

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE

November 2024 Board Communication

❖ 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.

❖ 2024-2025 CSO Competitive Grant Program

School leaders don't forget to submit in Epicenter your application for the CSO Competitive Grant Program by November 15th. The grant may be used for one of four "bucket" areas: Safety and Security, Extra Curricular Activities, Staff Professional Development or Other Projects. The total amount of funds for the grant program offered by the Ferris State University Charter Schools Office is **\$400,000**.

The CSO Competitive Grant Request Application can be found in Epicenter. You'll need to outline the project, anticipated cost and rationale for the project. 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. The CSO will notify school leaders of their grant status no later than November 29, 2024. Grant awards will be disbursed with the December 2024 State Aid payments.

❖ Important Epicenter Deadlines

November 1, 2024 – Audited Financial Statement and Management Letter (Board Received & Reviewed)
November 1, 2024 – Lease Amortization Schedule **(new requirement)**
November 1, 2024 – Support Indicators-Financial AFS 2023-2024
November 3, 2024 – Board Candidate Application (for consideration at the 12/14/2024 FSU BOT meeting)
November 15, 2024 – 2024-2025 FSU CSO Competitive Grant **(optional)**
November 16, 2024 – Student Count
November 30, 2024 – Hyland Insurance Policy Submission

❖ Important Dates

November 5, 2024 – Board Professional Development Webinar Establishing a Positive Board Culture
November 6, 2024 – In-person Board Professional Development Session Detroit Area
November 13, 2024 – In-person Board Professional Development Session Southfield Area
December 3, 2024 – Board Professional Development Zoom Session Board President Interaction

❖ Virtual Board Professional Development Opportunities

Mark your calendar for the next two webinars in our 2024-2025 board professional development series, *Board Governance Etiquette*. The first one, *Establishing a Positive Board Culture*, is scheduled for November 5th at 6pm. This session will address the importance of identifying, understanding and ensuring a positive board culture, as well as provide insight into the ultimate value board culture can bring to governance operations, decision-making and procedural knowledge.

The second upcoming board professional development opportunity is on December 3rd at 6pm. This will be an interactive Zoom session for board presidents. It will bring board presidents together to discuss and exchange thoughts and ideas on how to lead boards effectively. This session is intended to be interactive so bring your best advice to share with your fellow board leadership colleagues.

Board members look for an email invitation from AirWin Educational Services with registration information for both sessions.

In case you missed previous virtual board professional development sessions below are links to the recordings. 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: Part 1](#)

[Why Can't We All Just Get Along](#)

❖ In-Person Board Professional Development Opportunities

The regional in-person professional development sessions held last month in Lansing, Traverse City and Detroit proved to be an excellent opportunity for charter school board members across the state to come together for a common purpose. The presentation, handouts and other valuable resources provided board members with the tools necessary to create a governance framework for their respective boards.

In case your schedule conflicted with the previous regional sites and dates below are the two remaining sessions. We look forward to seeing you!

Date	Location
November 6, 2024 Wednesday 5pm-8pm	Voyageur Academy 4366 Military Street Detroit, MI
November 13, 2024 Wednesday 5pm-8pm	Faxon Academy 26275 Northwestern Highway Southfield, MI

Please click on the link below to register for a session.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfWk6n3PmiekL56dtYj2QntxR4m65wLoHeNI7h06ZHBhNLBjg/viewform?usp=sf_link

❖ **Board of Directors Question Toolbox**

The Ferris State University Charter Schools Office is happy to provide you with a few questions to help further your conversations this month. The question focus could come from one or more of our four School Support Pillars: Academics, Fiscal, Operations, and Compliance.

Please note that this is meant as a reference, some items may not apply to all schools, and that there are many questions a board member may choose to ask. If you have questions, please reach out to your Field Representative or the Ferris State University Charter Schools Office.

We will focus on Pillar #2 Fiscal:

- How close was the actual Fall student count compared to the projected count and chartered enrollment? Is a budget amendment necessary?
- What is the school's fund balance? How does it compare to the board's goal?
- Revisit district payment and billing issues from the previous two months.
- How is the board ensuring that school leaders meet reporting due dates for the quarterly unaudited financials?
- How does current cash flow compare with last year's?
- What were the auditor's findings for the 2023-2024 audited financial statements?

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.