

## Celebrating National Charter Schools Week

Charter schools across the nation celebrated National Charter Schools Week from April 30 to May 6, 2006. In his recognition of the contribution of charter schools to the American educational landscape, President George Bush said, "We recognize the vital role charter schools play in fostering an America where children have the knowledge and skills they need to grow, succeed, and achieve their dreams."

Michigan's charter movement has continued to strengthen since the first public school academy opened in 1994. Here are a few facts about Michigan's charter schools:

### Strong Growth & Need

In 1994, twelve charter schools opened in our State with just over 2,000 students. Here in 2006, Michigan now has more than 92,000 children who have chosen Michigan's 225 charter public schools for the 2005-2006 school year. There are also thousands of children on academy "waiting lists." More than 4,500 certified teachers have chosen to work in

charters statewide. In 2004, a survey by the National Council of Education Providers found that 84% of parents with public school aged children want to be able to choose a school other than the one to which their children are assigned.

### Excellent Achievement

In 2005, 82% of charter schools made annual yearly progress (AYP), with charters posting a 21% increase in schools making AYP compared to a 12% gain in the State average. Charter students showed greater gains than the State average in 7 of 10 elementary and middle school grades/subjects on the 2005 Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP). Statistics clearly show that African American students who reach 7th and 8th grades in charter schools outperform their local peers and those across the state. In Detroit, Consortium College Preparatory High School has 85% of the 2006 graduating class accepted into a college or university. The local district is currently graduating less than 50% of its students from high school.

### Doing More With Less

Latest data from the National Center for Educational Statistics shows that

63% of all charter school staff in Michigan are in the classroom directly engaged in helping children to learn. In contrast, the State average for all other schools is 48%. The Michigan Department of Education distributed an analysis of charter school funding in spring 2005 which shows that charters receive an average of \$1,473 per student less than traditional schools. At current enrollment levels, these savings equate to more than \$136 million a year.

### What Does It All Mean?

Charter schools are making a significant impact on education not only in our State, but around the country as well. As a State authorizer, we are proud to be part of the charter school movement and to be involved with committed, quality educators.



### Special Points Of Interest

- Teacher Tribute
- CSO Holds Spring Briefing
- School Improvement Corner
- National Charter School Award

## In Honor of All Teachers During Teacher Appreciation Week

Have you heard about the next "SURVIVOR" show planned by TV executives?

Three businessmen and three businesswomen will be dropped in a middle school classroom for 6 weeks. Each business person will be provided with a copy of his/her school district's curriculum, and a class of 28 students. On the third day of school, the number will expand to 34. There will be no money available for supplies.

Each class will have five learning-disabled children, three with ADHD, one gifted child, and two who speak limited English. There will be one identified with severe behavior problems, one will be on house arrest, and about half will come from single parent homes, one quarter of them without phones.

Each business person must complete lesson plans at least three days in advance with annotations for curriculum objectives and modify, adapt, organize or create materials accordingly. They will be required to teach students, handle misconduct, implement technology, document attendance, write referrals, correct homework, make bulletin boards, compute grades, complete report cards, document benchmarks, communicate with parents and arrange parent conferences. They must also supervise recesses/lunches and monitor hallways. In addition, they will complete drills for fires, tornados, and emergency lock downs.

All participants must attend workshops (120 hours), faculty meetings, department meetings, and attend curriculum meetings. They must also tutor children who are behind and strive to get their two non-English speaking students proficient to take the MEAP in early fall.

If they are sick and cannot make it to work, they must create lesson plans to accommodate a substitute, leaving specific instructions on what child goes to what class for speech, guidance, leveled reading group, bathroom access or to the school nurse for their medication. If the participant is ill and having a bad day, they must not let it show.

Each day, they must incorporate reading, writing, math, science, and social studies into the program. It goes without saying that each must maintain discipline while providing an educationally stimulating environment at all times.

