

APPROVED



## Veritas Preparatory Charter School

### Minutes

#### Board Meeting

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**Date and Time**

Friday August 23, 2019 at 8:15 AM

**Location**

Veritas Prep Charter School 1st Floor Conference Room or Dial-In Number: 866-848-2216,  
Conference Code: 7783935205, Leader Code: 2356

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**Trustees Present**

A. Errichetti, A. Mendelson, D. Ford, D. Fuller (remote), D. Janes, J. Crowell (remote), R. Sela,  
T. Moran (remote)

**Trustees Absent**

G. Moody, L. Doherty, M. Landon, M. Sweet, R. Martin, T. Gabinetti

**Guests Present**

R. Romano

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**I. Opening Items****A. Record Attendance and Guests****B. Call the Meeting to Order**

R. Romano called a meeting of the board of trustees of Veritas Preparatory Charter School to order on Friday Aug 23, 2019 at 8:18 AM.

**C.**

### **Approve Minutes - July**

no quorum

### **D. Approve minutes - June**

no quorum

## **II. Committee Reports**

### **A. Academic Achievement**

AA Com met on 8/8 and discussed curriculum and codification of the curriculum across both schools. Trying to strike the balance between stabilizing the curriculum and also remaining nimble enough to make it relevant and improve as needed. Committee also discussed Director of Talent, a new hire, and how she is supporting schools to fill positions. Schools are fully hired at start of year. Committee also talked about how we are developing teachers as leaders with content leads and coaching fellows. The school is doing a great job of distributing leadership and providing pathways for teachers to develop as leaders while staying in the classroom. 40% of the VPCS team identify as people of color, an increase over the last three years. Each school has been delivering three weeks of PD for teachers prior to the first day for students. The two schools came together for a network PD day with content sessions, culture sessions, parent panel and development of leaders.

## **III. Development Planning**

### **A. plans and progress**

Denise led the group in a discussion of development planning. Denise has been compiling a list so we can begin contacting people, she is assigning trustees to each person so they can be the primary contact for that person. Goal to get letter out by October 1st.

To Do:

Create letterhead with trustee names on side

Coupon with donation instructions and envelope

Coordinate for trustees to write personal notes on letters

We will follow up with an electronic letter for folks for whom we do not have a mailing address and/or as a personal follow up to the hard copy, snail mail version.

## **IV. Executive Director Report**

### **A. Executive Director Report**

Rachel presents information on our (racial equity) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work. There has been a trend of DEI work beyond just hiring people of color in Springfield in particular but also assessing the culture beyond the organization.

A few years ago we made a commitment of recruiting and hiring people of color to better reflect the students we serve. Rachel reflects on a student meeting in which a student commented on the fact that the teachers of color we had were either far and few or would not stay long enough to have impactful relationships. The initial intention for the school was just to open a good school for the students of Springfield. Part of our mission is the "beyond" and that portion of the mission is two fold. Ensure that our students have the tools to attain internships, jobs etc but there is a realization that students of color need more than just those skills to be able to navigate through the world. Its is really critical to our students for their identities and their success in academic achievement and also

We can not ignore that race takes a huge place for our students lives.

As a school we are reflecting on our white dominant practices and how some of those practices might be preferences that makes so that the school is not as inclusive as it could be. Through this work we put together professional development to asses our implicit bias but because it has in the past been led by main white women and we recognized that we needed help. And thus we brought in with Harvard Profession Aalyah El-Amin to do a diagnostic for us where she meet with students, teachers and leaders. Through her study we found strengths; staff see that we are making progress as an organization, staff want a greater commitment to the DEI work. Our staff of color are particularly energized around this work. We continue to engage outside experts, Beyond Diversity. And lastly making a commitment to having an equity lens to all the things we do.

Some weaknesses that were assessed were around our discipline practices and ensuring we have a culturally responsive curriculum. We look to identity the areas that are weakest and not just scrap them but being thoughtful of our to replace them with better practices.

Some threats that will counter the racial equity work we are trying to do are around racial literacy and our staff having the language to speak on race, our current demographics to our Network Leadership Team which with the exception of Johnathan is white woman, and lastly the majority of or staff of color are junior staff.

Some actions steps we are taking as a school

- We have taken a stake on naming ourselves as an anti-racist school so that we can interrogate our practices.
- Leadership teams across both schools with meet with Beyond Diversity to develop a change team and create a charge for that team to work on our areas of weakness

Charges for the Board

- Challenge someone from the board to commitment to being on the change team
- We have open positions on the board that will not be filled by white people and its okay for if we move slowly to find the right people of color to fill the positions

## V. Closing Items

### A. Adjourn Meeting

Did not have a quorum so will vote on minutes next meeting.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:36 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

R. Romano

D. Ford made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

A. Mendelson seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.