

APPROVED



Veritas Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Zoom Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday February 29, 2024 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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+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 879 4469 7628

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

Trustees Present

A. Errichetti, A. Mendelson, D. Ford, L. Doherty (remote), M. Landon (remote), R. Martin, R. Sela, T. Maxey (remote), X. Delobato (remote)

Trustees Absent

D. Fuller, M. Freeman

Guests Present

N. Gauthier, R. Romano

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

A. Errichetti called a meeting of the board of trustees of Veritas Preparatory Charter School to order on Thursday Feb 29, 2024 at 4:38 PM.

C. Approve minutes

D. Ford made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 11-30-23.

R. Martin seconded the motion.

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

D. Approve Minutes

D. Ford made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 01-25-24.

R. Martin seconded the motion.

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

II. Board Chair Report

A. Board Chair Updates

Ann gives kudos to Rachel and her team for recent media coverage re: Flag Football and Financial Literacy.

Ann and Rachel ask Trustees to save June 27th (date of annual meeting). We will hold a Board retreat. TBD on where and timing. The plan is to review goals and get a full state of the school update.

Aaron asks about having some of the retreat devoted to strategic planning?

Rachel says that can be a part of it - we do have five year strategic priorities that we created at our last retreat that still span the next two years. If we add some more time, we could talk about longer term priorities.

We will send out a poll re: timing and we will present a tentative agenda for the retreat in March.

Matt talks about ending the retreat with us all going to dinner.

Please let us know if you have a conflict this day so we can change the date since we would like everyone in attendance.

Charter School News -

- 1.) Commissioner Riley is stepping down and Russell Johnston is now interim.
- 2.) City on the Hill Charter School is closing - the Board discusses recent charter school closings across the state.

III. CEO Report

A. FY24 Annual Fund Update

Rachel outlined the overarching advancement plan at the last meeting. She has been making real progress on delegating out pieces of the bigger picture to senior leaders and others that will be involved in this new vision.

Rachel has been working on a Spring Appeal letter to help us reach our \$50,000 goal. We will be sending students to a two week overnight experience at Westfield State called Camp Beyond and she will be highlighting that in her next appeal letter. Rachel asks the trustees if they have 10 people they could reach out to to support this effort. She will bring a draft of the letter to the March meeting and we can talk about how exactly to roll this out.

Matt says a PDF of that letter that he can write a personal note on and send out to his contacts would be great.

Rachel and Katie Zobel have been working on cleaning up the donor database and follow ups. We are getting a better handle on where we are and what we might need support from a consultant for. She feels good about the short term and long term efforts (advancement vision).

B. Advocacy Week Debrief

Nikki updates the Board that advocacy week kicked off by gathering **300 supporters** – both virtually and in person – to celebrate the ways in which charter public schools offer ***an education that adds up.***

Throughout the rest of the week, our community:

- Sent **1,700 emails to their elected officials**, reaching 88% of Massachusetts' legislators!
- Hand delivered **over 200 personalized postcards** to 40 legislators at the State House.
- **Flooded social media** with stories of impact and success using **#EdThatAddsUp**.
- Shared (and re-shared) [this moving video](#) co-created by our charter public schools across the state!

We will be hosting Representative Carlos Gonzalez at VPCHS on March 19 at 9:30 a.m.

The tentative agenda is as follows:

Welcome and Introduction (Principal, Student Government students)

School Tour (Principal, Student Government students)

Facilities Per Pupil (FPP Ask) Meeting (Rachel, Nikki, Xiomara, and Parent)

IV. Academic Achievement Committee

A. Data Updates

Rebecca shares headlines from the Academic Achievement meeting. We continue to host guests at the monthly meetings. This month we heard from Kali, Middle School Dean of Curriculum and Instruction (ELA and Humanities) and Adrienne the HS Dean of Early College.

We focused on Math and ELA results from the second ANet. We are not currently on track to meet the academic goals that we have set. There are, however, some bright spots like in 7th grade (which also happens to have the strongest team of teachers). Another positive piece is that for writing, there is a very clear and actionable plan on how to improve student writing. The focus on writing will also help students on other ELA portions of the MCAS. Rebecca thinks it is the right priority and the right set of actions but it takes time.

Aaron asks about absenteeism and it's effect on these scores?

Rebecca says we know absenteeism is a national issue.

Denise asks what the ultimate goal is?

Rachel says 95%. We are far from that now and it is a moving target. We are focused on this. We have a tiered system of supports where we are utilizing several different methods to address this issue and we have seen improvements. We made significant progress last year, but this year we are about the same. The way we are addressing absenteeism now, it not going to impact achievement in the long run.

In High School data, we are partially meeting and on a path to meeting many of the academic goals. We are seeing a 100% pass rate in college courses being taken by 10th graders.

In Math achievement, we noticed that something was happening in Algebra in 8th grade - students were not being successful. We have hired a consultant to figure out what is happening here. If you look at some of the Math assessments where students were not meeting goals, they were taking an abbreviated version since COVID - now they are taking the full version which makes comparing scores from last year to this year difficult.

Robbie says he has noticed that social media trends are also impacting achievement. (Family trends and gender roles effect this as well).

Rebecca says overall there is a lot of work being put into the teachers that will translate to the students over time.

Rachel mentions the middle school instructional walk they did yesterday - she feels students are back on track and starting to learn again. It took us a while to get back to where we were pre pandemic but we're on the way. Unfortunately, the results aren't validating that yet and that is what you need to create buy-in from teachers. The one piece of our program we need to focus on now is how to respond to data in the immediate moment. We have to remained focused on middle school achievement because it will greatly impact high school achievement.

V. Finance Committee

A. Finance Committee Report

Denise updates the Board that on the balance sheet liquidity is stable. We borrowed \$200,000 from the line of credit but paid that back immediately. Our goal for cash at hand would be to get to 45 and eventually 60 days. As far as grants, ESSER funds have to be used this year and Rachel and Lynne continue to look for new grant opportunities. Expenses remain well controlled.

B. FY25 Budget Update

The update gives you a view of mostly the revenue at this time. We are confident that the tuition rate at the top is accurate. ESSER funding is at 0. On the revenue side it is very doable. Next month, expenses will be looked at. There should be a budget for the Board to look at in May.

Rebecca asks for a list of what would be cut with ESSER funds going away.

There are a couple of positions that are going away or being consolidated. Rachel talks about some specific examples (i.e. we have gotten more efficient with special education services). There will be no significant programmatic changes.

VI. Governance Report

A. Prospective Trustee Nomination

D. Ford made a motion to nominate Ann Marie Martínez to the Veritas Prep Board of Trustees.

A. Mendelson seconded the motion.

The Board reviews her credentials. She is very mission aligned and excited about the opportunity. She is a great addition to the Board and also to the finance committee as that is her skillset and expertise.

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

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 6:02 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

A. Errichetti

Documents used during the meeting

- Q2 Data Report - Middle School - February Meeting.pdf
- Q2 Data Report - High School - February Meeting.pdf
- Early College Pass Rates - February Meeting.pdf
- Financial Reports to the Board - February.pdf
- FY25 Budget Planning Update February Meeting.docx
- Ann Marie Martinez_RESUME_Veritas - February Meeting.docx