Written Testimony to the House Commerce Committee
Subject: 26-0768 & CTE VACTED Draft
Submitted by: Jody Emerson, CVCC Director/CVCCSD Superintendent/Director

Good morning Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jody Emerson. I serve as Superintendent and Director of the Central Vermont Career Center School District in Barre, and I am a past President of the Vermont Association of Career and Technical Education Directors (VACTED). Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I also want to apologize for my tardiness and for attending virtually. I would have preferred to be there in person, but a matter required my attention at CVCC this morning.

Today was the first time I was able to review the draft HCED CTE language. I apologize if I should have been able to access it sooner. After reviewing it, I was encouraged to see that the proposal appears to take measured steps to update the State Board rules and to provide an opportunity to move forward thoughtfully in considering potential governance changes.

In response to the Agency of Education's updates, greater clarity around roles and responsibilities is helpful and needs to be ongoing. I have not yet had adequate time to fully digest the information presented this morning, so I do not have a detailed response at this point. Yesterday, representatives from our centers met briefly with the Agency of Education to ask questions about their presentation, which I understand was further revised following that conversation, we appreciate any opportunity to collaborate in this work.

I do want to emphasize that Career and Technical Education must be funded and resourced as a priority. CTE is a critical vehicle for workforce development in Vermont and plays an essential role in strengthening both our state economy and our local communities.

As this conversation continues, there are several areas where additional clarity would be helpful. These include the timeline for any transition, the broader vision for education in Vermont, not only for CTE but for the entire system, and cost modeling that allows us to better understand what a potential future structure would require.

We also need to understand the rationale for moving toward an Education Service Agency structure rather than maintaining governance through school districts. If the goal is to expand regional technical high schools or develop comprehensive high schools, as referenced in the HCED CTE language, we should carefully consider whether moving CTE programs into an ESA structure, separate from the schools where they are currently located, supports that goal.

There are also questions related to funding. Ruth indicated that the AOE intends to maintain at least current funding in the first year while determining the "true cost" of programs and considering construction funding to increase student access. At the same time, it discusses the

potential redistribution of resources. It will be important to clarify what that redistribution would look like in practice. We certainly want to ensure that centers that are not currently equitably staffed or resourced receive the support they need, but we should be cautious about doing so by reducing resources from other centers.

Finally, adequate transition time will be essential. Centers will need time to plan for how best to expand student access, how to structure staffing across the state, how facilities may need to evolve, and what role transportation will play in supporting students.

To help illustrate the scope of responsibilities associated with my role as Superintendent and Director, I will also attach my current work plan. It reflects some, though certainly not all, of the work required to operate and lead a regional career and technical education center.

I believe we share common goals with this committee, the Agency of Education, and VACTED: ensuring that Vermont students have strong access to high-quality Career and Technical Education and that our system supports the workforce needs of our communities and our state.

Thank you for the opportunity to share these thoughts today, and I look forward to continuing the conversation.

CVCC Superintendent/Director Work Plan

| Time Period | Director Tasks | Superintendent Tasks |
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| Things to monitor every month and sometimes weekly | ● Daily -- approve absence requests and POs/Invoices<br>● Re-envisioning with the Assistant Director and the Architect team<br>● Regular communication with sending school Principals<br>● Teacher Prep Program Teachers - keeping them on track with their coursework, PRAXIS testing (should happen in the first year - the cost is paid by the teacher/not the district - the district pays for courses).<br>● PD - Summer, August, throughout the year<br>● VACTED group<br>● VPA<br>● Monthly union rep meetings with Wendy Clark and Christina Currier<br>● Budget lines and expenditure monitoring<br>● Perkins expenditure monitoring<br>● Revenue monitoring<br>● **Admissions** appeals from students and parents<br>● Work with the Office Staff and **Events Team** all year on quarter awards, open house, and Awards Night preparation - including scholarships and NTHS<br>● Take regular **walkthroughs** for all programs regularly with the Assistant Director; record these with Teach Point.<br>● **Office Staff Calendar** (Google Calendar) shows who is out and other things happening throughout the day/week. Be sure there is coverage in the front office. | ● Board updates, committee and board meeting agendas and scheduling; monthly Superintendent Report<br>● Regular communication with sending district Superintendents; Winooski Valley Superintendents Meetings<br>● VSA<br>● Budget lines and expenditure monitoring<br>● Perkins expenditure monitoring<br>● Revenue monitoring |

