

**Report:** Reauthorization Review Visitation  
**Academy:** Lighthouse Academy  
**Date:** November 29-30, 2017

The visitation occurred at the Lighthouse Academy (LA) with four 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 three of the facilities and visit several classrooms to observe teaching and learning. We appreciate the open communication and transparency that was apparent with all of our interactions.

## Visitation Findings

<u>School Improvement Plan (SIP) and EdYes! School Systems Review</u>	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<p><b>School Improvement Plan (SIP)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All buildings have a school improvement plan where they have agreed to work collectively on three shared goals (standards-based grading, MTSS, and retaining quality staffing) while also adding goals customized to their own unique setting/population.</li> <li>• System wide protocols are aligned with the SIP (PLC Process, Intervention Systems, MTSS, etc.).</li> <li>• The School Improvement Team collaborates effectively and shows the willingness to share best practices amongst staff, both within and across buildings.</li> <li>• There is career planning in place for students in buildings where applicable.</li> </ul>	<p><b>School Improvement Plan (SIP)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware of details, such as dates, in the SIP and/or identify completion in updated progress notes.</li> <li>• Look for opportunities to support the PBIS process by finding financial support for the student stores other than out of teachers' pockets.</li> <li>• Continue efforts to insure that the Responsible Thinking Advocate (RTA) process is implemented in every classroom with fidelity.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts at LA North to address the English Language Learners seems to be working well, including the strategies of immersion and SIOP training (which has also been provided to staff in other buildings).</li> <li>• Through the MTSS process, each school has employed a Responsible Thinking Advocate to meet the needs of the whole child while also advocating with the local community.</li> <li>• Staff has indicated the PBIS program is working well with noticeable student behavioral/academic improvement.</li> <li>• In relation to staffing, the staff indicated they work very hard to create a positive and supportive work culture to assist in retaining quality teachers and appreciate the current support they are receiving from the HR department.</li> <li>• The development and implementation of the curriculum maps and pacing guides are helpful to the development of the standards-based grading process.</li> </ul> <p><b>EdYes! School Systems</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is sufficient documentation to clearly support all evidences in this report.</li> </ul>	<p><b>EdYes! School Systems</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider identifying/creating a universal process the school leaders would use in every classroom during a walkthrough. Would it be beneficial to establish “must-do’s” and/or non-negotiables” in every classroom in each campus?</li> </ul>
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**Facilities Review**

Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The facilities were safe, secure and well maintained.</li> <li>• PBIS is posted in every building.</li> <li>• Student work and/or artwork is prominently displayed in every building.</li> <li>• Great pride was evident from staff in how the setting and surroundings are beautified for those students living on campus providing a “homey” feel.</li> <li>• Current facilities provide adequate space for current population.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue efforts to plan for expansion that may be coming due to recent legislation or need.</li> </ul>

## Academy Culture Review

Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Total dedication by the staff to teach students to be productive citizens.</li><li>• Evidence that a priority is placed on safety and comfort in the learning environment.</li><li>• Sense of strong staff support and care for each other, especially when under stressful situations.</li><li>• Staff is encouraged to try new things if in the best interest of students without worrying about failure.</li><li>• Strong evidence and commitment by staff to work with at-risk students who come into their programs with a variety of needs.</li><li>• There is a clear understanding that their program is not always the right fit for every student and the district's priority is to make sure each student gets an education wherever that might be.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue efforts to be selective in the hiring process to recruit staff committed to work with the unique populations within the district</li><li>• Continue to partner with the Kent ISD and other community agencies to provide additional supports for the staff and students within the district.</li><li>• Continue to “think outside of the box” as it relates to programming that might potentially increase student enrollment.</li></ul>

## Mission Accomplishment

Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Very evident that all staff from the board, to school leadership to staff understand the mission and is why they are here every day.</li><li>• The staff believes they are a safe haven for students providing more than just an education but also provisions to survive (i.e. clothes, food and safety).</li><li>• Student management procedures are a direct reflection of the mission.</li><li>• There is an understanding that there needs to be progress but it is more often a marathon, not a sprint.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to provide a nurturing and empathetic learning environment.</li><li>• Continue the processes to review the mission on a regular basis to insure it is still applicable and relevant to what you are doing.</li></ul>

