

Michigan Council of Charter School Authorizers

Michigan's Public School Authorizers take their important role and responsibilities very seriously. That is why many of them have come together to form the Michigan Council of Charter School Authorizers (MCCSA), a collaborative non-profit, non-partisan organization that allows for sharing of issues, ideas, resources, and best practices among all authorizers working in the state.

Incorporated in 2003, MCCSA's mission is to advance public school choice and accountability by supporting charter school authorizers and serving as their unified voice. The organization recently released its first Annual Report titled *Strategy in Motion: Advancing Quality Public Education*.

In the executive summary, the Authorizers have urged attention to the following key issues if the State's charter movement is to stay the course and remain strong:

- **Quality** must remain a focus for authorizers,



school operators and policymakers alike

- Charter school **growth** must occur for the movement to continue achieving meaningful results
- Policymakers and authorizers alike must **guard against "regulatory creep"** in the Michigan charter school movement

It is important to note the absence of one major guiding principle usually found in a discussion of charter schools objectives: freedom from regulation. In many states, charter schools have flexibility with respect to many state requirements so they can experiment more fully with innovative educational strategies. This is not the case in Michigan however. Charter public schools are subject to virtually all of the same statues and regulations as all other K-12 schools, and more. Because of their contracts, Individual authorizers all

require the regular submission of many documents. Most of the University Authorizers are now using on-line programs such as the Authorizer's Oversight Information System (AOIS), or E-cabinet to help sort and track these documents.

The Council holds bi-monthly roundtable meetings, as well as monthly business meetings to share information and discuss topics important to not only the charter school community, but the education field as a whole.

MCCSA Members:

Bay Mills Community College
Central Michigan University
Eastern Michigan University
Ferris State University
Grand Valley State University
Lake Superior State University
Northern Michigan University
Oakland University
Saginaw Valley State University
Wayne RESA

If you would like a copy of the MCCSA Annual Report, please contact this office and we will be glad to send you a copy.

Special Points Of Interest

- CSO Awards Grants
- New CSO Staff Member
- FSU Summer Camps
- MAPSA News

CSO Awards Academic Performance Grants

With the permission and support of Dr. Michael Harris, FSU Vice President of Academic Affairs, and Dr. Roberta Teahen, Dean of the University College of Extended Learning, the CSO offered Academic Performance Grants (APG) to each of the 16 public school academies authorized by Ferris State University.

Each school was offered an amount equal to \$25.00 for each student enrolled at the time of the unaudited fall count of 2005. Based on enrollment figures, grants ranged in size from \$3,675 up to \$19,150. The guidelines for use of the grant money were specified in the instructions with the application which stated that above all, grant funds must address a need supported by performance data at the academy. One further stipulation was that grants funds could not be used to supplant monies already allotted to school improvement purposes, but must be considered as additional revenue. "We wanted to see the money make an immediate and positive impact on the students at the academies", said CSO Director Jimmie Rodgers.

FSU academies proposed a wide variety of projects for use of grant monies such as:

- A K-8 literacy/language arts program called the "Shurley English System." All classrooms

will have activity resource kits-New City Academy, Lansing

- "Hands On" science kits for grades 3-8, with additional focus on parent and student presentation materials.-Pierre Toussaint Academy, Detroit
- Expansion of the Differentiated Reading Program, grades 4-8.-Francis Reh Academy, Saginaw
- Summer school for students who are shown to be at least one grade level or more behind based on their MEAP and Scantron Performance series scores.-Northridge Academy, Flint
- Purchase of the Literacy Library, Accelerated Readers, and a K-2 Writing Program.-Conner Creek Academy East, Roseville

All academies will be required to submit an Expenditure Log at the end of the fiscal year to show that those materials listed in the application were purchased. Each grant recipient will also be asked to evaluate the effectiveness of their program.

The CSO is pleased to have been able to make this offer available and is looking forward to celebrating the results with it academies.



Conner Creek Academy East Holds First National Honor Society Induction

Eight Students from Conner Creek Academy East High School were inducted into membership of the National Honor Society in a ceremony held at the school on January 25, 2005. Members were selected by a Faculty Council for meeting high standards of scholarship, service, leadership and character.

