

**Report:** Reauthorization Review Visitation  
**Academy:** Hope Academy of West Michigan  
**Date:** November 28-29, 2018

The visitation occurred at the Hope Academy of West Michigan (HAWM) with five members on the Ferris State University Charter Schools Office (FSU-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 staff and stakeholder’s open communication and transparency that was apparent during our visit.

## Visitation Findings

School Improvement Process and Results	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school improvement team recognized the former plan was too broad and unmanageable and have since revised it to include 3 major goals which all staff is aware of.</li> <li>• The staff is implementing an RTI/MTSS process to provide support for Tier 2 and 3 students and using data to determine who should receive interventions.</li> <li>• Teachers are receiving training to implement SIOP effectively to support English Language Learners.</li> <li>• The revised school improvement plan is very well aligned with the Action Plan as well as the Academy Internal Review.</li> <li>• The team understood that content vocabulary which is in the plan is key to their student’s success and it was observed when the team visited a variety of classrooms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to insure that content objectives and vocabulary are based on the standardized tests the students will take.</li> <li>• Continue to review data to determine the best pathway to increase your M-STEP/SAT results.</li> <li>• Continue the effort of measuring the success of the variety of interventions being implemented and adjust them accordingly as needed.</li> <li>• Continue to expand the PBIS Champs process throughout the building to provide consistency for behavior building wide.</li> <li>• Continue to refine the practice of how not only the content objectives are written but then referred to, multiple times throughout the lesson.</li> <li>• Consider using appropriate test vocabulary as often as possible throughout daily lessons.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers seem to appreciate the help they are receiving from the academic interventionists and para professionals in the school.</li> <li>• The new Reading Street curriculum for the elementary has been well received and the teachers report it has been very helpful.</li> <li>• The secondary staff reported the effort of helping students become more organized as part of the SIP has been very successful and helpful to their students.</li> </ul>	
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**Facilities Review**

Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The building is well kept and they are making good use of the space available to them.</li> <li>• The leadership is well aware that the building is full and have looked at multiple ways to expand (portable, additional space in neighboring building).</li> <li>• The building is safe and locked during the school day requiring visitors to be buzzed in.</li> <li>• The building recently added air conditioning in all rooms.</li> <li>• There is a very noticeable respect and pride the staff and students have for the building by observing how well kept it is during the school day.</li> <li>• The school recently installed a new gym floor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to evaluate your building needs as your population grows.</li> <li>• Continue efforts to provide technology to all classrooms and students throughout the building.</li> </ul>

**Academy Culture Review**

Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The culture of the school is “family” oriented as evidenced during multiple interviews.</li> <li>• There is a focus on the importance of building positive relationships with all of the students in order to find success in the classroom, which was evidenced in our classroom visits.</li> <li>• While academics is a priority, the school also finds it important to focus on the whole child and their unique needs they bring into the school.</li> <li>• The school leadership has tried to find creative ways to celebrate their teachers through activities like teacher of the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to grow the Individual Learning Plans for students.</li> <li>• Continue to grow PBIS in the building providing for more consistency.</li> <li>• Continue efforts to engage parents in their child’s education.</li> </ul>

<p>month, hand written thank you notes after visiting the classroom, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an effort to engage parents in the education of their children at HAWM. One example is meeting with community parents with a group called “Baby Scholars” to help parents with parenting their kids ages 2-4.</li> <li>• The teachers appreciate the opportunities provided to them for additional training.</li> <li>• It is evident the school leaders care about the staff and students at HAWM.</li> <li>• Students were respectful and well behaved.</li> </ul>	
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**Mission Accomplishment**

Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The mission is posted in most classrooms.</li> <li>• The mission is part of the interview process to determine if the new candidate is a good fit for the school.</li> <li>• The school lives their mission by creating a weekly community meeting for all secondary students in effort to make sure the students feel part of the building by being able to provide input and find support among each other.</li> <li>• The school recognizes the importance of creating strong relationships with students as that is vital for the student population the school serves.</li> <li>• Teachers report there is “a lot of heart at Hope”.</li> <li>• The board appeared to be aware and passionate about the mission and it was reported that their agendas are created and based on that mission.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue your community partnerships and engagement to insure the mission of the school remains consistent.</li> </ul>

**Website**

Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website provides the required and necessary information.</li> <li>• The website seems to have expired information and the mission statement on the website is different than in other documents or what is posted in the classrooms.</li> <li>• The school uses other social medial platforms such as Facebook and Instagram to also share information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to review and update the website on a more consistent basis</li> </ul>

- The school uses a remind text resources to communicate with staff along with Spanish and English speaking parents.

