

Vermont Transfer Guarantee Memorandum of Agreement

Between

**New England Board of Higher Education
Community College of Vermont
Association of Vermont Independent Colleges**

and

Vermont Four-Year Receiving Institution Signatory to the Guarantee MOA

November 2023

Vermont Transfer Guarantee Memorandum of Agreement

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I. Background

In November 2019, the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) received a three-year grant, co-funded by the Teagle Foundation and the Davis Educational Foundation, to implement the New England Transfer Guarantee in Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Fully operationalized in the southern New England states as of Fall 2021, the initiative enables eligible community college graduates to transfer into participating four-year institutions – admission guaranteed. The Guarantee is modeled on existing state-specific transfer policies, thereby unifying public and independent transfer in these three states and increasing access and opportunity for transfer students. The structure of the Guarantee also addresses fundamental barriers to transfer success. Receiving institutions agree to waive their application fee and guarantee the transfer of associate-earned credits to mitigate the credit loss that typically plagues transfer students—especially to independent colleges and universities. These institutions also commit to making community college transfer students eligible for meaningful institutional aid in the form of grants and scholarships. At the core of the initiative, then, is an unwavering commitment to equity, opportunity, and access for all students in higher education.

In July 2022, NEBHE received three-year implementation grant awards from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations, the Teagle Foundation, the Davis Educational Foundation and the Lloyd G. Balfour Foundation to expand the New England Transfer Guarantee to Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont.

II. Vermont Transfer Guarantee

NEBHE's implementation partners for the Vermont Transfer Guarantee include the Community College of Vermont (CCV) and the Association of Vermont Independent Colleges (AVIC). The Vermont Transfer Guarantee is founded upon existing associate degree and general education transfer policies between the Community College of Vermont and in-state four-year colleges and universities. Four-year independent institutions will align with state policy and adhere to additional Vermont Transfer Guarantee provisions. The result will be a seamless, unified system of transfer statewide and an expanded menu of transfer options for the state's community college students.

Four-Year Institutions

With the goal of unifying guaranteed transfer of an associate degree statewide, both public and independent four-year colleges and universities are invited to participate in the Vermont Transfer Guarantee. MOA submissions will be processed on a rolling basis; four-year receiving institutions may elect to participate at any time. Participating signatory four-year receiving institutions will demonstrate a strong commitment to transparent transfer practices and promote

a transfer-receptive culture at their college or university. Participating institutions will adhere to all required policies outlined in this agreement, and embrace the best practices recommended herein.

The Vermont Transfer Guarantee will ensure acceptance at participating four-year institutions for CCV associate-degree-bearing students, regardless of degree type, who have met a minimum grade point average (GPA) requirement of 2.0, 2.5 or 3.0. Each individual participating four-year receiving institution will self-select a qualifying GPA for guaranteed admission from these options.

III. Purpose

This Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Community College Vermont, the Association of Vermont Independent Colleges, the New England Board of Higher Education and Sterling College signed on 9-26-24 serves as the agreement for the Vermont Transfer Guarantee. The MOA applies roles and responsibilities and terms and conditions to the signatories of this agreement. Signatories include the president of each organization or their designee.

IV. Roles and Responsibilities: Initiative Facilitator and Founding Partners

A. Initiative Facilitator: New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE)

NEBHE was established in 1955 by the six New England governors and authorized as a regional higher education compact by Congress. NEBHE advances equitable postsecondary outcomes through convening, research, and programs for students, institution leaders and policymakers. NEBHE will serve as the administrator and facilitator of the Vermont Transfer Guarantee. Under the Vermont Transfer Guarantee, NEBHE will:

1. Serve as the administrator for the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations, Teagle Foundation, Davis Educational Foundation and Lloyd G. Balfour Foundation grant awards.
2. Allocate resources from the grant sources to support the Vermont Transfer Guarantee.
3. Coordinate the operation of the Vermont Transfer Guarantee Steering Committee.
4. Coordinate all aspects of the Vermont Transfer Guarantee in consultation with its primary partners – CCV and AVIC.
5. Plan and deliver all state convenings.
6. Develop all necessary documents to guide implementation.
7. Provide technical assistance to participating institutions.
8. Provide training to transfer advisors, admissions counselors, community college staff and participating four-year institutions.
9. Develop press release templates for use by partners and participating institutions.

10. Develop the scope and plan for a student-facing landing page, including creation, maintenance and updating.
11. Develop a public engagement plan for promoting the Vermont Transfer Guarantee.
12. Develop and implement enrollment data collection.
13. Generate resources that support the sustainability of this initiative.
14. Seek additional grant funds through foundations and other means to support the Vermont Transfer Guarantee if needed.

B. Signatory Partner: Community College of Vermont

CCV is Vermont’s second-largest college, serving nearly 10,000 students each year and supporting and challenging all students in meeting their educational goals through an abiding commitment to access, affordability, and student success. Under the Vermont Transfer Guarantee, the CCV Academic Dean’s office will:

1. Provide representation, in the form of one member, to the Vermont Transfer Guarantee Steering Committee.
2. Advise on policy, resource development, program promotion and sustainability.
3. Provide critical information to key institutional staff such as transfer counselors.

C. Signatory Partner: Association of Vermont Independent Colleges

AVIC is a statewide organization that represents the interests of private higher education in Vermont. AVIC provides public policy leadership, fosters cooperative efforts among institutions, and serves as the liaison between its members and the state and federal government. Established in 1982, the association seeks to strengthen the quality of higher education in Vermont, increase accessibility to the broadest range of students, and foster cooperative efforts among its member institutions and all segments of higher education. AVIC is dedicated to expanding the capacity of Vermont’s independent educational network and attracting students who will contribute to the state’s future workforce as well as the economic, civic, and cultural life of Vermont. Under the Vermont Transfer Guarantee, the AVIC executive office will:

1. Provide representation, in the form of one member, to the Vermont Transfer Guarantee Steering Committee.
2. Advise on policy, resource development, program promotion and sustainability.
3. Promote the Vermont Transfer Guarantee to its member institutions and other stakeholders in the state.

