

VERMONT STATE COLLEGES SYSTEM  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
RESOLUTION 2021-007

**Transformation of the Vermont State Colleges System**

- WHEREAS, The Vermont State Colleges System (VSCS), which includes Castleton University, Northern Vermont University, Vermont Technical College and the Community College of Vermont, was created by Vermont statute in 1961 as a public corporation to plan, supervise, administer and operate facilities for education at the postsecondary level supported in whole or in substantial part with State funds; and
- WHEREAS, The VSCS’s mission is, “for the benefit of Vermont,” to provide “affordable, high quality, student-centered, and accessible education, fully integrating professional, liberal, and career study, consistent with student aspirations and regional and state needs”; and
- WHEREAS, The State created a Select Committee on the Future of Public Higher Education in Vermont (“Select Committee”) “to assist the State of Vermont in addressing the urgent needs of the Vermont State Colleges (VSC) and develop an integrated vision and plan for a high-quality, affordable, and workforce connected future for public higher education in the State”; and
- WHEREAS, The Select Committee has made numerous recommendations regarding the future of the VSCS, including: (a) maintaining the Community College of Vermont as a separate institution while unifying the remaining three institutions under a single leadership structure and accreditation; (b) aggressive coordination of administrative services; and (c) a significant increase in the amount of State investment in the VSCS to address its structural deficit, mitigate the impact of COVID, and increase its annual base appropriation moving forward; and
- WHEREAS, The Select Committee’s recommendations were informed by information gathered from a wide range of stakeholders concerning their perspectives on higher education in Vermont and the VSCS, as well as the reports and recommendations issued by stakeholder groups; and
- WHEREAS, The Board of Trustees has solicited and received considerable written and oral public feedback on the recommendations of the Select Committee, as well as other stakeholder reports, from both internal and external stakeholders; and
- WHEREAS, The Board of Trustees charged the Chancellor, in consultation with the Presidents, to consider the recommendations of the Select Committee in making a recommendation for a transformed organization, governance, and

operational model for the VSCS that is fiscally sustainable and fulfills the VSCS's mission; and

WHEREAS,

The Chancellor has presented her recommendations for the future of the VSCS in *VSCS Transformation Proposal: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Public-Access System of Higher Education for Vermont*, which includes seeking a common accreditation for Castleton University, Northern Vermont University, and Vermont Technical College, maintaining a physical presence at their primary locations, along with aggressive coordination of administrative services system-wide; and

WHEREAS,

The recommendation is conditioned on the understanding that: (a) the State provides the VSCS with the requisite additional funding; (b) the New England Commission on Higher Education (NECHE) approves the proposal for a common accreditation of the three institutions and related substantive change proposals; and (c) there is no further flare-up or worsening of the global pandemic that adversely impacts the operations of the VSCS; therefore, be it

RESOLVED,

That the Board of Trustees of the Vermont State Colleges System hereby approves the Transformation Proposal and directs the Chancellor to commence the significant work that will be required to implement her recommendations, including, but not limited to, providing the Board with the following information on an ongoing basis: (a) financial projections of the revenue and costs from transformation; and (b) identified risks and mitigation actions.

be it Approved: February 22, 2021



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Lynn Dickinson, Chair of the Board of Trustees