

**Vermont State Workforce Development Board**

Career Pathways Committee - Meeting Minutes

March 31, 2023

8:00 – 9:00 am

**Committee Members in Attendance**: Joan Goldstein, Michael Harrington, Meg Hammond, Sarah Kleinman, Rick Bugbee, Mary Anne Sheahan, Rebecca Kapsalis, Nicole Miller, Melissa Norman, Mark Gebo, Heather Waryas

**Guests in Attendance**: Victoria Biondolillo, Abby Rhim, Andy Crossman, Julia Schuster

Abigail Rhim called the meeting to order at 8:05 am. She began by introducing herself as the Deputy Director of the Vermont State Workforce Development Board.

Meg Hammond introduced herself as the Executive Director of Generator.

Rick Bugbee introduced himself as the Vice President of Programs for Vermont Associates for Training and Development.

Sarah Kleinman introduced herself as the Director of 4-H, Family and Migrant Programs with UVM Extension.

Mary Anne Sheahan introduced herself as the Executive Director of the Vermont Talent Pipeline.

Rebecca Kapsalis introduced herself as the Associate Vice President of Talent Acquisition for the UVM Health Network.

Joan Goldstein introduced herself as the Commissioner of the Department of Economic Development for Vermont.

Andy Crossman introduced himself as the Director of the Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation.

Nicole Miller introduced herself as the Executive Director of Vermont AfterSchool.

Mark Gebo introduced himself as a school counselor for the Windham Northeast Supervisory Union.

Heather Waryas introduced herself as a work-based learning coordinator for the Windham Northeast Supervisory Union.

Melissa Norman introduced herself as the Director of HR Operations for Casella Waste Systems, Inc.

Julia Schuster introduced herself as the Career Pathways coordinator for the Career and Technical Education team at the Agency of Education.

Michael Harrington introduced himself as the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Labor.

Victoria Biondolillo introduced herself as the Executive Director of the Vermont State Workforce Development Board.

Rebecca Kapsalis asked if an invitation was sent to Jerry Baake for the meeting.

Abigail Rhim said he would be able to attend future meetings and that Committee members can invite people relevant to the meeting to attend.

Abigail Rhim then set the agenda for the meeting, to review the Committee’s “one-pager.” She also outline the main focuses of the Workforce Board’s strategic plan: “WIOA,” workforce system alignment, workforce support, workforce education and training, and increasing the size and volume of Vermont’s workforce.

Abigail Rhim shared the one-pager with the Committee. “The Situation” is that roughly half of Vermont’s high schoolers do not continue to higher education and there is a portion of the population, aged 16 and older, who are disengaged from the workforce and need guidance related to essential services and opportunities.

Meg Hammond asked what the goal was with the statistic that 50% of Vermont’s high schoolers do not go on to higher education.

Abigail Rhim said that it was complex because the Workforce Board is trying to shift away from the narrative that people must go on to higher education, but the Committee should be focused on where that 50% is going and engage with them.

Mary Anne Sheahan asked if the Committee should use “post-secondary” instead of “higher education.”

Abigail Rhim said the wording can change if needed.

Megan Hammond said that she thinks there should be a stronger introduction in the one-pager.

Abigail Rhim said that she will send the one-pager out so that people can make edits.

Sarah Kleinman wondered if there was a data point regarding not just post-secondary education, but also how many students don’t go on to receive other kinds of professional credentials.

Victoria Biondolillo agreed the main focus should be where Vermonters end up in the workforce, not whether or not they go on to higher education.

Mary Anne Sheahan asked if the sole focus of the committee should be young Vermonters. She proposed that the Committee could also focus on helping adults enter the workforce.

Victoria Biondolillo said the Committee could also focus on older Vermonters.

Mary Anne Sheahan continued that students graduating from high school are a small population, and there is a larger population that needs help entering the workforce.

Melissa Norman also said the Committee should focus on older Vermonters; for example, people transferring from full-time military status to civilian employment. Additionally, she thinks adult learning should be a focus.

