

APPROVED



Veritas Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Academic Achievement Committee Meeting

Zoom Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday May 11, 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), 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 May 11, 2023 at 8:02 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

D. Janes made a motion to approve the minutes from Academic Achievement Committee Meeting on 04-13-23.

A. Errichetti seconded the motion.

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

II. Academic Achievement

A. Accountability Plan Goals Update

Amy informs the committee that we will be looking at these goals every other month and these are the goals we will have to report to the state on at the end of the year.

Goal #1: 70% of scholars in grades 5-10 will earn a C- or higher in Reading and Math by the end of the school year.

Goal Status: Meeting

We are meeting this goal across the board. 6th grade improved 7% from last time we reviewed this goal.

Goal #2: By 2025, 25% or fewer students will need a decoding or fluency intervention when entering 9th grade.

Goal Status: Not Meeting

Most students needed this intervention this year, in the future it will only be some students. All grades have improved here and less students are needing this intervention. We are not meeting this goal, but making progress! Not all testing is complete.

Dale asks to have decoding and fluency defined. He also asks how Veritas teaches reading?

Amy says we have students read text on or right above their level. We want them to be able to engage in discussions about this text as well as write reflections that demonstrate comprehension. We have added, in the last few years, in addition to reading comprehension we want students to be able to decode and read fluently.

Ann asks if our teachers implement these interventions or is it done by specialists?

Amy says because of the need over the past few years, every ELA teacher was trained to do it. However, the way this is implemented with fidelity by different teachers ranges

significantly. We do plan in the future to just have one or two people who are trained to implement this at the highest level.

Goal #3: By graduation, 85% of students will earn 12 or more college credits.

Goal Status: N/A

This data point has not changed as we haven't offered any additional opportunities for classes and the semester is not over.

Amy says some team members have been visiting other early college programs and we have learned that special education enrollment in college classes has also been a struggle for them. We are hoping that by 11th grade more of our special education students will be taking early college classes.

Goal #4: Annually, on a student survey, 85% of high school students will agree or strongly agree with the following statements that align with the VPHS portrait of a graduate:

Goal Status: Not Meeting

This data point has not changed, we will administer the survey one more time this year.

Goal #5: In grades 9 & 10, the average for habits of success will be at least a 2.5 in each grade.

Goal Status: Partially Meeting

Meeting in math, but not the other subjects. Amy says students seem to have the strongest habits in History which may be because that teacher is the toughest grader.

Rebecca asks if this holds true with academic grades?

Amy says yes and no. The largest number of our high school students are failing biology and that is in line with the habits but then next largest number of students are failing math and that is not in line with the habits.

Goal #6: 70% of students will earn the incentive each week.

Goal Status: Partially Meeting

Meeting recently in grades 5 and 6, but the data is inconsistent.

Amy is still not sure on how we want to report this information out but we're seeing progress. Amy showed these goals to the school improvement team (SIT) and they reported back that some of the reason we are not meeting this goal is because teachers are not consistently putting in the points.

Jonathan knows there was also some confusion last time we discussed this goal about how it was worded. He still wants to think about this.

Rachel says that our intention with this goal initially was to keep kids in class, it was focused on behavior. Then it was reframed as a more positive goal - lets focus on what percentage of students are doing what we ask of them. Rachel thinks we have flexibility here and how we want to calculate it - it is an internally set goal.

Goal #7: At least 85% of instructional staff will agree...

Goal Status: Not Meeting

Last time we looked at this, we had not taken the midyear survey yet. We were at 81% and 78% for middle school respondents and we will be sending it out to the high school teachers shortly. We will take survey data from the high school and combine the totals.

Goal #8: Fewer than 20.5% of students will be chronically absent.

Goal Status: Meeting

This has improved significantly since last time. Last year we were at 33% of students missing more than 10% of school and this year, across all grades, it is at 11%. Our team has been working incredibly hard at making progress in this area. Saturday school has been hugely effective in helping us get back on track here.

The committee discusses the term "proficiency" and how we measure what is and is not proficient.

B. Matterlab Partnership

Over the past year we have been working with a communications and marketing agency called Matterlab who we were introduced to through our partnership with the Barr Foundation and we have been working on crafting our organizational identity, talent brand, and more.

In the slide deck attached, you can see examples of one of the things they have been working on with us related to developing our brand identity.

Rachel mentions that we started with a communications intensive with them in October then met monthly. Our work with them has been extremely helpful because a lot has changed at Veritas and this work has helped us to hone our identity and create a unified language that everyone can use to talk about Veritas and the work we're doing. We also developed messaging for different stakeholders that will allow us to be consistent and more impactful in the way we promote ourselves, our mission, and our values as an organization. Our work with them will take us through this year and we are hoping to extend this work into next year funded by Barr.

C. School Improvement Team Update

Amy has been mentioning the SIT and how it is new for us this year at the middle school. It is a team of 11 people comprised of teachers, culture staff, and counseling staff. They are discussing ways which we can get back to reaching all of our goals - they will help us propose the initiatives that we will launch for next year. We hope to have this group help us present our priorities to the team before the end of the year (we usually don't do this until the fall, so that is a change).

The team had their first meeting where they asked team members different questions and listened to their responses.

Amy said we are synthesizing the key themes we heard across all responses.

Consistently what we heard was the curriculum is academically challenging but our kids are so far behind that they struggle to access it.

When rating themselves, team members generally said they are at a "6" and this is because their students aren't where they need to be. They also mentioned lowering the bar for themselves because they observe certain colleagues around them are not pulling their weight.

Dale asks when as a leader do you say, it's time to stop complaining and start doing?

Rachel says we are doing this now in a systematic way. Accountability has to come from the team. It can't just come from the leaders.

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 9:02 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
R. Sela

Documents used during the meeting

- Veritas Accountability Dashboard May Meeting.xlsx
- Veritas Prep Identity Guide - Academic Achievement Committee Meeting May 2023.pptx
- School Improvement Team 22-23 May Meeting.pdf