

December 17, 2021

Dear Vermont Legislator,

I am reaching out as a follow up to the Southeast Vermont Superintendents Legislative Meeting held on Friday, December 3rd.

Senator Alison Clarkson - Windsor County and Kathleen James - Bennington-4 have been supportive of the three independent technical center school districts (Hannaford Career Center in Middlebury, River Valley Technical Center in Springfield, and Southwest Tech in Bennington) having funds made available to them via a Budget Adjustment Act.

The three technical centers are in a unique circumstance as they are not eligible to receive any Elementary and Secondary Education School Emergency Relief Funds (ESSER) because they are not designated as Local Education Authority school districts. The districts served by these technical center school districts received a total of 74.5 million dollars in the three different allocations of ESSER funds from the federal government with school districts served being awarded the follow:

- Hannaford Career Center School District service region school districts combined ESSER Funds - 12.4 Million
- River Valley Technical Center School District service region school districts combined ESSER Funds - 36.2 Million
- Southwest Technical School District service region school districts combined ESSER Funds - 26 Million

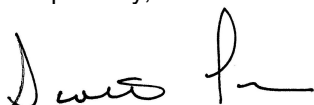
The centers have provided testimony to House Education on three occasions in the last calendar year, once to Senate Education, and met with the representatives from the administration on three separate occasions. The administration contacted the White House and has been in contact with the congressional delegation about this matter, but because the three districts are not LEAs, they are not eligible to receive ESSER funds.

Since Vermont Career and Technical Education Centers receive funding to operate based on student enrollments via the six-semester average, the centers have been uniquely impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic. The students who enroll in a CTE Center do so by choice; this makes student visits and thoughtful experiences as middle schoolers and early high schoolers, at the center of the utmost importance. Since the start of the pandemic in March of 2020 these Career Awareness and Career Exploration visits have not happened due to the social distancing and "pod" restrictions which have been part of the mitigation strategies in every Vermont school. The three independent technical center school districts have not been able to hold over 6,000 student visits for students within out service regions. The breakdown per district is as follows:

- Hannaford Career Center School District - 2,000 plus student visits
- River Valley Technical Center School District - 2,040 plus student visits
- Southwest Technical School District - 2,200 plus visits

Other pandemic impacts to CTE enrollment in a CTE were misaligned schedules or fewer days a week because of hybrid schedules, lack of transportation for students on hybrid off days when the CTE center is in session, families decision not to send students because of the potential for mixing with other students, and other remote/hybrid learning challenges. The challenges to CTE funding due to the pandemic will continue until six semesters after the end of the pandemic. The Budget Adjustment Act amount will keep the three independents whole as far as staffing to pre-pandemic levels. Without this funding three independent technical center school districts will be faced with either staff reductions or significant tuition increases. Which further exacerbates the competitive funding model CTE currently operates under. Hopefully, we can eventually move to a funding model (ACT 189) which does not place CTE in competition for tuition dollars with the very same high schools we serve. We appreciate your thoughtful consideration for our request.

Respectfully,



Scott D. Farr  
Superintendent/Director

Held Harmless Calculation for Independent Career and Technical Centers

<b>River Valley Technical Center Held Harmless Calculation</b>							
	Spring 2019	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Fall 2021	6 Semester Ave FTE
	Pre COVID 19 Pandemic			Impacted by Covid 19 Pandemic			
Actual FTE	112.56	131.86	124.61	100.27	84.78	104.84	109.82
Held Harmless FTE	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	131.86	124.61	131.86	126.22
				16.4 X \$19,072 = \$312,780.80			16.4 FTE

<b>Southwest Technical Center School District Held Harmless Calculation</b>							
	Spring 2019	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Fall 2021	6 Semester Ave FTE
	Pre COVID 19 Pandemic			Impacted by Covid 19 Pandemic			
Actual FTE	144.56	155.53	151.23	173.97	139.15	147.77	152.04
Held Harmless FTE	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable		151.23	155.53	155.34
				3.3 x \$23.998 = \$79,233.24			3.3 FTE

<b>Hannaford Career Center School District Held Harmless Calculation</b>							
	Spring 2019	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Fall 2021	6 Semester Ave FTE
	Pre COVID 19 Pandemic			Impacted by Covid 19 Pandemic			
Actual FTE	116.65	149.83	140.17	126.33	119.75	147.08	133.30
Held Harmless FTE	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	149.83	140.17	149.83	141.08
				7.78 x \$23,827 = \$185,374.06			7.78 FTE