

news

JULY 2024

“Summer afternoon- to me, those have always been the two most beautiful words in the English language.”

-Henry James



From the Top

Dear Board Members and Academy Leaders,

Welcome to the July edition of our newsletter! As we dive into the heart of summer, we are excited to share the latest updates, insights, and stories from the LSSU Charter Schools Community.

In this month's issue, we will shine a spotlight on our summer enrichment opportunities as well as feature our 2024 LSSU CSO Charter Schools Unsung Hero and Change Maker. We will introduce a new staff member, and keep you informed on the latest developments from the CSO, upcoming events, and opportunities for collaboration.

I look forward to connecting with you at our July Administrator's Retreat that will be held in Bay City on July 16th-17th. Thank you to Bay City Academy for being our gracious hosts.

Although summer can be busy, I hope that you find some time to savor it.

Sincerely,

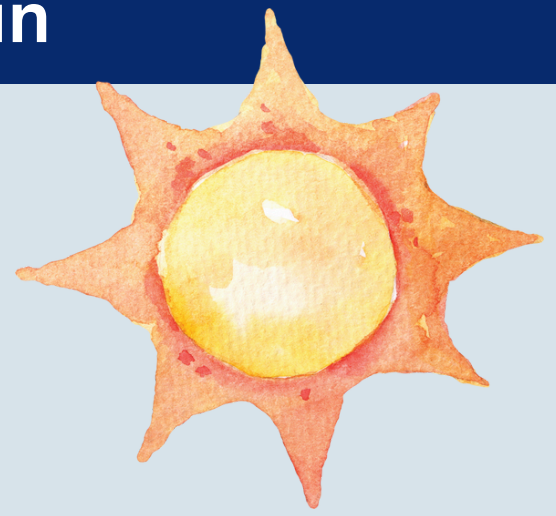
Chris Oshelski
Executive Director

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Summer Fun



The LSSU Charter Schools Office aims to provide enrichment opportunities for the students that attend our public school academies. Because of this, the partnership between the University and the academies extends beyond the confines of the campus, facilitating community engagement outreach initiatives that do just that. Through collaborative projects, service-learning activities, and cultural exchanges, students develop a deeper understanding of social responsibility and civic engagement. Additionally, hosting charter school camps fosters positive relationships between the university and the surrounding community, enhancing the institution's reputation as a hub for education and innovation. Together they can create transformative experiences that empower students to thrive academically, personally, and professionally.

by Kristin Graham
Executive Assistant &
Director of Events & Camps

"Discovering the hidden inhabitants of our freshwater ecosystems: North Central Academy students at the forefront of freshwater research with our CFRE ambassadors."



"Innocademy Allegan's young scientists on a mission to uncover the secrets of aquatic life at Pendills Creek"



"Journeying through the enchanting landscapes of the Upper Peninsula: Innocademy Allegan students captivated by the majesty of Lower Tahquamenon Falls."

New Staff Alert



Melissa St. John

Name: Melissa St. John

Position: Arts Center Business Manager

Hometown: Camano Island, WA

Family: Husband, Adam St. John (Assistant Professor of Theatre @ LSSU), Daughters- Stella and Sophia St. John, and Baxter (our crazy pup)

Hobbies: I truly love doing and trying all things so here are a few... podcasting, movie watching, baking/cooking, playing outside with my kids/dog, dancing, costume/hair & make-up design, tennis, cleaning (this seriously is my Zen time), crafting and a new hobby, gardening.

Little Known Fact: I was the front of house manager at a comedy club in Bellingham, WA for years called, The Upfront Theatre that was established by world-renowned improviser Ryan Stiles. I became great friends with him and was his on-call make-up artist.

2024-25 Testing Windows

Fall
September 9- October 4

Winter
January 6- February 3

Spring
April 28- June 6



On Friday April 26, 2024, LSSU held its annual Campus Beautification Day for staff and faculty to come together and help campus look its best for commencement. CSO staff was on hand to pull weeds, tidy up flower beds, and brighten campus with our smiles!

