

APPROVED



Veritas Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Academic Achievement Committee Meeting

Zoom Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday January 12, 2023 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

None

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 Jan 12, 2023 at 8:03 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

L. Doherty made a motion to approve the minutes from Academic Achievement Committee Meeting on 12-08-22.

D. Janes seconded the motion.

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

II. Academic Achievement

A. High School Staffing Update

Amy gives a general HS timeline update. We are coming to the end of the first semester of the HS tomorrow. Tuesday our very first round of early college classes begin. We met our goal of 51% of students enrolling in college classes this year. They will take Spanish with a Worcester State professor and a technology class with a STCC professor. Our current elective teachers (Spanish and Technology) will now switch to an Early College Liaison (ECL) role where they attend the college classes with the students and on the days the college professor doesn't come, they will run a lab class where students will be completing assignments for the college class with the support of the ECL.

Rebecca asks what Spanish it is?

Rachel says is Spanish 101 - college level Spanish.

Jonathan asks what the students response to being able to take college classes was?

Amy says our College and Career Counselor and our Dean of Early College met with students who were on the cusp and encouraged them to get the teacher recommendation they needed to be able to take the college classes and the students took the initiative to get the letters they needed.

Rebecca asks about big picture staffing and the ECL role?

Rachel says ideally ECLs will be their own group and have their own role but during our staffing projections we've determined some teachers will do both roles (teaching a class and being an ECL).

Rachel explains that we landed on the General Studies Associates Degree that we would like 50% of students to graduate with. These include all the building block courses and all of these courses are transferable to any state school under the MA transfer agreement. Through their elective classes in 11th and 12th grade, they can begin to explore certain pathways (i.e. healthcare, criminal justice, etc.). Most of those courses will be offered on the STCC campus. Our plan is that students will take college courses in 9th and 10th grade at our HS and in 11th and 12th grade they will go primarily to STCC and take some

specialized classes related to a certain pathway on campus. We will do a lot of experiential things for our students at Worcester State.

Our Early College Designation application is due tomorrow and having Worcester State and STCC as partners has been very helpful, they each play a very important role for us.

Amy explains that there is a lot that goes into getting students ready for these classes and we have realized that there is a gap in getting our 8th graders ready for 9th grade and therefore we have made some leadership changes to help close this gap. Our current HS AP will become Director of 8th Grade Readiness and our current Dean of Early College will become School Director (like AP). The Director position will help prepare students better for ninth grade as well as assist with recruitment of our 8th graders for our HS and helping to ensure that we meet our 85% goal (85% 8th graders continuing onto the HS).

Lisa asks about how the students feel about these changes and is it disruptive?

Amy says the students know the new School Director well and interact with him already a lot, so that won't seem strange. We have also created a transition plan for our current AP and how she will be announcing to different groups of people that she is transitioning to her new role.

Dale asks about the content of the technology course?

Amy says there is a lot of graphic design content but we haven't received the syllabus yet.

B. High School Grading Update

Rebecca asks about grading and how it relates to determining which students are going to take early college classes?

Amy says there were multiple measures we used including early college habits of success, literacy (ELA on demand essay score) and numeracy, and knowledge and skills. In addition to this, they can earn points by doing extra work and getting a letter of recommendation from a teacher.

Rachel says we really need to support our students because this is a college course and it will go on their college transcript so we can't have them fail. If they are struggling, we need to get them out of that class and get them into a HS elective class.

Amy says that we have fixed the technology glitch that was preventing us from determining grades. The document included in the agenda is our tracker which allows us to follow the progress of our students in each class and determine what our students are

struggling with and how they crossover certain subjects. The majority of our students are making progress. The students who are falling behind are the ones we plan on targeting with interventions during our Personalized Learning Block (PLB). PLB is five days a week for 45 minutes where our students get a teacher led intervention. The students who are doing well and making progress will be doing independent work during this time.

Dale asks if this data matches to the weekly focus bar graph?

Amy says, yes.

C. Middle School Data Updates

Dale asks about 7th grade chronically absent students - this is a large number.

Amy says the way we track this is by what the state says is absent 10% of the school year. Currently that is 8/9 school days missed. We are trying to identify these students early so we can implement an intervention (i.e. Saturday school) and help them get back on track. Many of these are sick days and we are just trying to provide interventions quickly to make sure there is not major learning loss that occurs.

Dale asks about 6th grade homework?

Amy says this got better and then it got worse. One of our 6th grade ELA teachers went on maternity leave and this effected things here. We need to really dig into homework in this grade, how are teachers assigning hw, how are students writing down hw, how are teachers collecting hw, etc. When we do this, we should be able to determine what is preventing this number from moving.

Dale asks about PD - Teach Woke?

Amy says this is our student anti-racism curriculum. Teachers just reviewed this yesterday and began to determine how they plan on unpacking this information for students.

Amy mentions that the data included in the Weekly Focus attachments are focusing on the one data point in each grade that we decided to focus on and mentioned in last month's meeting.

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 9:06 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
R. Sela

Documents used during the meeting

- Grade Reflection & Goal Setting - January Academic Achievement Meeting.xlsx
- VPCS Weekly Focus January Meeting.pdf