



CHAMPLAIN VALLEY EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT

2025-2026

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Clinton - Essex - Warren - Washington BOCES

OUR MISSION

Champlain Valley Educational Services is committed to being a valued and trusted partner by supporting students, schools, and communities to excel through high-quality education, training, and shared services.

OUR VISION

We aspire to be the premier provider of dynamic and innovative educational programs and shared services, serving as a catalyst for personal and regional growth and development towards a brighter global future.

OUR CORE BELIEFS

- Students are our first priority.
- Staff are essential to the health and well-being of our organization.
- We value open and honest communication.
- We embrace collaboration and shared decision-making.
- We promote creativity and innovation.
- ALL students can learn and be successful.
- We lead and act with integrity, fostering respect for all by ensuring the acceptance, inclusion, and celebration of our community members.
- Students, family and community are valued partners for success.
- We ensure a safe, supportive learning and work environment.
- We all impact the educational process and are dedicated to perform at the highest possible levels.

Public Non-Discrimination Notice

Clinton-Essex-Warren-Washington BOCES, a/k/a Champlain Valley Educational Services (CVES BOCES), offers career and technical education (CTE) programs <https://www.cves.org/cv-tec/cv-tec-career-programs/>. CVES BOCES does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or any other legally protected status in its programs, services, activities, employment, or admissions. The district provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups, as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The district will take steps to assure that the lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission to or participation in career and technical education programs. To request translation services or reasonable accommodations, contact the Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance Officers listed below. Inquiries may be directed to the compliance officers designated to coordinate compliance under Title IX and Section 504:

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Dear Colleagues and Friends,

The 2025–2026 school year has been a year of remarkable achievement, meaningful collaboration, and continued growth for Champlain Valley Educational Services (CVES). As you turn the pages of this Annual Report, you will see stories that capture what makes our work so meaningful: students discovering their potential, educators creating opportunities, and teams across our region coming together to help schools and communities thrive.



This year's stories are a reflection of what is possible when opportunity meets preparation, support, and determination. At CV-TEC, a young professional reached the highest level of achievement as a SkillsUSA National Champion—an accomplishment that represents not only individual talent and perseverance, but also the dedication of the instructors, mentors, and supporters who helped make that success possible. At the Rise Center for Success, the Outdoor Learning Center demonstrates how thoughtful, inclusive spaces can create opportunities for every student to learn, connect, explore, and succeed. These are more than individual accomplishments or projects; they are examples of how we are creating pathways for every learner to experience success.

Our work also extends far beyond the classroom. Through the Management Services Central Business Office, we continue to strengthen a regional approach that brings quality, consistency, expertise, and collaboration to the districts we serve. Behind that work is a team of dedicated professionals who understand that strong systems and shared knowledge help our schools focus on what matters most: supporting students.

Similarly, the School Support Services Regional Professional Development Day showcased the power of bringing educators and school leaders together. When we share ideas, learn from one another, and invest in professional growth, we strengthen not only individual educators but the educational experiences of students throughout our region.

I am deeply grateful to our students and families for placing their trust in CVES; to our dedicated staff for the expertise, compassion, and commitment they bring to their work each day; and to our 16 component districts and community partners for their continued collaboration.

Thank you for being part of the CVES community and for helping us build stronger opportunities, stronger schools, and a stronger North Country.

Sincerely,

Mark C. Davey, Ed.D.
District Superintendent/CEO

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Dear Colleagues and Friends,

I want to thank everyone at CVES for the dedication, collaboration, and commitment that make our region's educational community so strong.

The CVES BOCES Board is proud to support CVES's mission of providing outstanding educational services and leadership to our school districts. From expanding programs to meet student needs to strengthening partnerships with families and communities, CVES continues to show what is possible when we work together.

I'm excited about the year ahead and the

continued growth and innovation across our programs and services. Together, we will keep creating opportunities for students to succeed while supporting educators to grow and lead.

Thank you for all you do for our students, schools, and communities.



Michael St. Pierre

Michael St. Pierre
CVES Board President

CV-TEC FFA Makes Debut at New York State Convention

CV-TEC Division

This school year marked an exciting milestone for CV-TEC's Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapter as young professionals attended the New York State FFA Convention for the first time. Held in Buffalo from May 14–16, the annual convention brought together hundreds of FFA members, advisors, alumni, and agricultural education supporters from across New York State to celebrate student achievement while providing opportunities for leadership development, career exploration, networking, and statewide competition.

For CV-TEC, the trip represented much more than attending a conference. It was the realization of a vision that began several years ago. Large Animal Production Teacher Madison Peryea, who was actively involved in FFA during high school, understood firsthand the impact the organization could have on a CV-TEC young professional's growth. Having benefited from the leadership opportunities, competitions, and connections FFA provided, she wanted her own CV-TEC young professionals to experience those same opportunities.

Peryea first shared the idea of attending the state convention with former FFA advisor Anika Sewell, who began researching the event, coordinating logistics, and laying groundwork for what would eventually

become CV-TEC's first trip. When Peryea later stepped into the role of temporary FFA advisor, she continued building that foundation. With strong support from administration, the idea became a reality, opening the door for CV-TEC young professionals to participate in one of the premier agricultural education events.

