



**Voyageur Academy
Board of Directors**

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Detroit, MI 48210
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**Approved Annual Organizational and Regular Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 19, 2025**

Mission Statement:

The mission of the ***Voyageur School District*** is to prepare students to be ***College Ready and College Bound***. This mission will be achieved through the foundational pillars of Discipline, Focus, Hard Work, Perseverance and Character; and the humanitarian pillars of Empathy and Compassion.

Annual Organizational Meeting

Call To Order 6:31 pm

Roll Call

Curtis Wade – **Present**, (Wayne County, Detroit, MI)
Minika Benning – **Present**, (Macomb County, Macomb, MI)
Anita T. Washington – **Present**, (Oakland County, Farmington Hills, MI)
Barbara Smith – **Present**, (Wayne County, Inkster, MI)
Dale Williams – **Excused Absence**, (Oakland County, Southfield, MI)
Robert Redmer – **Excused Absence**, (Oakland County, Oakland Twp., MI)
Laura Benedict - **Present**, (Oakland County, Oakland Twp., MI)

Others Present: Vergil Smith(Superintendent), Angela Gilbert(TRG), Rod Atkins(Deputy Superintendent & K-8 Principal), Joe Gagnon(K-12 Director of Program, Quality & Data), Patricia Crosson(HS Principal), Jason Rider(IT Director), Nicole Burris(CTE Director) and Ronnie Phillips(Ferris State University)

**Reading of the Mission,
Vision and Core Values
Statement**

Anita T. Washington

Annual Organization Meeting Motions

1. Election of Officers
 - a. Motion to nominate Curtis Wade as President of Voyageur Academy Board of Directors
 - b. Motion to nominate Minika Benning as Vice President of Voyageur Academy Board of Directors
 - c. Motion to nominate Anita T. Washington as Secretary of Voyageur Academy Board of Directors
 - d. Motion to nominate Barbara Smith as Treasurer of Voyageur Academy Board of Directors

Consent Items

2. Adopt the previously approved calendar of regularly scheduled meeting dates and times for the Academy Board
3. Adopt the resolution appointing the School Leader as the designated person responsible for posting regularly scheduled and special meetings of the Academy Board
4. Adopt the resolution appointing the Board Room doors, Epicenter, Atrium doors and website as the designated public spaces to post calendar and individual meeting notices for regularly scheduled and special meetings of the Academy Board
5. Adopt the resolution appointing Citizens Bank as the designated depository for the Academy Funds
6. Adopt the resolution appointing Curtis Wade, Barbara Smith, John Weir and Vergil Smith as the designated Board Members and personnel eligible to sign academy checks
7. Adopt the resolution appointing Curtis Wade as designated Board Member authorized to negotiate and implement contracts over \$5,000 with service providers
8. Appoint the Superintendent and School Leader as the Title IX, Freedom of Information and Civil Rights Coordinators
9. Reappoint Jerry Richter for legal counsel
10. Reappoint CBIZ as the external financial auditor
11. Reappoint Curtis Wade as Chief Administrative Officer
12. Reappoint Kimberly Wilder as Recording Secretary

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| Action Item | Motion to approve all of the above annual organizational items, 1 - 15, as stated:
Moved by Benning, supported by Smith
Yes – 5
No - 0 |
| Adjournment | Motion to adjourn 6:36 pm
Moved by Smith, supported by Benning
Yes – 5
No - 0 |

