



Vermont Association of Career and Technical Directors

VACTED Legislative Priorities for Strengthening Career and Technical Education

Vermont Association of Career and Technical Education Directors (VACTED)

Purpose

The Vermont Association of Career and Technical Education Directors (VACTED) offers the following legislative priorities to strengthen Vermont's Career and Technical Education (CTE) system. These recommendations are intended to improve access, consistency, and accountability while protecting the safety, quality, and effectiveness of existing programs.

These priorities reflect recurring themes raised by CTE directors across regions and delivery models and are designed to advance achievable reforms in the near term, while aligning CTE with broader education governance and funding discussions underway in Vermont.

Guiding Principles

1. Accountability Must Accompany Authority

Updating statute or rule without a clearly functioning pathway for implementation, intervention, and escalation will not change outcomes for students or programs. Any CTE reform must specify who supports implementation, how disputes are resolved, and how unresolved issues are escalated.

2. Sequence Implementation Before Structural Change

Rule modernization, accountability capacity, and funding alignment must occur before any major governance restructuring. Sequencing reforms correctly is essential to expanding access while protecting safety, staffing stability, and program quality.

3. Recognize CTE as a Professionally Accredited, Standards-Based System

CTE centers are fully accredited institutions staffed by licensed educators who intentionally teach and assess academic and technical standards. Policy should respect this professional standing by affirming CTE centers' authority to award and transcript academic credit and to define CTE-aligned graduation pathways, and by requiring that CTE-earned credits be applied toward graduation requirements as awarded.

4. Expand Access While Protecting Safety and Program Integrity

Access must expand equitably, but CTE operates in regulated, high-risk environments with fixed requirements for staffing ratios, space, equipment, and instructional sequencing that cannot flex simply to meet policy goals.

5. Ensure Consistent Standards While Preserving Regional Flexibility

Vermont needs common expectations for quality, safety, and outcomes, while preserving flexibility across full-day and half-day models, embedded or dedicated academics, and regional or satellite delivery, including regionally appropriate program and course offerings. One-size-fits-all mandates risk undermining both access and effectiveness.

6. Align CTE Funding With Student Need and System Reality

CTE funding must reflect real cost drivers, including regulated environments, equipment cycles, and high concentrations of SPED/504 students, while remaining aligned with Vermont's broader education funding system.

VACTED Priority Legislative Actions (Near-Term)

1. Credit Recognition and Graduation Flexibility for CTE Students

Problem

CTE-earned academic credit is not consistently honored by sending districts, and graduation flexibility for CTE concentrators is uneven and often discretionary. This undermines access, equity, and program credibility.

VACTED Position

Codify that academic credits earned through CTE programs that meet State Board standards must be transcribed and applied toward graduation requirements in a consistent and timely manner.

Key Elements

- Affirm CTE centers' authority, as accredited institutions, to award academic credit
- Require consistent application of CTE-earned credits toward graduation requirements
- Ensure districts offer CTE-aligned graduation pathways for concentrators

Why This Matters

This is a high-impact, easily understood reform that improves fairness and access without reorganizing governance.

2. Mandate Modernization of State Board CTE Rules

Problem

CTE rules have not been comprehensively updated in over a decade and do not fully reflect current practice, Perkins V requirements, modern safety standards, or varied delivery models.

VACTED Position

Require the State Board of Education to undertake a time-limited CTE rule revision process, with CTE directors as primary drivers.

Core Elements to Address

- Updated definitions (CTE programs, credentials, embedded academics, satellite models)
- Credit standards and competency-based pathways
- Work-based learning sequencing aligned with OSHA and federal hazard orders
- Minimum safety, space, and equipment standards
- Data and reporting alignment with Perkins V
- Explicit allowance for differentiated regional delivery models

Required Condition

The rule update must include a clearly defined implementation, intervention, and escalation pathway.

3. Define CTE Program Quality Without Mandating Uniform Delivery

Problem

There is legitimate interest in statewide consistency, but concern that legislation could unintentionally impose uniform delivery models that do not fit all regions or centers.

VACTED Position

Codify minimum statewide quality expectations while explicitly permitting regional and programmatic variation.

Explicitly Permit

- Full-day and half-day centers

- Embedded academics or dedicated academic staff
- Regional satellites and off-campus programs
- Regionally appropriate program offerings

Why This Matters

Consistency of standards does not require sameness of structure.

4. Align CTE Funding With Statewide Education Funding Mechanisms

Problem

CTE funding through tuition billing and competitive grants creates instability, inequity, and friction with sending districts.

VACTED Position

- Move CTE funding into the Education Fund, aligned with Act 73 outcomes
- Use appropriate CTE student weighting to reflect higher costs
- Retain a six-semester rolling average or current enrollment, whichever is higher
- Pay funds directly to the entity responsible for CTE delivery

Why This Matters

Predictable, formula-based funding supports planning, access, and long-term program viability.

5. Establish a Functioning Pre-Enforcement Intervention Pathway

Problem

While statutes and rules exist, Vermont lacks a consistently functioning intervention step between local conflict and formal enforcement.

VACTED Position

Any CTE reform must include a clearly designated intervention and escalation function responsible for:

- Supporting interpretation and implementation of CTE rules and statute
- Providing early-stage mediation between CTE centers and sending districts
- Documenting patterns of noncompliance or systemic barriers
- Escalating unresolved or repeated issues for formal enforcement

Important Clarification

This function would not have independent enforcement authority. Its purpose is early resolution and targeted escalation.

6. Require Sequencing Before Any Major Governance Overhaul

No significant CTE governance restructuring should occur until:

- Updated State Board CTE rules are in place
- An intervention and escalation pathway is operational
- Funding alignment is defined
- A transition plan demonstrates no disruption to safety, access, or programming

Closing Statement

VACTED offers these priorities as near-term, high-consensus actions that would strengthen Career and Technical Education statewide while preserving safety, quality, and regional effectiveness. These recommendations are intended to support thoughtful legislative engagement this session and to inform ongoing discussions about the future of CTE governance, funding, and delivery. VACTED looks forward to continued collaboration with the Legislature, the Agency of Education, and partner organizations as this work moves forward.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Erik Remmers", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Erik Remmers
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