# VSCS Transformation Newsletter #48 (3/20/23)

Bringing you the latest updates in the Vermont State Colleges System's transformation project[1].

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[1] https://transformation.vsc.edu/

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**New to the VSC? The Vermont State College system is engaged in a five-year plan, the first phase of which is to launch the new Vermont State University. This will be comprised of Castleton University, Northern Vermont University, and Vermont Technical College and will be launched July 1, 2023. Concurrent with phase one, we are also now engaged in phase two of the transformation work. The second phase is focused on system-wide administrative consolidation and includes work on the shift to shared services for Information Technology, Human Resources, Finance, and Libraries. You can read past** Transformation Updates[2]**, visit** the Transformation website[3]**, or** the Vermont State University website[4] **to learn more.**

[2]https://transformation.vsc.edu/about-transformation/from-the-chancellor/
[3]https://transformation.vsc.edu/creating-vermont-state-university/
[4]https://vermontstate.edu/

# Message From the Chancellor: Op Ed from the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees



In lieu of a message from the Chancellor in this month's update, I am sharing an Op Ed from the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees.

With best wishes,

Sophie

**We Have Confidence in Vermont State University Faculty, Staff, and Leaders**

10 years from now, we believe Vermont will have a state-wide hybrid university that supports access and aspirations of students from across the state's rural communities, strengthens Vermont's workforce, and demonstrates sustainable quality. We are confident of this because of what we have seen faculty, staff, and leaders of the future Vermont State University already accomplish in just a few short years.

We pivoted in the emergency of the pandemic. Classes and meetings on Zoom. New and new uses of digital resources and technologies for student advising and collaboration.

In the challenges of that time, people came together, sharing resources and expertise across campuses. In a time when interaction was of necessity primarily virtual, human relationships across distance were maintained, and new connections formed.

Coming out of the pandemic, faculty across what have historically been four state colleges—at times in direct competition with one another—came together to redesign over 250 academic programs into a more sustainable array of just over 100 programs designed for increased access across multiple campuses.  With significant faculty leadership, painstaking coordination and effort, faculty reviewed and approved these 100 programs just this past fall.

With support of innovative and dedicated staff, they are piloting new teaching strategies and technologies in order to deliver these programs to students needing remote access to courses. It is not possible to overstate either the challenges or the accomplishments of this work.

There is much more hard work ahead. Collectively, Vermont State University is in the midst of redesigning our libraries, a process that is challenging everyone to define priorities for access to quality academic resources and sustain relationships and community across physical and virtual university spaces.

Right now, the first course schedule for Vermont State University is being built, a schedule that is designed to serve a broader range of Vermont students and will offer increased access to faculty, programs, and courses, whether a student attends from a classroom on a campus or connects from a laptop at home or during a break from work.

We are taking the best of what staff offer now for academic support, advising, and career development and creating new approaches to ensure all students have the access they need.

What Vermont State University will precisely look like ten years from now is impossible to predict. With uncertainty also comes fear, and with pressure to change comes frustration.

But make no mistake – there are good people working tirelessly every day, responding to the inevitable fears and frustrations with patience, humor, respect, and most important, commitment to ensuring students have access to quality education that they deserve, and that the state of Vermont needs.

We have confidence in the future of Vermont State University on every campus – Castleton, Johnson, Lyndon, Randolph, and Williston—in the students who are our lifeblood, and in the faculty, staff, and leaders who are working tirelessly to launch this new university on July 1.

Executive Committee of the VSC Board of Trustees

Board Chair Lynn Dickinson

Vice-Chair Megan Cluver

Treasurer David Silverman

Secretary Karen Luneau

# Transformation Project Team Updates



## New Student Experience

Spring is almost here which means admissions will be hosting a lot of visitors on our campuses in the coming weeks for Saturday information sessions, daily tours, open houses, and admitted student sessions. Special thanks to those of you who are helping admissions with these events. If you see visitors walking around campus, please give them a big Vermont State University welcome. Most of these students are using their visit to determine where they will enroll in the fall. Others are just beginning their search for enrollment in 2024.

Spring also means that our admission team is back on the road recruiting for future terms. There are 159 events that VTSU will be in attendance at this spring all over the northeast. This combined with fall travel totals over 900 events since September. Reports from recent National College Fairs in Pittsburgh, Buffalo, and Rochester indicate that our new brand is well received with hundreds of students stopping by our table to inquire! We are also happy to report that the graduate program application is live and on our website as of March 1st!

