

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE

April 2024 Board Communication

❖ Clean Drinking Water Access Act

On October 24, 2023 Michigan enacted the [Clean Drinking Water Access Act](#). There are two important sections of this new law we want to bring to your attention.

First, no later than **January 24, 2026** each school shall develop a drinking water management plan and make the plan available to the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (MDEGLE), school staff, parents/guardians of children enrolled in the school and the general public upon request.

The plan must include all of the following:

- Specify the location of each water outlet:
 - The location where a water outlet will be maintained to deliver water for human consumption, whether as drinking water or as a component of a food or beverage.
 - The location where a filtered bottle-filling station will be maintained. The plan must provide for the maintenance of at least one filtered bottle-filling station for every 100 occupants of the school, not including visitors or individuals attending special events.
 - The location where a filtered faucet will be maintained. Filtered faucets may be maintained only when the installation of a filtered bottle-filling station is not feasible, but a water outlet for human consumption is necessary, including but not limited to, kitchens, nurses' stations, preschool classrooms and teachers' lounges.
 - The location of where a water outlet for other purposes will be maintained.
 - The location of where a water outlet will be shut off or rendered permanently inoperable.
- Establish a schedule for when each of the following will occur:
 - Annual water sampling and testing of the water at each filtered bottle-filling station and filtered faucet in the school to ensure that the filters are properly installed and provide water with a lead concentration of not more than 5 parts per billion.
 - Regular replacement of the filter cartridge for each filtered bottle-filling station and filtered faucet in compliance with the manufacturer's instructions or recommendations of the MDEGLE.

The law further states that each school shall review and update the plan at least once every five years and make changes as directed by the MDEGLE or as needed to comply with the Act.

Second, the [Clean Drinking Water Access Act](#) states that no later than **June 30, 2026** each school shall do all of the following:

- Install all filtered bottle-filling stations and filtered faucets as indicated in the plan and not already in existence.
- Shut off or render permanently inoperable any water outlet providing water for human consumption that is not a filtered bottle-filling or filtered faucet.
- Post a conspicuous sign near each water outlet indicating whether or not the outlet is intended to provide water for human consumption.
- By June 30, 2026 and annually thereafter, each school shall submit to the MDEGLE documentation on a form prescribed by the MDEGLE that certifies that the school has complied with the Act.

- Not install a drinking fountain unless the drinking fountain is a filtered bottle-filling station.

When your FSU Field Representative conducts your School Safety & Security Checklist, they will verify that your school has a drinking water management plan, filtered bottle-filling stations and filtered faucets. For further details about the plan, funding, water sampling and testing, please read the [Clean Drinking Water Access Act](#) in its entirety.

❖ Important Dates

April 17, 2024 – Board Professional Development Webinar, Q & A session
May 3, 2024 – Ferris State University Board of Trustees meeting

❖ Important Epicenter Deadlines

April 2, 2024 – Student Count
April 30, 2024 – Budget - 3rd Quarter Financial Statements
May 1, 2024 – Notice of Open Enrollment Certification of Completion

❖ Board Professional Development Webinars

Mark your calendar for the final live webinar in our 2023-2024 board professional development series, [The How To's of Board Governance](#). It is scheduled for Wednesday April 17, 2024 6:00pm – 6:30pm. Board members look for an email invitation from AirWin Educational Services with registration information.

This session will be unique and something that hasn't been offered in previous years' webinar series. It will be a question and answer session totally driven by the questions from the board members in attendance. So if you have follow-up questions to any of this year's live or on-demand webinars, please attend this session. We're looking forward to interactive conversations with you about the board's role and responsibilities!

In case you missed previous live webinars or haven't had an opportunity to watch the other recorded on-demand webinars, below are the links.

[How to Ensure the Safety and Welfare of Students](#)

[How to Protect Against Charter School Closure](#)

[How to Engage in Legislative Advocacy](#)

[How to Become an Effective Board President](#)

[How to Ensure Your Board is Complying With Transparency Requirements](#)

[How to Recruit Board Members Effectively](#)

[How to Ensure a Positive Working Relationship With Your School Leader](#)

[Using Board Policy to Inform Decision Making](#)

[Board's Appropriate Role in Parent/Community Complaints](#)

Each board member that watches a recorded or live webinar earns one professional development credit for their respective board. **Please remember to earn the credit the board member will need to share their 2-3 takeaways about the webinar at a board meeting.** Boards are required to complete three credits per academy year by two or more board members.

