

FOUNDATION FOR BEHAVIORAL RESOURCES

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August 14, 2014

Dear Parents,

In June the *Detroit Free Press* ran a series of articles about charter schools in the state of Michigan. Their intent was to expose academic and financial problems at some of the schools, and the perceived lack of oversight by charter school authorizers which allowed these problems to go uncorrected. Unfortunately the *Free Press* chose to use half-truths, inaccuracies and fabrications to make their point. They also refused to publish a correction and rebuttal prepared by the Michigan Association of Public School Academies (MAPSA), even though the *Free Press* privately acknowledged many of their errors.

On Monday, August 11, State Superintendent Mike Flanagan, issued a statement in which he announced that he was placing 11 of Michigan's 40 charter school authorizers on probation. The basis on which he chose these authorizers seems to have been a combination of the *Free Press* articles and some secret, non-public data. Among these 11 authorizers was Grand Valley State University (GVSU), which authorizes our four schools, Arbor, Evergreen, Forest and Oakland Academies. In January, 2013, the same Superintendent Flanagan issued a study which identified GVSU as the best authorizer in the state. His report, *Presentation on Public School Academy (PSA) Authorizer Performance Metrics*, used student achievement data to show how superior GVSU's schools are across all racial and socio-economic groups. In fact, GVSU's final overall score was almost 50% higher than the number two authorizer. See:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Item_B_PSA_410260_7.pdf . GVSU has many of the very best Michigan schools in their portfolio and, frankly, it is a mystery to us how GVSU made it to the probation list.

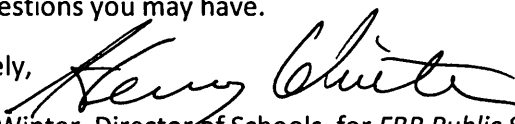
Local news media have picked up the story of Superintendent Flanagan's action this week and have broadcast and published a number of very negative stories about charter schools. Much to their credit, Kalamazoo's channel 3, WWMT, issued a clarification on Tuesday in which they stated that our four academies are among the best in the state, and even pointed out that Oakland Academy is among the top 10 percent of Michigan's schools. See: <http://wwmt.com/news/features/top-stories/stories/Clarification-on-charter-school-story-12946.shtml> .

I want to assure parents of several facts:

1. GVSU is cooperating with the Michigan Department of Education, and naturally will meet whatever requirements are established by Superintendent Flanagan.
2. Even if the worst were to occur for GVSU and they were suspended from being able to authorize new academies, the action would have no effect on our schools or our students.
3. The Foundation for Behavioral Resources and the members of the boards of our academies are committed to meeting and exceeding all performance and transparency requirements.
4. No Foundation operated charter school has ever been cited for a deficiency on its annual financial audit.

It remains to be seen how this story will play out in the media, but the good news is that our academies will continue to provide an outstanding education for your students. Feel free to contact our school offices with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Henry Winter, Director of Schools, for FBR Public School Academies

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