Financial Aid is very busy preparing offers for new students and answering questions from families. The new system is up and running, and the team is preparing to begin awarding current/returning students later in the spring. Please encourage all students, new and returning to make sure they fill out their FAFSA as soon as possible and list VTSU's code 003698. We would also like to remind everyone that the

returning student scholarship application deadline has been extended to March 24th. Please encourage your students to apply if they have not done so already! As a reminder, new student scholarship awarding parameters and tuition and fee information for the 2023-2024 academic year can be found at the following links:

Tuition and Fees - https://vermontstate.edu/admission/tuition-and-fees/[5]

New Student Scholarships - https://vermontstate.edu/admission/financial-aid/types-of-financial-aid/scholarships/[6]

Spring also means that our teams are busy collaborating with colleagues across our university to prepare for welcoming and onboarding our new students this summer. For general information regarding admitted student next steps, please visit the link below. We continue to build out the new VTSU instance of Slate every day by adding more differentiated communication campaigns, new events, reporting capabilities, and building out the new student enrollment checklist that is dependent on connecting Slate with other university department systems.

All in all, we still have a lot of work to do, however we are making great strides towards welcoming the inaugural incoming class of Vermont State University!

Admitted Student Next Steps -  https://vermontstate.edu/admission/next-steps/[7]

## Student Success

All Student Success teams are focused on prioritizing work to launch VTSU in a way that exceeds the expectations of students and improves their experience. There is a lot of activity occurring on many levels! Here are some of the highlights of current efforts:

Student Success Accomplishments/Updates:

- Searches for **Student Success Advisors** are nearing completion on multiple campuses.

- The search process for **Resident Assistants** is underway on all campuses with a consistent pay structure and other guidelines in place.

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[5]https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fvermontstate.edu%2Fadmission%2Ftuition-and-fees%2F&data=05|01|meg.walz%40vsc.edu|0cbdece64b984aee714108db2636a210|b17e9703dbdd49fa909c03dfd13086af|0|0|638145788315873605|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D|3000|||&sdata=0jcktQOGQrSrZ1bpeRtI8JYDCqOPQe0%2FU3zMxGuZiaI%3D&reserved=0

[6]https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fvermontstate.edu%2Fadmission%2Ffinancial-aid%2Ftypes-of-financial-aid%2Fscholarships%2F&data=05|01|meg.walz%40vsc.edu|0cbdece64b984aee714108db2636a210|b17e9703dbdd49fa909c03dfd13086af|0|0|638145788315873605|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D|3000|||&sdata=4ICBb12g9LyozWO5Be4GRnJJ%2FyF02oebFrQmZ0oCnAc%3D&reserved=0

[7]https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fvermontstate.edu%2Fadmission%2Fnext-steps%2F&data=05|01|meg.walz%40vsc.edu|0cbdece64b984aee714108db2636a210|b17e9703dbdd49fa909c03dfd13086af|0|0|638145788315873605|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D|3000|||&sdata=y8LtwDmLS59xgVMk6d2r5EnJGByseT%2BX2TShWjFhp5E%3D&reserved=0

- The **Dean of Students** search committee is currently holding Zoom interviews with eight semi-finalists. Finalist interviews are slated for April and will include opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to participate.

- **Vermont State 101**, the online orientation program that all students will complete, is almost complete and on course to launch in May. Current students from multiple campuses are featured in the orientation videos – they did a fantastic job! Planning for the other three orientation activities – **VTSU Summer Days, VTSU Kick-off Days, VTSU Welcome Days** – are also underway.

- The **Aviso** team held a series of discovery meetings with the vendor designed to inform future practices for supporting students.

On the horizon:

- Stay tuned for an announcement in the coming days for *Student Success Updates & Input*, a series of hybrid and in-person meetings to promote improved communication and team building among all Student Success staff.

- The **VTSU Retention and Completion Committee** launches on March 20 with a goal of planning how VTSU will define, track, monitor, evaluate, report, and continuously improve student success outcomes.

- The **Student Success Organizational Chart** will be shared soon, including information about who reports to who and what duties are associated with which roles.

- VTSU's **COVID-19 policy** for Fall 2023 is scheduled to be released soon.

Thank you to the staff in Student Success for your dedication to our students and your contributions every day.

## Academic Programs

With the program array now finalized for Fall 2023, the Academic Programs Core Team continues to work through the program and course-level details needed to incorporate the new program offerings into the new university catalog and other academic systems.  Based on this work, the catalog project team has been working diligently to assemble all the components of the new university catalog. The program work is almost complete and is being finalized now. Next, the group will work to finalize and input the course details. Important work is being done to harmonize the language and ensure consistent formatting across all the sections. There are still many pieces that must come together and be finalized to meet the end of April publishing date, but excellent progress is being made.

