

# Byron Center Charter School

“Making a Difference”



## School Improvement Plan 2009– 2012

*Byron Center Charter School  
9930 Burlingame Ave., SW  
Byron Center, MI 49315  
(616) 878-4852*

## ***Mission***

Byron Center Charter School strives to equip all students to walk through their doors of opportunity by providing strong academic integrity training and instilling of character.

## ***Description of the Academy***

Byron Center Charter serves grades K-12. The School focuses on character values and academics. The School believes that to teach a child is a noble calling; that throughout life, parents are a child's first teacher with the primary right and responsibility for their child's education. Byron Center Charter School believes a quality education is rooted in character, competence, academic excellence and hard work. The School seeks to assist a child to develop self-esteem and self-respect. Byron Center Charter School also encourages a child to be honest, fair and compassionate, as well as to have a social conscience and environmental awareness.

## **Strand I**

### ***Teaching for Learning***

#### **1. Curriculum**

Curriculum development is an on-going process at Byron Center Charter through the curriculum committee and the school improvement team. The State Model Core Curriculum, state high school graduation requirements, along with the Grade Level Content Expectations, is the basis for the subject matter taught at Byron Center Charter School. Specific benchmarks for skill achievement at Byron Center Charter School are based on the Michigan Frameworks.

Literacy learning, mathematics, science, social studies, art, computer technology, physical education, and music are part of Byron Center Charter School's curriculum. This is accomplished by establishing a partnership with the School's families and community. Byron Center Charter School seeks to provide a disciplined, safe and stimulating environment, developing sound character, citizenship principles, competence and lifelong skills. Byron Center Charter School will also strive to provide unique and innovative teaching styles, curriculums and programs while embracing leading edge technology.

## 2. Instruction

Byron Center Charter School will provide and promote academic excellence for all students in reading/language arts, math, social studies, and science. Early intervention strategies will be explored in the area of literacy.

Language Arts curriculum will be enhanced to include additional writing skills proficiency beginning in the first grade. This will supplement the increased phonics emphasis.

Math students will use higher level thinking skills to project, predict, and create practical solutions to real life examples after being taught the basics.

Science classes will include hands on experiments in all grades. Students will answer questions in laboratory experiments using the terms; what, where, why, and when.

Social Studies students will understand the historical, geographical, economical, and social aspects of each topic and unit studied.

Technology skills will be taught beginning in kindergarten and continuing through high school. Specific skills taught for each grade are aligned with the Michigan Educational Technology Standards and Expectations.

Curriculum alignment corresponding with goals

- Byron Center Charter begins instructions at the kindergarten level.
- Students at Byron Center Charter are encouraged to keep their bodies fit through physical education classes. Nutritional awareness is part of the science curriculum at the School.
- By providing a successful education through grade twelve, students develop the academic skills necessary to succeed at the high school level and beyond.
- Byron Center Charter students also develop organizational and self-esteem skills necessary to succeed in school and life.
- Character traits emphasized at Byron Center Charter are:
  - Responsibility
  - Thankfulness
  - Honesty
  - Courtesy Respect
  - Patience
  - Friendship
  - Truthfulness
  - Kindness
  - Self-Control

- Byron Center Charter School has highly qualified teachers in mathematics and science at the middle and high school level. Technology and real life applications are incorporated throughout the curriculum.
- The students at Byron Center Charter School are provided with the necessary life skills to become lifelong learners.

#### Strategies for Attaining Instructional Goals

- All staff will maintain high expectations while providing the support needed to meet them, students will receive support as identified on IEP's and/or EDP's
- Teachers will integrate classroom material with available media and computer technology resources
- The spectrum of learning styles and strengths will be considered by staff in planning and implementing lessons
- Exit goals for all grades in core curriculum subjects have been established and will continue to be reviewed
- Maximum classroom staff ratio of 1:12 for K-6; 1:20 for 7-12
- Opportunities for hands-on learning and open-ended assignments/projects will be provided for all students
- Higher level thinking skills such as comparison, synthesis, creative and critical thinking will be emphasized in classroom discussions and assignments
- The home/school connection will be diligently maintained to form a team effort in supporting student progress

### 3. Assessments

- ❖ Michigan Educational Assessment Program (M.E.A.P.)
- ❖ Michigan Merit Exam
- ❖ Northwest Evaluation Association – Measuring Academic Progress Test (M.A.P.)
- ❖ Progress reports and report cards to parents
- ❖ Teacher observations
- ❖ Continued varied classroom assessments

Note: All assessments are aligned to the curriculum, and results are distributed to students, parents, staff, administration, school improvement committee, board of education, and Grand Valley State University

## Strand II

### *Leadership*

#### 1. Instructional Leadership

Byron Center Charter School will provide and promote a learning environment which enables all students to achieve a high school diploma, to prepare for higher education, and to obtain the skills necessary to become lifelong learners.

#### Strategies for Attaining Goal

- Continue to review student progress toward graduation requirements
- Continue to review alignment of curriculum to graduation requirements
- Mandate a sufficient number of required credits in all areas of the curriculum
- Assist students in the scheduling of classes so as to aid them in reaching their highest potential
- Provide and demonstrate positive role models and mentors
- Develop lesson plans that will encourage students to attain mastery of basic skills
- Assist students in preparing for state required high school exams and college entrance exams
- Furnish opportunities for students to observe or participate in additional and/or external curriculum and career experiences

#### Assessment of Goal

- ❖ Periodic review of students' files to ensure that graduation requirements are being met
- ❖ Review graduation requirements with the State of Michigan's requirements
- ❖ Standardized assessments measuring abilities/interests
- ❖ Teacher and parent observations
- ❖ Student and parent feedback

## **2. Shared Leadership**

Byron Center Charter School will provide and promote a purposeful, highly moral learning environment throughout the school.

