

Fall 2018

VERMONT
SCHOOL
BOARDS
ASSOCIATION



Statewide Health Insurance Negotiations Change the Bargaining Landscape

Nicole L. Mace, Executive Director

Act 11 of 2018 creates the Commission on Public School Employee Health Benefits, which will determine, through negotiations, the amounts of the premiums and out-of-pocket expenses for school employee health benefits that will be paid by school employers and employees.


The Commission has 10 members, five of whom are representatives of school

employees and five of whom are representatives of school employers. The representatives of school employees are appointed as follows: (1) four members appointed by the labor organization representing the greatest number of teachers, administrators and municipal school employees in the State (Vermont-NEA) and (2) one member appointed by the labor organization representing the second

INSURANCE continued on page 2

In this Newsletter

Secretary Dan French Headlines VSBA Regional Meetings	6
Models of Good Governance	8
VSBA/VSA Annual Conference	10
Your Voice Matters	16



greatest number of teachers, administrators and municipal school employees in the State (AFSCME). The five representatives of school employers are appointed by the organization representing the majority of public school boards in the State (VSBA).

The Commission is charged with negotiating: (1) the percentage of the premium for individual, two-person, parent-child, and family coverage that shall be borne by each school employer and the percentage that shall be borne by employees, (2) the amount of school employees' out-of-pocket expenses for which the school employer and school employees shall be responsible and whether school employers shall establish a health reimbursement arrangement or a health savings account, both, or neither, for their participating employees, and (3) the extent to which the employer or employee shall bear first dollar responsibility for out-of-pocket expenses if using a health reimbursement arrangement and whether the balance in a participating employee's health reimbursement arrangement shall roll over from year to year.

The Act states that the Commission shall not negotiate stand-alone vision or dental benefits or retired teacher benefits.

Impact on Local Bargaining



Health insurance has been removed from the scope of bargaining at the local level, which means the parties may not negotiate health benefits beyond what is agreed to by the Commission.

The timeframe for the Commission's negotiations established by Act 11 is intended to ensure the statewide process concludes before local negotiations get too far underway. The worst-case scenario would have the process concluding on December 15 of the year before all collective bargaining agreements in the state expire. In the first year, this means that local bargaining councils will know what the statewide benefit is on or before December 15, 2019.

Statewide Negotiations



The Commission must commence negotiations no later than April 1, 2019. The Commission must select a person to serve as fact finder to assist it in resolving any matters remaining in dispute if the Commission is unable to reach agreement. If the Commission cannot agree on a fact finder by April 5, the American Arbitration Association shall be asked to appoint the fact finder.

Also by April 5, the Commission must mutually agree on an arbitrator to decide all matters remaining in dispute if it is unable to reach an agreement within 30 days after receiving the fact finder's report. If the Commission is unable to mutually agree on an arbitrator, it must form a three-member panel of arbitrators (one selected by the representatives of school employees, one selected by the representatives of school employers and one appointed by the American Arbitration Association).

The Commission is required to enter into a written agreement incorporating all matters agreed to in negotiation. The terms of the agreement are required to be incorporated by reference into all local collective

bargaining agreements for school employees.

Dispute Resolution



If the Commission is unable to reach an agreement by August 1, it must meet with the fact finder by August 15. Before issuing his/her decision, the fact finder must attempt to mediate the matters remaining in dispute. If mediation fails to produce an agreement, the fact finder must submit a written report to the Commission by September 15, recommending a reasonable basis for the settlement of the matters remaining in dispute.

If the Commission is unable to resolve all matters remaining in dispute within 30 days after receiving the fact finder's report, the Commission must submit the matters remaining in dispute to the arbitrator. The parties must submit to the arbitrator their last best offer on all issues remaining in dispute. The arbitrator is required to select one of the last best offers in its entirety, without amendment.

The arbitrator must hold a hearing on or before November 15 at which the Commission members will submit all relevant evidence. In reaching a decision, the arbitrator is required to give weight to the following factors: (1) the interests and welfare of the public, (2) the financial ability of the Education Fund and school districts across the State to pay for the costs of health care benefits and coverage, (3) comparisons of health care benefits of school employees with health care benefits of similar employees in the public and private sectors in Vermont, (4) the average consumer prices for goods and

services, commonly known as the cost of living, and (5) prior and existing health care benefits and coverage for school employees.

At any time prior to the issuance of a decision by the arbitrator(s), the Commission may notify the arbitrator(s) of any additional issues on which a majority of the representatives of school employees and of the representatives of school employers have reached agreement.

The arbitrator must issue a decision within 30 days after the hearing. The decision is final and binding upon the Commission and all school employers and school employees; it is not subject to ratification.