Victoria Biondolillo emphasized that the general focus is career pathways for Vermonters throughout their working lives.

Abigail Rhim laid out the solution: working with the Career Pathways Committee, the Department of Labor, the Agency of Education, and other organizations to endorse career pathways.

Victoria Biondolillo highlighted the difference between the Career Pathways Committee and other committees; the Career Pathways Committee is mandated by statute and does more hands-on work than being a “think tank.”

Victoria Biondolillo reviewed the milestones for the Committee:

* By August of 2023, the CPC (Career Pathways Committee) will revisit and review the AOE’s (Agency of Education) process for developing existing career pathways. In other words, the SWDB (State Workforce Development Board) wants everyone on the same page by August 2023.
* By December of 2023, the full board will approve the updated career pathways approval process.
* By January of 2024, the CPC will begin meeting quarterly.
* By June of 2024, the CPC will develop a strategic marketing campaign to promote career pathways.
* By September of 2024, the CPC will work with the full SWDB, relevant agencies and stakeholders to implement the marketing campaign.
* By September of 2025, the CPC will collect and review metrics from AOE and relevant stakeholders regarding program enrollment.
* By January of 2026, the CPC will implement any necessary changes to the marketing campaign.

Victoria Biondolillo opened the floor to questions.

Andy Crossman asked if there would be “working teams” so the large group can split into smaller groups and work on separate tasks.

Victoria Biondolillo said there will most likely be smaller teams within the Committee to work on different topics (e.g., Career Pathways for Manufacturing Team). She emphasized the importance of the larger Committee focusing on the big picture together. She also re-emphasized that the meeting and the first draft of the one-pager are just “the jumping off point” for the Committee’s work. The focus, role, and responsibilities of the Committee can be somewhat fluid moving forward.

Mary Anne Sheahan asked if the AOE will address adult education career pathways.

Victoria Biondolillo responded that they will.

Meg Hammond asked what exactly the AOE will address (i.e., to what degree is it the AOE’s responsibility to focus on education past K-12).

Victoria Biondolillo said that it is a complicated matter. Technically the AOE is responsible for the oversight and management of the K-12 system. However, through WIOA, they are also responsible for overseeing and managing adult education and literacy programming.

Julia Schuster added that the delivery of career pathways can overlap between K-12 and adult education (e.g., aviation education in Burlington is taught to people of all ages by the same instructors).

Mary Anne Sheahan emphasized the Committee has significant work to do. She highlighted the lack of adult technical education centers in the state.

Victoria Biondolillo concurred that there is a lot of work to do. She also said there is a nexus between the CPC and the Training and Credentialing Committee; the two committees should work in tandem to help everyone who is going through training for the workforce.

Meg Hammond asked if there is a way to identify the collaboration between the two committees in the one-pager.

Victoria Biondolillo said yes.

Meg Hammond discussed the stigma around technical education. She said there is no certificate that CTEs hand out.

Mary Anne Sheahan said CTEs are now required to give out credentialing.

Meg Hammond asked if the credentialing connects to higher education as well.

Mary Anne Sheahan said it should.

Julia Schuster said there are credentials required for CTEs across the board. However, the degree top which they are recognized across different institutions is variable. She continued that when career pathways are not well defined, it makes it difficult for employers to evaluate credentials.

Meg Hammond asked where her organization, Generator, “sits” because they are not a CTE or a high school – they are a makerspace.

Victoria Biondolillo said Generator, and makerspaces in general, should be considered a partner in adult education; she emphasized that the Committee could work on definitions moving forward.

Victoria Biondolillo laid out the Committee’s procedures in the coming months:

* Abigail Rhim and she will send the one-pager to Committee members for edits and feedback.
* The Committee will meet once or twice within the coming months.
* The goal of the Committee should be to start working by summer.

Meg Hammond congratulated Victoria Biondolillo and Abigail Rhim for doing a wonderful job.

Victoria Biondolillo adjourned the meeting at 12:38 pm.

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Respectfully submitted by Nicholas Kebo