

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE

October 2023 Board Communication

❖ Annual Conflict of Interest Questionnaire

By law public school board members are considered public officials and are expected to conduct business in a fair, open and transparent way. This means that board members must act in a way that is free of any real or perceived conflicts of interest.

A conflict of interest is a situation in which a person or organization engages in multiple aspects of a decision in a way that could possibly corrupt or compromise the individual's or organization's final decision.

As a public official, board members are bound by Michigan law and the Charter Contract that discourages conflicts of interest. To ensure that boards operate free of conflicts, board members are required to complete and submit to the CSO an annual conflict of interest questionnaire.

In October Sharon Hopper will send all board members an email and the 2023-2024 Annual Conflict of Interest Questionnaire. Board members please complete the form and email it to SharonHopper@ferris.edu or give it to your FSU Field Representative.

❖ Contract Performance Report (CPR)

In October school leaders and board members will receive the 2022-2023 Contract Performance Report (CPR) for their respective academy. The CPR is an annual custom report about the performance of the academy in the areas of fiscal responsibility, governance, compliance and academic performance.

The CPR will be included in the board packet of an upcoming board meeting. Your FSU Field Representative will go over the report in detail and answer any questions you may have.

❖ Important Epicenter Deadlines

October 1, 2023 – Annual Verification of Non-Profit Corporation Status
October 10, 2023 – Student Count-Preliminary
October 15, 2023 – Emergency Drills Report-WEB POSTING
October 31, 2023 – Budget-1st Quarterly Financial Statements
November 1, 2023 – Audited Financial Statement and Management Letter (Board Approved)
November 1, 2023 – Scorecard-Financial AFS
November 3, 2023 – Board of Directors Application (for 12/15/2023 FSU BOT meeting)

❖ Important Dates

October 4, 2023 – Count Day
October 6, 2023 – FSU Board of Trustees meeting

❖ Epicenter 100% On-Time Compliance

We have high expectations that all Epicenter submissions will be received by the due date. To assist school leaders and boards monitor this more closely, your FSU Field Representative will report at every board meeting your current on-time compliance percentage.

Why should on-time Epicenter compliance be a priority for all stakeholders?

- Your Charter Contract stipulates that all information and documents will be submitted in Epicenter no later than the deadline.
- Your board and academy's on-time Epicenter compliance percentage is published in your annual Contract Performance Report, which is a public document.
- When an academy is up for reauthorization, your Epicenter on-time compliance is one of the factors we consider when we make a recommendation to our Board of Trustees on the length of the reauthorization contract.

Last year there were eight academies and respective boards that maintained 100% on-time Epicenter compliance that deserve special recognition. They are:

- ★ [Battle Creek Montessori Academy](#)
5th consecutive year
- ★ [Benton Harbor Charter School Academy](#)
9th consecutive year
- ★ [Blended Learning Academies Credit Recovery High School](#)
6th consecutive year
- ★ [Creative Technologies Academy](#)
22nd consecutive year
- ★ [Hope Academy of West Michigan](#)
7th consecutive year
- ★ [Huron Academy](#)
22nd consecutive year
- ★ [Lighthouse Academy](#)
7th consecutive year
- ★ [Voyageur Academy](#)
5th consecutive year

At a board meeting FSU Field Representatives presented those academies with a special plaque recognizing last year's accomplishment of 100% Epicenter on-time compliance. **In addition, those academies will receive a monetary award of \$2,500.** Look for this to be included in the November State Aid payment.

Please take time to recognize and praise your Epicenter users, school leaders and board liaisons for their continued commitment to achieve and maintain 100% Epicenter on-time compliance for the entire school year.

❖ 2023-2024 Board Professional Development Webinars

This year eight Michigan charter school authorizers, including Ferris State University, contracted with Angela Irwin from AirWin Educational Services to facilitate a board professional development webinar series, *The HOW TO'S of Board Governance*. This will include ten webinars, five of which are pre-recorded, while the five others will be delivered live.

The live webinar topics and dates are:

- [HOW TO... Become an Effective Board President](#)
September 20, 2023 at 6pm
- [HOW TO... Engage in Legislative Advocacy](#)
November 15, 2023 at 6pm
- [HOW TO... Protect Against Charter School Closure](#)
January 16, 2024 at 6pm
- [HOW TO... Ensure the Safety and Welfare of Students](#)
February 27, 2024 at 6pm
- [Question and Answer Session](#)
April 17, 2024 at 6pm

Below are the links to the pre-recorded on-demand webinars.

[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 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 academy year by two or more board members. FSU Field Representatives will periodically report on your board's standing with professional development credits.

❖ Additional Opportunities for Board Professional Development Activity Credits

While we routinely promote FSU CSO sponsored board professional development opportunities, we want to make sure board members have a variety of ways to seek learning and board governance growth. The below table summarizes what boards and individual board members may want to consider when seeking continuous learning and development opportunities.

Board Professional Development Activity	Description/Example	Number of Activity Credits Awarded
Full Board Activity	Board Retreat Strategic Planning Meeting Book Study	Two activity credits
Individual Board Member Watches FSU CSO Training Video	Video Topics: Educational Goals Freedom of Information Act Open Meetings Act Charter Contract Finances	.25 activity credits per board member per video
Individual Board Member Attends FSU CSO Sponsored Opportunity	Webinars Spring Briefing Quarterly Convenings	One activity credit per board member per session
Individual Board Member Attends Meeting of Another Public Governing Board	Neighboring School Board Meeting City, County or State public meeting, where you are not a member of the board or required/requested to attend by employer	One activity credit per board member per meeting
Individual Board Member Attends Educational Workshop/Conference/Webinar	Any workshop, conference or webinar related to board governance, charter schools or education sponsored by MAPSA, NCSI, MDE, MASB or NACSA	One activity credit per board member per workshop/conference/webinar

❖ 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.