

2021-2022 CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE ANNUAL REPORT



READY FOR WHATEVER IS NEXT

At Grand Valley, next is opportunity and innovation. Next is global, connecting and uniting us. It's local, shaping the spaces in which we work and live. It's a commitment to progress. Next is where minds are free to imagine what could be. At GVSU, next is now. And whatever's next, we will empower our students, our communities, and our partners to reach higher to get there.



22,406

STUDENTS

300+

AREAS OF
STUDY

4

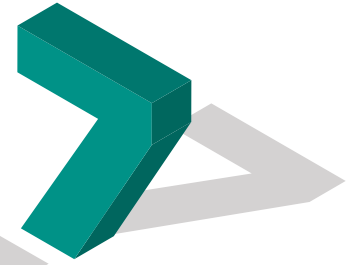
CAMPUSES

gvsu.edu/next





INTRODUCTION



PRACTITIONERS



PROFESSORS



POLICYMAKERS



COMMUNITY



OUR TEAM

Philomena V. Mantella, Ph.D.
President



Don Cooper
*Assistant Vice President for
Charter Schools*



Dear friends,

One of the most inspiring aspects at Grand Valley is our drive to empower learners to achieve success. Lakers on campus and throughout our global network continuously shape offerings that address the issues of the moment as well as the systemic barriers so many of our learners face.

Our goal is to be the catalyst behind solutions that embed equity and celebrate inclusion in our educational ecosystems. Grand Valley leads in learner-oriented design, both on our campuses and throughout our community. This undergirds our commitment to authorizing 79 charter public schools throughout Michigan.

This report describes how Grand Valley's Charter Schools Office embraces the university's position as a nexus of innovation in local, statewide, and national education, reaching higher for the benefit of the public. You'll learn how the Charter Schools Office spearheads efforts to improve schools through the authorization and support process. We challenge the givens, we question, examine, and adapt what we do to better align with dynamically shifting present-day needs. New partnerships and research initiatives are launched to quickly uncover best practices. We work together to solve problems in and through education at all levels, propelling opportunity for all.

You'll also read about the strengthening of the bonds we have with the students and educators in our charter public schools and on GVSU's campus. Working in partnership with our colleagues across campus, new pathways increase access to high-quality education and connect more learners to knowledge, support, and career achievement.

The Charter Schools Office exemplifies the passion we have at Grand Valley for embedding excellence into every aspect of our work. It is that passion for equity and excellence both on campus and in our charter public schools that drives us and that you will see unfold on the pages herein. Enjoy the report and join us on this journey!

Philomena Mantella, Ph.D.
President
Grand Valley State University

Don Cooper
Assistant Vice President for
Charter Schools

Mission

Grand Valley State University authorizes charter schools to join together professors, practitioners, policymakers, and communities (3P+C) in new ways to solve problems in education.

Vision

We strive to be the model university authorizer by accessing the university's collective resources and diversity to contribute to the enrichment and constant improvement of all Grand Valley State University-authorized schools.

Values

At Grand Valley State University's Charter Schools Office, the primary focus is understanding complex problems in the GVSU network of schools, facilitating the design of solutions, and advancing remarkable change in teaching and learning. Our mission, vision, and strategic outcomes reflect the university's five core values. These core values provide a foundation and framework for all of the Charter Schools Office's decision-making processes:

- Inquiry
- Inclusive and Equitable Community
- Integrity
- Innovation
- International Perspectives





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Grand Valley State University
continuously develops opportunities
that connect the teachers and
administrators working in its charter
schools to innovative solutions.



Linking Leaders to Understand and Solve Common Issues

Innovation is best fueled when new ideas can be rapidly tested, measured, modified, and replicated. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the GVSU CSO created nimble workgroups through which school leaders could share leading practices and gain perspectives from colleagues as they all faced the same problems.

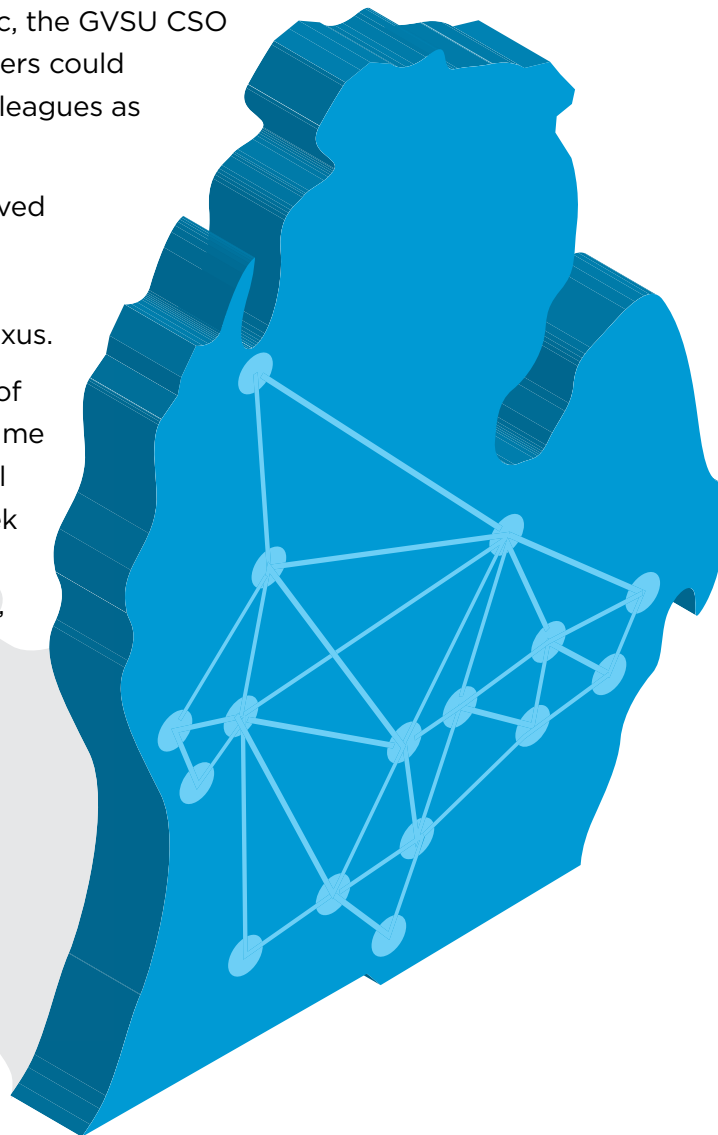
Principals praised the support and solutions they received in the workgroups, and as the 2021-2022 school year approached, the GVSU CSO enhanced the structure of those meetings to formally create the Laker Leader Nexus.