Ratification of Agreement



The representatives of school employers and school employees must each develop procedures by which their members will ratify the agreement entered into by the Commission. If the agreement is determined by arbitration, it is not subject to ratification.

Duration



The length of the agreement must be negotiated by the Commission but cannot be less than two years.

Health Care Benefit Transition



Act 11 states that it is the intent of the General Assembly that the Commission endeavor to transition

INSURANCE continued on page 4

school employees and school employers to more equitable health care coverage statewide in a manner that is fair and practical for all parties involved.

For the agreement that will take effect on July 1, 2020, the Commission may agree to establish, or the arbitrator's decision may provide for, one set of contribution levels toward premiums and out-of-pocket expenses for teachers and administrators and a different set of contributions for non-licensed school employees (support staff).

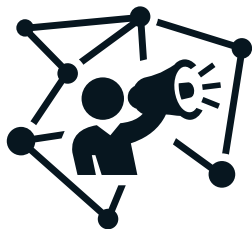
Term of Collective Bargaining Agreements



Act 11 states that **all collective bargaining agreements (not just health insurance provisions) between a SU/SD and school employees shall expire**

between July 1, 2020 and September 1, 2020. The initial agreement negotiated by the Commission shall be for incorporation by reference into collective bargaining agreements between a SU/SD and school employees that take effect on or after July 1, 2020.

VSBA Role & Process



Act 11 requires the VSBA to appoint five representatives of school employers to the Commission, and to adopt procedures

for ratification of an agreement entered into by the Commission.

At the annual meeting on October 18th, VSBA members will consider a resolution that outlines the process for the VSBA to appoint Commissioners and ratify any agreement reached by the parties. The proposed process for Commission appointments has the VSBA Board selecting applicants who provide regional representation, have experience on a negotiations council, and demonstrate willingness to participate in training and professional development regarding negotiations. The deadline for submission of applications via online form shall be November 1. The VSBA Board of Directors will appoint Commissioners at its November board meeting.

The proposed ratification process would require each supervisory union/supervisory district to notify the VSBA of the name, telephone number and e-mail address of its voting delegate by April 1, 2019. If the Commission enters into an agreement, the VSBA shall host an informational webinar for the voting delegates within ten calendar days after execution of the agreement. Within ten calendar days after the informational webinar, the VSBA will conduct an electronic ballot. Delegates will be provided at least ten calendar days' notice of the day of the vote. Delegates will be able to cast their vote through the electronic system between 7 am and 7 pm on the day of the vote.

Members are encouraged to attend the annual meeting to participate in the discussion and vote on this proposed process. Other preparations currently underway include a data collection tool jointly developed with the VT-NEA and solicitation of school board members' goals and concerns for statewide bargaining at the VSBA regional meetings. We will continue to keep members apprised of the process and seek your input as we navigate these uncharted waters. 🚌

Open Meeting Law Clarifies What Constitutes a Meeting

By Sue Ceglowski, VSBA Director of Legal and Policy Services

In Act 166, the legislature clarified what constitutes a meeting by stating what a meeting is not. These additions to the Open Meeting Law were effective July 1, 2018.

What is a meeting?

“**Meeting**” does not include any communication (including in person or through e-mail, telephone or teleconferencing) between members of a public body for the purpose of scheduling a meeting, organizing an agenda, or distributing materials to discuss at a meeting, *provided that no other business of the public body is discussed or conducted.*

“**Meeting**” also does not include occasions when a quorum of a public body attends social gatherings, conventions, conferences, training programs, press conferences, media events, or otherwise gathers, *provided that the public body does not discuss specific business of the public body that, at the time of the exchange, the participating members expect to be business of the public body at a later time.*

Finally, “**meeting**” does not include a gathering of a quorum of a public body at a duly warned meeting of another public body, *provided that the attending public body does not take action on its business.*

“Business of the public body” is defined as: the public body’s governmental functions, including any matter over which the public body has supervision, control, jurisdiction or advisory power.


Public Records Act Defines “Promptly” and Adds Certification Requirements

What is “Promptly”?

Under the Public Records Act, the custodian of a record must produce it “promptly” for inspection. Beginning July 1, 2018, “promptly” is defined as “immediately, with little or no delay, and, unless otherwise provided in this section, not more than three business days” (1) from the receipt of a request or (2) in the case of a reversal or appeal by a head of agency, from the date of the determination on appeal.”

A custodian who fails to comply with the applicable time limit provisions is deemed to have denied the request or appeal upon expiration of the time limit.

If the custodian considers the record to be exempt from inspection and copying, the custodian must promptly issue a written certification which:

- (1) identifies the records withheld
- (2) includes the statutory basis for denial and a brief statement of the reasons and supporting facts for denial
- (3) provides the names and titles or positions of each person responsible for the denial of the request
- (4) notifies the person of his or her right to appeal to the head of the agency any adverse determination. 