The New York State FFA Convention serves as the state championship for more than 30 Career Development Events and Leadership Development Events. These competitions challenge young professionals to demonstrate technical knowledge, problem-solving abilities, public speaking skills, and leadership competencies while competing alongside some of the state's most accomplished agricultural education students. Many of these events also serve as qualifying competitions for the National FFA Convention, providing young professionals with the opportunity to advance to the national stage.

While the competitions are an important component of the convention, Peryea emphasized the experience offered CV-TEC young professionals much more than the chance to compete. It allowed them to connect with FFA members from across the state, learn from industry professionals, develop leadership skills, and experience the strong sense of community.



“They were really excited, and since they were all competing, they were definitely nervous,” Peryea said. “But I think what stood out most was the camaraderie. They were able to experience everything together and seeing CV-TEC young professionals from our three different programs come together was a really cool and exciting experience.”

Bringing together young professionals from multiple agricultural programs created an opportunity for them to support one another, celebrate each other’s accomplishments, and represent CV-TEC as one unified FFA chapter. Throughout the convention, young professionals encouraged one another during competitions, attended workshops together, and formed memories that will last well beyond their time at CV-TEC.

Students also had the opportunity to apply technical skills they developed in the classroom through a variety of industry-focused competitions. Veterinary Science young professionals participated in hands-on events that mirrored real-world veterinary procedures and challenged them to demonstrate the same technical skills they will be expected to perform in future careers.

The Environmental Conservation and Forestry program also showcased their abilities by competing in tree grading, an event that evaluates industry knowledge and practical skills directly connected to careers in forestry and natural resource management.

CV-TEC young professionals participated in leadership sessions that strengthened communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills while learning how to become more effective leaders within their schools and communities. They also attended a dairy industry workshop where they explored career pathways and learned about evolving opportunities within the agricultural field.

The convention reinforced the importance of lifelong learning and highlighted the many ways agricultural education can lead to rewarding careers.

Jolie Krohn of Northeastern Clinton Central School placed among the top three competitors in the New York State Jersey Dairy Breed Competition. Her achievement reflects years of dedication to working with Jersey cattle and exhibiting livestock alongside local farms. Her success not only showcased her individual talent and work ethic but also demonstrated the quality of instruction and preparation students receive through CV-TEC’s agricultural education programs.

Looking ahead, the future of CV-TEC’s FFA chapter continues to grow.

“Next year FFA is growing, so we are inviting more programs to join FFA, which is exciting,” Peryea said. “If there are CV-TEC young professionals who are willing and eager to compete, then we are going to take them.”

For Peryea, the significance of the convention extends far beyond awards and competitions. She believes CV-TEC’s participation reflects the school’s commitment to creating meaningful experiences for every young professional.

“It shows inclusivity and support,” she said. “I had a lot of young professionals this year who had never been to Buffalo and had never experienced anything like this before. Because of the school’s support, they were able to experience a new city, meet new people, and participate in something they otherwise might not have had the opportunity to do.”

Those experiences, she explained, are just as valuable as the competitions themselves. Traveling together, meeting young professionals from across New York State, and experiencing a statewide event helped our CV-TEC young professionals build confidence, broaden their perspectives, and develop relationships that will benefit them long after graduation.

CV-TEC’s inaugural trip to the New York State FFA Convention marked the beginning of what the program hopes will become a longstanding tradition.

Shaelene Dedrick Crowned National SkillsUSA Champion

CV-TEC Division

To become a National Champion, you must be committed to your craft.

You have to bring your best energy, put forth every ounce of effort you have, and adjust to obstacles that may come your way.

Most importantly, you must love what you do.

All these qualities help tell Shaelene Dedrick's story.

The chapters of her senior year at CV-TEC and Ticonderoga were filled with amazing milestones.

This amazing CV-TEC Mineville young professional excelled throughout the year in Dr. Todd Menia's New Visions Medical Careers program and capped off her time at CV-TEC by becoming a National Champion.

Following a first-place finish in the NYS SkillsUSA Competition for Job Skill Demonstration, Dedrick took her talents to Atlanta for the SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Conference.

Her winning demonstration featured Intraosseous and Central Line.

Intraosseous (IO) access is a method of delivering medications, fluids, or blood products directly into the bone marrow when rapid IV access cannot be established, often during emergencies.

A central line is a catheter placed into a large vein, typically in the neck, chest, or groin, to provide reliable access for medications, fluids, blood draws, or other treatments.

Through countless hours practicing her presentation script and perfecting her special, eye-catching trick of using an industrial screwdriver to reach into the bone marrow, Dedrick wowed the judges.



"At first, when I presented, I thought the judges looked so bored," Dedrick said. "I was worried that I wasn't doing enough to keep them entertained."

But then she received a callback for a second showing.

"That's when I knew I had them," the CV-TEC Mineville young professional said.

There was one additional factor that gave her a lot of confidence.

She was just one of four competitors out of a field of nearly 50 who mentioned the SkillsUSA Essential Elements.

"I mentioned it with such pride during my demonstration, and I really feel that is what brought me to winning," Dedrick said.

Now a champion, Dedrick will carry many memories with her. She is thankful for the support she received from everyone at CV-TEC and the friendships she made along the way.

"Shaelene's success, along with the accomplishments of our entire SkillsUSA team, demonstrates the strength of our programs and the dedication of our young professionals and CV-TEC Team Members," said Michele Friedman,

Executive Director of Career and Technical Education at CVES.

