VERMONT REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

2026 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Kendal Smith, Commissioner

Jay Ramsey, Workforce Development Director

Wednesday, January 7, 2026

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VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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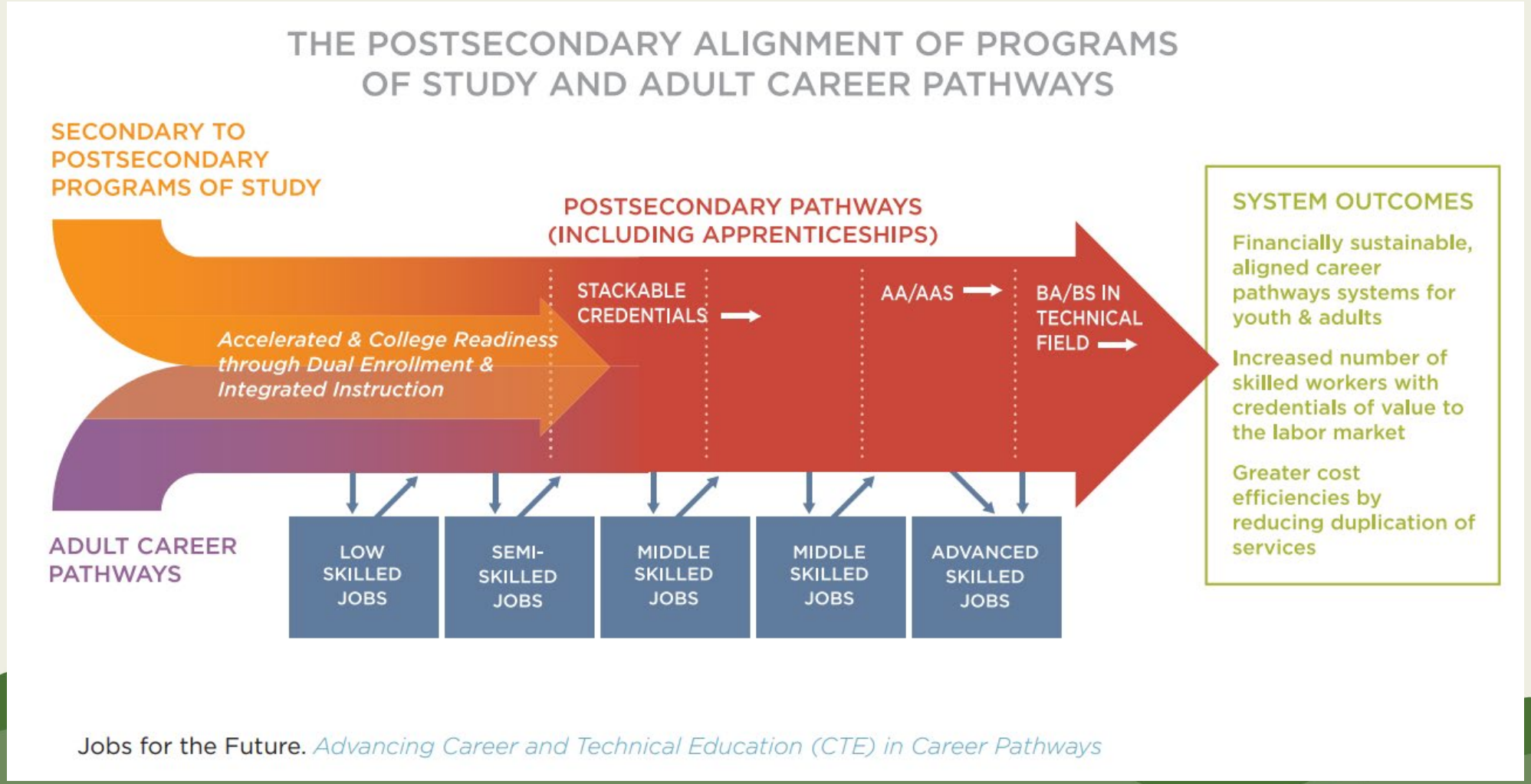
AGENDA

- Big Picture
  - Registered Apprenticeship + “apprenticeship” Models
  - VDOL as Registration Agency
- Program stats/growth since 2023
- Recent Federal changes
- Communication & online access / Raising awareness
- Objectives for 2026 – Service as a pathway
- Aspirations
- Questions



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Career Pathway Model



Jobs for the Future. *Advancing Career and Technical Education (CTE) in Career Pathways*

Essential Components

- Business & Industry Led
- Structured On-the-Job Training
- Experienced Employee Mentors
- Related Technical Training
- Embedded Wage Increases
- Interim and Occupational Credentials

Current Partners

- Sponsors:
  - Employers
- Licensing Entities:
  - Agency of Education
  - Department of Public Safety – Electrical & Plumbing Licensing Boards
- Related Instruction Providers:
  - Vermont State Colleges
  - Community College of Vermont

- Intermediaries:
  - Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center (VMEC)
  - Associated Builders and Contractors NH/VT
  - Ski Vermont
  - Vermont Rural Education Collaborative