Secretary Dan French Headlines VSBA Regional Meetings



Dan French the new Vermont Secretary of Education

VSBA Regional Meetings got underway with the Chittenden/Grand Isle and Franklin Regions in Winooski on September 5. In addition to the election of VSBA regional representatives, the evening program includes an introduction to Dan French, recently appointed Secretary of Education, and AOE staff who present an informative overview of Act 173, the special education funding bill.

In his comments, Secretary French focuses on school board governance and responsibilities. He specifies the board's fiduciary responsibility to the public, its role in developing and monitoring policy, and its relationship with the superintendent.



Board members attending the Windsor regional meeting

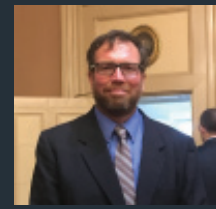
He also supports good governance and encourages all boards to adopt a best practice model of governance. (See the related article on page 8.) He goes on to address his overview of the AOE and his anticipated restructuring to “improve effectiveness and provide design leadership.”

Agency staff provide a thorough review of Act 173, including its purpose and history. They review what will change under the new Act and when.

Finally, VSBA Executive Director Nicole Mace opens the floor to small group discussions, encouraging member input for upcoming VSBA role in three key task forces or commissions. For more details, see page 16.

If you weren't able to attend your Regional Meeting or have additional thoughts on any of these issues, please email Nicole directly at nmace@vtsba.org. 🚌

A Word from the President



by Geo Honigford, VSBA President

There comes a time when an individual needs to recognize that it is the moment to move on either for personal reasons or because the institution is in need of a fresh face. Some of us reach that after 3 years on a school board, others are still serving at 20 plus years. Having thrown myself into the role of a school board member for 13 years, it seems odd that I am now in the final few months of my tenure. The vast majority of the time I spent working for my local and SU districts was enjoyable and rewarding, but the highlight of my board service has been the time that I have served on the VSBA board.

I was a little late to recognize the VSBA as playing a major role in my work on a local level. With a little urging I reluctantly ran for a seat to represent Windsor County on the VSBA board. I thought I'd serve out my term, make most of the meetings, but then boredom would set in and I would give up my seat for some other poor sap. Quite the opposite happened. I got totally pulled into the work and never missed a meeting. The VSBA board became the meeting that I looked forward to the most and I began wishing that I had joined the board in my earlier school board years.

I became a much better board member by watching and learning from the well-versed and knowledgeable set of board members that were on the VSBA board. Not only was I learning more about running and getting the most out of meetings, but I was also learning that my little area of the state did not hold universal truths for every school in the state. The statewide picture was diverse and multi-dimensional and statewide solutions needed to be reflective of that.

I have continually been impressed by the professionalism and dedication to public education that the small staff at the VSBA has, whether they are training board members in good governance or working the halls of the statehouse to get a legislative solution that works for boards. Your staff at the VSBA is strongly committed to working for students and a governance system that supports their learning.

I value that I can slowly decompress my role and stay active in the VSBA for another year as the past president. We are still facing challenging times in Vermont education, and board members around the state can take comfort that the VSBA has an excellent board and staff that is working hard to find the best solutions to further student learning in Vermont. 🚌

Models of Good Governance

by Susan Holson, VSBA Director of Education Services

At the VSBA Regional Meetings, Secretary of Education Dan French discusses the importance of good governance at the school board level.

Perhaps you've heard the term floating around in the context of your school board work, but what really is "governance"?

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) says the following on the concept of governance:

Governance has been defined to refer to structures and processes that are designed to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based participation. Governance also represents the norms, values and rules of the game through which public affairs are managed in a manner that is transparent, participatory, inclusive and responsive... In a broad sense, governance is about the culture and institutional environment in which citizens and stakeholders interact among themselves and participate in public affairs.¹

There are many governance models. Most school boards in Vermont rely on the VSBA's Essential Work of Vermont School Boards for their governance model. Others rely on Policy Governance®, which will be covered more thoroughly in a future edition of *From the Boardroom*.

The Essential Work of Vermont School Boards (Essentials) was developed by the VSBA and introduced in 2012. It is the core of most of the board development and trainings offered by the VSBA. Loosely adapted from the National School Boards Association's *Key Work of School Boards*, the Essentials framework is tailored to the unique needs of school boards in Vermont.

The Essentials governance model is comprised of six domains:

1 Engage the Community and Establish a Vision

The Board is in the strongest position when it is engaged with the community, clear in its vision for education, and unified in its direction. Once the vision is in place, the Board then takes on the responsibility for monitoring progress and making policy and budgetary decisions to achieve the vision.

