Indicate the category of your comments: (select all that apply)

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If none of the categories of stakeholder in the prior question apply to you, please explain your interest and/or affiliation with VSCS:

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<tr>
<td>I am a prospective student of possibly Castleton or VTC, and a former student of CCV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am a community member who cares about the success of the colleges, and a prospective future student who wants the colleges to still exist in the future. I have attended CCV, and have close friends who have attended and are employed at Castleton and VTC.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professor Emeritus of the Humanities</td>
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<td>Parent of current student</td>
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Please share the institution you are associated with: (select all that apply to you)

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<td>VSC System (Board, Office of the Chancellor, Other)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Not affiliated with VSCS</td>
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What do you see as the potential strengths and successes of the system transformation?

We have a lot to offer people and that will be seen by the students of the other schools who express interest in our location.

I see tremendous opportunity to create a vibrant leader in higher education in a multi-campus state university. I am excited to be a part of such a transformative time.

I do not see any strengths for the students at Castleton and feel we are losing our identity to a large public institution which is exactly what I did not want leaving HS.

I see none except the state of Vermont covering their tracks after years of mismanagement.

possibility of coordinating across campuses and with UVM

Survival. Accessibility.

I think that for our department, the opportunity to reach other students from the northern part of the state is a potential strength.

There can be benefits gained from economies of scale, not only in cost savings but by expanding offerings to students.

Reduce program redundancy across CU & NVU. Better crediting & transfer system between institutions—if CCV is willing to come to the table.

Economic interest, a way to save money and keep the college systems running financially in a stable condition.

Reduced administrative costs. Increases access to programs for students. More transparency.

cost saving, strength in numbers, a more unified state college system, ease of transfer for students

Finally being able to start fresh.

None.

More funding.

Perhaps a bigger shared pot of money allowing the schools as a group to coordinate on creating some new programs. Also, a possibility of coordinating the nursing programs on the various campuses. I think nursing should continue to be taught everywhere it is currently taught, including online; something that would be awesome would be if the nursing programs could all be fluid with each other, so students can seamlessly continue their education on a different campus if they want to in order to pursue other opportunities on that campus or if they need to because they move for an unrelated reason. I also see an increased possibility of students creating individualized majors and innovating across multiple disciplines. I think there should be a system-wide individualized major option. Students can create careers of the future.

easier transfer of course credits from one campus to another.

It will ideally be more efficient, with no degradation of quality.

Nothing.
What do you consider are the potential weaknesses and risks of the system transformation?

The name changes are going to put a huge dent in the Castleton spirit. The name of Castleton and our small town are important to us. We pride ourselves on being an extremely small school with big school experiences and opportunities. The name change is important to alumni and donors, they may feel that because of the name change that their time donating to the school is not worth it because it is no longer the institution it once was. We are the ones providing help to our more in debt neighbors and the only thing we don't want to come out of this is the change of the name. I understand that in order for it to be part of the change and a part of the same system it needs to be VSC but keep it VSC Castleton. The name is huge and changing it is so discouraging to the culture we have built.

1. Using CIP codes to design a framework for academic offerings across the campuses within the newly formed university is not a nuanced enough approach to determine Vermont's unique position in the higher-ed landscape. We have a unique brand and opportunity to attract students for the experience of college in Vermont. Where one program may look noncompetitive on a national job numbers basis, it maybe have demand as a Vermont program. 2. This analysis (rpkGroup) is incomplete as it excludes CCV and Online programs. The distinction between CCV and the other campuses results in a big blind spot in our evaluation of the system-wide efficiencies we seek. The boundaries between online and residential programs are being blurred more and more every day. Excluding Online programs from our reevaluation of academic offerings is arbitrary and motivated by policies that are not in service of our goal of achieving broad systemic optimization and efficiencies. We will not be able to have a holistic approach to managing the VSCS at a system level if, CCV and Online programs are somehow thought of as different or “special”. Until we include the entire system that is VSCS, we will not achieve system level optimization.