The Laker Leader Nexus builds upon the best aspects of the workgroup format to add even more value to the time school leaders spend with their colleagues. While small cohorts of principals are still invited to collaborate week to week, the GVSU CSO also expanded some sessions into portfolio-wide discussions, where legislative items, statewide trends, or proven resources are explored.

Principals can also use the Nexus to connect to state and national charter school leaders who periodically join to share their perspective on common issues.

Through the Nexus, leaders have better access to ideas they have yet to try, as well as quick feedback from their peers.

Ultimately, it is a space where the increased connectivity elevates high-quality solutions that can be used to improve education in any community in Michigan.



Piloting New Professional Enrichment Opportunities

As schools continued to manage the longer-term impact COVID-19 had on day-to-day instruction, it was clear many educators needed resources tailored to their immediate needs. Not only were they seeking resources to resolve challenges in the classroom, but also resources that could

transform their work in new ways and contribute to their overall career goals.

To meet that need, the GVSU CSO piloted a new scholarship called the Educator Enrichment Scholarship. The scholarship financially supports educators in GVSU-authorized charter schools who wish to enroll in courses or programs not covered by the CSO's M.Ed. scholarship.

A dean, for example, could take an undergraduate statistics class to learn more about reading data, or a principal could take a graduate public administration course to better understand strategic planning.

Opportunities like the Educator Enrichment Scholarship expand access to vital knowledge and tactics addressing current classroom issues, especially as teaching and learning continue to rapidly evolve.

By opening more doors to solutions, educators will have the assistance they need to create a working environment that best suits them and the students they serve.

“The Educator Enrichment Scholarship has helped me develop new ways to teach social emotional learning strategies to my students and improve my classroom management skills.”

– Brittany Klemish,
William C. Abney Academy

Inviting New Perspectives to the Charter Renewal Process

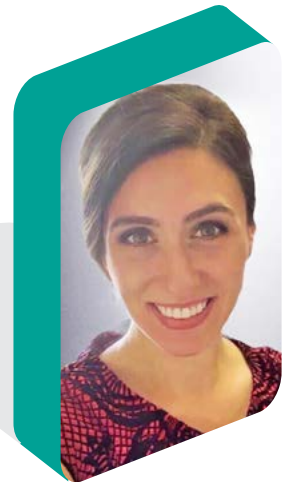
A core function of charter school authorization is to evaluate each school's academic, organizational, and fiscal performance to determine if its charter contract should continue. While school performance is monitored through routine oversight, the GVSU CSO also engages with school stakeholders through comprehensive charter renewal school visits, which occur near the end of a school's charter contract term.

For some renewal visits during 2021-2022, the GVSU CSO invited leaders from higher education institution authorizers in other states to participate.

Guests included leaders from Trine University, the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, and University of Wisconsin System's Office of Educational Opportunity.

The benefits of bringing out-of-state colleagues in is two-fold. First, a fresh set of eyes further elevates the level of neutrality during the observation and deliberation stages. Second, the guests can provide insight to the renewal process itself, helping the CSO uncover areas for improvement while returning with ideas that they can use for their own renewal process.

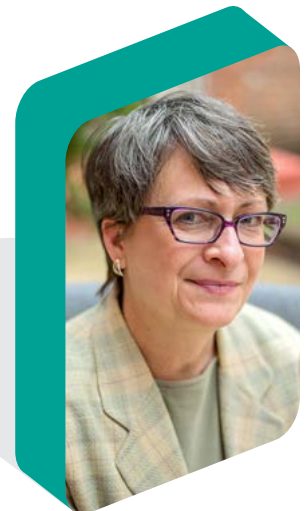
In the end, the schools get a more accurate assessment and both authorizers come away with suggestions for adjusting current practices. Overall, it deepens the level of accountability and integrity that families expect from charter public schools and their authorizers.



