

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE

Review Type: Reauthorization Review

Academy Name: Blended Learning Academies

Date(s): October 23 & 24, 2023

The Review occurred at Blended Learning Academies with 3 members on the Ferris State University Charter Schools Office (CSO) Review team. The team had the opportunity to meet with, and interview, multiple stakeholder groups, including the School Leadership Team, Governing Board members, teachers, and parents. The team was able to visit 6 classrooms to observe teaching and learning. The team had a discussion with the building leader focused on current operations. We appreciate the open communication and transparency from the academy team.

Onsite Review Findings

Pillar #1: Academic Progress

- Are classroom interactions cooperative and conducive to learning? Is there a structure approach to managing student behavior throughout the school?
- Do teachers provide clear learning goals leading to purposeful instruction?
- Are a variety of instructional strategies materials used to meet diverse needs?
- Is the learning environment structured and time maximized for learning? Do leaders and teachers share the responsibility for creating a learning environment that supports all students?
- Are students given the opportunity to develop higher order thinking skills?
- Has the school identified growth initiatives that appropriately address the needs of their student population?
- Does the school prioritize continuous improvement and monitor progress toward goals?
- Is there evidence of a positive school climate focused on student learning?

Areas of Strength	Opportunities for Growth
• All staff have strong relationships with students. • All teachers are flexible and adaptive. • Students are allowed to work independently at their own pace. • Teachers adapt curriculum to match students' needs. • Discipline is individualized. • SEL is part of the curriculum. • Teachers use a variety of methods to assess student learning. • Teachers allow for unlimited attempts on quizzes. • Parents expressed high satisfaction with how their students are being supported both academically and behaviorally.	• Continue your process of improving/updating your curriculum. • Continue to make discipline "restorative rather than punitive." • Continue to find ways to help every student cope. • Continue to look for ways to improve parent engagement. • Continue your efforts to increase the student graduation rate.

• Students have opportunities to attend clubs, field trips. • Livonia campus serves 24 students.	
Pillar #2: Fiscal Solvency ○ Does the academy demonstrate fiscal responsibility, responsiveness, and sustainability?	
Areas of Strength	Opportunities for Growth
• The Academy has a very strong budget with a solid fund equity. • The budget is projected to continue to be solid because the enrollment is stable. • The budget has allowed for the adding of a facility in Livonia. • The strong budget has allowed for very good compensation packages for their employees – they have 8 full time certified teachers and 1 full time sub.	• Continue to develop partnerships with other organizations like Ingham ISD that can help to meet student needs with shared financial cost. • Continue to monitor your budget carefully and purposely so that student needs can be met. • Continue to make improvements to your building as needed and the budget allows.
Pillar #3: Operations ○ Do school leaders and members of the Board of Directors effectively manage the academy's operations? ○ Are there systems that make the school sustainable, even with teacher or principal turnover?	
Areas of Strength	Opportunities for Growth
• Successfully recruit, hire and retain teachers. • Fully staffed with certified teachers. • Provide 100% medical, dental, vision, life insurance for all staff. • Have a succession plan in place for school leader. • Provide behavioral health support personnel for students. • Many facility upgrades related to school safety measures. • Annual budget development process seeks input from all staff. • Budget allows for all materials teachers need. • Strategic Plan is written and implemented.	• Review of progress toward Strategic Plan goals. • Update list of possible capital projects. • Maintain staff retention rates.
Pillar #4: Compliance & Governance ○ Does the academy comply with all applicable laws and regulations? ○ Does the academy comply with all contractual obligations as outlined in the charter contract? ○ Does the Board of Directors provide competent stewardship and oversight of the academy?	
Areas of Strength	Opportunities for Growth
• 6th consecutive year of 100% Epicenter on-time compliance. • Built and maintain positive collaborative relationship with CSO regarding compliance. • Maintains a 7-member board.	• Continue to maintain 100% Epicenter on-time compliance. • ESP and FSU partnership on new board member orientation. • Utilize board self-assessment tool. • Review of progress toward strategic plan goals.

- Board has positive collaborative relationship with ESP.
- Board makeup is professionally diverse.
- Board contracts with governance expert, who attends board meetings and facilitates board development and strategic planning sessions.

2022-2023 Contract Performance Report Review

Pillar	Areas of Strength	Opportunities for Growth
Pillar #1: Academic Progress	• Information is not available at this time.	• See this pillar under “Onsite Review Findings” for more information.
Pillar #2: Fiscal Solvency	• Enrollment has increased each year. • Has met all 6 key performance indicators: current ratio, change in fund balance, days cash on hand, enrollment change over time, current enrollment and debt-to-asset ratio and therefore, deemed fiscally stable.	• None at this time.
Pillar #3: Operations	• Not in the CPR.	• See this pillar under “Onsite Review Findings” for more information.
Pillar #4: Compliance & Governance	• The CPR indicates 100% compliance history for the last three years. • BLACRHS has a full Board of Directors (7 members). • The Board of Directors met the required professional development credits.	• The Board of Directors should set a goal of 85%+ attendance at regular board meetings.



CSO Review Chair



CSO Director