Large no local control over decisions on campus - no identity - also I feel like the research at Castleton is becoming non important and we are becoming a large " workforce development " institution - no one on campus is happy and many freshman feel betrayed

We will lose countless out of staters due to this, and each campus I believe will suffer greatly from this. While we want kids from vermont staying, this move seems specifically geared to push away any outside students cutting too many programs, making some programs unavailable to students if the only campus that offers it is one the student is not able to commute to or move to

The joining of Lyndon and Johnson was too superficial. This must be avoided this time. Vermont Tech is very respected in its own right, despite an unlovely and aging campus. It gets very high cost/benefit marks on a national basis. I'd hate to see it eclipsed by the merger.

I have several concerns: 1. I know the incredible work that we have done at CU to build the Music Education and Music BA programs. We have gone through RIGOROUS Precp and ROPA reviews to be sure that we were offering a comprehensive degree program that is aligned with standards and comparable to other schools -- the music “education” program being offered at NVU is NOT the same standard of “music education” offerings – it is more of a variety of independent studies and the end result is a “Licensure Option” which is not a degree that I would use to hire anyone looking for a music ed position. After hiring MANY music teachers, I look for the B.M. Ed first – because that tells me that they have truly had the program that will prepare them best for the classroom. 3. The name change is of great concern. When it was announced that there would be a closure of NVU Johnson/Lyndon, alumni and the community rallied -- and some of that was for the PLACE that they graduated from and called home. For 234 years, the name of Castleton has been a staple of Vermont. Legacy students are proud to carry on the tradition of attending the small university. Taking away the name of the university takes away so much of that tradition -- and 234 years of tradition are gone. I was thinking of this with the commencement video and wondered about the Alma Mater -- which would never be sung again. 4. This transformation right now, as we recover from COVID and the loss of enrollment in addition to the incentives for students to attend community colleges for free, etc. is having an incredible impact on our abilities to recruit and build enrollment. We have had students audition that have chosen other colleges outside of the state due to the uncertainty of what is happening in the VSC right now. 5. I truly feel that the President of the University is the face of the college. It is great to see him/her on campus at events, etc. What will the Presidency look like with so many colleges to visit and immerse themselves in? Or will they just become a figurehead and name on a letterhead in some office in Montpelier?

I think the approach ignores the reasons that students choose VSC institutions; so many students want a small college environment that is based on relationships in learning.
What do you consider are the potential weaknesses and risks of the system t...

A huge weakness in this plan is trying to change the name of Castleton University. Every single student I have spoken with on this topic is upset. EVERY single one. Renaming Castleton is a disservice to the students and the community built around the University. Castleton is an institution in the Rutland area, a cultural hub, and a place of pride. It belongs to the town of Castleton. Renaming the university will only cause dissatisfaction within the student body and community confusion. I implore the board not to change the name.

Vermont Tech will be swallowed up by the larger universities & their priorities.

Students not being able to have a ton of choice based on Vermont colleges they attend. While they will be different locations, I think courses and programs will unify between colleges, and some students may prefer programs (such as music education) at one college rather than the other. If they do unify and programs combine into one, I feel more students might leave VT because of limited options.

Losing the branding that institutions have worked for so long to create and uphold. Castleton, in particular, contributes more to the VSC system than any other individual institution. It risks more than any other in this merger and there is great worry that this will not be taken into consideration.

Staff, faculty and students could end up feeling lost in the system as it gets bigger.

Not changing old habits and investing into wasteful advertisements and in things that actually do not benefit students on campus (No offense, ask most students on campus and facility, the “Do North Campaign” was a disaster and almost shutdown our school.” Another major issue that occurs with this transformation is the fact that the administration and VSCS have no common sense in modern day economics, you guys are basically in the cave man age compared to other college campuses. This isn't meant to be an insult also, this is just the brutal honest truth coming from a student who cares about their campus and community and wants to see this area have more economic opportunities that will have more people attend schools in Vermont.

We are going to lose Castleton University. Loss of the school name.

