

From The Director's Desk . . .



The Ferris State University Charter Schools Office is continuing Academy visitations. On May 15, 2008, we visited Francis Reh Academy and Northridge Academy. FSU

Trustee George Menoutes, President David Eisler and Associate Vice President Roberta Teahen accompanied me to Northridge Academy. Pictorial highlights of our Northridge Academy visit are provided below.



President David Eisler speaks with a reading group student



President Eisler and FSU Trustee George Menoutes share a moment with Ms. Gibson's class

Lawrence V. Wells, Ph.D.

Appreciating Teachers

The week of May 5-9 was National Teacher Appreciation Week and even though that week has passed, we'd like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all teachers working in all schools. Most of us in the education field would not be here right now if it hadn't been for a teacher who took particular interest in us and encouraged and helped shape us along the way. Perhaps this person was patient with us, took a personal interest in us, challenged us, or through their work inspired us to think about ourselves in a different way. The fact is, most of us can name a person or two who stand out as instrumental in helping shape our lives, even though neither they (nor us) realized it was happening at the time.

On page three of this publication we have published some quotes from essays that students from FSU-authorized schools wrote for the MCCSA Essay Contest in conjunction with National Charter Schools Week. There is a common theme among these essays, and it relates directly to how these students perceive they are treated and welcomed in their school by their teachers. For the 420 teachers working in FSU-authorized academies and for teachers everywhere, we thank you for your work, effort, and dedication. You are greatly appreciated-every day!

Thanks



MEAP Reports In Mail

The Charter Schools Office has recently mailed copies of the 2007 MEAP reports. All Board members, school leaders, curriculum directors, and educational service providers will receive a copy. Please make sure to take some time at a Board meeting soon for discussion and analysis.

FSU-Authorized Schools Receive Awards in MCCSA Essay Contest

As part of the National Charter Schools Week (May 5-9), the Michigan Council of Charter School Authorizers (MCCSA) sponsored its first essay contest in conjunction with its Board Summit. Students were asked to write about "What my charter school means to me".

The MCCSA received over 250 submissions from across Michigan and there was originally to be only one winner from grades 6-8 and one from grades 9-12. According to Step-

nie Van Koevering, Executive Director of the MCCSA, three essays were given an award at the Middle School level due to the quality of the competing essays. The CSO is proud to announce that two students from FSU-authorized academies were selected as winners: **Ravina Armstrong**, 8th grader from Benton Harbor Charter School and **Fontayshia DeJesus**, an 8th grader from Marshall Academy. Each student received a \$500 savings bond and a \$500 gift for supplies for their schools.

Congratulations!



Ravina Armstrong, Benton Harbor



Fontayshia DeJesus, Marshall

CSO Holds 6th Annual Spring Briefing

The CSO held its 6th Annual Spring Briefing for School Administrators and Educational Service Providers on May 1st at the Double Tree Hotel in Dearborn. Special guests were Dr. Mary Barry-Cybulski of Michigan LearnPort, Stephanie Van Koevering from the Michigan Council of Charter School Authorizers, and Dan Quisenberry, of the Michigan Association of Charter School Authorizers. Many thanks to all those who attended.



Celebrating National Charter Schools Week-In Students' Own Words

A number of students in FSU-authorized schools turned in essays during National Charter Schools Week and we wanted to take an opportunity to share why some of these students like attending their school-in their own words:

"My other school just passed me on to the next grade-even if I wasn't ready. Now I'm doing better because I can read at the grade level I'm supposed to be in." **Soledad Vasquez**, 6th Grade, Conner Creek East

"My teachers are hard on me and encourage me to pull up my grades. At the other schools I attended the teachers didn't care as much and were handing out A's." **Laneva Jones**, 7th Grade, Benton Harbor Charter School

"Marshall Academy has impacted my education and my life in many positive ways. I have a strong academic background by completing the curriculum at Marshall Academy." **Megan Martinez**, 8th Grade, Marshall Academy

"Benton Harbor Charter School is the best school for me because the staff takes the time out to tell you how much they care about you." **Danisha Coleman**, 6th Grade, Benton Harbor Charter School

"One of the things I like about my charter school is that we have uniforms. The reason I like our uniforms is because it is a lot harder for the kids to pick on other kids who have to wear hand-me-down clothes. At traditional schools, kids get picked on for these things." **Jade Blair**, 6th Grade, Marshall Academy

"A reason I like charter schools other than the wonderful teachers they have are they help you out a lot. They help you because they love to see you succeed." **Dasianae Burt**, 6th Grade, Conner Creek East

"This school gives us the love and support we need for us to do better in school. That's what makes me get up in the mornings -knowing that someone loves me not just at home, but at school too." **Chelsea Palmer**, 6th Grade, Benton Harbor Charter School



Suzanne Finney

School Improvement Corner

By Suzanne Finney
Academic Assessment Specialist

As most of you have heard by now, Suzanne has left the CSO to work with the schools in the Mecosta-Osceola Intermediate School District (MOISD). We will certainly miss Suzanne, and we wish her well in her new endeavor. We have no doubt that she will be successful in her new role. We thought it appropriate to publish part of one of her earlier school improvement corner articles as a reminder to us of what we all need to accomplish:

THE MEAPS ARE OUT! THE MEAPS ARE OUT! NOW WHAT????

In the midst of already busy and demanding schedules, it is necessary to find time to analyze the results. The CSO has provided each academy with a detailed report on their school's performance compared to itself, and with other FSU charters and the State. We hope you will find this information valuable.

Remember the process of using the school's MEAP analysis information to establish School Improvement Plan Goals using the SMART goals process. SMART is an acronym for the desirable characteristics of goals:

- Strategic & Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Results-Based
- Time Bound


Next year's School Improvement Corner will feature guest articles from charter school staff. If you have something you would like to share in this space, please let us know!

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CSO Communication Survey

In an effort to better improve our service to you, we are asking you to please take a few moments and complete a survey. The 2008 CSO Communication Survey is being mailed to all Board members, school leaders, curriculum and assessment personnel, and educational service providers. Please let us know how we're doing as your authorizer, and offer any suggestions you may have on how we can better serve our schools. The surveys are anonymous and will not be tallied by the CSO.



Ferris State University Charter Schools
Committed to Continuous Quality Improvement
For Michigan Public Schools

Save the Dates:

- Charter Schools Office **Fall Board Leadership Conference III** will be held at Ferris State University on September 12-13, 2008. More information and a full conference schedule will be mailed out in early August.
- The **2008 Shining Star Celebration** will be held Friday, October 5, at the Dearborn Inn. Invitations will go out in early September.

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.