

What is the Flexible Pathways Initiative?

Vermont's Flexible Pathways Initiative provides flexibility for school districts and enables learners to pursue personalized pathways to college and career readiness that include dual enrollment and work-based learning opportunities.

What is a Personalized Learning Plan (henceforth referred to as a PLP)?

Act 77 of 2013 paved the way for schools to “work with every student in grade seven through grade 12 in an ongoing personalized learning planning process that: (A) identifies the student’s emerging abilities, aptitude, and disposition; (B) includes participation by families and other engaged adults; (C) guides decisions regarding course offerings and other high-quality educational experiences; and (D) is documented by a personalized learning plan (PLP).” PLPs should be developmentally appropriate and define the scope and rigor of academic and experiential opportunities necessary for a secondary student to complete secondary school successfully, attain postsecondary readiness, and be prepared to engage actively in civic life.

What about the bill at hand?

The intention of Act 77 is what led to the proposed expansion of it via the bill at hand. This bill proposed to require school districts to include military-related options in career development and postsecondary planning resources as part of the Flexible Pathways Initiative and a student’s PLP. The bill also proposes to require the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) to include information regarding all military-related options available for postsecondary planning and financial aid opportunities in all planning resources it produces.

What are some examples of those military-related options?

-JROTC, Civil Air Patrol, and Split Training (Army, Army National Guard, and Coast Guard).

Conclusion:

-A great number of civic and business leaders have credited their time in the military, no matter how short or long, to their success. Currently, schools are following federal law to the letter of the law, but not the spirit of the law when it comes to providing opportunities for high school-aged individuals to learn more about military service. Military service provides steady income and benefits including health and education, relevant vocational training that can be used after their time in service, leadership opportunities, lessons on discipline, a pathway to citizenship, and exposure to a world that is larger than just Vermont so that they can learn from the world and bring good ideas back to their home state.