

TO: Senate Education Committee

FROM: Patrick Guckin, St. Johnsbury Academy, CTE Director

DATE: March 27, 2025

RE: Career and Technical Education

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Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you again today regarding Career and Technical Education (CTE). Like all CTE centers across the state, St. Johnsbury Academy's goal is to help students see the many opportunities available to them upon graduation from high school, as well as to provide inspiration and aspiration to succeed in their chosen field. CTE must be accessible, valued and elevated as an integral part of our education system. That is the key to student success.

As background, St. Johnsbury Academy is an independent comprehensive high school serving 953 students, including 167 boarding students from around the world. The remaining 786 students are public tuition students from more than 40 towns in Vermont and New Hampshire. Of those 953 students, approximately 400 students take CTE courses. In addition, each year we receive a handful of share-time students from other surrounding high schools. We have 22 share-time students enrolled so far for next year.

St. Johnsbury Academy was founded in 1842 by the Fairbanks brothers. Our school is governed by a headmaster and a board of trustees. The CTE Director reports to the headmaster. As a comprehensive high school, St. Johnsbury Academy offers the robust programming of large high school, including the traditional humanities, English, social studies, mathematics, science, foreign languages, and fine arts. In the applied sciences and STEM program, we offer robotics, engineering, computer science, biomedical and health sciences. We support students in their learning as necessary, whether those needs involve an IEP or 504 plan, support in our reading or math lab, or advanced placement (AP) and dual enrollment courses.

In addition, we have a wide range of CTE course offerings including a full auto shop, an electrical space with panels, a woodworking shop, a culinary program with an operating restaurant, a space where students learn architecture and construction techniques, welding, plumbing, and human services programming that provides the foundation for careers in social work, public safety, child development, early childhood education, health and geriatric care. We also offer CTE programs in business and management skills, including marketing, sales and finance. We focus on connecting students with real world career experience in our communities through project-based work, internships and other opportunities. In addition, we offer exploratory CTE programs. We value the feedback of the local representation on our Regional Advisory Board, which helps us assess and adjust our programming to meet the needs of our community.

We believe our comprehensive model is one example of how to provide high quality and diverse technical education opportunities to students. Our CTE programs are located across our campus facilities and are fully integrated into the high school campus. All of our students have access to CTE programming, and we have one tuition rate that includes all programming, including CTE. Tuition for the 2024-2025 school year is \$23,425. For our share-time students, sending schools pay 40% of the tuition rate for half-day.

Due to the diversity of our student body and independent governance, full alignment with a statewide model such as calendar and salary schedule, would be challenging. The bulk of our CTE students attend St. Johnsbury Academy on a full-time basis. We align our calendar to the greatest extent possible with the superintendents in our service region that send share-time students to us for CTE. We coordinate closely with these sending schools on the few days annually where calendars may not quite line up due to our need to accommodate travel times for our international students during breaks or certain long-standing St. Johnsbury Academy traditions such as Spirit Week, for example. We do believe that sending schools should recognize CTE credits toward graduation requirements.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our model for providing Career and Technical Education to the committee.