Certified Pre-Apprenticeship

- Vermont Works for Women: Trailblazers
- ReSOURCE: HVAC 101
- ABC of NH/VT: Carpentry Bootcamp
- VYCC Timber Framing Pre-RAP

<u>Pending:</u>

- Vermont Adult Learning: Weatherization Training Program

The 8 Elements of Pre-Apprenticeship

- Written agreement
- Active advisory partnerships
- Sufficient demand to support transition
- Written program plan developed with sponsors
- Mentoring, Career Exploration/Exposure
- Includes paid/unpaid work experiences
- Incorporates diploma/GED attainment when applicable
- Written agreements for advanced standing

Big Picture – VDOL's Role

- Registration agency
- Monitoring & Compliance
- Outreach, Promotion, Recruitment
- Program Development
- Recruiting
- Apprenticeship Advisory Board
- 3 FTEs



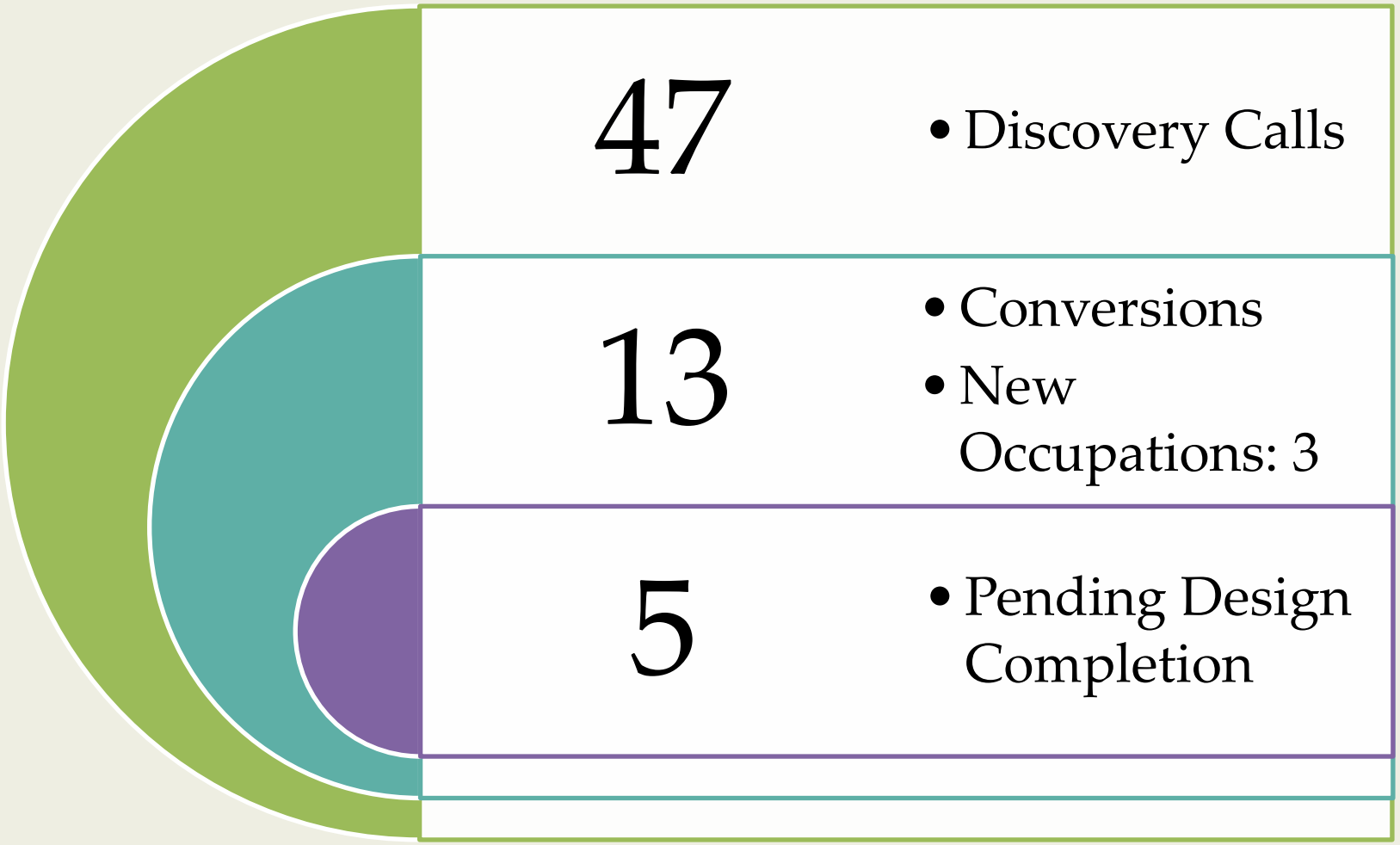
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Big Picture – Changing Expectations

- Post-secondary debt
- “Toolbelt” generation
- Applied learn and earn



VDOL 2025 Apprenticeship & On the Job Training Fair at Missisquoi Valley Union Middle & High School