Vanessa Moran,
University of
Wisconsin System,
Director, Office
of Educational
Opportunity



Brenda Mescher,
Trine University,
Assistant Director of
Community Connections
and Compliance



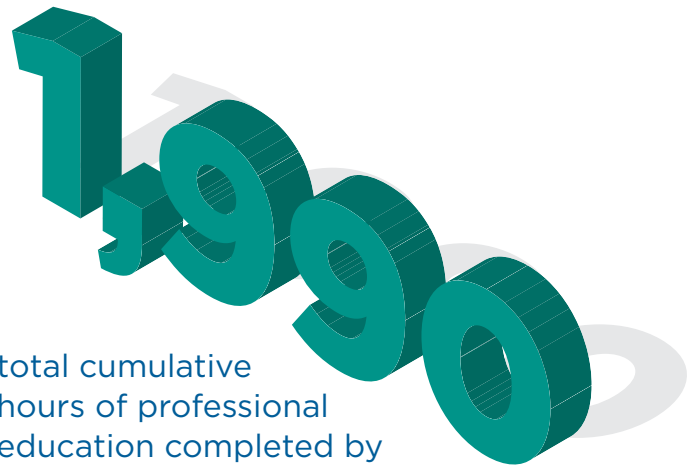
Theda Sampson,
Thomas B. Fordman Institute,
Director for Applications and Contracts



Driving Teacher Development for All

Part of the original vision of charter public schools was to create an environment where new ideas could be explored and, if found to be effective, widely implemented across districts. By opening more pathways to knowledge, more teachers would have impactful tools and more students would reach their academic goals.

For years, the GVSU CSO has addressed professional education in a similar manner; we believe that great leadership and instructional tactics that work at a charter school can work for any educator in any school. In the 2021-2022 school year, the GVSU CSO continued to be a significant provider of professional education opportunities for teachers and administrators across all types of Michigan school districts.



total cumulative hours of professional education completed by educators through GVSU CSO webinars

Because of a wide variety of webinar offerings, educators from every corner of the state could turn to Grand Valley to find meaningful sessions on literacy, education technology, STEM learning, school improvement, and interpersonal values. The GVSU CSO also provided a multisession series dedicated to some of most significant issues teachers faced, such as supporting students through trauma-informed practices and embracing teacher empowerment.

Creating spaces for educators of all backgrounds to collaborate keeps the most important question at the forefront of each participant's mind: what can we do, together, to make sure our kids are reaching their highest academic potential?

Researching What Impacts Student Learning

At Grand Valley, we recognize that solutions are created and adjusted through consistent inquiry. We value active-questioning in our work, as well as in every effort our schools undertake to improve teaching and learning.

The GVSU CSO furthered its understanding of the effects COVID-19 had on its portfolio of schools by extending two research studies that were first conducted in the 2020-2021 school year. The studies — both conducted by the independent research group Basis Policy Research — continued to quantify how the pandemic was impacting student achievement, as well as how teachers felt about their work environment.

VIEW THE REPORTS
gvsu.edu/cs0/research



The results of the studies provided key insights into the past two years of instruction. Students generally continued to grow academically through the pandemic, but at a noticeably slower rate than prior to 2020, confirming that schools in Grand Valley's portfolio were experiencing the same trends occurring nationally.

As for teachers, their voluntary survey responses illuminated a collective desire for leaders to provide them with more consistent feedback and opportunities to observe high-quality instruction.

The necessity for continuous learning helped the GVSU CSO and its schools identify action items that could address the most pressing needs for students and educators.

Expanding Our Team with Top Talent

Grand Valley's charter public schools work tirelessly to provide every child with the resources they need to succeed. In an effort to amplify that support, the GVSU CSO often partners with experienced state-level leaders who can offer schools a wealth of actionable advice and information.

That's why, in 2022, the GVSU CSO was excited to welcome Jan Weckstein to the team as a school support specialist who would focus exclusively on special education items throughout GVSU's portfolio of schools.

Prior to joining the GVSU CSO, Jan held the role of deputy director for the Michigan Department of Education's (MDE) Office of Special Education (OSE). In her role, she oversaw OSE managers, state and federal reporting processes, and stayed connected to Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) grant-funded projects like MiMTSS, START, SEMS, and more.

She assisted in the supervision of the Michigan School for the Deaf and MDE low-incidence outreach programs. Jan also held numerous leadership roles in school districts across the lower peninsula.

With Jan's assistance, schools will be able to improve their special education policies and gain valuable insight into MDE timelines, opportunities, and expectations. As a result, students utilizing special education services will receive another tier of collaborative care.



Jan Weckstein,
School Support
Specialist

The Grand Valley Charter Schools Office is the nexus where K-12 education and higher education professionals unite.

PROFESSORS



Advancing Graduate Research at GVSU

One of the GVSU CSO's goals is to continuously broaden the symbiotic relationship the university has with the public schools that it charters. By helping faculty and staff connect directly with schools, new opportunities arise for partnerships that help the GVSU community explore its curiosities. During the 2021-22 school year, Jennifer Ford, program director and assistant professor for the Master of Science in clinical dietetics, and clinical dietetic graduate students from GVSU's School of Interdisciplinary Health partnered with GVSU-authorized charter schools on two distinct research projects.