We are losing history in eliminating the Castleton name as well as forcing CU to “bail out” other failing schools. We cannot expect CU to thrive while now handling the finances from other schools. This will allow CU to fall with the remaining schools.

Virtual classes taught by professors at other university locations. I have heard this is a possibility from my professors and am very against this. In person learning is very valuable and should be available to everyone who wants it.

possible loss of important programs, possible loss of geographic accessibility- for example, if the only courses in the topic I want to study in the Vermont system are located at a campus 2 hours from where I live, I won't actually be able to take those courses. Avoiding duplication of courses means that some people won't have any such courses within a reasonable distance they can travel. I very much hope that you will have LOTS of online courses and courses with online options so that people can still take courses they want to take, even if the only one is hours from where they live. You should keep all the online stuff and even increase it.

A lot of faculty disruption.

When you read the goals and plans for the merger of the Vermont state universities and colleges, it does not sound like the intent is to create outstanding centers of higher education to attract students but instead to convert them to inexpensive, primarily commuter or remote learning vocational educational factories. That's not a university system. (My detailed comments and concerns are listed below in the 'other comments' section below.)

Losing our individual school branding is a big mistake. We run the risk of becoming "UVM-light" No discussion on how financially we will help BIPOC students.(Vermont continues to have a racist image) No commitment to academic quality is indicated.

It is upsetting as a student to see that the university I attend right now will undergo changes in the middle of my career here and we are not being given any information whatsoever until decisions have long been made. It is only going to deter more students due to the combination of campuses, and athletics.
What opportunities does system transformation provide?

To establish VSCS as a industry leader in creative pedagogy and administration in service of our students.

Helpful for other institutions

The opportunity to take away what makes each of these schools their own.

possible coordination of programs, including in innovative ways. The one I'm thinking of now, and wishing for, is some way for the athletic trainer education to apply toward a doctorate in physical therapy, so if someone goes through the athletic trainer program and then works as an athletic trainer for a few years and then wants to become a physical therapist, most of the profession-specific coursework they did in the ATC program would transfer into the DPT program so they already have a lot of progress toward DPT. It would mean offering high-level skills in the athletic trainer program that transfer to physical therapy. Another idea of a way to coordinate: perhaps making the BS in kinesiology at Castleton its own degree that has some course options so that people can tailor it as pre-ATC (continuing at Castleton) or pre-DPT (continuing at UVM) or pre-PA or pre-med, or tailored to be in tandem with a BSN to give it a sports medicine / orthopedic emphasis.. So people could use the BS in Kinesiology program as a pre-professional track for a few various health care professions. They would go into those professions with the right prerequisites (the BS in Kinesiology would contain electives that people could choose between, to tailor it to the prerequisites for the field they want to pursue) and with a strong foundation in sports medicine that could be applied to a variety of health care fields. The BS in Kinesiology would be able to used as a versatile pre-health-care-profession sports medicine specialist track, rather than just being a BS degree thrown into a 5-year masters program, that has no value of its own. People could use it as a jumping off point for a variety of health care fields. So it would be a more meaningful degree in itself. It needs reworking anyway, because right now there seems to be a lot of repetition in the BS Kinesiology to MS in Athletic Training track. Also, since VT is a sprawly rural state and some people don't have the flexibility to move or commute long distances, there should be a lot of online options for courses and whole degrees. This can also save money on infrastructure and on-campus services. The state university system could be putting most of their resources into professors salaries and other essentials. Also, it is an opportunity to cut down administrative expenses. I don't know if maybe some administrators could re-skill as professors.

Reduce the number of people in administration. If you walked the hall of that area in Lyndon you saw a lot of empty offices and people not seeming to be working very hard. I put in a request regarding transfer credits (via e-mail) that got no response for over a year. Had to bring it up again twice before resolution. A combined administration (with few onsite people) could make this worse, so we would need a known "complaint" department.

