

# FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

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## CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE



## January/February News and Updates

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*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

## Happy New Year!

Hello again and Happy New Year! I trust that all of you had an opportunity to relax a bit during the hustle and bustle of the Holidays and are looking forward to the start of a fresh new year.

Speaking of starting a fresh new year, I am delighted to announce that the Charter Schools Office is starting the New Year with two new hires. The first is our new Director of Charter Schools, **Mr. Chris Loiselle**. Chris comes to us with a strong background working in accounting and has spent the past ten years working for Berrien Springs Public Schools as their Operations Director overseeing 27 separate offsite virtual locations around Michigan serving approximately 6,000 students. Chris will formally assume the Director duties on February 1, 2024. Please see his introduction in this newsletter.



I am also pleased to announce the hiring of **Ms. Beth Taylor** as our School Support Specialist. Beth has served the Kelloggsville Public Schools as a Dean of Students, Elementary Principal, Middle School Principal, and most recently as the Director of Kelloggsville's Virtual School Director. Beth will also officially join the CSO on February 1st. Please also see her introduction in this newsletter.

As for me, I will be officially stepping down from the Directorship of the CSO at the end of February. My plan is to do some consulting under an LLC I have formed. Please know that it has been both an honor and a privilege serving the CSO and all of you for these 21.5 years. As I look back on that time, I am proud of all that we have accomplished together, yet I also realize that there is more to do. The charter school landscape is constantly shifting, and I am confident that Chris Loiselle is the right person to tackle this challenge at this time. I know you will enjoy getting to know and working with Chris and School Support Specialist Beth Taylor. I look forward to watching the continued progress of the CSO and all your academies in the coming years.

Thank you all for your work with students and their families in these challenging yet rewarding times.

*Ronald S. Rizzo, Ph.D.*  
*Director*

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### Thank you to all of our Academy Board of Directors

January is Board Appreciation Month, and we take this opportunity to salute and thank all of the members of our academy Boards of Directors. We know how seriously you take your responsibilities, and the care and deliberation you put into the difficult decisions you sometimes face.

Serving on the Board of Directors is one of the highest forms of community service, and your work has a significant impact on many students and their families.

Your assigned Field Representative has a gift for you this month as a token of our appreciation for your work. Thank you for your service and dedication!

With Much Appreciation,  
Ron

Meet the New Director  
of Charter Schools Office

Chris Loiselle commenced his professional journey as a CPA at Arthur Andersen in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Subsequently, he transitioned to the role of Chief Financial Officer after being recruited by a client, advancing through the ranks during his 15-year tenure to ultimately become the Chief Executive Officer. Driven by a profound passion for education, Chris resigned from his CEO position to pursue this interest. He embarked on this new path by initially serving as an adjunct for various colleges in West Michigan. Eventually, he secured an Assistant Professor position at Cornerstone University in Grand Rapids, Michigan. During this period, Chris was invited to join Berrien Springs Public Schools as the Operations Director, tasked with assisting the leadership team in their expansion plans. In his capacity as Operations Director for Berrien Springs Offsite Programs, he successfully helped expand their coverage from a single location to 27 throughout Michigan. This expansion required adeptly navigating the intricate legal, administrative, and legislative landscape inherent in K-12 administration in Michigan. Simultaneously, Chris pioneered software development and founded Student Achievement Systems, a company dedicated to tracking and evaluating the engagement of virtual students and staff. Currently residing with his wife on Lake Mecosta in Stanwood, Chris's son and spouse are recent graduates of Ferris State University. Eagerly anticipating his role as an advocate for educational opportunities within the Ferris community, Chris is committed to championing the educational needs of students served by the K-12 charter schools authorized by Ferris State University.



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## Meet the New School Support Specialist/Cyber Education Monitor

Beth Taylor is originally from the Detroit area but has spent most of her adult life living in Grand Rapids, Michigan. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Central Michigan University and a Masters degree in Educational Leadership from Grand Valley State University. Beth's career has included 15 years of teaching middle school and several leadership positions. She has served as an Assistant Principal, Middle School Principal, Elementary Principal, and Virtual School Director. Her most recent challenge was creating a post-pandemic K-12 Virtual School for Kelloggsville Public Schools. On a personal note, Beth is an avid reader, enjoys traveling, and being outdoors. Most of her trips involve college campuses as she has sons at CMU,



Michigan Technological University, and a high school senior on his way to Western Michigan in the fall! When not on the road, she can be found with her husband and eldest children at the lake or spending time with her grandson. Beth is always up for a new challenge and is looking forward to joining the Ferris State University CSO team! She is committed to maintaining high academic standards for all students and eager to help support all of the individual schools that FSU serves.

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## Mastermind Network and FSU CSO Hubs

Are you a member of the MI Charter Mastermind Network through the Michigan Association of Public School Academies (MAPSA)? You should be!

The Mastermind Network is an online community hosted by 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.

If you haven't already, we encourage you to join the Mastermind Network and FSU CSO Hubs. by clicking on the links in the narrative above or the pictures below.



### FSU CSO: Academy Board Members

Ferris Forward



### FSU CSO: School Leadership

Ferris Forward

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Compliance Auditor  
Board Liaison  
Updates





### January is National School Board Recognition Month

We recognize the unique roles academy boards play in promoting and advocating quality education. You put in countless hours in meetings and in the community supporting the academy. Being a board member is a challenging role, an important role, which monitors the fiscal health of the academy, focuses on student growth and achievement, and makes decisions that move the academy forward.

The CSO benefits every day from the dedicated time, skills and talents board members devote to what is best for all students. Even though it's school board recognition month, we recognize your contributions reflect a year-long commitment. We are truly fortunate to have such conscientious and dedicated community members guiding and supporting your academy.

Thank you for your leadership, service, and continued commitment to ensure the children in your community receive the education they deserve!

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

Best Wishes for a  
Happy, Healthy, and  
Prosperous 2024!

## **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

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## Contact Us

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Website**



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