



Veritas Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Academic Achievement Committee Meeting

Zoom Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday October 12, 2023 at 8:30 AM

Location

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

Committee Members Present

A. Clark (remote), A. Errichetti (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 Oct 12, 2023 at 8:36 AM.

C.

Approve Minutes

Will approve at November meeting.

II. Academic Achievement

A. 2023 MCAS Debrief

The committee discusses the MCAS conversation that occurred at the September Board meeting.

Amy mentions that she has been working with a consultant who advised that to contextualize our data we should look at our data compared to the rest of the state.

The committee discusses the comparison data.

Ann mentions that the Board talked about the need to improve writing and action plan for teachers moving forward in response to our MCAS results.

Amy says that as a school we are on a four year path to recovery and in year one we did not have the improvements we hoped to see. Although we did not decline, we stayed pretty level.

Jonathan mentioned that the state talked about the overall results in the same way - the decline is over.

Amy says special education students showed promise with improved scores.

Rebecca asks if SGPs were discussed at the Board meeting?

We will ask Rachel when she joins.

Amy says our goals is to get our SGP up to 65.

The committee discusses what else the Board may want to discuss related to this data.

Rachel has asked our new data coordinator to include comparative data for the Board at the next meeting. She echoes Ann regarding the need to keep achievement in front of the Board in a way that is manageable, digestible, and consistent. She also mentions providing high level take-aways for the Board.

Ann asks what leadership needs from the Board?

Rachel appreciates that the Board is always supportive. Rachel thinks this year we are keyed up to see real progress and growth related to achievement. While we are focused

on achievement, we are also growing the high school so if the Board can assist us in keeping an eye on the big picture planning for the high school - making sure our program is being developed, that would be helpful. Additionally, employer partnerships are going to be an important part of our high school program. We need to engage other committees as well in planning work-based learning experiences for our students.

Ann asks if the employer partnership work falls to a certain committee?

Rachel says maybe governance but she could see it as a whole Board priority as well. We also need a data base for career speakers to support our counselors in this college and career curriculum we want to employ.

Ann talks about how unique our HS program is well oriented to help students succeed in college courses. She continues that it sounds like there are two buckets we need to focus on every month with the Board.

- 1.) Middle school achievement
- 2.) High school program design/development and implementation

Ann talks about the articles she has been reading about reading - what is our approach?

Rachel says we have done lots of different things over the years that are based in research related to reading. We have never used a packaged curriculum. We more use an approach that is related to the science of reading - decoding, fluency, and comprehension. Early on, we used decoding and direct reading instruction only with the students who were really struggling.

Amy led data meetings for ELA and Math based on the results of the data. These led teachers through looking directly at student work (high, medium, and low) and tried to find the gaps. It was across the board, very obvious that our students do well with finding evidence that supports their point but they almost never directly answer the question and the organization of their writing is poor. These observations have given us very specific direction in terms of moving forward i.e. no more graphic organizers - students should be writing on blank pieces of paper and have a specific template for open responses. We hope to see progress in writing on our first ANet due to these changes.

In terms of Math, teachers looked at how their grade performed across the different domains. They then zoomed into the lowest standards and determined what students couldn't do i.e. in 5th grade students struggled with comparing numbers. Amy says that this means that we need to be continually re-teaching and re-assessing the standards throughout the year.

Rachel also points out the real bright spots that we saw in analyzing the data i.e. reading scores improving. She also mentions that we wanted to focus on re-teaching as a goal last year - how are we going to be more accountable for this moving forward?

Amy says leadership needs to follow up more consistently on the re-teaching efforts as well as stay on top of the data.

B. Data Update

Staff attendance: The district team has been keeping an eye on this. We are trying to analyze when staff is out and what pockets are being effected the most by these absences.

The biggest pockets at the middle school are in special ed. and 8th grade (due to staff absences as well as vacancies).

Rebecca says it's early in the year to have so many absences. Amy concurs.

Ann asks about 7th and 8th grade absences - how do you fill that in?

Amy says we pull from associate teachers and co-teachers from special ed. Unfortunately, this impacts our co-teaching model and the goal of each class having two teachers all the time.

Rebecca mentions the signal that these absences sends to kids when we focus on reducing chronic absenteeism.

Rachel asks what our goal for students being chronically absent this year?

Amy says the goal is not out yet. In 2022 it was 39.4%, she guesses it will be around 20% this year.

Ann asks about consequences for students missing school?

Rachel says we have a Saturday school but it didn't so much help with learning loss as it did with our chronic absenteeism percentage.

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 9:32 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
R. Sela

Documents used during the meeting

- MCAS Writing Data Meeting - October Meeting.pdf
- MCAS Analysis 23-24 - October Meeting.pdf
- Staff Attendance Tracker - October Meeting.pdf
- Student Attendance - Open Architects - October Meeting.pdf