

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE



*Happy New Year
from the CSO!*

January-February 2025

News and Updates

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When Ferris State University authorizes a public school academy, it is an endeavor to positively transform the life trajectory of the students who attend that academy. The Charter Schools Office holds as its most fundamental goal that all students be prepared for success in college, work, and life. Test scores and knowledge are important but are not enough to succeed in an ever-competitive and connected global community.

We believe that students must be able to apply knowledge to new situations, and to seek out new information through research skills and technological competence. To accomplish this, each academy must provide an environment to achieve academic excellence by delivering quality programming and instruction for the students it serves.



Messages from our Director

Celebrating National Charter Schools Week: A Tribute to Innovation and Excellence in Education

Each year, National Charter Schools Week offers us a moment to pause, reflect, and celebrate the remarkable contributions charter schools make to the educational landscape. This year, as we honor the successes and innovations of charter schools across the country, we want to shine a special spotlight on the exceptional work being done right here in Michigan.

What Is National Charter Schools Week?

National Charter Schools Week is a nationwide celebration that recognizes the achievements of charter schools, students, educators, and families. It is an opportunity to showcase the unique role that charter schools play in expanding educational opportunities and inspiring student success. During the week of Jan. 26 through Feb. 1, we celebrate the diversity, creativity, and commitment that define the charter school movement.

[Read More
Here](#)



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Messages from our Associate Director



Margaret Baker
Associate Director of the
Charter Schools Office

SAVE THE DATE



A graphic with a light green background and a decorative border of pink, orange, and teal wavy lines. Inside the border, the text reads: "LEADERSHIP SUMMIT", "July 22-23, 2025", "DoubleTree Hotel", "Bay City, Michigan", and "STAY TUNED FOR MORE INFORMATION". Below the border, it says "SPONSORED BY" followed by the logos for Ferris State University and Lake Superior State University. There are also several colorful starburst graphics scattered around the text.

LEADERSHIP
SUMMIT

July 22-23, 2025
DoubleTree Hotel
Bay City, Michigan

STAY TUNED FOR MORE
INFORMATION

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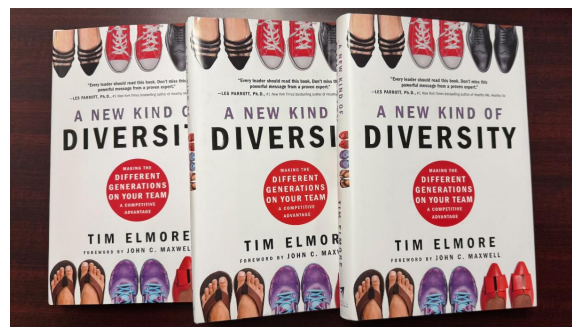
The Ferris Charter Schools Office is planning a two-day Leadership Summit with Lake Superior State University. The summit will be on July 22-23, 2025 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bay City, Michigan. Sessions will be focused on leadership and student achievement.

More details will be sent soon!

Takeaways from the 2024 MAPSA Symposium

Some members of the CSO staff, myself included, traveled to the 2024 MAPSA Symposium in December. We enjoyed engaging and sharing ideas with other charter school leaders and authorizers. We found the keynote speaker on the last day of the event to be especially appropriate and informative. Here's a link to a **brief article** with some food for thought on working with co-workers.

The Tim Elmore Workshop set the stage for forming positive work relationships with colleagues from different generations and viewpoints. We were so inspired by his research that the CSO purchased copies of his book "A New Kind of Diversity: Making the Different Generations on Your Team a Competitive Advantage" for all 12 members of our staff.



Next year, if possible, consider setting some time aside to attend the MAPSA Symposium. The Ferris CSO would love to see you and connect!



Photo courtesy of Hope Academy of West Michigan.

Nurturing Young Leaders: Cultivating the Future of Leadership

A key component of a positive culture and productive organization is nurturing the leadership qualities inherent in our youth, as these individuals are crucial for creating a sustainable, dynamic future. By empowering the next generation with the tools, skills, and mindset to lead, we provide the opportunity to create schools driven by innovation, collaboration, and empathy. Here's a few ideas to help you promote young leadership.