Students inducted were:

*Jennifer Bienieck
RoDerrick Gaston
Lawrence Hayes
Angelica Hobson
Ronatta Jackson
Brett Langschieid
Michelle Moore
Marcus Reliford*

"National Honor Society members are chosen for and then expected to continue their exemplary contributions to the school and community", said Mary Hazenbrook, CCAE chapter advisor.

This is the first year that Conner Creek Academy East High School started a National Honor Society Chapter.

Since 1921, thousands of students have been selected for this elite membership. NHS is sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals



Members of CCAE High School
First NHS Induction

Congratulations!

Benton Harbor Charter School Puts Freedom To Learn Computers to Use



Benton Harbor Charter School students and staff were the recipients of 250 new Freedom To Learn computers this past fall. Students have quickly put them to great use in projects, research, and additional school programs such as their after school *Skills City* program. Benton Harbor has also been using the Scantron Performance Series to help boost student learning and performance. The academy plans to continue the program this summer.



New Staff Member Joins Charter Schools Office



The Charter Schools Office is pleased to announce the appointment of Suzanne Finney, as the CSO Assessment Specialist. This is a newly created position for the office.

“Student achievement is our number one focus now,” said Associated Director Ron Rizzo. “With No Child Left Behind, and Education Yes! we need to have a clearer picture of student achievement than we ever have had. Sue will be gathering data, presenting reports, and assisting with the monitoring of contract educational goals of all FSU-”

Ms. Finney recently served as Reading/Title One Director from 1998-2005 at Crossroads Charter

Academy in Big Rapids. She has also served as Curriculum Director at Crossroads since 2003. Sue received her Bachelor degree from Central Michigan University, and her Master of Education degree from Grand Valley State University.

“I am excited about joining the team at the Ferris Charter Schools Office and working with the members of the family of charter schools under their umbrella”, said Suzanne. “The charter school movement is dear to my heart because I believe it has made a tremendous difference for students’ learning and achievement. Being a part of something that is having such an impact for children and young people is a wonderful opportunity”

The CSO looks forward to Suzanne joining the office on February 14.

Ferris State University Offers Summer Enrichment Opportunities



Ferris State University offers academic camps during the summer. Camp participants stay on campus, and attend classes usually for a period of up to five days. This summer FSU will be offering the following camp sessions:

- CAD & Manufacturing June 12-17, and June 26-July 1
- Computer Technology June 24-27
- French July 10-15
- Television & Digital Media Production July 24-29
- Allied Health Services July 10-15 & July 24-29
- Bio Technology July 24-29

All FSU-authorized academies will be receiving camp brochures in March. Call the University Center For Extended Learning (1-800-562-9130) for more info.



MAPSA News

The Michigan Association of Public School Academies (MAPSA) will be holding regional meetings on the following dates:

- 2/16/05-Dearborn-Holiday Inn Fairlane
- 2/22/05-Grand Rapids-Holiday Inn Select
- 3/2/05-Lansing-Clarion Hotel
- 3/9/05-Mt. Pleasant Country Club

Go to: www.charterschools.org for registration information

MAPSA will also be holding workshops titled: “Using Data To Drive Instruction”. To register visit NCSI online at: www.nationalcharterschools.org



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Ferris State University Charter
Schools Office Committed to Con-
tinuous Quality Improvement For
Michigan Public Schools

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U.S. Department of Education Offers Significant Grant \$

The Office of Innovation and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education has announced significant grant amounts for the promotion of economic and financial literacy among all students in kindergarten through grade 12.

The deadline for submission is March 23, 2005. Estimated available funds for this grant are approximately \$1,500,000 so competition is expected to be keen!

For more information go to:
The Federal Register On-Line at
Wais.access.gpo.gov

Reference the code: fr28ja05-55 or you
can call the Govern Printing Office (GPO)
toll-free at: 1-888-293-6498

Call For Pictures/Articles

Does your school have an event or activity you would like to share with other readers of this newsletter? Send us some info and a photo or two and we'll try to help you out! We're interested in showing the many wonderful activities that students in FSU-Authorized are doing so send us some info at:
rizzor@ferris.edu

FSU Mission

Ferris State University will be a national leader in providing opportunities for innovative teaching in career oriented, technological and professional education.