More than 90 talented CV-TEC young professionals competed at the state competition, showcasing five gold medalists, two silver medalists, two bronze medalists, and 15 additional extraordinary medalists.

“Shaelene’s achievement is an outstanding example of what happens when preparation, passion, and opportunity come together,” said Nicole Santaniello, CV-TEC Lead SkillsUSA Advisor. “We are incredibly proud of all of our young professionals who represented CV-TEC and New York State with professionalism, skill, and integrity on the national stage.”

A foundation for continued success has now been set for upcoming CV-TEC young professionals to follow.

“My favorite thing about CV-TEC is there’s always something new you can learn,” Dedrick said. “I usually pick things up quickly when I learn, but with medicine and learning what I did at CV-TEC, it kept me interested. My love for learning about medicine and wanting to know as much as possible always kept me going, and it made me a national champion.”

CV-TEC Top 5

New CTE Center on the Horizon in Plattsburgh

CV-TEC is preparing to open the doors to its new home at the state-of-the-art CTE Center in Plattsburgh. Young professionals will continue to benefit from the high-quality, supportive educational programming and experiential learning opportunities that have defined CV-TEC for generations. The new facility will provide modern learning environments designed to enhance career preparation while building on the longstanding tradition of excellence that young professionals, families, and community partners have come to expect.

Young Professionals Shine at NYS SkillsUSA Competition

More than 90 CV-TEC young professionals competed at this year’s NYS SkillsUSA Competition, and plenty of medals returned with them. Collectively, CV-TEC young professionals earned five gold, two silver, two bronze and 15 extraordinary medals. Nine CV-TEC young professionals earned the distinction of advancing to the 2026 SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Championships, representing the highest level of SkillsUSA competition nationwide. Shaelene Dedrick from Ticonderoga went on to win gold at the national competition thanks to her amazing work with Dr. Todd Menia and the New Visions Medical Careers program.

Women in Trades Forum Creates Productive Networking

For the third consecutive year, CV-TEC held a Women in Trades Networking and Career Exploration Event, bringing together young professionals in non-traditional CTE programs with women who have found success in the skilled trades. The event included a panel discussion featuring professionals from automotive collision repair, law enforcement, welding, and automotive service management, along with small-group conversations that allowed for meaningful engagement.

CV-TEC Partners with North Country Honor Flight

When CV-TEC learned that North Country Honor Flight had received a donated BMW in need of repairs, our young professionals eagerly stepped up to help. The Auto Collision and Repair Automotive Collision Repair Technology program restored the vehicle to excellent condition and prepared it for its next chapter. Also Young professionals in the Heavy Equipment & Diesel Mechanics program made important repairs to North Country Honor Flight’s iconic blue bus, which transports local veterans on Honor Flights to visit the memorials built in their honor.

Signing Day Honors Bright Futures

Signing Days were held at both the Plattsburgh and Mineville campuses to celebrate the accomplishments and bright futures of CV-TEC’s young professionals. Young professionals signed letters of intent to officially join outstanding North Country business and industry partners, showcasing the technical skills, professionalism, and career readiness they developed through their CTE programs. As part of SkillsUSA National Signing Day, these events recognized young professionals entering high-demand careers while celebrating the strong partnerships between CV-TEC and local employers.

Purchasing Office Centralizes

Management Services Division

The Purchasing Office at CVES has recently undergone a significant change in how purchasing services are organized and supported across the organization. What was once a decentralized process, with individual divisions responsible for managing their own purchasing needs, has transitioned to a centralized model within the Business Office.

Previously, each division at CVES had staff members dedicated to handling its purchasing responsibilities. For many years, this system worked well and provided divisions with direct support for their day-to-day needs. However, as CVES continued to grow and the organization experienced staff retirements and other changes, the need for a more efficient and sustainable approach became increasingly apparent.

The transition to a centralized purchasing system brought staff together within the Business Office, creating a team that can share knowledge, resources, and expertise while providing support across the organization.

“This change is an important evolution in the way we approach purchasing at CVES,” Director of Financial Operations Christine Myers said. “We have an exceptionally strong team with the knowledge and experience to support the needs of our divisions. By working together in a centralized office, we are able to share our expertise, provide consistent support, and respond more effectively to the demands of the organization.”

As part of the transition, purchasing support staff from RISE and CV-TEC were moved into the Business Office. The timing was particularly important as CV-TEC prepares for the construction and opening of its new building, which has significantly increased the volume and scope of its purchasing needs.

Having the purchasing team centralized allows staff to more effectively



manage those increased demands while also providing greater flexibility across CVES. Staff members can assist one another during particularly busy periods, share their knowledge and experience, and provide coverage when additional support is needed. The arrangement also creates more opportunities for cross-training, helping ensure that purchasing operations can continue smoothly even as staffing needs change.

The success of this change has been driven in large part by the people behind the work. Stephanie Trombly has played a particularly important role in helping establish and maintain the centralized Purchasing Office. Her knowledge, dedication, and commitment to meeting the needs of CVES staff have made her an integral part of the office's success.

