

APPROVED



Veritas Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Governance Committee Meeting

Zoom Meeting

Date and Time

Friday August 9, 2024 at 10:00 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)

Committee Members Absent

X. Delobato

Guests Present

N. Gauthier (remote), R. Romano (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 Friday Aug 9, 2024 at 10:07 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

D. Fuller made a motion to approve the minutes from Governance Committee Meeting on 07-12-24.

A. Mendelson seconded the motion.

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

II. Governance

A. 2024-2025 Student and Family Handbook

Partnerships and Collaborations

The conversation delved into Veritas' partnership with Worcester State University, involving collaborative planning meetings for course offerings and sending professors for cohorted classes. Additionally, Rachel mentioned an overnight trip for seventh graders to experience college life at Worcester State University.

Aaron asked about Worcester State's involvement in early college programs. Rachel clarified that a subset of 11th-grade early college max kids would attend STCC campus while others continue hybrid high school programs on-site. The partnership with Worcester State remains unchanged; they provide cohorted courses hosted by Veritas while also collaborating on middle school initiatives.

Title IX Policies and Education

Rachel explained that Veritas revised its Title IX policy due to changes in federal law definitions regarding discrimination offenses under Title IX regulations. She emphasized training staff members regarding protocols related specifically towards potential violations under Title IX regulations.

Rachel explained that the school aligns with Title IX by teaching students about discrimination and harassment in a way that is integrated into the school rules. She mentioned instances where teachers had to address potential Title IX violations, such as persistent harassment of a student. The discussion highlighted changes in the law, emphasizing that even a single egregious behavior could trigger a Title IX violation. Aaron inquired about instances of teachers calling out students for Title IX violations, to which Rachel clarified that it often occurs when students report feeling harassed rather than being explicitly labeled as a violation.

Rachel shared various challenging situations related to individual rights protection at the school. She discussed how investigations under Title IX allowed them to address these issues formally and provide learning opportunities for both students and staff members.

Handbook and Policy Revisions

The meeting agenda items were discussed, including voting on revisions to the handbook policies and approving a new appendix outlining policies for students operating on STCC's campus. The Title IX policy was highlighted due to federal law revisions coming into effect on August 1st.

The team discussed revisions to the handbook regarding policy changes aligned with federal laws like Title IX. They also addressed procedural changes related to attendance policies aimed at reducing chronic absenteeism among students.

Rachel mentioned that lawyers reviewed policies related to Title IX but indicated other policy changes did not require legal review since they were more procedural or practice-based adjustments within the school's purview.

David sought clarification on how their policy changes differed from those of district schools, prompting discussions on fine-tuning attendance policies based on specific challenges faced by their institution compared to broader district-level approaches.

Rachel discussed changes to the school handbook, including policies related to attendance, bus behavior, and cell phone usage. She highlighted that these changes are aimed at aligning with district schools' practices and addressing issues arising from the pandemic. Rachel emphasized that these adjustments are necessary for maintaining clean data and ensuring student safety on buses. Additionally, she mentioned potential challenges in implementing the new cell phone policy due to students' attachment to their devices.

Rachel explained that a policy change regarding bus behavior is being introduced as a practice rather than a formal policy adjustment. The focus is on supporting bus drivers in managing disruptive behavior by allowing for suspensions from using the school transportation services as a consequence.

The discussion revolved around changing the cell phone policy at high school campuses due to excessive distractions caused by phones during instructional time. Rachel expressed concerns about potential resistance from students and parents but emphasized prioritizing student focus during classes over unrestricted access to phones.

David inquired about differences in policies between campuses regarding cell phone usage. Rachel clarified that while high school students will have restrictions on using phones during instructional time, those attending classes on the STCC campus will be allowed more flexibility due to their ability to handle this privilege responsibly.

David asked if students had been informed about the new policies concerning cell phones. Rachel confirmed that communication would primarily occur through updates in the handbook; however, she anticipated some initial pushback from students who were accustomed to having their phones readily available throughout the day.

Rachel explained how middle schoolers have historically had their cellphones locked up upon arrival at school or kept out of reach during class hours, a practice which will now extend into high schools starting next year despite expected resistance from older grade levels.

Veritas-STCC Handbook Appendix and Classes

Rachel discussed the contents of the Veritas-STCC Handbook, which aligns with STCC policies and outlines expectations and policies around work completion and grading for college courses. She emphasized differences between high school and college rules, such as attendance requirements. Rachel also mentioned that staff will teach these guidelines to students at the beginning of the school year.

David inquired about whether classes taken at STCC would be exclusively for Veritas students or mixed with other college students. Rachel explained that most classes are for Veritas students but may include other kids if there is room in the class. She detailed the minimum number of students required to cohort a class at STCC, challenges related to this requirement, recording classes, singleton classes not exclusive to Veritas kids based on their career paths, and support provided outside cohorted classes.

III. 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 10:46 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
D. Fuller

Documents used during the meeting

- VPCS Handbook Revisions August 2024.docx