Provide Opportunities for Responsibility

Giving young people opportunities to lead, whether in school projects, community activities, or internships, helps them develop confidence and experience. Responsibility fosters a sense of ownership and accountability, which are essential traits of effective leaders.

Encourage Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving

Leaders are often faced with challenges that require creative and effective solutions. Encouraging young individuals to question, analyze, and think critically helps them develop strong decision-making skills. Encouraging discussions and debates on real-world issues can sharpen their problem-solving abilities.

What are your ideas? We all should share and contribute to come up with a satisfactory answer to the leadership challenges we face today. All our students will benefit from our intentional efforts to support the leaders of tomorrow.



Photo Courtesy of Marshall Academy.

Social Emotional Goals from Winter to Spring Could Lead to an Increase in Student Achievement

Beyond academics, the shift from winter to spring also marks an important period for social and emotional growth. As the weather improves, many schools organize outdoor activities, field trips, and group projects that foster collaboration, communication, and leadership skills. These experiences help students build friendships, develop a sense of community, and gain confidence in their abilities.

Spring also brings a sense of accomplishment as students begin to see the fruits of their labor from earlier in the year. This boost in self-esteem and motivation can lead to increased engagement in learning, setting the stage for a strong finish to the school year.

We are looking forward to seeing the amazing student growth in all areas!



Messages from our School Support Specialist



Important NWEA Information

Beth Taylor

Professional Development Offerings

1. Virtual sessions are now open to all academies.
2. "Teacher Information" for the School Leadership Team on Feb. 19, 2025 @ 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

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Achievement Status and Growth Report with

Quadrant Chart: Shows three pictures of growth, all based on national norms:

- **Projections** so you can set student growth goals
- A **summary comparison** of two terms so you can evaluate efforts
- An **interactive quadrant chart** so you can visualize growth comparisons

If you signed up in the fall, a Zoom link will be sent to you no later than Feb. 17, 2025. If you did not sign up and are still interested, please email Beth Taylor (BethTaylor@ferris.edu) for a link no later than Feb. 14, 2025, at 3 p.m.

[Read More](#)



Panorama Information

Individual Virtual Sessions are Still Available

The Ferris CSO has purchased a Panorama virtual professional development session for each academy that uses this support. Each session is customizable to fit the needs of your academy. Please reach out to Justin Liebman (jliebman@panoramaed.com) or contact Beth Taylor (BethTaylor@ferris.edu) to schedule a session for your team.

Winter Survey Session Information

Winter Rosters Due to Beth Taylor: Friday, Jan. 17, 2025

Survey Window: Monday, Feb. 3, 2025 - Friday, Feb. 21, 2025

Academic Communication Timeline

The Ferris CSO has been working hard to update existing processes and introduce new ones. Below is a timeline that academies should expect to follow in the upcoming years.

Late October/Early November

- Contract Performance Reports (CPRs) presented to Ferris authorized academies
- Correspondence sent to the Academy with the CSO identified level of academic support

November & December

- Academic Monitoring Plans (AMPs) modified or created for those named in academic support Tiers III and IV

December

- MDE releases the School Index Scores (dates vary each year)
- AMPs sent to Epicenter by Dec. 31

January

- Academic Compliance Letter sent to notify the academy that they have met their academic goals (after consideration of the State of Michigan Index Scores)

February-May

- Support available to all academies authorized by Ferris

June

- AMP End of the Year meetings held

[View Printable Version Here](#)

Messages from our Compliance & Governance Specialist

January is National Board Recognition Month

Each January we celebrate National School Board Recognition Month, a time to shine a spotlight on the unsung heroes of our education system—our school board members. This observance, established to highlight the vital role school boards play in shaping the success of students, recognizes the dedication, leadership, and vision that school board members bring to our schools. Serving as the bridge between communities and schools, these individuals work tirelessly to uphold educational excellence, advocate for resources, and create policies that support



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students and educators alike. Their efforts ensure schools remain places of opportunity, growth, and inspiration for every child.

