

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE

June 2026 Board Communication

❖ Communication Plan

To ensure timely and coordinated communication, school leaders must notify the CSO Director immediately of any situation that may result in media attention or significant public concern. This includes, but is not limited to, incidents involving student safety, staff misconduct, threats of violence, credible social media threats, serious injury, hospitalization or death of a student or staff member, major facility failures, fires, floods, power outages, emergency closures, cybersecurity incidents or data breaches, allegations of discrimination, harassment or hazing, transportation accidents involving students or staff, large-scale fights or disturbances, law enforcement activity on campus, health-related emergencies, communicable disease outbreaks, or parent and community protests. Prompt communication allows the CSO to provide appropriate support, guidance, and response coordination when needed.

❖ Board Action

All board actions require a vote by each board member that is present at the public meeting. The Michigan Open Meetings Act does not stipulate how a vote should be conducted. Therefore, it can be done by voice, show of hands or roll call, provided the vote is accurately recorded in the meeting minutes.

Below are examples of when a roll call vote should be utilized:

- when a voice vote or show of hands reveal a divided vote amongst board members,
- when a board member requests a roll call vote,
- when the board is acting on matters of significance and
- when specified by law.

To play it safe, some boards use roll call voting on all board actions, which is completely acceptable.

The only lawful, valid reason for a board member to abstain from voting is when a board member has a conflict of interest, as defined by law. If this is the case, the board member should state their conflict of interest so it is recorded in the meeting minutes. In all other circumstances, as promised in their oath of office, each board member must participate in the decision making process and cannot abstain because they want to avoid a controversial or difficult decision before the board.

❖ Important Epicenter Deadlines

June 1, 2026 – Budget - Legal Notice of Public Hearing

June 1, 2026 – Annual Board Calendar

June 1, 2026 – Academic School Calendar

June 30, 2026 – Health Department Permit

June 30, 2026 – CSO Competitive Grant Award Expenditure Verification Form

June 30, 2026 – Emergency Drills Log Sheet

June 30, 2026 – Budget – Year End

June 30, 2026 – Budget – Annual

- **Must show object level detail**
- **Must include projected enrollment**
- **Must include Board Resolution**

❖ Virtual Board Professional Development Opportunities

Below are links to the recordings of the 2025-2026 board professional development series ***Governance Growth: Strengthening Boards, Empowering Schools***. If you would like a copy of a presentation or handouts, please contact Sharon Hopper at SharonHopper@ferris.edu.

[Navigating Your Role as a New Board Member](#)

[Leading with Purpose: Mission-Driven Decision-Making](#)

[Strategic Oversight vs Micromanagement](#)

[Data-Driven Governance for Student Achievement](#)

[Ensuring Effective Financial Oversight](#)

[Growth Planning: Expanding Impact, Not Just Enrollment](#)

[Evaluating Contracts: Tools for Accountability](#)

[Strengthening Governance and Management/School Leader Partnerships](#)

To earn a professional development credit, board members please share key takeaways with the rest of your board. This can be accomplished through a brief written summary or a short update at a meeting. Your FSU Field Representative will include that information in their board report and we will update our database with the earned credit.

❖ End of the Year Board of Directors Question Toolbox

Pillar #1 Academics:

- What are your school's student attendance and suspension rates for the year? How does this rate compare to last year (three years, five years)? What plans are in place for next year to improve student attendance and reduce suspension rates?
- Are certain subgroups, grades or teachers outperforming? Underperforming? Why?
- What are the key findings from the surveys sent to students, teachers and parents? What might be some things that emerged from the surveys that should be considered for the upcoming school year?
- Did students make expected annual growth in reading compared to their peers?
- Did students make expected annual growth in math compared to their peers?

Pillar #2 Fiscal:

- Does the school usually maintain a healthy fund balance of more than 20%? If the balance is lower, has it been improving over the past year and over the last three years overall? If not, is the school intentionally using fund balance reserves to invest in improvements that are expected to strengthen the school's financial position over time?
- How did actual revenue and expenses compare to projections? Did the board identify specific areas of overspending or underspending?
- Is next year's projected enrollment greater than or equal to this year's enrollment?
- How did our significant budget expenditures directly reflect student outcomes and academic gains?
- Were restricted revenues (e.g., grants, donations) used strictly for their intended purposes?

Pillar #3 Operations:

- Going into the next school year, will the school retain 90% or more of its teachers, support and administrative staff?
- Has the board completed an evaluation of school leadership/management company? What were the results? How will focus areas be monitored next year?
- What summer maintenance/renovation projects are planned for the summer? Are they within budget? When is completion expected?
- Has the board completed a self-evaluation? What were the results? How will focus areas be monitored next year?
- Did the Board act independently from the school leaders and management company in its discussion and decision making?

Pillar #4 Compliance:

- Was Epicenter on-time compliance 98% or above and Epicenter accuracy compliance 90% or above?
- Did the board review Charter Contract compliance, at least quarterly?
- Did the school receive any notifications from MDE or other agencies for non-compliance with state or federal requirements?
- Did board members receive a board packet 5-7 days in advance of each board meeting to ensure they have sufficient time to review materials, prepare informed questions and make well-informed decisions?
- Did the board complete their required three (3) professional development credits?

❖ With Gratitude: A Note from the CSO

As this school year wraps up, the CSO wants to express our deepest gratitude to all educators and school staff. We are truly in awe of your tireless dedication to ensuring every student reaches their full potential. To our board members, thank you for being dedicated stewards of public education. Your behind-the-scenes efforts profoundly shape the future for students and families in your community. While it has been a busy year, we hope it has also been incredibly rewarding. We are excited about the future and confident that our continued partnership will have a lasting, positive impact. Thank you and enjoy your summer!

❖ 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.

The next Board Communication will be in your September board packet.