

news

"SEPTEMBER TRIES ITS BEST TO
HAVE US FORGET SUMMER."
-BERNARD WILLIAMS-

SEPTEMBER 2023

From the Top

Dear Academy Board Members and Academy Staff,

Welcome Back! We hope you had a great summer break and are well rested for the challenges of this school year. Our team has been hard at work this summer reviewing new charter applications, preparing 2022-23 annual reports, and organizing professional development opportunities.

We are excited to be partnering with Saginaw Valley University to offer five regional board trainings. Please see page 2 for details. We will be sending out a save the date email with a link to sign up for your region.

All training dates will begin at 5:00 p.m. and include dinner and networking opportunities. Your supervising field officer will have more information for you in the near future. We look forward to seeing all of you for this great professional development opportunity. We also encourage you to discuss summer camp/outreach opportunities with your field representative for the 2023-24 academic year. It makes us smile to see charter school students and staff on campus.

Our team wishes you the best as you embark on a new year.

Chris Oshelski
Executive Director



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Dr. Jody Carrington

"We're all just walking each other home."

-Ram Dass-

The one and only Dr. Jody Carrington, Canadian psychologist, author, and simply amazing human being, was the inspirational speaker for Bay City Academy and North Central Academy's back to school professional development. The training was held on August 14th, 2023 at the DoubleTree Hotel and Conference Center in Bay City. Participants laughed, cried, and were shown the importance of what they do each and every day working with students. "No one is more powerful than teachers," stated Dr. Carrington. She added, "little people will be okay if the big people who teach them are okay." Ensuring the needs of teachers and staff is essential to the overall well being of students.

Carrington used humor to engage her audience while providing real life, concrete examples of ways to manage students that may have "flipped their lid." A child cannot utilize their prefrontal cortex when they are disregulated. Carrington urges to be kind and calm during times of turmoil. Students and quite frankly, staff, need a leader when times are hard.

To learn more about Dr. Carrington, click here, <https://www.drjodycarrington.com/>



Dr. Jody Carrington

"IN THE END AND THE BEGINNING, ALL WE WANT TO KNOW IS THAT WE MATTER ."

-JODY CARRINGTON-

COMPLIANCE CORNER

Upcoming Regional Board Trainings

- **October 4th-** Northern Region- Charlton Heston, St. Helen (LSSU)
- **October 10th-** Southwest Region- Innacademy, Zeeland (LSSU)
- **October 23rd-** Southeast Region- Chatfield School, Lapeer (SVSU)
- **November 8th-** Southeast Region- Tipton Academy, Garden City (LSSU)
- **November 13th-** Southeast Region- Chandler Park Academy, Harper Woods (SVSU)
- To register, please visit, <https://forms.gle/94oGoiuce7uD6Emq7>

Just a reminder that our LSSU CSO website contains a wealth of resources. Check it out.

<https://www.lssu.edu/charter-schools/>



FINANCE CORNER

Welcome Back!

SEPTEMBER

- 30th- Budget Revision Resolution-1st Quarter

NOVEMBER

- 1st Financial Audit
- 1st- Financial Audit Letter to Those Charged with Governance
- 1st- Financial Information Database
- 14th- Quarterly Financial Statement 1st Quarter
- 15th- CEPI-MSDS Student Count per Grade or Setting



Public Act 48 Update

The requirements under PA48 section 98b have been **repealed** for the 2023-24 school year.

What does this mean?

- You are **not** required to set building level goals based on benchmark assessment data, create or post learning plans for transparency purposes, or present to your academy board on progress towards goals.
- You are **not** required to create PA48 reports twice a year, however, I will still do so for you because I've received feedback indicating how valuable the reports are to you. (utilizing a target of a student conditional growth percentile of 50 on the NWEA MAP)
- Reports will be sent out in February and June
- Funding is available for the benchmark assessment (2023-24)

What else does this mean?

- Reporting requirements return in 2024-25 and state, "results must be reported to parents and the department within 30 days of assessment"
- Funding will be made available under 104i as long as you use one of the approved providers and assessments. (NWEA MAP, Curriculum Associates IReady, Renaissance Learnings STAR, or Data Recognition Corp. Smarter Balanced and MDE K-2 Early Literacy Assessments (free options)
- Local benchmark assessments are not eligible for reimbursements.

Click below for MAISA's handy summary.
More information to come as it is published.

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?tab=rm&ogbl#search/longd%40baycityacademy.com?compose=new&projector=1>

"Anyone who has never made a mistake,
has never tried anything new."