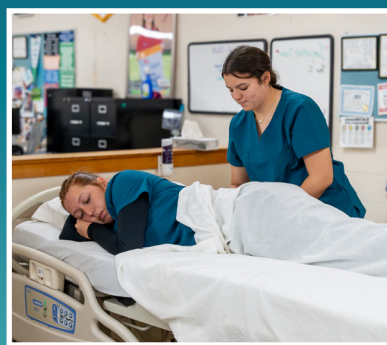
“Stephanie is the reason for the success in the Purchasing Office,” Myers said. “She works very hard to meet everyone's needs, and the office would not be where it is without her.”

For Trombly, the centralized structure creates opportunities to look beyond individual purchasing requests and consider how the overall process can continue to improve.

“The opportunities that come from being able to centralize purchasing make things better for us as an organization,” Trombly said. “We are able to really look at how to make things more efficient and make sure they are done the best way possible.”

As CVES continues to grow and take on new projects. The centralized Purchasing Office will play an important role in meeting the organization's evolving needs. With an experienced team working together and a structure designed to promote flexibility and collaboration, CVES is better positioned to provide effective purchasing support now and into the future.





CVES Celebrates Another Year of Success ...and Smiles



Strengthening District Operations Through Centralized Services

Management Services Division

The Central Business Office at CVES oversees and manages a wide range of business operations for CVES and its component school districts. The office plays an essential role in ensuring that the financial and operational needs of CVES and the districts it serves are handled efficiently, accurately, and effectively. Its responsibilities include payroll, purchasing, accounts payable, accounting, budgeting, business management, and other financial services.

Since its establishment at CVES, the Central Business Office has experienced significant growth, both in the number of districts it serves and in the range of services it provides. The office began expanding its services in 2023, initially providing payroll services to two districts. In 2024, the office transitioned to a full-service business model, allowing CVES to provide comprehensive business office support rather than focusing solely on payroll.

Today, the Central Business Office provides services to five different districts, assisting with their day-to-day business operations and helping them manage their financial responsibilities.

CO-SER are also 100% aidable by the state.

Before services are provided, the Central Business Office works closely with each district to understand its specific needs and determine the best way to

provide support. Business Manager Hayden Reidy explained, “This process involves an in-depth conversation with district officials to identify their current procedures, challenges, and goals or needs.”

Through this collaborative process, CVES staff gain a better understanding of each district’s unique circumstances and can develop an approach that strengthens and improves its overall

business operations.

One of the major goals of the Central Business Office is to create greater consistency and efficiency among the districts it serves.

“In the districts we assist, we have overhauled all of their procedures and policies, so all districts are operating the same, and it is much easier to share CVES staff with the districts



Districts that participate in the Central Business Office CO-SER receive in-district services from CVES business office employees. This model gives districts access to experienced business professionals while allowing the services to be tailored to each district’s individual needs. Services provided through the

when they have cohesive business practices,” Reidy said.

Standardizing procedures allows the Central Business Office to provide services more efficiently while also making it easier for CVES staff to work across multiple districts. When districts follow similar business practices and procedures, employees can more easily step in and provide support when a district needs additional assistance. This creates greater flexibility and helps ensure that important business functions continue to operate smoothly.

“Consistency makes everyone’s job more efficient and straightforward. It eliminates a lot of questions while doing your job,” Assistant School Business Manager Taylor Sullivan said.

The Central Business Office also provides interim services when districts experience a temporary need for additional business office support. Whether a district has a vacancy, needs assistance during a transition, or requires additional help for a specific period of time, CVES can provide staff to help fill the gap and maintain the district’s business operations.

In addition to providing direct business services, the Central Business Office offers counseling and training opportunities for school business officials. These programs provide district personnel with additional guidance, resources, and professional support as they navigate the many responsibilities associated with school business management.

The continued growth of the Central Business Office reflects CVES’s commitment to providing its component districts with the resources, expertise, and support they need to strengthen their operations.

Management Services Top 5

Payroll and Purchasing Staff Support CVES

During the 2025–2026 school year, CVES demonstrated exceptional operational efficiency by processing 2,832 purchase orders, paying 17,892 invoices, and completing 23,928 payroll transactions. These impressive volumes reflect the dedication, professionalism, and attention to detail of the CVES staff responsible for these critical business functions.

Facility Expansion Continues

The wait is nearly over for the new CV-TEC Career and Technical Education (CTE) Center in Plattsburgh. Following the groundbreaking in March 2025, the state-of-the-art facility is on track to welcome its first students in September. Building on that momentum, the CVES Board has approved plans for a new CV-TEC campus in Mineville. While planning is still underway, the new Mineville Campus is currently anticipated to open for the 2028–2029 school year, with groundbreaking in November 2026.

O&M Team Goes Above and Beyond

The CVES O&M Team has played an instrumental role in preparing the new CTE Center in Plattsburgh, dedicating critical time and efforts to support one of the organization’s largest projects. In addition to this tremendous undertaking, the team also helped oversee the installation of the new playground and pavilion at the Rise Center for Success in Plattsburgh while continuing to ensure that all CVES buildings, grounds, and systems remained safe, functional, and well maintained.

Human Resources Supports Organizational Growth

The Human Resources Team played a vital role in the success and well-being of CVES by attracting, supporting, and retaining the talented professionals who make our mission possible. During the 2025–2026 school year, the team facilitated the hiring and onboarding of more than 150 new employees. The year also marked an important evolution for the department as Personnel Specialist Kala Guillily joined the team. During this transition, the team was led by our veteran Human Resources team member Erin Keefe.

