

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE

October 2025 Board Communication

❖ Charter School Day at Ferris State University

Last year we hosted the first Charter School Day at Ferris State University. It was a huge success with 208 charter high school students and 28 chaperones in attendance representing 7 of our high schools. This year we are excited to host the second Charter School Day on **November 1, 2025** for all 10th, 11th and 12th grade students of a FSU-authorized school. The CSO will reimburse transportation costs to and from the event. All board members are also invited to attend. The event includes a campus tour, free lunch and football game.

The tentative itinerary is:

10:30am – 11:00am	Arrive at Ferris State University
11:00am – 12:30pm	Ferris tour, including pictures with our mascot, learning all about student groups and other things like band, athletics, the different colleges and programs offered, etc.
12:30pm – 1:00pm	Lunch at the football field
1:00pm – 3:00pm	Football game Ferris State University vs. Northern Michigan University
3:00pm	Depart from Ferris State University

❖ 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.

Your FSU Field Representative will provide you with the 2025-2026 Annual Conflict of Interest Questionnaire. Board members please complete the form and return it to your FSU Field Representative.

❖ **Board Information That Must Be Readily Available to the Public**

Several Michigan laws, such as, but not limited, to the Revised School Code, Open Meetings Act and State School Code Aid Act, require specific information to be readily available to the public. Board of Directors of a public school academy must ensure all relevant information is accessible to the public.

For example, the board is legally required to establish and enforce governing policies. These policies cover a wide range of topics, including academics, student conduct, personnel matters, fiscal and facilities management and community relations. School board policies should be the foundation for all decision making and are required to be readily available to the public on the school's website.

In addition to board policies, public school boards are required to conduct business openly and with transparency. All board meetings are required to be open to the public. Board meeting minutes must be taken and made available to the public. The minutes must contain the date, time and location of the meeting, names of board members present and absent, any decision made during the public meeting, the purpose of any closed session held and all roll call votes. Proposed meeting minutes must be available for public inspection within eight business days and approved minutes within five business days of approval.

❖ **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.

As we start the new school year, we will focus on Pillar #4 Compliance and Governance:

➤ **Compliance/Legal**

- Have new students been identified for at-risk services and have interventions begun?
- How are school leaders ensuring all students with disabilities and ELLs receive services they are legally entitled to?
- Are there any charter amendments your school might need to consider making its goals for growth, new grades, new facility, etc. a reality? If so, has the school leader or board president contacted the CSO Director to discuss these plans?

➤ **Governance**

- Has the board discussed a calendar of board member development opportunities that align with the organizational goals and strategic plan?
- How is the board supporting school leader morale in the opening weeks of school?
- How is the board assessing staff morale? Are there plans in place for the board to keep a pulse on this? How can the board support it?
- What is the communications plan and what are the roles of board members and staff if a crisis arises?
- Has the board reexamined its new board member orientation program to ensure maximum impact?
- Has the board reviewed best practices for public comments during a board meeting?

❖ Important Epicenter Deadlines

October 1, 2025 – Annual Verification of Non-Profit Corporation Status

October 1, 2025 – Charter Contract on Academy's Website – Certification of Completion **(new requirement)**

October 1, 2025 – ESP Agreement on Academy's Website – Certification of Completion **(new requirement)**

October 1, 2025 – Name of Authorizer and ESP on Signs, Promotional Material, Website and Enrollment Application – Certification of Completion **(new requirement)**

October 20, 2025 – Board of Directors Application (for 12/11/2025 FSU BOT meeting)

October 31, 2025 – Budget-1st Quarterly Financial Statements

November 1, 2025 – Lease Amortization Schedule

November 1, 2025 – Audited Financial Statement and Management Letter (Board Approved)

November 1, 2025 – Support Indicators-Financial AFS

❖ Important Dates

October 1, 2025 – Count Day

October 3, 2025 – FSU Board of Trustees meeting

October 14, 2025 – Board Professional Development Webinar

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

November 1, 2025 – Charter School Day at FSU

❖ Contract Performance Report (CPR)

This Fall school leaders and board members will receive the 2024-2025 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.

❖ Virtual Board Professional Development Opportunity

Mark your calendar for the second webinar, [Leading with Purpose: Mission-Driven Decision Making](#), in our 2025-2026 board professional development series **[Governance Growth: Strengthening Boards, Empowering Schools](#)**. It will be on Tuesday October 14, 2025 at 7pm. Board members look for an email invitation from AirWin Educational Services with registration information.

This session will discuss the importance of revisiting a clearly articulated mission and vision in guiding governance decisions. Key takeaways will include how to define and revisit mission and vision statements; tools for keeping the mission front and center in decision-making; signs of mission drift and how to course correct.

In case you missed the first webinar, [Navigating Your Role as a New Board Member](#), below is a link to the recording. This interactive Zoom session, designed for new board members, provided the history of charter schools, the appropriate role of the board and the critical relationships board members must navigate to serve effectively, efficiently and masterfully.

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

❖ In-Person Board Professional Development Opportunity

Eight Michigan PSA authorizers are collaborating with Angie Irwin from AirWin Educational Services to provide you with additional opportunities to perfect your governance role by implementing best practices and utilizing effective tools and resources. Charter school board members from over 150 academies across the State have been invited to participate in these professional development opportunities. Below is information about the sessions and registration link.

Session 1: Welcome to Charter School Board Service

This orientation session provides new charter school board members with a foundational understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Attendees will learn about the structure of charter school governance, the distinction between board and management duties, key accountability areas, and how to contribute to effective meetings and a strong governance culture. The session is designed to be practical, engaging and mission-focused - equipping members to serve confidently and compliantly.

Session 2: Leading with Purpose: Roles of the Board President and Vice President

This orientation session provides charter school board presidents and vice presidents with a clear understanding of their leadership roles and responsibilities. Attendees will explore how to effectively plan and lead meetings, partner with their school leader, support board performance, and promote a culture of professionalism and governance integrity. Designed to be practical and engaging, this session will equip board leaders with confidence and purpose.

Session 3: Charter School Boards: Reflect, Recommit, Reimagine

This session is designed to encourage boards to assess their past, recommit to their mission, and envision new possibilities in their governance role(s). Attendees will explore how to turn insight into action through board self-evaluations; how to revisit the charter to determine if the school over which they are governing is still on mission; how to foster a community voice at the board table, and, finally, how to plan and prepare for board member transitions.

Date	Topic	Location
October 9, 2025 Thursday 4:30pm – 8:00pm	Welcome to Charter School Board Service	Chandler Park Academy High School 20254 Kelly Road Harper Woods, MI
October 23, 2025 Thursday 4:30pm – 8:00pm	Leading With Purpose: Roles of the Board President and Vice President	Voyageur Academy 4366 Military Street Detroit, MI
October 28, 2025 Tuesday 4:30pm – 8:00pm	Charter School Boards: Reflect, Recommit, Reimagine	Detroit Service Learning Academy 25940 Grand River Avenue Redford, MI

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

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

❖ **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.