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| | ● Monthly check-ins with sending school principals (Office hours?) | |
| Early July | ● Finalize the CVCC student and staff calendars for distribution ASAP, and finalize PD plans for the following year.<br>● Fill any vacancies that are still open<br>● Work with Registrar over the summer to act on any students on wait lists as openings occur | |
| Mid July | ● Review the Faculty Handbook/Procedures Manual and get it ready to be sent out to staff for their signature with a summer letter around mid-July. Admin Assistant works on this packet; she will need your letter to go with it.<br>● Create a PD schedule for next year's PD days<br>● Write the summer letters (welcome back letters) for staff and students and give them to the Admin Assistant to be included in the summer mailing that happens late July/early August. | |
| July/August | ● Approve POs in SchoolERPro<br>● Program of Studies | ● Soon to come PERKINS - annually, the Board will need to approve the pooling of funds to pay for pooled funds (Form 267), and they will approve the Perkins Plan/Grant as well. You will need to provide an amendment to Perkins FY22 in October to add the additional 30% funds, so that will be a good time to get onto the board agenda for approval. See Ruth with questions; it may need to be done for this coming fall. So, you should see an email from Ruth in the fall with the actual language for the board agenda item, since it will need Action. I usually provide a summary of the Perkins spending to the board, vs. the entire 76-page plan/grant. |

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| | | ● Perkins FY22 amendment **(per Ruth May 20, 2021**), GMS might be open as early as the **1st of August** to do this amendment. Still, see Ruth with questions and deadlines.<br>● Checks being made out to VT CTSO Corp/mailed to the Randolph address for $1300 have been paid for FY21. However, the fiscal agent for this work, supported by the VACTED, might move to another Tech Center - you will find all of this out at the VACTED meetings.<br>● Felicia Allard at RTCC will be the fiscal agent for VACTED - she will be able to guide you on these issues, too.<br>● Review Perkins V Plan and CLNA to be prepared for data work and collection in October/November to begin to put together this information to inform FY23<br>● Perkins – grant writer/administrator, If deadlines are missed or negotiated targets are not met, the center could lose funding ($230,000) |
| August | ● Work with the Counseling Coordinator on how **Dual Enrollment**, Fast Forward, and Running Start courses are going to run.<br>● Work with Instructors with businesses to determine when and how their **internal businesses** will open up. All revenues from those businesses are split 80% back to the CVCC revenue account and 20% into each program's associated funds. FYI, this is an equity issue with all other programs having to do more traditional fundraising, whereas the businesses have a natural stream of revenue all year long. There | |

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| | are also huge debates every year about who can buy uniforms, vs. t-shirts, vs. sweatshirts, vs. program jackets, etc., and using associated funds or local budget funds. The business people listed above feel they should be able to buy these things for their kids; however, the other teachers don't feel it is equitable, as they don't have their own businesses. I think the team leaders should take this on, so it isn't on your plate. This has always been a tough one among teachers. Some feel that there is favoritism for those who run businesses, getting to purchase what they want, take trips, etc., with their kids.<br>● Prepare for the **opening days** with the full staff. Determine if there are times when you only want teachers present or need to have all staff, including permanent subs, present as well. Emmanuel Ajanma manages links for mandatory trainings.<br>● Ensure Mentorships are set in place.<br>● Enrolled new teachers in the Teacher Prep Program as needed; signed PLPs<br>● **Apprenticeship classes** – are paid in full by CVCC – the teacher needs to submit the forms for that process ahead of time.<br>● Prepare for Opening Day in the Auditorium, welcoming all students and staff, staff introductions, review of handbook and expectations, importance of grades and attendance in earning NTHS, Scholarships, and if they plan to return the next year. Allow for time for Counseling Coor, Student Services Coor, Coop Coor, and CTSO advisor to give updates. | |

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| | ● Prepare for OSHA 10 and WorkKeys testing | |
| September | ● Prepare for **formal observations for all 1st and 2nd-year teachers**. Those who are also part of the Apprenticeship Program will receive observations from program staff twice a year.<br>● Use the Danielson model, hold pre-conferences, observations, and a post-conference. Use September to get those all scheduled so you can be done before February 1st, when you might have to make a non-renewal recommendation to the Board.<br>● All program teachers (except for those in year 1) are required to hold two **advisory committee meetings** per year. I ask them to do one per semester.<br>● Review the Tech Ed Regulations for CTE and State Board rules<br>● Prepare to do **walk-through**s once per month for each teacher. | |
| October | ● Begin **Teacher meeting**s/one-on-one around annual goals and budget needs. Sometimes the goals discussion can inform you on PD and equipment/software/training needs.<br>● Stay on top of what the board wants for budget percent increases – maximums. This translates into tuition | ● Emergency cancellation procedures<br>● Budget development<br>● School Safety Survey |
| November | ● Prepare for Open House<br>● Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) every 2 years.<br>● Non-Instructional Staff Time Study | ● Provide the Board with a budget draft<br>● Work on the FY23 Budget Flyer so it will be ready to be printed in January and distributed across all sending regions in early February.<br>● Work on any budget sheets that the board will be printing in their budget |

