APPROVED

Veritas Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

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

Date and Time
Thursday April 24, 2025 at 4:30 PM

Location
In Person at the High School: 225 Carando Drive Springfield, MA 01104

One tap mobile +13126266799,,87944697628#

Dial by your location
+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 879 4469 7628
Passcode: 912934

Find your local number: https://vpcs-org.zoom.us/u/k8aG053ZG

Trustees Present
A. Errichetti (remote), A. Martínez (remote), D. Ford (remote), L. Doherty (remote), M. Freeman (remote), M. Landon (remote), R. Martin (remote), R. Sela (remote)

Trustees Absent
A. Hickson-Martin, A. Mendelson, D. Fuller, X. Delobato

Guests Present

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

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

A. Errichetti called a meeting of the board of trustees of Veritas Preparatory Charter School to order on Thursday Apr 24, 2025 at 4:33 PM.

B. Approve minutes

L. Doherty made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 03-27-25.
M. Freeman seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Board Chair Report

A. Board Chair Update

Upcoming June Board Retreat
Ann informed the attendees about an extended meeting and retreat scheduled for June 26th, followed by dinner at Twin Hills. Rachel was tasked with planning the agenda for the retreat, and attendees were encouraged to suggest topics to include.

III. CEO Report

A. CEO Updates

Student Attrition
Rachel highlights an unusually high rate of student attrition, particularly in sixth grade. Veritas Prep's data analyst will conduct a deeper analysis to identify trends and inform planning. The team will investigate whether similar patterns appear in peer schools and will work to categorize where students are transferring, with a focus on those returning to Springfield Public Schools.

They also discuss the implications of reaching the enrollment cap of 7606 next year and emphasize the need for tighter backfilling strategies. Plans include keeping the waiting list warm and notifying the next five candidates about potential seat availability.

Lisa asks about the budgetary impact of attrition. Rachel assures that contingency funds are available and notes the minimal impact on this year's budget due to increased revenue.

CEO Goals

Staff Culture and Retention
Rachel discusses the goal of rebuilding a staff culture that is mission-aligned and grounded in shared values. To support this effort, school leaders have focused on several key strategies:

- Strengthening internal communication to ensure alignment with the school's mission and values.
- Improving processes around due process and discipline, including the implementation of a system to document investigations related to staff and student misconduct.
- Utilizing the Spark Survey to assess staff culture and climate, with results benchmarked against nationally normed questions.
- Ensuring fairness and consistency in teacher evaluations, with standards aligned to the Dessie framework.
- Prioritizing recognition and praise for top-performing teachers and staff.
- Raising the teacher salary cap to $90,000 to support retention efforts.
- Exploring a potential increase in the salary floor, while considering the impact on the budget and staffing allocations.

College and Career Readiness Programming
Rachel shares the goal of designing and implementing a comprehensive College and Career Readiness Program at Veritas Prep. To support this, the school has taken the following steps:

- Partnered with OneGoal to provide coaching, curriculum, and support for postsecondary planning, with an emphasis on first-generation college-bound students. The partnership will be evaluated for value and cost-effectiveness after three years.
- Used School Links to fulfill the MYCAP requirement and developed a seminar curriculum spanning grades 5–8.
- Rolled out student-led conferences across multiple grade levels to build skills in presentation and portfolio development.
- Established partnerships with employers such as Roberts Energy, Valley Communications, and Peerless Precision to offer mentorships, internships, and company tours.
- Collected ongoing feedback from the College and Career Advisory Board, made up of employer partners and local college representatives.
- Worked on developing a rubric to guide student internships and engaged employer partners in shaping the experience.
- Applied for the Innovation Career Pathways Designation, with an initial focus on advanced manufacturing and potential expansion into health sciences. Considered the funding implications of this designation, with plans to reassess if financial support is not secured.
- Recognized the need to rebuild student learning culture and improve average daily attendance.

- Focused on strengthening academic preparation in middle school to ensure readiness for high school and early college pathways.
- Reported that 59% of students are currently enrolled in early college, with 80% of 11th graders earning college credits.