I think if we considered turning CU into the Fine and Performing Arts School for VT would be one opportunity. We have the only true "stage" and facility of the colleges and this would definitely improve the recruitment/enrollment numbers -- instead of having NVU Johnson and CU fighting over the same students to keep programs going -- especially with the competition with UVM, this could create one STRONG program in one location which could turn us into the "school of fine and performing arts" choice for students in Vermont as well as out of state.

There is the opportunity to reduce administrative overhead.

Finance? Lower attendance cost for students?

cost saving, strength in numbers, more unified state college system

Opportunity for students

None

Provides a loss of jobs for professors who are released because of duplicate majors and programs.

Keep the Vermont university system solvent.

Ideally, if it's done right, a sustainable college system.

None.
What are the barriers to a successful transformation?
I would encourage you to consider adopting a new model of leadership that is based on systems theory and optimizing innovation. Centralized management models are not serving us, and they are rooted in historical traditions of domination and colonialism. You are not thinking creatively about the administrative model, only prescribing creative solutions for the academic arm of the institutions. This is not a system-level approach.

When I was recruited I was told over and over Castleton was a small arts and science based university with a personal feel - I do not want a virtual library I do not want a president that oversees 4 colleges nothing is personal about that - I am an out of state student there are no tuition programs for me and the athletic fields and library as well as the dorms need updating.

While we all want the "good" vermonters to stay, we have to acknowledge there are many bad people living here and people we don't want at our institutions. By making these schools all into one, you're inviting many people in who should never be around a college campus, and you're pushing away the ones who will excel. Lots of castleton students will tell you how weird it is to have 25-30 year olds with families creeping on them at a party or around campus. It's already a bad place to be, don't make it worse.

There are various types of students and stakeholders that it would be wise to think about. Typical aged college students, non-traditional aged college students looking for professional development, and also the communities and what they need for workforce development. Where there's a worker shortage, could influence what programs get offered. Also, VT needs to take more advantage of HRSA scholarships and loan repayment programs, through the types of programs offered at our universities. Those are full ride scholarships and there are many HRSA designated areas in VT. That's a huge source of potential revenue. But we would need to offer programs in the professions those scholarships are for. Which we should do anyway because there are worker shortages in those professions. Psychotherapists (no program in our university system?), social workers (UVM has a program), physician assistants (no program in our university system), nurse practitioners (no program in our university system), dentists (no program in our university system). We're getting very little from the HRSA program just by not offering the types of programs that the grants pay for. That is a mistake. We should have those programs in our university system. Having a combined university may allow us to pool resources to start programs that are professions that are needed in Vermont and where students can use HRSA scholarships to attend.

I am a 77 year old degree student. For cost reasons, I have been working on finishing my BA at both Johnson and Lyndon for many years. I have always felt that the schools make little effort to encourage older students. The "traditional" student mindset has seem cast in iron. I read in the press about other schools that are more welcoming to us OWLs (Older Wiser Learners), while NVU just takes us for granted (although professors appreciate us). Since the modern undergraduate is so reluctant to speak up in class, we are needed as catalysts. Give us a club, free tuition after 65, and publicity (mugs and T-shirts?) There are more of us in Vermont every day. Use us...

In NH, we have the University System of NH -- but the universities of KSC, PSU, and UNH are still very different campuses with their own identities. I truly feel that the re-naming to one name will take away so much of the history and legacy that the institutions hold dear. Additionally, we have a FINE music education program and music program at CU with three full-time professors which is a reason that we are successful. I am struggling to understand why NVU has no full time music program personnel and they just lost their "dept. head" and are still promoting a full music program. I LOVE teaching at Castleton. I love being a part of the Castleton Way and bringing the Castleton Spirit to our students and faculty. I love the campus and the community and am passionate about the amazing students of the CU Fine and Performing Arts Dept. and supporting them to become the best musicians and music teachers they can be.

I feel that the transformation process, despite the claims and rhetoric, is not focused on student needs. I also think that the process is overly focused on 'workforce development' poorly defined. While it is extremely important that the VSC institutions prepare students for productive careers, it is overly focused on projected employment needs in Vermont. In other words, the objective is to serve the "projected" needs of Vermont businesses not to promote the best interests of the students, whose tuition, because of under-funding from the state, is the primary source of the system funding. We have professional programs that prepare students for careers in related fields, but the liberal arts prepare students to be adaptable, critical thinkers who could launch successful careers in a wide array of areas.

