

Report: Mid-Contract Review  
 Academy: Voyageur Academy  
 Date: February 12-13, 2018

The visitation occurred at Voyageur Academy 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, one school board member 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 open communication and transparency that was apparent with everyone we interacted with.

### Visitation Findings

School Improvement Plan (SIP) and EdYes! School Systems Review	
Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<p><b>School Improvement Plan (SIP)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SIP goals present an appropriate balance between academic achievement and school culture.</li> <li>• The SIP is developed with broad input from staff.</li> <li>• Efforts to improve the student culture and learning community have been impactful.</li> <li>• Systems are in place to engage families and create supportive community relationships.</li> <li>• Staff recognizes the importance of retaining high-quality teachers that demonstrate commitment to the school vision.</li> <li>• Use of instructional coaching appears to be fully implemented.</li> <li>• Classroom observations/walkthroughs occur regularly, and consistent feedback is provided.</li> <li>• There is a strong sense of shared leadership. Teacher input is valued, and quarterly surveys encourage reflective practices.</li> </ul>	<p><b>School Improvement Plan (SIP)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annually review curriculum goals, resources, and outcomes, and continue efforts to assess/improve vertical alignment.</li> <li>• Schedule, organize, and participate in regular SIP meetings and develop a process to evaluate the effectiveness of the SIP.</li> <li>• Consider various ways to incentivize teacher success.</li> <li>• Continue discussing strategies to effectively utilize paraprofessionals.</li> <li>• Continue efforts to emphasize student goal setting.</li> <li>• Continue to strengthen the focus and intent of Advisory period.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional development topics are aligned to established school goals and the SIP.</li> <li>Targeted instruction focuses on re-teaching content to ensure student mastery.</li> <li>PSAT/SAT lessons are embedded in the HS curriculum.</li> <li>Teachers encourage student ownership of learning goals.</li> </ul> <p><b>EdYes! School Systems</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is sufficient documentation to support most of the evidences in this report.</li> <li>A review of this document shows a clear process is in place at the academy to help all students to reach high levels of academic achievement.</li> </ul>	<p><b>EdYes! School Systems</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a process to review submitted reports to ensure that they are accurate.</li> </ul>
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Facilities Review

Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities were well maintained, clean and safe.</li> <li>There is ample security at all sites.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to work on a plan to alleviate drop-off and pick-up congestion, to ensure the safety of students and staff.</li> </ul>

Academy Culture Review

Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an emphasis to accomplish the “Big Three:” academic soft skills, goal setting, identity and relevance.</li> <li>There is adequate staff supervision during student transitions.</li> <li>Students were polite, and respectful. All seem to be aware of the existing behavior expectations.</li> <li>Across the district, it was observed that many students arrived late; missing instructional time.</li> <li>Teacher/student relationships were positive, and mutual respect was evident.</li> <li>Staff place a strong emphasis on the importance of creating a positive learning environment through student culture.</li> <li>It is apparent that there is a strong effort to improve climate and culture. The Deans of Culture are making a difference.</li> <li>A uniform policy appears to be consistently enforced and encouraged.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that new staff and students are fully aware of the cultural expectations of the school.</li> <li>Continue to evaluate cultural initiatives to ensure that they complement and encourage student learning.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a wide variety of extra-curricular activities for students to participate in.</li> <li>• A number of initiatives have been put in place to encourage family engagement and participation.</li> <li>• Classrooms are well structured, and teachers appear to manage proactively.</li> <li>• Parents are provided information regarding their children via Power School.</li> </ul>	
<b>Mission Accomplishment</b>	
<b>Observations</b>	<b>Opportunities for Growth</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school community demonstrates commitment to the school mission, vision, and core beliefs through behaviors and actions consistent with the mission.</li> <li>• The mission and vision are displayed in some areas of the building.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Periodically review your mission and vision statements and ensure that they are applicable for your student population</li> </ul>
<b>Website</b>	
<b>Observations</b>	<b>Opportunities for Growth</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The website appears to provide necessary and adequate information.</li> <li>• The website provides information in a variety of languages.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None at this time.</li> </ul>

## Academy Internal Review

<b>Student Outcomes</b>	
<b>Observations</b>	<b>Opportunities for Growth</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school leaders are well aware of what the student achievement data indicates, and are continually driving efforts towards high student achievement. Teachers have access to lesson planning across the curriculum.</li> <li>• Diagnostic and performance data are used to determine appropriate MTSS intervention protocols.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to develop opportunities for appropriate incentives for meeting expectations for MS and HS students.</li> <li>• Continue to regularly analyze your curriculum outline, including the efforts to align the curriculum vertically.</li> <li>• Continue to develop and improve the MTSS framework at all levels; including implementation fidelity and progress monitoring.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bi-weekly data teams meet to assess student progress positively impact overall learning outcomes.</li> <li>• School Leaders appear to be very intentional about improving student achievement scores.</li> <li>• There is cohesion and collaboration between all levels of school leadership.</li> <li>• Mid-year assessment results indicate substantial progress toward year end goals.</li> <li>• SAT preparation (backwards planning, test language, tips/strategies, et al), have been embedded in HS lesson planning.</li> <li>• Staff consistently use data from multiple sources to drive instruction and inform decision making.</li> <li>• High expectations are regularly communicated, and school leaders encourage academic rigor. i.e. requiring all HS students to take an AP course.</li> <li>• School Leaders engage the school community in reviewing culture and climate data, including surveys and observable data.</li> <li>• Elementary students receive motivating incentives for appropriate behaviors and academic achievement.</li> <li>• Programs are in place to support the habits and skills necessary to succeed in college.</li> <li>• Staff focus on the importance of addressing soft skills, through the development of a school community.</li> <li>• Most teachers utilize strategies to actively engage students.</li> <li>• Teachers were able to carry on effective instruction regardless of interruptions; i.e. students coming in late.</li> <li>• Some teachers were observed asking probing questions that generated thoughtful responses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue efforts to determine appropriate instructional strategies, and ensure that they are implemented with fidelity.</li> <li>• Continue to develop school-wide instructional frameworks.</li> <li>• Continue to engage your staff in curriculum and assessment audits to validate their effectiveness and impact on student outcomes.</li> </ul>
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Governance and Leadership