As we observe this important month, we extend our deepest gratitude to our school board members for their commitment to public education. Your dedication to guiding our schools, often during challenging times, is invaluable. From long hours spent in meetings to making tough decisions that impact students, teachers, and families, your leadership fosters the growth of our communities and ensures a brighter future for all. Thank you for your unwavering service, your vision for academic excellence, and your steadfast belief in the potential of every student. Your efforts make a profound difference, and we are truly grateful.

A special shout out to all of our board members that have reached significant milestones in their years of service. Thank you for your longstanding dedication to your academy.

[Read Complete List of Significant Board Milestones Here](#)

Ferris News



Photo Courtesy of Ferris State University.

MLK Day at FSU

In addition to closing the university on Jan. 20 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the Ferris community will be celebrating King in a variety of events from Jan. 21 to Jan. 23. On Jan. 20, the university is encouraging students to participate in activities that serve the community and recognize King's legacy.

The FSU Office of Multicultural Student Services has the following events planned for next week:

- Day of Service Social Media Challenge - Monday, Jan. 20

- 39th Annual MLK March - Tuesday, Jan. 21
- Metamorphosis: A Time to Change - Wednesday, Jan. 22
- Trivia Night w/ Franklin Hughes - Thursday, Jan. 23

[Read More Coverage Here](#)



Photo Courtesy of Ferris State Football.

Ferris State University Football Wins 2024 DII National Championship

On Dec. 21, 2024, the Ferris football team beat the Valdosta State Blazers 49-14 to win their third DII National Championship in four years. Under head coach Tony Annese's leadership, the FSU Bulldogs ended the year with a 14-1 record. In addition to earning the NCAA DII National Championship, the Ferris football team earned the GLIAC Championship and the Super Region Three Championship.

On Jan. 13, 2025, the Ferris and Big Rapids communities came together during a campus event that jointly celebrated the football and volleyball teams' successes in 2024.

[Read More Game Coverage Here](#)



Photo Courtesy of Ferris Athletics.

Ferris State University Women's Volleyball has a Historic Season

The Ferris women's volleyball team finished their regular 2024 season undefeated with a perfect record of 28-0. The team also earned the 2024 NCAA DII Midwest Regional Championship. In December 2024, the team travelled to Sioux Falls, South Dakota to make its first DII Elite Eight appearance since 2013. However, the team fell in this round in a 3-2 decision against Bentley University, finishing 2024 with a 34-1 record.

Some individual players on the team earned honors such as the American Volleyball Coaches Association's (AVCA) National Player of the Year honors, AVCA All-America First Team honors, AVCA All-America Second Team Selection honors, and AVCA Honorable Mention All-America honors.

Additionally, head coach Tia Brandel-Wilhelm received the AVCA DII National Coach of the Year award for the first time in her 30-year career.

[Read More Game Coverage Here](#)

Board of Trustees Appointments

In December, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced that she will be reappointing LaShanda R. Thomas to Ferris State University's board of trustees. Additionally, she will be appointing Matthew Evans, a resident of the Detroit area with experience in the education and construction industries, to the board of trustees.

Once approved by the Michigan Senate, Thomas and Evans will each have eight year terms.

[Read More Coverage](#)

Our Mission and Vision Statement

Ferris State University Mission

Ferris State University prepares students for successful careers, responsible citizenship, and lifelong learning. Through its many partnerships and its career-oriented, broad-based education, Ferris serves our rapidly changing global economy and society.

Charter Schools Office Vision Statement

FSU will authorize public school academies that promise to transform the lives of students by demonstrating high-quality performance.

Charter Schools Office Mission

By implementing quality oversight, the Ferris State University Charter Schools Office focuses on student growth and achievement, offers professional learning opportunities, and provides relevant resources to its authorized public school academies.

Core Values

1. Student Learning
2. A Collaborative Working Environment
3. Diversity
4. Opportunities
5. Excellence
6. Accountability
7. Integrity and Trust

Contact Us

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