V. Vermont Transfer Guarantee Steering Committee

The Vermont Transfer Guarantee Steering Committee guides the successful implementation of the initiative. The Steering Committee includes representatives from CCV and AVIC, along with additional representatives from independent four-year receiving institutions. NEBHE facilitators and Steering Committee members will:

1. Provide strategic direction to NEBHE and its state partners in the adoption of the Vermont Transfer Guarantee.
2. Provide input on various aspects of implementation, including but not limited to the Foundational Design and Guiding Principles, state meeting agenda building,

implementation guidance, student-facing information and landing page, as well as promotion and public engagement.

3. Identify risks and challenges and offer advice to mitigate risks and surmount challenges.
4. Advise on institutional policy development and procedures, prioritizing actions that need to be taken by NEBHE and its state partners to implement the initiative.
5. Advise on reporting and success metrics.
6. Serve as the decision-making body on all aspects of the Vermont Transfer Guarantee.
7. Serve as the arbiter of any issues that may arise during the implementation process.
8. The Steering Committee may elect to establish an Academic Deans and Provosts Subcommittee in order to ensure the successful implementation of the Vermont Transfer Guarantee. If established, the committee will work in conjunction with the Steering Committee to provide recommendations for standardizing general education block transfer and will inform programmatic pathway development.
9. Upon the end of the grant period, the Steering Committee will advise on the formation of a permanent governance structure for the Vermont Transfer Guarantee. Members of the current Steering committee will not be bound to serve as members of the permanent governance structure.
10. Advise on the development of a sustainability plan for the time period beyond the life of grant funding.

VI. Staff Roles and Responsibilities: Vermont Transfer Guarantee Participating Four-Year Institutions

With the goal of unifying guaranteed transfer of an associate degree statewide, independent four-year colleges and universities are invited to participate in the Vermont Transfer Guarantee. MOA submissions will be processed on a rolling basis; four-year receiving institutions may elect to participate at any time. Participating signatory four-year receiving institutions will demonstrate a strong commitment to transparent transfer practices and promote a transfer-receptive culture at their college or university. Participating institutions will adhere to all required policies outlined in this agreement and embrace the best practices recommended herein.

A. Guarantee Coordinator

Upon signing this MOA, the participating institution will designate a Guarantee Coordinator (GC), identifying this individual and their title using the form provided in Appendix B. At the institutional level, the GC will typically hold a title of Vice President of Enrollment, Dean of Admission; in some cases, a designated senior admissions representative who is well versed in transfer will assume the role. The GC will serve as the primary institutional point of contact for the program and coordinate the implementation of the Vermont Transfer Guarantee at the institutional level. GC's will be actively supported by NEBHE facilitators. The GC will:

1. Participate in all Vermont Transfer Guarantee implementation convenings, workshops and trainings.
2. Participate in quarterly GC meetings facilitated by NEBHE.
3. Collaborate with NEBHE facilitators on all aspects of institutional implementation.
4. Assemble and chair an institutional Guarantee Cross-Functional Team focused on the implementation of the Vermont Transfer Guarantee.

5. On an annual basis, coordinate with their Institutional Research department to submit Vermont Transfer Guarantee enrollment data to NEBHE, to be incorporated into an annual report.
6. Assume responsibility for coordinating with institutional webmaster(s) to showcase clear and standard, NEBHE-supplied language about the Vermont Transfer Guarantee on the institution's transfer webpage.
7. Assume responsibility for institutional promotion of the Vermont Transfer Guarantee at college and transfer fairs.
8. Participate in optional professional development sessions offered by NEBHE.

Transition Procedure

If or when the designated GC leaves their institution or assumes a new position that is incompatible with continued GC service, the participating institution is required to notify NEBHE facilitators no more than two weeks after the GC's departure. At that time, the institution must identify an interim GC or appoint a new permanent GC. The participating institution is responsible for onboarding the new GC, however, NEBHE facilitators will be available to provide an individual informational session and technical assistance, as needed.

B. Institutional Guarantee Cross-Functional Team

Participating institutions are required to assemble a Guarantee Cross-Functional Team (GCFT) at their institution. The role of the GCFT is to advise the institution's administration on related transfer policy and practice, train faculty and staff, recruit students, coordinate promotion and outreach, develop or solidify a transfer-receptive culture on campus, stay informed of best practices for transfer advising and data collection. Membership may include representation from: department leadership, faculty members (including faculty involved with general education requirements), registrar's office, admissions, financial aid, Institutional Research, communications, website administrators and advising staff. The GCFT shall be chaired by the GC, or an approved designee, and will:

1. Develop a communication structure to disseminate information about the Vermont Transfer Guarantee to all pertinent faculty and staff.
2. Meet quarterly to discuss updates, challenges, and best practices.
3. Coordinate with both academic deans and Institutional Research to ensure timely program implementation and enrollment data collection, respectively.

C. Institutional Research

Each institution is responsible for compiling student-level data on an annual basis for submission to NEBHE each April, relying on either their own Institutional Research (IR) personnel or, in the case of smaller independent institutions, IR personnel with whom their school contracts. During the initial submission year, NEBHE will host information sessions to prepare for data collection. An IR designee is required to attend one of the aforementioned sessions to ensure data submissions are timely and accurate.

Transition Procedure

Similar to the transition process for the GC (outlined above), if the IR staff member who typically completes annual data collection and submission for Vermont Transfer Guarantee enrollment departs their position, the participating institution is responsible for notifying and providing a new point of contact to NEBHE facilitators within two weeks. It is also the institution's responsibility to provide sufficient onboarding to the new IR point of contact so that they can be clear on the expectations for annual data collection for Vermont Transfer Guarantee enrollment.

D. Marketing and Communications

Marketing and/or communications staff are responsible for liaising with the GC and admissions in order to promote the Vermont Transfer Guarantee to prospective transfer students.

VII. Articulation of the Vermont Transfer Guarantee

A. Student Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the Vermont Transfer Guarantee, a student must have graduated with an associate degree from-CCV and have a minimum GPA of 2.0, 2.5 or 3.0. Each individual participating four-year receiving institution will self-select a qualifying GPA for guaranteed admission from these options.

Admission is guaranteed given the student has met all eligibility criteria for the selected institution and the institution has available capacity within the intended major. Participating four-year institutions recognize that students who have completed an associate degree within the Community College of Vermont have received a rigorous, high-quality education, and, thus, are prepared to succeed at a four-year institution.

