

APPROVED



Veritas Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Academic Achievement Committee Meeting

Zoom Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday May 12, 2022 at 8:00 AM

Location

Join Zoom Meeting <https://vpcs-org.zoom.us/j/3161659740>

Committee Members Present

A. Clark (remote), A. Errichetti (remote), D. Janes (remote), L. Doherty (remote), R. Romano (remote), R. Sela (remote)

Committee Members Absent

J. Crowell

Guests Present

N. Gauthier (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

R. Sela called a meeting of the Academic Achievement Committee of Veritas Preparatory Charter School to order on Thursday May 12, 2022 at 8:07 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

D. Janes made a motion to approve the minutes from Academic Achievement Committee Meeting on 04-14-22.

A. Errichetti seconded the motion.

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

II. Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain

A. Discuss Chapter 5: Building the Foundation of Learning Partnerships

A discussion is held about Chapter 5 of Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain.

Anne thinks this chapter is a nice progression related to what we have been reading previously.

Dale thinks building relationships has always been the goal for teachers so he is wondering why this is more important for diverse student populations.

Amy responds because school systems were set up for white kids there are also a lot of white teachers who operate the way they experienced school growing up and don't always treat students from diverse backgrounds and cultures in a way that helps them be successful and prioritize relationships and collectivism.

It reminds Ann of policies that were in place at her former work place, they encouraged management to build relationships with their employees so they could feel valued. How can teachers, who have so much going on in their day, make this a priority?

Rebecca thinks about this as overall school success related to student learning if you take the time to build meaningful relationships. Doing this never felt like an additional thing you had to do but rather something that was necessary and helpful to complete the overall objectives of your job.

Dale mentions that this must be difficult to do if you have 25 children in the class. Do some students feel excluded because the teacher is focusing on someone else?

Amy thinks that is what they are trying to point out. There are always buckets of students that will love their teacher from the start. Then there are some that don't like their teachers from the start and teachers have to build trust or prove themselves - these students you know need extra support. The final group of students fly under the radar and don't necessarily say what they need and you might not know they need that extra support.

Dale asks is it a struggle to connect with students who have heavy accents or are hard to understand?

Amy says yes, the more kids you have, the larger differentials you have in all areas including linguistic differences and this makes it hard but teachers seem to do a great job navigating this.

Dale asks what percentage of students are ELL? Amy says 19 students this year.

Rebecca explains that many students can test out of being ELL and that's why you may see lower numbers than expected. It is important for Board members to know that our number is lower than other Springfield schools. Do we know how many students will be going from 8th grade to the HS?

Amy says it's about 82% which is a good, strong number for opening a new school.

Rachel says we are having a second lottery for students not from Veritas and it looks like we will have approximately 9-11 from outside Veritas joining our school community.

Amy says Springfield Prep will be through 5th-8th grade next year and we are hoping to build a pipeline from Springfield Prep to our high school which would be a great relationship.

Dale asks how much leeway a teacher has in learning about a student's family/home life situation when trying to build a relationship?

Amy says yes, teachers do learn a lot about all of their students, especially if they have a good relationship. Getting to know our families is important as well so that we can best and fully support our students. If you build healthy relationships, when something goes wrong, it's easier to repair. The deep layer of student accountability is also a big part of the teacher student relationship.

Rebecca agrees and when you do this work as a whole school, it can be really effective.

Lisa feels like this book has been dominating academic achievement conversations and she'd like to spend a few moments on that this morning if possible.

Rebecca says that MCAS have been happening the past few weeks and we will be able to look at some data based on what the results of those assessments are moving forward compared to the last time MCAS were administered "normally" which was 2018-19. We can also talk about accelerating learning and how our plans have or have not been successful.

Amy says in ELA we're tracking better by 8-10 points in all subjects. 6th grade is making the biggest gains. We are struggling to catch up our 8th graders but we have some good plans for the high school and how to compensate for this. We are on the path to getting back to where we were.

Amy said yesterday, they did a leadership walk through to all grades and she was so impressed. There was great group work going on and productive conversations about high school.

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 9:01 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
R. Sela

Documents used during the meeting

- Building the Foundation of Learning Partnerships - Beginning with Meaningful Relationships.pdf