

1 Sec. XX. SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC HIGHER
2 EDUCATION IN VERMONT; REPORTS

3 (a) Creation. There is created the Select Committee on the Future of Public
4 Higher Education in Vermont (Committee) to assist the State of Vermont in
5 developing a vision and plan for a high-quality, affordable, and workforce-
6 connected future for public higher education in the State.

7 (b) Membership. The Committee shall be composed of up to the following
8 22 members:

9 (1) one current member of the House of Representatives, who shall be
10 appointed by the Speaker of the House;

11 (2) one current member of the Senate, who shall be appointed by the
12 Committee on Committees;

13 (3) the Interim Chancellor of the Vermont State Colleges (VSC) or
14 designee, and a representative of each of the VSC Board of Trustees, VSC
15 campus administration, VSC faculty, and VSC students, each appointed by the
16 Interim Chancellor;

17 (4) the President of the University of Vermont or designee and a
18 representative of the UVM Board of Trustees, appointed by the President;

19 (5) the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development or
20 designee;

21 (6) the Secretary of Education or designee;

1 (7) the Commissioner of Labor or designee;

2 (8) three representatives of the business community, appointed by the
3 Steering Group created under subsection (c) of this section;

4 (9) two community members representing regions of the State that are
5 not otherwise represented, appointed by the Steering Group created under
6 subsection (c) of this section;

7 (10) the President of the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation or
8 designee;

9 (11) two representatives from Vermont organizations dedicated to
10 higher education or workforce development, such as Advance Vermont, VSC
11 Forward, or the Vermont Talent Management Pipeline, appointed by the
12 Steering Group created under subsection (c) of this section;

13 (12) up to two members appointed at the discretion of the Steering
14 Group created under subsection (c) of this section

15 (c) Steering Group. On or before June 29, 2020, the Speaker of the House
16 and the President Pro Tempore shall jointly appoint three members of the
17 Committee, and the Governor shall appoint two members of the Committee, to
18 serve as members of a Steering Group. The Steering Group shall provide
19 leadership to the Committee and shall work with a consulting firm to analyze
20 the issues, challenges, and opportunities facing Vermont's postsecondary
21 institutions, as well as create a formal action plan to drive change and

1 innovation in the State’s postsecondary institutions. The Steering Group may
2 form one or more subcommittees of the Committee to address key topic areas
3 in greater depth.

4 (d) Collaboration. The Committee shall seek input from and collaborate
5 with key stakeholders, as directed by the Steering Group.

6 (e) Powers and duties. The Committee shall study the structure of the
7 current higher education system in Vermont, build on previous studies in this
8 area, and offer recommendations on how to increase affordability, access,
9 retention, attainment, relevance, and fiscal sustainability, including the
10 following issues:

11 (1) the financial sustainability of the public higher education structure
12 and its impact on institutional capacity to innovate and meet State goals and
13 learners’ needs, including a comparison of higher education programs, delivery
14 models, and structures in other states;

15 (2) the current organizational structure of public higher education in
16 Vermont and its ability to promote student success; and

17 (3) the alignment of higher education and workforce development goals,
18 policy frameworks, and partnerships between businesses and institutions of
19 higher education that are designed to meet the needs of employers and promote
20 the public value of education.

1 (f) Consultant. The Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office, in
2 collaboration with the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE),
3 shall issue a request for proposal to hire a consultant to assist the Committee
4 with responses due from interested parties on or before July 17, 2020. On or
5 before July 31, 2020, the Steering Group shall select the consultant.

6 (g) Assistance. The Committee shall have the administrative and technical
7 assistance of the Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office. NEBHE shall
8 provide project management support to the Committee.

9 (h) Reports. Recognizing the need for short-term solutions on system
10 structure, governance, funding, and sustainability, the Committee, through its
11 Steering Group, shall use a phased approach to reporting. The first interim
12 report shall be due on or before December 20, 2020 and shall focus on the
13 topics described in subdivision (e)(1) of this section; the second interim report
14 shall be due on or before June 15, 2021 and shall focus on the topics described
15 in subdivisions (e)(2) and (3) of this section; and the final report, which shall
16 collate findings relative to subsection (e) of this section and include the action
17 plan, shall be due on or before December 15, 2021. All reports shall be in
18 writing and be delivered to the General Assembly and the Governor.

19 (i) Meetings.

20 (1) The Secretary of Education or designee shall call the first meeting of
21 the Committee to occur on or before August 28, 2020.

1 (2) The Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore shall
2 jointly select the Committee chair.

3 (3) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

4 (4) The Committee shall cease to exist on January 31, 2022.

5 (j) Compensation and reimbursement.

6 (1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General
7 Assembly, a legislative member of the Committee serving in his or her
8 capacity as a legislator shall be entitled to per diem compensation and
9 reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 406.

10 (2) Other members of the Committee, who are not employees of the
11 State of Vermont, shall be entitled to per diem compensation and
12 reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A. § 1010.

13 (3) Compensation and reimbursement under this subsection shall be, in
14 each fiscal year 2021 and 2022, for a maximum of:

15 (A) six in-person meetings of the Committee;

16 (B) eight in-person meetings of the Steering Group; and

17 (C) four remote meetings of up to four subcommittees, assuming
18 compensation and reimbursement for up to five members of each
19 subcommittee.

20 (4) Payments authorized under this subsection shall be made from
21 monies appropriated to the Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office.

1 (k) Appropriations.

2 (1) The sum of \$40,250.00 is appropriated to the Vermont Legislative
3 Joint Fiscal Office from the General Fund in fiscal year 2021 for per diem
4 compensation and reimbursement of expenses for members of the Committee,
5 Steering Group, and subcommittees.

6 (2) The sum of \$250,000.00 is appropriated to the Vermont Legislative
7 Joint Fiscal Office from the General Fund in fiscal year 2021 for the consultant
8 hired by the Steering Group under subsection (f) of this section.