The Vermont Transfer Guarantee is, as described above, a guaranteed admissions model to community college transfer admissions. It should be distinguished from a 2+2 model to the extent that it does not guarantee baccalaureate degree completion at the receiving institution within two years or 60 credits. However, the program may include extant or future 2+2 pathways under the umbrella of the Vermont Transfer Guarantee.

B. Features and Benefits to Students

The unique features of the Vermont Transfer Guarantee include:

1. No application fee.
2. No required admission essays, high school transcripts¹ and/or standardized testing scores.

¹ High school transcripts are not a requirement for admission; however, students may be asked to submit high school transcripts as part of an application for federal financial aid.

3. Guaranteed admission - given the student has met all eligibility criteria for the selected participating Vermont Transfer Guarantee institution, and the institution has available capacity within the intended major.
4. Guaranteed transfer of the general education core.
5. Guaranteed transfer of credits for all associate degree courses that were successfully completed.
6. Automatic consideration for institutional aid, in the form of scholarships or grants.
7. Access to an institution that has committed to promoting a transfer-receptive culture.

C. Transfer Articulation Policy Alignment

In order to facilitate smooth and successful student transfer under the Vermont Transfer Guarantee, the initiative is modeled on existing CCV transfer agreements. Given CCV's plethora of highly effective extant agreements, the Vermont Transfer Guarantee will standardize the transfer process for both institutions and students alike.

D. General Education Block Transfer

Depending on the institution, the Vermont Transfer Guarantee can provide students with the added benefit of block transfer of the general education core. Under this agreement, institutions may elect to receive the general education core as a block and will indicate this in Appendix D. Block transfer of general education requirements is the recommended practice, however, this agreement takes into consideration the varying stages of transfer preparedness of individual institutions. NEBHE facilitators will aid institutions who seek to prepare for future block transfer of CCV general education requirements. Moreover, institutions who do not initially sign on to accept the general education block are asked to make a good faith effort to receive all general education credits in order to minimize credit loss and time to degree for students.

All CCV degree students complete general education courses as part of their associate degree. The purpose of the general education program at CCV is to develop engaged, self-directed and collaborative learners who demonstrate core competencies, recognize and apply strategies of inquiry, and embrace the challenge, complexity and wonder of our interconnected world. More information regarding CCV's general education requirements and program outcomes can be [viewed here](#).

Associate degree-bearing CCV graduates have completed general education requirements upon degree conferral. These credits will be applied as a block toward the general education requirements at the receiving institution, rather than as one-to-one course equivalencies. If the receiving institution's general education requirements exceed the 33-36 CCV credits, the receiving institution may consider other courses successfully completed in transfer or require the student to complete no more than 12 additional credits (or four three-credit-hour or three four-credit-hour courses).

Institutions with general education requirements of more than 39 credit hours should contact NEBHE facilitators to determine the best path forward prior to signing this agreement. In the southern New England states where the Guarantee is already implemented, religiously-affiliated institutions, for example, have worked with NEBHE to shift specific courses typically included in the general education block to graduation requirements to preserve the relevance of the block transfer of the community college general education core.

E. Majors Offered

Through the Vermont Transfer Guarantee, participating institutions commit to offering admission, via the above stipulated eligibility criteria, to all bachelor's programs outside of two special cases:

1. Exclusions: select competitive majors (e.g., nursing) may be excluded from eligibility.
2. Exceptions: select majors may be permitted to require additional admissions materials from students, e.g., an art portfolio, higher GPA, writing sample or specific prerequisite coursework prior to transferring.

In the rare case that a student who has completed an Associate of Applied Science degree in a skilled trade, or some other major that is typically considered a terminal degree path, wishes to utilize the Vermont Transfer Guarantee to transfer to a four-year receiving institution, they should be advised about the potential challenges of this route on a case-by-case basis early on in the transfer process (preferably while the student is enrolled at the community college). This approach will ensure maximum credit applicability for all such students who proceed with transferring to a four-year institution. The Vermont Transfer Guarantee aims to standardize the transfer process, therefore both exclusions and exceptions should be kept to a minimum. Institutions are required to complete the accompanying Excel sheet titled "Vermont Transfer Guarantee: Offered majors" at the time of MOA submission. Using this sheet, institutions must identify all majors they plan to offer as well as exclusions and exceptions; the information submitted via this sheet will be used to populate the Vermont Transfer Guarantee website. Revisions and/or changes to the programs offered or the exclusions and exceptions necessitate submitting an updated form to NEBHE facilitators.

F. Transfer Pathways

Outside of the general education block, participating Vermont Transfer Guarantee four-year institutions may receive major requirements and other electives at their discretion, while guaranteeing a minimum of 60 transferable credits and advanced class standing.

Existing articulation agreements, including 2+2 pathways, will be honored under this agreement. To maximize clarity for prospective students, existing programmatic (major) articulation agreements and/or guaranteed admission programs between CCV and receiving institutions that have signed MOAs to participate in the Vermont Transfer

Guarantee will be referred to under the broader umbrella of the Vermont Transfer Guarantee. This necessitates marketing the Vermont Transfer Guarantee rather than continuing to market individual articulation agreements that have been absorbed under this larger community college transfer heading. If an institution is considering signing an MOA but is anticipating challenges related to honoring existing agreements or programs (e.g., if they have an articulation agreement for a program that must remain distinct due to narrow admissions parameters such as a student age or due to its ties to a specific funding stream), they should reach out to NEBHE facilitators for technical support. If an institution does not have any extant articulated pathways, they are encouraged to develop mapped pathways in order to streamline the transfer process.

G. Additional Recommended Transfer Credit Policies

Community college students frequently take courses and receive credit from multiple institutions or through credit for prior learning including, but not limited to Advanced Placement (AP) exams, International Baccalaureate Programme (IB), dual enrollment, national standardized exams such as the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), challenge examinations, Joint Service Transcript analysis for veterans or current members of the military or online coursework. The determination to award credit from other institutions or for credit for prior learning is made through a transfer audit and a graduation audit carried out at the community college. These audits serve to ensure that all associate degree earners have fully met degree requirements at the community college. While all relevant documentation in the form of score reports and transcripts will be forwarded to the receiving institution, receiving institutions who sign on to participate in the Vermont Transfer Guarantee agree to honor the community college graduation audit for credit issued. It is also recommended that institutions perform a credit evaluation upon application, rather than admission, in order for students to make informed decisions in a timely manner.