Correspondence Ferris State Board Newsletter - **None**

**ESP/School
Admin, Contractors**

1. Authorizer Report – Ronnie Phillips
 - A. Added a few new schools to their portfolio
 - B. Leadership conference
 - Performance by Ms. McCall and K - 12 students was well received
2. ESP Report - Vergil Smith
 - A. Received Temporary Certificate of Occupancy for the Trade building
 - Expires at the end of October
 - Fire Marshall has asked architect to revise emergency plan
 - Classrooms are furnished
 - Offices are stocked
 - Phase II
 - Unbox of shelving
 - Landscaping
 - Parking lot
 - Working with Alpine to do the engineering
 - Waiting on revised survey
 - \$300,000 budgeted
 - Early spring will be the target time
 - B. Title I, II and IV
 - 18% decrease
 - C. Eagle
 - Soil testing and mitigation
 - Maintain sod, mulch, properly covered
 - D. Filter First Legislation
 - All water fountains have to follow certain requirements
 - 14 new hands free bottle filling stations
 - Applied for a grant to cover this expense
 - E. Ferris State, CSO, Chris Loezelle
 - Would like to host a Board of Trustee Training at Voyageur College Prep, HS Media Center
 - Thursday, October 23 from 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm
 - F. Kitchen needs a new walk in fridge
 - \$16,000 purchase
3. IT Director Report - Jason Rider
 - A. No major outages
 - B. No failed devices
 - C. Maintain all carts in each classroom
 - D. Next year, may need to replace those devices that are failing
 - E. May need to purchase 1,200 to 1,400, one for each student
 - F. Would like to have 100 extra chromebooks on hand
 - G. Collect and inventory staff laptops
 - H. Handing out devices to new staff
 - I. New card readers with PIN codes, have been installed
 - Can assign PIN codes to vendors
 - J. Digital clocks installed in classrooms and hallways of new building
 - K. Interactive TV training is scheduled for next Tuesday

4. K - 8 School Leader Report - Rod Atkins

A. Enrollment

- Wanted the Trade Building to be part of the marketing plan
- Compare enrollment totals 2024 vs 2025
- 1,313 was total enrollment last year; this year budgeted goal is 1,365

As of August	2024	2025
Elementary	485	489
Middle School	275	291
High School	487	503
TOTAL	1,247	1,283

B. Attendance

- 3-6-9 Proactive Attendance Monitoring Process
 - An extremely aggressive monitoring policy
 - 3 Days – Immediate contact with families
 - 6 Days – Warning letter reiterating truancy trajectory and communication from SW Department
 - 9 Days – Administrative meeting and truancy warning
 - 10 Days – Possible removal from school if absences are not excused
 - This is currently in the Student Handbook and will be posted throughout the school
 - Exceptions will be made based on communication to the school

C. Former ELL Room is now a storage room for curriculum

- Four alternatives are being reviewed based on number of students requiring ELL Services
 - Media Center
 - Music Room
 - Classroom
 - Combination strategies leveraging 3 Options
 - Decision will be made by Thursday, August 21, 2025

5. 9-12 School Leader Report - [Patricia Crosson](#)

A. Introduction of new Career Tech Director

- Nicole Burris
 - Been working at VCP for four weeks
 - Native Detroiter
 - 23 years in the Administration field
 - Worked in youth programs in the city of Detroit
 - Worked with Edison, UPREP
 - Start up person
 - Worked with Career Pathways

B. M-Step Science

- 114 students tested for Science
- Only 11th graders take M-Step
- Below Benchmark by 25 points
- 55% of students are At or Near Benchmark in Physical Science
- Actions Needed
 - New Science Lead
 - New Curriculum - OpenScied 6-12
 - NGSS standards are integrated Sciences
 - Data analysis beyond raw scores
 - Module monitoring

C. SAT - 11th Grade - 4 year trend

Year	VCP	State
2022	772	959
2023	803	957
2024	765	944
2025	763	952

- 11th grade Cohort went up a total of 42 points

D. SAT Celebrations

- 3 First-Generation Recognition Awards
- 8 School Recognition Awards
- Criteria: B+ or Higher & Outstanding
- Performance on PSAT/SAT
- 11th Grade 7 Students
- 10th Grade 4 Students

