

Report: Mid Contract Review
Academy: New Bedford Academy
Date: 12/03/2021

The Mid Contract Review occurred virtually with New Bedford Academy with three members on the Ferris State University Charter Schools Office (CSO) Review team. The team had the opportunity to meet with and interviewed the School Leadership Team and two board members. The team had a discussion with the building leader focused on current operations and instruction. We appreciate the open communication and transparency from the academy team.

Visitation Findings

School Improvement (both MICIP and local) Processes and Student Outcomes	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Leadership Team seems pleased with Freckles as an appropriate learning aid for young children. The use of cartoon figures seems to attract and engage the attention of young learners.• The academy specifically identifies their bottom 15-20% on student assessments. Learning centers are created to provide students with additional classroom supports from both teachers and para-pros.• The academy uses a variety of assessments to drive instruction and interventions. Those include iReady, NWEA, M-step and teacher made assessments.• All staff participate on both the School Improvement Team and data teams. By providing ongoing input, staff feel more empowered and grade level teams have better alignment.• Staff deliver differentiated instruction by balancing full class instruction with small learning centers, individualized lessons and added support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue the frequent assessment and review of data to adjust curriculum and instructional practices to address the needs of students.• Continue assisting students in all grade levels to develop their Individual Learning Plan and understand how to develop goals.• Continue to use assessment tools to drive instructional practices.• Continue using para-pros, who are guided by certified teaching staff & administration, to customize learning activities that reinforce the main lesson goals, objectives, and outcomes.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The academy staff uses pre-teaching activities with their students to better prepare lessons, enrichment, and remedial activities to assist in student learning. • The academy is intentional in focusing on the whole child. Staff teach appropriate social skills to help children become successful learners. • The academy implements a variety of research-based programs to assist in student learning. • The academy has established specific targets in both math and ELA for their students to reach. 	
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Academy Culture Review

Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The academy’s use Love and Logic to build positive relationships with their students results in a family-like culture. • Staff teach students how to manage disagreements to avert major conflicts. • Teachers are included in much of the decision-making processes in the school. • Staff intentionally makes sure that virtual learners interact with the teacher and classmates as if they were physically present at the building. • Every student is working on an Individual Educational Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue efforts to ensure that the staff and students’ SEL needs are met. • Review the Panorama School Climate Survey results to assess how students feel about New Bedford Academy. Best practice is to choose one key area to focus on that is impactful. Make sure all stakeholders know what “one thing” will be the priority. • Continue to build in opportunities for in-person and virtual learners to interact at all levels.

Mission Accomplishment

Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mission/vision is posted outside of each classroom in the building. • The academy staff and students recite their NBA Pledge every morning, which has the mission/vision concepts embedded in it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider revisiting the school’s mission on a more regular basis. • Consider discussing the mission more frequently at board meetings and using that mission to drive decision-making.

Governance and Leadership

Observations	Opportunities for Growth
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board and leadership team believe there is a positive and transparent relationship between all parties. • The board is aware of the need to increase enrollment without conflicting with its mission and vision to maintain a close-knit family culture. • The board complimented the academy leadership and management company for implementing a variety of changes, such as a new curriculum, increased technology, and an improved teacher compensation package, to improve the school environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to nurture the strong working relationship between the ESP and board. • By tangibly demonstrating that teachers and other staff are valued by the board, loyalty will continue to be enhanced. • The board would like to see an expansion of different extra and co-curricular opportunities for students. • Continue to recruit new board members. • Continue to work on increasing student enrollment. • Consider asking the management company to seek refinancing options to bring back to the board for their review and approval.
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Resources and Support Systems

Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The academy and ESP personnel are aware of the needs of the school and are providing support to address the needs. • The academy has a good working relationship with the Monroe County ISD. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider engaging with a marketing/tech firm to assist with online advertising. • Continue to look at all opportunities to increase enrollment, both with resources and geographically.

Facilities Review

Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The academy facilities are clean and well maintained. • The academy has upgraded safety features in the school, including a new buzz-in door. • The design of the academy facilitates the family-like culture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to evaluate the needs of the building to meet the needs of the students and staff. • Continue your efforts to refinance the current building/property debt.

CSO Review of Overall Performance for New Bedford Academy

Contract Performance Report & Fiscal Scorecard

Pre-Pandemic (2018-19) & Current (2020-21)	Opportunities for Growth
<p><u>2018-19</u></p> <p>Academic Achievement & Growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 3rd & 4th grade ELA and math, there was a higher percentage of students proficient compared to 2017-18 M-STEP results. • M-STEP data showed an overall increase in Math proficiency of 6% from the prior year. • M-STEP data, showed an overall decrease in ELA proficiency of 0.3% from the prior year. • Compared to the composite district, New Bedford Academy was outperformed on the ELA and math M-STEP in all grade levels except 6th grade ELA. • In reading, about 65% of students met NWEA MAP reading growth projections. In math, about 56% of students met NWEA MAP math growth projections. • According to NWEA MAP achievement data, all grades (were data was able to be reported) had an increase in the percent of proficient students in both reading and math. • New Bedford Academy had an overall index score of 67.53 in 2018, which was the last year data was available due to COVID. This placed the academy 5th in the Ferris State University portfolio. <p>Compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% compliant in 2017, 2018, and 2019. <p>Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Bedford Academy only had four board members as of this CPR. <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16% fund balance. Down from 22% in 2016-17. <p><u>2020-21</u></p> <p>Academic Achievement & Growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No M-STEP/PSAT data was reported due to the COVID-19 pandemic. • Due to low enrollment numbers by grade level, NWEA MAP data could not be reported in aggregate. <p>Compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% compliant in 2019, 2020, & 2021. <p>Governance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students at the academy have shown academic growth. However, the academy needs to work towards increasing proficiency as measured by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Closing the proficiency gap between the academy and the composite district on state assessments. ○ Continued increase in the percent of students at grade level norms according to NWEA MAP. • A long-term strategic plan needs to be created to improve enrollment numbers. Data from the financial section of the CPR shows that enrollment will have a huge impact on the financial health of the academy after ESSER funds run out.

- New Bedford Academy had five of the seven required board positions filled.

Finance

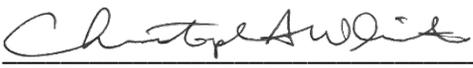
- Fund balance for 2017—18 was 9%. Fund balance increased in 2019-20 to 23%, mainly due to ESSER (COVID-19 Relief) funds.

Fiscal Performance & Accountability

- New Bedford Academy met the standard for the following Key Performance Indicators: current ratio, change in fund balance ratio, days cash on hand, debt to asset ratio and current year enrollment change.
- The academy did not meet the standard for enrollment change over time.

Overall Opportunities for Growth

Current enrollment and the enrollment trend are the biggest concerns for New Bedford Academy. Without ESSER funds, the academy would potentially be struggling financially more due to decreased revenue. The academy board and school leadership need a strategic plan, both short-term and long term, on how to retain and recruit students.

Signed: 
CSO Associate Director


CSO Visitation Chair

Date: December 8, 2021