Submitted by Becky Clawson
Photo by Julie Buchholtz

Compliance Corner

-Governance and Compliance Reports will be emailed to Academy boards in Aug/Sept.

Professional Development Options

We will be offering professional development webinars with Angie Irwin again this year. Here are the topics with dates to follow when finalized.

- **Sept. 3:** Navigating your Role as a New Board Member – Part I (Format: Zoom)
- **Oct. 1:** Why Can't we all Just get Along? (Format: GoToWebinar)
- **Nov. 5:** Establishing a Positive Board Culture (Format: GoToWebinar)
- **Dec. 3:** Board President Interaction (Format: Zoom)
- **Jan. 7:** Bringing Order to Meetings (Format: GoToWebinar)
- **Feb. 4:** The Role of the Board Treasurer (Format: Zoom)
- **Mar. 4:** Acquainting Yourselves with Board Policy (Format: GoToWebinar)
- **Apr. 1:** Navigating Relationships as part of Good Governance (Format: GoToWebinar)
- **May 6:** Navigating Your Role as a New Board Member – Part II (Format: Zoom)

We are planning a regional face-to-face training and will send more information once the details are complete.

Reauthorizations

The one reauthorization contract for last year has been finalized and has been sent to the MDE. We thank you for your due diligence in completing the many tasks required to complete the review process and contract documents. There will be no reauthorizations for the 2024-2025 year.



Summer is the perfect time to kick back and read a book. Click on the link to learn more about the 2024 Notable Books recommended by the American Library Association. Happy Reading!

Notable Children's Books - 2024

Each year a committee of ALSC identifies the best of the best in children's books. According to the Notables Criteria, "notable" is defined as: Worthy ...

 ala.org

THE WINNERS ARE...

Unsung Hero



Brent is our Director of Maintenance and Head Custodian. Brent is our unsung hero, as he does much more than plunging toilets. He never misses carpool, morning or afternoon, where he opens the doors for every student or holds the stop sign to direct traffic. Even when he takes a day off, he comes in just for carpool. Brent also has several students that require extra attention and mentoring for social behaviors. Brent will meet with them daily and helps them to find their self-worth. He lets them work along side of him on projects, often teaching them things that their parents are unable to do. He gets invited to birthday parties, graduation parties, and every student knows him. He positively affects every student in our building. Additionally, he does so many things behind the scenes to be sure we are safe. He comes in every Sunday to do a walk through, he is the main contact for when the alarms go off due to a teacher forgetting to disarm the system, he gives all teachers his cell phone so that they can text anytime to have the system disarmed. He is oncall 24/7 and does all of this with a happy heart. He has been at GTA for over 20 years and has often been the glue that holds everything together. He is a wise confidant, an objective observer, has served as an athletic director, coach, mentor, Mr. Fix anything guy, and the first to run outside to help anyone with a flat tire or any car needs. He will be sure kids have enough food - even running to the store to get extra cupcakes when a student drops them on the floor. Brent is one in a million, very humble, a good leader, and GTA through and through. He can often reach kids who may have disciplinary issues when no one else can. He is greatly appreciated, though does not hear it as often as he should. He is also very humble and will deflect any compliments to himself to the team or others. Thank you for considering him as an Unsung Hero.

Change Maker



Ms. Williams is and has always been a valuable team player. No matter what the situation is, if something doesn't go as planned, she has always been able to manage control. Ms. Williams is also very good at keeping others calm in the event of having to make changes if we have to change the game plan for a task. Without Ms. Williams I don't know what we would do, she deserves it!

As the Chief Operations Officer, this superwoman Latoya Williams wears many hats to assist each student in getting a quality education at AIA. She is always brainstorming ways to engage her students. To see her in the classroom is to see her passion in action. She is a mother, daughter, granddaughter, substitute teacher, grant writer, program developer, caseworker and mentor . She puts her heart and soul into being an educator that embodies her schools philosophy of " Love, Laugh, and Learn."