2 Adopt Policy

The development and maintenance of school district policies that articulate the values and concerns of the Board as trustees of the school district is the central job of a school board.

3 Board and Superintendent Partnership

Perhaps the most important decision a board makes is to hire a qualified superintendent to lead and manage education throughout the district or supervisory union. Boards provide oversight; they do not manage day-to-day operations of the school system. Vermont law designates the superintendent as the chief executive officer for the supervisory union/district. As CEO, the superintendent is accountable for the operations of the entire school system.

4 Develop a Budget and Assure Financial Oversight


Financial resources support the delivery of education. Boards have an important role in assuring the education system has sufficient resources to achieve its mission and in providing high-level financial oversight to assure that resources are properly managed on behalf of taxpayers.

5 Monitor Progress

The Board is accountable to the community to ensure that the district makes reasonable progress in achieving outcomes for students and that the system operates in compliance with all policies, laws, and regulations. To meet this obligation, the board needs to regularly monitor both of these areas. For administrators to be able to produce evidence related to these areas, the Board should clearly identify the student learning outcomes and system operations outcomes it expects, based on the Board's vision, budget policy, strategic plan and goals.

6 Effective and Ethical Operations

School boards are public bodies entrusted by the community with overseeing the system of education for children in the district. As elected officials, school board members must act with integrity and adhere to the highest ethical standards. Lawful and effective operations are crucial to a strong school board. Effective operations are characterized by well-organized meetings with agendas that focus discussion and decision making, engaged board members who have the information necessary to make informed decisions, and practices, protocols and policies that are legally compliant.

For more extensive information about the Essential Work of Vermont School Boards, visit the Tool Kit at vtsba.org. If you'd like to learn more about board development activities around good governance, please contact Susan Holson, VSBA Director of Education Services at 802-223-3580 or sholson@vtsba.org. 

¹ Source: *Education: Concept of Governance*. Retrieved from UNESCO: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/strengthening-education-systems/quality-framework/technical-notes/concept-of-governance/>

VERMONT SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION

2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE: OCTOBER

DESIGNING FOR EQUITY AND OPPORTUNITY ALL OUR KIDS:

Vermont's schools meet the needs and aspirations of many of our students, yet we have not found a way to systematically create learning environments that provide a world-class education to every student. Vermont has a deep commitment to equity, yet we see persistent performance gaps between populations disaggregated by race, gender, disability, and socioeconomic status. These persistent inequities call upon us all to design systems that better leverage the resources and talents in our public schools and communities in service of all our kids.



Schedule of Events

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18

- 8:30 **Welcome**
- 9:00 **Keynote Address: Caroline Hill**
- 10:30 **Workshops**
- 11:45 **Lunch: "I'm From Here"**
- 12:30 **Student/School Panel on Equity Initiatives in Vermont**
- 2:00 **Workshops**
- 3:15 **VSBA/VSA Business Meetings**
- 4:45 **Afternoon Wellness Options**
- 6:00 **Reception**
- 6:30 **Dinner: Vermont Secretary of Education, Dan French**
- 8:15 **Trivia**

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19

- 8:00 **VSBIT Annual Meeting**
- 8:15 **VEHI Annual Meeting**
- 8:45 **Welcome**
- 9:00 **Designing for Equity: Promising Practices**
- 10:45 **Keynote Address: Paul Reville**
- 12:00 **Lunch**
- 1:00 **Adjourn**

The VSBA/VSA Annual Conference will feature keynote presentations from Caroline Hill and Paul Reville, a panel of Vermont student leaders and activists, promising practices in districts across the state, and workshops on topics ranging from restorative justice practices, inclusive district cultures, community engagement strategies, and tools to achieve greater equity in your school district.

REGISTRATION DEADLINE
REGISTER AT www.vtvsba.org

1 & VERMONT SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

BER 18 & 19 @ LAKE MOREY RESORT

Don't miss out on this year's annual VSBA/VSA conference on! The program offerings promise to be powerful and provocative.

A panel of Vermont student activists who will share their experiences, challenges, and successes as they navigated the obstacles to affecting change in their systems, and practitioners will offer insights and opportunities through a discussion of their promising practices in designing for equity.

Workshops will offer something for everyone. Some of the planned topics include:

- Diverse Workforce Recruitment and Retention
- Lessons in Community Engagement
- The Vermont Annual Snapshot
- Designing for Equity
- Digging Deeper into Policy Governance
- Whole School Restorative Justice
- Partnering to Increase Equity in Postsecondary Aspirations and Attainment
- School Safety: Lessons Learned from Fair Haven
- An Introduction to School-Based Councils



And, in case that's not enough, there will be the second annual VSBA/VSA Trivia Contest on Thursday evening!