CVES Adds New Food Service Directors

CVES continues to strengthen its regional school nutrition program through the leadership of Isaac Dirolf and Zachary Zarling, who assumed key roles within the Cafeteria Management Co-Ser. Julie Holbrook has announced her retirement, and we are transitioning leadership to ensure this critical work continues at the highest level of quality. As Director of the Cafeteria Management Co-Ser, Dirolf will lead the program’s ongoing operations, supporting participating districts and advancing food service initiatives. Meanwhile, Zarling will spearhead the startup and implementation of the new CVES Commissary Kitchen.

A Playground Designed for Every Student

Rise Center for Success

This school year, the Rise Center for Success in Plattsburgh celebrated the completion of its newly Outdoor Learning Center, a transformational project that has reimagined what outdoor play can look like for students of all abilities.

Officially opened in April, the space was thoughtfully designed to remove barriers, promote independence, and ensure every student has the opportunity to play, learn, and grow alongside their peers. In just a few months, the playground has become one of the most popular places on campus, where students build confidence, strengthen friendships, and experience the joy of inclusive play.

“We are a special school,” Special Education Teacher Aly Restrepo said. “Special education is changing for the better, and our school needs to be a shining example of that. Having an all-inclusive playground for our students was a big priority.”

That commitment to inclusion guided every stage of the project’s planning and design. Rise Physical Therapist Liz Theeman played an instrumental role in creating a playground that does far more than meet accessibility standards. The vision was to build a space where every student, regardless of ability, could move freely, participate fully, and play alongside their peers without barriers.

One of the most significant design features is the seamless artificial turf surface, which creates a level play area free of thresholds, wood chips, sand, puddles, and uneven terrain. Unlike many accessible playgrounds that rely on designated pathways, the Rise playground was intentionally designed without them.

“Often with students who use wheelchairs, we think that as long as we give them a path, they can access it,” Theeman explained. “But we specifically designed it without paths so students using wheelchairs can go anywhere on the playground.”

The level surface also benefits students with

emerging walking abilities by providing secure footing and reducing obstacles that can make movement more difficult. By eliminating drainage issues and uneven surfaces, the playground remains more usable throughout the year, allowing students to spend more time learning and playing outdoors.

The playscape itself was designed to encourage exploration while supporting a wide range of movement

abilities. A gradual ramp allows students using wheelchairs or walkers to reach elevated areas, including slides and interactive musical panels, while grab bars and handholds provide additional stability for students developing balance and coordination. Instead of directing children along one fixed route, the structure



offers multiple ways to move through the equipment. Students can climb over, crawl under, move around, or travel through different sections, allowing children with varying physical abilities to play together while accomplishing the same goals.

“We really emphasized group equipment, so students are looking to invite each other and include each other,” Theeman said.

Every piece of equipment was selected with inclusion in mind. A ground-level merry-go-round allows students using wheelchairs or those with mobility challenges to participate alongside their friends. A built-in bench provides additional support for students who may not have the balance or endurance to stand. Multiple swing options accommodate a variety of physical abilities, while the Rock-and-Sway Couch allows students using wheelchairs to gently rock with their peers.

Communication and sensory needs were equally important considerations during the design process. A communication board gives students who use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) a way to express their wants and needs while playing,

encouraging interaction and independence. Shade structures and benches are built directly into the playground, providing students with opportunities to regulate their body temperature or take a brief break without leaving the play area or becoming separated from their classmates.

Even the location of the playground was carefully considered. By moving it directly outside the school entrance, students no longer have to use valuable energy walking long distances before they can enjoy recess. For younger students and those with limited endurance, this means they can spend more time playing, exploring, and interacting with their peers.

“We needed a space where all students could be included in quality outdoor learning and play without barriers,” Theeman said. “It is a basic right to be able to have fun outside.”

She explained that the former playground consisted of individual pieces of equipment that were disconnected from one another, limiting opportunities for collaborative play. Drainage issues also frequently affected the usability of the space, making it difficult for students to consistently enjoy outdoor activities.

Since opening in April, the impact has been remarkable. Teachers and staff watched students who once hesitated to participate now eagerly explore every corner of the playground.

The area designed for teenagers and young adults was another important addition to the Outdoor Learning Center. While students at traditional high schools often have access to athletic facilities and outdoor spaces that support recreation, school spirit, and



community, CVES previously didn't have a comparable space designed around the needs of its older students. The new area recognizes opportunities for movement, recreation, and social connection remain important throughout adolescence and into young adulthood. It provides students with opportunities to build confidence and independence, develop problem-solving skills, support sensory regulation, and connect with peers.

A track surrounding the area provides opportunities for walking, running, and other forms of adaptive recreation, while its level surface creates a safe, accessible space for students to use a variety of wheeled recreational and adaptive equipment. An accessible obstacle course encourages students to challenge themselves while accommodating a range of physical abilities. The area also includes swings that provide opportunities for movement and sensory regulation, as well as a covered pavilion that can be used for outdoor learning, social interaction, and group activities. Together, these features give teenagers and young adults a space intentionally designed for them;

one that promotes movement, independence, connection, and continued growth.

Students check the weather each morning to make sure they will be able to go outside because recess has become one of their favorite parts of the day. Teachers have observed noticeable improvements in students' confidence, endurance, balance, climbing skills, and willingness to explore.