-Albert Einstein-

Academy Spotlight



Unleashing Excellence: Sara Messbarger's Extraordinary BCA Music Program

In the heart of a close-knit school, lies a remarkable gem that has been enchanting audiences and nurturing young talent since 2011 – an exceptional small school music program under the visionary leadership of Sara Messbarger. With a passion for the arts and an unwavering commitment to her students, Sara Messbarger has transformed the music program into a powerhouse of creativity, dedication, and excellence.

Sara Messbarger's journey as the director of this outstanding music program has been marked by a series of spectacular accomplishments that have left an indelible mark on both her students and the community. Just this past 2022/23 school year, she has accomplished the following:

- 1. State Competition:** An extraordinary achievement came when the program secured 2nd place in the state for its first-ever high school theater competition, a testament to the zeal and hard work put in by Ms. Messbarger and her team. This was no small feat, as the schools they competed against were significantly larger and the winning team's school was approximately ten times larger than BCA.
- 2. “Matilda the Musical Jr.”:** A production that showcased not only the talent of the young performers but also Ms. Messbarger's ability to translate complex stories into captivating performances.
- 3. Downtown Cabaret Performance:** Celebrating BCA's new downtown office, Ms. Messbarger and her students shined on an unconventional street platform bringing music to the community.
- 4. One Act Competition:** This team valiantly competed in Districts, Regionals, and State Finals of the High School One Act Competition. The program's ability to consistently excel in these contests attests to Ms. Messbarger's keen directorial skills and the dedication of her students.



5. **LoveFest Theatre Festival:** The program's participation in the LoveFest Festival allowed it to showcase its talent and foster a spirit of camaraderie.
6. **Thespian's Festival:** This is the largest high school festival in the state of Michigan and the 10th largest in the country. During this 2 day event, Ms. Messbarger and her students wowed the audience with several remarkable performances, coming home with several awards and most importantly, smiles on faces.
7. **MAPSA Charter School Day Showcase:** This was a feather in Ms. Messbarger's cap as the BCA music program had one the most outstanding performances on the steps of the Capitol Building in Lansing, MI that anyone has ever seen.
8. **"Frozen Jr.":** The most highly attended performance in BCA history. This enchanting challenge of directing "Frozen Jr.", demonstrates her versatility in adapting to different styles and themes.
9. **High School Theatre Leadership Camp:** Recognizing the importance of nurturing leadership qualities, Ms. Messbarger and her students attended a two day High School Theatre Leadership Camp.

The "Why" behind it all, a direct quote from Sara Messbarger:

"My job isn't a job at all, it's doing what I love, with the people that mean the world to me. Teaching my students to be good people, while instilling: confidence, social skills, friendships, compassion, work ethic, and creativity. I am blessed each and every day that I get the opportunity to be a part of BCA, and impact the lives of our incredible students." A Legacy and a Bright Future Ms. Messbarger's journey with Bay City Academy's music program has been a relentless pursuit of excellence, and has had a profound impact on the lives of her students. Sara's music program is a reminder that even in a small school, brilliance can flourish with the right guidance and support. With approximately 45 kids in her first show, "Jungle Book KIDS" and 105 students in "Frozen Jr." she has more than doubled her participation in musicals. There's no doubt that Ms. Messbarger will continue to nurture budding talent, inspire future generations of performers, and weave the magic of music and theater into the fabric of her community for years to come.

Submitted by Stephen Richard, Director of Community & Parent Partnership



Mountain Biking

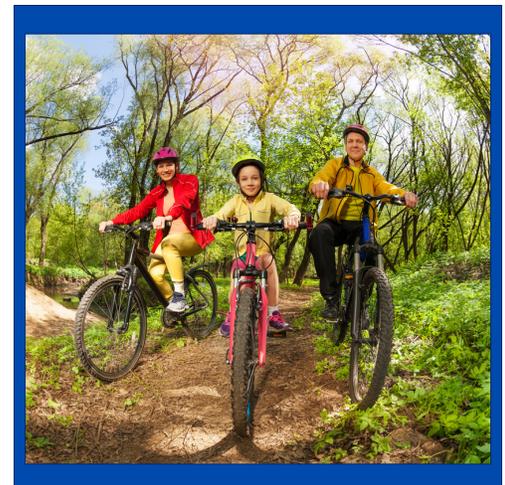
North Central Academy

Mancelona, Michigan, July 24, 2023- "I wish I would have had that when I was in school" is a saying we at North Central Academy (NCA) have been hearing a lot. NCA believes in incorporating lifetime fitness routines into students' school experience. The mountain bike program does exactly that inside and outside of the school day. Students in grades 3-12 have the opportunity to participate in mountain biking during their physical education classes. This includes improving skills like basic balance, learning how to ride on non-pavement, and enhancing bike techniques. Additionally, students have the opportunity to join the NCA Mountain Bike Club to have even more exposure and experience riding on our on-property trails as well as public trails in the region.

