

A Solution: Adult Career and Technical Education
By the
Vermont Association of Career and Technical Education Directors
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Governor Scott's 2020 Budget Address highlights a system for collaboration and cooperation between the multiple workforce training entities in the State of Vermont. He mentioned CCV, VTC, Department of Labor and the Career and Technical Education Centers. The Vermont Association of Career and Technical Education Directors (VACTED) fully supports this vision and has made a proposal of how this can be accomplished. The White Paper - "Vermont CTE: A Path Forward" by VACTED in November of 2017, proposed a system where each center would have a full-time position dedicated to workforce education and training coordinated activities; the position might be called the Assistant Director for Adult Career and Technical Education or Regional Career Pathways Coordinator. Below is an excerpt from the White Paper:

*"Each Local Workforce Investment Board would have a full-time **Regional Career Pathways Coordinator** (Assistant Director of Adult Technical Education) to coordinate activities and have the responsibility to develop a Regional Plan, with partners' input, which would need approval from the State Workforce Development Board."*

The evidence shows that when a person is working full time with Adult CTE, the results are positive. Over the years at the North Country Career Center, Stafford Tech, or at Southwest where the Board recently decided to fund the position on a full-time basis, there have been positive results. Testimony over the last few years by multiple CTE Directors, has been to support a full-time position, and the positive results will follow. By using the existing Technical Center infrastructure as a connection point for all regional Workforce Development, we can finally create a cohesive workforce development system.

Recommendation # 1 - Fund a full-time position to oversee and coordinate Adult CTE as part of a regional workforce education and training system that provides opportunities for secondary students to continue on after completing high school, as well as adults who need education and training to succeed in today's economy.

The environment of Adult CTE as we know it is one of many players providing quality programming but with little or no coordination. A systemic accountability is needed to ensure coordination and efficiency of effort. Another excerpt from the White Paper:

“All Workforce Development related grants from the Department of Labor, Agency of Education and others would have to address priority pathways in the regional plans. These plans would be outlined for each pathway with specific roles of all service providers described.”

Coordination of entities can be gained first, with a statewide oversight, along with regional oversight. A statewide advisory council, to include relevant stakeholders, could be appointed by the Workforce Investment Board to include industry partners, CTE Directors, Adult CTE Directors, state college system reps, DOL, Commerce, etc, but the group should be limited in size. The goal would be to develop and implement a coordinated statewide plan. One of the clear outcomes of this past Fall’s “Regional Workforce Summits” was that workforce development is best done on a local level. A local advisory group that has a similar makeup to the state advisory, would provide oversight and guidance on regional issues, plus would coordinate back to the statewide advisory.

Recommendation #2 - Develop a statewide advisory and regional advisories for planning and coordination.

To further ensure coordination, cooperation, and collaboration with efficiency, Vermont Career and Technical Education Centers would provide the regional leadership via the Assistant Director for Adult Career and Technical Education/Regional Career Pathways Coordinator. This position would be empowered to make decisions regarding all workforce development initiatives which are supported by state or federal funds of any kind to operate. This position would also hold people accountable. Such funds include VSAC Grants/Scholarships, Vermont Training Program Funding, and WIOA Funds. The statewide coordination would eliminate efforts which are not currently in sync with the statewide plan or represent a duplication of efforts and resources. Each CTE service region would be required to develop a Regional Workforce Development plan which is coordinated between all Workforce Training providers in the region. The CTE Center becomes the Regional Partner Resource “hub” or “one stop” for all workforce development activities. The goal of this empowerment and collaborative planning is to maximize the offerings which are available to individuals seeking technical training.

Recommendation #3 - Empowerment of Regional Coordinators to manage Workforce Development Initiatives to gain efficiencies.

Vermont has a multitude of providers and resources to support individuals who are looking to improve skills, and consequently, the ability to grow within a career pathway. But providers aren’t coordinated in a way to maximize training opportunities and the available funding. By empowering regional coordinators within the existing CTE infrastructure, while executing a

Statewide Plan which is coordinated to local needs, opportunities will be developed and funded with measurable outcomes.