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# **“Success for All Vermont Students”**

## **Governor Shumlin’s Workshop on Education**

### **June 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> 2012**

### **The Grafton Inn, Grafton**

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The Governor’s Workshop on Education was designed for the Administration and partners to explore key policy ideas to improve Vermont’s Pre K-12 education system, to develop a comprehensive and coordinated education platform, and to define specific action steps to be implemented over the next two years to advance the progress of public education in Vermont.

The Workshop centered on creating a concrete list of the most important steps we could take, as a State, to ensure that all Vermont children graduate from high school prepared for post-secondary education, career success, and active lives as contributing citizens.

Workshop participants contributed their ideas for three separate elements as contributions to a platform for the next stage of education policy in Vermont: Vision Points, Goals, and Recommended Action Steps.

*This report represents the ideas and contributions of all Workshop attendees; it includes their recommendations to the Governor for key Action Steps that can advance educational opportunities for all of Vermont’s children. All participants recognize that some of these goals and actions are doable today and others are stretch or long-term goals. We respectfully submit them as contributions to the work ahead.*

# Report on Vision, Goals & Action

Workshop participants believe that the Governor should advance a vision and set of goals for the future of education in Vermont and should lead the implementation of an Action Campaign for Educational Transformation and Renewal.

The Campaign should lead with key messages:

- *Vermont has the opportunity to take advantage of our new broadband capacity to create an innovative, world class system of education and accountability that personalizes learning to ensure success for all Vermont students. We are going to celebrate our successes and innovate to become a model for the nation.*
- *As Vermonters we share a goal for every young Vermonter to graduate from high school prepared for post-secondary education, career success and an active life as a contributing citizen.*
- *The Governor should ask for help from all Vermonters: How do we get there? How can we all work together – students, teachers, parents, school boards, community members, businesses, non-profits and the state – to reach this shared goal?*

## A. Points of Vision

*We look to a future for Vermont's Education System where:*

- ✓ All Vermont students graduate from high school ready for successful post-secondary education and careers and to be contributing members of their community. Every young person graduates from high school with the basic competencies in reading, writing, and math needed for success.
- ✓ Investment in the state's human capital is the state's *primary* economic development strategy, and this means a commitment to education from pre-K to lifelong learning.
- ✓ The education system educates the whole child—intellectual, social, emotional, life skills, and physical—and inspires students to become holistic thinkers with critical reasoning skills.
- ✓ Every student is engaged in something they are passionate about and experiences the joy of learning. Students are given the support they need to discover that passion so they can maximize their potential.

- ✓ The school is a place where students are exposed to appropriate models for success, are encouraged to seek new aspirations, and accomplish personal goals.
- ✓ We address the needs of all children before kindergarten to support brain development and learning readiness. All children receive the nurturing and nutrition they need to thrive, and brain development is cultivated in the years before they enter school.
- ✓ Every child enters Kindergarten ready to learn.
- ✓ Teachers are increasingly guides and facilitators of learning, rather than simply subject matter experts.
- ✓ Teachers have a voice, ownership, and leadership in advancing educational practice.
- ✓ Students see the value and relevance of their education, are engaged, and have a voice in decisions.
- ✓ Vermonters hold education in high esteem and we are committed to it for its common, societal benefit, not only for its individual benefit.
- ✓ Vermonters honor, respect and support the teachers and administrators who guide and facilitate the education of our young people.

## B. Goals

*To reach our vision for the success of all students Vermont should set a goal where:*

- ✓ Relevance, engagement and respect are essential and universal elements needed to prepare every student for post-secondary education, a career, and to be a contributing member of society.
- ✓ Every student has a personal learning plan with a network of connections to parents, teachers, and the community, and each student takes personal responsibility for leading their education.
- ✓ Equal opportunities for students around the state begin at a young age. To create equality in opportunity we should provide equivalent pre-K, access to technology, foreign languages, and other educational elements for all students.

- ✓ Pre-K education is the great equalizer and can help level the playing field and end the achievement gap. It should be extended universally and connected with the K-12 system.
- ✓ Vermont creates a statewide computer network so that all VT teachers can work together in a common digital system so they can share best practices and districts use common on-line management and learning system platforms.
- ✓ Virtual and on-line learning is universally available to students and supports the personalization of their education—both in their ability to choose content areas and explore as they learn, and also as they are evaluated in real time for skills and knowledge.
- ✓ The state takes a leadership role in school infrastructure including sharing digital management and learning platforms and vehicles developed by teachers and districts along with best practices for their use.
- ✓ Each child performs at his or her highest level and engages in cooperative learning, problem solving and the utilization of technology in partnership with others.
- ✓ Our teachers have access to best practices around student learning and to peer learning from around the globe. We measure our performance against those of students around the world and not against the federal mandates.

## C. Action Steps

The State of Vermont should lead an education system transformation that centers on student proficiency and accomplishment measured by real-time, on-line adaptive assessments, and results in “diplomas that mean something” for every graduating student.

