APPROVED

Veritas Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

In Person

Date and Time
Thursday January 22, 2026 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), A. Mendelson (remote), L. Doherty, M. Landon, R. Sela

Trustees Absent
A. Hickson-Martin, D. Ford, D. Fuller, M. Freeman, R. Leonard, R. Martin, X. Delobato

Guests Present

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

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

M. Landon called a meeting of the board of trustees of Veritas Preparatory Charter School to order on Thursday Jan 22, 2026 at 4:34 PM.

B. Approve minutes

II. Board Chair Report

A. Board Chair Updates

Board Recruitment
The Board discussed ongoing recruitment efforts and the current candidate pipeline. Matt Landon reported that two promising candidates are being considered. Andres Gomez, Executive Director of Hospitality at MGM, attended the November meeting and expressed strong interest in serving, citing his personal connection to Springfield and alignment with Veritas Prep's mission. Rachel also highlighted Hank Japalski who brings significant finance, nonprofit, and legal experience. Both candidates will need to submit resumes and proceed through the Governance Committee's formal review process before potential nomination at the February meeting. The Board emphasized the need to strengthen its finance bench, particularly for future Treasurer and Finance Chair roles, and noted that these candidates could help fill key skill gaps.

Spelling V
Matt shared positive feedback from attending the recent Spelling V event, noting it was highly engaging and well-executed by Katrina and Nicole. Students demonstrated confidence, bravery, and sportsmanship throughout the competition. A notable highlight was that the winner was the younger sibling of a previous champion, adding a meaningful family connection. Teachers were actively present and supportive, and the event underscored the school's strong academic culture and community engagement. Board members expressed hope that the event continues to grow in participation and visibility.

Terry Maxey
Rachel Romano reported ongoing challenges in securing required 2024 financial disclosure forms from board member Terry Maxey. Multiple attempts have been made to contact him via email, phone, and his workplace at Behavioral Health Network without success. The Board received a compliance-related communication from Alyssa emphasizing the need for resolution. It was agreed that certified mail containing the disclosure forms would be sent to establish a formal paper trail. Matt suggested

proactively updating Alyssa on all contact attempts to document good-faith compliance efforts.

III. CEO Report

A. CEO Updates

Teacher Compensation Update
Rachel provided a comprehensive update on the teacher compensation restructuring initiative being developed in collaboration with Lynne and the Finance Committee. The proposed salary scale is significantly more competitive and better aligned with Springfield Public Schools and peer charter schools, including Springfield Prep. Funding the restructure required difficult organizational decisions, including planned staffing reductions—marking the first time the school has made such cuts. Positions previously supported by expiring COVID relief funds will be eliminated to allow reinvestment in teaching salaries. The plan is approximately 90% complete, with remaining decisions focused on raise commitments and implementation levels.

Post-Secondary Planning
Rachel reported strong progress in college and career planning, with 72 seniors having submitted a total of 275 college applications. While most students are on track, FAFSA completion remains a concern, with 48% completed to date. The school has hosted multiple FAFSA support nights and continues to provide intensive assistance, including support from college representatives. Academic profile challenges were also noted, as the senior class average GPA of 2.5 limits selective college options. Staff continue outreach efforts to support remaining students who have not yet finalized postsecondary plans.

IV. Finance Committee

A. Finance Committee Report

Matt reported that the school is currently projecting a budget surplus, with personnel expenses running approximately $1.3 million under projections for the first half of the fiscal year. The teacher compensation restructure is expected to cost roughly $200,000 in salary increases, which will be offset by staffing reductions, resulting in a largely budget-neutral outcome. The school remains well-positioned to continue building reserves while making strategic reinvestments.

B. Investment Subcommittee Update

Matt provided an update on the investment portfolio managed by Seeley Howard, which has grown from approximately $600,000 at the end of 2021 to $728,290. Despite challenging market timing, the portfolio achieved strong returns, supported by a 70/30 allocation strategy. Quarterly reviews continue to focus on balancing growth and risk management. Investment Committee meetings remain open to all board members.

V. Academic Achievement Committee

A. Academic Achievement Committee Report

Rachel and members of the Academic Achievement committee shared findings from a January 8 instructional walkthrough conducted by the committee across grades 5–8 in math and ELA. Observations highlighted strong teacher preparation and commitment, but also revealed a pattern of over-scaffolding, where teachers provide excessive support that limits productive student struggle. This practice may contribute to learned helplessness, as seen in upper-grade students requiring extensive assistance with tasks such as college applications. The committee discussed the tension between curriculum rigor, student skill gaps, and accountability pressures.

Rachel also outlined plans to restructure fifth grade to better support students transitioning from elementary schools. Proposed changes include reducing student load per teacher and allowing more time for foundational skill development. These adjustments aim to improve student outcomes, support teacher sustainability, and strengthen readiness for sixth grade.

VI. Next Steps

A. Next Steps

- Governance Committee to review Andres Gomez’s resume and advance board recruitment process.
- Certified mail to be sent to Terry Maxey regarding financial disclosures.
- Finance Committee meeting scheduled for February 19 to review compensation restructure. Nikki will invite all Board members.
- Teacher renewal letters to be distributed by end of February following evaluations.
- Academic Achievement Committee to plan additional classroom visits.
- Fifth grade restructuring plan to be finalized.

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 6:07 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
M. Landon

Documents used during the meeting

- Financial Reports to the Board January.pdf
- QB Statement of Cash Flow January Board Meeting.pdf
- Veritas Performance Monitor January 2026.pdf
- Agenda - Instructional Walk Through - January Meeting.docx
- Instructional Walk Through Debrief Questions - January Meeting.docx