

Minutes

VSAC Programs & Services Committee Meeting

**March 24, 2025
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**Boardroom, VSAC Offices
10 East Allen Street
Winooski, Vermont 05404**

Committee Members Present: Martha Heath (Chair), Dave Larsen, Ryan Dulude, Tim Chamberlin,
Committee Members Absent: Clarence Davis
Other Members Present: Dodie Mitchell
VSAC Staff Present: Scott Giles, Tom Little, Patrick Leduc, Meghan Metzler, Brad Fallon, Miranda Roth, Kirstin Boehm

Chair Martha Heath called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. With a quorum established, the Committee took up the first order of business.

Approval of Minutes

January 27, 2025, minutes were not approved due to an error in the materials for this meeting. These minutes will be reviewed for approval at the April Committee meeting.

Public Comment

There were no public comments given during the public comment period.

Grant Policy – Ongoing Review

Martha Heath moved the Committee meeting forward with the ongoing review of grant policies. Miranda Roth, manager of grants & scholarship operations, was introduced. Miranda reviewed the previously distributed policy, Awarding Vermont Grants. This policy is the combination of the prior policies Awarding Incentive Grants and Awarding Basic Incentive Grants with no material changes. Miranda reviewed the details of the policy and answered questions from the Committee.

Upon a motion made by Ryan Dulude and seconded by Tim Chamberlin, the Committee Members voted unanimously to recommend that the full Board approve the Awarding Vermont Grants policy as presented.

Miranda Roth exited the meeting at 10:11 a.m.

Risk Assessment

Patrick Leduc reviewed the risk of outsourcing/contracting as part of the ongoing risk review process. Patrick outlined the ways VSAC mitigates these kinds of risks including but not limited to, potential-vendor evaluations, controls and contracts. The Committee asked questions that Patrick responded to.

Operations Updates

Martha Heath asked Patrick to continue with his operations update.

- Grant Awarding Update – FAFSA completion in Vermont is greater than last year at this time. VSAC has nearly 8,000 completed FAFSAs and grant applications. Currently, on target to make grant projections in April.
- Non-Degree Program –VSAC is reviewing its provider policies regarding how they affect trade and training programs, and the practices used to approve a program provider. The evaluation is being done to ensure the best use of state funding. Currently there are 230 program providers.
- College and Career Pathways – There have been three successful events so far at UVM, Landmark College and Saint Michael’s College which was attended by almost 1,000 students. There are two more planned events for April at VTSU Castleton and VTSU Lyndon with over 500 students planning to attend.
- Standing Reports – Patrick reviewed the previously distributed materials.

The Committee engaged Patrick and Scott in questions and dialogue.

Federal Update

Scott Giles provided updates on the Department of Education regarding the recent executive order to close the Department and the impact this could or could not have on VSAC’s GEAR UP application and VSAC’s other Federal Grants. Scott also talked about the current consideration to have the Small Business Administration oversee student loans. He continued on to the current standing of a budget resolution, and the possible impacts of budget reductions to student aid programs and loans. The Committee then engaged Scott in a discussion.

Vermont Update

Scott Giles reviewed the differences between the Governor’s budget and what the House is proposing. It appears that the House budget could include changes to free tuition programs with CCV and VTSU. It is unclear what may happen to some of the one-time funded forgiveness loan programs. Tom Little added that the National Guard tuition program is being reviewed again, and it appears there are only minor changes to the current program. The Committee asked Scott and Tom questions that they responded to.

Looking Forward

Kirstin Boehm, senior director of career & education outreach, development, and research entered the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

Kirstin Boehm provided an overview of the GEAR UP grant that VSAC recently applied for. She reviewed the expected impact on Vermont students, communities, including specific outcomes that would be supported by data collection. The Committee then engaged Kirstin in dialogue about the grant and its outcomes if VSAC is awarded.

Other Business

Dave Larsen wanted to note that he appreciates it when VSAC staff present to the Board and Committee meetings.

There being no other business, the Committee adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Leduc, Assistant Secretary

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