

**Valley Community School
Alternative Governance Board
MEETING MINUTES
February 16, 2010 9:00-11:00 a.m.
VCS Merced Library**

I. Call to Order:

Derrek Dean called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Introductions:

The following members were present:

Derrek Dean, Principal, VCS Merced

Rob Baptie, Vice Principal, VCS Merced

Carrie Harkreader, Principal VCS Atwater

Brandi Marquez, Coordinator, VCS Merced

Janette Alvarado, Principal, VCS Los Banos

Jill Macha, Director, Valley Community School

John Keane, Vice Principal, Juvenile Hall

Kathy Phillips,

Nina Nigel, Madera County

Bruce Berryhill,

Kevin Clark, Clark Consultant

Luise So'oalo, Secretary, VCS Merced

II. Presentation/Roundtable Discussion:

Admins: Handout presented by John Keane. Graphs showing cycle one after classroom visits, 346 questions and 503 student responses. Page one; data indicated 45% of students answer in complete sentences while 55% are not. Page three; only 10% of incomplete sentences are being addressed by the teacher. Team needs to address this area. Cycle two began two weeks ago with error correction; after 44 classroom visits, results noted as incomplete for now. Page four; data comparison, variations form cycle one to two. Data indicates 10% of observation and 10% of error correction correlates with the plan of the 1st year of gathering information.

Administrators discussed findings and came up with five:

1. Slang. Grammar and grammar correction. VCS students use "slang" at school making it difficult to differentiate education and culture language.
2. Teachers choosing their battles and ignoring unacceptable language in the classroom.
3. The time of day visits take place. Students are unresponsive, quiet, not much interaction in the mornings. Various degrees of interaction. Beginning with direct instruction, then target practice, and finally, independent practice.
4. 10% of grammar errors addressed. Variables include sub teachers, testing, instructional videos, etc.
5. Students/Teachers behavior. A change in students and teachers behavior is noticeable when admins visit the classroom. Almost seems like role playing.

Admin cont'd: Students and teachers are not aware of scheduled visiting times. Requesting a quarterly report from the board members to take to our county board on whether or not VCS is meeting our objectives.

Board: Agreed to the request.

Derrek Dean: Open to questions at this time.

Board: Is it too early for completed data? Cycle one is listening for complete sentences and cycle two is listening for error correction. Are they still doing complete sentences as well? Are they doing both at the same time? What will the protocol look like for addressing the importance of your findings? What work have you done with teachers since our last visit?

Admins: Yes. We're in the middle of it and planning invitation to talk for March 1st. Teachers are asking questions in complete sentences and students are responding in complete sentences. In the upcoming in-service scheduled for March 5th, we will definitely address the importance of our five findings to get everyone on the same page. Teacher input is preferred then we consult with Kevin and go from there. Error correction has been addressed in staff meetings at each site. Not a lot of debriefing with teachers yet. A tool has been developed by the team to remind teachers of the basics in grammar and addressing slang. Team is dedicated and committed.

Board: Faculty should and could discuss this with each other. What admins think based upon what you saw, however, this is what we think school wide. If it's not teacher targeted, people will open up to discussion about language use. Please give examples of the findings and AHAs that you have in terms of what is going on.

Admins: Being in the classroom is good because we get so busy. The five findings are probably things we knew but don't think about so we've never addressed them until now.

III. Consent Agenda/Approve Prior Minutes

Motion: Kathy Phillips

Second: Nina Nigel

All in favor: No objections

IV. Call for Public Comments on Agenda Items

No members of the public present

V. Agenda Items

a. Review Complete Sentences Data Revise - Covered

b. Update on Error Correction Walk-Through – Administration Team - Covered

c. Classroom Visits – Covered

Nina Nigel: Please add (d.) Action Plan to agenda items.

Derrek Dean – Timeline

February 2010, we have the final written version of district instructional philosophy. Each ILT member conducts sixteen hours of instructional observations which we are doing with classrooms observations; 84 separate classroom observations.

Admins: We've talked about post observation discussions with teachers in details and how it should look. Due to union issues, feedback protocol is not finalized because there are boundaries and we don't want to just give them negative feedback. A 3x5 index card with comments at the end of each visit was introduced. If observation was not so good, then a meeting will be set up with the teacher later. Student and teacher resistance is down from January to February.

Board: Will you be discussing immediate feedback at your inservice and present on your data?

Admins: Absolutely. It would be a good idea for the board members to visit classrooms for 10-12 minutes. Break for visits from 9:30-9:45 a.m.

Members split in groups:

- Alvarado/Marquez-Nigel
- Dean/Keane-Berryhill
- Harkreader/Baptie-Phillips

Derrek Dean: ILT data meeting #2 this morning and ELD staff training days are in the work; days are scheduled and calendared. Merced City schools are off this week and we're returning from a four day weekend. This may have some affect on today's visits.

10:00 a.m. - Admins to cover students break time.

Kevin Clark: Open to the admin team on what they want from the board members. Board is asking admins to monitor instruction, instruction changes, and student achievement. AGB's role is to help admins implement their plan. One month cycles and the focus is on classroom observations. Board's comments at this point on legitimacy of this plan that's new for admins and maybe even for board members. We're asking for help on revisions, otherwise, moving forward on this.

Jill Macha: We would like to talk about the reporting format, what it should look like, and what is most effective for them.

Board: Let us know if you have thoughts based on what you've learned so far. Where you're heading, what you've done, and what you're planning to do. This is to improve instruction; learning for kids. Implementing and effectiveness of the action plan.

Admins: It is too early in the plan to comment on student achievement and what the future holds. After teacher feedback, we will go from there. We have to consider how long student has been attending Valley, prepare students and parents at orientation on what is expected while attending Valley, and their rapport with the teachers. Admins don't want to take any power away from teachers.

Board: Teachers have to confront students' behavior issues as well as teaching standards so the assumption in this plan is that teachers will need to work on getting language to become more standard so academic can be taught. We're looking at a school wide initiative for improving or changing the "norm."

10:15-10:45 a.m. Break for classroom visits. Reconvened at 10:47 a.m.

10:47 a.m. - Discussion on classroom visits:

Board: Heard language in the room that should not be used. No student/teacher interaction. Students engaged but no error correction. Limited modeling by the teacher on former language. Focused more on standards. Students are learning but not having them respond in complete sentences. Teachers are not checking for understanding on a regular basis. Are teachers trained to elicit response from students on certain questions? Emphasize the importance for back and forth dialog to be observable.

Admins: Same observations from admins visits; 10% of teachers are doing error correction. Our next step will be discussed with Kevin at our inservice. Many factors to consider. A refresher course on teacher training. We have an idea of what to draw from from both teachers and students. We will work on completing error correction at the end of this month and start on our third strategy which is invitation to talk.

Board: Requesting samples on summaries of data for visual idea. Interested in what admins have decided on immediate feedback protocol.

VI. Business Items for Action
None

VII. Next AGB meeting is scheduled for April 30, 2010 from 9:00-11:00 a.m.

VIII. Meeting adjourned – 11:00 a.m.

Motion – Nina Nigel

Second – Bruce Berryhill

All in favor: No objections