*Component Actions in Advancing this Transformation include:*

### A. Advancing Personalized Learning

- The State of Vermont should ensure that every student has a Personal Learning Plan, and sponsor teacher and school staff training sessions and provide other supports to school districts working to implement them.
- Each Personal Learning Plan should include an experiential learning, internship, travel or service learning activity.

- The State of Vermont should partner with local boards to provide computer devices for one:one education for every 5<sup>th</sup> grade Vermont student and on through to high school completion.
- The State of Vermont should ensure access to a Virtual Learning System for all schools that will allow students to participate in on-line High School and College courses, which will also be available to adult learners in the community.
- Mentorship programs should be developed to ensure that every child who needs one has a mentor.
- Vermont should provide policy, budget and practical support to encourage districts to modify the school day to maximize the potential for student learning, increase its length, and extend the annual calendar for school-based learning.

## **B. Expanding Pre-Kindergarten and Addressing the Achievement Gap**

- In line with the goal of having every Vermont child ready for Kindergarten, the state should develop a coordinated system of care that includes accessible and affordable pre-natal care, paid parental leave and other workplace accommodations, best practice home visits with parents of infants, and universal access to high quality childcare and certified Pre School for all children (with credentialed teachers and supports).

## **C. Connecting Graduates to Higher Ed, Careers, and Community Service in Vermont**

- Vermont should develop a system that provides every student that achieves the proficiency objectives in their personal learning plan with a 5<sup>th</sup> Year supported by the average education fund per student amount (e.g. \$12,500) to do:
  - 1 year (or more) of college
  - 1 year in a technology center program
  - 1 year of formal apprenticeship
  - 1 year of certified training
  - 1 year of paid internship
  - Or 1 year of paid community service to Vermont

## **D. Developing a Management Structure for Innovation and Shared Learning**

- The State of Vermont should develop and deliver to districts a unified student data management system—a platform for management that will allow tracking through school and post graduation.
- Vermont’s data platform should have capacity for appropriate and seamless information sharing between the Agency of Human Services and the Agency of Education, with special connection to include pre-K education.
- Vermont should also develop and deliver a unified Learning Management System (LMS), based on best practices from school districts throughout the state. The LMS should include an e-portfolio system for each student, to evaluate student proficiencies and document progress of personalized learning.

## **E. Expanding and Enhancing Professional Development**

- Vermont should develop a lateral, online network to connect teachers and to share best practices statewide for innovation, collaborative learning and professional development.
- The state should also improve Professional Development for Teachers by expanding conferences, workshops and symposium on best practices and exposing teachers to real world experiences in workplaces and other settings which can provide experiences that can be shared with students, and develop funding for fellowships for teachers to explore new experiences or curricular areas that can be brought into their classrooms.
- Enhance Leadership Development Training for Principals and include training in commitment to place-based and relevant curricula that promotes innovation.
- Vermont should align teacher requirements for re-licensure to reward and encourage innovation and creativity.

## **Governor's Workshop Participants**

**Bob Allen**, President, Windham Foundation  
**Susan Bartlett**, Special Assistant to the Governor  
**Julie Coffey**, Executive Director, Building Brighter Futures  
**Stuart Comstock-Gay**, President, Vermont Community Foundation  
**Paul Costello**, VCRD Executive Director  
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**Tim Donovan**, Chancellor, Vermont State Colleges  
**David Finney**, President, Champlain College  
**John Fischer**, Deputy Commissioner of Transformation & Innovation, Department of Education  
**Jeff Francis**, Executive Director, Vermont Superintendents Association  
**Dan French**, Superintendent, Bennington Rutland Supervisory Union  
**Margaret Gibson McCoy**, VCRD Operations and Communications Director  
**Steve Gold**, President, Lyndon State College  
**Tom Hark**, President, Vermont Youth Conservation Corps  
**Marie Houghton**, Community Relations Manager, IBM  
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**Alex MacLean**, Deputy Chief of Staff  
**Amy Mellencamp**, Principal, Burlington High School  
**Lawrence Miller**, Secretary, Agency of Commerce & Community Development  
**Stephan Morse**, Chair, Board of Education  
**Kevin Mullin**, Vermont State Senator  
**Jenny Nelson**, Legislative Liaison, Office of Senator Bernard Sanders  
**Annie Noonan**, Commissioner of Vermont Department of Labor  
**Peter Peltz**, Vermont State Representative  
**Elaine Pinckney**, Superintendent, Chittenden South Supervisory Union  
**Doug Racine**, Secretary, Agency of Human Services  
**Alyson Richards**, Governor's Office  
**Tom Sabo**, Science Teacher, Montpelier High School  
**Chris Saunders**, Legislative Assistant, Office of Senator Patrick Leahy  
**Jeb Spaulding**, Secretary, Vermont Agency of Administration  
**Bill Stritzler**, Managing Director, Smugglers' Notch Resort  
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