

From the Director's Desk...



Ronald S. Rizzo, Ph.D.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Well, it's happened again, the Holidays are upon us! All of us at the Charter Schools Office (CSO) would like to take this opportunity to wish each of you a very Happy Holiday Season and a prosperous New Year.

As I'm sure it's true for all of you, this has been a busy fall, and the time seems to have flown by. In a very real sense, it seems like just a few short weeks ago when we were welcoming students and staff back to school. Once we return from the Holidays, we will be just a few short weeks from the halfway point in the school year!

As your Authorizer, we have been working continuously to improve our oversight practices and to become a resource for all of our Ferris State University (FSU) authorized academies. Consistent with our mission statement, we are committed to continuous quality improvement and to offering quality professional learning opportunities for each FSU authorized academy. We look forward to telling you about some of our work at the 15th Annual Spring Briefing in March.

We all have much work ahead of us, yet I hope everyone will have a chance this season to spend some time with family and friends, and catch a little R & R during the Holiday break. We look forward to seeing you soon in the New Year!

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'R. S. Rizzo'.

Dr. Ronald S. Rizzo
Director of Charter Schools



Greetings from the Associate Director



Ron Schneider
Associate Director

Greetings! I hope your Holiday Season is off to a great start!

I wanted to do a quick update on Michigan's mandated assessments for Spring 2017. It is important that you subscribe to the Michigan Department of Education's (MDE) Assessment and Accountability **Spotlight Newsletter**. In addition, you should be able to utilize the Assessment & Accountability Website for more detailed information, curricular crosswalks, reports, and links. All MDE websites are accessed via the www.michigan.gov/mde address.

The required Spring 2017 Summative Assessments are as follows:

- **Early Literacy and Mathematics Benchmark Assessments-** (no high stakes accountability planned)- grades K-2- were operational in the Fall and will be available in the Spring- ELA and Math (if you use the MDE assessments the total testing time is from 2.5 – 3 hours)
- **M-STEP ELA-** (computer-adaptive (CAT)) grades 3-8 plus a Performance Task (PT) in grades 5 and 8
- **M-STEP Math-** (CAT) grades 3-8 plus PT in each grade 3-8
- **M-STEP Science-** grades 4 and 7- online assessments
- **M-STEP Social Studies-** grades 5 and 8- online assessments

Here are approximate testing times for the **M-STEP grades 3-8:**

Grade	Estimated Time for all Subjects	Grade	Estimated Time for all Subjects
3 rd	4 hours	6 th	4 hours and 30 minutes
4 th	5 hours and 40 minutes	7 th	6 hours and 10 minutes
5 th	7 hours and 40 minutes	8 th	8 hours and 10 minutes

- **Michigan Merit Exam (MME)-** grade 11- **SAT with Essay** (paper/pencil about 4.5 hours)- Reading, Writing/Language, Math with calculator, Math without calculator, and Essay Section
- **ACT WorkKeys-** (paper/pencil about 2.5 hours)- grade 11- Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics, and Locating Information
- **MME M-STEP-** (online assessment about 50 minutes)- grade 11- **Science**
- **MME M-STEP-** (online assessment about 50 minutes)- grade 11- **Social Studies**

-continued-

Questions?

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- **MI-Access Functional Independence (FI)**- grades 3-8 and 11- ELA- Expressing Ideas (paper/pencil), Accessing Print and Using Language, Math, Science, and Social Studies (all online assessments)
- **MI-Access Supported Independence (SI) & Participation (P)**- grades 3-8 and 11- ELA, Math, and Science (paper/pencil with online answer documents)
- **WIDA ACCESS**- identified English Learners (EL) grades 1-12 (limited administration for kindergarten)- Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing
- **PSAT**- I have had several educators ask me if the PSAT 8/9 and 10 are mandated (required). At this time, to the best of my knowledge, the State "expects" all 9th and 10th grade students to take a PSAT assessment BUT, it is NOT part of the State of Michigan's accountability system for 2017. Ferris State University (FSU) charter schools must administer the PSAT tests to all 9th and 10th grade students in Reading, Writing/Language, and Math (both sections) unless they have made other arrangements with our office. The PSAT (paper/pencil) takes about 3 hours to complete.

