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S.313

Introduced by Senators Ram Hinsdale, Bongartz, Clarkson, Hardy, Harrison,
Major, Perchlik, Weeks and Westman

Referred to Committee on Education

Date: January 27, 2026

Subject: Education; career technical education

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to express
legislative intent to transform Vermont’s career technical education (CTE)
system.

An act relating to transforming Vermont’s career technical education system

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. FINDINGS

The General Assembly finds that:

(1) Vermont has unmet workforce needs and skills gaps, while a growing percentage of the decreasing school-aged population is not continuing on to higher education. Career technical education (CTE) creates a bridge between education and career that is valuable to all Vermont students, whether they are entering the workforce immediately after graduation, continuing their education immediately, or joining the military. For Vermont to have student

1 outcomes that match students' individual aspirations and to prepare the
2 workforce of the future, every Vermont high school student should have access
3 to career technical education.

4 (2) A thriving prekindergarten through grade 12 education system is one
5 that prepares every student to graduate prepared for what comes next after high
6 school, whether that is continued education or training, military service, or
7 entering the workforce.

8 (3) Creating and maintaining a thriving education system requires
9 intentional, coordinated, and equitable local, regional, and statewide
10 programming from elementary school through high school. The education
11 system should ensure that students gain awareness of post-high school career
12 and education opportunities through career exploration, personalized guidance,
13 work-based learning, flexible pathways programming, and credentials of value
14 that support successful transitions beyond high school.

15 (4) CTE is an essential tool to realize this vision. CTE engages students
16 in hands-on instruction and applied learning that builds practical skills,
17 develops career readiness, and provides pathways to industry-recognized
18 credentials and postsecondary credit. Vermont's CTE system must ensure that
19 every student, regardless of geography, identity, or school, has access to high-
20 quality career technical education opportunities.

1 Sec. 2. CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

2 TRANSFORMATION; LEGISLATIVE INTENT

3 To realize a strong statewide career preparation system, it is the intent of the
4 General Assembly to transform Vermont's career technical education (CTE)
5 system as follows:

6 (1) Provide universal access to CTE, ensuring that every student can
7 participate in CTE programming, including pretech and foundations courses,
8 by:

9 (A) increasing access to CTE in middle school and the first two years
10 of high school;

11 (B) addressing barriers such as transportation, scheduling conflicts,
12 and awareness;

13 (C) providing consistency in admissions policies across all CTE
14 centers; and

(D) ensuring that no student may be placed on a waitlist or prevented
from accessing CTE *for lack of capacity* when there is a viable alternative to
the locally accessible program through the provision of transportation.

15 (2) Enable flexible delivery models, expanding beyond regional
16 technical centers to offer multiple pathways for students to access CTE
17 programming and graduate with required high school courses by:

1 (A) delivering programs at sending high schools or in a hybrid
2 format where appropriate to improve accessibility; and

3 (B) utilizing shared resources and technology to improve educational
4 access and limit transportation needs.

5 (3) Align the CTE system with workforce needs by designing and
6 evaluating programs based on current and emerging Vermont labor market
7 demands, continue robust evaluation of the system through the Comprehensive
8 Local Needs Assessment process, and utilize statewide research from
9 Vermont’s Most Promising Jobs and VT Labor Market Information to assess
10 student outcomes in continuing to the workforce.

11 (4) Create a sustainable, student-centered funding system that removes
12 disincentives for participation and supports program growth and innovation.
13 Flexible delivery models and access must be taken into consideration to ensure
14 the sustainability of program delivery.

15 (5) Explore the viability and impact of CTE centers becoming diploma-
16 conferring institutions or comprehensive high schools. In situations where this
17 is not possible, high schools shall be required to award the credits
18 recommended by a CTE center.

19 (6) Maintain a strong adult CTE system by building robust adult and
20 continuing education pathways within CTE that meet Vermont’s upskilling,
21 reskilling, and workforce development needs while connecting seamlessly with

1 secondary programs and regional workforce partners. Such a system shall
2 have a governance and funding model that promotes coordination, quality,
3 program consistency, and sustainability.

4 (7) Coordinate CTE governance by establishing governance approaches
5 that strengthen collaboration across districts, improve consistency and program
6 quality, and better support positive student outcomes. CTE governance should
7 align with the ongoing education transportation process, with the above goals
8 as the lens through which decisions are made.

9 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

10 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.