The recommended minimum course grade for transfer under the Vermont Transfer Guarantee is C-. Institutions may, however, elect to use the current course grade for transfer stipulated by the institution's existing policy.

Receiving institutions are encouraged to take into consideration the transfer slump many students experience and to develop academic good standing policies that wait until the end of the academic year to determine a transfer student's placement on academic probation.

Institution-Specific Transfer Policies Form

Keeping in mind the above policy recommendations, institutions will need to stipulate any specific transfer policies using the Institution Specific Transfer Policy Form located in Appendix D.

VIII. Institutional Transfer Receptivity and Guiding Principles

The Vermont Transfer Guarantee promotes transfer receptive culture at both the two-year and four-year level. Institutions are able to better serve transfer students by focusing on developing an inclusive transfer receptive culture – a framework developed by a team of practitioners from California led by Dimpal Jain, who link critical race theory and transfer.

According to Jain et al., the five elements of transfer receptive culture are:

Pre-transfer

1. Establish the transfer of students, especially nontraditional, first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented students, as a high institutional priority that ensures stable accessibility, retention, and graduation.
2. Provide outreach and resources that focus on the specific needs of transfer students while complementing the community college mission of transfer.

Post-transfer

3. Offer financial and academic support through distinct opportunities for nontraditional/reentry transfer students where they are stimulated to achieve at high academic levels.
4. Acknowledge the lived experiences that students bring and the intersectionality between community and family.
5. Create an appropriate and organic framework from which to assess, evaluate, and enhance transfer receptive programs and initiatives that can lead to further scholarship on transfer students.²

The spirit of these foundational elements informs the New England Transfer Guarantee Guiding Principles, which are enumerated in Appendix A.

IX. Student Advising

CCV advisors will provide information and guidance to students pre-transfer through review of all transfer opportunities, including opportunities available through the Vermont Transfer Guarantee.

Pre-application and post-transfer, participating four-year receiving institutions will provide robust student support and wrap-around services. Services will include, but are not limited to: orientations, academic guidance and counseling, academic support, peer advising, personal guidance and counseling, career services and supplemental services.

X. Institutional Scholarships and Financial Aid

Vermont Transfer Guarantee partner institutions are committed to providing access through need-based financial aid as well as merit-based and/or Guarantee scholarships. Institutions are encouraged to offer incentives with clear criteria (ie: GPA-based merit aid) and to provide detailed information about how incentives discount the total cost of attendance. Institutions may establish their own incentives or discounting rates for the Vermont Transfer Guarantee. All institutional incentives and pertinent financial aid information will be posted on the institution's

² Dimpal Jain , Alfred Herrera , Santiago Bernal & Daniel Solorzano. (2011). [Critical Race Theory and the Transfer Function: Introducing a Transfer Receptive Culture](#). Community College Journal of Research and Practice. (p. 258)

Vermont Transfer Guarantee webpage and on the student-facing statewide landing page in order to provide maximum transparency for students and families.

XI. Student Outreach and Promotion

NEBHE, its partners, and all participating institutions will co-promote the Vermont Transfer Guarantee through internally consistent outreach in the form of messaging, branding and information deployed across all promotional platforms including: press releases, marketing materials, social media channels, and other avenues that disseminate information to students, faculty and staff. NEBHE will provide all institutions with promotional materials in the form of logos and templates. Participating institutions are encouraged to promote their Vermont Transfer Guarantee offerings through their regularly scheduled transfer recruitment efforts.

XII. Vermont Transfer Guarantee Websites

The Vermont Transfer Guarantee will have a highly visible and impactful web presence across multiple platforms and tailored to different audiences.

A. NEBHE Site

The NEBHE Vermont Transfer Guarantee landing page will be hosted under the permanent New England Transfer Guarantee section of nebhe.org. The primary audience for this site includes NEBHE stakeholders, such as State Higher Education Executive Officers, legislators and institutional leaders. This landing page will also host signed MOAs and link to the student-facing landing page.

B. Student-Facing Landing Page

The Vermont Transfer Guarantee student-facing landing page will provide students with a one-stop-shop transfer experience. This landing page will be hosted on the existing CCV website. The creation and maintenance of the pages will be funded by NEBHE through the New England Transfer Guarantee grant award. Additionally, the page design and features of the pages will be agreed upon by NEBHE and CCV and executed by the CCV staff. Additional details will be outlined in an agreement between NEBHE and CCV (see Appendix E).

The webpages will include, but not limited to, a landing page with a clear description of the Vermont Transfer Guarantee, eligibility and features, a program and institution search function, as well as a campus directory. NEBHE will be responsible for providing content to CCV, as well as updating information on participating institutions and pathways for the life of the grant and beyond.

Institutions are responsible for submitting website content via survey to NEBHE within two weeks of signing this agreement.

C. Institutional Webpages

Institutions are required to establish Vermont Transfer Guarantee specific pages on their websites within 30-60 days of signing this MOA. NEBHE will provide institutions with specific language, along with the state's official program logo (see Appendix F).

XIII. Data Collection and Reporting

Four-year receiving institutions are required to collect student-level enrollment data for all Vermont Transfer Guarantee students. Institutions use a state-specific spreadsheet, which they download, complete and submit to NEBHE via a secure platform (Appendix G). Each institution employs consistent unique student identification numbers to enable longitudinal tracking of otherwise deidentified Guarantee students. Data is submitted to NEBHE on an annual basis in April, a deadline developed in consultation with Institutional Research personnel. Institutions submit data for the fall and spring semesters only. NEBHE cleans and analyzes this data and then publishes state-level findings in an annual enrollment report each fall.

XIV. Term and Withdrawal Provisions

This agreement takes effect upon the signature of authorized representatives of each party and shall remain in effect for the foreseeable future. A party to the MOA may withdraw from the agreement by providing written notification to the other parties at least one year in advance of such withdrawal. For any institution that seeks to withdraw, this would require expunging all language pertaining to the institution's participation in the Vermont Transfer Guarantee from not only the student landing page but also institutional websites and marketing materials.

XV. Other Provisions

This MOA expresses the entire agreement of the parties and shall not be modified or altered except in writing executed by the authorized written agreement of all parties.

