

**Vermont State Colleges Announces System-Wide  
Task Force to Assist with Building a Sustainable Future**  
*The group will recommend solutions to system-wide challenges  
focusing on program quality, viability and access*

**Montpelier, VT** – Vermont State Colleges System (VSCS) Interim Chancellor Sophie Zdatny today announced the creation of a new system-wide task force charged with developing plans and advising the Chancellor’s Office and Board of Trustees on how to move the organization forward to ensure quality, financial viability, and access to programs for students across Vermont. The 15-member task force, called *VSCS Forward*, is comprised of diverse and highly skilled individuals representing all VSCS entities, as well as faculty, staff, students, and trustees. Each college and full-time bargaining unit was asked to select participants. An outside professional facilitator will be hired to lead the group discussion and support the team’s work.

“*VSCS Forward* is a critical next step in our work to move beyond the challenges of the past and toward a future where our system is thriving, our faculty and staff are supported in new and exciting ways and our students receive the high quality education they deserve,” said Interim Chancellor Zdatny. “We must seize this opportunity to build an inclusive and thoughtful process to consider how we transform into a sustainable organization with high-demand programs that prepare students for the economy of the future.”

*VSCS Forward* members will spend the next few months meeting, researching and analyzing the system. They will engage the entire VSCS system and collect feedback from the community through public forums.

Specifically, they are charged with reviewing ideas and developing recommendations to:

- address program duplication;
- ensure quality, financial viability, and access to programs;
- clarify distinguishing characteristics of member institutions;
- strengthen VSCS’s focus on core, high-demand programs that meet the needs of today’s students and the Vermont workforce;
- identify sustainable strategies to deliver programs and provide student support in rural areas of Vermont; and
- reconfigure the system in organization, finance, governance, and accreditation.

“This is no small lift and we know change is very hard. We also know that we have to change to be relevant and successful for decades to come. I am so grateful to this brilliant

team from across the system and Vermont who are stepping up to move us forward,” added Zdatny.

The Task Force is expected to deliver a preliminary report of ideas reviewed and potential recommendation areas to the Interim Chancellor for consideration and presentation to the Board no later than August 14, 2020, at which time the Board will provide further direction to the Task Force.

Task Force members include:

1. Dylan Giambatista (Legislative Trustee)
2. Yasmine Ziesler (Chancellor’s Office – Chief Academic Officer)
3. Heather Weinstein (CCV – Dean of Strategic Initiatives and Student Affairs)
4. Tiffany Keune (CCV – Associate Dean of Workforce Education)
5. Lit Tyler (VTC – Dean of Administration)\*
6. Sarah Billings-Berg (VTC – Associate Dean of Nursing)
7. Kim Hannon-Brobst (VTC – Coordinator of Remote Access Services and selected representative of the Staff Federation)
8. Rich Clark (Castleton – Professor, Political Science Program Coordinator)
9. Maurice Ouimet (Castleton – Dean of Enrollment)
10. Bethany Sprague (Castleton – Office Manager for Center for Schools and selected representative of United Professionals)
11. Nolan Atkins (NVU – Provost)\*\*
12. Elaine Harvey (NVU – Director of Student Engagement and Persistence, Academic Affairs)\*\*
13. Alex Huff (NVU – Student and Editor of *The Critic*, NVU-Lyndon’s student newspaper)
14. Greg Petrics (NVU – Associate Professor of Mathematics and selected representative of Faculty Federation)
15. Interim Chancellor (*ex officio*, non-voting member)

\*Also on VTC’s Transition Advisory Taskforce

\*\*Also on NVU Strong Advisory Committee

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