# DELTA AIR LINES AWARDS $150K TO AVIATION CHARTER SCHOOL TO PURCHASE PLANE

**News / Airlines**

West Michigan Aviation Academy students got their first look at the Cessna 172 plane the charter high **school** was able to **purchase** after a **$150,0000** award from the **Delta Air Lines** Foundation.

"We can increase the capacity of the number of kids we can train," WMAA CEO Pat Cwayna said Thursday about flight school students now having two Cessnas. "We are thrilled."

The 550-student school, located on the grounds of Gerald R. Ford International Airport, was founded in 2010 by businessman and Amway heir Dick DeVos. There are 18 seniors in the flight school.

"The airline industry will need qualified employees in the coming years, and WMAA has the capacity to produce talented future leaders," said Gil West, Delta Air Lines chief operating officer, who said WMAA has an excellent aviation school.

He said the Delta Air Lines Foundation supports education in their key states.

Cwayna said the school has two significant themes - aviation and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math).

"They merge perfectly together and there are such great career opportunities out there," said

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Cwayna, who added the school is projected to have 600 students next year. "Companies cannot find enough talent to fill positions in aviation and engineering."

Cwaya said he connected with a Delta representative who attended the school's March college fair that drew over 20 of the nation's top collegiate aviation and service academy programs. He said soon afterward, a team from Delta visited the school and, in discussing the needs, funding was awarded for the plane.

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