APPROVED

Eno River Academy

Minutes

Academic Committee Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday September 24, 2026 at 12:00 PM

Location
Join Zoom Meeting:
https://meredith.zoom.us/j/95176259949?jst=2

Committee Members Present
Charlotte Dungan (remote), David Nagel (remote), Lindsey Sealy (remote), Megan Shepherd-Banigan (remote), Pamela Norcross (remote)

Committee Members Absent
Annie Harrison

Guests Present
Kristin Martin (remote), Michael Brown (remote), Morgana Hover (remote), Sarah Auchter (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Pamela Norcross called a meeting of the Academic Committee Committee of Eno River Academy to order on Thursday Sep 24, 2026 at 12:03 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

We ended up not having enough voting members to approve September's meeting

II. Academic Committee

A. Review & Discuss ERA school growth performance

Dave presented data on student growth at ERA- presentation attached
- Requested that the Board listen in on teacher concerns; Trull volunteered to help with this
-Teachers provided valuable feedback

AI Notes from Lindsey's Notetaker:

Academic Committee
September 24, 2026
Overview
The Academic Committee met to review school performance data and discuss the strategic direction for student
growth and achievement.
Data Analysis
David presented a comprehensive review of the school's report card, noting that while the school maintains a "B"
grade, there are concerns regarding declining growth scores in math and reading.
* Achievement vs. Growth: David explained that achievement is weighted at 80% (including ACT scores and
graduation rates) while growth is weighted at 20% (based on EOG and EOC results).
* Proficiency Trends: Data shows a broad spread of proficiency levels, with 24% of the population marked as not
proficient. While high school achievement is strong at 88%, the K-8 levels show concerning downward trends.
* Growth Metrics: Mark Alford (teacher) raised concerns that the current growth metric may be misleading because it fails to capture
progress for students moving from level one to level two, or for high-achieving students who have limited room for upward movement (no documentation provided for this perspective).
Strategic Discussion
The meeting transitioned into a debate regarding the board's role in academic oversight versus day-to-day instructional management.
* Top-Down Concerns: Sarah Auchter (teacher) expressed significant frustration, arguing that the board's focus on testing data and
potential recommendations—such as requiring lesson plans—feels like "top-down" micromanagement that ignores teacher expertise and culture.

* Board Intentions: David clarified that the board aims to work with administration to evaluate if current strategies are effective, rather than dictating classroom instruction. He suggested that bringing in external expertise might be necessary to reverse declining trends.
* Teacher Support: Sarah and Katherine argued that instead of administrative oversight, resources should be directed toward reducing class sizes and hiring more support staff, such as an AIG teacher or additional MTSS teachers, to work directly with students.

Future Planning

The committee discussed ways to bridge the communication gap between the board and teaching staff.
* Communication Forums: Casey Trull (Dean) proposed designing a specific forum for real-time dialogue between teachers and the board to ensure staff feel heard without the constraints of official board meetings.
* Goal Setting: The timeline for finalizing academic goals has been extended to the end of October to allow for further integration of data and strategy development.
* Unresolved Questions:

1. How can the school design a forum that allows for meaningful teacher input while remaining tenable for a large group?
2. What specific models for AIG support (pull-out vs. push-in) would best serve the high-achieving student population?

Action Items

- Manually record and type the academic committee meeting minutes because the Board on Track minutes are inaccessible (Pamela fixed this).
- Investigate how the growth methodology determines starting levels and accounts for Level 1 and Level 2 students.

Outline

Meeting Call to Order

- Pamela Norcross officially called the academic committee meeting to order at 12:03 to discuss data findings.
- David Nagel prepared to present a deep dive into the school's recent performance and data trends.
- The committee noted that several teachers would need to leave early due to high school third-period schedules.

Data Presentation and Metrics

- David Nagel explained that the school currently holds a B rating based on achievement and growth scores.
- Achievement is calculated via EOG/EOC tests, ACT scores, Math 3 pass rates, and graduation rates.
- Growth is measured using a statistical algorithm from SAS that projects student progress on EOG and EOC tests.
- Mark Alford pointed out that current growth metrics may be misleading because they fail to capture progress for
students moving between lower proficiency levels.

Analysis of Achievement Trends

- Nagel presented achievement data showing a broad distribution across proficiency levels at ERA.
- Data indicates that while high school achievement is strong at an 88 score, K-8 scores are pulling the average down.
- A trend analysis shows potential declines in rigor for higher-achieving (Level 4 and 5) students in certain grades.
- Middle school English Language Arts (ELA) showed some positive upward trajectory compared to three years ago.

Teacher Concerns and Feedback

- Sarah Auchter expressed significant concern that the board's approach feels top-down rather than bottom-up. Auchter argued that recommendations regarding classroom instruction should involve staff buy-in and direct consultation with teachers.
- Katherine Penley shared concerns about a perceived shift in school culture toward increased restrictions and lack of trust in professionals.
- Teachers emphasized the need for more classroom support, such as reduced class sizes or additional pull-out staff, rather than administrative oversight like lesson plan reviews.

Strategic Goals and Recommendations

- The board discussed two primary recommendations: increasing emphasis on student-centered learning and potentially bringing in new academic expertise.
- Nagel clarified that "bringing in expertise" refers to supporting administration rather than micromanaging individual classrooms.
- Discussion occurred regarding whether schools should focus on mastering specific standards or broader instructional design through Tier 1 instruction.
- Natalie (Annie) Harrison, a new board member, offered a perspective on how academic leadership can support teachers without being punitive or overly supervisory.

Improving Communication Channels

- Casey Trull suggested creating a dedicated forum for real-time dialogue between teachers and the board to address
feelings of disconnect.
- Pamela Norcross invited staff to attend public board meetings or attend academic committee subgroups for better transparency.
- The committee agreed to explore designing a structured way for all voices to be heard without overwhelming official meeting formats.

Next Steps and Conclusion Meeting Wrap-up

- The board decided to postpone setting formal academic goals until the October meeting to allow more time for data integration and strategy development.
- Lindsey Sealy noted the need for more consistent resources for high-achieving learners, specifically suggesting a full-time AIG position instead of part-time roles.
- Pamela Norcross concluded by emphasizing that this presentation was intended as a stimulus for constructive conversation rather than final decisions.

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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 1:48 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pamela Norcross

Documents used during the meeting

- Addressing_ERA_Academic_Outcomes_-_September_22_2026__1_.pdf