Grand Rapids Promise Zone Approved – Scholarships Available for Class of 2020

The Grand Rapids Promise Zone Authority (GRPZA) is pleased to announce it is launching the Grand Rapids Promise Zone scholarship. Starting with the Class of 2020, students who live in the City of Grand Rapids and graduate from one of the eligible high schools (see below) can earn a certificate or associate degree at Grand Rapids Community College tuition-free. The scholarship will not only cover tuition, but also books, supplies, and fees associated with GRCC courses. The scholarship is prorated based upon the length of time a student resides in the City of Grand Rapids and attends one of the eligible high schools – as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LENGTH OF ATTENDANCE AND RESIDENCY</th>
<th>SCHOLARSHIP BENEFIT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GRADES 9 - 12</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRADES 10 - 12</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRADES 11-12</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRADE 12 ONLY</td>
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</table>

Eligible students in the Class of 2020 will receive additional information in the coming months. However, the GRPZA strongly urges all students to complete their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by March 1. Students can complete and submit their FAFSA online at studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid. Additional information regarding the Grand Rapids Promise Zone scholarship and additional resources to assist students in completing their FAFSA form can be accessed at grpromisezone.com.

Grand Rapids Promise Zone Scholarship – Eligible High Schools:

- Grand Rapids City High School
- Grand Rapids University Preparatory Academy
- Innovation Central High School
- Ottawa Hills High School
- Union High School
- Grand Rapids Montessori High School
- C.A. Frost Environmental Science Academy
- Grand Rapids Public Museum School
- Grand Rapids Learning Center
- Southwest Community Campus High School
- Lake Michigan Academy
- Grand Rapids Catholic Central High School
- Sacred Heart Academy High School
- Grand Rapids Christian High School
- West Catholic High School
- Grand Rapids Adventist Academy
- Wellspring Preparatory High School
- Hope Academy of West Michigan
- Grand Rapids Covenant House Academy
- NorthPointe Christian High School
- Plymouth Christian High School
- Southeast Career Pathways

City High School Marching Band to represent Michigan at 2020 National Independence Day Parade

Grand Rapids Public Schools’ City High Middle School has been invited to be a representative of Michigan in the 2020 National Independence Day Parade in Washington, D.C. The invitation arrived after a nomination by Mayor Rosalynn Bliss which guarantees acceptance to the parade. The band will travel to Washington D.C. to celebrate America’s 244th birthday and perform before tens of thousands of spectators.

“The City High Marching Band performs all over the city, district, and state,” says Mayor Bliss. “I’m eager to see them as one of the Michigan representatives in the parade this year.”

The patriotic spectacle will take place on Saturday, July 4, 2020 in the heart of the United States Capital, making its way west down Constitution Avenue, and ending at the National Mall between the White House and the Washington Monument.

The City High School Marching Band will be featured alongside bands and other parade performers selected to march in this historic tribute to America’s past and present.

“This is a once in a lifetime experience for our students that we don’t want to miss,” says Ryan Huppert, Principal of City High Middle School. “We’re excited about this opportunity and eager to make it happen.”

Throughout the school year, the City High School Band performs at festivals, galas, pep rallies, and games. This year, the band is featuring its first ever Winter Color Guard, for students grades 7-12. The band also features a mentor program where older students tutor younger musicians to help them excel on their instruments. Thank you to GRSAF and all our parents, partners, and donors for making this opportunity possible.
GRPS Hosts 6th Annual ROBO Battle of the Minds FIRST LEGO League Robotics Tournament

In December, GRPS hosted ROBO Battle of the Minds, the 6th annual FIRST Lego League Robotics qualifier for the Grand Rapids area. The FIRST LEGO League in Michigan affords students grades 4-6 the opportunity to explore their futures in the fields of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). Students work as teams building their skills while both designing an autonomous LEGO MINDSTORMS robot and creating a research project that can impact their community. This year’s event will host up to 30 teams from schools across the region and state, up to 10 kids per team.

Grand Dial Communications was the event producing partner with the FIRST in Michigan League. Other key sponsors of the event include: The Grand Rapids Student Advancement Foundation, Steelcase, and Consumers Energy.

The Grand Rapids Montessori Super Robotics Squad qualified to advance to the State Championship on December 14th at Bloomfield Hills High School. The team also received a trophy for Robot Strategy and Innovation.

C.A. Frost Architectural Inhabiters

The C.A. Frost Architectural Inhabiters received a Project trophy for their strong research work, and Taryn Eva, the North Park Coach won the Coach and Mentor award to recognize her work with the North Park teams.

