

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE

November 2023 Board Communication

❖ 2023-2024 CSO Competitive Grants

Since its inception in 1997, the Ferris State University Charter Schools Office has provided resources to the University's authorized public-school academies in numerous ways. Our mission statement sums up that commitment:

By implementing quality oversight, the Ferris State University Charter Schools Office focuses on student growth and achievement, offers professional learning opportunities, and provides relevant resources to its public-school academies.

Consistent with our mission, the Ferris State University Charter Schools Office is pleased to announce that all FSU-authorized academies are eligible to apply for a competitive grant of up to \$25,000 for the 2023-2024 academic year. The grant may be used for one of four "bucket" areas: Safety and Security, Extra Curricular Activities, Staff Professional Development, or Other projects that do not fit these first three areas. The total amount of funds for the grant program offered by the Ferris State University Charter Schools Office is \$300,000.

Here is some specific information:

- Academies must complete the CSO Competitive Grant Request Application outlining the project, anticipated cost, and rationale for the project. The completed application is submitted in Epicenter no later than November 10, 2023.
- Grant requests may be for any amount up to, but not exceeding \$25,000 to fund specific projects not covered by the Academy's general fund. The grants are not meant to supplant general budget money, but to enhance offerings or projects that the Academy would not be able to fund otherwise.
- The grant must benefit academy students and/or staff.
- Academies may apply for more than one grant, but must use a separate application for each request. Award amounts are cumulative, no academy will be awarded more than \$25,000 in total funding.
- Academies will be notified of their grant status no later than November 27, 2023. Grant awards will be disbursed in early December 2023 State Aid payments.

❖ Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

As a public institution, the academy and its Board of Directors are subject to the Michigan Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). As such, your board has a board policy regarding public records and has appointed a FOIA Coordinator. For further FOIA details, please refer to your board policy and the [Freedom of Information Handbook - Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel](#). For specific guidance regarding FOIA, the Board President may want to consult with the board's attorney.

❖ Mastermind Network and FSU CSO Hubs

The Mastermind Network is an online community hosted by the Michigan Association of Public School Academies (MAPSA). It is digital community built to connect charter school educators from every corner of the Mitten, bridging physical distance to foster conversation, collaboration, problem solving and professional development. Within this site, you will find Ferris State University Charter Schools Office two private hubs, one for school leadership and the other for board members. The hubs look similar to a private Facebook group. To join or sign into an existing account, please click on [Mastermind Network](#). From there you can join two FSU CSO hubs, School Leadership and Academy Board Members. You'll find recorded professional development sessions, updates on legislation that affects public education and/or board governance, CSO Board Communications and other important information.

We encourage you to join the Mastermind Network and FSU CSO Hubs.

❖ 2023-2024 Board Professional Development Webinars

Mark your calendar for the second live webinar, *How to Engage in Legislative Advocacy*, in our 2023-2024 board professional development series, *The HOW TO'S of Board Governance*. It is scheduled for Wednesday November 15, 2023 6:00pm – 6:30pm. Board members look for an email invitation from AirWin Educational Services with registration information. This webinar will focus on the active role board members can play in the political arena supporting their schools and charter school education in Michigan.

Below are links to the on-demand webinars, as well as the recorded September webinar.

[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 attends a live webinar or watches an on-demand webinar can earn 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 academic year by two or more board members.

❖ Important Epicenter Deadlines

November 1, 2023 – Audited Financial Statement and Management Letter (Board Received & Reviewed)

November 1, 2023 – Scorecard-Financial AFS

November 3, 2023 – Board Candidate Application (for consideration at the 12/15/2023 FSU BOT meeting)

November 11, 2023 – 2023-2024 FSU CSO Competitive Grant (optional)

November 16, 2023 – Student Count

November 30, 2023 – Hylant Insurance Policy Submission

❖ Important Date

November 15, 2023 – Board Professional Development Webinar

❖ MCCSA Annual Report

As a member of the Michigan Council of Charter School Authorizers (MCCSA), in September we received the MCCSA 2021-2022 annual report. The report provides insight into the objectives of the Council, how it's doing with meeting those objectives and what activities they engage in to reach those objectives.

In addition to key facts and figures about the Council and other interesting information, the report spotlights one of the schools FSU authorizes, [Muskegon Montessori Academy for Environmental Change](#).

To read the complete report, please click on [MCCSA 2021-2022 Annual Report](#).

❖ 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.