Working in parallel with the core team, the Registration and Records team has been busy readying our systems and processes for the university's first academic term this fall. As part of the Colleague systems project, led by our consulting partner Ferrilli, the new term structure for Vermont State University has been built within the system.  It has been challenging to meet the tight timeline, but the academic

scheduling team, faculty, department chairs, deans, and academic staff have all been working very hard to deliver the fall academic schedule for registration to begin in April. Last week, a project milestone was celebrated as all the fall course sections from the Ad Astra scheduling system were entered into Colleague. Final reviews and adjustments will be made through the rest of March, and the finalized schedule will be published on March 29, 2023. With the VTSU institutions on break April 3rd through 7th, advisors will have eight days to meet with advisees before pre-registration opens on April 17, 2023. Many thanks to faculty and the large group of people throughout the university who have worked so hard to deliver the fall schedule.

## Administrative Operations

The administrative operations teams have several exciting projects currently in the works. The first project is launching the new Chart of Accounts for our general ledger. This project will create a new coding structure for Vermont State University that will support its new organizational structure. Additionally, changes to the Chart of Accounts have been made to support the standards outlined in the Financial Accounting and Reporting Manual (FARM) from the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) for both Community College of Vermont and Vermont State University.

In June, the first student bills will be issued for Vermont State University. This effort will be the culmination of months of work to redesign the billing and financial aid processes by our accounts receivable, financial aid, and information technology teams. To date, billing tables have been built in our test environment, and testing is actively underway to ensure the accuracy of the bills and that the processes will work correctly starting in June. The team has worked hard to successfully launch these processes in the coming months.

The "request for payment" process of accounts payable requires modification to streamline the approval processes. These improvements are necessary to support Vermont State University's new organizational structure. It is expected these changes will be launched in June or July of this year. Next up for accounts payable is exploration of Colleague's self-service purchase order solution. This solution, if implemented, would replace the request for payment process with pre-approved purchase orders thus improving financial controls and budget management, and speeding payments after the purchase has been delivered. We are actively exploring this solution and will pilot the processes this summer.

Another critical project is implementation of a contract management software database that will record and track all contracts to which any member institution of the Vermont State Colleges is a party. This software, recently selected after review by key staff and administrators at the colleges, will support timely review and approval of contracts and renewal processes. Stay tuned for more information as the implementation effort commences in the coming weeks.
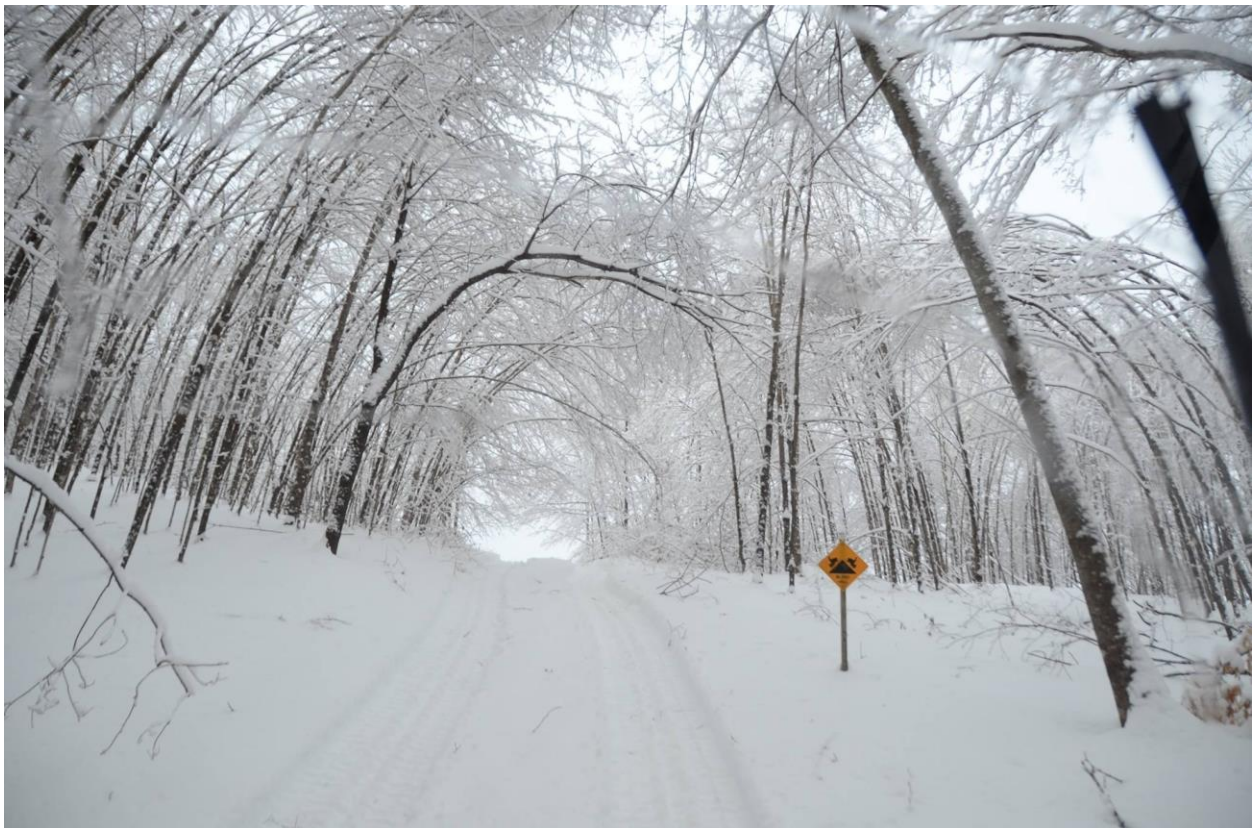
Lastly, the Alumni and Development team is consolidating its alumni and donor databases into a single instance of its donor management system. This project, approved last January, will launch in April with implementation expected later this year. Consolidating the databases will improve communication with donors and enhance the donor experience by minimizing the number of communications from Vermont State University when donors give to more than one campus.