XVI. Signatories

Vermont Transfer Guarantee Four-Year Receiving Institution

Institution Name: Sterling College

Signator Name and Title: Scott L. Thomas, President


Signature: *Scott Thomas*

Date: 26 September 2024

Other Signatories to the Agreement

New England Board of Higher Education


Signator Name and Title: *Michael K. Thomas, President & CEO*

Signature: 
4E7356A79A81452...

Date: September 27, 2024

Vermont Association of Independent Colleges

Signator Name and Title: *Kimberly Jessup, President*

Signature: 
69F9371E9C9849E...

Date: September 30, 2024

Community College of Vermont

Signator Name and Title: *Joyce Judy, President*

Signature: 
A315DAB748394D1...

Date: September 29, 2024

Appendix A: **New England Transfer Guarantee Guiding Principles**

The New England Transfer Guarantee promotes transfer-receptive culture at both the two-year and four-year level. By focusing on enhancing existing inclusive institutional practices, colleges and universities are able to meet the unique needs of New England's highly diverse community college population. Participating institutions commit to a student-centered approach to transfer by providing eligible students with greater access, opportunity and affordability.

The New England Transfer Guarantee is guided by the following principles:

1. Leadership commits to establishing community college transfer as an institutional priority, both academically and administratively.
2. Community college graduates enrich the student body of four-year receiving institutions, bringing diversity of thought, background and life experiences.
3. The shifting demographics and declining birth rates in New England make community colleges, and their student bodies, essential to sustaining higher education as an economic engine in the region.
4. State-wide unification of the guaranteed transfer of an associate degree is prioritized. Therefore, where available, the established public-to-public model will be utilized for state-specific transfer policy alignment.
5. Liberal arts education is essential, as it fosters critical thinking and cultivates an informed citizenry.

Four-year receiving institutions will:

1. Acknowledge the varying needs of transfer students and take special care to provide tailored support to nontraditional, first-generation, low-income and underrepresented students.
2. Recognize that eligible community college graduates are academically prepared, and graduate at a rate equal to or more likely higher than incoming high school graduates.
3. Offer financial and academic support through distinct opportunities for community college transfer students where they are stimulated to achieve at high academic levels.*
4. Acknowledge the lived experiences that students bring and the intersectionality between community and family.*
5. Provide high-quality advising including academic guidance and counseling, academic support, peer advising, personal guidance and counseling, career services and supplemental service to all transfer students.
6. Create an appropriate and organic framework from which to assess, evaluate, and enhance transfer receptive programs and initiatives that can lead to further scholarship on transfer students.¹

Two-year public institutions will:

1. Provide outreach and resources that focus on the specific needs of transfer students while complementing the community college mission of transfer.
2. Provide students with the full range of public and independent four-year institution transfer options and take into account aspirations, goals, best fit and affordability.

¹ Dimpal Jain , Alfred Herrera , Santiago Bernal & Daniel Solorzano. (2011). Critical Race Theory and the Transfer Function: Introducing a Transfer Receptive Culture. Community College Journal of Research and Practice (p. 258).

Appendix B:
Designated Guarantee Coordinator and Guarantee Cross Functional Team Form

Guarantee Coordinator

Participating New England Transfer Guarantee four-year receiving institutions shall designate a Guarantee Coordinator (GC). At the institutional level, the GC will hold the title of Vice President of Enrollment, Dean of Admission; in some cases, the GC may be a designated senior admissions representative who is well versed in transfer. The GC will serve as the primary point of contact and main coordinator for the implementation of the Guarantee at the institutional level. GC's will be actively supported by NEBHE facilitators. The GC will:

1. Participate in all implementation convenings, workshops and trainings.
2. Participate in quarterly GC meetings facilitated by NEBHE.
3. Collaborate with NEBHE facilitators on all aspects of institutional implementation.
4. Assemble and chair a Guarantee Cross Functional Team focused on the implementation of the Guarantee.
5. Coordinate with Institutional Research to submit Guarantee enrollment data to NEBHE on an annual basis.
6. Responsible for coordinating with institutional webmaster(s) to showcase clear and standard language (provided by NEBHE) about the Guarantee on the institution's transfer webpage.
7. Responsible for institutional promotion of the Guarantee at college and transfer fairs.
8. Participate in optional professional development sessions offered by NEBHE.

Transition Procedure

If or when the designated GC resigns or moves to a new position, the participating institution is required to notify NEBHE facilitators no more than two weeks after the GC's departure. At that time, the institution must identify an interim or new permanent GC. The participating institution is responsible for onboarding the new GC, however, NEBHE facilitators are available to provide an individual informational session and technical assistance.

Please identify your institution's GC below:

Institution: Sterling College

Name: Weylin Garnett

Title: Director of Admission

Email: admission@sterlingcollege.edu

Phone: 802-586-7711 x 106

Guarantee Cross Functional Team

Participating institutions are required to assemble a Guarantee Cross Functional Team (GCFT). The role of the GCFT is to advise the institution's administration on related transfer policy and practice, train faculty and staff, recruit students, promote and outreach, develop or solidify a transfer-receptive culture on campus, and use best practices for transfer advising and data collection. Membership may include representation from the following: department heads, faculty members (including faculty involved with general education requirements), registrar's office, admissions, financial aid, institutional research, communications, website administrator and advising staff. The GCFT shall be chaired by the GC or their designee and will:

1. Develop a communication structure to disseminate information on the Vermont Transfer Guarantee to all pertinent staff and faculty.
2. Meet quarterly to discuss updates, challenges and best practices.
3. Coordinate with both academic deans and Institutional Research to ensure timely program implementation and enrollment data collection, respectively.

The GC is responsible for providing assurances to NEBHE facilitators that a designated GCFT has been or will be assembled at their institution within 30 days of submission of this document to NEBHE. The GC shall retain and provide, if requested, the names and titles of the GCFT members.

Appendix C: Sample CCV Pathway Agreement

Articulation Agreement Between Community College of Vermont and _____

The mission of The Community College of Vermont (CCV) is to support and challenge all students in meeting their educational goals through an abiding commitment to access, affordability, and student success. The Community College of Vermont is accredited by New England Commission of Higher Education (neche.org).

The mission of _____ is _____. XXXX is accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (neche.org).

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this agreement in the spirit of academic cooperation is to facilitate the transfer of graduates from the Community College of Vermont (CCV) to _____.