Development Inquiries

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Program Funding

FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT	USE/PURPOSE	PROGRAM
SOV General Funds	$848,720	Salaries, program administration, grant to VTSU for Electrical and Plumbing admin, VMEC and AGC.	
SAEF #3 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2028)	$395,708	Grants to Agency of Education and VT State College system	Emerging Pathways Coordinator and K-12 Teacher Apprenticeship Programs development and expansion
TOTAL	$1,544,439		

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Program Stats

- Active Apprentice Training Programs: 106
- Active Occupations: 29

Big Picture – 29 Active Apprenticeship Training Programs

Competency Based

- *Progression based on demonstrated mastery of skills and competencies*

- Accounting Technician
- CNC Operator – Milling & Turning
- Early Childhood Educator
- Industrial Manufacturing Technician
- K–12 Teacher
- Machinist
- Phlebotomist
- Production Technologist
- Semiconductor Processing Technician

Hybrid

- *Combination of time-on-the-job and competency demonstration*

- CNC Operator – Milling & Turning
- Construction Craft Laborer
- Facilities Locator
- Mechatronics Technician
- Pre-K – 8 Teacher

Time Based

- *Progression based primarily on hours worked and related instruction*

- Commercial Craft Professional
- Construction Craft Laborer
- Correction Officer
- Electrician
- Electrician, Maintenance
- Electrician, Substation
- Environmental Control Systems (HVAC)
- Heating & Air Conditioning Mechanic & Installer

Time Based (cont…)

- Industrial Maintenance Mechanic
- Line Maintainer
- Metal Building Assembler
- Plumber
- Police Officer
- Sheet Metal Worker
- Tool and Die Maker
- Tramway Maintenance Technician
- Waste Treatment Operator
- Water Systems Operation Specialist

Apprentice Stats

- Active Apprentices: 1,686
- New Apprentices Registered this Year: 701
- Apprentice Completions this Year: 197

Key Trends

- **Younger Apprentices Overall**
  Apprentices are younger across programs, with a **notable decrease in average age** among female-identifying apprentices, suggesting earlier entry and improved access points.

- **Program Availability Expanded**
  The number of available Registered Apprenticeship programs **more than doubled**, signaling strong and growing employer demand.

- **Participation Growth Lagged Demand**
  Participation increased modestly, indicating **employer interest may be outpacing apprentice awareness** and recruitment pipelines.

- **Stronger CTE → Apprenticeship Pathways**
  Nearly **twice** as many apprentices reported prior CTE experience, reinforcing stronger career pathway alignment and system integration.

Snapshot: Registered Teacher Apprenticeship

- Vermont Biz: Workforce Development: Apprenticeship Program Helps Solve Teacher Shortage Crisis
  - Multi-year, ongoing effort with AOE
- McClure Foundation Pathway Illumination – Service to Careers



Recent Federal Changes

- Workforce context of broader changes
- "America's Talent Strategy" / Preparing Americans for High-Paying Skilled Trade Jobs of the Future Executive order
- "MASA" block grant proposed – 10% used for apprenticeship
- American Manufacturing Apprenticeship Fund
- State Apprenticeship Expansion Funds (SAEF) – Construction & Teaching

Outreach & awareness

- Searchable list
- Quarterly Apprenticeship Newsletter to 1,037 recipients (best engagement rates)
- 2026 youth employment & apprenticeship fairs (Franklin, Windham)
- Intermediary Outreach



VERMONT APPRENTICESHIP QUARTERLY

SHARING PROGRESS, PARTNERSHIPS, AND POSSIBILITIES.

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Launched: Online Program Look-Up Tool!

The Vermont Department of Labor has released an easy-to-use tool to help find local Registered Apprenticeship programs! This searchable, sortable table is ideal for filtering the programs by town, county, occupation, or even employer, and will be updated quarterly.

Try it out!

Employers & Sponsors, double-check the tool to ensure your information is correct. If you notice an error, please email labor.apprenticeship@vermont.gov.

Current Vermont Registered Apprenticeship Programs

There are over 600 programs on the list across nearly 550 employers! We've made it easier than ever to find a Registered Apprenticeship program near you.

This Quarter's Open-Door Session...

Invitation To Connect One-On-One

Aspirations

- Review definitions
- Discuss pre-apprenticeship requirements
- Better data and tracking of pre-app and youth participants
- Use of technology to track OJT and RTI completion
- Waiver process for ratios
- Grow number of sponsors, and active occupations
- Preparation programs for electrical and plumbing
- Wider promotion of apprenticeship; recruitment assistance

2026 Objectives

- Service to Career Pathways
- Geography
- Construction
- Healthcare
- Public Sector/Municipalities



VDOL Service to Career Pathways Summit, September 2025

Legislative Items

- Technical corrections as requested in previous session
- Help get the word out to employers and learners in your districts
- Help constituents understand that RAPs are jobs
- CTE governance changes to include adult CTE

Questions?



G.S. Precision Apprentices



Pre-Apprentices



Ski Lift Technician Apprentices

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