E. PSAT - 10th Grade - 4 year trend

Year	VCP	State
2022	765	901
2023	788	901
2024	720	883
2025	750	884

- 10th grade Cohort went up a total of 54 points

F. PSAT - 9th Grade - 4 year trend

Year	VCP	State
2022	722	865
2023	738	869
2024	705	847
2025	687	850

- We have to identify the Cohort to determine how VCP students are doing compared to transfer students

G. Student Code of Scholar Handbook Revisions 2025-2026

- Added:
 - Career Tech Education requirements
 - Dual Enrollment Policy
 - FAFSA Policy
 - Pass/Fail option for long-term absent students
 - Added information about the Family Medical Center
 - Added disciplinary panel hearing process
 - Truancy Policy 3/6/9
 - Bookbags to be see-through (clear or mesh) and purses larger than a sheet of paper are considered tote bags/book bags
- Separated discipline infractions into 3 tiers:
 - Added offenses for gambling & gang activity
 - Inspect and/or search students who are in restrooms when vape sensors go off
 - Automatic candidate for expulsion for:
 - Jumping in a fight
 - Calling others to come to our campus for conflict
 - A staff member is injured for preventing or breaking up a fight
 - Electronics Policy - Classroom and Hallway ban
- Added parent ban policy if school leadership determines they have violated our conduct expectations
- Board member recommendations:
 - Remove Gabriella; add Laura Benedict
 - Need to specify paper size, letter or legal, for purses
 - Need to add AI Tools
 - Plagiarism

H. Teacher Certification

- 4 year trend for K - 5
 - 2022 - 61%
 - 2023 - 68%
 - 2024 - 78%
 - 2025 - 83%

- ## Discussion Items

- ## Action Items

1. Specialized Services Committee - Met 8/12
2. Budget Development Committee - None
3. Academic Excellence Committee - Will schedule a meeting in September
4. Policy Committee - None
5. Technology Committee - will schedule a meeting in September
6. Athletic Committee - None

7. Security Committee - None

8. Facility Committee

Motion to issue a Facility Use Agreement for the FSU Board of Trustee Training that will be held October 23, 2025

Moved by Benning, supported by Smith

Yes - 5

No - 0

Call to the Public

None

Announcements

The next Board of Directors meeting will be September 16, 2025 at 6:35pm

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 8:39 pm

Moved by Benning, supported by Smith

Yes - 5

No - 0

*Individuals wishing to address the Board of Directors under items II and XII above are requested to sign in with the Board Secretary prior to the start of the meeting. Individual comments are limited to no more than three (3) minutes each and a total time allowance not to exceed thirty (30) minutes. The Board will not verbally respond to public comments but may follow up in the most appropriate and time-effective manner.

*Complaints or concerns regarding Board members or school employees associated with the Academy shall first be addressed in writing and delivered to the Board President at least five (5) days prior to the Board meeting or such complaints or concerns shall not be heard by the Board. The Board will not verbally respond to public comments but may follow up in the most appropriate and time-effective manner.

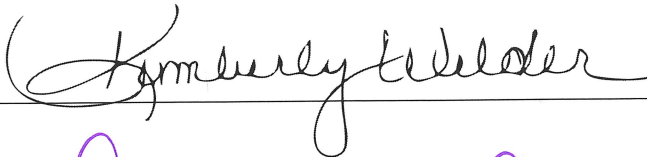
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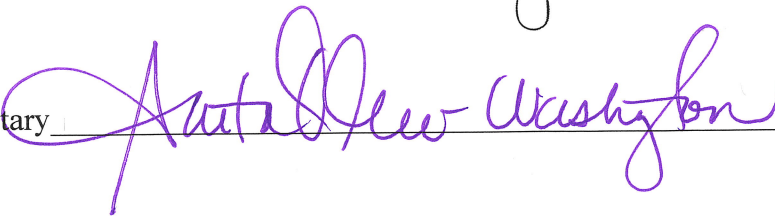
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Board Recording Secretary



Date 8-24-25

Board Secretary



Date

9/16/25