Objectives include:

1. To build a formal and mutually beneficial partnership between Community College of Vermont (CCV) and _____
2. To expand and enhance learning opportunities and degree completion options for CCV graduates by providing clear pathways and transfer admissions guarantees of credits earned in the completion of an associate degree from CCV.

This Agreement guarantees that students who have completed an associate's degree from CCV and have been accepted for admission into _____ may enter a bachelor's degree program with the equivalent of 60 credits and junior status.

II. TERMS

1. _____ will admit CCV associate degree graduates with a grade point average of _ or higher, subject to review and approval by the Admissions Department.
2. All academic coursework in which a CCV graduate has earned a grade of C- or higher is fully transferable. Up to 90 credits may be accepted in transfer towards a bachelor's degree program.
3. CCV graduates must apply and be admitted to _____. Currently enrolled CCV students may apply in their final semester, with the terms of this agreement contingent upon their successful completion of their CCV degree.
4. CCV graduates must submit, as part of their application for admission, an official transcript from their completed CCV program.
5. Inclusive of CCV coursework applied to a completed associate degree, up to 90 credits may be accepted through any combination of transfer credit and/or credit awarded through assessment of prior learning (APL), CLEP, or other transfer credit.

6. Based on articulated transfer pathways attached (Appendix__), _____guarantees transferability of all credits outlined in the CCV associate degrees to the corresponding _____bachelor's degrees.
7. CCV and _____ agree to inform the partner institution of any organizational, programmatic, or curricular changes that impact the terms of the partnership within ten business days, and agree that the partner organization can unilaterally opt out of the partnership at any point if the adopted changes conflict with requirements, policies or practices at the partner school, or are perceived to have the potential of diminishing the standing of the partner organization.
8. CCV graduates meeting admission requirements and entering _____ will be awarded a \$_____ transfer award for each year, renewable for up to _____ .
9. CCV and _____will incorporate a summary of this agreement into their official publications and public website and collaborate in CCV transfer related fairs and events.
10. CCV will provide _____ with a list of annual graduates with the agreement that _____will never sell these lists to third parties and will abide by all FERPA regulations.
11. Transfer students are eligible for need and merit based financial aid at _____.
12. Review of the agreement will take place between _____and CCV every five years or as needed. _____ and CCV will inform one another of changes in course or degree program requirements and revise this articulation agreement as needed. The signatures below indicate acceptance of the above agreement.

III. CONTACTS

The following staff are identified as Partnership Administrators and will serve as the primary point of contact for their respective institution as related to this Agreement:

For _____:

For Community College of Vermont:

Partnership Approval

This Memorandum of Understanding takes effect upon approval and will remain in effect through _____. Review of this Agreement will be done on an annual basis. Either party may terminate this Agreement with one year notice or under item seven of the Terms of this Agreement.

For Community College of Vermont

For _____

Date

Date

Appendix A:

CCV A.A. and A.S. degree _____ to _____

CCV Programs: all A.A. and A.S. Degrees	XXXX B.S/B.A. Degree Program
Gen Ed: INT-1050 Dimensions of Self & Society	Gen Ed: Requirement met with CCV Associate Degree
Gen Ed: ENG-1061 English Composition	Gen Ed: Requirement met with CCV Associate Degree
Gen Ed: Digital & Computing Literacy : Choose: XXXXX	Gen Ed: Requirement met with CCV Associate Degree
Gen Ed: Mathematics	Gen Ed: Requirement met with CCV Associate Degree
Gen Ed: Natural Science	Gen Ed: Requirement met with CCV Associate Degree
Gen Ed: Social Science Choose from list of approved courses	Gen Ed: Requirement met with CCV Associate Degree
Gen Ed: Arts and Aesthetics Choose from list of approved courses	Gen Ed: Requirement met with CCV Associate Degree
Gen Ed: Humanistic Perspectives	Gen Ed: Requirement met with CCV Associate Degree
Gen Ed: Communication Choose:	Gen Ed: Requirement met with CCV Associate Degree
Gen Ed: Research & Writing Intensive	Gen Ed: Requirement met with CCV Associate Degree
Gen Ed: Hum-2010 Seminar in Educational Inquiry	Gen Ed: Requirement met with CCV Associate Degree
Additional Requirements for specific A.A. or A.S. degree Program Requirements: <i>Recommended Electives:</i>	Course Equivalencies:
Total CCV credits: 60	Credits to be taken at:
	60 credits
	Estimated Total Credits: 120

Appendix D:
Institution-Specific Transfer Policy Form

Minimum Institutional GPA For Guaranteed Acceptance

To be eligible for the Vermont Transfer Guarantee, a student must have graduated with an associate degree from a Vermont community college. Participating institutions must select a standard minimum GPA for acceptance from the three tiers listed below:

- 2.0
- 2.5
- 3.0

General Education Transfer Block

Accept the CCV general education block as a whole, thereby waiving the general education requirements at the receiving institution. Note: the receiving institution may require the student to complete no more than 12 additional credits (or four three-credit or three four-credit hour courses).

- Yes
- No

If no, please provide reasoning in the space below:

NS Req. would waive our NS107A Foundations of Ecology only if BIO1240, BIO1250, BII02250, BIO22060, ENV 1010, ENV2050, BIO 1211 BIO2340. Likely only required to complete upper level gen eds including writing course upper level seminars, and senior year research project

If yes, and if the general education block contains a course with a letter grade lower than a C-, but the student meets the GPA requirements, the block will still be accepted as complete.

- Yes
- No

If no, please provide reasoning in the space below:

If necessary, participating Vermont Transfer Guarantee receiving institutions will be granted a grace period of one year upon signing this agreement to prepare for block transfer of CCSNH general education requirements. Will your institution need to evoke the grace period?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide reasoning in the space below:

Institution Specific Transfer Policy

In order to facilitate smooth and successful student transfer under the Vermont Transfer Guarantee, the initiative is modeled on existing CCV transfer agreements. Given CCV's plethora for highly effective extant agreements, the Vermont Transfer Guarantee will standardize the transfer process for both institutions and students alike.