In one master's research project, graduate students Abigail Glonek, Rose Ribbens, and James Smith explored high school student awareness and desire to pursue dietetic careers through a presentation on the dietetic profession with a pre- and post-test evaluation. The purpose of their study was to identify the level of student awareness and interest in the dietetics profession in a diverse high school population. The GVSU students provided a presentation on the dietetic profession to 29 high school students in an Advanced Physical Education class at Grand River Preparatory High School. Their study found a significant increase in students' self-reported likelihood to consider the dietetics professions. Of the 29 high school students, nine increased their ranking of likelihood to consider a career in nutrition and dietetics, 11 reported an increase in confidence about the dietetic profession and nine reported an increase in their desire to pursue a career in dietetics.



Jennifer Ford,
Program Director
and Assistant Professor for
Clinical Dietetics Coordinated
Graduate Program

Advancing Graduate Research at GVSU (continued)

In another study, clinical dietetic graduate students Ashleigh Walter, Mikaela Rogers, and Lauren Klein investigated the impact of in-school nutrition education on child and adolescent nutrition knowledge at West Michigan Academy of Arts and Academics. The researchers provided nutrition education on calcium,

vitamin D, and iron, and a pre- and post-test were provided after the nutrition education. Results from this study support the inclusion and effectiveness of nutrition education in schools for improving child/adolescent nutrition knowledge.

The GVSU graduate students were able to showcase their research projects through a poster presentation to family, faculty, and dietitian preceptors at GVSU's clinical dietetics Annual Research Day on April 29, 2022.

Furthermore, Ford will be working with another group of clinical dietetic graduate students on an exploratory study of the experiences of GVSU charter schools teachers and administrators on food allergy awareness and education. The goal, Ford said, would be to standardize food allergy education and deploy it through GVSU's network of charter schools to improve food allergy safety procedures.

Working alongside GVSU's charter schools gives Grand Valley faculty and staff the chance to tap into a potential sample base that includes thousands of public school educators and students. Having access to such a unique opportunity fuels a sense of inquiry and further motivates the Grand Valley community to find new solutions for today and tomorrow.

Jennifer Ford and the clinical dietetics team would like to thank Joanna Bennink, Mike Irwin, Brent Klug, and Don Cooper for their help and support with both research projects.



Connecting More Educators to Graduate-level Learning

As a nexus where K-12 education and higher education meet, the GVSU CSO continues to explore new ways to connect more educators to the lifelong learning opportunities offered by the College of Education and Community Innovation and other university departments.

A cornerstone of this effort comes from the GVSU CSO's Master of Education Scholarship, which is offered to all full-time, certified educators working in GVSU-authorized charter schools. The scholarship is available to eligible students taking courses in Grand Valley's graduate-level education programs, as well as courses that lead to certifications and endorsements.



President Mantella congratulates M.Ed. student at Commencement

\$540,000
awarded
in tuition
reimbursement

Scholarship recipients can receive 50% or 80% tuition reimbursement depending on the length of service at their GVSU charter school.

In 2021-2022, educators from 50 GVSU-authorized charter schools utilized the scholarship. In total, the GVSU CSO awarded nearly \$540,000 in M.Ed. scholarship funds during the academic year.

Helping K-12 educators access the knowledge, guidance, and expertise of Grand Valley faculty can lead to the discovery of new ideas or resources that may spark school improvement. Furthermore, Grand Valley faculty may be inspired to partner with educators to explore their curiosities around a problem of practice. By opening more doors to continuous learning for adults, more student-focused solutions can be uncovered, studied, and implemented.

Putting Classroom Theory Into Practice Through School Partnerships

The GVSU Charter Schools Office acts as a unique passageway that helps other university departments establish opportunities for learners to apply their studies in a K-12 school community. During the 2021-2022 school year, for example, the CSO once again helped learners from the Criminal Justice department complete internship hours by supporting the unique student population of Covenant House Academy Grand Rapids.

For alumnus Julian Pearson, who is pursuing a career working with juveniles, the yearlong experience working with the school amplified the effectiveness of the tools he learned in the classroom. “I started to see the real scenarios that could exist and how what we talked about in class actually can help you in the field. It’s a game-changer.” Julian also said that his experience with a diverse student population has contributed to the development of his leadership and communication skills, pushing him to focus on small details and be strategic with his messaging. “I’ve really learned how to find a middle ground where I can be authoritative but also still build strong rapport where they respect me because I respect them.”

Immersive, collaborative experiences like Julian’s supplement faculty instruction by putting learners in real situations, allowing them to utilize classroom knowledge. And for learners like Julian, those experiences confirm their passions for their area of study.



