

From: [Jan Eckert](#)
To: [Shelly L Armstrong](#); [Archive](#)
Subject: Ferris to Oversee Academies at Vista Maria
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Included below is a press release regarding Ferris State University and its oversight of two charter school academies on the Vista Maria campus in Dearborn Heights. Further information is available by contacting Leah Nixon, assistant director of News Services.

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Ferris Board of Trustees approves oversight of academies at Vista Maria

BIG RAPIDS – The Ferris State University Board of Trustees today approved an agreement partnering the University with the non-profit Vista Maria organization in Dearborn Heights to provide oversight to two new academies – the Clara B. Ford Academy and the Vista Meadows Academy.

Clara B. Ford Academy, located on Vista Maria’s Dearborn Heights campus, would provide instruction for students in grades four through 12 by serving as a Strict Discipline Academy. Strict Discipline Academies are regular public schools, but their enrollment is limited to students who are under the jurisdiction of and are placed by a court, or students who have been either expelled or long-term suspended from a district, said Ronald Rizzo, interim director of Charter Schools at Ferris.

Vista Meadows will be a regular charter school (open enrollment) also located on the Vista Maria Campus and also serving students in grades four through 12. The Clara B. Ford Academy has been authorized by Ferris, while Vista Meadows is authorized by Bay Mills Community College. The Ferris Charter Schools Office will provide oversight for Vista Meadows due to an agreement between Bay Mills Community College and the University.

“Ferris is delighted to be able to partner with Vista Maria,” Rizzo said. “This is a nationally-recognized organization doing astounding work with a forgotten and growing segment of our state’s population.”

Added Vista Maria President and CEO Cameron Hosner, “This will provide us with an opportunity to take a leap forward and create a village of hope for students to sustain the gains they make in treatment. It is these kinds of opportunities that can help break the multigenerational cycles of poverty.”

Ferris is dedicated to continuing its ongoing commitment to the social and economic growth of the state of Michigan and the well-being of all of its populations, Ferris Vice President for Academic Affairs Michael Harris said.

“The University wants to ensure everyone has access to educational opportunities,” he added.

In other charter school news, the board of trustees also approved the re-authorization of Creative Technologies Academy in Cedar Springs for seven years. The academy’s current contract is set to expire on June 30, 2007. Under the new agreement, the academy is re-authorized for an additional seven-year period through June 30, 2014.

The board also approved Conner Creek Academy East’s establishment of a new building site in Warren. The building would meet the demands of a student population nearing 1,000 students for its middle and high school grades. The school is currently under its second five-year contract with Ferris’ Charter Schools Office. Included below is a press release regarding Ferris State University and its oversight of two charter school academies on the Vista Maria campus in Dearborn Heights. Further information is available by contacting Leah Nixon, assistant director of News Services.

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