Congratulations to everyone!
Burton Elementary was recognized as an Apple Distinguished School for 2019-2022 for its extensive use of Apple technology in the classrooms.

Apple Distinguished Schools are innovative, leadership driven educational experiences that use Apple technology to inspire creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking. They showcase innovative uses of technology in learning, teaching, and the school environment, and have documented results of academic accomplishment.

Burton Elementary received this designation because its use of Apple technology allows teachers to create opportunities for students to take ownership of their learning, to communicate and collaborate with classmates and their immediate and global communities, all while challenging students to create unique products that represent their learning.

“Our teachers and students have worked hard for the last three years to use technological learning in such a unique way,” says Burton Elementary Principal, Allison Woodside de Carrillo. “We have seen so much growth not only in our own learning, but also in what our students are able to express. We have come so far and can’t wait to continue!”

Burton Elementary is a cultural center on the southwest side of Grand Rapids, where 95% of students receive free and reduced lunch. Being recognized as an Apple Distinguished School highlights Burton Elementary’s success as an innovative and compelling learning environment that engages students and provides tangible evidence of academic accomplishment.
### GRPS Academic Calendar

#### JANUARY 2020
- **Jan 6**: Theme School Round 2 Application
- **Jan 20**: NO SCHOOL: No LOOP Programming
- **Jan 21-31**: NWEA/MAP K-8 Testing (grades 9-10 optional)
- **Jan 29**: GRPS HS Vocal Music Festival
- **Jan 31**: Middle School Swimming Championship (@ City)

#### FEBRUARY 2020
- **Feb 1**: Union HS Showcase
- **Feb 1**: Ottawa Hills HS Boys’ Swim Invitational
- **Feb 3-7**: NWEA/MAP K-8 Testing (grades 9-10 optional)
- **Feb 10-11**: GRPS Pre-MSBOA Festivals
- **Feb 12**: COUNT DAY
- **Feb 15**: GRCC Dual Enrollment Application Due (Summer)
- **Feb 20-21**: GRPS Middle School Vocal Music Festivals
- **Feb 20**: School Choice Expo (TBD)
- **Feb 28**: Theme School Round 2 Application Deadline

#### MARCH 2020
- **Mar 1**: GR Community Foundation Scholarship Apps Due
- **Mar 6**: NO SCHOOL
- **Mar 7**: Middle School Wrestling Invitational (@ City)
- **Mar 18-19**: GRPS Non-MSBOA Music Festivals

#### APRIL 2020
- **Apr 2**: No LOOP Programming
- **Apr 3-10**: NO SCHOOL - Spring Break
- **Apr 13-30**: M-STEP 5/8/11 Testing
- **Apr 13-30**: MI-Access 3-8/11 Testing
- **Apr 14**: SAT Initial Test Date
- **Apr 14**: PSAT 8/9/10 (grade 8 initial test date)
- **Apr 14-16**: PSAT 8/9/10 (grade 9-10 initial test date)
- **Apr 15**: WorkKeys Initial Test Date
- **Apr 15**: GRCC Dual Enrollment Applications Due (Fall)
- **Apr 15-21**: PSAT 8/9/10 Make-Up
- **Apr 20-30**: NWEA/MAP K-10 Testing
- **Apr 28**: SAT Make-Up
- **Apr 28**: City-Wide Art Show Public Reception - GRPS Elem.
- **Apr 28-29**: PSAT 8/9/10 Make-Up

#### MAY 2020
- **May 1**: Preschool, Here I Come
- **May 1-8**: M-STEP 5/8/11 Testing
- **May 1-15**: NWEA/MAP K-10 Testing
- **May 4-29**: M-STEP 3/4/6/7 Testing
- **May 4-29**: MI-Access 3-8/11 Testing
- **May 6**: Last Day for Great Start Readiness Preschool
- **May 21**: Last Day of LOOP Programming
- **May 22**: 1/2 Day - Students (am), Records Flex (pm)
- **May 25**: NO SCHOOL - Memorial Day
- **May 26**: Innovation Central HS & Grand Rapids Montessori Graduation (7:30-8:30 pm at Calvin College-VanNoord Arena)
- **May 28**: City High Middle School Graduation (6-7 pm at Fountain Street Church)
- **May 29**: Ottawa Hills High School Graduation (6-7 pm at Calvin College-VanNoord Arena)
- **May 30**: University Preparatory Academy Graduation (11 am - 12 pm at Calvin College-VanNoord Arena)
- **May 30**: Union High School Graduation (2-3 pm at Calvin College-VanNoord Arena)

#### JUNE 2020
- **Jun 1-3**: 1/2 Day - Secondary Exams (am), Records Flex (pm)
- **Jun 3**: LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

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More than 500 scholarships for college or trade school are waiting for you!