The M-STEP testing window for Spring 2017 begins on April 10th and ends on May 26th and is broken into **two, four-week windows (grades 5, 8, 11 and 3, 4, 6, and 7)**. WIDA ACCESS begins February 6th and ends on March 24th and MI-Access runs from April 10th until May 26th. You can access the complete schedule and get additional information by downloading the 2016-17 Guide to State Assessments from the Assessment and Accountability website (www.michigan.gov/mde and then select Student Assessment on the left side of the screen).

The time to prepare your students for this year's State of Michigan assessments is NOW. You also should be making your local plans for the administration process NOW. Remember technology needs, staff updates, connected classroom test prep activities, testing rooms, proctors, ordering procedures, student accommodations, parental information plans, snacks, etc. Contact your ISD or the MDE if you have questions or concerns. Feel free to contact us at the FSU Charter Schools Office and we will help get you the information you need!

Ron Schneider
Associate Director of Charter Schools



Assessment News

NWEA©MAP©

Your academy's Fall Assessment Summary was sent to your board president, school leader, and field representative on October 31st. This summary showed your 2016 Fall Average RIT score for each grade level compared to your 2015 Fall Average, and the Fall NWEA© norm. If you have any questions concerning the information or would like a copy of the report, please do not hesitate to contact me. The Spring NWEA© norm is what we are currently recommending to refer to in terms of academic achievement for the 2016-2017 Educational Goal Policy. The growth metric (student conditional growth percentile at or above the 50th percentile) will continue to be the same.

Reports update: The student profile report is undergoing some huge changes on the NWEA© MARC site. These changes will make navigating the learning continuum and finding specific areas of growth for each student much easier for teachers. Find an example student profile report here: [Student Profile Report](#)

Professional Development

Thanks to all of you who attended the NWEA Focusing on Growth Workshops. We will be offering another NWEA Workshop at the end of the school year—focusing on formative assessment and differentiated instruction. This will be held in June following the 2016-2017 school year.

A few of you have been taking advantage of our partnership with Grand Valley State University, but we would love to see more of you participating in these workshops! They are all high quality and are offered in both Grand Rapids and Detroit—so travel is not an issue. They offer many things, including official NWEA MAP training! To see what they offer, follow this link: <http://www.gvsu.edu/cso/professional-development-11.htm>. There is also a downloadable brochure available on the site; a copy of the brochure was mailed to each academy earlier this year. Remember that the registration costs are covered by the Ferris State University Charter Schools Office (FSU-CSO)!

Student Tracker Update:

If your academy serves high school students, you should identify a Student Tracker contact and give to Charissa ASAP. This person will be responsible for gathering information about your graduating students and submitting it to the FSU-CSO via Epicenter. The CSO will then take care of sending the information on to the National Student Clearinghouse and facilitating the creation of reports. If you have any specific information and/or reports you would like to see, please let Charissa know.

Early Literacy Information

As part of my continued participation in my local ISD Curriculum Task Force, I have access to many of the resources that are produced through the General Education Leadership Network (GELN). This is a network comprised of representatives from most ISD/RESA's in the State of Michigan. If you do not know who your

local GELN representative is, I would strongly recommend reaching out and discovering who that may be in your ISD. The GELN was a key player in the reading legislation and is a valuable resource for educational evaluation, school leadership, and SAT resources. You can investigate the organization here:

[General Education Leadership Network](#).

The GELN Early Literacy Task Force has recently completed a white paper on [Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy \(K-3\)](#). This paper identifies instructional practice that is research supported and has demonstrated positive improvement in literacy development. These practices could become a foundation for professional development or strategies in your school improvement plans and/or PLC meetings as you work towards having a systematic approach to having all children reading by the 3rd grade. There is also a white paper identifying practices for pre-kindergarten students here:

[Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy Prekindergarten](#).

