

APPROVED



Veritas Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Academic Achievement Committee Meeting

Zoom Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday April 11, 2024 at 8:30 AM

Location

Join Zoom Meeting <https://vpcs-org.zoom.us/j/3131719731>

Committee Members Present

A. Errichetti (remote), L. Doherty (remote), R. Sela (remote)

Committee Members Absent

None

Guests Present

N. Gauthier (remote), R. Romano (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 Apr 11, 2024 at 8:35 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

A. Errichetti made a motion to approve the minutes from Academic Achievement Committee Meeting on 03-14-24.

L. Doherty seconded the motion.

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

II. Academic Achievement

A. Middle School Academic Updates

Presenter: Kali Vadnais, Middle School Dean of Curriculum and Instruction, ELA and Humanities

We have had our 3rd ELA and ANet since she last spoke to the committee.

ELA ANet 3 was all on scientific nonfiction readings which is historically the hardest test for our students. To prepare, all ELA classes practiced nonfiction reading. We also involved our science and history teachers. Our ANet 3 scores were not as high as 1 and 2 but overall matched, or were slightly above, other network schools. 8th graders scored the highest with 53% (8th grade has been struggling, so that is a highlight.)

Lisa asks what is the network we are comparing to?

Kali says any other schools who take ANet - schools throughout the country.

Rachel says previously we had chosen the schools to create a curated network that we compared ourselves to.

Lisa asks about the difference between English 1 and English 2?

Kali says that's 9th and 10th grade.

Ann asks how we use this data?

Kali says ANet is essentially a practice test for MCAS. It helps us predict how well students will do in the different domains of the MCAS test.

Lisa asks about scores - how do you react to each grade level score?

Kali says there is a big push to practice nonfiction annotations - some teachers implemented these practice readings with more fidelity than others. 7th grade seemed to

struggle with implementation the most, which we see reflected in the scores. The current curriculum in 7th grade had almost no nonfiction so they didn't have a lot of practice. There is a gap here that we are working on closing. Kali says they will go back to teachers with the data to show that strong implementation will work.

Kali says we have been using ANet to see where students are successful and where there are gaps and we used that data to create a MCAS boot camp in the three weeks since we got those scores and before MCAS which were Monday and Tuesday of this week.

MCAS boot camp was an 8-10 lesson program designed to be a strategic plan to close gaps based on ANet data. There were tutoring groups and reteaches that happened throughout the lessons. Kali provided examples of what the days/lessons looked like during the boot camp. Teachers and students were really invested in these lessons, some grades even set up competitions to reach their goals. This is a new initiative, we have not done it as a whole school until now.

Rebecca asks if there has been reflection about how these types of lessons could be incorporated into the mainstream curriculum.

Kali says the biggest take away she's had are that there are four strategies that are implemented year round that make very successful classrooms and students. We are now figuring out ways to teach teachers those things and prioritize what is working.

Ann asks how it feels to teachers - is it adding on to their list of responsibilities?

Kali says she received very good feedback around the boot camp from teachers. It built momentum and positivity around achievement but we are aware of competing priorities and are considering that as we move forward.

Lisa asks if we felt better going into MCAS this year?

Kali says, observations as they moved through testing spaces were positive. The environment felt more serious and like more teachers and students were invested in the process. Students were taking longer to complete the tests which means they were writing more. Kali provides an example of how they used students' MCAS writing from last year to help them reflect and improve. We went into MCAS this year with students having a toolkit they didn't have last year.

B. High School Academic Updates

Presenter: Bianca Charles, High School Dean of Curriculum and Instruction

Bianca tells the committee that we've been tracking pass rates all year. We have had some struggles with standards based grading. Towards the end of semester 1 we revamped our schedule to allow for time during the school day where students are required to go to office hours with core subject teachers so teachers can reteach standards on a more consistent basis. 2nd semester is where the schedule change has been implemented and more training has been provided to teachers related to reteaches. We are seeing most teachers in 70-80% for passing grades. We are working on Spanish because it is low now but we are trending positive.

In 9th grade science we see a bit of dip here in pass rates, supporting students in this class has been the most challenging.

-Teachers have changed in this class.

-There has been a lot of conversations with the teacher around continuing pacing as opposed to slowing down and focusing on reteaching concepts and skills that students are struggling with. This teacher and the Spanish teacher will receive more coaching to support them.

Lisa asks about passing rates each month?

Rachel says these are a snapshot in time - it is indicative of how they are doing at a moment in time but it is cumulative.

Bianca explains standards based grading and decaying averages and how they are effecting these pass rates on a monthly basis.

Lisa says tracking these things on a daily basis may be too granular or narrow.

Rachel says daily is too granular for students but Bianca is making sure that teachers are entering the data daily which is important to be able to give kids an honest and fair assessment of their progress over time.

Lisa asks if we have ever graphed this data?

Bianca says no, but she would like to.

Lisa asks how the pass rates they received in the meeting packet relate to this data?

Bianca says she will check with Amy about those pass rates and where she pulled them from. This data can change in just a few days.

Rebecca asks about 9th grade science - how much have the curriculum and/or assessments changed in the time that pass rates went down significantly? She also asked about the change in English 1 to English 2 and History 1 and History 2?

Bianca says for science, those facilitating instruction as well as curriculum have played a role in how students are doing in those courses. We have started implementing a new curriculum which is seeing some success due to vendor support. Next year, we will use OpenSciEd similar to what the middle school has been using. We have had teachers have more success in English and History when they are given a curriculum to build off of.

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 9:23 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
R. Sela

Documents used during the meeting

- MS ELA A3 Scores - April Meeting.pdf
- HS Pass Rates - April Meeting.pdf