

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE



September-October 2025

News and Updates

September 12, 2025



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.

Messages from our Director

Welcome to a new year with the

Ferris State University Charter Schools Office!

We're excited to continue building on the continuous improvement approach to charter authorization that we launched last year. Our team is updating practices to align with national standards, address new legal and compliance requirements, and prepare for our upcoming Cognia accreditation process.

Recently, the CSO team engaged in strategic planning and revised our mission statement to more clearly reflect our refined approach:



Chris Loiselle

Director of the Charter
Schools Office
chrisloiselle@ferris.edu
Cell: (616) 591-7825
Office: (231) 591-5907

“The Ferris State University Charter Schools Office provides quality oversight and support by focusing on the four pillars of academics, finances, operations, and governance/compliance.”

We are committed to supporting all of our academies—especially those facing challenges. Our approach centers on evaluating performance in the four pillars, identifying areas of concern, providing meaningful support, and maintaining transparency. At the same time, we continue to refine our practices to align with national best practices and evolving legal standards.

We look forward to the year ahead and are excited to continue strengthening our authorizing approach. Thank you for being part of this important work!



Safety and Security



Extra-Curricular
Activities



Staff PD



Other

2025-2026 Competitive Grants

The CSO is pleased to announce that all FSU-authorized academies are eligible to apply for a competitive grant of up to \$20,000 for the 2025–26 academic year. A total of \$400,000 has been allocated for this year's grant program.

Grants may be used in one of four areas (“buckets”):

- Safety and Security

- Extracurricular Activities
- Staff Professional Development
- Other – projects that do not fit into the categories above

To apply, academies must complete the CSO Competitive Grant Request Application, which includes a project description, anticipated costs, and a clear rationale. Grant requests may be made for any amount up to, but not exceeding, \$20,000.

Please note:

- Funds must be used for specific projects not covered by the Academy's general fund.
- Grants are not intended to replace general budget dollars, but rather to support initiatives that the Academy would not otherwise be able to fund.
- Projects must directly benefit academy students and/or staff.

[More Information](#)

[Application](#)

Michigan Charter School Symposium

Registration for the 2025 Michigan Charter Schools Symposium is now open. Secure your spot today and join this transformative event. Participants will have the opportunity to explore innovative strategies, share success stories, and collaborate to shape the future of charter education in Michigan.

The 2025 Symposium will be on December 10-11 2025, at the Detroit Marriott Troy. This premier event will gather over 450 influential attendees, including charter school leaders, management company executives, and authorizers, all focused on advancing the charter school movement.

[Register Now](#)

Messages from our School Support Specialist

Professional Development Catalog

Welcome to the new school year! ☐ Our 2025-2026 professional development catalog is now live, and registration is open for all sessions. Be sure to sign up before deadlines close.

We hope you find offerings that inspire and support your leadership.



Beth Taylor

Have questions or ideas for next year's catalog? Send them to Beth Taylor (BethTaylor@ferris.edu) —we'd love your input!

School Support Specialist
bethtaylor@ferris.edu
Office: (231) 591-5805

Professional Development Catalog

Testing and Survey Windows

The Ferris CSO will continue to support NWEA Testing for all academies and Panorama Surveys for those academies that registered last spring. Ferris will continue to provide consortium pricing and cover the cost of professional development.

NWEA: 2025-2026 Academic Year

Testing window dates are as follows:

- **ALL:** August 18, 2025, to October 10, 2025 (8 weeks)
- **WINTER:** December 8, 2025, to February 13, 2026 (10 weeks)
- **SPRING:** April 13, 2026, to June 12, 2026 (9 weeks)

There is a student participation goal of 95% or higher for grades 2-8. It is optional for students enrolled in grades K-1 and 9-12 but is **strongly encouraged**. All questions should be directed to Beth Taylor (BethTaylor@ferris.edu).

NWEA Contractual Goals

Panorama Surveys 2025-2026

Survey Windows:

- **Fall:** September 22, 2025 - October 17, 2025
- **Winter:** February 2, 2026 - February 27, 2026
- **Spring:** May 4, 2026 – May 29, 2026

Survey's Available:

- School-Level Climate, Rigorous Expectations & Mindset
- Social-Emotional Learning Survey (Individual Student)

Finalized Rosters to Ferris CSO:*

- **Fall:** September 8, 2025
- **Winter:** January 19, 2026
- **Spring:** April 20, 2026

**(The CSO will send you a reminder email with directions before the required submission date)*

We look forward to each academy reaching the goal of 95% of students being surveyed.

Messages from our Compliance & Governance Specialist

Virtual Board Professional Development Opportunities

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.



Sharon Hopper
Compliance & Governance
Specialist
sharonhopper@ferris.edu
Office: (231) 591-5804

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 Opportunities

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.

[**Click Here for Session Information and Registration Link**](#)

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

The Ferris State University Charter Schools Office provides quality oversight and support by focusing on the four pillars of academics, finances, operations, and governance/compliance.

Core Values

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



Contact Us

Ferris State University
Charter Schools Office
1020 Maple Street
Big Rapids, MI 49307
(231) 591-5802

[Visit our Website](#)

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