

APPROVED



Veritas Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Governance Committee Meeting

Zoom Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday December 16, 2021 at 11:00 AM

Location

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

ID: 85152375662

Passcode: 370079



[\(US\) +1 669-900-6833](#)

Passcode: 370079

Committee Members Present

A. Mendelson (remote), D. Fuller (remote), R. Romano (remote), T. Moran (remote), X. Delobato (remote)

Committee Members Absent

None

Guests Present

N. Gauthier (remote)

I. Opening Items

A.

Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

D. Fuller called a meeting of the Governance Committee of Veritas Preparatory Charter School to order on Thursday Dec 16, 2021 at 11:05 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

A. Mendelson made a motion to approve the minutes from Governance Committee Meeting on 11-18-21.

T. Moran seconded the motion.

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

II. Governance

A. Finalize FY 22 Governance Committee Goals

Draft FY22 Goals:

1. Governance will improve the new trustee onboarding process through the creation of an onboarding template which is presented by E.D. and/or Chair which links or direct to documents in Board on Track –order of priority with timeline

David asked for some elaboration on the onboarding process we discussed during the last meeting.

Nicole explained about what we discussed during the last meeting. She talked about how it was determined that it is essential that there be a process for onboarding trustees that could span 90 days. It would include required readings, stakeholder meetings, attending committee meetings, learning about charter school governance, etc. This process will ensure that becoming a trustee is the right fit for the potential trustee and for Veritas.

Aaron has an outline some of what he thought would be important for the process:

1. What are charter schools and how are they different from other schools
2. How are schools governed
3. Attend a finance committee meeting
4. Academic programs committee meeting
5. Visit a classroom
6. Job description

David asked if we are going to create something like this more formally.

Aaron thinks we have talked about this for so long that we should put pen to paper and get this started.

Nicole will start and share a google doc that everyone can edit and add their ideas/thoughts and we will re-visit at the January meeting.

2. Governance will oversee the development of a new accountability plan for the third charter which incorporates high expectations for high school performance.

Xiomara wants to know where documents are kept. For example, the previous accountability plans? Nicole will find out from Rachel. Xiomara would like full access to any necessary documents, centralized location.

Rachel said that since the Board established strategic priorities, this became more of a Board goal.

Xiomara thinks we, as governance committee, should still be the group overseeing the successful implementation of this plan.

Rachel says the documents that would be helpful for the whole Board are (Rachel and Nicole will get them to you all): Accountability documents - technical guides that explain accountability for charters, common criteria for charter schools, current accountability plan.

III. Trustee Recruitment

A. Onboarding Procedure(s)

Discussed as part of our goals in previous section. A document will be formulated and shared to gather all committee members' ideas and thoughts related to an official onboarding process for new trustees.

B. Trustee Recruitment

Look at trustee term of service spreadsheet. We will be losing 6 trustees terms ending in June 2022.

Aaron mentioned Latino Chamber of Commerce for recruitment purposes.

Xiomara said she is familiar with organization. It went dormant for a while but is now back and being revitalized. There is also the Lewis Chamber (LGBTQ chamber). She recently attended a launch event. Xiomara said she can talk to both chamber presidents about trustee recruitment.

David asked what is the relationship between the aforementioned chambers and the Springfield Chamber of Commerce?

Xiomara said we have the ERC and Springfield Chamber, the Latino Chamber is their own entity where anyone can pay membership dues if they want to be a part of it. More focused on community building, development, legislative work, programming.

David asks if they have an educational arm?

Xiomara says, yes, the Latino chamber does. In Springfield over 50% of Latino descent, so education is at the forefront. They really want to be a hub for the voice of the people rather than the voice of the businesses.

David asks if they have a membership list?

Xiomara will check in with President of Latino Chamber - Aaron Melendez.

David says when talking to the President see if he knows any members who are focused on or interested in education.

Aaron thinks we need to have a target, see where we're at and then have current Board members see if they know anyone who could fill these roles.

Xiomara mentioned Andrea Williams from the High School Advisory Board.

Aaron said we need to be careful with union issues if someone is currently a teacher.

Xiomara says we should look at the demographic of the school and having the Board be reflective of that.

Tom says the 50% diversity goal for the Board came from the Board currently not being that diverse and so we wanted to take steps to improve.

Aaron thinks this is a long term goal and it should be reflective of the population of the school.

Nicole says let's look at the document to see where we will be at the end of the year with whose leaving. We can then determine who we think might be the right fit for those vacant seats.

Xiomara agrees with Aaron that we should have a goal with a timeline, it takes time. We need to be thinking about diversity more broadly. Not just race and ethnicity but ability, etc.

Rachel said Veritas demographics are not in front of her but she guesses 75% LatinX, 20% African American, 4% white, 1% Asian American. She will share actual demographics (related to race, students with disabilities, ELL, etc.). We should add a

column to our Trustee spreadsheet how trustees identify so we can look at our current roster and look at vacant seats and determine who would be the right fit for those seats. We probably won't find enough people for this cohort to fill all the slots we currently have. It may also mean certain Board members moving off the Board to make room for new, diverse trustees.

Xiomara thinks we also need to consider industry representation on the Board as well.

Rachel agrees that is part of diversifying the Board.

Tom says the most powerful Boards that do the most good are the ones that have trustees with varied skillsets. We tend to have a lot of executive skillsets such as legal, management, etc.

Rachel can talk about strengths of Board members currently: finance skills, legal. Deficits: advocacy/political support, access to capital (talk about this more next meeting as we look at Board member terms of service - what strengths and what deficits do we currently have and what should we be looking for). Dale actually brought this up to Rachel this month related to terms ending and increasing diversity over time.

Tom thinks we can learn a lot from Ann because she brought a lot to the Board even though she wasn't racially diverse.

Rachel agrees, you have to look at all levels of diversity at the same time as skillsets being brought to the table.

Tom says, let's make it easy for people to step down from the Board to allow for more Board diversity but still have an advisory role.

Rachel says maybe we need a mini strategic plan/ Board maturity model that normalizes people stepping away from the Board but not losing all involvement. We could even create an Emeritus Board member group and people can be as active as they are able or want.

Next meeting we can:

- 1.) Review Trustee onboarding plan
- 2.) Review/Discuss important documents (technical guides that explain accountability for charters, common criteria for charter schools, current accountability plan)
- 3.) Look at Trustee spreadsheet and determine what we are looking for moving forward in terms of diversity and skillsets.

IV. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 12:02 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
D. Fuller

Documents used during the meeting

- Board of Trustees Terms of Service 2021-2022.docx