“The playground makes students feel safe and comfortable,” Restrepo said. “They are independent and playing.”

The transformation of the playground was made possible through the leadership of the Rise Strategic Planning Team and the support of the CVES Board of Education, the Operations and Maintenance Team, and dedicated construction partners.

For Rise Executive Director of Special Education Dr. Matthew Slattery, the playground represents far more than a new recreational space.

“It reflects Rise's commitment to ensuring every child has access to joyful, meaningful, and inclusive opportunities to learn, explore, and connect with others,” Slattery said. “Designed to meet the diverse needs of all our students, this space allows children to take the skills they've learned in the classroom and apply them independently in a natural, real-world setting alongside their peers, because research shows that's where learning truly takes root. Here, every child can experience success, independence, and the simple joy of being a kid.”

Today, the Rise Outdoor Learning Center stands as a lasting symbol of what is possible when accessibility, inclusion, and student-centered design are placed at the forefront.

Building Connections via Instructional Coaching

Rise Center for Success

Instructional Coach Danielle Janisewski has completed her first full year in the role, establishing a strong system for supporting teachers and helping shape a position that was entirely new to the district. Because the position was created from scratch, Danielle had the unique opportunity to develop an approach that met the needs of teachers and reflected the goals of the school.

The purpose of the Instructional Coach is to partner with teachers to build confidence, strengthen instructional practices and ultimately improve student outcomes. For Danielle, that work begins with building strong relationships.

“One of the biggest things I’ve learned is that relationships always come before strategies,” Danielle said. “I truly wanted people to see my heart and let them know I’m genuinely here to help them any way I can.”

That approach starts with listening, recognizing teachers’ strengths and working together to identify goals. Danielle has also found that being visible and accessible throughout the school day helps build trust. Whether she is checking in with a teacher, modeling a strategy, co-planning a lesson or sharing a resource, these ongoing interactions provide teachers with support when they need it most.

Throughout her first year, Danielle has also learned that flexibility is an important part of instructional coaching. Some of the most meaningful coaching moments happen unexpectedly, such as during hallway conversations, quick classroom visits or impromptu problem-solving sessions.

“Listening is often more important than offering solutions,” she said.

A couple of teachers that Danielle has worked closely with had very positive things to say about her and her position. Fontilla Richardson and Bethany Katzfey have worked closely with Danielle, and both have great takeaways from the experience.



How has working with Danielle supported you in your day-to-day work as a teacher?

Bethany: Working alongside Danielle daily has had a significant and positive impact on my growth as an educator. Her willingness to share her expertise, offer guidance, and engage in meaningful discussions has strengthened my instructional practices and increased my confidence in supporting students. Danielle demonstrated exceptional flexibility with her schedule and consistently made herself available to answer questions and provide support. We established regular check-in meetings to review progress, reflect on student needs, and discuss relevant topics. Her open communication and approachable nature, whether through informal hallway conversations, meetings in her office, or collaboration via Teams, created a supportive professional relationship that has contributed greatly to my development and preparedness for future success in teaching.

Fontilla: Working with Danielle has supported me in my day-to-day work by giving me someone to collaborate with, bounce ideas off of, and turn to when I need another perspective. She has helped me think about different ways to approach instruction, support student needs, and make my lessons more engaging and accessible for all of my students. Danielle has supported me as a teacher by giving me honest feedback, whether it is negative or positive. She is always willing to help me work through an issue, answer questions about a project, offer to do a lesson with me, and come in to observe a class and let me know what is working and areas where I could improve. She is approachable, willing to listen, and helps me think through challenges rather than simply giving me an answer. Having that additional support makes my day-to-day work feel more manageable and helps me continue to grow as a teacher.

What strategies, tools, or techniques has Danielle shared with you that have helped make your job easier or more effective?

Bethany: Danielle has significantly enhanced the effectiveness of my instruction by sharing practical teaching strategies and evidence-based techniques that I have been able to implement in my classroom. Through her guidance, I learned ways to make small-group instruction more engaging, interactive, and responsive to the diverse learning needs of my students. These approaches increased student participation, fostered stronger engagement, and created more meaningful learning experiences for all learners.

Fontilla: Some strategies and goals we've worked on are going over lesson plans for the day with staff, giving reminders, leading by example, and not asking someone to do something you wouldn't do yourself. Delegate; don't take tasks all on your own. Communicate, listen, and share ideas. Danielle has shared tools from her meetings, giving everyone access to many informational strategies to implement in the classroom. Danielle has also helped me look at what is working, identify areas that may need improvement, and develop strategies that are practical and meaningful for my students.

Read more about Bethany's and Fontilla's experience in the online edition at www.cves.org.

Rise Center for Success Top 5

Rise Students Cultivate Skills for Life

Through a partnership with Prays Farmers Market, older students gained authentic career-readiness experience by arranging flowers, managing inventory, handling materials, and providing customer service in a real-world setting. Younger students explored gardening by planting, nurturing, and harvesting flowers and vegetables in their classrooms. Together, these experiences strengthened problem-solving, teamwork, independence, and responsibility while demonstrating how meaningful, hands-on learning prepares students for success far beyond the classroom.

