

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE



September/October 2023

News and Updates

September 15, 2023 | Volume 23 | Issue 4



When Ferris State University authorizes a public school academy, it is an endeavor to positively transform the life trajectory of the students who attend that academy. The Charter Schools Office holds as its most fundamental goal that all students be prepared for success in college, work, and life. Test scores and knowledge are important but are not enough to succeed in an ever-competitive and connected global community.

We believe that students must be able to apply knowledge to new situations, and to seek out new information through research skills and technological competence. To accomplish this, each academy must provide an environment to achieve academic excellence by delivering quality programming and instruction for the students it serves.

THOUGHTS FROM THE
DIRECTOR

Welcome Back!

Welcome Back! The 2023-24 school year is in full swing with all the promise and excitement that the beginning of school brings. There is always a great deal of work that goes in to preparing for the opening

of school, and we would like to extend a special thank you to all school staff and Board members who worked all summer on ensuring a smooth opening for their students and staff.



We realize there are also some unique challenges that come with the start of this school year. The educational research and data clearly show that we are still digging out from instructional loss during the COVID era, with many students still behind in both Reading and Math. In particular, the effect is most profound in grades 3 and below. Additionally, schools are still working to mitigate the social emotional impact of the pandemic on students and staff.

Despite these challenges, we are confident that the staff of all FSU-authorized academies are up to the task, and we stand ready to assist when/where we can.

We look forward to a great school year and to seeing you sometime soon!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mr. Rizzo'.

Ronald Rizzo, Ph.D.
Director of Charter Schools

School Support Specialist

We are pleased to announce that **Laura Emshanov** has assumed the full-time role of School Support Specialist. Laura has been with the CSO for ten years as one of our Field Representatives but has also been working in school support for several of those years. The School Support Specialist monitors the FSU academy testing, analyzes student growth and achievement, and works collaboratively on comprehensive strategies with those academies not reaching their contractual goals.



25 Year Celebrations

This year marks the 25th anniversary for several of our academies. Please join us in congratulating:

Hope of Detroit Academy (The Leona Group)
Huron Academy (CS Partners)
Joy Preparatory Academy (The Leona Group)
Michigan Collegiate Academy (The Romine Group, Inc.)





Update on Leadership Transition at the CSO

With the 2023-24 school year now back in full swing, I wanted to take an opportunity to fill you in on the status of the leadership transition at the CSO.

As you may recall, I announced this past spring my intention was to retire at the end of June. With the unexpected departure of Associate Director Dr. Chris White, I postponed my retirement until such time as my successor could be identified. I feel strongly that I owe it to the CSO staff and all of you to ensure that the office can still perform the requirements of an authorizing office, and that there is stability in the leadership position before I depart. *(Read Dr. Rizzo's letter in its entirety by clicking "Read More" below.)*

[READ MORE](#)

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SCHOOL SUPPORT SPECIALIST UPDATE

NWEA: 2023-2024 Academic Year

Welcome to the 2023-2024 academic year. There are a couple reminders about NWEA testing that we wanted to pass along:

NWEA Testing window dates are as follows:

- August 14, 2023, to November 17, 2023 (FALL)
- December 4, 2023, to February 23, 2024 (WINTER)
- March 11, 2024, to June 15, 2024 (SPRING)

Direct any NWEA questions to [Laura Emshanov](mailto:LauraEmshanov@ferris.edu) (LauraEmshanov@ferris.edu).

As a reminder, academies have contractual goals related to NWEA. Click the link below to read more.



NWEA 2023-2024 AY

Also, this Fall, NWEA is back in Michigan to host interactive Leadership Summits! These full-day events will be held at three different locations and will feature a variety of breakout sessions. Join the Leadership Summit to learn from NWEA staff and experienced school leaders on topics like setting growth goals, MAP Growth reports for fall, and using MAP Reading Fluency to screen for Dyslexia.

Please note that each event is limited to just 100 participants, so early registration is encouraged. Don't miss this chance to boost your knowledge and network with peers for student success. Use the links below to register by **September 29, 2023!**

October 16
Whitmore Lake, MI
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
[Register here](#)

October 17
Kent ISD
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
[Register here](#)

October 19
Traverse City, MI
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
[Register here](#)

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COMPLIANCE AUDITOR / BOARD LIAISON UPDATE

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 is involved 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 mid-September Sharon Hopper will send all board members an email with the 2023-2024 Annual Conflict of Interest Questionnaire. Board members please complete and email it to SharonHopper@ferris.edu or give it to your FSU Field Representative at your next board meeting.

**Contact:**

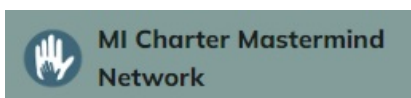
Sharon K. Hopper

Compliance Auditor/Board Liaison

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Reminder to join the Mastermind Network and FSU CSO Hubs

**FSU CSO: School Leadership**

Ferris Forward

**FSU CSO: Academy Board Members**

Ferris Forward

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, please click on [Mastermind Network](#). From there you can join the FSU CSO hubs. On our hubs 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.

If you have any questions, please reach out to AndreaRuggles@ferris.edu.

**Everyone's gearing up
for a new school year!**

***From All of Us
in CSO***

Welcome to the
2023-2024
Academic Year!



Our Mission and Vision Statement

Ferris State University Mission

Ferris State University prepares students for successful careers, responsible citizenship, and lifelong learning. Through its many partnerships and its career-oriented, broad-based education, Ferris serves our rapidly changing global economy and society.

Charter Schools Office Vision Statement

FSU will authorize public school academies that promise to transform the lives of students by demonstrating high-quality performance.

Charter Schools Office Mission

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 authorized public school academies.

Core Values

1. Student Learning
2. A Collaborative Working Environment
3. Diversity
4. Opportunities
5. Excellence
6. Accountability
7. Integrity and Trust

Contact Us

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Ferris State University is an equal opportunity institution. For information on the University's Policy on Non-Discrimination, visit ferris.edu/non-discrimination.

**Visit our
Website**



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