**Workforce Development Updates**

The Workforce transformation team has been meeting intensively over the last few weeks to create customer journey maps for Vermont State University's workforce development unit.  The purpose of these maps is to begin designing the customer processes and requirements for two customer segments, students who come to VTSU independently and employer partners who are looking for a workforce development solution for their organizations.  Once the processes and requirements are designed at a high level, the team will work with IT and other functional leaders such as Marketing, Admissions, and Student Success to define the systems and resources needed to support the growth of VTSU's workforce courses and programs. Where possible, the team will align these workforce systems and processes with those used by CCV to support stronger collaboration.

While the broader team is working on systems and processes, smaller groups are meeting to define business growth opportunities in the key workforce product segments and sectors. The two segments that are kicking off this work include the forestry accelerator/co-working space and the Vermont Cooperative for Practice Improvement. The business cases developed will help guide conversations with customers and other stakeholders as we work to better understand and capitalize on customer needs.

## IT Shared Services Update: Multifactor Authentication for Students



The IT Shared Services team is working to ensure we implement solutions to keep the Vermont State Colleges system as safe as possible. Login credentials are more valuable than ever and are increasingly easy to compromise. Over 90% of breaches today involve compromised usernames and passwords.

Multifactor authentication enhances the security of your account by using a secondary device to verify your identity. This prevents anyone but you from accessing your account, even if they know your password.

Following a successful roll-out of two-factor authentication last summer for faculty and staff, we will enforce Duo Security for students in the coming weeks. We are phasing the enforcement by college: **NVU on March 20, 2023, VTC and Castleton on March 27, 2023, and CCV on April 3, 2023**. Enrollment emails went out to students on February 27, 2023 and were resent on March 13, 2023. We encourage students to enroll early to minimize the impact of the change on the day of enforcement.

Students can learn more by visiting our FAQ page[8] on the IT Shared Services website. If there are any comments, questions, or concerns, please put in a ServiceDesk ticket[9] or email cybersecurity@vsc.edu[10].

## Upcoming Board and Committee Meetings



Please find all information, including the full meeting schedule and the links for virtual attendance, here.[11]

The Board Chair's Rules for Public Comment are available on the VSC website[12], as is a form to submit public comment before the meetings[13].

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[8] https://support.vsc.edu/accounts-passwords/mfa/281-2/
[9] https://servicedesk.vsc.edu/
[10] mailto:cybersecurity@vsc.edu
[11] https://www.vsc.edu/board-of-trustees/meeting-schedule-materials/
[12] https://www.vsc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/VSC-BOT-Rules-for-Public-Comment.pdf
[13] http://www.vsc.edu/signup

Thursday, March 23rd at 10:30 a.m. – Executive Committee (via Zoom)

Saturday, March 25th at 9:30 a.m. – Board of Trustees (in person at CCV-Montpelier)

Monday, April 17th (Time TBD) – Finance & Facilities Committee and Audit Committee (via Zoom)

Monday, April 24th (Time TBD) – Board of Trustees (via Zoom)

Monday, May 8th (Time TBD) – Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee and Nominating Committee (via Zoom)

Monday, May 22nd (Time TBD) – Finance & Facilities Committee and Education, Personnel, and Student Life (via Zoom)

Monday, June 12 (Time TBD) – Board of Trustees (in person at NVU-Johnson)

## Giving Feedback to the Transformation Teams

If you would like to submit your thoughts regarding the ongoing system transformation or offer suggestions to a specific team, please send them to: Engage – VSCS Transformation.[14]

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[14]https://transformation.vsc.edu/engage/