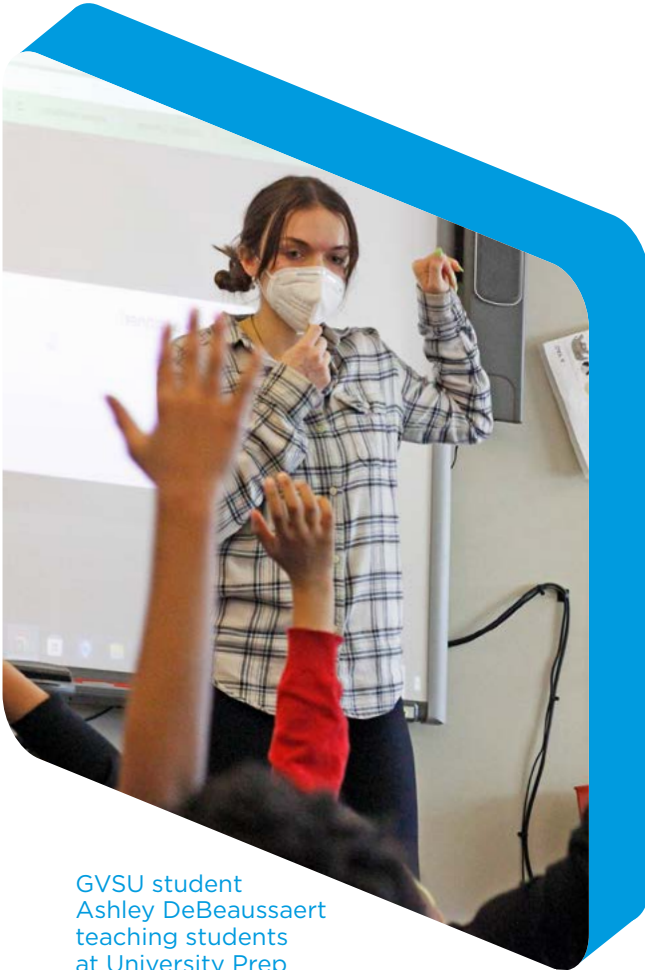
Julian Pearson,
Covenant House
Academy Grand Rapids

Promoting the Teaching Profession in Detroit

One of the best ways to hone a skill on the path to excellence is to consistently find ways to integrate theories and practice. It gives learners the opportunity to test their knowledge in the field and refine their personal tactics to improve outcomes. The GVSU CSO looks to broaden such available opportunities for learners by helping them hone their work within the university's charter schools.

This year, 12 GVSU undergraduate students studying to become teachers received the Detroit Student Teacher Scholarship from the GVSU CSO. The scholarship covers tuition for an entire semester while students apply their studies in one of GVSU's charter schools in Detroit. Not only would students get the opportunity to assist a high-needs community, they would also be embedded in the state's largest teaching market, giving them easier access to countless job opportunities upon graduation.

The GVSU CSO understands that it is imperative to help create more and more co-curricular experiences for Grand Valley learners. Not only does it further their development in their studies, it also solidifies their understanding of evidence-based research and how it can appropriately guide their professional decisions.



GVSU student
Ashley DeBeaussaert
teaching students
at University Prep
Academy Elementary
School - Ellen
Thompson Campus

For schools to get results, the policy environment must be in alignment. Everyone — teachers, school leaders, board members, and public officials — must have shared expectations. The Grand Valley State University Charter Schools Office works to align policies among all stakeholders.



Spearheading Research Into National Best Practices

For some higher education institutions, authorizing charter public schools complements historic commitments that were made to improve teaching and learning. For others, it is a bold new way to reach communities and empower families with educational opportunities. Collectively, every authorizing institution understands that they have an obligation to use some of the best aspects of higher education to improve public elementary and secondary schools.

This year, GVSU partnered with Ferris State University, Northern Michigan University, and other colleges and universities throughout the nation to initiate a national exploration of best practices among higher education authorizers. The research project was conducted by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA), the unbiased, leading voice of the nation's chartering community for great authorizing practices. NACSA examined what the higher education authorizer landscape looks like, as well as the unique challenges and benefits colleges and universities face when engaged in charter school authorization.

National research such as this brings light to strengths of the sector and areas of improvement of all. It could also provide encouragement to other colleges and universities that want to explore charter school authorization. Ideally, it would be a key resource that guides state policymakers and leaders who oversee human capital programs, offering insight to those who want to broaden the impact they have for the kids and families in their states.



Increasing the Value of New Board Member Orientation

When charter school board members are appointed to their role by the GVSU Board of Trustees, it is imperative that they understand their duties as public officials and are ready to lead. The GVSU CSO ensures new board members feel confident in their new role through numerous orientation resources, including a newly created series of supplementary video training modules.

The eight-module series is designed to help new board members start their orientation process sooner and complete it at their own pace. As they progress through the modules, new board members get a general sense of the educational environment they are stepping into and their role within it.

Modules cover introductory items like the history of charter schools, their board's relationship with GVSU, and tips for good governance practices. They even watch a mock board meeting, so they are familiar with proper decorum and procedure well before they participate in their first official meeting.

The modules now also make other training sessions more meaningful by allowing the GVSU CSO to dive deeper into specific subject material that board members should know. As a result, new board members become even better equipped to govern with success and the utmost integrity.

