

APPROVED



## Veritas Preparatory Charter School

### Minutes

#### Board Meeting

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**Date and Time**

Wednesday March 30, 2016 at 8:15 AM

**Location**

Veritas Prep Charter School board room or Dial-in number: 866-848-2216, Conference Code: 7783935205

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**Trustees Present**

A. Martin, A. Mendelson, C. Wistreich (remote), D. Fuller, G. Moody, L. Doherty, M. Sweet, T. Gabinetti

**Trustees Absent**

L. Abbate, R. Holmes, S. Alston

**Trustees who arrived after the meeting opened**

L. Doherty, M. Sweet

**Guests Present**

Dale Janes, Emily Baecher, R. Romano

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**I. Opening Items****A. Record Attendance and Guests****B. Call the Meeting to Order**

A. Mendelson called a meeting of the board of trustees of Veritas Preparatory Charter School to order on Wednesday Mar 30, 2016 at 8:21 AM.

### **C. Approve Minutes**

A. Mendelson made a motion to approve minutes from the Board Meeting on 02-26-16 Board Meeting on 02-26-16.

A. Martin seconded the motion.

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

### **D. Veritas Prep Student**

Jeshuah Whitney read his narrative from the music concert and provided feedback on the school.

## **II. 5-Year Plan**

### **A. School Leadership Presentation**

R. Romano opened the meeting on what the leadership team would like to do at the school with its program. R. Romano introduced principal, Emily Baecher. E. Baecher discussed her background and experience at Brooke Charter School in Boston. She commented on habits and culture challenges with students and parents. R. Romano commented on cultural challenges and the environment students grow up in at home and at school. E. Baecher commented on student grade retention and the challenges we face that early impacts for students would impact them more. E. Baecher commented on expansion to Kindergarten would impact students and parents better academically and culturally. R. Romano commented on our current impact of students and who we are and are not serving.

M. Sweet arrived.

### **B. Academic Achievement Presentation**

A. Martin opened the discussion on the options AA committee considered and the process in evaluating the options; stay a single site, expand K-8, expand to another middle school. She discussed the challenges continuing as a single site school - recruiting is an issue among other issues. Expand to another middle school - more staff, more students, intense community, potential development and collaboration, sports programs, competition from middle/high schools. K-8 expansion - fill academic and social/emotional gaps earlier in students. M. Sweet commented on dissemination practices and the discussion AA had around this topic. Leadership suggested we will still be able to disseminate to middle schools if we expand to K-8. A. Martin commented that what works in Boston charter schools depends on what the team is willing to do whether they tackle a system problem, become a boutique school or become teacher development organization. D. Fuller asked what the academic challenges are with incoming 5th graders. E. Baecher commented that we can bring students up to grade level over the four years at Veritas but they are not prepared to compete locally or

nationally. R. Romano commented on the special education program for incoming students. We would serve students with disabilities better expanding to K-8. A. Martin suggested we need to clarify what our priorities are as a Board and school to overcome the challenges in the current program.

R. Romano commented that we need to be mindful of the charter school landscape, limited number of seats and cap issues. A. Mendelson commented on the competition that will exist with expanded charter schools if we stay a single site school. R. Romano commented that students are leaving to attend middle/high charter schools. R. Romano commented on the challenges to expanding a high school program as a small school but a consideration for a long term plan.

### **C. Finance Presentation**

L. Doherty arrived.

A. Gabinetti opened the conversation on the two projections presented- staying as a single site and expansion to a K-8. He walked through current projections for this year and staying as is. R. Romano commented on the assumptions included in the projections which include backfilling every single seat and at full enrollment and the cultural impacts. Discussion around enrollment and backfilling. C. Wistreich asked about fundraising. R. Romano commented that fundraising increases in the projections but private funding will be a challenge. He commented that more resources should be provided towards development and fundraising. A. Aaron has commented that fundraising was a lower priority due to other priorities. R. Romano commented that we did not do private fundraising in anticipation of a capital campaign.

M. Sweet asked about staffing projections. R. Romano commented a formalized staffing plan is not in place for those numbers yet, rough estimates only. M. Sweet commented he would like comfort that expanding grades with help our staffing challenges. A deeper dive needs to be done on staffing impacts. D. Janes commented that expansion can be an issue even if a strong management team is in place. They can be spread too thin and not prepared for the staff issues from having an expanded team. R. Romano will develop a staffing plan for a K-8 expansion and present during the Academic Achievement committee meeting. A. Martin commented we need to build costs for additional recruitment. D. Fuller asked for a facility plan for a K-8 expansion.

### **D. Governance Presentation**

A. Mendelson commented on the need for more committees and board members with an expansion. A. Mendelson commented that board recruitment should be a continual priority for all board members. A. Martin commented that all board members need more psychological and financial responsibility to consider an expansion and projected transitions.

L. Doherty commented on her concerns of moving forward with a K-8 expansion and State rejecting it. February 2017 would be the earliest we would find out about renewal and increase seat approval.

### III. Finance

#### A. February Financials

A. Gabinetti provided highlights on the status of current financials.

### IV. Other Business

#### A. Executive Director Report

R. Romano provided an update on staffing, recruitment, and coverage for principal maternity leave.

### V. Closing Items

#### A. Adjourn Meeting

A. Mendelson made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

A. Martin seconded the motion.

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

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

L. Doherty