

News Release

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Local education leader tapped as founding CEO of Flint Cultural Center Academy

Flint, Michigan – Leaders of the Flint Cultural Center institutions today announced Eric Lieske will become the founding chief executive officer of the Flint Cultural Center Academy, effective January 1, 2019. Lieske currently serves as superintendent of Davison Schools.

During 22 years of service to his hometown school district, Lieske has excelled at every level of leadership – classroom, building and district. His service has been distinguished by innovations that benefit children and strong classroom engagement. He is recognized, both in the community and throughout the region, for leading the growth and success that the Davison Schools district has experienced during his eight years as superintendent.

“We’re excited for Eric to play an integral role in the development of our public, nonprofit charter school,” said Mark Sinila, chief operating officer for the Flint Cultural Center Corporation. “His deep educational experience will bring a wealth of knowledge to the Flint Cultural Center Academy, and we look forward to his leadership and vision as we work toward welcoming students next year.”

Expected to open in time for the start of the 2019/20 school year, the Flint Cultural Center Academy will offer students a unique educational experience that features daily activities and programs at the Cultural Center institutions — the Flint Institute of Arts, Flint Institute of Music, Flint Public Library, Longway Planetarium, Sloan Museum and The Whiting.

Mr. Lieske stated, "The revitalization in the Flint community is great to see, and I'm more than excited to become a part of this effort while leading the new Flint Cultural Center Academy. This school has tremendous potential to offer great educational opportunities for kids."

In the first year, the Academy will enroll a total of up to 300 students from kindergarten through fifth grade. The following school year, as the fifth-graders advance, grade six will be added, then grade seven in year three, and grade eight in year four. At that point, the Academy would enroll a total of up to 675 students each school year in grades K–8.

Enrollment will be open to students living in Flint, Genesee County and — in accordance with state law for public charter schools — elsewhere in Michigan. If enrollment applications for a particular grade outnumber the available seats, students will be chosen by a lottery system.

The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation has committed up to \$35 million to cover the costs of designing, constructing and outfitting the school, as well as making related improvements to the Cultural Center campus. The Foundation also awarded an additional grant of \$392,500 to the Flint Cultural Center

Corporation to support initial implementation of the Academy. That grant will cover costs such as curriculum design, hiring of key personnel and technology.

Additional information about the Flint Cultural Center Academy can be found on its temporary website at fccacademy.org.