

**VIRTUAL PREPARATORY ACADEMY OF OKLAHOMA INC
BOARD MEETING**

**OPSRC, 309 NW 13th Street, Suite
103 Oklahoma City, OK 73103**

MINUTES

Monday, October 14th @ 4:00 p.m.

1. Call to order, roll call, and introductions.

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 PM.

Board Members:

Tom Newell- President – Present

Marcus Jackson – Absent

Keili McEwen – Finance Director – Present

Robert Ruiz – Secretary – Present

Joshua Williams – Vice President – Present

Guests:

Megan Sandoval – ACCEL Regional Vice President

Erin Robins – Head of School

David Harp – Treasurer

Blair Harrison – Minutes Clerk

Brandon Hull – ACCEL Financial Team

Kathleen King – VPrepOK Educator

Stephanie Tucker – VPrepOK Educator

Amber McKee – VPrepOK Educator

Consent Agenda

The following items concern reports and items of a routine nature normally approved at Board meetings. These items will be considered and voted on together as a group with one vote; provided that any Board member may ask that one or more items be considered and voted on separately. The Consent Agenda includes discussion, consideration, and possible action upon the following items:

2. Minutes from September 2024, regular board meeting.
3. 24_25 Estimate of Needs
4. Updated encumbrances
Adding Purchase Order for Alexis Rollins, substitute to encumber for \$5000
Increase encumbrances from \$7, 668.93 to \$12, 668.93.
5. Financial Report
6. Credit Card Statement
No expenses are being incurred. Card is paid off monthly.
KM – amount is different on cc statement compared to encumbrances. ER and DH clarified those are costs that were approved from last month.
7. Final lease agreement
There is an out on every fiscal year to comply with state requirements.

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda made by Robert Ruiz. Motion seconded by Joshua Williams.

Tom Newell – Yes

Keili McEwen – Yes

Robert Ruiz – Yes

Joshua Williams – Yes

Discussion & Update Items

8. School update- Erin Robins

- a. Enrollment updates
- b. School partnership updates
- c. Staffing updates- new staff introductions
- d. Teacher of the Year Awards

a. During the meeting, it was noted that high school enrollment for Fall 2024 had concluded, with only twenty-nine students currently enrolled. Although overall enrollment numbers are down, enrollment for grades K-8 will continue through the fall, and high school enrollment will resume in January 2025. Some students who were not on track to graduate could not remain enrolled due to the school's lack of offerings for junior and senior grade levels.

Megan Sandoval reported that enrollment declines are being observed across ACCEL partner schools nationwide. In response, the national team is conducting an audit of processes from enrollment onward to identify potential causes. Factors contributing to the decline include a stronger homeschool movement and the impact of school choice programs, particularly in states offering vouchers. While the school has shown some improvements, it did not reach the projected enrollment numbers. Brandon Hull is scheduled to meet with the board next month to discuss a revised budget and the financial implications of lower enrollment on funding.

- b. The school is considering a partnership with a community health program to provide healthcare access to families. The program would offer a mobile health center that could attend school events, at no cost to the school and low cost to families. Additionally, eight facilities across the state would be available for family use. Other partnerships are progressing well; students are attending The Bridge program, which is planning to expand its hours, and the aviation academy, which currently has six students enrolled. The aviation program will accept more students during the second semester. Head of Schools, Erin Robins, continues to seek out additional partnership opportunities.*
- c. New staff members were introduced by Head of Schools, Erin Robins, with several attending the meeting virtually: Kathleen King, a secondary math teacher from Choctaw; Amber McKee, a secondary science teacher from Waynoka; and Stephanie Tucker, a 4th/5th grade elementary teacher from Guthrie. The Board President welcomed the new staff and expressed gratitude for their attendance.*
- d. It was announced that the Teacher of the Year Awards ceremony would be postponed to the following month due to the unavailability of some administrators.*

9. Update on board required training hours

All board members have completed their training, except for Keili McEwen, who is working to finalize her hours. Legal counsel Bill Hickman will confirm the number of training hours required annually for board members at the November board meeting.

Purchasing and General Business: The following items will be considered for action by the board on an individual basis and a roll call vote will be conducted on each item.

10. Discussion and possible action to change the November board meeting currently scheduled on November 11th, Veteran's Day

Head of Schools, Erin Robins, stated that she is available for the meeting on November 11th but was unsure about the availability of others. Tom Newell suggested moving the meeting to Monday, November 18th, which would be three weeks before the December meeting on December 9th. There were no conflicts among the board members regarding the change. David Harp, Treasurer, mentioned that the school's auditor is scheduled for the same day, but this should not impact the meeting. Erin Robins will make the necessary adjustments with the state and update the meeting invitations.

Motion to approve moving the November Board Meeting from November 11th to November 18th made by Robert Ruiz. Motion seconded by Joshua Williams.

Tom Newell – Yes

Keili McEwen – Yes

Robert Ruiz – Yes

Joshua Williams – Yes

11. Consideration and possible action to approve the substitute teacher Independent Contractor Agreement (ICA)

The Board President explained that the agreement presented was created by ACCEL Schools' attorney and is their standard contractual agreement. The school substitute is classified as a contractor, used to cover classes during extended leave periods. Some members raised concerns about the agreement not being under Oklahoma jurisdiction, but it was noted that since the substitute is contracted with ACCEL, it would not need to be. Megan Sandoval confirmed that Bill Hickman should provide guidance on this matter.

