

To: Vermont State College System Communities
From: Chancellor Sophie Zdatny
Re: **Transformation Update #3**
Date: May 10, 2021

Dear Vermont State Colleges Community,

Our regular updates to you throughout the Transformation process can be found on the VSCS website at www.vsc.edu/transformation.

PROJECT MANAGER

Interviews are complete for the Transformation Project Manager and we are pleased to share that Wilson Garland will be joining us in June. Wilson has an extensive background in higher education leadership, program and project management, innovation, and entrepreneurship. He is currently employed as the Executive Director of the IT Center of Excellence within the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System, in St. Paul, Minnesota. Prior to his current role, Wilson was an entrepreneur who developed video-based mobile training and skill practice tools for virtual teams, and was a planning and product leadership consultant. Wilson has also worked for Capella University where he oversaw a wide variety of administrative functions.

STATE FUNDING

We are continuing to work with the state to secure the additional funding for resources the VSCS needs. Our work with the Legislature and the Governor is ongoing to secure funding to support both our system needs and transformation needs, as well as additional scholarships and supports for our students. [The State Senate finalized their budget recommendation](#) in late April and the Legislature is now finalizing their work. We are seeing broad support in the legislature for our funding request and are waiting for their finalization of our student scholarship and workforce development proposals. We expect the state budget to be finalized by the end of May and hope to have many exciting announcements to share about student opportunities at that time.

NAME AND BRANDING UPDATE

The Transformation Marketing Team has released an [Audience Research and Name and Brand Strategy and Development Request for Proposals](#) for the newly combined institution, unifying Castleton University, Northern Vermont University, and Vermont Technical College. The firm will be selected in the coming weeks and is expected to begin work in early June. Their first task will be to conduct audience research to inform a name recommendation to the Board of Trustees. We anticipate that, barring any setbacks, the Board will receive that information and make a name recommendation at its August 4th meeting. Brand development work will continue throughout the fall and winter.

ACADEMIC UNIFICATION UPDATE

rpk GROUP is continuing to collect feedback from faculty on its analysis of a unified academic portfolio through May 10th (today). Information about the analysis framework and a current draft of the data results is posted on a sub-page of the Transformation website at <https://www.vsc.edu/vscs-academic-portfolio-review/>, along with a link to ask questions and provide feedback.

On April 30, 2021, rpk hosted a faculty town hall via Zoom. You can access the recording of the meeting [here](#). rpk GROUP will be presenting its recommendations to the Education, Personnel, and Student Life (EPSL) Committee of the Board of Trustees on May 24, 2021.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

In close partnership with IT leadership across the system, the IT team is doing a full review of the IT Service Portfolio and support structure in preparation for transformation. In addition, the team is working through identifying the project portfolio ahead, including both internal-to-IT projects and projects where IT will be a critical partner. The team is seeking to prioritize, roadmap, and identify critical resources to be in alignment with broader transformation timelines and objectives. There are current projects already underway, including the system-wide Portal project that just kicked off a few short weeks ago. Finally, discussions have started with Ellucian (Colleague), our current ERP provider. Colleague is the back-bone and a critical system for the VSC. The conversations to date are reviewing the current professional services options and models for supporting transformation of both the NCE and administrative consolidation.

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

May 10 th	Board of Trustees Meeting
May 24 th	Education, Personnel, Student Life Board Committee Meeting and Finance & Facilities Committee Meeting
June 2 nd	Executive Committee of the Board Meeting
June 3 rd	Nominating Committee of the Board Meeting
June 16 th	Board of Trustees Meeting
August 4 th	Board of Trustees Meeting

Additional information about Board and Committee meetings, including information on how to access the meetings may be found [here](#).

PUBLIC INPUT

We will continue to work on soliciting broad input as our transformation continues. **We've established an ongoing opportunity to collect your feedback and encourage you to share it at [this link](#).** Additionally, we will continue to accept public comments at Board and Committee meetings and will continue to post regular updates on our [Transformation page](#).

I hope you will continue to reach out with your questions and concerns as this process unfolds. I will continue to keep you updated as decisions are made by the state and the Board of Trustees. Thank you for your continued engagement in this critical work.

With kind regards,

Sophie