

APPROVED



Veritas Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Zoom Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday November 18, 2021 at 4:30 PM

Location

Join Zoom Meeting <https://vpcs-org.zoom.us/j/87944697628?pwd=RE43LzRVRWhpVC9iOTBwZEZ4YS9NZz09>

Meeting ID: 879 4469 7628

Passcode: 912934

One tap mobile [+13126266799,,87944697628#](tel:+13126266799,87944697628#)

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Meeting ID: 879 4469 7628

Find your local number: <https://vpcs-org.zoom.us/j/87944697628?pwd=RE43LzRVRWhpVC9iOTBwZEZ4YS9NZz09>

Trustees Present

A. Errichetti (remote), A. Mendelson (remote), D. Ford (remote), D. Fuller (remote), D. Janes (remote), M. Landon (remote), R. Martin (remote), T. Maxey (remote), X. Delobato (remote)

Trustees Absent

J. Crowell, L. Doherty, R. Sela, T. Gabinetti

Guests Present

N. Gauthier (remote), R. Romano (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

D. Janes called a meeting of the board of trustees of Veritas Preparatory Charter School to order on Thursday Nov 18, 2021 at 4:38 PM.

C. Approve minutes

D. Fuller made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 10-28-21.

D. Ford seconded the motion.

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

II. Executive Director Report

A. High School Athletics

Alyssa Dube, Fitness Teacher and Athletics Coordinator for VPCS middle and high school presenting on the development of a High School athletics program.

Rachel expressed excitement about growing a HS athletics program. The first step is applying to join the Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Conference (PVIAC). This will allow us to start scheduling games for Fall 2022 in the Spring of 2022.

Alyssa begins at the middle school she has created competitive sports teams as well as intramural programs.

Middle school current competitive sports:

Fall - Co-ed soccer, cross country

Winter - Basketball

Spring - Launching baseball Spring 2022

Middle School current Intramurals:

Volleyball, dance squad, and softball

Alyssa intends that the program at the middle school will help develop the high school program. She is working with Rachel and Lily to determine what our high school athletics program will look like. In addition to a strong sports program, we want our students to

gain important life skills including leadership, confidence, and time management from their participation in athletics.

Step #1: Propose to join PVIAC and Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA).

Questions:

Alyssa would propose for Fall 2022 cross country, co-ed soccer, and girls volleyball. Winter she would propose co-ed basketball. Spring she would propose track and field and boys volleyball.

Dale asked if co-ed is intramural?

Alyssa responded that if we cannot fill a team roster with one gender we offer fair opportunity to all and create gender inclusive teams.

Matt asked as you ease into it how can you make sure it's not a lopsided experience. It's probably tough to enter and climb the skill ladder, will we be competitive?

Alyssa says the MIAA allows you to waiver kids from 7th and 8th grade into HS athletics. Her plan would be to have waivers if we couldn't fill a roster.

David asked how do you know you don't have enough players?

Alyssa has created and distributed sports collection information and chosen the sports based on responses as well as current middle school participation.

Dale thanks Alyssa for her service and wonders what the current participation is for the middle school current offerings. Second, will we have the equipment, coaches, etc. we need for high school athletics budget wise?

Alyssa knows sports that will have interest based on middle school participation. Her goal for this year was to have 75% of students engaged in competitive sports, intramural sports, or performing arts.

Rachel mentioned that Alyssa doesn't have a budget yet but we plan on offering full support just as we do for middle school. They will have uniforms, coaches, and transportation.

Alyssa mentioned she has reached out to local businesses to get an idea of how much those things will cost. As far as bigger picture items, courts, scoreboards, etc. we will have a better idea of costs at the beginning of 2022. As far as the winning aspect, with only 9th graders, it will take some time to build up but we hope to play other freshman teams.

Ann asked how many coaches would you need in year one?

Alyssa said 4-5 for the Fall, 2 for the Winter, 3 for Spring. Roughly 10 to start.

Ann asked would these coaches come from current faculty?

Alyssa said yes, right now middle school teams are coached by faculty. Many have not coached before and Alyssa will help them through that process.

Matt asked if teachers who coach get a stipend?

Alyssa said yes. The stipend differs for competitive, intramural, and performing arts.

David asked if you have to offer a boys and girls team for sports?

Alyssa said yes but right now we don't have the numbers to do that, so that's why our team is co-ed. If we offer softball but have a male who is interested, he can play if we are not offering baseball.

Aaron asked what schools we currently play against?

Alyssa said we participate in the Springfield youth soccer league, not specific schools, but we play teams within the conference. For basketball we're in a league that plays in MA and CT - teams from surrounding areas. A lot of parents and staff do attend games.