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| | | flyer. You will want to review these before they are sent to print.<br>● Legislative engagement<br>● Schedule budget presentations for sending district boards.<br>● Superintendents' Assurances Survey? |
| December | ● Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) every 2 years.<br>● New Teacher formal observations completed? | ● Draft **marketing materials** to print (same vendor as the Budget Flyer)- Annual Report<br>● Know re: board elections, who will be up for election<br>● Calendar draft<br>● Admin Eval Mtgs for individuals "of concern."<br>● Finalize the **next year's budget and tuition rate** |
| January | ● Review the current budget from now through June to ensure you have a positive year-end balance<br>● Check in with all teachers who are in the Apprenticeship Program/Teacher Prep to ensure they are on track with courses, courses were pre-approved through, and invoices have been paid.<br>● Work with team leaders to plan the second half of the year.<br>● Meet with assessment coordinators (?) to be sure we are on track to do the post-testing on Work Keys for all students per the AOE<br>● Work with the Assistant Director on any students who may be sent back to their sending district due to attendance, etc. | ● Review Perkins and prepare for additional funds and or the next iteration.<br>● Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) every 2 years.<br>● Budget adoption<br>● Hiring process/plan<br>● Plan for RIFs/non-renewals |
| February | ● Check in with the Registrar and School Counseling Coordinator on admissions and how it is moving forward.<br>● Keep an eye on the number of applications we receive; the fall enrollments should be around 190 each | ● Prepare for Annual Meeting and Budget Forum<br>● Board completes superintendent evaluation |

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| | fall to keep the six-semester average up and the revenue in good shape to support a close to level-funded tuition rate. Even though the budget might go up by 4%, the tuition can usually be level-funded because the revenue offsets the costs. The budget is always approved well before the Perkins Plan is even released for that same fiscal year.<br>● Non-Instructional Staff Time Study | |
| March | ● Formal evaluations should be done and on file.<br>● Look at your Year-End Projections in the budget and assess what equipment replacement can happen based on the plan if you appear to have some surplus. It is always good to carry over 1-2% surplus each year if possible, especially since you have expenses related to Governance and Re-Envisioning that aren't always apparent at budget approval time. I tried to put a $75,000-$100,000 amount from surplus toward reducing tuition if possible each year, which is why I try to roll over 1-2% surplus each year. This has allowed us to maintain a decent tuition for the past 8 years. | ● Prepare for any potential of budget defeat and have plans B and C ready to make adjustments quickly<br>● Perkins Grant/CLNA will need to be readied for submission in April-May. You will need to work with various staff to collect the data needed for the CLNA<br>● Board Reorganization<br>● Present CLNA data to the board. |
| April | ● Year-end CTSOs - competitions state-wide and nationals in June<br>● Prepare Schoolspring ads for all anticipated openings<br>● Form hiring committees - prefer having staff, parent, student, and sending school partner on committee when possible<br>● Plan to spend fund balances in the budget to bring your total bottom line (after revenue) to less than 3% otherwise, the entire amount is sent back to sending schools the following fall. This is why I use any surplus to make improvements in the programs, purchase aging equipment, and even do some IT upgrades for faculty. | ● Contracts out to teachers - potential resignations/retirements causing openings<br>● Complete the Central Data portion of GMS for Perkins next month<br>● Prep Perkins/CLNA 4-year plan and have it ready for approval at the May board meeting<br>● Ensure any overnight field trip requests are in the board packet<br>● Ensure retirements/new hires in the board packet<br>● Make a decision regarding the end of the year for Teachers (snow days make-up or not) |

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| May | ● Work with AP to finalize any last-minute purchases<br>● Contract letters for Administration, Lab Assistants, and Office Staff. | ● Hand out any contacts that are issued by the SU for personnel<br>● Year-end projections with Lisa Perreault - if there is money to spend above the 3%, you need to spend down some funds and then add some surplus to the general fund for CVCC in order to have money to go toward reducing tuition for the following year. You might also have additional expenses for the Governance and Re-envisioning process to budget for in FY23.<br>● Negotiate own contract with board.<br>● Update any required policies. |
| June | ● Bring the year to a close with staff and Team Leaders<br>● Program of Studies Draft<br>● Prepare all things needed for Awards Night - Events Team is the lead<br>● With the Team Leaders, work on finalizing next year's calendar and PD day plans so you can release this when they leave for their last day in June<br>● Share the PD schedule with Team Leaders for the following year to get the content set and communicated out to teachers<br>● Manage end of year checklist with the Admin Assistant<br>● Plan end of year gathering and staff recognition events | ● Prepare final Board meeting materials for the year. The last meeting is when we share out our year of data, work keys, IRCs, Dual Enrollment, Co-op numbers, admissions numbers, etc.<br>● Double-check contracts to verify who is returning and finishing up any hiring committee things.<br>● Update recommended and other policies. |