Ms. Williams is a Change Maker because anything that needs to be done for the students in the school she does even if it is outside of her role. The core of her care is the students and making sure the excel to the best of their abilities. Ms. Williams is the Chief Academic Officer here at AIA. She is constantly looking for ways to better our district for the students and staff.



*Individuals were nominated for the Unsung Hero and Change Maker Awards by colleagues and peers as part of our Charter Schools Week Celebration that was held May 13th-17th.

Academy Spotlight



Tipton Academy

Submitted by Angela Gilbert

Tipton Academy is proving to be the “music makers and the dreamers of dreams!” Two years ago, they decided to refocus their mission and partner with Franklin Covey to implement the Leader in Me program. The Leader in Me program teaches the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People and the newly added 8th Habit: Finding Your Voice to children. This partnership gave the school a new lens to deliver all of the greatness envisioned for their students aligned to their mission. Franklin Covey has designed the program to be a 3-phase implementation with their “go slow to go fast” pedagogy and Tipton has just completed year 2. In year two, the school is really proud of some of the great ways they have captured the essence of creating leaders of self and others in their students. This year, Tipton added a quarterly leadership project where the entire school worked towards a common goal. One of those leadership projects was their Kindness Campaign. During this campaign, students and staff logged their random acts of kindness individually, added them to their class graphs, and then student leaders calculated the totals as an entire school. The school was really excited to exceed their goal! Not only were they doing really great things for people, but showing their leadership to others! Hopefully, it was a true “pay it forward” for the entire community being both a leader of self and a leader of others initiative!

Goals: School-wide- 3,000 total

Tipton West Total: 1,584

Tipton East Total: 2,586

Actual Total: 4,170



“Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible.”

-Dalai Lama



Tipton Academy Continued

Another really exciting addition was the NWEA Growth Leadership Awards. This was a great “leader of self” initiative. While teaching their students how the Habits fit into all aspects of their lives, here they started with Habit 2: Begin with the End in Mind. For this Habit, the students set goals for growth in learning. When they met those goals they had individual celebrations and school celebrations. The school had growth targets for different levels of leaders. The biggest one, Rock Star Growth Leader, was for students that were at the 80 th percentile or higher in growth for math or ELA. Those students received a Golden Ticket inviting them to a Willy Wonka style party to celebrate their hard work.



One last highlight to share was Charter Day at the Capitol! Tipton modeled Habit 8: Find Your Voice. They decided this was a great opportunity to support their student leaders in advocating for themselves and their school. They took their National Junior Honor Society, as well as some of their 4th and 5th grade Leaders of the Month to the steps of The Capitol building. There, they engaged with legislators and other visitors by using Leader in Me chat cards with questions aligned to each of the Habits. They also performed their Leader in Me song on the steps of the Capitol and wrote letters to their legislators. It was a great learning opportunity for all! Tipton is growing leaders of tomorrow! They have definitely grown and shown great leadership this year and look forward to all the greatness to come for their students, school, and community!





W·A·Y ACADEMY

Widening Advancements for Youth

Our Academy has experienced unheralded success this Spring with two events!! The staff worked diligently on making sure these events were well attended and supported for our school.

WAY... TO GO!!!



CAREER DAY



We were able to host a number of different professions and careers on both of our campus' this Spring! Our researchers had the opportunity to meet face-to-face with business professionals including Ford Motor Company, Henry Ford Hospital, Air Force, Delta Dental and many more!!

We also highlighted some non-tradition careers such as Graphic Designer, Dog Trainer, Jewelry Maker, Funeral Director, Musician and more.

Our researchers got exposed to a host of different careers and had a blast!

Submitted by Cameron Nichols

GRADUATION 2024

Last year at our Graduation we had 13 WAY Academy researchers completed their graduation requirements and cross the stage. We have seen an enormous amount of credit being earned the last two years and knew we were due for a big graduating class this year.