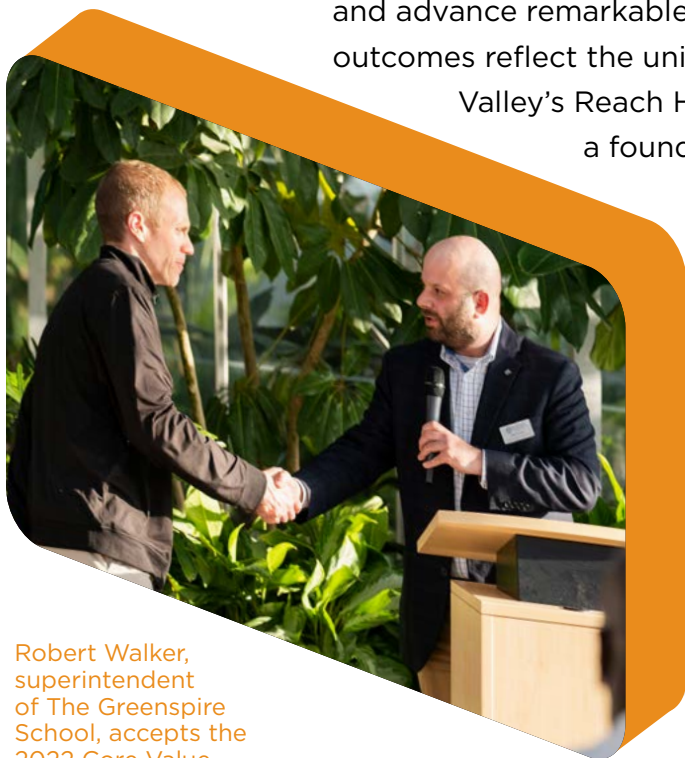
To access the modules, go to gvsu.edu/cso/boardmodules



A mock board meeting takes participants through an entire scripted agenda

Championing Our Core Values Through Award Program

A primary focus of the GVSU CSO is to understand complex problems in GVSU's network of charter schools, facilitate the design of solutions, and advance remarkable change in teaching and learning. Our work and outcomes reflect the university's five core values, which are part of Grand Valley's Reach Higher 2025 strategic plan. These values provide a foundation and framework for all GVSU CSO decision-making processes.



Robert Walker, superintendent of The Greenspire School, accepts the 2022 Core Value Award for Innovation

To recognize, highlight, and celebrate the efforts GVSU's charter schools make to advance achievement through these core values, the GVSU Charter Schools Office was pleased to introduce a new value-based awards program. Each year, awards will be presented to school boards whose program, project, practice, or other initiative best demonstrates advancement of a GVSU core value.

In the spring of 2022, the first ever GVSU CSO Core Value Award went to The Greenspire School in Traverse City, which won the innovation award for piloting a new statewide teacher evaluation program. Awards for other core values will be added in subsequent years.

When the GVSU CSO and its network of schools continuously check that all work is framed by our shared values, then we are better positioned to model initiatives that push us to reach higher and advance all communities.



board members
completing 25 years
of service



board members
completing 20 years
of service



board members
completing 10 years
of service

Celebrating Long-term Commitments to Public Education

Every school board that governs GVSU's charter public schools is composed of people who volunteer to develop better outcomes for the children in their community. Being a board member can be a powerfully rewarding experience, but it is also a role that takes high levels of selflessness and passion to properly guide the school toward achieving its mission.

Such enthusiasm for excellent public education is evident throughout the GVSU CSO's portfolio by the number of board members who have dedicated their time and expertise for multiple terms. During the 2021-2022 school year, the CSO celebrated dozens of milestones as 57 board members completed their 10th year of service, 24 completed 20 years, and eight completed their 25th year.

That incredible level of longevity indicates that the board members governing the schools we authorize have developed a deep bond with their school community and feel charged to turn their vision for public education into a reality. For that, the GVSU CSO is always seeking more ways to show gratitude for our charter school board members.

The Grand Valley State University
Charter Schools Office is dedicated
to strengthening and expanding
relationships between the university,
its charter public schools, and the
communities they serve.



Expanding Our Commitment to Lifelong Lakers

Grand Valley sees every student in its charter public schools as a member of the Laker community. To support their lifelong success, the university and the GVSU Charter Schools Office develop new opportunities that help learners reach their full potential.

On February 3, 2022, the GVSU CSO announced two scholarships the university established specifically for students who graduate from a GVSU-authorized charter high school: the GV Charter School Alumni Scholarship and the GV UPrep Charter School Alumni Scholarship.

Both scholarships award eligible students \$1,000 a year for up to four years, meaning an incoming first-year student could receive a maximum of \$4,000 or \$8,000 depending on eligibility. Alumni who are already on campus and transfer students could also receive the scholarships.

The GVSU CSO expects the university to award at least \$130,000 to its charter high school alumni at the start of the Fall 2022 semester, when scholarships first take effect.

The GVSU CSO is proud to provide financial support to charter alumni so they can focus more on their studies and career preparation. By removing some of the barriers to higher education, countless future students will feel inspired when they choose Grand Valley.

For more information about the scholarships, please visit gvsu.edu/cso/charteralum.



GVSU charter high school alumni students celebrate the announcement of their new scholarship



Inviting National Thought Leaders to Our Community

At GVSU, we cherish the opportunity to incorporate a wide range of perspectives when developing meaningful solutions. It is important to learn from others as they bring new information to light that deepens understanding and sparks inventive ideas.

One way the GVSU CSO strives to shape this atmosphere of understanding is by welcoming new voices to conversations happening (or not yet happening) in Michigan. Throughout the school year, the GVSU CSO invited national thought leaders to participate in a monthly radio series and share their work in the school choice movement with Michigan families.

The CSO was proud to connect listeners to leaders, including:

- Andrew Campanella, President, National School Choice Week
- Denisha Merriweather, Founder, Black Minds Matter
- Ron Rice, Senior Director of Government Relations, National Alliance for Public Charter Schools

The leaders' discussions focused on the accelerated desire for more school choice options, how school choice can improve educational equity, and the decisions in Washington, D.C., that could impact Michigan children.