Community college students frequently take courses and receive credit from multiple institutions or through credit for prior learning including, but not limited to Advanced Placement (AP) exams, national standardized exams such as CLEP, or online coursework. The determination to award credit from other institutions or for credit for prior learning is made in a community college transfer audit and a graduation audit. The receiving institution agrees to honor the community college graduation audit for credit issued.

Please confirm your institution will adhere to the following transfer policies by indicating Yes or No below:

1. Accept a C- as the minimum course grade for transfer credit.

- Yes
 No

If no, please provide your institutions minimum course grade for transfer credit below: C if student is transferring before completing associates. We will accept all cre

4. Accept previous credits earned from AP Exams that have been applied to the completion associate degree.

- Yes
 No

5. Accept previous credits earned from CLEP that have been applied to the completion of the associate degree.

- Yes
 No

6. Accept previous credits earned from other exam sources that have been applied to the completion of the associate degree.

- Yes
 No

7. Accept academic credits earned through the evaluation of military occupation, training, experience and coursework that have been applied to the completion of the associate degree.

- Yes
 No

8. Accept academic credits earned through dual enrollment, that have either been applied to the completion of the associate degree or comprise the entirety of an associate degree completed through an in-state community college.

- Yes
 No

Other:

List any additional institutional transfer policies pertinent to the Vermont Transfer Guarantee below:

N/A

Appendix E: **Website Agreement**

Agreement Between New England Board of Higher Education and Community College of Vermont

Vermont Transfer Guarantee Student-facing Landing Page Partnership Agreement

This Agreement is entered into by and between the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) with an address of 45 Temple Place, Boston, MA 02111 and the Community College of Vermont (CCV), with an address of PO Box 489, Montpelier, VT 05601, for support of the construction and maintenance of web pages on the CCV website highlighting the Vermont Transfer Guarantee.

I. Background

The New England Board of Higher Education was established in 1955 by the six New England governors and authorized as a regional higher education compact by Congress. NEBHE's mission is to advance equitable postsecondary outcomes through convening, research and programs for students, institution leaders and policymakers. In November 2019, the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) received a three-year grant, co-funded by the Teagle Foundation and the Davis Educational Foundation, to implement the New England Transfer Guarantee in Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Fully operationalized in the southern New England states as of Fall 2021, the initiative enables eligible community college graduates to transfer into participating four-year institutions –admission guaranteed.

In July 2022, NEBHE received three-year implementation grant awards from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations, the Teagle Foundation, the Davis Educational Foundation and the Lloyd G. Balfour Foundation to expand the New England Transfer Guarantee to Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. NEBHE is partnering with the CCV and the Association of Vermont Independent Colleges (AVIC) to establish the Vermont Transfer Guarantee, which is modeled on existing state-specific transfer policies, thereby unifying public and independent transfer and increasing access and opportunity for transfer students. Moreover, the structure of the Guarantee addresses fundamental barriers to transfer success. Receiving institutions agree to waive their application fee and guarantee the transfer of associate-earned credits to mitigate the credit loss that typically plagues transfer—especially to independents. These institutions also commit to making community college transfer students eligible for meaningful institutional aid in the form of grants and scholarships. At the core of the initiative, then, is an unwavering commitment to equity, opportunity and access for all students in higher education.

Vermont Transfer Guarantee

The goal of the Vermont Transfer Guarantee is to create a uniform and seamless system of transfer that expands transfer options for Vermont's community college students. The program will ensure acceptance at participating four-year institutions for associate degree holding

students who have met a minimum GPA requirement of either 2.0, 2.5 or 3.0. The minimum GPA requirement will vary by institution.

II. Purpose of the Vermont Transfer Guarantee Student-facing Landing Page Partnership Agreement

The purpose of this Agreement is to detail a scope of work that will be undertaken by CCV at the bequest of NEBHE. In addition to a scope of work, the Agreement delineates parties to the contract, roles and responsibilities of each party, a projected timeline and payment provisions.

III. Scope of Work

CCV will construct and maintain web pages on the existing CCV transfer pages for the Vermont Transfer Guarantee. The web pages are described in the specifications and content section below and will include, but not be limited to:

1. Vermont Transfer Guarantee home page (description, eligibility, features, FAQs)
2. Searches (by major, area of study, institution, GPA tier)
3. Institution specific content blocks

NEBHE is responsible for providing content to CCV, as well as updated information on participating institutions and transfer majors available for community college graduates for the life of the grant (2025) and beyond. Institution and program updates will be provided to CCV on an agreed upon basis after the initial upload.

IV. Web Page Specifications and Content

1. Vermont Transfer Guarantee homepage
 - a. Program description, logo, eligibility criteria, features and benefits (provided by NEBHE).
2. Program page with search functionality utilizing CCV's current Transfer Search Tool.
 - a. Search by institution
 - b. Search by area of study
 - c. Search by major
 - a. Majors with mapped pathways (articulation agreements) will be denoted as 2+2 pathways.
3. Participating institution specific content blocks, which will include:
 - a. Description of the institution
 - b. GPA minimum for guaranteed admission
 - c. Scholarship and/or financial aid information
 - d. Transfer admissions contact information
 - e. Institution transfer webpage link
 - f. Tuition and fees
 - g. Institution specific transfer policies
 - h. Optional items may include:
 - a. Undergraduate enrollment and transfer graduation rate, any other additional transfer requirements, link to institution's net price calculator

V. Roles and Responsibilities

- A. The New England Board of Higher Education shall perform the following:
 - 1. Provide suggestions and feedback for the following web pages:
 - a. Landing page, searches, and institution specific content
 - 2. Provide data and content for all web pages, which include:
 - a. Landing page, searches, and institution specific content
 - 3. Provide updates and/or changes for all Vermont Transfer Guarantee data and content to ensure the accuracy of posted information. Content will be provided on a rolling basis during first Academic Year (set to start in the spring semester of 2024). Following updates will be provided on an agreed upon schedule.
 - 4. Updates to the web pages will be provided quarterly.
 - 5. Develop a public promotion and engagement plan.