Rise Graduates Celebrate Milestones and New Beginnings

The Class of 2026 marked an important milestone as students from both the Plattsburgh and Mineville campuses graduated and prepared for the next chapter of their lives. Graduates celebrated years of growth and achievement while looking ahead to continued education, employment, and greater independence. Each diploma reflects not only the determination of our students but also the unwavering partnership between educators, families, and staff who work together every day to help each learner reach their fullest potential.

Rise Center Earns National Recognition for Character Education

The Rise Center for Success received national recognition from the Positivity Project (P2), with its innovative work featured on the organization's official Facebook and Instagram platforms. This distinction recognizes Rise as a model for embedding character education into everyday learning and reflects the dedication of our staff to building positive relationships, developing students' character strengths, and supporting social-emotional growth. National recognition affirms the Rise Center's commitment to educating the whole child while fostering a culture where everyone is valued and empowered to succeed.

Celebrating Achievement, Community, and Belonging

The school year concluded with celebrations honoring student achievement while strengthening the sense of community that defines the Rise Center. Students in Plattsburgh celebrated with memorable proms and spirited field days, while the Mineville campus hosted its inaugural school carnival, bringing together students, staff, and families for an afternoon of fun and connection.

Investing in the Future of Special Education

The Rise Center continues to invest in learning environments that will serve students for generations to come. Planning is underway for the expansion and reconfiguration of the Plattsburgh Campus to address evolving program needs and support future enrollment growth. Simultaneously, progress continues toward the development of a new Essex County campus, expanding access to high-quality special education programs across the region. These long-term investments reflect our commitment to providing innovative, student-centered learning environments where every learner has the opportunity to thrive.



North Country Educators Unite for Regional Day of Learning, Collaboration

School Support Services

March 20, 2026, was a day for education in the North Country.

CVES BOCES, in partnership with its component districts, hosted a Regional Development Day—the first of its kind in nearly 20 years.

With Beekmantown CSD and Moriah CSD serving as outstanding host sites, the day brought together educators and staff from across the region in a truly meaningful way.

The program featured an energizing keynote by Walter Bond, along with thoughtful discussions on workforce transitions, collaborative job-alike sessions, and a wide range of engaging breakout opportunities. Most importantly, the day created valuable space for connection, shared learning, and professional growth.

A day this special took time to develop. Planning started in the fall of 2024, when superintendents came together to express interest in a Regional Day. Regional Calendar Committee members met and selected the date in March, and planning continued from there.

The CEWW Health Consortium, led by Benefits Director Vicki Demarse-Giroux, booked the amazing keynote speaker, Walter Bond—a former NBA player and a member of the National Speakers Association’s CPAE Speaker Hall of Fame.

Additional planning included each district assigning one person to serve on the Regional Day Planning Committee, with BOCES taking the lead.

“The committee emphasized how the

initiatives coming from New York State made it that much more important for us to work together,” said Amy Campbell, Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services.

“We all realize as educators in this region that, with the finite resources we have, we need to work together on this and capitalize on how we can do this together while still holding on to our individual identities.”

With a focus on New York Inspires, Portrait of a Graduate, assessment changes, and regionalization at the forefront, there was plenty of purpose behind the day.

Participating districts and organizations included Beekmantown, Boquet Valley, Chazy, Crown Point, Moriah, NAC, Peru, Schroon Lake, Ticonderoga, Willsboro, CV-TEC, Rise Center for Success, and CVES.

A total of 1,500 participants took part in the event, which was held across Beekmantown and Moriah. Superintendent of Schools Dustin Relation of Beekmantown and Bill Larrow of Moriah, along with their teams, were gracious hosts for the event.



Attendees took part in job-alike conversations, where professionals in the same fields came together to talk about their work. First-grade teachers were talking with other first-grade teachers, counselors were connecting with counselors, history teachers chatted with history teachers, and the list goes on and on.

Breakout sessions were also offered by colleagues from across the region to elevate the good work already being done. A few examples of breakout session themes included Co-Teaching That Works, College Board AP English Courses, NY Inspires and the Portrait of a Graduate Q&A, AI in the Classroom, Unified Physical Education, and Modeling in Science.

“In this time of a shifting landscape in education in New York State, this commitment to bringing educators together, learning together, seeing people interacting, meeting people from other schools, and sharing successes and challenges was inspiring,” Campbell said. “People had a wonderful time. Our evaluations showed great feedback, and people appreciated the opportunity to spend time with colleagues and learn together.”



Printshop Digitizes Yearbooks

School Support Services

Every school has a story to tell, and many of those stories are captured in yearbooks, scrapbooks, photographs, and newspaper clippings that document generations of students, staff, and community life.

Recognizing the importance of preserving this history, the CVES Print Shop launched a new digitization service for

component districts.

Inspired by conversations with local schools and a willingness to pilot a new approach to archiving, the service helps districts safeguard their stories and share them with future generations.

The service began when Plattsburgh City School District Superintendent Jay LeBrun reached out to CVES and asked whether scrapbooks dating back to the 1950s and 1960s—with newspaper clippings included—could be digitized.

Shortly after that conversation, scrapbooks arrived at the CVES Print Shop, and digitizing began.

Longtime Print Shop team member Kim Wimett took the lead on digitizing projects, scanning

countless pages into e-booklets that have been shared back with the district.

“It’s something new to me, and it’s fun to be able to do the job while also looking through different

books and going through the past,” Wimett said. “I have enjoyed coming in at different times during the week and working on scanning. It’s relaxing and a great service for our schools.”

