

Agenda

Vermont 250th Anniversary Commission

School and Teacher Outreach Committee

February 2, 2026 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

ATTENDEES: Eric Howard, Martha Deiss, Rich Strum, Elsa Gilbertson, Izzy Provoncha, Joshua Bell, Phil Holland, Chris Sheehan, Jonathan Clark, Meg Mallory, Meghan Hill Bartholomew

NOTES:

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Changes to Agenda – NO

III. Approval of August Minutes – Approved Unanimously

IV. Public Comment

V. Old Business

- CTE/VT public

VI. New Business

- [America's Field Trip - America250](#)
- CTE /VT Public
 - Students were quiet, teacher sent an email about how helpful the meeting was and not to take their apathy personally. Noted kids hate Zoom.
 - Jonah thinks it would be helpful to provide resources and dialogue. Something rich about the declaration and constitution
 - Kids had great ideas. Housing immigration, teacher moving to Canada to protect family relating to gender issues
 - Jonah is in the process of having the regional tech kids film him speaking to
 - Elsa is going to try to record a short pithy video.
 - Izzy would like to see a bit of pushback from the committee to have students make a more direct connection to 250th and/or the Declaration of Independence. Run draft by Jonah, Elsa, Martha, and Eric
 - Elsa notes that time is running out

- Eric: maybe surveying educators to get a sentence topic for each student project to be able to get more specific resources and content ideas for students
 - Martha is taking this on
 - Meg M: Chat: You could also direct them to Vermont Historical Society YouTube Channel. There may be some bits that are helpful in terms of context, etc.
- America's Field Trip 2025-2026 Contest Flyer
 - Josh Bell: No American Field Trip submissions from Vermont yet. Potential to win a pretty cool trip across the United States.
 - Phil: Concerned if it is more about propaganda and the current agenda vs. what it really means to individuals
 - Mag M, Chat: <https://manage.america250.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Americas-Field-Trip-2025-2026-Contest-Flyer.pdf>
- MY AMERICA is a nationwide, nonpartisan, youth civic-art engagement campaign where students from all 50 states will create a massive flag mosaic (150 ft x 80 ft!) made up of thousands of individual tiles with their messages about democracy, unity, and what America means to them.
 - Martha: May need to look at the fine print for political concerns
- Flow of History
 - Sarah Rooker out of Norwich VT
 - Putting together a 1 day PD for local Upper Valley social studies educators
 - Martha wants to know when she can share it – May 5th is the date, according to Izzy
 - Sarah believes there is a need to have “plug and play” to make PD useful and doable for educators
 - Hoping to potentially expand to a 5 day workshop if this is successful
 - Grade-band 6-12
- Teacher highlights
 - Izzy: What do teachers need? Maybe highlighting 250 and Revolutionary War stuff that they can share with other Vermont educators
 - Highlight work of a great teacher
 - If that teacher is willing, potentially sharing resources
 - Rich: Sounds like a way to recognize teachers at VASS and ask to submit a proposal based on their projects

- Izzy: The question is, who are these educators and how do we learn about them
- Elsa: Getting to historic sites is a real challenge for schools (bussing, etc.)
- Meg M, Chat: Maybe?! This years theme is Revolutions, Reactions, and Reforms. When we speak to teachers who visit the museum, we're finding a mixed bag reaction to the 250th. Some are avoiding it with a 10 foot pole and others are interested in exploring it as an idea. We seeing more comfort with VT's 250th, interestingly.
- Izzy firmly convinced there are teachers doing awesome things and we don't know about it. If we can find those people, that might prompt others to engage.
- Josh: Could other teachers nominate great educators for recognition and get to great educators that way?
- Rich: Recommends going and looking who presented at VASS over the last few years, might be a starting point to get the ball rolling
- Martha; Could Rich follow up with ____ (Missed it) about 2 Day VASS Conference
- Meg M, Chat: I can add a nomination page to the VT250th tab on Vermont History Explorer.

VII. Adjourn

Next Meeting: **March 2, 2026**

Future Agenda:

- Josh can present on the Passport Idea
- Jonathan could present in more detail on VT Library projects (including some grant possibilities) focused on 250 programing (7~8 of them, still working on it) \$1,200 per grant
- Project updates