Bringing in national voices gives Michigan parents additional understanding that they are part of a movement that touches nearly every part of the United States. By increasing collective knowledge, more and more community members can feel empowered to make an impact in public education at the local, national, and global level.



Andrew Campanella,
President, National
School Choice Week



Denisha Merriweather,
Founder, Black
Minds Matter



Ron Rice,
Senior Director
of Government Relations,
National Alliance for
Public Charter Schools

Bringing the ArtPrize Experience to the Classrooms

A major benefit of being a university charter school authorizer is having the ability to tap into a vast array of resources that creatively broaden student understanding of the world around them. One way the GVSU CSO accomplishes this is by inviting schools to visit Grand Rapids to experience ArtPrize, an international art competition.

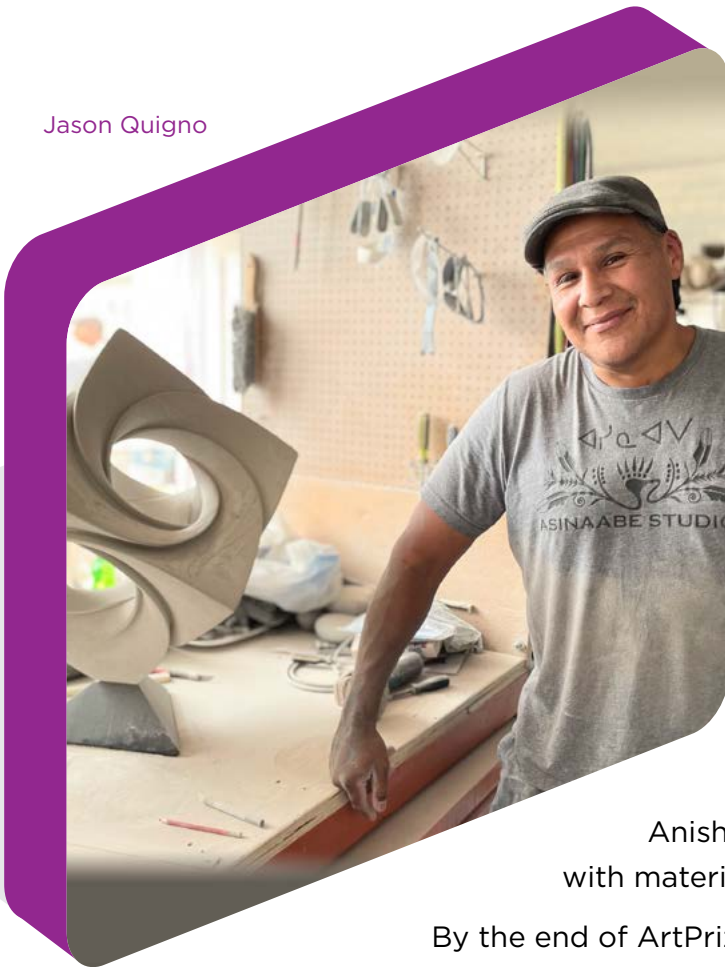
This year, in an effort to allow more students to safely participate — and reduce the amount of time spent away from the classroom — the GVSU CSO partnered with the GVSU Art Department to design a virtual art education opportunity available to all students in grades 3-6.

The hands-on lesson included instructional content featuring Jason Quigno, an Indigenous artist from Michigan who was a contestant in ArtPrize 2021. During the lesson, Quigno shows students how he creates his stone sculptures and how they connect to

Anishinaabe culture. The CSO then provided students with materials to carve their own soap sculptures.

By the end of ArtPrize, more than 800 students across the state had participated in the activity. More importantly, the students were able to learn about a culture different than theirs through a unique lesson that complemented their classwork.

Jason Quigno



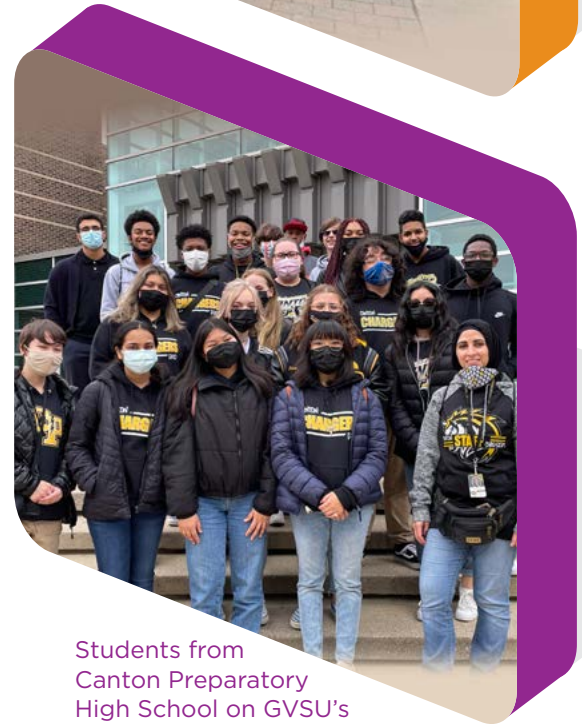
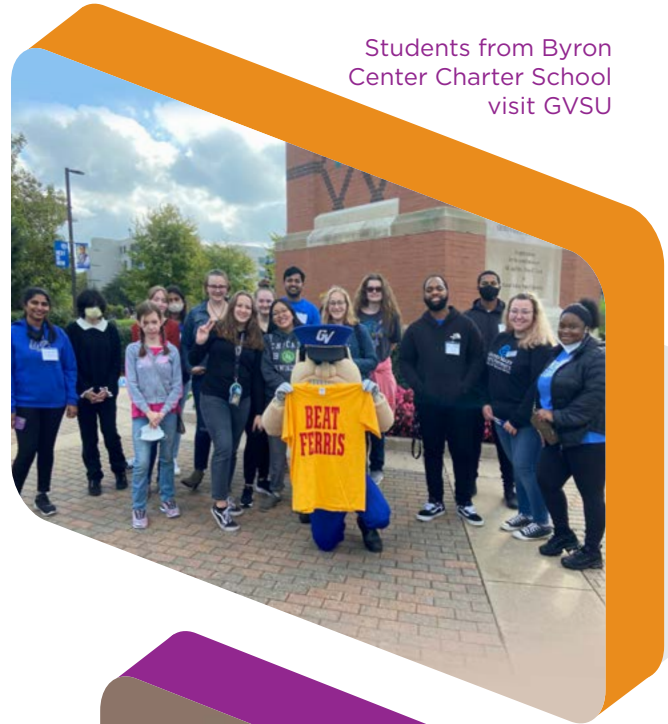
Setting Records with Charter-Through-College Connections

