
TESTIMONY

Testimony To: House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development

Respectfully Submitted by: Vermont Agency of Education

Subject: Career Technical Education Service Agency

Date: March 26, 2026

Goals and Benefits of an Education Service Agency

Career and Technical Education (CTE) will be moved under a single Education Service Agency (ESA). The goals of creating the ESA include:

1. Oversight of the 15 CTE Centers and independent school CTE programs, allowing for a more effective and efficient statewide CTE system aligned to both student and statewide workforce development needs.
 - ESA will be tasked with aligning programming to best serve students statewide, including increasing capacity in programs with large waitlists or areas needed for workforce development.
 - ESA will align quality and cost structures of programs to ensure common educational experiences for students across the state.
2. The expansion of CTE programming for all high school students with a target of every student taking at least one CTE course during high school.
3. The expansion of CTE exposure for middle school students, ensuring exposure in every middle school in the state, with a common curriculum and professional development system.
4. Statewide leadership for CTE through the ESA, including:
 - Conducting, in collaboration with each CTE center, the required Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment and annually submitting one federal Perkins grant application for the ESA inclusive of all centers;
 - Overseeing all program substantive change requests and new program approval requests to the AOE; and
 - Overseeing all program closure decisions, in accordance with a policy to be adopted by the ESA governance board and the AOE.
5. A funding system that provides stability of funding for CTE while allowing for adjustments as governance changes are fully implemented.



Fall 2026
ESA Implementation Planning

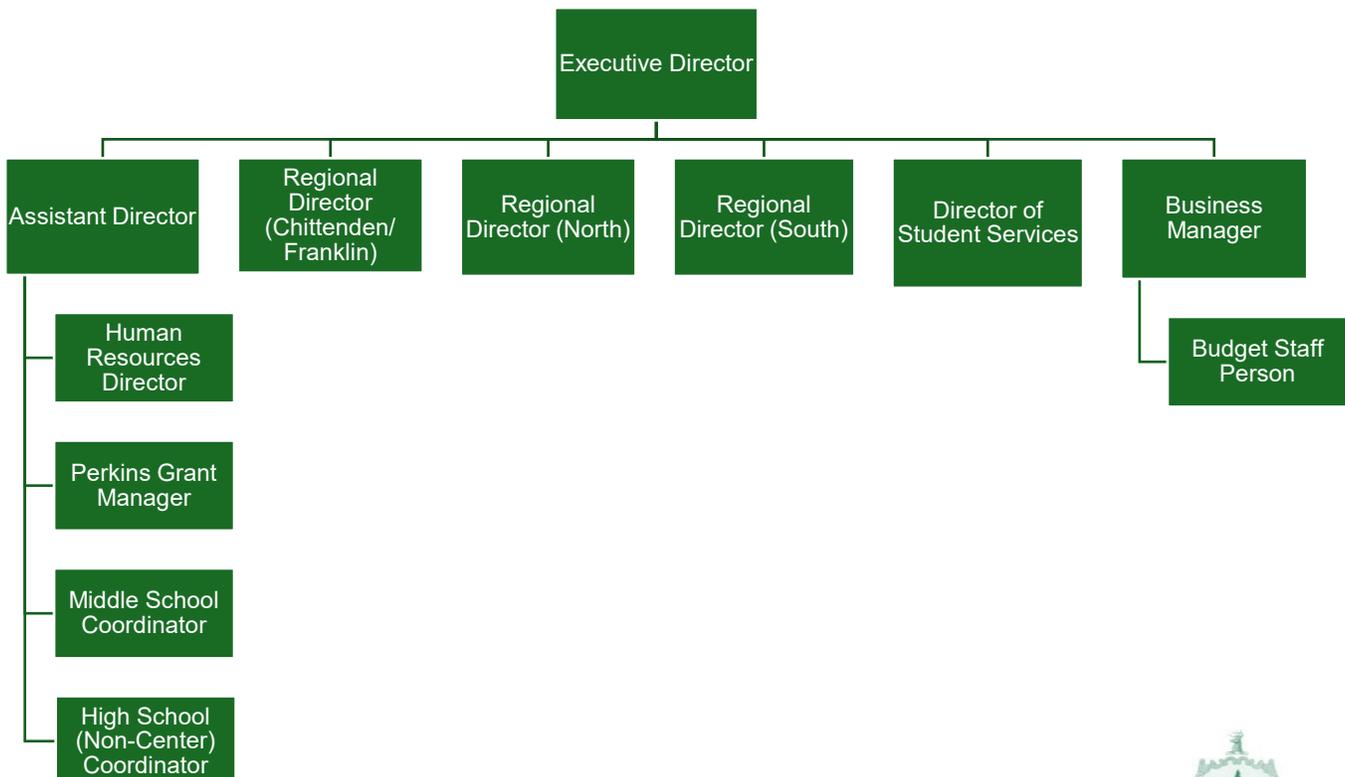


Fall 2028
Implementation for SY 28-29

ESA Staffing

The ESA staff will oversee all 15 CTE Centers, independent school CTE programming, and the expansion of high school and middle school CTE opportunities. With some limited and practical exceptions, CTE center staff will become ESA employees with many of the central services currently provided by CTE centers, or the housing districts, being transferred to the ESA. ESA staff will provide professional development, curriculum, and other technical assistance to CTE Centers and other CTE providers in the state.

ESA staff will include an Executive Director, Assistant Director, three Regional Directors, and a Director of Student Services. It will also include finance and Human Resources staff along with a middle school and a non-CTE center high school director. The following organization chart shows the key staffing needed; recognizing that additional administrative and support staff may be needed to support these key staff roles, at the discretion of the ESA:



Anticipated Oversight Areas of Key ESA Staff

Role	Anticipated Oversight Areas
Executive Director	System finance and budget management; oversight of Regional Directors; workforce system and higher education liaison; system planning, partnership development and community outreach
Assistant Director	Human Resources, Grant Management, Middle and High School (Non-Center) Coordinators
Regional Directors (3)	Oversight and provision of academic support to centers in a region of the state. Each Regional Director is additionally responsible for one of the following area statewide: (1) facilities; (2) curriculum and instruction/professional development; and (3) transportation.
Director of Student Services	Statewide coordination of student services such as special education, 504 plans, multilingual learners, equitable attendance
Human Resources Director	Oversight of all human resources functions of the ESA
Middle School Coordinator	Design of middle school CTE experience, including curricular resources, ongoing statewide professional development for middle school educators; support for LEAs
High School (non-Center) Coordinator	Coordination of Pre-Tech and Non-CTE center 9th & 10 th high school CTE course exposure; provision of curricular resources and professional development

Financing

CTE has been accounted for in the full cost of the system in Act 73 funding. In practice, the CTE ESA would receive a line item from the state budget, consistent with how pk-12 districts will receive their budgets. The assumptions underlying CTE cost modeling are based on an evaluation of the cost to operate programs at capacity.

State Board Rule 2390.2 requires the CTE center to pay shared services to the sending districts. This would shift some of those costs to the CTE ESA to provide more comprehensive, CTE specific resources.

This funding model in conjunction with a new ESA does not preclude changes to the CTE structure in the future. This ESA is intended to be put in place as a necessary first step to increase quality and programming in the system. As the ESA builds CTE capacity across the state, other governance structures or opportunities for CTE delivery may evolve. If they do, the ESA could be replaced and the CTE funding incorporated directly into district budgets.

