APPROVED

Veritas Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Academic Achievement Committee Meeting

Zoom Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday March 13, 2025 at 8:30 AM

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

Committee Members Present
A. Errichetti (remote), L. Doherty (remote)

Committee Members Absent
A. Hickson-Martin, M. Freeman, R. Sela

Guests Present
A. Clark (remote), 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 Mar 13, 2025 at 8:34 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

II. Academic Achievement

A. Overview of DESE Accountability System

Overview of State Accountability System
The discussion began with an overview of the state accountability system for schools in Massachusetts. Every school in the state receives accountability reports and targets set by the state education department. The system evaluates schools on multiple indicators including achievement, growth, English language proficiency progress, graduation rates, advanced coursework completion, dropout rates, and chronic absenteeism. Schools are categorized into 'recovery path' (performing lower than 2019 pre-pandemic levels) or 'path forward' (performing better than 2019 levels). The state sets detailed goals for improvement in each category, aiming for schools to return to pre-pandemic performance levels by 2026-2027. Goals are set not just for the overall student population, but also for various demographic subgroups including lowest-performing students, high-needs students, English language learners, and students with disabilities.

B. SY23-24 Report Card and Performance Targets

Veritas Prep's Current Accountability Status
The group reviewed Veritas Prep's most recent accountability report, which showed that the school is making 'moderate progress' towards its targets, achieving 39% of its goals. Achievement scores were relatively low, especially in math, with the school receiving 1.1 out of 4 possible points.

Growth scores were more promising, particularly in English, where the school received 2 out of 4 points overall and 3 out of 4 points for its lowest-performing students.

The school met its targets for chronic absenteeism for the overall student population but scored poorly for its lowest-performing group.

English language learners nearly met their proficiency progress goals, scoring 3 out of 4 points.
The school does not yet have scores for high school completion metrics as the high school program is still new.

Expectations for Future Results
The leadership team shared their thoughts on how they expect the school to perform in upcoming assessments and accountability measures. They anticipate continued strong growth scores, particularly in math, even if overall achievement scores remain similar.

The school's early college program is expected to boost their performance in the 'advanced coursework' category once high school metrics are included. There is some uncertainty about how student attrition and alternative pathways (like Job Corps) might impact graduation rates and dropout statistics. The team expects generally positive results for graduation rates when those metrics become applicable.

C. MCAS Testing Schedule

Upcoming MCAS Testing Schedule

Amy provided an overview of the upcoming standardized testing schedule.

High school 10th graders will take ELA and math tests on April 25th and 26th.

Middle school students will take ELA tests on April 1st and 2nd.

Math testing for middle school occurs on May 8th and 9th, with high school following on May 20th and 21st.

Science testing for middle school is scheduled for the week of May 26th, while 9th graders will take the Biology MCAS the week of June 2nd.

Changing Perceptions of Standardized Testing

The group discussed how the emphasis on standardized test results has shifted in recent years.

There is less media coverage and public focus on MCAS results compared to the past. Schools and education professionals are increasingly recognizing that standardized tests provide a narrow view of student abilities and school performance. There is a growing movement towards considering multiple metrics of success beyond test scores. The shift is partly due to a recognition that an overemphasis on testing can stifle innovation in education. Massachusetts is seen as having leaned heavily into standardized testing, potentially at the cost of developing more innovative school models.

III. Other Business

A. Board Communication Strategy

Board Communication Strategy

The group discussed how to present this information to the school board. They agreed it's important for the board to understand the accountability system, even though it's complex.

They decided to have Rebecca, who is skilled at explaining complex topics, present an overview to the board. The presentation will likely occur in an upcoming board meeting, possibly in May or June, to prepare board members before new scores arrive in October. The goal is to provide a framework for understanding the accountability system now, so board members will be better prepared to interpret new data when it becomes available.

IV. 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 9:18 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
N. Gauthier

Documents used during the meeting

- acctplan-guidelines (3).docx
- acctplantarget-setting (1).docx
- 2024 Accountability Data - Veritas Preparatory Charter School (04980405).pdf