New name: Vermont State University. Stop the "brand bullying" from CU & its surrounding communities!

N/A

Castleton University, to its furthest extent, should be able to remain as independent as possible and retain its own identity. This institution, on all quantifiable scales, contributes more into the Vermont State College system than any other institution. There has been word that data from each college will be integrated so that numbers will operate as a single unit - it is imperative that all data, even under a single system, be tracked from each institution.
RE: Branding/Naming - I like how other states have state college systems in which they use their locations as an indication of their differences. For instance: Vermont State College: Johnson or Vermont State University: Johnson.

Get rid of Jeff Bickford. this is a request of students, faculty, and the community. This man is a major reason people are leaving the Johnson Campus.

This transformation wasn't the best idea ever. This is happening without our control. Not many people agreed with this. We will be pulling off funds to attend Castleton if this did happen. We will let future students know that this is occurring. Parents will not like this merger because of increased funds.

I believe this has been done so the wrong way and it will lead to a larger lack in student body. After just a small survey from close students, many of them are upset at the merger and all of which said if changes were so large and bold, moving schools is a large priority. I think the fact that the students having 0 knowledge and say in where our money funds will lead to the demise of the system all you said would help.

"Castleton" has a lot of name recognition, such as when successful professionals talk glowingly about their student experiences there. You need to keep "Castleton" in the name. "Vermont State College at Castleton," for example. Don't remove the "Castleton" name. That would make it harder to attract students. There are some things about "Castleton" that are legendary. Like the Tom Heffernan era of the Nordic ski program. You lose legendary status if you drop the word "Castleton" from the name. That is just my opinion from having grown up in NH hearing about "Castleton." "Castleton" is famous in a very positive way. The small, rural, reasonably priced state college with excellent academics, very friendly and respectful staff, and awesome though humble athletic opportunities. A quietly awesome place, awesome by having very high quality things to offer, not by being high-pressure. People fell in love with what they were doing, developed solid knowledge and skills, and made life-long friendships there. Castleton's athletic training program is at the cutting edge of the field. People speak more highly of "Castleton" than they do of "Dartmouth" on average, in NH, and "Dartmouth" is in NH. You need to have the word "Castleton" in the name.