❖ Major Purchase or Lease Over \$150,000

If your school plans to finance the purchase of facilities or equipment where the cost exceeds \$150,000 and will take more than one year to pay, the Charter Contract requires this transaction to be reviewed by the CSO Director prior to finalizing the lease or purchase. This is pursuant to the Charter Contract under Terms and Conditions, Article 3, Section 3.7. Below is a screenshot of that section.

Prior to finalizing these types of transactions, please submit the corresponding draft document through Epicenter's Document Center under the submission type *Transactions over \$150,000 – FOR CSO REVIEW*. CSO Director Chris Loiselle will review the document and respond accordingly. If you have any Charter Contract questions, please contact Chris at (616) 788-7825 or ChrisLoiselle@ferris.edu. If you have any Epicenter questions, please contact Sharon Hopper at (231) 591-5804 or SharonHopper@ferris.edu.

Section 3.7 CSO Director Review of Certain Financing Transactions Involving Pledge of State Aid. If the Academy proposes to (i) finance the acquisition, by lease, purchase, or other means, of facilities or equipment, in excess of \$150,000, pursuant to arrangements calling for payments over a period greater than one (1) year, and which include a pledge to one or more third parties of a portion of the funds to be received by the Academy from the State of Michigan pursuant to the State School Aid Act of 1979, as amended, being MCL 388.1601 *et seq.*, or (ii) direct that a portion of its State School Aid Payments be forwarded by the University acting as fiscal agent to a third party account for the payment of Academy debts and liabilities, the Academy shall submit the transaction for prior review by the CSO Director, as designee of the University Board, in the manner provided herein. The Academy shall, not later than thirty (30) days prior to the proposed closing date of the transaction, submit a written request to the CSO Director describing the proposed transaction and the facilities or equipment to be acquired with the proceeds thereof (if any), and in the case of a transaction described in subparagraph (ii) of this Section, (a) a copy of the Academy Board's resolution authorizing the direct intercept of State School Aid Payments; (b) a copy of a State School Aid Payment Agreement and Direction document that is in a form acceptable to the CSO Director; and (c) copies of such other documentation regarding the transaction which is the subject of the proposed direct intercept as the University Charter Schools Office may request. Unless the CSO Director extends the review period, within thirty (30) days of receiving a written request in compliance with this Section, the CSO Director shall notify the Academy if the proposed transaction is disapproved (the CSO Director may disapprove the proposed transaction in his or her sole discretion). If no response is made during that period, this transaction shall be considered not to have been disapproved. If the proposed transaction is disapproved, such disapproval may, but shall not be required to, state one or more conditions which, if complied with by the Academy and any lender, lessor, seller or other party, would cause such disapproval to be deemed withdrawn. No transaction described in this Section may be entered into that is disapproved by the CSO Director. By not disapproving a proposed transaction, the CSO Director is in no way giving approval of the proposed transaction, or any of the terms or conditions thereof.

❖ **Development of 2024-2025 Budget**

As a board responsibility, financial oversight is second only to student achievement in importance. Boards have an obligation to ensure that school leaders and/or management companies have competently and effectively managed the school's finances. It is that time of the year when schools begin to develop their budget for the next year.

The law requires the budget to be presented, discussed and approved at a public meeting. Typically, boards schedule their budget hearing in May or June. With that said, board members should receive the proposed 2024-2025 budget far enough in advance of the scheduled budget hearing to permit time for them to review and understand it, frame meaningful questions and negotiate changes, if appropriate. Best practices also include comparing the proposed budget with past budgets to understand the school's income and expense trends. The careful planning and strategic allocation of resources is critical to the success of your school.

❖ **Any Questions?**

You may contact your FSU Field Representative or Sharon Hopper if you have any questions regarding this Board Communication. Important and/or urgent information that cannot wait until the next Board Communication will be sent to you by email.