Secretary Dan French will give remarks during dinner on Thursday.

The VSBA Annual Business Meeting will be held on Thursday afternoon at 3:15. Join us to get organizational updates and to take action on the 17 resolutions submitted by member boards. This is the time to actively participate in your association!

IS FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12
(Events/Annual Conference)



2018 VSBA/VSA CONFERENCE

WORKSHOPS

DIVERSE WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Northern New England offers a unique set of challenges in the recruitment and retention of a racially or culturally diverse workforce. Learn to avoid the pitfalls and enrich your recruitment and retention toolkit with these recommended strategies and techniques.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Lessons from Essex Westford School District

Essex Westford School District is proud of the work they have done to engage their community in school matters and creating positive changes. This workshop will walk you through key steps and processes that led to greater community engagement in EWSD.

THE VERMONT ANNUAL SNAPSHOT

This coming December, the first Vermont Annual Snapshot will be released. The Annual Snapshot is an online tool where you can find quantitative performance data about the students in your school, your SU/SD, and the state as a whole. Based on indicators determined by stakeholders across the state, the snapshot is a tool for VT communities to better understand how well their schools and groups of students within their schools are performing and find opportunities for growth and improvement. In addition to performance measures, the Annual Snapshot will include an Equity Gap metric to understand how historically marginalized student populations are performing compared to their peers, allowing for schools and communities to develop systems to address pervasive performance gaps. Come engage in a conversation on the snapshot, its rollout, and how you can prepare your community to use it to improve teaching and learning.

DESIGNING FOR EQUITY: A FIRESTARTER

Participants will explore a few of the key experiences and structures that can be used to design for equity in their districts and schools.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO POLICY GOVERNANCE

This workshop is intended for board members and superintendents who are in the implementation stages of Policy Governance (PG) and want to delve more deeply into areas of PG such as: the Monitoring Process, Community Engagement, Board Structures and/or Board-Superintendent Relationship. The presenters intend to briefly touch on the foundations of PG that should be in place and then solicit specific areas of interest from participants to shape the workshop.

WHAT IS WHOLE SCHOOL RESTORATIVE JUSTICE?

Implementation of Restorative Approaches in schools has been linked to reduced discipline referrals; reductions in violent and serious incidents; decreases in punitive and exclusionary discipline responses; increased student attendance and improved academic outcomes; and enhanced social emotional learning. (see <http://www.greenomegal3c.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/RJ-in-School-outcomes.pdf>)

PARTNERING TO INCREASE EQUITY IN POSTSECONDARY ASPIRATIONS AND ATTAINMENT

70% of the jobs in Vermont's 2025 economy and beyond will require learning after high school. Collaboration between public PreK-12 and postsecondary systems is critical to prepare students for the education and training they will need to get those jobs. Unfortunately, Vermont high school graduates access postsecondary opportunities at some of the lowest rates in New England. While new initiatives have increased access to postsecondary options in Vermont, the continuation gap for first-generation, low-income students and boys, in particular, is widening. In this workshop, we will explore data related to postsecondary aspiration, enrollment, and completion, share success stories from the field, and discuss with participants how the pre-k-12 and postsecondary systems might collaborate further to close equity gaps. In particular, how can we work together to ensure dual enrollment, work-based learning, and early college increase access and close equity gaps? Can districts address barriers to continuation through college/career preparation, more open access to SAT/ACT testing, and FAFSA completion? How can we change the narrative to create an expectation of continued learning after high school?

LESSONS LEARNED FROM FAIR HAVEN

This workshop will cover the lessons learned and impacts from the threat of a school shooting at Fair Haven High School last year. Topics to be discussed will include: the threat assessment process, coordination with local/state law enforcement, impacts on the school and the community and the stress and trauma associated with managing this type of incident.

CREATING A CULTURE OF EMPLOYEE WELLNESS IN SCHOOLS

Enjoy an exploration of the Habit Design process that makes wellness accessible to everyone. Dive into the methodology and develop your own plan to help make a personal habit solid once and for all. Hear a brief intro about PATH (VEHI's employee wellness program) and its impact on health and why Habit Design is a powerful tool in a successful program.

THE WHO, WHAT & WHY OF SCHOOL-BASED COUNCILS

Many newly-unified districts referenced school-based councils in their articles of agreement, but the purpose and role of these councils is not clear. Join VSBA Executive Director Nicole Mace for an overview of the issues boards and administrators need to work through as they determine whether and how to establish school-based councils in their districts.

Student Freedom of Expression in School Media Policy Adoption Reminder

Last year, the legislature took action to ensure free speech and free press protection for public school students in order to encourage students to become educated, informed and responsible members of society.

