

APPROVED



Veritas Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Academic Achievement Committee Meeting

Zoom Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday October 13, 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), R. Romano (remote), R. Sela (remote)

Committee Members Absent

L. Doherty

Guests Present

N. Gauthier (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

A. Errichetti called a meeting of the Academic Achievement Committee of Veritas Preparatory Charter School to order on Thursday Oct 13, 2022 at 8:06 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

D. Janes made a motion to approve the minutes from Academic Achievement Committee Meeting on 09-08-22.

R. Sela seconded the motion.

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

II. Academic Achievement

A. 2022 MCAS Results

We will discuss further next month.

B. Other Academic Updates

Amy shares data related to homework, attendance and grades.

Our goal for homework is 75% - this was a major thing we intentionally let go during the pandemic and now we need to get back to it. In previous years, we have pretty easily hit the 75% goal. This year, in 7th grade, were close to hitting that goal and in 8th grade we're the farthest away. We know this is a habit we need to build back.

Our big goal this year is to double our scores in math, reading, and science. It's a lofty goal but we believe we can achieve it.

"RSM" on the spreadsheet is Rock Star Monday which is an incentive we use with students and we track how many students are earning it.

We also track referrals and 8th grade has the most with 196. We have had many less incidents than this time last year, so we are hopeful about that.

Our attendance goal is 95% daily and 5th grade is meeting that, 8th grade is the lowest and 6th and 7th grade are in between.

Dale asks if our academic data relates to the strength of our teachers?

Amy says yes because for example, if you look at 8th grade science grades, that teacher resigned so you can definitely correlate the lower grades with teacher effectiveness and strength.

Dale asks of all the subjects, which do we think receives the least emphasis?

Rachel says social studies does. This subject is not yet tested by the state. Next in line would be science although we have spent a lot of time to developing that curriculum. ELA and Math are tested in 5th through 8th grade so we have definitely focused here.

Ann asks how we have interpreted these grades?

Rachel says looking at grades and tracking them is important because we have a standards based grading system and if teachers are not tracking this, students will not make progress. We also want to track growth over time as well as determine if the teacher's perspective on students' progress aligns with what the data is showing us is happening in the classroom. This is what makes us different and how leadership is able to lean into a teacher's practice.

Rachel mentions that we have always had tutoring as part of our program and we were developed to help students who came to us with unfinished learning. We need to get back to doing, with unwavering clarity, what we were doing pre-pandemic to meet our goals. We have some work to do to rebuild and re-emphasize for our staff what our core work is about and how we achieve the goals related to our core work.

Dale asks what are the 2-3 things that Rachel as the ED is doing to address the above issues?

Rachel says her plans include:

- Getting staff re-bought into and re-focused on our core mission/goals. Rachel is planning related to her communications/strategic messaging to staff around this.
- Setting strong, bold academic goals that we are passionate about. (we did not set an academic goals for students over the past two years.)

Dale believes this revolves around leadership and a lot falls on Rachel. She needs to be delivering this message in a positive way.

Rachel says that, in a way that we haven't in two years, we are getting aligned on how to re-focus people on getting back to our core work.

Dale says don't let this get us too down because every organization goes through ups and downs, we just need to re-focus on our core cultural elements and if there are certain people who are not aligned, this might not be the right place for them.

Rachel agrees and mentions that several leaders just came back from a communications intensive in Boston through the Barr Foundation and Matterlab where we were able to hone our message in a way that we haven't in a few years. We get to work with them over the year to continue to develop strategic messages for different stakeholders that will bring us back to that core work. Once we re-establish these messages, we need them to become part of the fabric of how we operate and the way every person who works at Veritas speaks about Veritas. This may get harder before it gets easier.

Ann talks about our vision and really helping staff determine their personal why and whether or not that aligns with what we are all about.

Rachel says there are a lot of our team members who have been on our team for a long time that need to inspire to act as our legacy leaders and then inspire newer employees, who are just as important, in acting as our re-builders.

We are looking at a number around 30% of team members who have been here since before the pandemic (a lot of turnover). There are many reasons why this turnover was so high but much of it was related to the fact that teaching is a very rigid, inflexible schedule because it has to be. The pandemic allowed people to experience flexibility in a way they never imagined and for a lot of people it opened their eyes to a work life balance that worked better for them. In addition, many people struggled with mental health.

Ann says we can't allow ourselves to be held hostage to staff issues but at the same time we must continue to hold staff to high standards and make sure they are aligned with our core values and Dale adds that we need to be consistent with our messaging around these core values.

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,
A. Errichetti

Documents used during the meeting

None