Aaron mentioned Board members should attend a game. Others agreed.

Rachel said we are looking for the Board to vote to allow Rachel Romano to apply to join PVIAC. We hope that the creation of athletics at the HS level will create connections and bring our school community together.

David asked if there is a field near the new HS?

Rachel says yes, not a regulation field but a practice field.

B. High School Athletics Vote

D. Janes made a motion to Allow Rachel Romano to apply to join PVIAC.

R. Martin seconded the motion.

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

III. Board of Trustees Strategic Priorities 5 Year Plan

A. Board of Trustees Strategic Priorities 5 Year Plan

You will find a draft of strategic priorities in your packet.

Rachel talked about how she and Nikki took the notes from the retreat as well as additional thoughts from other Board members and we developed a synthesized draft. We have separated them into operational and aspirational priorities. We chose to call them priorities as opposed to goals because they are not measurable. We will use these to guide decision making, committee goals, goal setting for Rachel.

Dale continued that we do have goals that are measurable so he doesn't want people to worry about goals not being measurable. He thinks as a Board we should take a broader approach so that as a Board we can be more flexible. Operational is the how and the aspirational is the why.

Matt's feedback would be to keep racial equity as a focus. Does that come through in our goals or should it stand alone?

Rachel explained that our intention was to embed it into the priorities where it fits rather than make it its own goal so it is more overarching.

Robbie agreed that it shouldn't be a single point but rather more seen throughout. Potentially called out more specifically.

Dale thinks maybe we need to add an overall point related to it.

Rachel said we used the term "equity-focused" in the framing portion of aspirational goals and we could add it in the operational section as well. Rachel pointed out the different areas where we explicitly added it to certain bullet points.

Matt tested it by wondering if he came in as a new Board member and he read the priorities, would he understand our focus on racial equity.

Denise agrees with Rachel that sustainability and viability are the same thing so we can combine them and then wonders if it's diversity or inclusion?

Matt clarified that he thinks we're moving from inclusion toward racial equity.

Xiomara thinks it's important to remember that diversity means many different things and it is fine the way it is written.

Nikki said that racial equity is an umbrella term and a paying attention to increasing the diversity of the Board is still important it just can't be the only focus of our anti-racist work.

Rachel thinks that we can add it as an aspirational priority, what are some things that fall under that?

- Prioritize access and equity for all students
- Support and resource the school leadership to operationalize the antiracism standards
- Commit to personal learning around systemic racism and racial equity

Robbie agrees we can make it it's own goal but he doesn't want it to take away from other goals.

IV. Academic Achievement Committee

A. Academic Achievement Committee Report

We are passing on this one because the meeting was cancelled, there was not a quorum.

Rachel mentioned that Nikki researched open meeting law and discovered that you do not need a quorum to approve minutes.

V. Finance Committee

A. Finance Committee Report

Denise said the budget remains strong. Matt is working to review our investment structure. Income statement, we are looking to revise the approved budget. We will submit a revised proposal in December and vote in January, There are some continued pressures surrounding enrollment. We are in the ballpark but we can make some adjustments. Some expenses are running higher based on inflation and shortages. Instructional furniture and equipment is running higher as well as transportation due mostly to summer school.

Dale mentioned he thinks it would be good for the Board monthly or quarterly on COVID related funds and where they are being spent. Important for the Board to be knowledgeable about this.

Denise agrees and saw the Boston Globe article he sent to everyone. Dale has no concern that we are misusing the funds but he wants to keep on top of appropriate tracking of these things.

VI. Governance Committee

A. Governance Committee Report

Rachel says we talked about committee goals especially related to onboarding new trustees. We talked about a longer onboarding process to vet potential trustees which would allow us and a potential trustee to make an educated decision about whether this is the right fit for both entities. Xiomara talked about the Latinx Chamber of Commerce and how important it is to enter into relationships that are mutually beneficial.

Dale asked Rachel what the priorities for skillsets of potential trustees are?

Rachel thinks we need to do an assessment of current skillsets. It is always important to have people with legal, finance, and accounting experience. Educators are important but we need to be discerning there. Right now her focus is on building community relationships. We are in need of mentors and networking opportunities for our students. She believes it is more important to have people with the right mindsets and who are passionate and aligned with the work we are doing. Finally, leaders from our community who understand what it means to manage complex teams, and understands management at a higher level.

VII. 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 5:48 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
D. Fuller

Documents used during the meeting

- Letter to PVIAC.docx
- DRAFT of Board of Trustees 5 Year Strategic Priorities Plan 2021.docx
- Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain Chapters 1 & 2.pdf