16 V.S.A. Section 1623 requires each school or its governing body to adopt a written freedom of expression policy. To

C.3.POLICIES		Code Policy		Code Policy	
Code Policy	Updated	Code Policy	Updated	Code Policy	Updated
C31 Student Records	12/18/15	C34 Student Conduct and Discipline	04/30/11	C36 Student Activities	04/30/11
C32 Student Councils	12/18/15	C35 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C37 Admissions of Student Records	03/18/16
C33 Student Safety	12/18/15	C38 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C38 Student Activities	03/18/16
C34 Student Safety	12/18/15	C39 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C39 Student Activities	03/18/16
C35 Student Safety	12/18/15	C40 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C40 Student Activities	03/18/16
C36 Student Safety	12/18/15	C41 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C41 Student Activities	03/18/16
C37 Student Safety	12/18/15	C42 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C42 Student Activities	03/18/16
C38 Student Safety	12/18/15	C43 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C43 Student Activities	03/18/16
C39 Student Safety	12/18/15	C44 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C44 Student Activities	03/18/16
C40 Student Safety	12/18/15	C45 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C45 Student Activities	03/18/16
C41 Student Safety	12/18/15	C46 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C46 Student Activities	03/18/16
C42 Student Safety	12/18/15	C47 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C47 Student Activities	03/18/16
C43 Student Safety	12/18/15	C48 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C48 Student Activities	03/18/16
C44 Student Safety	12/18/15	C49 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C49 Student Activities	03/18/16
C45 Student Safety	12/18/15	C50 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C50 Student Activities	03/18/16
C46 Student Safety	12/18/15	C51 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C51 Student Activities	03/18/16
C47 Student Safety	12/18/15	C52 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C52 Student Activities	03/18/16
C48 Student Safety	12/18/15	C53 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C53 Student Activities	03/18/16
C49 Student Safety	12/18/15	C54 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C54 Student Activities	03/18/16
C50 Student Safety	12/18/15	C55 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C55 Student Activities	03/18/16
C51 Student Safety	12/18/15	C56 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C56 Student Activities	03/18/16
C52 Student Safety	12/18/15	C57 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C57 Student Activities	03/18/16
C53 Student Safety	12/18/15	C58 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C58 Student Activities	03/18/16
C54 Student Safety	12/18/15	C59 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C59 Student Activities	03/18/16
C55 Student Safety	12/18/15	C60 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C60 Student Activities	03/18/16
C56 Student Safety	12/18/15	C61 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C61 Student Activities	03/18/16
C57 Student Safety	12/18/15	C62 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C62 Student Activities	03/18/16
C58 Student Safety	12/18/15	C63 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C63 Student Activities	03/18/16
C59 Student Safety	12/18/15	C64 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C64 Student Activities	03/18/16
C60 Student Safety	12/18/15	C65 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C65 Student Activities	03/18/16
C61 Student Safety	12/18/15	C66 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C66 Student Activities	03/18/16
C62 Student Safety	12/18/15	C67 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C67 Student Activities	03/18/16
C63 Student Safety	12/18/15	C68 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C68 Student Activities	03/18/16
C64 Student Safety	12/18/15	C69 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C69 Student Activities	03/18/16
C65 Student Safety	12/18/15	C70 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C70 Student Activities	03/18/16
C66 Student Safety	12/18/15	C71 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C71 Student Activities	03/18/16
C67 Student Safety	12/18/15	C72 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C72 Student Activities	03/18/16
C68 Student Safety	12/18/15	C73 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C73 Student Activities	03/18/16
C69 Student Safety	12/18/15	C74 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C74 Student Activities	03/18/16
C70 Student Safety	12/18/15	C75 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C75 Student Activities	03/18/16
C71 Student Safety	12/18/15	C76 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C76 Student Activities	03/18/16
C72 Student Safety	12/18/15	C77 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C77 Student Activities	03/18/16
C73 Student Safety	12/18/15	C78 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C78 Student Activities	03/18/16
C74 Student Safety	12/18/15	C79 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C79 Student Activities	03/18/16
C75 Student Safety	12/18/15	C80 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C80 Student Activities	03/18/16
C76 Student Safety	12/18/15	C81 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C81 Student Activities	03/18/16
C77 Student Safety	12/18/15	C82 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C82 Student Activities	03/18/16
C78 Student Safety	12/18/15	C83 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C83 Student Activities	03/18/16
C79 Student Safety	12/18/15	C84 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C84 Student Activities	03/18/16
C80 Student Safety	12/18/15	C85 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C85 Student Activities	03/18/16
C81 Student Safety	12/18/15	C86 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C86 Student Activities	03/18/16
C82 Student Safety	12/18/15	C87 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C87 Student Activities	03/18/16
C83 Student Safety	12/18/15	C88 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C88 Student Activities	03/18/16
C84 Student Safety	12/18/15	C89 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C89 Student Activities	03/18/16
C85 Student Safety	12/18/15	C90 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C90 Student Activities	03/18/16
C86 Student Safety	12/18/15	C91 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C91 Student Activities	03/18/16
C87 Student Safety	12/18/15	C92 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C92 Student Activities	03/18/16
C88 Student Safety	12/18/15	C93 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C93 Student Activities	03/18/16
C89 Student Safety	12/18/15	C94 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C94 Student Activities	03/18/16
C90 Student Safety	12/18/15	C95 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C95 Student Activities	03/18/16
C91 Student Safety	12/18/15	C96 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C96 Student Activities	03/18/16
C92 Student Safety	12/18/15	C97 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C97 Student Activities	03/18/16
C93 Student Safety	12/18/15	C98 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C98 Student Activities	03/18/16
C94 Student Safety	12/18/15	C99 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C99 Student Activities	03/18/16
C95 Student Safety	12/18/15	C100 Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media	11/10/17	C100 Student Activities	03/18/16



