

Vermont Insight Meditation Center – Teacher Leadership Committee
August 8th, 2020

Recommendations to the VIMC Board of Directors regarding 2021 Teaching Leadership

The Committee was formed in May of this year with the specific purpose of reviewing VIMC's options for how our teaching leadership will be structured once our current Guiding Teacher steps down later this year, and then to return to the Board with a short list of suggestions regarding what this teaching leadership looks like in 2021. The list below represents our complete and unanimous suggestions to the Board.

These recommendations have been compiled inclusive of the participation of many sangha members who have engaged in the multiple open forums which we have hosted over the past month.

Section 1: A Self-Led Teachers Council

We recommend the Board:

1. transfer the Guiding Teacher responsibilities to the Teachers Council; and
2. discontinue the role of Guiding Teacher; and
3. confirm the current members of the Teachers Council; and
4. celebrate our time with Rae prior to her departure; and
5. work with the Teachers Council to provide more information to the VIMC community about the members of the Teachers Council; and
6. ensure the Teachers have the ongoing support they need.

Section 2: A Formalized Mechanism for Teacher Feedback

We recommend the Board:

1. investigate, welcome, and encourage effective methods of feedback about our teachers and the teachings; and
2. periodically assess the efficacy of our teaching structure; and
3. share all feedback with the Teachers Council for the benefit of self-reflection and learning.

Section 3: Updating of Governing Documents

We recommend the Board:

1. coordinate with the Elders Council to update the governing documents; and
2. complete the update to the governing documents by October 1st, 2020.

Section 4: Confirmation of Teacher Appointments

We recommend the Board:

1. continue with its sole authority to appoint teachers; and
2. grant the Teachers Council the opportunity, previously held by the Guiding Teacher, to recommend the appointment of specific teachers; and
3. ask the Teachers Council to investigate an appropriate teacher development (which may include a training program) and criteria for teacher appointment with the goal of publicizing this by October 1, 2021.

- a. this training program should recognize that different teachers have different levels of training and preparation.
4. clarify within the governing documents that dismissal of any teacher is the sole responsibility of the Board.

Section 5: Communication of these Results

We recommend the Board:

1. undertake a robust campaign of communicating these changes to the sangha before they happen; and
2. thank the sangha members who participated in this process with their consideration, questions, suggestions, etc.; and
3. work with the Teachers Council to highlight each teacher to the sangha via the newsletter, announcements after morning and Sunday sats, etc.

We suggest these changes be accepted in their entirety, and our Committee is available to answer any specific questions the Board may have regarding our process, our recommendations, or further details regarding implementation.

Respectfully submitted,

The Vermont Insight Meditation Center 2020 ad-hoc Teacher Leadership Committee
Rose O'Connor, Ann Fielder, Paul Rodrigue, Susan Dreyer Leon, Doug Wessel, and Jeff Bower
August 8th, 2020.