## Academy Internal Review

<u>Student Outcomes</u>	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school leaders are aware of the data, both NWEA and M-Step. They are pleased with the growth on the NWEA but recognize they need to work on increasing proficiency on the M-Step.</li> <li>• The school is implementing USA Test- Prep as an intervention for M-Step and SAT.</li> <li>• The school has implemented a balanced calendar to minimize the loss of skills and knowledge during summer break.</li> <li>• The teachers are engaged in data digs along with PLC's.</li> <li>• The school has implemented HAWK time 40 minutes each day to provide reading and/or math interventions to students based on data.</li> <li>• The school has identified the students who are close to proficiency to create interventions to close the gap.</li> <li>• All students have an Individual Development Plan K-12. This looks different in the elementary and secondary but both look at current data scores and then uses goal setting with the students to improve achievement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on M-Step and NWEA scores continue your efforts to work on content vocabulary as they assess the same standards.</li> <li>• Continue to focus on short term interventions for students close to proficiency leading to long term plans.</li> <li>• Insure that SIOP is being implemented with a high level of fidelity and that additional PD is provided to new staff on this strategy.</li> </ul>
<u>Governance and Leadership</u>	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The board members recognize and understand the challenges of the student population they are trying to help.</li> <li>• The board reports having a positive relationship with both the ESP and the school leadership.</li> <li>• The board feels confident that both the ESP and school leadership are transparent and are sharing all of the necessary information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue your work on improving your strategic plan using an outside facilitator to assist in the process.</li> <li>• Continue your efforts in seeking out other schools that work with similar populations with success so to learn how you might better meet HAWM's needs.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The board recognizes the challenge of retaining quality teachers and staff and have expressed that concern to the ESP in hopes this will improve.</li> <li>• The board is well aware of their budget and finances. The budget remains balanced and has a sound fund balance.</li> <li>• The board appreciates the financial assistance of community partners but is well aware of the potential issue this would create with the budget should these financial contributions stop.</li> <li>• The board is very cautious about where monies are spent understanding the need to maintain a balanced budget.</li> <li>• The board has a current strategic plan and is taking an initiative to revisit the plan in effort to improve it.</li> <li>• The board is looking at viable ways to hold the management company accountable to the strategic plan as it is rewritten.</li> <li>• The board recognized the need in finding a facilitator to assist with the strategic plan.</li> <li>• The board and its members seem very knowledgeable and aware of the unique student population they are working with.</li> </ul>	
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**Resources and Support Systems**

Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ESP works well with the board to develop a balanced budget and provides current and transparent information.</li> <li>• The ESP has worked with local universities to provide alternative certifications to help develop and retain teachers.</li> <li>• The ESP and the board continually look for external resources to meet the needs of the academy outside of the normal avenues.</li> <li>• The school leadership team has been restructured, which now includes a bilingual Assistant Principal and a Dean of Academics.</li> <li>• The ESP recognizes the need for retaining teachers and are looking at creative ways to grow and keep them.</li> <li>• The ESP and school leadership provide the teachers a variety of professional learning experiences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to the specific needs of the student population of Hope Academy of West Michigan and Lighthouse Academy, as well as the difference in accountability for both schools, continue to consider these differences when determining the appropriate and needed PD for each school.</li> <li>• Continue to review how to meet the needs of your current enrollment as it relates to building space.</li> <li>• Continue to look for ways to work with community agencies to meet the needs of your community families.</li> </ul>

## Contract Performance Report Review

Observations (2017-18 data)	Opportunities for Growth (2017-18 data)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fantastic MAP growth (exceeds 50th percentile in all areas)!</li> <li>• Stable enrollment.</li> <li>• 50% of students attend 3+ years.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAP Achievement (goal is 50<sup>th</sup> percentile) was at 37<sup>th</sup> for Reading and 32<sup>nd</sup> for Math.</li> <li>• MSTEP average Proficiency Percentages (9% for ELA and 5% for Math) were below Composite and State Averages.</li> <li>• Special education certifications are at 7%. That seems low.</li> <li>• Targeted Support for Improvement (2016-17 Index) for Hispanic scores</li> <li>• Overall MDE Index score was 39- too low.</li> </ul>

## School Support Team (SST) and Field Representative (FR) Updates

Observations (2018-19 data)	Opportunities for Growth (2018-19 data)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Red SST Designated School.</li> <li>• MAP Growth has not been a problem.</li> <li>• MSTEP Proficiency Percentages remain well below Resident District</li> <li>• No financial, facility, compliance, or leadership concerns from SST or FR.</li> <li>• Sometimes it appears there are so many initiatives it must be hard to focus and achieve success in the most important areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximize preparation and procedures for Balanced Calendar (calendar needs to allow times for additional focused interventions).</li> <li>• MSTEP Proficiency Percentages remain below State Averages.</li> <li>• MSTEP Math and ELA growth (Student Growth Percentile average) remain low- 45% for ELA and 49% for Math- must translate MAP growth into MSTEP growth.</li> <li>• Some staff left after school started- added challenges!</li> </ul>

### Overall Opportunities for Growth

- MSTEP Proficiency.
- New principal and planning for new Balanced Calendar.
- Get to that 50<sup>th</sup> percentile of MAP achievement in Math and Reading.

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

#### **For Hope Academy of West Michigan:**

- 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.
- Keep your MDE Accountability Index Score above the bottom 5% in the State.
- Eliminate Targeted Support for Improvement status with MDE.

Signed James K. Scholten  
CSO Visitation Chair

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