APPROVED

River Valley Charter School

Minutes

Accountability Committee Meeting

Date and Time
Monday November 4, 2024 at 6:00 PM

Location
River Valley Charter School Middle School Great Room

River Valley Charter School welcomes your participation at Board meetings. The purpose of a public meeting of the Board of Trustees (“Board”) is to conduct the affairs of the organization in public. Your participation assures us of continuing community interest in our school and assists the Board in making the best decisions for our school. To assist you in the ease of speaking/participating in our meetings, guidelines are provided at the bottom of this agenda. All materials for all board and committee meetings, are available on our Board on track public portal found at rivervalleycharter.org.

Committee Members Present
A. Godino (remote), E. Simone, J. Patterson, K. Kuse, M. Mitchell-Daniels, N. Durkee, P. Ganley, T. Murdy

Committee Members Absent
C. Irose, D. Herrera, R. Waterson

Guests Present
Laura Burbine

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

E. Simone called a meeting of the Accountability Committee Committee of River Valley Charter School to order on Monday Nov 4, 2024 at 6:03 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

E. Simone made a motion to approve the minutes from Accountability Committee Meeting on 09-30-24.
T. Murdy seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

II. Proposed agenda

A. MCAS discussion

Executive summary:

Overall scores are on par/trending with what is being seen statewide. Science was a highlight, i.e. area that RVCS does quite well in vs. Massachusetts overall. That being said, the continued slide/lower scoring in ELA and Math particularly for the cohort that was in the end of 2nd grade at the start of the pandemic (now 7th graders) is still observed. Absenteeism was also discussed, it continues to trend higher than pre-pandemic levels, but lower than pandemic peak (worst absenteeism).

Questions to probe further -

1. What are DESE's positions/suggestions on looking into direct comparisons with the sending districts vs RVCS? Mass Charter recommends against this, but it seems like the more appropriate comparison given the more relevant demographic vs. say the state overall.
2. Is there any correlation (and the harder to prove causation) with decreased time in classes per PBE?
3. Are students getting enough time in core classes and on study time/instruction while accommodating the spelectives?
4. Teasing apart the partially meeting and not meeting categories suggested. This is being pursued on an individual basis for students identified to be struggling in general. Interest in any overlapping trend with Acadience and Dibels metrics.

Notes from discussion:

See summary analysis by Jane, attached pdf to the agenda. Updated deck per edits mentioned during the meeting is also attached to the minutes.

Clarification made: All data presented is publicly available.
Clarification for slides: "district" refers to RVCS throughout.

Topic broached by AC (Accountability Committee) of whether we can compare to data from sending districts vs. composite state averages, at least giving a sense of how RVCS is doing with the most similar demographic profiles. Jane mentioned charter schools have been asked specifically not to compare to sending districts. Discussion on whether this is a discussion to take offline outside of the publicly facing analysis. Question raised - what is the appropriate bar to compare against? There is value in this level of analysis, especially when families are looking at whether to keep children in RVCS vs. their district school.

slide 4, title discussion, just clarifying messaging (emphasize achievement, not performance)
slide 5, add perhaps how overall schools did on this scale, i.e. Mass state average vs. RVCS
slide 6, absenteeism - RVCS did not achieve target level. Question raised by AC, What is statewide level? 23-24' 19.74% MA students were chronically absent vs. 27.7% of pandemic high, 13% before pandemic (data pulled from DESE website and read aloud during AC meeting).
slide 8. ELA scores dropped overall.
Slide 9, Growth in ELA. Question on utility of this metric was raised. Add definition to this slide, so easier for viewers to digest.
Slide 10. Would be helpful to look across by grade. Overall RVCS did score better overall as compared to the state. To be covered further in slide 20. Would be helpful to look at by gender, but this is not made available from report provided by state.
Question on slide 11, presentation of hispanic students not meeting. Update slide title, show all data as requested. Don't want to create the impression of hiding data.
slide 19, correct plot, title needs to be corrected (initial slide presented showed data for Science, but title said "mathematics"). Post meeting note, corrected plot attached to updated deck.
Slide 20. Cohort tracking by color. Suggestion made to graph data in scatter plot and/or line plot to better visualize the trends observed. Upswing transition noted in scores for middle school (7th and 8th grade) students in math (purple and pink cohorts noted in slide deck), not necessarily seen in ELA. Performance of blue cohort in math remains an area of concern.

Conclusions (also in slide deck):
-celebrate and learn successes in Science
-investigate potential root causes for declined scores and low end of typical growth in ELA and Math
-increase attendance tracking and family communication regarding attendance concerns

In Middle school it does seem to come together, particularly in math, except for the cohort that is currently in 7th grade (the "Hockey stick" phenomena discussed in prior years when trending cohort performance on MCAS that suggests a potential benefit to the Montessori style that is not realized until learnings come together in Middle School). ELA did not however demonstrate this recovery.

Goals coming out of this TBD.

Open question from Nancy - Can non-parent AC members be shown the full disaggregated data?

Would it be possible to look at partially and not meeting data in more detail to see if there's anything else being missed? Jane replied this is being looked at on individual basis for children struggling. Are there parallels across Acadience, Dibels, etc., other metrics?

More background information to parents would be highly recommended to help them digest and keep MCAS results in context. Explain how this is used, explain to parents, would be very helpful, should be done before they get scores.

Follow up for AC, Denise and Eric to run this by DESE on disaggregated data analysis and what the expectation is, i.e. does the attached slide deck demonstrate the necessary level of disaggregated data.

III. 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 7:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
E. Simone

Documents used during the meeting

- MCAS BOT Report 2024.pdf

THE ORDER OF BUSINESS MAY BE CHANGED WITHOUT NOTICE Notice is hereby given that the order of consideration of matters on this agenda may be changed without prior notice.

REASONABLE LIMITATIONS MAY BE PLACED ON PUBLIC TESTIMONY The Board Chair reserves the right to impose reasonable time limits on public testimony to ensure that the agenda is completed.