Observations	Opportunities for Growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board is very committed to the success of the students, and is willing to put forth great effort to see positive outcomes.</li> <li>• The Board is familiar with the community and stakeholders.</li> <li>• The Board is very invested in the development of the budget and committed to putting the needs of the students first.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There needs to be conversation and clarification regarding the roles and expectations of the Board as it relates to the ESP.</li> <li>• Encourage open, collaborative communication with the ESP.</li> <li>• Further develop a strategic plan with specific, measurable outcomes.</li> <li>• Identify and participate in appropriate professional development activities.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify an appropriate protocol for dealing with stakeholder concerns presented to the Board.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources and Support Systems</b>	
<b>Observations</b>	<b>Opportunities for Growth</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ESP has identified and implemented resources and initiatives to address school culture and academic needs.</li> <li>Financial reports to the Board are timely and consistent, and have addressed Board concerns.</li> <li>The ESP has worked with staff to implement school-wide protocols resulting in improvements in student outcomes.</li> <li>The ESP has worked to restructure the Academy's debt, freeing up money to be used for school operations.</li> <li>The ESP appears to have identified a strong school leadership team, and communicates the need to retain high-quality staff.</li> <li>The ESP provided instructional coaches appear to have had a positive influence on teaching efficacy and overall student outcomes.</li> <li>The ESP provides access to adequate technology, including guidance and IT support.</li> <li>The ESP seeks out community partnerships, and is actively pursuing grant opportunities.</li> <li>The ESP provides strong support and resources for data analysis and the utilization of data to inform instruction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue working to stabilize the instructional staff.</li> <li>Continue to provide the Board with ongoing data analysis and progress reports.</li> <li>Consider ways to inform the Board of ongoing teacher activities to utilize data to inform classroom instruction.</li> </ul>

**CSO Review of Overall Performance for Voyageur Academy**

<b>Contract Performance Report Review</b>	
<b>Observations</b>	<b>Opportunities for Growth</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MAP growth targets met on only 3/14 measures.</li> <li>MSTEP Proficiency Percentages exceed their Composite District's averages.</li> <li>MSTEP growth is above 40% in all areas and averages 49% in ELA and 50% in math.</li> <li>93% Free &amp; Reduced Eligibility.</li> <li>Enrollment is stable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MAP Spring Achievement Percentiles averages remain low- 31<sup>st</sup> percentile in Reading and 23<sup>rd</sup> percentile (50<sup>th</sup> is goal).</li> <li>MSTEP 2016-17 Proficiency Percentages were 19% for ELA and 9% for math- compared to 29% and 12% for the previous year.</li> <li>MAP growth percentiles must improve- they only met the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile goal in 3/14 areas and 9/14 were at or below the 30<sup>th</sup> growth percentile.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Voyageur ended 2016-17 with a solid 30% Fund Balance- excellent!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SAT average scores remain low and well below their Composite District's average (Voyageur- 848 compared to Composite District- 884).</li> <li>Compliance remains to be an issue- 96% last year, 90% and 97% the two previous years. This measure should be at 100%.</li> </ul>
<b>School Support Team (SST) Updates</b>	
<b>Observations</b>	<b>Opportunities for Growth</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Voyageur Academy has a "Red" designation based on declining MSTEP and MAP results.</li> <li>Communication and trust issues between the Board and ESP hinder academic progress.</li> <li>Board has issued an RFP for ESP services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growth and Proficiency data both declined in 2016-17- your results need to begin to trend upward.</li> <li>2016-17 Student Growth Percentiles exceeded the 40% minimum but with lower proficiency results in 2016-17, a higher level of growth is needed to reduce the growing achievement gap in MSTEP.</li> </ul>

**Overall Opportunities for Growth**

- Monitor student preparation for assessments and determine what students have demonstrated mastery of what skills.
- Board must understand the roles and responsibilities of the Authorizer, Board and ESP triad.
- Improve Board/ESP relationships so board members and ESP staff operate as an effective and efficient team.

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

**For: Voyageur Academy**

- 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.
- NOT be designated as a Partnership, Priority, Comprehensive Support, low performing, etc. school by the State of Michigan.

Signed   
**CSO Visitation Chair**

  
**CSO Associate Director**