

# news

APRIL 2026

“The Earth laughs in flowers.”  
-Ralph Waldo Emerson



## From the Top

Dear LSSU Academy Leaders and Board members,

As we enter the final quarter of the 2025–2026 academic year, it is hard to believe how quickly the year has progressed. While the calendar tells us it is spring, those of us in the Upper Peninsula know that winter is not quite ready to let go just yet. Even so, we are all looking forward to the arrival of warmer weather in the near future.

I would like to remind you that National Charter Schools Week will be observed May 11–15, 2026. The LSSU Charter Schools Office (CSO) will host daily contests with prizes to encourage participation and celebrate the impact of our charter school communities. Additional details will be shared soon on our [Facebook page](#).

The CSO team has been actively engaged in new school authorizations, reauthorization processes, developing professional development opportunities for the 2026–2027 academic year, preparing budgets, and finalizing both office-wide and individual professional goals.

We look forward to welcoming charter school students to campus this spring and summer as they participate in our camp offerings and enrichment opportunities.

As always, please do not hesitate to reach out if we can be of assistance.

*Chris Oshelski*  
Executive Director



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# Charter Week Nominations

Who doesn't love a celebration? National Charter Schools Week is scheduled for May 11<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>. As part of our celebration, we want to recognize the amazing charter school students, staff, teachers, leaders, and board members who are part of our public school academy family. Please consider nominating a Change Maker or Unsung Hero and have your students participate in the student contest.

## 2026 Change Maker Award Nomination Form


**Purpose:** To recognize the leaders who drive innovation and meaningful change in our academies! What is a Change Maker? A Change Maker is an individual who demonstrates innovation, creativity, and a commitment to going above and beyond in support of their academy community. These individuals lead with purpose, advocate for students, and work to create meaningful and lasting impact. Change Makers actively contribute to improving student outcomes, strengthening school culture, and advancing new ideas that benefit students, families, and staff. Eligible nominees may include board members, teachers, administrators, or other leaders who exemplify these qualities. Tell us their story and explain how they are making a difference in their academy community. Nominate someone, [here](#).

## 2026 Unsung Hero Nomination Form

**Purpose:** To recognize the everyday heroes who make our academies stronger. An Unsung Hero is someone who may not always be in the spotlight but plays a vital role in positively impacting the academy community. These individuals work behind the scenes every day to support students, families, and staff. An Unsung Hero could be a support staff member, lunchroom worker, custodian, paraprofessional, office staff member, or volunteer who makes a real difference in the lives of others. While they may not always receive recognition, their dedication, kindness, and hard work are truly invaluable to the academy. During Charter Week, we want to celebrate the people who help make our academies stronger. Please note: This award is intended for individuals not serving in leadership roles, teaching positions, or on the academy board. Tell us their story and explain why they deserve to be recognized as an Unsung Hero. Nominate someone, [here](#).

## Why I Love My Charter School–Student Contest

As part of Charter Week, we are excited to celebrate students and their experiences in our charter schools. Students in grades K–12 are invited to share why they love their charter school through one of the following formats: short essay, drawing with a caption, or a short video.



All nominations & entries are due April 24th.

Winners will be selected by grade group:

K-5 (Elementary)- 2 winners  
6-8 (Middle School)-2 winners  
9-12 (High School)-2 winners

To enter the student contest, click [here](#).

# Charter Week Daily Challenges

LSSU Charter Schools

## Charter Week Challenges

### Monday- May 11

Show your academy pride by wearing a t-shirt or sweatshirt that features your academy. Post pictures on our LSSU Charter Schools [Facebook page](#).

Prize: \$150 Visa Card for Academy

### Tuesday- May 12

Show your LSSU pride by wearing a t-shirt or sweatshirt that features Lake Superior State University. Post pictures on our LSSU Charter Schools [Facebook page](#).

Prize: \$150 Visa Card for Academy

### Wednesday- May 13

The winner of our Change Maker contest will be announced at 5:00 p.m. on our LSSU Charter Schools [Facebook page](#). To nominate someone, click [here](#). Nominations close April 24<sup>th</sup>.

Prize: \$100 Visa Card and Gift Box

### Thursday- May 14

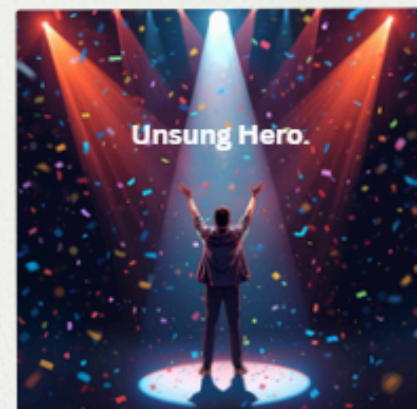
The winner of our Unsung Hero contest will be announced at 5:00 p.m. on our LSSU Charter Schools [Facebook page](#). To nominate someone, click [here](#). Nominations close April 24<sup>th</sup>.

