

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE

February 2024 Board Communication

❖ **Welcome New CSO Director Chris Loiselle**

Chris Loiselle commenced his professional journey as a CPA at Arthur Andersen in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Subsequently, he transitioned to the role of Chief Financial Officer, after being recruited by a client, advancing through the ranks during his 15-year tenure to ultimately become the Chief Executive Officer. Driven by a profound passion for education, Chris resigned from his CEO position to pursue this interest. He embarked on this new path by initially serving as an adjunct for various colleges in West Michigan. Eventually, he secured an Assistant Professor position at Cornerstone University in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

During this period, Chris was invited to join Berrien Springs Public Schools as the Operations Director, tasked with assisting the leadership team in their expansion plans. In his capacity as Operations Director for Berrien Springs Offsite Programs, he successfully helped expand their coverage from a single location to 27 throughout Michigan. This expansion required adeptly navigating the intricate legal, administrative, and legislative landscape inherent in K-12 administration in Michigan. Simultaneously, Chris pioneered software development and founded Student Achievement Systems, a company dedicated to tracking and evaluating the engagement of virtual students and staff.

Currently residing with his wife on Lake Mecosta in Stanwood, Chris's son and spouse are recent graduates of Ferris State University. Eagerly anticipating his role as an advocate for educational opportunities within the Ferris community, Chris is committed to championing the educational needs of students served by the K-12 charter schools authorized by Ferris State University beginning February 1, 2024.

❖ **Welcome New CSO School Support Specialist Beth Taylor**

Beth Taylor is originally from the Detroit area but has spent most of her adult life living in Grand Rapids, Michigan. She holds a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Central Michigan University and a master's degree in Educational Leadership from Grand Valley State University.

Beth's career has included 15 years of teaching middle school and several leadership positions. She has served as an Assistant Principal, Middle School Principal, Elementary Principal, and Virtual School Director. Her most recent challenge was creating a post-pandemic K-12 Virtual School for Kelloggsville Public Schools.

On a personal note, Beth is an avid reader, enjoys traveling, and being outdoors. Most of her trips involve college campuses as she has sons at Central Michigan University, Michigan Technological University and a high school senior on his way to Western Michigan University in the fall! When not on the road, she can be found with her husband and eldest children at the lake or spending time with her grandson.

Beth is always up for a new challenge and is looking forward to joining the Ferris State University CSO team beginning February 1, 2024. She is committed to maintaining high academic standards for all students and eager to help support all of the individual schools that FSU serves.

❖ CSO Field Representatives

Since we are introducing new CSO staff, we thought it would be a good time to reintroduce you to our exceptional Field Representatives. The CSO, your academy and board benefit from their wisdom, background and vast experiences.

Linda Bouman grew up in Kalamazoo, Michigan - the daughter of a teacher and a school superintendent. She received her bachelor's degree from Central Michigan University, with a major in Teaching the Emotionally Impaired. She then attended Grand Valley State University where she received her master's degree in Teaching the Learning Disabled. Linda has a 31-year career of educational service for grades K-12 in both regular and special education. Her last years were spent as a Title I Reading and Math Specialist, as well as serving as Interim Principal. Linda has also taught at the college level, instructing undergraduate classes and supervising student teachers. She has been a member of the Ferris Charter Schools Office since 2019 and serves Clara B. Ford Academy, Creative Technologies Academy and Huron Academy.

Ronnie Phillips earned a bachelor's degree in Education from the University of Illinois and taught school at the elementary and high school levels for several years. He continued his career as a counselor, department head, assistant principal, principal, and superintendent. His extended career as an adjunct professor at Wayne State University allowed him to teach and supervise in the College of Education. Ronnie is currently an educational consultant and has authored approximately 34 articles and three books. He joined the CSO team in 2023 and serves Hope of Detroit Academy, Michigan Collegiate, Red Oak Academy and Voyageur Academy.

Jim Scholten received a bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Physical Education and a master's degree in Educational Leadership from Grand Valley State University. His K-12 educational career was with Tri County Area Schools, first as a middle school mathematics teacher, which progressed into the elementary school principal, middle school principal and finally as the superintendent. Jim has been with the CSO since 2013 and is the Field Representative for Bridge Academy, Joy Preparatory Academy and Pittsfield Acres Academy. In addition, he is the CSO Visitation Review Chair for all mid-contract and reauthorization reviews.

Dr. Michele Sideman earned her bachelor's degree in Social Work from Grand Valley State University, obtained her teaching certificate from Prescott College, two Master's in education one in Human Relations Counseling and the second in Educational Leadership from Northern Arizona University and her Ph.D. in K-12 Educational Leadership from Western Michigan University. She began her career in social work, but quickly realized this was not the right path for her and took an emergency teaching position at Woodard Junior High School in Yuma, Arizona. This led to a new teaching/coaching position at Yuma High School, teaching a variety of courses in the Social Studies Department and coaching both varsity girls basketball and softball. After nine years in Arizona Michele moved back to Michigan to be closer to family and took her first administrative position as an Assistant Principal and Athletic Director at Elk Rapids High School. From there, she landed a position at East Kentwood High School as an Assistant Principal and then was promoted to Principal at East Kentwood Freshman Campus where she worked for 12 years until her retirement in 2018. She joined the Ferris State Charter School's office in 2017 as a Field Representative and currently serves Hope Academy of West Michigan, Lighthouse Academy, Michigan Connections Academy, Marshall Academy and New Bedford Academy.

Sue Wakefield was awarded a bachelor's degree in Secondary Education and master's degree in Social Work from Western Michigan University, as well as a Master's degree in Education from Grand Valley State University. She worked in public education as a high school teacher, social worker, principal, and superintendent for the final ten years of a thirty-year career. Committed educators and kids are her favorite people so she is thrilled to be able to continue to support them. Sue has been with the CSO since 2019 and currently is the Field Representative for Battle Creek Montessori Academy, Benton Harbor Charter School Academy, Blended Learning Academies Credit Recovery High School, Northridge Academy, and Muskegon Montessori Academy for Environmental Change.

❖ Important Epicenter Deadline

March 22, 2024 – Board of Directors Application (for May 3, 2024 FSU BOT meeting)

❖ Important Dates

February 14, 2024 – Michigan Student Count Day

February 16, 2024 – Ferris State University Board of Trustees meeting

February 27, 2024 – Board Professional Development Webinar, *How to Ensure the Safety & Welfare of Students*

❖ Board Professional Development Webinars

Mark your calendar for the next live webinar, *How to Ensure the Safety & Welfare of Students*. It is scheduled for Tuesday February 27, 2024 6:00pm – 6:30pm. Board members look for an email invitation from AirWin Educational Services with registration information.

In case you missed previous live webinars or haven't had an opportunity to watch the other recorded on-demand webinars in our 2023-2024 board professional development series, *The HOW TO's of Board Governance*, below are the links.

[How to Engage in Legislative Advocacy](#)

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

[Transparency Requirements: HOW TO... Ensure Your Board is Complying](#)

[Board Recruitment Strategies: HOW TO... Recruit Board Members Effectively](#)

[Board/School Leader Relationship: 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. To earn the credit the board member will 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.

❖ 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.