



VSCS Transformation Newsletter #51 (6/14/2023)

Transformation Update #51 - June, 14, 2023

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

In This Issue

- Significant Dates & Celebrations in June
- Message from the Chancellor
- Board of Trustees' Meeting Update
 - VTSU Nursing Programs Update
 - Transformation Update
 - Board Calendar
 - Presidential Search Committee
 - VTSU Strategic Plan and System Budget
- New England Commission on Higher Education (NECHE) Update
- Upcoming Board and Committee Meetings
- Transformation Feedback Form

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](#), visit [the Transformation website](#), or [the Vermont State University website](#) to learn more.

Significant Dates & Celebrations in June



June is **LGBTQIA+ Pride Month**, which recognizes and celebrates LGBTQIA+ people and their contributions to politics, art, culture, education, science, the fight for human rights, and more. It is important to stand with the LGBTQIA+ community as across the country rights are under attack, especially of transgender, Black, and Indigenous members of the community. Pride Month takes place in June to commemorate [the Stonewall uprisings for gay liberation that took place in 1969](#). Key members of this uprising include [Marsha P. Johnson \(1945-1992\)](#) and [Sylvia Rivera \(1951-2002\)](#). [There are pride events happening across the State](#) of Vermont this month and in September.

June 12th is **Loving Day**, which is the anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court decision that legalized interracial marriage in all states. The decision took place in 1967. In 2020, [the Vermont House of Representatives recognized Loving Day](#). You can learn more and find out about events and ways to celebrate at [LovingDay.org](#).

Juneteenth (taking place on June 19th) commemorates the effective end of slavery in the U.S. This took place in 1865, two years after the Emancipation Proclamation, [when the news of the end of the enslavement of Black Americans was delivered to Galveston, Texas](#). It is a [historically significant date in U.S. history and a time to affirm and recognize Black history](#), especially with the rise of states trying to

erase such history from education. But it is also a time to celebrate Black history and Black identity – you can find events doing so happening across the state from [Essex](#) and [Burlington](#) to [Brownington](#).

Eid al-Adha starts at sundown on June 28th and goes through the 29th. This overlaps with the Hajj, which takes place June 26th to July 1st, which is the [pilgrimage that every adult Muslim who is physically and financially able must make at least once during their life](#). [Eid al-Adha is a celebration that takes place near the end of the Hajj and is celebrated by Muslims across the world](#). Both are major Muslim holidays.

Want to learn more about important upcoming dates this year? The Community College of Vermont has a [Calendar of Dates with Historical, Interfaith, or Cultural Significance](#) on their [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion page](#).

Message From the Chancellor



The Community College of Vermont (CCV) held their commencement on Saturday, June 3rd. As always, these celebrations are a reminder of the time investment and tremendous commitment that our students put forward to achieve these important milestones. Congratulations to all those who graduated!

On Monday this week, the Board of Trustees held their annual meeting at the Johnson Campus, a summary of which is provided below. As we near July, many of the topics at the meeting covered the vast array of projects and initiatives underway that are needed to successfully launch Vermont State University. Provost Nolan Atkins also provided an update on the tremendous and intensive work the faculty have done since the end of the spring semester to create a new governance structure for the university. It was exciting to see how many of these projects have already concluded, and how many more are nearing completion.

It is with great gratitude that I would like to thank all the faculty and staff across all the campuses who have been so committed to students and the work of transformation with the goal of building a strong foundation for the future.

This transformation work has involved long hours working together to overcome numerous challenges and to reimagine and reconfigure how we do our work. There is still a lot yet to do, but I do hope that you are able to take some time over the next few weeks to reflect on the progress that has been made.

Finally, in support of the VSC's continued transformation, including within the Chancellor's Office, effective July 1, Yasmine Ziesler will be transitioning to a limited part-time role as special assistant to the Chancellor. Over the past three decades, the system has evolved from five institutions with completely independent academic programs to the transformed, two-institution system we will have with the launch of Vermont State University on July 1. The system's new simplified structure will allow for more direct academic collaboration between Vermont State University and CCV, with a corresponding decrease in system-level administration. I want to express my great appreciation for all that Yasmine has accomplished in her distinguished career with the VSC (at CCV, Castleton, and, since 2015, in the Chancellor's Office) and gratitude for her willingness to be available over the coming year, on an as needed basis.

Wishing everyone a happy and enjoyable summer,

Sophie

Board of Trustees' Meeting Update



The Board of Trustees met at the Johnson campus for their Annual Meeting on June 12, 2023. When finalized, [minutes for the meeting will be available here.](#)

VTSU Nursing Programs

Sarah Billings-Berg, Vermont State University's Dean of Nursing and Health Sciences [gave a presentation on VTSU's Nursing Program](#), which covers the spectrum from Practical Nursing Certificates, through to a Master of Science of Nursing at the graduate level. The nursing programs are delivered across Vermont in a variety of learning modalities. Dean Billings-Berg provided an overview of the multiple sources of funding for expansion of the nursing programs, including the creation of a proposed immersive nursing education center at the Johnson campus, as well as new learning spaces at Williston and a nursing telepresence classroom at Castleton.

Transformation Update

The trustees received a [comprehensive overview of the transformation work](#) undertaken by each of the Core Teams, including the status of current projects, the FY 2024 transformation priorities, spending to date on the transformation work, as well as the risks and mitigation strategies. The presentation also included an update on Shared Services for Information Technology, Human Resources, and Finance. A recording of the presentation is available at [June 2023 Transformation Update](#).



1 - Transformation Update Presentation at the Board of Trustees Meeting on June 12, 2023.

Board Calendar for Next Year

As part of the report from the Executive Committee, the trustees approved [the calendar for the Board's and its committees' meetings for 2023-2024](#).

Presidential Search Committee

In addition, the Executive Committee provided information on the creation of a Search Committee to lead the search for the next President of Vermont State University when Interim President Mike Smith's six-month term ends. Given the short period of time in which to find the next President and the non-alignment of the search with the academic year, the Search Committee will be seeking an experienced change management leader to serve as a transitional President for the new University for 18 months to two years. The Search Committee is composed of five trustees (Janette Bombardier, Lynn Dickinson, David Durfee, Karen Luneau, and Shawn Tester) and is currently scheduled to meet every other Thursday, starting June 22-August 31, 2023. The Search Committee will be reporting to the full Board. The Search Committee will be seeking nominations and recommendations of possible candidates, as well as exploring ways to include community voices in the process given the short time frame. It is anticipated that the Board will conduct a full traditional search for the subsequent President.

VTSU Strategic Plan and System Budget

The Board also approved **VTSU's Strategic Plan** and the **FY2024 Budget**, copies of which are available at pages 50-55 and pages 22-25 respectively in the [meeting materials](#).

New England Commission on Higher Education (NECHE) Update

On June 1st, the VSC submitted its [third progress report](#) on its substantive change request to unify Castleton, NVU and Vermont Tech as Vermont State University. [Links to all of the VSC's submissions to NECHE are available on the transformation website](#). Interim President Mike Smith and Chancellor Zdatny will meet with the Commissioners at their retreat on June 15th (incorrectly communicated initially as the 16th) to discuss recent progress and seek final approval for the new university.

Upcoming Board and Committee Meetings

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

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

Monday, August 14th – Education, Personnel & Student Life (EPSL) (via Zoom) - Time TBD

Monday, August 14th – Board of Trustees (via Zoom) - Time TBD

Monday, August 21st – Finance & Facilities (via Zoom) - Time TBD

Monday, September 18 & Tuesday, September 19 – Board Retreat at Lake Morey (in person)

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](#).