The business people will only have access to the golf course on the weekends, but on their new salary they probably will not be able to afford it anyway. There will be no access to vendors who want to take them to lunch, and lunch will be limited to 30 minutes. They will be provided with two 40 minute planning periods per week while their students are at electives. If the copier is operational, they may make copies during this time. They will also be asked to sit in on parent meetings scheduled by the administration during their planning time.

The business people must continually advance their education on their own time and pay for this requirement themselves.

Last, but certainly not least, the business people must make sure at every turn that they leave No Child Behind.

The winner of this SURVIVOR series will be returned to their own job!

**To all those who work day after day for the education of our nation's youth we say THANK YOU!**



## Spotlight On Academies



### CSO Holds Spring Briefing for School Leaders and Service Providers

On April 27, the CSO hosted School Leaders, Curriculum Directors, and Educational Service Providers at the 4th Annual Spring Briefing and Conference held in Dearborn. The briefing is an opportunity for the CSO to share changes in procedures and policies with its authorized academies, and update leaders on new legislation and legal requirements. The CSO also unveiled a major grant opportunity for FSU-authorized academies and reviewed its new 36-month Review



Patricia Ward and Karen Christensen from Crossroads Charter Academy in Big Rapids.

The PowerPoint presentation for Briefing can be viewed on the CSO website by clicking under the resources tab.

([www.ferris.edu/charterschools](http://www.ferris.edu/charterschools))

and Reauthorization model. The afternoon session was a workshop on Teacher Learning Centers with Suzanne Finney from the CSO, and

**Thanks to all who attended!**

### National Charter School Of The Year Award

The Center for Educational Reform (CER) has recently announced the creation of the National Charter School of the Year Award. The year-long review process will culminate in a gala event during the 2007 National Charter Schools Week in 2007. The winning school will receive \$10,000, a trophy, and will be featured in CER's National Charter School of the Year Program.

The CER is in the process of seeking the assistance of the US Department of Education and the White House, with hopes of the President bestowing the award. For all of the criteria and more information, visit the Center For Educational Reform Website at [www.edreform.com](http://www.edreform.com).



### School Improvement Corner

By Suzanne Finney

In the last newsletter, the *School Improvement Corner* focused on the process of curriculum mapping and how essential it is to bringing about curriculum, instruction, and assessment alignment. Last week the Office of School Improvement rolled out the new *Michigan School Improvement Framework* with planning tools and information, promising practice, research and links to school improvement sites across the nation. To help disseminate this information, the Michigan Department of Education has developed a "one stop School Improvement web page at: [http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-28753\\_38959---.00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-28753_38959---.00.html) This web page is an incredible resource. For example, under the *Improving Michigan Schools* section you can find the entire State School Improvement Plan and resources.

During upcoming school improvement team meetings, reviewing the rubrics in *Strand I: Teaching For Learning* would be helpful for determining the school's current status and setting goals to begin the journey to "exemplary practice" in the area of curriculum, instruction, and assessment alignment.

Hats off to the Office of School Improvement for their exemplary development of this framework which **if** implemented will benefit all students.

Until Next Time . . .



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## CSO To Hold Academic Performance Grant Information Conference Calls

The CSO will be holding informational conference calls to answer questions about the Academic Performance Grant (APG) opportunity announced at the Spring Briefing. Conference calls with Suzanne Finney from the CSO will be held on May 18, and June 15. It is necessary to register for the call, so please call Susan Impelizzeri at (231) 591-5802 to register.

**Visit Us At Our Website:**  
[www.ferris.edu/charterschools](http://www.ferris.edu/charterschools)

## Save The Date!

The CSO will hold the fall Shining Star Celebration on October 6, 2006. The event will once again be held at the Dearborn Inn. Dr. Crystal Kuykendall, well known author and presenter will be the guest speaker for the evening.

  
Ferris State University Charter Schools

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For Michigan Public Schools

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