Since its founding, GVSU has taken pride in being a place where learners can pursue their professions and find their purpose. The GVSU CSO works to amplify that mission by connecting students to the university well before they have graduated high school, creating various opportunities to learn why it's special to be a Grand Valley Laker.

Thanks to such work, there is growing evidence that Grand Valley is a primary destination for a significant number of students enrolled in our schools. During the 2021-2022 school year, more seniors from GVSU's charter public high schools participated in the GVSU CSO's Charter-Through-College programming than in any previous year. In the fall semester alone, for example, 80 students were admitted to Grand Valley thanks to College Night programming held at schools, and nearly 300 seniors visited campus for extended tours.

It is not uncommon to hear Grand Valley undergraduates say that those early connection points made a difference when they were choosing colleges. To them, it showed there was a university that truly cared for their well-being and that there would be familiar staff and students ready to embrace and support them the moment they committed to Grand Valley.

Students from Byron Center Charter School visit GVSU



Students from Canton Preparatory High School on GVSU's Allendale Campus

Advancing Solutions to the Teacher Shortage

Effective, sustainable solutions can be built once we break down any silos that prevent the merging of knowledge. To do that, individuals and organizations have to be committed to creating the spaces that foster evaluation and deliberation across a wide swath of social spheres.

One example of the GVSU CSO's effort to accomplish this was by bringing people together to focus on combating Michigan's teacher shortage. In early March, the GVSU CSO welcomed state policymakers, university members, researchers, K-12 educators, and general members of the public to screen and discuss the documentary *Teachers Who Aren't Teaching: Who Are They and How Do We Get Them Back*. Featuring interviews with research experts, schools, and practitioners in Michigan, the documentary examines ongoing efforts to attract and retain teachers in Michigan, along with the success and challenges of these efforts.

Just by creating that viewing space, teachers, parents, higher education leaders, and elected officials could openly and directly converse with each other minutes after the documentary to better understand their own varying perspectives around the issue and what they heard.

When we encourage more people to actively investigate their surroundings and solve problems together, we increase our shared capacity to improve lives and communities.



A community member sharing her ideas during a Q&A session

OUR TEAM



Bill Barker
School Consultant



Sarah Constable
Office Coordinator



Matt Cawood, Ph.D.
School Consultant



Don Cooper
Assistant Vice
President for
Charter Schools



Michael Cousins
Manager of
Communications

OUR TEAM

Brooke Franklin
School Consultant



Barry Hall II, Ed.D.
Assistant Director
of Charter Through
College Programs



Cheryl Edwards-Cannon
School Consultant



Jayne Lesperance
Manager of Teacher
Development



Clint McDaniel
School Consultant



Jeff Maxwell
School Support
Specialist



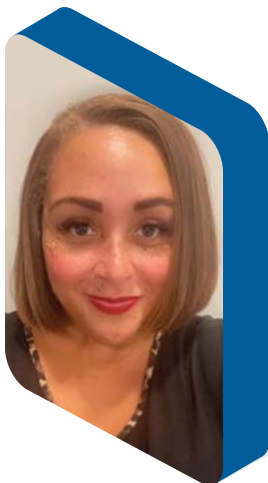


Matt Missias, Ph.D.
School Support
Specialist

OUR TEAM



Alyson Murphy, J.D.
Deputy Director
for School
Accountability



Merrideth Okonkwo
School Consultant



Ram Ravikumar
Manager of Data
Analytics



Jan Weckstein
School Support
Specialist

GVSU Charter Schools Office

Bicycle Factory
201 Front Avenue SW, Suite 310
Grand Rapids, MI 49504
(616) 331-2240
gvsu.edu/cso

GVSU Detroit Center

163 Madison Street
Detroit, MI 48226

*Empowering learners in their **pursuits,**
professions, and **purpose***

All photos were taken responsibly and safely.

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