Stakeholder Engagement and Fundraising
Rachel outlines the goal of engaging stakeholders to strengthen fundraising capacity and boost enrollment demand. Key efforts include:

- Implementing a multilayered stakeholder engagement strategy to build relationships and increase community investment.
- Making progress in developing internal infrastructure to support long-term fundraising goals.
- Positioning the school for a potential capital campaign in the near future.

IV. Academic Achievement Committee

A. Academic Achievement Committee Report

Career Pathways and Early College Program
Rebecca provides an update on efforts to integrate career-focused learning with the Early College program at Veritas High School. The goal is to develop a seamless, student-centered model that allows for exploration of multiple postsecondary pathways while earning industry-recognized certifications and work-based learning credits.

There is ongoing discussion about creating opportunities for students to pursue meaningful employment while continuing their education, ultimately enhancing both career readiness and earning potential.

Middle School Report and Metrics
Rebecca presents the Middle School report, which includes relevant high school metrics. Key highlights and discussions include:

- Implementation of a new ELA curriculum has shown promising results, with improved performance on the At Three assessment.
- A goal is set for 60% of students to meet or exceed expectations in academic achievement, which was reached with a special shout out to successes in 7th grade.
- Data reveals that ESL and special education students face the greatest challenges in math. Plans are underway to hire a dedicated math interventionist to support these students.
- There is a recognized need for a more strategic approach to fifth-grade math instruction, particularly in addressing foundational learning gaps.
- Leaders agree to continue monitoring the effectiveness of the current middle school math curriculum for another year before making major adjustments.

- The possibility of studying successful math programs at other schools is discussed as a way to inform future curriculum improvements.

Math Curriculum and Intervention
Rachel addresses ongoing challenges in math achievement and emphasizes the need for a more systematic, targeted approach.

Since 2019, the school has used the Fish Tank curriculum; however, intervention efforts have proven difficult. To address this, plans are in place to implement **Math 180** and hire a dedicated math interventionist to close gaps in student understanding.
Leaders also identify a need to strengthen math content knowledge among teachers. A potential partnership with **Mount Holyoke College** is under consideration to provide high-quality, content-focused professional development.

Additional goals include building teacher capacity to understand math learning progressions and effectively address student misconceptions. The team also acknowledges the impact of teacher turnover, reinforcing the importance of ongoing training and support.
There is optimism around the Mount Holyoke partnership as a promising step toward long-term instructional improvement in math.

Balancing Priorities and Academic Success
Matt raises a critical question about whether the pursuit of multiple initiatives may be diluting the school's focus on academic outcomes.

Rachel acknowledges the challenge of maintaining clear priorities and ensuring simplicity so teachers can concentrate on what matters most. The conversation centers on the need to establish interim metrics to track progress between assessments and the foundational role attendance plays in academic success.

Leaders reflect on the widespread struggles with student attention and engagement in the wake of the pandemic, recognizing this as a challenge across all levels of education.
Looking ahead, there is a shared commitment to refining priorities and identifying core drivers that will guide the **State of the School** and strategic planning for the upcoming year.

V. Finance Committee

A. Finance Committee Report

Finance and Budget
Denise reports that liquidity remains stable and continues to improve, with 40–41 days of cash on hand. A positive net change in position of approximately **$450,000** is projected,

with expenses remaining well-controlled. Leadership plans to reinvest some of the surplus into areas that were under budget in preparation for the next school year.

Work is underway on a five-year financial plan, including scenario planning for potential revenue reductions and adjustments to staffing levels or salary floors and caps.

Denise also discusses the delayed **middle school window project**, which carries a projected cost of $1 million.

A busy month is anticipated as the school moves toward a **final budget vote in June**.

B. Investment Subcommittee Quarterly Meeting

The Investment Subcommittee update will be postponed to next month, as the scheduled meeting was rescheduled.

VI. Governance Committee

A. Trustee Recruitment

We will discuss this at next month's meeting.

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 6:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
A. Errichetti

Documents used during the meeting

- FY25 CEO Goals_summary April Meeting.docx
- q3 Middle School Report (1).pdf
- VPCHS Innovation Pathways Brochure (25-26).pdf
- Financial Reports to the Board April.pdf
- Veritas Prep Quarterly Performance Monitor Aptil 2025.pdf
- SH Thoughts on the Market New.pdf
- SHPW Tariff Tidings.pdf