Wimett retired from her full-time position in late 2023, but returned as a temp-on-call to keep her knowledge and skill sets in the work.

Shortly after Plattsburgh sent scrapbooks to CVES, more schools came calling with similar requests.

Chazy and Saranac have used the same service, sending numerous yearbooks to the Print Shop to be digitized.

“I personally love this service because of the history aspect,” Communications and Publications Manager Joey LaFranca said. “I have always loved journalism and storytelling, and this is a great way to preserve history for years to come.”

CVES keeps the service simple for schools. Upon request, schools can send anything they would like digitized to the Print Shop for scanning. Once completed, the digital booklets are returned through a shareable drive that stakeholders can access.



By helping districts preserve yearbooks, scrapbooks, and other archival materials close to home, CVES is ensuring that the stories, traditions, and accomplishments that have shaped North Country schools remain accessible and protected for generations to come.

“Rather than having to rely on an outside vendor, schools can reach right out to us for their digitizing needs,” LaFranca said. “This is a service that speaks volumes to what CVES can do. Once a school makes a request, we find a way to make it happen—even if it’s not something we’ve done in the past. Plus, it’s always fun looking through the past and enjoying history.”

School Support Services Top 5

Meetings with District Safety Leaders

Our Health, Safety, and Risk Management team has elevated school safety by convening regular meetings with District Safety Leaders from our component districts and CVES. These collaborative sessions have reinforced a shared commitment to protecting everyone in the school community while fostering meaningful discussions on emerging challenges, best practices, and innovative solutions. Through this regional approach, the team has strengthened partnerships, encouraged the exchange of ideas, and advanced initiatives that enhance safety, preparedness, and risk management across all participating districts.

Section VII Holds 3rd Student-Athlete Summit

Student-athletes from across the region gathered this June at the High Peaks Resort in Lake Placid for a leadership conference focused on teamwork, personal growth, and wellness. Through engaging workshops, breakout sessions, and keynote presentations from Special Olympian Kelsey O’Driscoll and Saranac Lake Superintendent of Schools Josh Dann, students explored the importance of leadership, collaboration, time management, mental health, and physical health.

School Library System Hosts Networking Opportunity

Throughout the year, the School Library System offered professional learning opportunities, including Harnessing the Power of Generative AI and Chatbots led by Dr. Monica Burns. The session brought together librarians, technology directors, and administrators to explore the evolving role of AI in education, including practical applications and responsible implementation. Looking ahead to the 2026–2027 school year, database planning is already underway, with districts reviewing trial options and requesting quotes to ensure students and staff have access to high-quality resources.

Communications Team Simplifies Budget Presentations

The CVES Communications team has streamlined the way Component Districts share their budget presentations. School leaders can record their presentations and synchronize them with their slides, creating a clear and engaging resource for stakeholders. Several Component Districts, along with CVES, have adopted this approach to enhance transparency by sharing videos during Board of Education meetings and making them available on district websites and social media platforms. The user-friendly process requires less than an hour to record, ensuring community members have timely access to important budget information.

Shifting to Computer-Based Testing

CVES has successfully transitioned grades 3–8 assessments to a fully computer-based testing platform, creating a more efficient and streamlined process for students, educators, and administrators. This shift has improved testing logistics, reduced administrative demands, and allowed for faster access to assessment data and results.

AAUW Scholarship Winners Excell in Many Fields

VIRGINIA MOLE
Three more girls have been named AAUW scholarship winners by the local chapter of the American Association of University Women. Virginia Mole, a senior at the Saranac Lake High School, was named the winner of the \$1,000 scholarship. The announcement was made at the annual banquet and dinner at the Saranac Lake High School. The girls were named by a committee of the AAUW chapter. The girls were named by a committee of the AAUW chapter. The girls were named by a committee of the AAUW chapter.

EVELYN MOLLERSTEIN
Evelyn Mollerstein, a senior at the Saranac Lake High School, was named the winner of the \$1,000 scholarship. The announcement was made at the annual banquet and dinner at the Saranac Lake High School. The girls were named by a committee of the AAUW chapter. The girls were named by a committee of the AAUW chapter. The girls were named by a committee of the AAUW chapter.

JOANN GLADOW
Joann Gladow, a senior at the Saranac Lake High School, was named the winner of the \$1,000 scholarship. The announcement was made at the annual banquet and dinner at the Saranac Lake High School. The girls were named by a committee of the AAUW chapter. The girls were named by a committee of the AAUW chapter. The girls were named by a committee of the AAUW chapter.

Hornets Defeat SJA, 6-1

Portsmouth High School's basketball team defeated Saranac Lake High School's team in a game held at the Saranac Lake High School. The Hornets won the game with a score of 6-1. The game was a part of the regional tournament. The Hornets were led by their star player, who scored 15 points. The game was a close contest, but the Hornets pulled away in the second half. The game was a testament to the team's hard work and dedication.

Hornets Nip SJA

The Hornets, Portsmouth High School, defeated Saranac Lake High School in a game held at the Saranac Lake High School. The Hornets won the game with a score of 6-1. The game was a part of the regional tournament. The Hornets were led by their star player, who scored 15 points. The game was a close contest, but the Hornets pulled away in the second half. The game was a testament to the team's hard work and dedication.



CHAMPLAIN VALLEY EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT

2025-26