Since fall 2021, Coach Spencer Lindenberg has been focused on building the mountain bike program from the ground up. NCA's twenty eight acres of property now has approximately 1.1 miles of completed bike-specific singletrack and a skills area that is currently under construction. The bike fleet has also expanded courtesy of an Outside Riding for Focus Grant which brought in twenty new specialized RockHopper bikes in various sizes. Furthermore, Coach Lindenberg obtained his bike instructor certification Level 1 in March 2022, which allows him to better assist students of all ages with developing their skills. Even with current enhancements, the academy has plans to continue to expand its trail system.

The school and community has had an overwhelmingly positive response to this new program. NCA has started offering Community Biking Days during summer at which community members can come out and enjoy a few hours biking with friends or family. Mrs. Danielle Williams stated that, "the mountain bike program has opened up a lot of opportunities for my son and all of the students. I love how there is a focus on fitness that can be used even after my son graduate. It's even inspired my husband to get into mountain biking in his free time."

Submitted by Jill Kettlewell, Principal



2023-2024 Testing Windows

Fall

September 12-October 6

Winter

January 8-February 9

Spring

April 29- June 7

Per your Educational Goals, 2nd-8th graders must be assessed three times per year by NWEA MAP according to the LSSU testing windows.

Please remember to certify in Epicenter as soon as you have completed testing!

Save the Date

The Michigan Association of Public School Academies (MAPSA) Symposium is an annual charter event for professionals connected to one of the over three hundred charter schools in Michigan. Attendees are able to learn and grow from one another. The 2023-24 symposium will occur on **December 6-7** with the registration link below. This is always a well organized event that features engaging sessions, knowledgeable speakers, provides networking opportunities, along with a social event.

<https://www.charterschools.org/symposium-home>



Brooke's Corner

Welcome back! Thank you for being a part of the work that is some of the hardest but at the same time the most rewarding. You are part of a team that is changing the lives of the students in your care and we truly respect your efforts and commitments.

During the months of August and September, I have had the pleasure of working with many districts to help prepare them for the upcoming school year. WAY Flint, WAY Detroit, North Central Academy, American International Academy, Concord Academy Petoskey, Concord Academy Boyne, Tipton Academy, Macomb Montessori Academy, and Advanced Technology Academy will all have completed NonViolent Crisis Prevention & Intervention training. This training allows educators to add to their toolboxes in helping to support the individuals in their districts. Some of the main takeaways of this training are that all behavior is communication and it is our job to figure out what those behaviors are trying to communicate to us. Additionally, the training prepares participants how to stay professional when incidents happen and how to properly support individuals in need. Throughout this training, we focus on techniques to support individuals who are showing signs of anxiety, verbally escalated, or are in crisis. Select teams from these districts also completed additional training on how and when to safely restrain an individual who is exhibiting risk behavior, meaning they are an immediate risk of harm to either themselves or others.

With over 225 participants during these months, and 40% of the LSSU CSO portfolio utilizing this training, we are happy to continue to offer it. Additionally, we hope you all have an amazing year and we love to continue to grow our relationships with each of your school districts. - **By Brooke Maciag**

Survey Says...

I'm not sure how many of you watched the original "Family Feud" hosted by Richard Dawson but I sure did. Dawson hosted it from 1976 until 1985. It is a classic. In the show, two families compete to name the most popular answers to survey questions. Here's a video on the shows history. Enjoy. <https://youtu.be/sRufAgS1NiU>

The LSSU CSO has conducted our own survey for the past three years. We survey our stakeholders; community partners, administrators, board members, academy staff, and management companies to gain valuable information on how we are supporting our academies and performing as an authorizer. Thank you to all that participated in this year's survey.

According to the results from our 2022-2023 survey, there are some things that we are doing well as an authorizer as well as areas we can improve upon. Let's start with the positives . Our availability to our academies, respecting our PSA's autonomy, holding academies accountable, streamlining our policies and processes, providing timely understandable reports, supporting PSA's, as well as maintaining high standards scored high. Some of the comments we received were, "We appreciate the level of support, I've never felt unsupported in any capacity" or "We value the working relationship with LSSU, the CSO staff does everything possible to see our success." Aww, thank you. :)

Areas that have been identified for improvement include being up to date on compliance requirements, policy changes, and due dates. Because of this, our LSSU Team met with academy administrators in June of 2023 to review compliance requirements and weed out unnecessary tasks in Epicenter.

One other area we are addressing is access to professional development opportunities. The LSSU Team is working to provide a variety of professional development opportunities for both academy staff as well as academy boards.