Prize: \$100 Visa Card and Gift Box

### Friday- May 15

The winner of our student contest will be announced at 5:00 p.m. on our LSSU Charter Schools [Facebook page](#). Students can submit [here](#). Nominations close April 24<sup>th</sup>.

Prize: Gift Box for each winner



I like my academy because...

# Finance Corner

## MI Money Matters

The Michigan Department of Education, in partnership with the Michigan Department of Treasury, is highlighting the importance of financial empowerment this April during Financial Literacy Month. Educators and individuals are encouraged to explore the Treasury's MI Money Matters program.

MI Money Matters offers a wide range of free tools covering essential topics such as budgeting, mortgages, health care costs, saving for college, student loans, banking, credit, and overall financial planning. These resources can be easily integrated into financial literacy lessons to support student learning and real-world financial skills.

To participate in the Michigan Department of Treasury's financial wellness program, sign up through [MI Money Matters](#).



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## Upcoming Epicenter Tasks

### **April 30**

-3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Budget Amendment

### **May 15**

-3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Financial Statements

### **June 30**

-2027 Budget Hearing Notice  
-2027 Adopted Budget Resolution  
-3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Financial Statements  
-2027 Budget Timeline



**“Beware of little expenses, a small leak will sink a great ship.”**

-Benjamin Franklin

# Campus Outreach

## Bay City Academy Brings The Sound of Music to LSSU



by  
Melissa St. John

Lights. Camera, Action.

Bay City Academy will be on campus May 26–28 for a special collaboration with LSSU’s Theater program. Working with Assistant Professor, Adam St. John and Bay City Academy Theater/Music Teacher, Sara Messbarger, students will perform their junior production of *The Sound of Music* on the LSSU Arts Center main stage.

During their visit, students will also participate in hands-on theater workshops and behind-the-scenes experiences with LSSU faculty. Two performances will be offered on May 27: A school matinee for local students and an evening performance open to the community.

Charter schools interested in attending the daytime performance can contact Melissa St. John for details at [mstjohn1@lssu.edu](mailto:mstjohn1@lssu.edu). Performance times will be shared soon. This partnership highlights student talent while providing a meaningful, real-world college theater experience.

### Upcoming Charter Visits

We’re excited to welcome the following schools to campus this spring and early summer:

**April 23–24** – Momentum Academy

**May 19–21** – Ridge Park Academy

**May 26–28** – Bay City Academy

**May 28** – Tipton Academy

**June 2–4** – Innocademy Allegan

**June 8–12** – Innocademy Zeeland



# 2026-2027 Professional Development

## 2026-27 Professional Development Overview

For more information or to register contact [Tammy Bell](#)

### **Building Connections: A New Networking Opportunity for Alternative Education Leaders**

Leaders from alternative education academies across GVSU, FSU, and LSSU connect to share ideas, address challenges, and collaborate on promising practices. Dates: TBD.

### **I Love U Guys: Standard Reunification Method (SRM) Training**

Building on 2025–26 Crisis Response Training, this half-day session provides a comprehensive overview of the SRP, how to implement it within your organization and how to train your students and staff on using the Standard Reunification Protocol to respond to any crisis. Date: September 30<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.

### **Leading for Instructional Impact**

Dr. Jenn Shaver will facilitate three sessions focused on equipping leaders with clarity and actionable strategies to support staff instructional growth during the 2026–27 school year. Sessions will be held Oct 14th, Nov 4th, Dec 2nd from 10:00 - 11:30 AM.

### **NWEA Standards Report**

This one hour session will introduce the new Standards Report that will be available by NWEA in Fall 2026. Date: TBD

### **NWEA Instructional Responsive Planning**

An introduction to responsive planning, supporting educators in using MAP Growth data to inform instruction, differentiate learning, and improve student outcomes. Date: TBD (Oct).

### **NWEA: Responsive Planning Implementation Series: Planning Keys (5 sessions)**

This five-session follow-up series supports educators as they apply the Responsive Planning process in their classrooms using the five planning keys. Date: TBD (Nov/Dec).

### **Special Education Leadership Learning Sessions**

Sarah VanderBaan will lead focused sessions on key special education legislation and implementation, offering learning and discussion for special education administrators. Sessions will be held Sept 9th, Oct 28th, Jan 13th, March 10th from 10:00 - 11:30 AM.

### **Winter Book Study**

Lynn Methner will lead a winter 2027 book study (texts provided; selection announced Fall 2026) open to LSSU authorized academy staff, with attendance required for SCECH credit. Dates: 1/19, 1/26, 2/2, 2/9, 2/16, 2/23 from 4:00 - 5:00 PM.

\*These offerings will be presented in a virtual format

# ABCs of Board Reappointment

It is that time of year when the Charter Schools Office (CSO) begins the reappointment process for board members whose terms are expiring this June.