I know that the Chancellor has assured us that this ship has sailed, but I can't resist, so... Whenever I think about the future of the VSCS, which is often, I always conclude that the best course of action for the VSCS is to implement the third option suggested by the Select Committee on the Future of Higher Education in Vermont in its December 4, 2020, report. That option calls for Castleton University to remain Castleton University and to continue to have its own president. It also calls for Castleton University to embrace the administrative consolidation and academic realignment recommended by the report. I think this option is best for CU and for the system for these reasons: 1. I agree with President Dave Wolk that the Castleton University "brand" is important. I prefer the word "reputation." We are known inside and outside of Vermont as a friendly, student-centered institution where the virtues of kindness, honesty, and decency are valued and promoted. We have tried to express that spirit in the phrase "the Castleton way." Dave tried to capture it in the line, "the small college with a big heart." This reputation matters because so many of our students come from small high schools and the prospect of going to college with hundreds, and maybe thousands, of other people can be unbelievably intimidating. You probably know Darren Perron. He is a reporter and news presenter for WCAX. Darren applied to only one college when he was a senior in high school. That college was Castleton. He knew he could thrive here, and he did. He is not the only student who has had this experience. From the students who have wanted to be high school teachers and coaches to the students who have wanted to be nurses in delivery rooms and cancer wards, Castleton has been a welcoming institution that lets them know that we will help them fulfill their dreams. If Castleton University becomes a part of a larger institution, how do we know that it will keep its present reputation and appeal? We might well be seen as just a nondescript part of a new university, not any different from all the other parts, a victim of bureaucratic standardization. "The branch with a big heart" won't do much for our enrollment, that's for sure. Why force Castleton to abandon its reputation, when it's so easy to keep it? We can retain the name AND be part of Vermont State University. Our letterhead might look something like CASTLETON UNIVERSITY, a member of the Vermont State University System. Sounds good to me. 2. I also think Castleton University should have its own president. The president represents the institution. He or she speaks for the university to our students, staff, faculty, alumni, and supporters in the area and around the state. The president promotes and insures the health and welfare of the university. The report suggests that in place of a president, the university will have a "campus CEO." Well, what will the duties of this person be? If the campus CEO has the same duties as our current president, then why not call the campus CEO a president? And if the campus CEO does not have the same duties, then what duties does he or she NOT have? Moreover, I strongly believe that someone who is only responsible for Castleton University will have a deeper concern for it and more time to advance its mission than someone who is responsible for three or four institutions. After all, there are only so many hours in a day. I should mention that I do not expect the president to have the same salary and benefits that previous presidents have had. Given the financial problems of the VSCS, serving as the president of Castleton University would have to be seen as an act of love. I think there are a number of talented people who would be willing to do this. They would be following the example of Edwin Colodny, who served as interim president of UVM during its difficult days either for no salary or a very modest one. 3. Keeping the names and presidents of the three universities will cut back on the conflicts that are bound to occur between the chancellor and the presidents. It will be clear that the presidents preside over the institutions and the chancellor presides over the system and the presidents. If there are only two presidents, as the report recommends, and one of them presides over a two-year institution, I think the president of VSU will want to take over more and more of the duties assigned to the Chancellor in the report. Most of the chancellor's duties apply to VSU, not CCV, and because the president of VSU is responsible for the direction and welfare of VSU, that president will want a stronger and stronger voice in deciding what the tasks and destiny of VSU will be. "Who's in charge here?" will become an increasingly troublesome question. I fear that the preceding paragraph makes me seem jaded. I'm not. I am, however, experienced. I have been associated with Castleton and the VSC for over 50 years. I have worked with many presidents and chancellors. Conflicts among them are inevitable, but the more we can do to minimize those conflicts, the better. Option 3 will do that. Option 1, the one presently in favor, will not. Thank you for reading my long comment. I appreciate it. All the best.
For the people designing the new portal, please allow the option for two-factor authentication (2FA) when logging in to the new portal.

I just finished reading the Chancellor's latest "update." I did not see the phrase "quality education" indicated anywhere in that message. Just wondering if delivering a quality education to our students is still part of our VSC mission. If so, why is it never mentioned? 

I think, for the sake of faculty sanity, it would be prudent to have some sort of preliminary statement about how the reorganization will affect hiring, particularly part timers. Obviously, some consolidation and elimination of redundancy will mean some job losses, but it would be nice to know how integration may affect long time part time faculty who have been teaching at a particular institution.