- B. The Community College of Vermont shall perform the following:
 - 1. Provide a point of contact for Vermont Transfer Guarantee web page development.
 - 2. Develop all related Vermont Transfer Guarantee web pages, including:
 - a. Landing page, searches, and institution specific content
 - 3. Submit newly developed web pages to NEBHE for review and approval prior to publication.
 - 4. Develop a protocol for receiving Vermont Transfer Guarantee updates and/or changes.
 - 5. Execute updates and/or changes for all Vermont Transfer Guarantee data and content to ensure the accuracy of posted information. Content will be provided on a rolling basis during first Academic Year (set to start in the spring semester of 2024). Following updates will be provided on an agreed upon schedule.
 - 6. Post Vermont Transfer Guarantee content within 10 working days of the receipt of the data.
 - 7. Provide user analytics upon request.

VI. Website and Web Page Ownership

The CCV website and content therein shall at all times remain under the control of CCV and shall remain the sole property of CCV.

VII. Projected Timeline

The website and associated pages will be established in conjunction with the Vermont Transfer Guarantee Memorandum of Agreement release, which is slated for October-November of 2023.

VIII. Term

This Agreement shall become effective as of the date of signature by both parties and continue in full until either party moves terminate this Agreement by written notice to the other party one year prior to actual termination. This agreement may be modified or extended by mutual agreement of the parties.

IX. Payment Provisions

A payment of \$50,000 shall be made by NEBHE to CCV in two equal payments. The first payment of \$25,000 shall be made by NEBHE upon the execution of this agreement by both parties. The second payment of \$25,000 shall be made upon the satisfactory completion of the Vermont Transfer Guarantee web pages described in the Scope of Work. CCV shall not be required to reconcile funds or provide any other documentation to NEBHE that funds allocated to develop the Guarantee web pages were used strictly for that purpose. The completed web pages shall serve as the only required documentation.

X. Vermont Transfer Guarantee Student-facing Landing Page Partnership Agreement

Community College of Vermont

Project Leads: Nicole Stetson, Associate Academic Dean; Danielle Bresette, Director of Marketing Operations

New England Board of Higher Education

Project Lead: Emily Decatur, Director of Transfer Initiatives

Appendix F: **Institutional Transfer Page Website Language**

Participating institutions are required to establish Vermont Transfer Guarantee specific pages on their websites within 30-60 days of signing this MOA. NEBHE will provide institutions with specific program description language (see example below), along with the official Vermont program logo. Both will be delivered via email to the institution's GC.

Vermont Transfer Guarantee – Standardized Program Description

The Vermont Guarantee is a transfer partnership between the Community College of Vermont (CCV) and participating four-year colleges and universities. Eligible CCV graduates are able to transfer seamlessly - admission guaranteed!

Vermont Transfer Guarantee Logos



**MORE
OPTIONS,
MADE EASY**

Appendix G: Data Collection Form and Reporting Variables

Data Collection and Reporting

Four-year receiving institutions are required to collect student-level enrollment data for all Vermont Transfer Guarantee students. Institutions use a state-specific spreadsheet, which they download, complete and submit to NEBHE via a secure platform. Each institution employs consistent unique student identification numbers to enable longitudinal tracking of otherwise deidentified Guarantee students. Data is submitted to NEBHE on an annual basis in April, a deadline developed in consultation with Institutional Research personnel. Institutions submit data for the fall and spring semesters only. NEBHE cleans and analyzes this data and then publishes state-level findings in an annual enrollment report each fall.

DEFINITIONS

Table 1 - Initial Student Enrollment Data - To be completed for the first semester of enrollment for all Guarantee students.

Table 1 should contain 1 row/record per student entering your institution for the designated data collection period. Each student should only be represented once.

Student ID No. Randomized Unique Student Number	Student ID number (or a consistent randomized unique student number to protect confidentiality)
Date of Birth	mm/dd/year
Gender/Sex	Male/Female
IPEDS Reported Race	Nonresident alien, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White, Two or more races, Race unknown
First-Generation Student	Y/N to whether student is classified as first-generation
Enrollment Intensity	Full-time, Part-time designation for students initial term of enrollment at the receiving institution
Cohort Term	The semester and year that the Guarantee student begins attending the receiving institution
Sending Community College Name	Name of institution where student earned their AA/AS/AAA/AAS
Community College Degree Type	AA (Associate of Arts), AS (Associate of Science), AAA (Associate of Applied Arts), AAS (Associate of Applied Science) and Other
Community College Program Name	Program/major of awarded degree
Community College GPA	Grade Point Average (GPA) upon degree conferral
CIP Code for Enrolled	The 6-digit Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code for the program/major the Guarantee student is enrolled in. For undeclared students with no intended

Guarantee Program	major, please leave the cell blank.
Number of Credits Received from Sending Institution	Total number of credits accepted for transfer
Number of General Education Credits Accepted	Total number of credits accepted from the student's general education core/block
Complete General Education Received/Waived	General Education requirements/core accepted as a block Y/N
Number of Credits Applied Towards Guarantee Program (Major Electives)	Total number of credits accepted and applied towards Guarantee program/major
Number of Credits Applied to Open Electives	Total number of credits accepted and applied as open or free electives

Table 2 - Term-Specific Data - To be completed for each term the students in Table 1 attended your institution.	
Table 2 should contain 1 row/record for each term the students in Table 1 attended your institution. A new row should be used to represent each enrolled term for a student in Table 1.	
Student ID No. Randomized Unique Student Number	Student ID number (or a consistent randomized unique student number to protect confidentiality)
Term	The enrolled term on which you are reporting the term-specific data elements.
Pell Grant Status	Y/N to whether a student is receiving financial assistance from the Pell Grant Program in the enrolled term.
Scholarship or Financial Aid Award Amount	Total of Federal Work Study, grants, scholarships, tuition waivers, tuition discounts, provided to students to meet expenses in the enrolled term. Does not include loans. Please use a blank to indicate when information is not available and a "0" to indicate when zero dollars were awarded.
Enrollment Status	Please use the following to characterize enrollment status: Enrolled, Completed, Not Enrolled, Withdrawn
Cumulative GPA	Cumulative GPA at the start of the specified term. If student is in their first term with the institution, please use "N/A" to indicate a Cumulative GPA does not yet exist.

Completed Guarantee Program	Name of Guarantee program/major associated with degree award. This column will only be filled in during the term when a student's enrollment status is "Completed."
Completion GPA	GPA upon degree conferral award. This column will only be filled in during the term when a student's enrollment status is "Completed."
Number of Credits Obtained at Time of Graduation	Total number of credits upon degree conferral award. This column will only be filled in during the semester when a student's enrollment status is "Completed"