

From The Director's Desk . . .



The emergence of warm weather along with frequent rain showers, sport banquets, school proms, and graduation celebrations signal the end of another school year. This has been an exciting year. I have had the opportunity to visit every Academy and engage in collaborative dialogue with Charter School Boards, Educational Services Providers and their employees, all of which was centered on "continuous quality improvement" through enhanced Academy oversight. Much has been accomplished. The Ferris State University Charter Schools Office (FSU/CSO) has conducted on-site visitations reviewing programs and services of its authorized Public School Academies (PSA). Four Academies received 36-Month Reviews and four other Academies were reauthorized. Clara B. Ford, a strict discipline academy (SDA) for adjudicated youth, was successfully opened in Dearborn Heights. Lighthouse SDA is scheduled to open Fall 2008 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. These Academies expand educational opportunities for seriously at-risk youth.

In pursuit of "continuous quality improvement," the FSU/CSO has strengthened professional development opportunities. Professional Development requirements for Academy Board of Directors have been established. An orientation program for newly appointed Board members has been revised and implemented. The Second Annual Board Leadership Conference was conducted for 40 participants. Professional development opportunities were also provided for school leaders and staff. The 5th Annual Spring Briefing was conducted for approximately 50 school leaders and Educational Service Provider representatives. Recognizing the importance of data-driven decision making to facilitate student achievement, the CSO provided training opportunities in Scantron Performance Series and Achievement Series Assessment Programs. Forty-seven academy staff members participated in four days of training. Data-driven decision making professional develop-

ment opportunities were further expanded through the implementation of four Professional Learning Communities collaborative sessions. All FSU/CSO authorized Academies participate in the AOIS program as a means of addressing contractual and legislative compliance requirements.

The outcome of these collaborative efforts by the CSO, Academy Boards of Directors and the Educational Service Providers is enhanced opportunity for facilitated student achievement. For example, competing against 45 other Michigan schools for the first time, Hope of Detroit Academy won third place in the Michigan League of Academic Games Super Tournament. Many of FSU/CSO authorized Academy high schools have significant senior class graduation rates.

- *Allen Academy had a graduation rate of 100% with all of them accepted to attend college in the Fall.
- *Conner Creek Academy East had a graduation rate of 100% with 97% going on to college.
- *Consortium College Preparatory High School had a graduation rate of 100% with 98% of the graduating class going to college.
- *Creative Technologies Academy had a graduation rate of 100% with 54% of them scheduled to attend college.

As previously stated, this has been an exciting and rewarding year. Your effort to incorporate our mission of "continuous quality improvement" in many of the things that you do is gratifying. We look forward to the coming year and your return from summer vacation, with renewed energy and vigor to this work that we all love. As an essential member of the FSU Charter Schools Team, I'm sure you will agree the best is yet to come.



Lawrence V. Wells, Ph.D.

Congratulations Graduates!

June is graduation month, and we take this opportunity to congratulate the graduates of Hope of Detroit Academy, George Crockett Academy, Voyageur Academy, Allen Academy, Creative Technologies Academy, and Conner Creek Academy East. Collectively, over 85% of the recent graduates from FSU-authorized schools have plans to attend a university or community college for additional studies.



Conner Creek Academy East Teacher Named Middle School Teacher of The Year



Congratulations to Ms. Janice Leone, middle school teacher at Conner Creek Academy East, for being named as Middle School Teacher of the Year in the Oakland Press and Macomb Daily Media in Education awards recognition program. Ms. Leone was nominated by CCAE 8th grader, Neena Rhouhani.

“The more time I spent with Ms. Leone the more I learned about her. Ms. Leone has taught me to always put my best foot forward, to try hard as I can even if I don’t succeed the first time, and most of all, never back down. It’s one thing for someone to tell you these things. But it’s another if they set examples to make you believe what they said. I can say, with no doubt in my mind, that Ms. Leone influenced me to take action. I will be forever grateful to her for these life lessons she has taught me and hope she knows how important she is to me.”

Neena Rhouhana, 8th Grade

School Improvement Corner

By Ronald Rizzo, Associate Director

Assessment is More Than Just Testing!

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has caused all of us to look in depth at the ways we measure student academic performance. Essentially, any time we measure performance we are measuring how students are achieving (outputs) in relation to the curriculum that has been delivered to them (inputs). If the outputs do not meet our expectations or standards, then how the inputs are delivered must be changed or modified. The concept at least is fairly simple, but how we process the information is not.

This article purports that real assessment IS NOT testing and measurement but is the **culmination** of the two processes. In her book *Building a Scholarship of Assessment*, Trudy Banta (2002) suggests that there are four parts to the assessment process: 1. Learning; 2. Educational practices and experiences; 3. Evaluation; and 4. Decision making. The fourth and final part, *decision making*, is the part that many school improvement teams and administrators are still having some difficulty grasping. This is the point where true assessment actually begins and is usually one of the most difficult parts because staff are at so many different stages of understanding the process. This is also the point where the individual’s readiness to change what **they** are doing in terms of their inputs comes into focus.

Banta states that true assessment is only as effective as our willingness to make changes based on what the results of the evaluation tell us. To be as effective as possible then, assessment must be an iterative event; it must take place consistently and become a process rather than an event. As Boards, school leaders, and school improvement teams meet this summer to plan for the upcoming year, we encourage all members to consider ways to incorporate assessment as an ongoing process at the building and classroom level. We will continue to share some thoughts on this subject next year. Have a great summer!



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CSO Communication Survey

A few weeks ago, Board members, school leaders, and key administrators were mailed a CSO Communication Survey. If you have already returned yours in the self-addressed envelope, we thank you. If not, it is not too late to give us your feedback! Please return your survey by the end of June. Thanks in advance for your input. Results of the survey will be shared in the September newsletter.

The CSO newsletter will not be published in July or August. We will be back in September with more news on FSU-authorized academies and their achievements. Have a great summer!

FSU Mission

Ferris State University prepares students for successful careers, responsible citizenship, and lifelong learning. Through its many partnerships and its career-oriented, broad based education, Ferris serves our rapidly changing global economy and society.


Ferris State University Charter Schools

Committed to Continuous Quality Improvement

For Michigan Public Schools