<u>Website</u>	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The website provides necessary information describing the Academy's mission and services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make sure information is updated on a timely basis.</li> <li>Consider using the website as a tool for marketing the variety of programs offered throughout the district.</li> <li>Consider adding more student accomplishments/achievements on the website.</li> </ul>

## Academy Internal Review

<u>Student Outcomes</u>	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School leadership and staff are fully aware of their student progress as it relates to Ferris State's student achievement contractual goals.</li> <li>The school has placed an emphasis on using the CAFAS (Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale).</li> <li>Staff recognizes that student growth and achievement is difficult due to the length of enrollment in of students within the various programs.</li> <li>School leadership appreciates the flexibility amongst staff to try new strategies and share successful strategies with each other in effort to improve student academic growth.</li> <li>Staff creates and implements individual/student learning plans to meet the needs of the students as they enter their respective programs.</li> <li>School leadership and staff are pleased with the increased number of graduates they are seeing at each individual site.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue efforts to look for ways to effectively calibrate the CAFAS results and then to train staff to use the data from the assessment.</li> <li>Continue to work on implementing the standards-based grading so data can be gathered on student growth for those staying for shorter periods of time within the program.</li> <li>Continue use of motivational visual aids that influence student achievement and are focused on the goal of graduation.</li> </ul>

<u>Governance and Leadership</u>	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board is fully aware of the roles of the ESP and the Board and believe there is transparency between the two groups.</li> <li>• The board members are here specifically due to the mission of the district.</li> <li>• The board has developed a system to hear the student academic progress from every site. This is done by hearing the progress from one site each month.</li> <li>• The board is very conscious of meeting Ferris State’s expectations.</li> <li>• The board appreciates the guidance and support they receive from Kacie, Leslie and Heidi.</li> <li>• Board is meeting their professional development requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider consulting the National Charter School Institute for helpful resources.</li> <li>• Continue to ask probing questions.</li> </ul>
<u>Resources and Support Systems</u>	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RTA’s have done a good job building relationships and understanding community associations within the area to build an accepting atmosphere with their student populations.</li> <li>• Management company is providing quality staff and training for staff.</li> <li>• The management company has partnered with Davenport to provide pathways to alternative teacher certification.</li> <li>• Adequate technology and online learning opportunities are available for students.</li> <li>• Opportunities are provided to students to become career ready through the completion of EDPs and Career Cruising at the sites where it is appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue working with community resources and businesses to cultivate career exploration and workplace experiences and opportunities for students.</li> <li>• Work to provide fair distribution of support staff across buildings to meet student needs that will potentially provide for more student success.</li> <li>• Continue to work with the Board of Education to adequately support student needs.</li> <li>• Consider marketing strategies to let local districts know what you do for troubled students.</li> </ul>

## CSO Review of Overall Performance for Lighthouse Academy

<u>Contract Performance Report Review</u>	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enrollment has ranged from 312-369 over the last 5 years (counting 2017-18 as the 5<sup>th</sup> year)</li> <li>Special education was at 26% last year (understandable at an SDA)</li> <li>MAP growth for students in grades 8-10 was excellent (School Conditional Growth ranged from 73-94% in Reading and 89-99% in Math)</li> <li>2016-17 average total SAT score was 811- not the lowest score in our portfolio and up from 763 in 2015-16. Different students but still encouraging.</li> <li>Compliance was at 100% for 2016-17</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MAP Spring Achievement Percentiles remain low</li> <li>MSTEP Proficiency Percentages are 1% for ELA and math</li> </ul>
<u>School Support Team (SST) Updates</u>	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accurate and sustained standardized assessment data is limited - 87% of students were enrolled for two or less years at Lighthouse</li> <li>Fund balance grew by 15% last year</li> <li>Revenues increased significantly last year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achievement and Proficiency data</li> <li>Continue to attack their unique CSO goals- increasing pro-social skills, progress with Student Learning Plans, decreasing referrals to the Responsible Thinking Centers, and demonstrating significant gains for students who complete two consecutive MAP tests</li> </ul>

### Overall Opportunities for Growth

- Meeting the needs of students in challenging situations
- Expanding experiences for their students

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

**For: Lighthouse Academy**

- Meet or exceed Lighthouse’s unique 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.
- Must submit their annual report into Epicenter by June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year

Signed James K. Scholten  
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