assist you with this requirement, VSBA posted a model policy in March of 2018 entitled “Student Freedom of Expression in School Sponsored Media.” If your district does not have a policy in place, this is a reminder that the new model policy is in VSBA’s Policy Manual on our website under Required Policies: Students. 🚌



Need Help?

VSBA Board Development services are available to help you and your board! Whether you’re eager to develop a deeper understanding of your job as a board, working on a strategic plan with your superintendent, undergoing board self-assessment, or building your annual work plan, we are here to help.

In addition to the regularly scheduled board development activities scheduled throughout the state (and outlined on pages 8 and 9) we can travel to your meeting and facilitate training on topics that are specific to your board.

Contact Susan Holson for more details.
sholson@vtvsba.org or 802-223-3580



Please tell your students..

“Yes, you should FAFSA now”

A new video from Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) makes the case for filling out the FAFSA, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

“As tuition costs continue to skyrocket, it is more important than ever to know what help is available to pay for college. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid – commonly known as the FAFSA – is the key to securing financial aid,” Sanders said. “Filling out the FAFSA can open doors to federal, state and college-specific financial aid.”


Senator Sanders’ video is part of an ambitious get-the-word-out campaign from Vermont Student Assistance Corp. and statewide partners, including the Agency of Education, University of Vermont, Vermont State Colleges System and Vermont Principals’ Association.

In Vermont, about 40 percent of high school seniors don’t file a FAFSA. According to NerdWallet, Vermonters are leaving about \$4.6 million on the table each year, which works out to about \$5,400 per year for eligible students. That’s over \$21,000 in four years.

When it comes to financial aid for education and training after high school, the sooner you file the better, said Marilyn Cargill, vice president of financial aid services at VSAC.

In fact, if you fill out the FAFSA before Nov. 30, nine Vermont colleges have an extra incentive – an additional \$1,000 FAFSA scholarship drawing when you apply to one of these schools: Bennington College, Castleton University, Community College of Vermont, Northern Vermont University, Saint Michael’s College, Southern Vermont College, Sterling College, University of Vermont or Vermont Technical College.

“The FAFSA is the key, literally the gateway, to all financial aid – federal Pell grants, the Vermont State Grant, many scholarships, institutional aid, work-study programs and loans,” Cargill said. “If you decide not to fill out the FAFSA, you are very likely going to overpay for your education. Or you may choose not to go, which is an even bigger, more expensive mistake.”

You can get FAFSA help at VSAC’s FAFSA Fridays. Or attend a VSAC Financial Aid Forms Workshop in your area. Still got questions? Call 833-802-VSAC. 



Your Voice Matters

Current Opportunities to Shape State Policy

The VSBA is representing school boards on three key commissions or task forces this year, and we need your input. At the regional meetings this fall, we asked members to share information, concerns, and questions to the VSBA to help inform our participation in the following initiatives:

- ▶ **Act 173 Special Education Funding Advisory Group:** Act 173 makes significant changes to the way the state delivers services to struggling students and how we fund special education. The act creates an advisory group that will meet from September 2018 through June 2021. VSBA has a seat on the group. You can find more information about the law and the advisory group on the Agency of Education website.
- ▶ **Act 11 Student/Staff Ratios Task Force:** Act 11 creates a task force charged with
 - (1) reviewing current staff-to-student count ratios for specific categories of schools and school district configurations, and establishing optimal target ratios for different school district configurations;
 - (2) identifying barriers that hamper staffing flexibility at the local level, including whether aspects of the regulatory environment, including mandatory staffing requirements and collective bargaining or other contractual obligations, contribute to lower staff-to-student ratios;
 - (3) aligning to the greatest extent possible the work of the Task Force with existing research findings and reports, based on studies conducted either nationally or in New England, concerning optimal classroom practices and resources, class and school sizes for successful learning outcomes, and the impact of population decline on rural schools;
 - (4) attending to compliance with federal rules and regulations, so as to avoid jeopardizing the State's federal funding;
 - (5) determining a mechanism or mechanisms that account for the effects of familial and community-level poverty and human services need, including student experiences of trauma and familial or community-level addiction, on staffing ratios;

