



Vermont Association of Career and Technical Directors

October 5, 2024

Dear Acting Secretary Saunders,

I am writing on behalf of the Vermont Association for Career and Technical Education Directors to express our concerns regarding the Early College Program, a component of the Flexible Pathways Initiative.

Under the current policy, students must be high school seniors enrolled in publicly funded schools, including Vermont Career Technical Centers, approved independent high schools, and those funded by their hometowns, as well as the High School Completion Program or through home study. This policy requires students to "un-enroll" from their high school, which consequently means withdrawing from any Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in which they are currently enrolled. Established by the Vermont Agency of Education's leadership just over a year ago, this policy appears to undermine the intent of the Flexible Pathways Initiative.

Each year, we observe students forced to choose between continuing their crucial CTE programs and participating in the Early College Program. Many CTE students who opt for the Early College Program express disappointment and a strong desire to remain in their well-established CTE learning communities. This lack of flexibility prevents students from fully realizing their Personal Learning Plans and effectively pursuing their career aspirations. Before 2022, students could access Early College and CTE/High School programs, which best supported their pathways. For reference, here is a link to a memo outlining the previous procedure: [[Link to 412022 Early College Memo](#)]. We hope for a more streamlined process than what is described in the memo.

The financial impact on CTE centers is also a significant concern due to the current funding mechanism. To comply with Perkins V legislation, CTE programs must offer either Dual Enrollment or rigorous Industry-Recognized Credentialing. Ideally, Dual Enrollment courses provided by CTE centers should be integrated into the Early College Program, with credits awarded by institutions such as the Community College of Vermont, Norwich University, or Vermont State University.

We urge a review of this policy to better align it with the goals of providing flexible and personalized educational pathways for all students. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully,



Jody Emerson
Central Vermont Career Center
VACTED President



Scott Farr
River Valley Technical Center
VACTED Past President



Erik Remmers
Green Mountain Tech. & Career Center
VACTED Vice President



Erika Schneider
Hartford Area Career and Tech. Center
VACTED Secretary



Nika, Oakes
Randolph Technical Career Center
VACTED Treasurer

cc: Ruth Durkee, State Director of Career Technical Education
Zoe Saunders, Interim Secretary of Education