Please know that we value your feedback at anytime. Please reach out to us if you have other ideas as to how we can better support you in our position. When our academies are successful, we are successful and, most importantly, kids win.



Submitted by Julie Buchholtz

Welcome, Joe!



Meet Joe Thienes. Joe joined our LSSU Charter School's team in May 2023 and serves as field representative for our Grand Rapids area academies. (Innocademy, Innocademy Allegan, iCademy Global, and Ridge Park Scholars) Joe is married to his wife, Monica, and has four adult children and three grandchildren.

Joe was born in Philadelphia and raised in a family of educators. He grew up in the Thumb of Michigan and moved to Grand Rapids in 1991 to pursue a career in school administration. Over his thirty-five years in education; Joe served as a teacher, administrator, and later worked for National Heritage Academies management company. He lead schools through turnaround efforts in Ohio, New York, Louisiana, and Michigan. Joe also worked as a field representative for the John Engler Center for Charter Schools for three years prior to accepting a position with LSSU.

Joe says that participating in activities with his grandchildren has become a fun hobby which includes traveling the state attending Gus Macker basketball tournaments. Welcome, Joe!



Hitting the Road

Fall is my favorite time of year. Not just because I enjoy the crispness of colder air or taking in the beauty of the changing leaves, but this is the season I "hit the road" and visit our LSSU authorized academies.

As the LSSU Academic Assessment Specialist, it is my job to measure the degree to which the students in our academies meet their educational goals and then report that information to Academy leadership and boards. I will once again "hit the road" beginning in late August through late fall to present your Academy's 2022-2023 Annual Academic report in person. You will receive notification as to which board meeting I will attend within the next month.

I look forward to seeing all of you. In a few cases, if there is a scheduling conflict, your friendly field representative may be the one to present your report. Thank you.

-Julie Buchholtz-



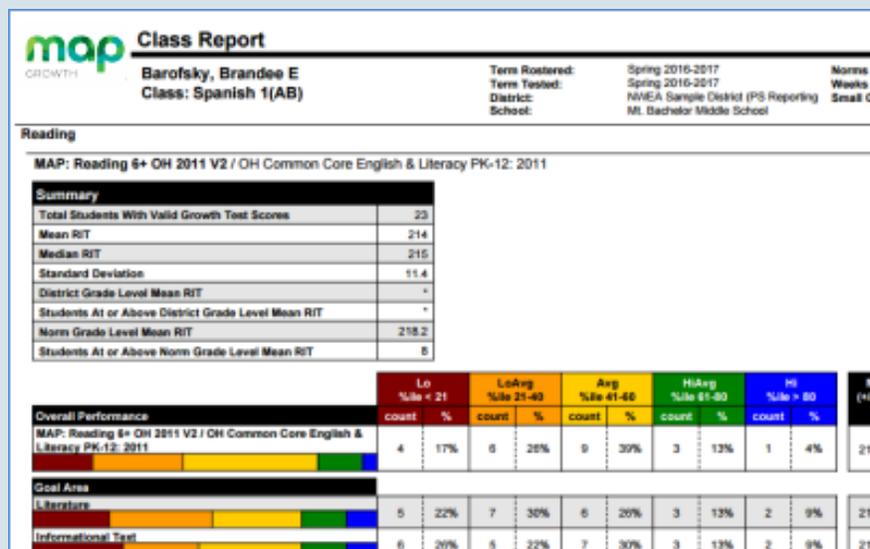
*If you have any questions,
please reach out to me at
jhopper@lssu.edu
or
906-635-2118

Assessment ABC's by Lynn Methner

As school resumes, it is more important than ever to understand what students have learned and what they're ready to learn next. NWEA's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) interim assessment provides timely results, a context for student performance and information to help with flexible grouping. Once your students have completed the assessment, the MAP reports provide a useful instructional tool for classroom teachers, interventionist and administrators.

The Class Report is a great place to start and provides useful information for subjects tested. This report provides educators with a summary of their class' overall performance in regards to Mean RIT, Median RIT, Standard Deviation, and allows for comparison of the percentage of students at or above district and national norms.

So what does this mean instructionally? While Mean, Median and Standard Deviation are all useful, educators may want use the Overall Performance quadrants to quickly calculate the percentage of students performing at or above national norms by adding up the percentages listed for Average (Gold), Hi Average (Green) and Hi (Blue). This is helpful when working toward targeted levels of proficiency. While overall trends are helpful, it is important to dig a little deeper and look at how individual students are doing on page two of the Class Report. This report lists students from low RIT/Percentile to high percentile along with the amount of time spent on the assessment. This can be useful information for instructional grouping, remediation and/or accessing additional supports and services. As with any tool, it is important to be strategic and monitor results over time.



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.



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