The board decided to move this item to the November meeting. David Harp expressed concerns about the previously approved encumbrance, but members indicated that a contract is not necessarily required to approve it. Additionally, there was concern that the contract referred to Virtual Preparatory Academy of Oklahoma Inc., rather than ACCEL. The board will seek clarification from Bill Hickman on this issue.

No motion taken.

12. Presentation and possible action to approve the VPREP District/Site Reading Plan

Head of Schools, Erin Robins, presented an update stating that the reading plan needed to be adjusted to comply with state requirements set by the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE). There were no questions from the board.

Motion to approve the updated VPREP District/Side Reading Plan made by Keili McEwen. Motion seconded by Joshua Williams.

Tom Newell – Yes

Keili McEwen – Yes

Robert Ruiz – Yes

Joshua Williams – Yes

13. Presentation and possible action to approve the 24-25 updated VPREP Staff Handbook

Head of Schools, Erin Robins, presented a new document from the 2024-2025 school year. There was a discussion about whether to make the ACCEL Schools employee handbook publicly accessible. It was decided to include a link to the ACCEL handbook within the new document and ensure it complies with Oklahoma state requirements. Member Williams asked if there were any policy changes, and Erin Robins confirmed there were none. There were no further questions from the board.

Motion to approve the 2024-2025 update VPREP Staff Handbook made by Keili McEwen. Motion seconded by Robert Ruiz.

Tom Newell – Yes

Keili McEwen – Yes

Robert Ruiz – Yes

Joshua Williams – Yes

14. Discussion and possible action to approve MOU with Community Health Centers of Oklahoma

Head of Schools, Erin Robins, led a discussion and presentation regarding a standard Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the program, noting that there is no exchange of funds involved. The partnership aims to offer services to families. Member Ruiz inquired whether an agreement to comply with HIPAA and FERPA was necessary. Erin Robins clarified that the school would not be sharing personal information; instead, they would simply recommend the program to families, who could choose to participate.

Motion to approve the MOU made by Robert Ruiz. Motion seconded by Joshua Williams.

Tom Newell – Yes

Keili McEwen – Yes

Robert Ruiz – Yes

Joshua Williams – Yes

15. Discussion and possible action to approve the Cardiac Arrest Prevention Policy

Head of Schools, Erin Robins, stated that legal counsel Bill Hickman recommended implementing this policy to comply with new state requirements.

Motion to approve Cardiac Arrest Prevention Policy made by Keili McEwen. Motion seconded by Robert Ruiz.

Tom Newell – Yes

Keili McEwen – Yes

Robert Ruiz – Yes

Joshua Williams – Yes

- 16.** Discussion and possible action to approve the Communication Devices Policy
Head of Schools, Erin Robins, stated that legal counsel Bill Hickman recommended implementing this policy to comply with new state requirements. Keili McEwen asked about communication with teachers and students.

Motion to approve the Communication Devices Policy made by Robert Ruiz. Motion seconded by Joshua Williams.

Tom Newell – Yes

Keili McEwen – Yes

Robert Ruiz – Yes

Joshua Williams – Yes

- 17.** Discussion and possible action to approve the Voluntary Prayer Policy
Head of Schools, Erin Robins, stated that legal counsel Bill Hickman recommended implementing this policy to comply with new state requirements. Robert Ruiz asked to strike the “s” on the third line “permits.”

Motion to approve the Voluntary Prayer Policy made by Robert Ruiz. Motion seconded by Keili McEwen.

Tom Newell – Yes

Keili McEwen – Yes

Robert Ruiz – Yes

Joshua Williams – Yes

- 18.** Discussion and possible action to approve American Flag and Pledge of Allegiance Policy

Head of Schools, Erin Robins, stated that legal counsel Bill Hickman recommended implementing this policy to comply with new state requirements. Member Williams asked whether the school is already meeting the requirement, noting that teachers currently lead the Pledge of Allegiance daily during Launch. Legal counsel will need to confirm whether the school's current practices comply with the policy. Member Newell suggested ensuring that the state charter board requests the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) to consider virtual schools when creating policies that affect all schools. It was also recommended to have a flag posted in the school office.

Motion to approve the American Flag and Pledge of Allegiance Policy made by Keile McEwen. Motion seconded by Robert Ruiz.

Tom Newell – Yes

Keili McEwen – Yes

Robert Ruiz – Yes

Joshua Williams – Yes

19. Board Member Comments

President Tom Newell apologized for his absence last month and asked if our activity account is now setup and if we are able to submit donations. Treasurer, David Harp confirmed that donations may be made to the school activity account.

Member Ruiz said, “Happy Indigenous People’s Day” and shared how proud he is of living in a country with such a diverse background and cultures. He is immensely proud of his background and reflected upon that.

Keili McEwen apologized for missing the last two meetings and stated she will complete her training asap.

20. Public Comments

All meetings of the Board of Education shall be open to the public, and any regular meeting shall include an opportunity for the public to address the Board. Presentations under “Public Comments” are limited to three (3) minutes. Where several people wish to address the same subject, a spokesperson must be selected. The Board Chairman may interrupt and terminate any presentation that is not in accordance with any of these criteria. Board members may not respond to speakers’ comments. Matters that are subject to any legal action or investigation are not proper topics of public comment and are not authorized.

21. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn meeting made by JW. Motion seconded by KM.

Tom Newell – Yes

Keili McEwen – Yes

Robert Ruiz – Yes

Joshua Williams – Yes

Adjourned at 4:53.

These Minutes were approved on December 9, 2024 by the Board of Education of VPA:

Tom Newell President
Printed Name & Title


Signature

Keili McEwen
Printed Name & Title

Kiri McEwen

Signature

