

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE

Review Type: Virtual Mid-Contract

Academy Name: Voyageur Academy

Date(s): February 13, 2025

DRAFT REPORT

The Review occurred virtually with Voyageur Academy and included 6 members on the Ferris State University Charter Schools Office (CSO) Review team: Chris Loiselle – Director, Peg Baker – Associate Director, Beth Taylor – School Support Specialist, Sharon Hopper – Compliance & Governance Specialist, Ronnie Phillips – Field Representative, and Jim Scholten – Reauthorization Review Chairperson. The team had the opportunity to meet with, and interview, multiple stakeholder groups, including the School Leadership Team and Governing Board members. The team had a discussion with the school leadership and Board members focused on the Academy progress. We appreciate the open communication and transparency from the academy team.

Onsite Review Findings

Pillar #1: Academic Progress	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 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
PBIS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• K-12 positive behavior peer resolution, conflict intervention, add Saturday improvement course.• K-8 and 9-12 electronics – new policy for limiting.• K-8 new supports for students, events as rewards for positive behaviors (funding supplied for events), creative restorative room – such as yoga and breathing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to monitor and analyze the needs of parents and families as they arise.• Continue to use data to improve intervention effectiveness.• Promote the variety of programs offered and continue using social media and tools such as AI to increase participation.• Continue consistent use of data to inform instruction and assessment.• Continue to monitor progress on academic targets for both Board and AMP goals.• While interventions and academic opportunities are abundant, improved academic outcomes are expected and required to ensure viability of the school.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K-12 culture team, improve behavior for positive culture events to increase word of mouth, and reduce suspension and have students want to be in school. • PD – Teach like a champion and clear communication and strategies for teachers to address K-12 expectations. • PD culturally responsive training <p>Approach to Instruction and Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common board configurations, learning targets, date, assessment, exit tickets at the end for each teacher. • Grade-level meetings routine; common systems for communication to students. • Do now; gradual release model; for all courses K-8. • Coaching model and student level data; scope and sequence with standards. • Monitor, seek analyze with triangulation of data; continuity of curriculum for instructional routines. • Coaching is available for all teachers; and reading specialist. • Board asks questions and emphasis on performance and all students. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Academic acceleration. ▪ School team is open to ideas and change. ▪ TRG open to ideas. • Board has subcommittee on academic excellence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Heavily focused on academics and great education. ▪ See change in K-12. ▪ Teacher market; let's meet the standard in people in correct places. <p>School Teams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MICIP teams are school level. • Data shares at MICIP strategies and activities. • Directional planning monthly with monitoring. • Lead teacher and master teachers short and impactful – for measuring programming; input on PD end of year exam for K-8 subgroup of MICIP actions to align program. • Add in team members such as social workers and student voice in planning. <p>Academic Monitoring Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop targets K-9 the growth of students in intervention program – below grade level students, ensuring the gap is closed with struggling students. • HS shifts additional 9-10-11 supports for all students accessing test prep course. • Extending learning and supplemental support; tutoring sessions 160 students avg. Per day for afternoon tutoring; and morning tutoring 40-50 students per day. • 8 sessions in phase 1 and pause restart and middle March any subject area; efficient use of funds and share out with Board – impacting grades will be analyzed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider expanding ML supports. • Continue to use Restorative Practices and PBIS initiatives to reduce negative behavior and increase student attendance.
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9-12 data on credit recovery grade equity and standards-based grading; completion 95 % enrolled are passing; getting the number in credit recovery less. • Fall to Winter NWEA - increase in median achievement percentiles; at every grade level student conditional median growth percentile increase (SCGP) Winter - Winter and Fall to Winter increases in growth reaching for 50% percentile. • 10th grade will add 25-26 NWEA for another piece of data moving forward, same results in 9th (SCGP) increases for students with positive culture for students want to do well and see rewards. <p>Parent and Community Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academics reading specialist quarterly literacy nights. • Events at conferences. • Stations for updating PowerSchool Station; contact information; advise – no longer mail access electronically. • Parent Town Hall – K team starts in Feb. Collectively for grade level supports – program and AI related supports/ for home and school connection. • Summer orientations for parents, students and school set high expectations. • HS content teams hold family school wide event that is content related and support students. 	
<p>Pillar #2: Fiscal Solvency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Does the academy demonstrate fiscal responsibility, responsiveness, and sustainability? 	
Areas of Strength	Opportunities for Growth
<p>Financial Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information share with the board on finances is good, and expertise is present on the board. • Particularly good financial oversight and budget in subcommittee work – recommendations go to full Board for approval. • Good with making financial adjustments as needed to address surprises in construction costs. • Healthy fund balance. <p>Enrollment goal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% return and retention rate – 120 in each 9th -12th. • Recruitment strategies are strong. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 8th 100 student retention and getting 9th entering at 120 requires only finding an additional 20 students to fill the gap. <p>Other budget items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective management of student count expansion. • Working closely with board and subcommittees to ensure good financial decision making. • TRG and BOD quarterly financial decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue grant funding research and initiatives – new opportunities for this come every year. • Large zip code area – with enhancement of marketing if student count is a concern as cost infrastructure increases. • Continue to provide funding for a HQ Teacher and aide in classrooms. • As the CTE program begins and expands, monitor fiscal limitations and plan for costs related to the addition of new programming. • If facility size is limiting student growth options, incorporate facility expansion plan into the board strategic planning process. • Continue to seek space for athletic programs.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant funds- willing to expand workload to do oversight necessary. • Building expansion. • Management of marketing strategies – balance with proper budget and supported marketing and resources TRG – hitting 1300+ students. 	
Pillar #3: Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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
Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher retention, and recruitment focus of Board and ESP. • Teachers participate in Board meetings. • Recruitment using Frontline and LinkedIn. • Increase cert. Teachers by participating in university fairs and student teacher placements. • Internally develop staff; Grow Your Own grant. • Instructional development PD belonging and professional skills. • Onboarding process well developed. • Certified staff and placements are intentional at K-3 HQ. • Google form for surveys of all stakeholders. • Social Worker total 4 and one is provided from State of MI – increased integration in SEL all grade levels. • Private partnership for behavior therapist in area of behavior caseload with 20 students. • Extra-curriculars are important for families – offer a variety of 60-70% clubs and sports enhance SEL. • Strategic Plan for expansion and land bank will help secure area for field and practice facility. • Demand educational excellence for homework supports and tutoring during the week and on the weekends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor staff retention program effectiveness (retention and achievement bonuses). • Consider regular staff surveys to monitor staff culture in your buildings. • Ensure that salary structure keeps pace with competition. • Research and implement SEL programming within the classroom setting (ex. TRAILS and Michigan Model for Health). • Board sees opportunity for growth in admin/teacher quality. • Maintaining supports for demographic served. • Research transportation options, as needed.
Pillar #4: Compliance & Governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board has a solid understanding of academics and finances. • The Board advocates for excellence, ask questions and requests follow-up, if necessary. • Longevity of board members. • Extensive board sub-committee work (ex. academic excellence). • Board members take advantage of FSU PD opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue board committee structure that leads to good questions lead to sound guidance and decision making. • Board is interested in FSU administered ESP and board self- evaluation tools.

