

APPROVED



Veritas Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Academic Achievement Committee Meeting

Zoom Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday December 8, 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

J. Swan (remote), 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 Dec 8, 2022 at 8:05 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

D. Janes made a motion to approve the minutes from Academic Achievement Committee Meeting on 11-10-22.

A. Errichetti seconded the motion.

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

II. Academic Achievement

A. Middle School Academic Data Review

Data and looking at data is back on the map. We are looking at data constantly and we have a lot of data to review.

Amy asks the committee what they would most like to hear about?

Ann and Dale talk about overall data strategy, comparison data, and data surrounding school culture. What do the data points tell us about what is happening at the school?

Amy shares a data story about the middle school as it hits many of the things Dale and Ann mentioned.

There were two months at the middle school where we noticed homework completion was low. A few weeks ago, it was decided that something needed to be done. A data strategy was created for each grade level. The data dashboard was looked at and we determined what emerged as key priority areas that needed to improve at each grade level.

5th Grade: Kids were not earning the weekly incentive (i.e. Rockstar Monday). Teachers will focus on the top ten students who had low incentive earnings and high referrals over the next six weeks and try to help them earn more incentives. We will follow these students and see how they progress.

6th Grade: Homework completion was really low. 6th graders need to read for homework to be able to participate in the lesson the next day. They are going to work to get to 75% homework completion over the next six weeks.

7th Grade: Their chronic absenteeism was the highest in the school (even though academically their grade was doing the best). They looked at the number of students who have been chronically absent and they are focusing on the top ten students who they want to get into school more over the next six weeks and employing strategies to do that.

8th grade: Kids are missing the most class in this grade. They are referred and asked to leave the class the most in 8th grade. It was determined, through data, that kids missed

approximately 8100 minutes this year collectively because they were being asked to leave class due to referrals. This happened most between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. (this is math classes and some ELA classes). They are going to work on reducing this number over the next six weeks. We have leveraged our resources to make sure we have staff in the hallways at that time and we are focusing on keeping 8th graders in class more, especially during this time.

In Amy's weekly focus (weekly newsletter) she is tracking how each grade is doing surrounding this data and sharing the information publicly on a weekly basis.

Dale is curious as to individual teachers vs. the team mentality.

Rachel talks about removing teachers from the individual power struggle with kids by focusing more on team building and each grade's team working together to achieve a common goal.

Jonathan says if you look at 7th grade, who students are performing the best academically, you also see that this team of teachers and staff work the best together.

Ann asks about individual tutoring.

Amy said we were looking into programs that could help us accomplish this but we haven't found one yet.

Amy, Rachel and Rebecca talk about the positive and negatives about bringing in tutors for our students. Rachel mentioned that we have considered other ways to bring in highly qualified/trained tutors through a program like AmeriCorps. She also points out that a piece of effective tutoring is tied to relationship building and the person tutoring the student knows them, how they learn, what motivates them, etc. It is hard to find enough bodies right now to accomplish this.

B. High School Academic Data Review

Rebecca is curious about the general data strategy for high school. Are you tracking different data at the high school than at the middle school?

Amy says there are certain things we are tracking across both schools but high school and early college are primarily what we are focused on at the high school. Some data points that are different from middle to high school are as follows:

- 1.) We are tracking students who are passing a class with an eye for how many students overall will pass that class. (In middle school, it's less about passing a class and more about how they are doing in that class).

2.) The second one is the amount of students passing early college readiness requirements. We are below what we wanted here but we are doing ok for our first year.

3.) The third is getting students ready for high school. 8th graders recently visited the high school to begin to get excited about it.

4.) The fourth is about Habits of Success - we don't have this language at the middle school. These are skills and abilities that help students graduate high school and college. These are things we are specifically tracking at the high school.

5.) Our students will take early college classes for the first time in January and here we will look at how many withdrawals or failures we end up with.

We are still doing standards based grading at the high school.

Students are having difficulty solving one or two step equations in algebra which means they can't move on to anything else. This is a clear data gap where we could potentially have tutors help get 75% of students to be able to solve one and two step problems. We also lost our math teacher in 9th grade so this has not helped.

Overall, attendance had been improving but lately it has risen again (it is that time of year where students are actually sick with a variety of things).

Ann asks about celebrating small successes as a way of engendering buy in and commitment?

Rachel says we do but we need to more of that. Amy says we've been better at doing this at the middle school than the high school.

Rebecca asks Amy how much the schools feel separate?

Amy was very worried about this, especially after Holyoke, but it has been really good and generally united. Our leaders do walk throughs of each other's schools. It does feel like two schools but we feel like partners in our work and there is no competition.

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 8:59 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
R. Sela

Documents used during the meeting

- Middle School Data December Meeting.pdf
- High School Data December Meeting.pdf