



## SLT Agenda & Minutes, 11/29/22

### VALIDUS PREPARATORY ACADEMY

"Building Skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century"

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Christopher Hibbert, Principal

Latasha Frisco, AP



Department of  
Education

Attendees: Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Keenan, Ms. Puris for Mr. Sherman (not present), Ms. Castillo, Ms. Barna, Ms. Mays, Ms. Noel Norwood, Omar Dukureh, Akosua Akuoko, Ashley Jiminian, Elvis Montilla, Prince Norwood ([Keep or omit names as needed](#))

- I. Call to Order - Mr. Keenan
- II. Welcome - Mr. Hibbert
  - A. Belated happy holiday!
- III. Second Marking Period Closing Dec. 2 - Mr. Keenan
  - A. We are especially focusing attention on students who are attending school but not passing / falling behind
    1. Important to pass at least 2 marking periods
- IV. Shift in Attendance Recording - Mr. Hibbert
  - A. Increasing attendance is one of our school priorities this year.
  - B. Started the year (September) with 84% attendance, but we are seeing a decline in attendance in October and November.
    1. Factors attributed to:
      - a) Seniors who have not come to school on days when other seniors were going on college trips
      - b) Students staying at home when not feeling well (e.g. due to covid and other illnesses) - a factor we cannot control
      - c) Families making travel plans during times of year when school is in session
  - C. We will be making a shift in attendance recording procedures: We will be taking attendance 2nd period (instead of 3rd period), and making personal

phone calls home, as early as 9:30 am, for students not yet in attendance (instead of the “robo calls” that we had been making).

- D. Student representatives:
  - 1. Agree with the shift
  - 2. Perhaps offer more attendance incentives (like the gray shirts)
    - a) Student government will be tasked with deciding what the next attendance incentive will be for MP2
  
- V. Hotspot/Internet Upgrade - Mr. Hibbert
  - A. We have been requesting that the NYCDOE increase the bandwidth for our school, given that we share bandwidth with 3 other schools.
    - 1. NYCDOE investigated. The issue is not with bandwidth; we are not using up the bandwidth that we have coming into the building. The problem is with the wifi routers in the classrooms, which are bottlenecks for wifi signals and need to be upgraded.
    - 2. While we are waiting for upgrades, we will be using wifi hotspots in each classroom which can be logged into by up to 10 students at one time. This should decrease demand on the classroom wifi access in each classroom for the other students.
      - a) Our new IT tech, Mr. Tevin Price, has been working on this initiative and we are ready to begin this interim solution starting tomorrow.
  - B. Responses: Student representatives are very happy to hear that we are working on solutions for the wifi difficulties we've been experiencing.
  
- VI. Day of Giving Thanks Celebration - took place last week, Wednesday.
  - A. A day for all of us to spend a day together, to consider all we are grateful for. Alumni are invited to attend, and a number of alumni did come. This is a great event in our school, and reflects the family culture of our school.
    - 1. Akosua - it's a great day; nice to visit each others' crews, share food.
    - 2. Omar - liked that it was not as “organized” as last year, since it gave students more freedom in what activities to participate in.
    - 3. Elvis - enjoyed the dancing, in particular!
    - 4. Teacher feedback: Day of Giving Thanks is always a great day. Students always make it their own, so one suggestion from teachers overheard on the day was that next year we should ask students, during planning, what activities they would most like to include in the flow of the day.

- B. Administration likes to hear how the students and teachers feel about the day.

## VII. Student Business

### A. Student Government Elections - Mr. Keenan & Students

1. Elvis & Ashley - Reflected on the spirited debates.
  - a) Student government has decided to meet once a week, 4th period, on Mondays.
  - b) Discussing how to more effectively communicate with administration.
  - c) Want to communicate / engage better with the student body so that fellow students are aware of who their representatives are, what they do, and how they can be involved.

### B. Floor opened to students to bring up any student business to discuss:

1. Omar: Discussed College Fair; attended as a sophomore. Attending was interesting and was an opportunity to feel professional.
2. Akosua - found out about additional options for college, and what the requirements are to get into some of the HBCUs.
3. Elvis - students had practiced handshakes but others preferred daps and fist bumps. Was a great trip – looking forward to repeating it next year.
4. Mr. Keenan - one of the intentions is to bring information back from the trip and disseminate it to students who were not able to attend (like Prince Norwood, whose mom mentioned how disappointed he was over not having been in attendance). Ashley is currently collecting the contact information (business cards, etc.) for colleges they had contacted with, and this will be shared with other students.
5. Looking into whether schools would be willing to participate in a virtual college fair.
6. Some of our 10th graders were already accepted to one or more of the HBCUs in attendance!

### C. Omar: Summer Search program applications have begun! It is only available to sophomores. They will be coming 5th period and showing students how to register.

1. Students apply in 10th grade. Once in the program, students stay in the program throughout high school.

2. Summer Search provides many opportunities, including job opportunities over the summer; trips; academic support; etc.

VIII. Parent Business

- A. Ms. Mays - Great to hear about the HBCU trip and how well students were prepared for the trip. Students were all on point. Was very impressed!
  1. Mr. Keenan – commends students for sitting in the after-school workshops: etiquette, networking, mock interviews, attire.
    - a) Students came 100% ready! Plan is to take a photograph of all the students with their acceptances posted up on a bulletin board behind them.
      - (1) Two students were offered full rides to college!!
- B. Ms. Norwood seconds the accolades.

IX. Mr. Keenan is working diligently to update the school website. It is still a work in progress, but continually improving, to provide additional information to parents and students.

- A. Looking forward to creating more “adult learning opportunities” for parents.

For example:

  1. Language course: Improving language proficiency
  2. Business course
  3. Financial literacy course

X. Motion to Adjourn (at 4:57 pm)

- A. Motion accepted and seconded.