- Board, school leadership and other stakeholders collaborated on the development. Implementation and monitoring of strategic plan.
- Positive and collaborative relationship with Epicenter user and FSU.
- 6+ years of 100% on-time Epicenter submissions.
- Very strong and effective board governance.

Contract Performance Report(s) Review and Financial Scorecard

Pillar	Areas of Strength	Opportunities for Growth
Pillar #1: Academic Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students in grades 2-8 are meeting their Growth target in reading the MSTEP/PSAT8. • Students in grades 2-8 exceed their overall School Conditional Growth Percentile target in math on the NWEA assessment. • The school is meeting their overall growth index target. • Students are outperforming on their ELA MSTEP and PSAT 8 as compared to the districts where students may otherwise attend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide math interventions for students in grades 2-8 to increase student proficiency as measured on the NWEA assessment. • Continue to focus on high school instruction to increase scores in EBRW and math to meet all contractual targets. • Continue to evaluate data as compared to the composite resident district achievement in grades K-12. • Continue to work with Ferris CSO in regard to the assigned academic monitoring plan.
Pillar #2: Fiscal Solvency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All indicators for fiscal solvency are strong 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to closely monitor expansion costs and develop a long-term financial plan as needed
Pillar #3: Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets most operations indicators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue using strategic plan to monitor process
Pillar #4: Compliance & Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceeds most compliance indicators. • Very strong and effective board governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a board self-evaluation.

Signed


CSO Review Chair


CSO Director