As a reminder, your field representative will inform you of which board members are eligible for reappointment. If a board member wishes to serve an additional three-year term, the following steps must be completed:

**Step 1:** The academy board must nominate the board member for an additional term. The board member must accept the nomination, and the board will then vote to approve the nomination.

**Step 2:** The board member must complete an application for reappointment, which will be provided by the field representative. This application is required to grant the Charter Schools Office permission to conduct a background check, as required by law. All materials must be completed and submitted on or before April 1, 2026.

**Step 3:** Once the above steps are completed, the LSSU Board of Trustees will vote to appoint the candidate to serve another term on the academy board. This vote will take place at the spring meeting.

**Step 4:** The board member will receive an email notification confirming whether they have been approved for reappointment by the LSSU Board of Trustees.

**Step 5:** At the June meeting, the board member will take an oath of office. The oath will be provided by the field representative and must be notarized. The academy field representative can assist with this process. The new term will take effect on July 1, 2026.

-by Melissa Weisberger

**-NOTE-**  
Conflict of Interest and  
verification of  
Professional Development  
credits for board members  
are also  
due by June 30.



## Board Professional Development

There are two remaining board training offerings for the 2025-2026 school year.

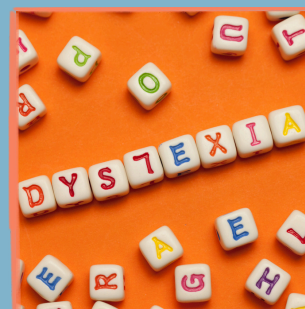
- **April 14:** *Strengthening Governance & Management School Leader Partnerships*
- **May 12:** *Strengthening School Board & Authorizer Partnerships*

Look for an email from Angie Irwin.

## Dyslexia Summit Resources

- [Dyslexia Summit Information](#)
- [2026 Dyslexia Summit Playlist](#)
- [Dyslexia Resources](#)

IMPORTANT: The Dyslexia recordings are only available until April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026.



# Momentum Academy

by **Katie Alexander**, Principal

Momentum was so excited to have our 7th and 8th grade students travel to LSSU on February 19th. Sadly, the bridge was closed and they had to return. However, we have rescheduled for April 23rd.

## -Take Note-

LSSU Charter Schools purchased a BEAUTIFUL bus to transport students from our academies to the campus of Lake Superior State University for various events. Students are now able to ride in style.

Please reach out to Melissa St. John, Connections Coordinator, for more information at [mstjohn1@lssu.edu](mailto:mstjohn1@lssu.edu)

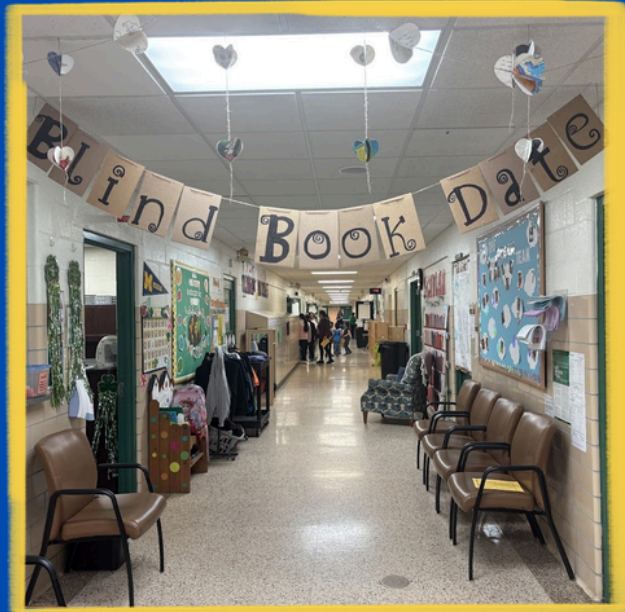


We celebrated Black History Month with a school wide interactive assembly. Students are pictured below while learning about Muddy Waters, Aretha Franklin and Stevie Wonder.



# Reading Month at Momentum Academy

Celebrating National Reading Month with our annual Literacy Night. The theme this year was BLIND BOOK DATE. Each classroom had a different genre. All the books were wrapped and clues were given. We had a mystery book giveaway and every student left with a book. We invited our Girl Scout Troop to set-up a table and sell cookies. What goes better together than books and cookies!



**“Once you learn to read,  
you will be forever free.”**

*-Frederick Douglass*



# Global Travel

Our vision at Lake Superior State University Charter Schools is to foster an educational system in Michigan that provides families with diverse opportunities, empowering each child to flourish, and discover their place in the global community.

Students from across multiple Eastern Upper Peninsula schools, including those from DeTour Arts & Technology Academy, had the opportunity to expand their global horizons. These experiences extend far beyond the classroom, cultivating cultural awareness, building confidence, and creating lifelong memories.

We look forward to hearing about their adventures in greater detail. Stay tuned for a first hand account of the trip in our July newsletter. For now, enjoy some photos.



## 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

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*“Support to Success”*