- (6) considering the impact on staff-to-student ratios due to students' enrollment with independent schools; and
- (7) developing recommended strategies for districts to help them meet targets.

VSBA has a seat on the ratios task force, along with representatives from the education associations and representatives from Vermont postsecondary institutions who have expertise in multi-age classrooms and teaching strategies, interdisciplinary instruction, school realignment and reconfiguration, and the impact of community poverty, trauma, or addiction on education staffing, as well as a national expert in rural education.

Act 11 Commission on School Employee Health Benefits: The VSBA is charged with appointing and supporting five members to the commission charged with negotiating school employee health benefits on behalf of all school districts in the state. For more information about the Commission, see page 1.

If you were unable to attend the VSBA's regional meeting to provide your input on these issues, please send your comments, questions and concerns to Nicole Mace at nmace@vtsba.org. 🚌



**VERMONT
SCHOOL
BOARDS
ASSOCIATION**
Great Governance, Excellent Education, Strong Communities

MISSION

The VSBA exists to achieve Vermont's vision for public education by supporting all school boards to serve as effective trustees for education on behalf of their communities and by providing a strong collective voice toward enhancing the cause of public education in Vermont.

● ● ●



VISION

The VSBA envisions a state where every student has access to and is engaged in a world-class public education, where local boards provide student-focused oversight of education systems, and where educators, families, and communities are engaged partners, ensuring that the futures of all Vermont children are driven by their aspirations, not bound by their circumstances.

● | ●



Mark your calendar!

Anyone who registers to attend a webinar will receive an email following the event with a link to the video, the handouts and answers to any unanswered questions (regardless of attendance).

Webinar registration is now open for the following

FREE programs:



11/01/18

State Education Funding Dynamics

The 2018 legislative season was bogged down in budget issues - especially those pertaining to education funding.



12/06/18

Act 46 Final State Plan

The final Act 46 state plan is due by December 1, 2018. This webinar will focus on default articles of agreement and Act 49 process for modifying those articles.



01/03/19

Preparing for the Annual Meeting

Organize early for your annual meeting and budget presentations. Get tips on what information to include and how to present it clearly.



02/07/19

Transitions in Governance

Has your district recently merged or are you in the midst of consolidation? It's complicated! We'll discuss some of the issues newly-merged and merging boards are encountering and offer guidance on overseeing the process.



03/07/19

Board Chair 101

Effective and Ethical Operations - Success of a school board heavily depends on its chair. The chair is responsible for leadership and team dynamics, board operations, and setting the overall direction of the board's work by running efficient and productive meetings. Whether you're a current board chair, an aspiring chair for your newly organizing board, or a board member who is about to vote on your chair for the next year, it's critical to understand the importance and complexity of this crucial role on the board.



04/04/19

Welcome to the School Board

New board members don't always understand what they've just signed up for. Getting elected is the easy part! Join us as we review the role of a school board and the Essential Work of Vermont School Boards.



05/02/19

Planning a Board Retreat

Does your board get bogged down in day-to-day work at your regular meetings throughout the year? A summer retreat is the perfect opportunity to step back and focus on the big picture. In this webinar we'll address the value of board self-assessment, goal setting, and developing an annual work plan.



06/06/19

Emerging Issues in Negotiations

Get updated on the first-ever statewide health care bargaining effort.



07/02/19

Vision and Community Engagement

The board is responsible for adopting a vision for the school district and then reviewing it periodically to ensure its relevance. Learn about strategies to develop the vision statement and include the community in the process.



08/01/19

Monitoring Progress

School board work means providing excellent educational opportunities for all students and a good return on taxpayers' investment. How do you know if you're succeeding? Explore some options for monitoring student outcomes, financial oversight, and progress toward the board's goals.

VSBA Webinars are scheduled for the first Thursday of each month for one hour from 6:00-7:00 p.m. All registered participants receive the webinar video, PowerPoint presentation, and any follow-up materials whether they are able to attend or not.

Register now at www.vtvsba.org/webinars



2 Prospect Street
Suite 4
Montpelier, VT 05602-3579
www.vtvsba.org

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Permit #222
Barre, VT 05641