#### Strategies for Attaining Goal

- Byron Center Charter School will incorporate character education into its everyday environment
- Specific character education concepts will be integrated into the Byron Center Charter curriculum
- A School Improvement Team, which includes parent volunteers, will recommend continuous improvements for the school
- A student handbook will be given to each family detailing expectations and violations will be handled on a per case basis
- Weekly recognition of outstanding achievements in the areas of character
- Byron Center Charter School environment will strive to be free from threat or physical harm for both students and staff
- Both student and staff activities; committees will be formed to enhance a positive school and work environment

#### Assessment of Goal

- ❖ Teacher observations
- ❖ Problem behaviors monitored, recorded and referrals made for appropriate interventions

### **3. Operational Resource Management**

Byron Center Charter School's board of education and administration continually review the school's budget and allocations to its specific programs. The school increases its allocations to the programs annually as the need arises. The school budget is publicly submitted to its stakeholders, Grand Valley State University, and Michigan Department of Education.

## **Strand III**

### ***Personnel and Professional Learning***

#### **1. Personnel Qualifications**

In order to be considered for a staff position at Byron Center Charter School, applicants are required to have a current Michigan Teaching Certificate with the appropriate subject and grade level endorsements for the position applied for.

In addition to two interviews to discuss skills, knowledge, and personal dispositions, teachers at Byron Center Charter are required to begin with a mentor, participate in multiple annual professional development in-services, and discuss performance with administration three times per year.

All staff credentials are independently audited by contracted services out of Grand Valley State University at least two times per year.

#### **2. Professional Learning/Development**

Byron Center Charter School is committed to providing quality professional development activities for its staff on a continuing basis.

- All Byron Center Charter teachers have access to quality professional development
- This professional development is available through local in-services and state conferences
- All teachers at Byron Center Charter are certified and continue to acquire additional knowledge and skills needed to teach their challenging subject matter
- Byron Center Charter School has a mentoring program in place
- Networking opportunity with other schools

Staff will continually collaborate to meet the following teamwork goals:

- Openness
- Work together
- Good communication
- Acceptance of each other
- Common focus and direction

- Positive work environment
- Sharing of resources
- Roles and responsibilities are clarified
- Group trust
- Mutual respect

#### Strategies for Attaining Goals

- Staff in-services will be provided
- Staff will have access and attend professional development activities at the local ISD and state conferences
- In-school departmental meetings will be held to instruct staff and discuss latest educational research, technology, and professional development methods
- Mentoring

#### Assessment of Goals

- ❖ Staff reports on professional development activities
- ❖ Administrative/staff evaluations
- ❖ School improvement committee will regularly evaluate effectiveness of activities

## **Strand IV**

### ***School and Community Relations***

#### **1. Parental/Family Involvement**

##### Parental Participation

- Parents at Byron Center Charter are actively engaged in a partnership which supports the academic work of children at home
- Parents participate in the Parent Teacher Organization and School Improvement Team. Parents are also free to address the Board at regular meetings
- Parents provide fundraising activities
- Parents assist by providing playground and classroom assistance
- A public relations committee will be formed to reach out to families and create a partnership with the community

Parents are encouraged to volunteer at Byron Center Charter School. Parents regularly volunteer to assist in the classrooms and special events. Field trips are not possible without the assistance of our parents. Parents are the drivers to and from all field trips, as the School does not have busing. The PTO conducted numerous fundraisers to provide additional materials and trips for students, and serve the entire staff a luncheon with gifts.

Students take part in various out reach projects throughout the year including:

- Visiting a local nursing home
- Smoke House field trip
- Bike Helmet Safety guest speaker
- Adopt a family Christmas project
- Various other field trips

## **2. Community Involvement**

Adult education, community education, libraries and community colleges are part of the education process: Byron Center Charter students utilize local libraries for research as well as recreational reading. Annual field trips are taken to study how to utilize library resources. Library materials are frequently brought into the classroom for student use.

Students have access to Kent Career/Technology Center (KCTC) which is an educational service of the Kent Intermediate School District. KCTC provides students with quality training in over 30 career and technical programs which includes core technical training, academic integration and alignment with post-secondary education. Upon completion of their training, student are assisted by counselors and work-based learning coordinators in finding employment and in exploring further educational opportunities.

Students have the opportunity to dual enroll at the local Community College as well as an area four year university.

Opportunities for structured on-the-job training and internships: Students at Byron Center Charter have the opportunity to job shadow, enroll in Kent Career Technology Center, Kent Transition Center or work a co-op program.

## **Strand V**

### ***Data and Information Management***

#### **1. Data Management**

Byron Center Charter School utilizes authentic assessments as well as standardized tests. Evaluations of student work are mainly completed in the classroom. Evaluation tools are teacher and curriculum developed tests, the MEAP

test, Michigan Merit Exam, and the Northwest Evaluation Association computerized standardized test. In addition, the school's reading specialist, along with the resource room instructor evaluates individuals as needed. Students in danger of falling behind are referred to the school's child find and child study team for analysis.

## **2. Information Management**

Teachers, administrators, community members and parents of elementary and secondary students work co-operatively to develop the school improvement plan. These individuals meet throughout the school year to analyze, review, and interpret all data obtained by the school as it relates to the school improvement process. The team then revises the plan annually according to data collected throughout the school year. Ongoing revisions are and will be made to the school improvement plan to ensure success for all students.

## **3. Technology Committee**

This committee conducts ongoing research and assessment of needs based on technology benchmarks.