



**EDUCATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday January 6, 2020 | 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.**  
**Teleconference**

**Commissioners present:** Kellie Campbell, Sarah Mell

**Commissioners absent:** Nancy Brooks

**Advisors present:** Lisa Townsen of Vermont Women in Higher Education, Jen Horowitz of Let's Grow Kids, Rhoni Basden of Vermont Works for Women, Amy Brady of Voices for Vermont's Children, Amy Russo-Perler of Vermont Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance, Morgan Crossman of Building Bright Futures.

**Staff present:** Lilly Talbert

**Presiding:** Kellie Campbell

**Recording:** Lilly Talbert

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**Called to order at 9:01 a.m.**

Kellie reviewed the agenda and lead a round of introductions.

Committee members provided these organizational updates:

Building Bright Futures: Morgan announced release of Building Bright Futures' 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the report, ***How Are Vermont's Young Children and Families?*** and a virtual briefing taking place next [Monday January 11th, 1:30-2:30 via Zoom](#). The briefing will include highlights from the report, and will feature Governor Scott, Senator Balint, SAC Co-Chair Cheryle Wilcox, and Parent Leader Lexi Duquette. [Registration link here](#). The report highlights the significant impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Vermont's Early Childhood system and identifies indicators to watch over the next 5 years to see the impact of the pandemic on service provision and outcomes over time. The full report or sections will be useful our committee members as partners, informing and illustrating demand for this important work: it contains one-page sections – useful for those advocating on specific topic areas. While gaps and needs were identified across sectors, the briefing will focus on the challenges children and families face in the areas of basic needs, mental health, and child development and education. Other highlights from the report include: an overview of the updated Vermont Early Childhood Action Plan; a new

chapter on the continuum of child development and education; regional profiles; and 2020 State Advisory Council Recommendations. A print copy can be requested [here](#).

Also on Monday, January 11th, the new **Vermont Early Childhood Resource, Data, and Policy Center** goes live. The center, hosted by Building Bright Futures and in collaboration with UVM and the state, is a centralized, one-stop-shop for stakeholders to view the latest data (state based, national and census data), resources, and policy recommendations. Contact Morgan to be listed as a resource.

Vermont Works for Women: Rhoni reflected on the word of 2020 for VWW: “pivot” and the actions staff is taking to pivot to be a better support, especially with the focus from “hands on” opportunities. VWW has adapted programming and approaches to continue engagement with youth during the pandemic, and with young people. They’re connecting with employer partners to help recruit women, to address barriers that demographic is facing ,and to building up the pipeline. VWW welcomes collaborations with other organizations. They’re interested in doing some research into guidance and language in student handbooks. They’re receiving more requests for gender equity support from schools and tech centers. They’re also hearing stories about what hinders individual achievement.

Kellie asked about themes in this work, and what differences they notice, esp. geographically, ex: physical access to trainings. Rhoni responded that it is often cultural: seeing more women (or less women) in a field, experiencing harassment, being influenced by other’s stories bad experiences. They might be looking for a shorter training in order to reap a paycheck, and with COVID-19, all is exacerbated, financial pressure, child care and responsibilities at home.

Vermont Women in Higher Education: Lisa spoke about UVM’s new [UVM Office of Engagement](#) serving as the university’s “front door” for UVM research, resources and people. UVM faculty’s research can help other organizations, an example is the above described Vermont Early Childhood Resource, Data, and Policy Center.

Voices for Vermont’s Children: Amy: Voices is prepared for today’s start of the session and the pursuit of legislation for an Office of Child Advocate. Former VCW Commissioners and current legislators Rep. Kornheiser and Rep. Redmond have been helpful. Voices will release the new Kids Count report next week.

Let’s Grow Kids: Jen reported the release of their legislative agenda, at a Virtual Policy Briefing, taking place Tuesday, January 12. This will feature Aly Richards and Chief of Strategy Trey Martin reviewing child care policy goals for the legislative session, and how these goals will get us closer to ensuring all Vermont families have access to high-quality, affordable child care. Jen also reported that a White Paper and a press conference will also take place, later in month.

Vermont Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance: Amy reported they are working on finalizing a legislative agenda as well and they’ve just hired Dan Brown, who previously worked at VPIRG and on the Sanders and Zuckerman campaigns.

Lilly shared [VCW's Coffee and Conversation event taking place next Thursday](#).

Kellie has been focused on the future of the Vermont State College System and transformation of that system to best serve students and our economy. Access is central focus for Kellie, and removing barriers. She shared some data from the Helping Vermonters Get To Work Initiative supported through CARES funding in partnership with the Vermont State Colleges. Of the 302 inquiries about this program to VTC, 91 were from males and 206 were from females. This was a workforce initiative, with wrap-around services. Mostly women inquiring and considering trainings and education in light of those supports.

Rhoni said she sat on the board of TENN. ACHIEVES – a program providing free college tuition and even books. The program data only saw uptakes where there was public transportation and child care available, not in rural areas. Making it free doesn't drive enrollment – services and support are needed. Mentors for that program reported lack of understanding and comfort of college culture, ex: how to navigate the basics: changing classes, anacronisms. Students were intimidated and dropped out immediately.

Kellie spoke about [Advance Vermont](#) – working adults need access to the basics first, before training/education.

The group spoke about the middle and high school population and wondered about data resources. Sarah described data collected in the [Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey](#) sponsored by the Health Department and the Agency of Education, and also through the [Network's Askable Adult campaign](#) and also mentioned Spectrum. Rhoni referenced data that student organizations in each school might be able to provide, though more often present in well-resourced schools. Amy talked about [YRBS Data Digest – Vermont Afterschool](#) programs. Jen spoke about [UpwardBound programs](#). Kellie wondered about if there is comprehensive work in this area that can peel out systemic challenges that each population faces.

The group discussed revisions to the committee description language. The group worked together to add, refine and suggest edits.

Sarah reported she is meeting with Andrea at PPNNE about sexuality education curriculum tomorrow.

**Meeting adjourned at 10:07 a.m.**