In 2024 we graduated 35 seniors!! The largest class we have seen in 5 years or more!! Congrats to the staff and researchers for all of their hard work!! WAY to GO!!



Assessment ABC's

-by Lynn Methner-

While the regular school year has concluded for many, this is a great time to think about the end of the year NWEA MAP test results. Successful educators realize the primary objective of assessments is to understand where a student is on their learning journey. For academies offering summer school programs, how are the end of the year NWEA MAP results used to reach the students most in need of intervention? And are NWEA MAP results used to monitor the effectiveness of programming when looking at spring to fall NWEA MAP results for students who attend summer school and those who don't?

It's also not too soon for school leaders to think about the logistics of Fall testing and setting the stage for favorable student outcomes. When planning for Fall testing, there are a number of considerations to ensure consistent and valid test administration. While not all inclusive, I've included a quick checklist below for things to consider:

Test Administration Preparation for Administrators:

- Consult IT for device readiness
- Rostering students
- Scheduling staff training
- Develop Test Administration Guidelines including policy for retakes
- Identify student needs for accommodations (504 plans and IEP's)
- Space considerations for shared spaces or small group testing
- Middle and High School considerations: bell schedule, attendance, athletics
- Plan for reducing disruptions: classroom and building wide (PA system, bell schedule, etc.)
- Plan for make-up assessments: staff and space considerations
- Parent and student communication once school starts

*“Assessment is today's
means of modifying
tomorrow's instruction.”*

-Carol Ann Tomlinson

“The real goal of classroom assessment
is to improve student performance,
not merely audit it. ”

-Sousa & Tomlinson

Brooke's Corner



YOU MADE IT! Congratulations on a fantastic conclusion of your school year. We appreciate the amazing things you have done all year long for your students. Please try to take a few minutes to recharge your batteries before you charge into the 2024/25 school year. We know you need it and definitely deserve it! As 2023/24 comes to a close, I look back on the whirlwind it was. I spent more time in your districts than ever before and loved every minute of it. We completed multiple book studies, conducted NWEA training, and certified multiple individuals in NonViolent Crisis Intervention. I'm working hard on getting things lined up for the upcoming year. Right now we're busy working on completing our plans for the Leadership Summit in Bay City on July 16-18. I am so excited to see our school leaders face to face all in one area. It's been a long time since we were all able to get together. It's set to be a great opportunity for learning and networking, and I'm hoping you're as excited as I am. See you soon.

-Brooke Maciag

Finance Corner

August 14

-4th Quarter Financial Statement

"School boards are the champions of education, fighting to ensure that every child is given an equal chance to succeed."

-Unknown



Leadership Summit

WHAT: LSSU Charter Schools Summit

WHEN: July 16th-17th, 2024

WHERE: Bay City, Michigan

WHY: The Leadership Summit will allow the opportunity for teachers, administrators, and staff to come together for professional development, collaboration, and team building.

Philosophy

We believe in authorizing through the lens of an educator, realizing students are more than academic performance or financial incentives. True authorizing takes into account the whole child, whole academy, and whole community while recognizing the importance of increased performance and sustainability.

Mission

To ensure quality oversight and support to our authorized charter academies resulting in students who are prepared for the next phase of life whether it be attending college, joining the military, or entering the workforce.

Vision

We envision an educational system in Michigan that provides families with diverse educational opportunities that allow each child to flourish and find their place in the global community.



LSSU CSO Team

Chris Oshelski
Executive Director
coshelski@lssu.edu

Julie Buchholtz
Academic Assessment
jhopper@lssu.edu

Becky Clawson
Finance & Governance
rclawson@lssu.edu

Garnet Green
Field Representative
ggreen3@lssu.edu

Brooke Maciag
School Support
bmaciag@lssu.edu

Lynn Methner
Field Representative
lmethner1@lssu.edu

Jenny Peterman
Reauthorization &
Compliance
jpeterman@lssu.edu

Joe Thienes
Field Representative
jthienes@lssu.edu

Melissa Weisberger
Field Representative
mweisberger@lssu.edu