Dates to Note:

- January 9-February 3: NWEA MAP Winter Window
- ****NEW****: February 16—Literacy Tools: A Make It Take It Workshop facilitated by Amy Kavanaugh and Kristin Conley. Ferris State University Campus

Resources:

- Academic Assessment Website: <https://sites.google.com/site/fsucsoaa/>
- NWEA RIT to Resource: <http://rittoresource.org/>
 - This site allows you to search by goal area with a specific RIT band/score or grade level and find aligned internet based resources and activities.
 - Teacher note: **PREVIEW first before having students use this resource by themselves.**
 - I had better luck searching by RIT band rather than grade level when testing this for math content. I suspect that this resource will grow as time goes by.
- Khan Academy Practice Links
 - This [link](#) will get you to PDFs that contain links to Khan Academy Practice Exercises. I am working on a way to get the documents into an easily accessible location; however, I found when I downloaded the PDF's, the hyperlink of the resource went away.
- Teachers pay Teachers & Pinterest
There are thousands of MAP-correlated resources out there on these crowdsourced sites. Just remember to make sure the content matches your learning target, and that the activity truly matches that target.
- [NWEA RIT to College Explorer](#)
This website allows a student to enter their RIT score at different seasons and see what college acceptance rates are. Similarly, students can look at their top college choices and see how their RIT compares to their enrollment as well as their ACT score.

Save the Date!

15th Annual Spring Briefing



The Charter Schools Office will host its 15th Annual Spring Briefing on March 21, 2017, at the DoubleTree Hotel Detroit-Dearborn. School Leaders, Curriculum Directors, Assessment Coordinators, Board members, and management company representatives will receive information early in the new year.

Contract Performance Reports



Our Field Representatives are delivering the newly completed Contract Performance Reports (CPRs). The CPRs replace the former Academic Achievement Reports and contain comprehensive information on vital contractual areas such as governance, compliance, and finance, as well as student academic achievement. Field Representatives will be delivering the reports to the Academy Boards of Directors in November and December.

The reports can also be accessed on the CSO website: www.ferris.edu/charterschools.

Charter Schools Office and the School of Education Fall Bus Tour



The staff of the Ferris State University (FSU) Charter Schools Office and the School of Education recently collaborated on a two-day bus tour of several FSU authorized academies. We wish to thank the administration and staff from the following academies for their hospitality and the great conversation with all tour participants:

Creative Technologies Academy, Battle Creek Montessori Academy, Michigan Connections Academy, Northridge Academy, Voyageur Academy, Hope of Detroit Academy, and Bridge Academy.



Compliance Awards – Congratulations!



Creative Technologies Academy

Each year the CSO recognizes those academies and their boards who achieve 100% compliance in submitting documents to Epicenter as required by federal and state law and the charter contract. This is not an easy task, since compliance can entail hundreds of required documents, but it's a very important one.

Congratulations to those academies and boards who achieved 100% compliance in 2015-2016 as follows:

- Benton Harbor Charter School Academy (2nd consecutive year)
- Bridge Academy (4th consecutive year)
- Clara B. Ford Academy
- Conner Creek Academy East (3rd consecutive year)
- Creative Technologies Academy (15th consecutive year)
- Huron Academy (15th consecutive year)
- Joy Preparatory Academy
- Muskegon Montessori Academy for Environmental Change (2nd consecutive year)
- New Bedford Academy (7th consecutive year)
- Northridge Academy

CSO field representatives presented compliance award plaques to these academies this fall. Keep up the great work!



Congratulations!

Creative Technologies Academy
and
Huron Academy
for
100% Compliance for
15 Consecutive Years



Bridge Academy

Our Mission

FSU 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.

CSO Mission

The Ferris State University Charter Schools Office focuses on student success and continuous improvement through quality oversight, professional learning opportunities, and relevant resources for its authorized public school academies.

Ferris State University Charter Schools Office



Happy Holidays!

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