In reading the Select Committee's Report, there are multiple references to teaching more classes online so that students from each campus can take the same class simultaneously and avoid duplicate classes. After 3 semesters of online/Zoom classes, I think it has been well established that most students do not learn well this way. Students also do not choose to go to residential campuses to stay within their room and take classes. Barring Covid restrictions in the fall and beyond, students need to be in a classroom the vast majority of the time and in front of a professor. As the parent of an out-of-state student, paying higher tuition and room & board, I can tell you that if a significant percentage of classes are planned to be remote that will not be a viable situation for my son. There's also the concern that there will be a reduction in class offerings and majors. My concern is that even if students can finish out the majors being eliminated, they will likely be impacted by exiting faculty. A significant concern I have is that you are not considering the brand recognition that currently exists with all of your institutions, especially Castleton University. It has a long-reaching, positive reputation known throughout the country, thanks, in part, to students who come here for sports. They also have international students who bring home their experiences and share with others in their country – which may encourage others to attend Castleton. Professors include Fulbright Scholars. Employers know the quality of its graduates. Castleton has been around for 234 years. It is obviously doing something right. If you make the Castleton name just a location suffix in a generic VSU name, all this history, name recognition and reputation will be lost. NVU has already gone thru a rebranding less than 3 years ago. As I've heard and read, it is still feeling the repercussions of their name change. If you change their name again, not only will you experience that same identity issue and confusion, you will have wasted all the money that has already been spent on rebranding. I don't know a lot about Vermont Tech but from what I have read and listened to on your forums and board meetings, they are quite unique and very well respected for their curriculum. Why would you want to ignore this and change their name? With rebranding comes expense. The reason for the merger is financial. Why spend millions of dollars when you already have established brands within your system? This money can be spent where you most need it: attract and increase enrollment, offer scholarships, etc. There is no reason why the transformation cannot be accomplished without changing the names of each school. I think a lot of hesitancy toward the merger is what has occurred with NVU over the past few years. As two separate colleges, their struggles led to the merger to NVU. Not more than 2 years later, with continued financial woes and declining enrollment, the previous chancellor felt there was no other option but to close these campuses. Understanding more money will be infused by the state and cost reductions will help but what is the proposal to increase enrollment to maintain the viability of the programs? Is it just more affordable tuition? If the student population in VT is getting smaller, perhaps additional attention to getting more out of state students, who bring in a larger tuition payment, should be considered to maintain the viability of the state universities. It would bring additional money to the schools and to the community and potentially result in students remaining in VT after graduation, becoming residents in the state and contributing to the growth of the economy. Money that would be spent on rebranding could be used to have more interaction with high school guidance counselors within VT and other states to encourage students to attend VT state universities by promoting the outstanding education and value they can offer. A big part of keeping schools viable is STUDENTS! I understand that the primary intent of a state university is to educate its residents at a reasonable cost. I'm sure adding out-of-state students are a financial benefit but may not be a focus. My son selected Castleton because of its program, its reputation, its history, its commitment to students, small class sizes, faculty relationships, football program and coaches, the beautiful outdoors and the general feel of belonging he felt when he walked on campus. You shouldn't discount or dismiss this. One-size-fits-all is not what attracts students. That's why each of these schools has a separate identity. You can still make necessary financial cuts and implement one set of policies and procedures for all and still keep each school's identity. If not, they become impersonal and generic. Each university meets the needs of its community as well. You don't want to lose those attributes. I know you will be hiring a team to implement these changes. You need educational experts for this transition – someone to make tough decisions. If a campus or satellite location must close to keep the state university system flourishing, then do it. Otherwise, you will be right back here in another few years. A long term plan is definitely necessary along with administrative consolidation but not at the detriment of students. Keeping each school's identity and brand reduces rebranding expense and avoids the loss of reputation and recognition. I also hope that each campus will retain a presence of qualified staff and administration in each department. There are many things students need to talk with staff about in person. You lose that personal touch speaking with someone on the phone or on a Zoom call. This entire merger is a huge undertaking and while it is essential to be completed as quickly as possible, it does seem rushed. It is my hope that everything will be thought out completely and prepared in a manner that will lead to immediate success upon implementation. We've already seen that the previous NVU merger did not solve the issues. Even if finances are consolidated, I strongly believe that it would be prudent to have each campus report financials separately so that you can identify what works and what does not. Putting it all together makes it difficult to identify needed adjustments in a particular location. Thank you for all the time and work you and the Select Committee has put into this transformation. I hope my concerns and comments will be considered.

Students and parents especially need to be put in the loop, not left out. More money is going to be lost due to the lack of communication and the behind the scenes work going on. We were originally told it would be 2024 which would be my senior year, and now it is apparently 2023 which would be directly in the middle of my career. As someone who graduated high school in 2020 during Covid, and started as a freshman in college in Covid, it is really upsetting to see that I'm also going to be screwed over for my junior and senior years of college.
I believe this idea has been put forth before, but given the beauty of our Johnson (and Lyndon) campus(es), I think there is significant revenue to be raised by renting out our venue(s) for weddings and other special events. Please see this article for ideas:

End of Report