

Report: Reauthorization Review Visitation
Academy: Battle Creek Montessori Academy (BCMA)
Date: November 1-2, 2017

The visitation occurred at the Battle Creek Montessori Academy Campus with three members on the Ferris State University Charter Schools Office (CSO) visitation team. The team had the opportunity to meet with and interview the school leadership team, two school board members and the School Improvement Team. The team was able to tour the facility and visit several classrooms to observe teaching and learning. We appreciate the open communication and transparency that was apparent with everyone we interacted with.

Visitation Findings

School Improvement Plan (SIP) and EdYes! School Systems Review	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<p>School Improvement Plan (SIP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fountas and Pinnell training has been implemented resulting in a universal diagnostic tool to determine student reading levels. This results in intervention as needed. Example- through this process, it was discovered that reading comprehension is a school wide area of weakness. This also showed up as a concern in math. Interventions have been put in place. The PLC process has been restarted and is being implemented with rigor after training took place. Teachers are fully aware of the SIP and what is required for implementation. 	<p>School Improvement Plan (SIP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider improving efforts to identify specific processes/practices to address weaknesses that can be implemented with consistency across programs and grade levels. Consider a deeper data dive to determine how to best address math achievement needs.

<p>Ed Yes! School Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report identifies 21 standards/indicators that are partially implemented. • Evidences listed were provided for the review team. • The required lesson plan template that is stated as an evidence appears to have been implemented with fidelity. 	<p>Ed Yes! School Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to develop these partially implemented standards/indicators into full implementation status. • Review within each standard/indicator which evidences are not in place and determine which ones may be helpful to put into practice that will benefit the Academy vision, mission and core values.
<p><u>Facilities Review</u></p>	
<p>Observations</p>	<p>Opportunities for Growth</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The facility is well cared for and is conducive to the learning environment. • The bathroom additions are in place and very near completion. • The addition of the lobby area by the office is a helpful improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue your efforts to provide better classroom partitions.
<p><u>Academy Culture Review</u></p>	
<p>Observations</p>	<p>Opportunities for Growth</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive teacher-student and staff-staff relationships were observed. • A family atmosphere is very apparent. This was mentioned by each group interviewed as a strength. • The staffing levels are adequate for the current student enrollment. • Students were engaged and respectful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue your efforts to maintain your positive culture as your enrollment grows.
<p><u>Mission Accomplishment</u></p>	
<p>Observations</p>	<p>Opportunities for Growth</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone appears to have a clear understanding that becoming a school of choice in your community is the expectation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None at this time.

<u>Website</u>	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The website appears to be up to date, informative, user friendly, and a good marketing tool. We were informed that the web site will have a makeover soon for improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to keep your site up dated as needed.

Academy Internal Review

<u>Student Outcomes</u>	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school leadership believes that the students are making good academic growth. However, student performance data indicates they are not at the proficiency/achievement levels they want to be at yet. The required universal lesson plan template has been implemented and should be helpful in addressing student deficiencies. A comprehensive effort is being made to align enacted/implemented curriculum with NWEA and M-Step expectations. Teachers are using “Thinking Maps” to address deficiencies in reading and math. The Character Education program is resulting in very good student behavior. The behavior expectations are well displayed. Efforts to improve student attendance is resulting in higher attendance rates. There is a strong effort to use data with staff to drive better instruction. Two intervention programs, afterschool tutoring for identified Tier 2 students and work during the school day with a reading interventionists for identified Tier 3 students, are providing needed help for the students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to implement interventions with intentional expectations. Work to ensure this is done with fidelity. Continue your efforts to close the student demonstrated skill/knowledge gap. That gap reduction is essential for your school to be recognized as the best in the community. It also should provide an opportunity for your staff to be leaders in effective education.

<u>Governance and Leadership</u>	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your board appears to have a clear understanding of their role. Your board appears to be very engaged. Your board is committed to high student achievement. Your board is fully aware of your mission and vision. Your board has worked effectively to get the academy finances in order. Your board has developed and implemented a written strategic plan. 	<p>The Board should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide strong support to meet the academy's vision.
<u>Resources and Support Systems</u>	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ESP staff has a clear understanding of their role and work well with the board. The school leader and the ESP staff have worked to balance the budget and are clear of their intention to make all expenditures purposeful. The school leader and the ESP staff have worked effectively to procure additional funding to meet student needs. The ESP staff is using social media to encourage additional enrollment. There appears to be a very balanced communication process in place. Effective partnerships have been developed with the local Intermediate School District and the Choice Schools team. The school leader and ESP staff have worked to implement a process to improve and ensure teacher effectiveness. There is an overall effort to develop a productive balance between the Montessori Model of student driven learning with the standardization needed to meet accountability standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue your efforts to ensure that there are adequate finances to provide the desired robust educational program.

CSO Review of Overall Performance for Battle Creek Montessori Academy

<u>Contract Performance Report Review</u>	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAP growth targets met on 4/8 measures • MSTEP growth is above 40% - averages are 49% in ELA and 53% in math • Excellent 3rd grade MSTEP scores last year • Overall Compliance is at 100% • 0 Board vacancies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAP Spring Achievement Percentiles, while improving slightly, remain low • MSTEP Proficiency Percentages are 21% for ELA and 11% for math • MSTEP Proficiency Percentages are comparable to their Composite District's but not clearly higher • Low enrollment in some grades • Average Board Attendance is at 66% • Business & Administration costs (35%) is highest in FSU's portfolio

<u>School Support Team (SST) Updates</u>	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCMA moved from a Red designation to Yellow based on their MAP and MSTEP growth • New grade configurations could improve academic performance • Good leadership and supportive Board • Appears to be a good relationship between staff, Board, and ESP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With low grade enrollments they can individualize student's needs and improve their proficiency data on both MAP and MSTEP • Current enrollment in grades 6 and 7 is low

Overall Opportunities for Growth

- Monitor student preparation for State and national assessments (address Targets, skills, retention, practice tests, etc.)
- Stabilize/grow enrollment

Current CSO Expectations in Consideration for Recommendation of Reauthorization. These are subject to change.

For: Battle Creek Montessori Academy

- Meet or exceed FSU CSO's academic measures and goals
- Continue to follow all charter contractual expectations
- The CSO may have other academic and non-academic expectations as more information becomes available. All other contractual and policy standards must be met and maintained.
- Not be named as a low-performing, Partnership, Comprehensive Support, etc. school by the State of Michigan

Signed James K. Scholtes
CSO Visitation Chair

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