This year we’ll award more than $1 million in scholarships to undergraduate and graduate students like Edgar, a West Michigan student pursuing his dreams at New York University.

Apply at grfoundation.org/scholarships.
Understanding College Financial Aid

Deadline for FAFSA Application for Financial Aid is March 1

Did you know that more than $185 billion in financial aid is available to students attending college? Many people think they won't qualify for financial aid, but about 2/3 of full-time undergraduate students receive some sort of aid, according to The College Board.

What is financial aid?

Financial aid refers to the combination of loans, grants, and scholarships that help pay for college. Most students will receive some form of financial aid. Some of the most common types of financial aid are:

Federal loans
- There are two types of federal loans: subsidized and unsubsidized. Both types of loans must be repaid with interest. With a subsidized loan, the government pays the interest while your child is in school. With an unsubsidized loan, the interest is being added to the loan balance while your child is in school.
- Some federal loans do not require a credit check or cosigner.

Private loans
- Private loans are usually offered by banks and other financial institutions. Private loans usually have a higher interest rate than federal loans, but not always, so it is important to research any loans you are offered and compare the terms.

Grants
- Grants may come from the government, a college/university, or private organizations. Grants are a gift and do not need to be paid back. Students usually receive grants based on their financial need.

Scholarships
- Scholarships may also come from the government, a college/university, or private organizations. Scholarships, like grants, do not require repayment. Scholarships are different from grants because they usually are awarded based on a characteristic of the student. Examples include academics, athletics, an association you belong to, religious affiliation, or the degree you will pursue in college. Scholarships often have rules that recipients need to follow, such as a GPA requirement.

Work study
- Some students are offered an opportunity to work part-time on campus to help pay for their schooling.

How do I sign up to receive financial aid?

Applying for financial aid can seem like a daunting task, but it doesn't have to be. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid, better known as the FAFSA, uses much of the same information you provide on your income tax return. Before beginning the FAFSA, you will need to register for a PIN number at pin.ed.gov. You will also need to collect the following documents, if applicable: social security number; alien registration number; most recent federal income tax return, W-2s, and any other income records; bank statements and investment records; and any records of untaxed income. Depending on your situation, you may not have all of these, just collect as many as you can. The FAFSA is available online at fafsa.ed.gov.

If you need help filling out the FAFSA, you can access a step by step guide at studentaid.gov/fafsa or connect with a customer service representative at fafsa.gov.

How often do I need to apply?

You must complete the FAFSA each year. The FAFSA is always due March 1 for Michigan schools and determines financial aid for the following school year.

What do I do after the FAFSA is completed?

On the FAFSA, you will indicate which colleges you want your FAFSA information sent to. The college will send you an award letter, which outlines what type of financial aid you are eligible to receive. The letter will have a deadline to reply, and it is very important to respond before the deadline. The college/university's financial aid office can answer any questions you have about the award letter. You may choose to accept some, all, or none of the financial aid offered to you.

You should also apply for scholarships. Search the web for legitimate scholarship research sites such as michigan.gov/mistudentaid and fastweb.com. Research scholarships available through you or your parents' employer, school networks, community organizations, and religious organizations.Locally, the GRCC Foundation (most applications due March 15) and the Grand Rapids Community Foundation (due March 1) are great places to apply for scholarships.

Helpful Websites

Federal Information
- FAFSA - fafsa.gov
- IRS (Tax Forms) - irs.gov
- Selective Service - sss.gov

State Information
- michigan.gov/mistudentaid

Loan Information
- studentaid.ed.gov/sa

Scholarship Information
- The GRCC Foundation - grcc.edu/money
- Other Scholarships - fastweb.com
Choosing a College

Choosing a college can feel like a daunting task. Choosing the right college can seem even harder. Before you begin your search, it helps to understand some of the terms associated with higher education.

- Public, Private, and For-Profit: Public colleges receive funding from local and state governments. They typically offer lower tuition rates, especially to in-state residents. Private colleges are funded through tuition, fees, and donations. Some private schools offer competitive scholarships to make them more affordable. For-profit schools are businesses that offer degree programs. They typically offer degrees for specific careers. Students may graduate with higher debts than from other types of schools, and credits don’t always transfer.

- Four-Year vs Two-Year: Four-year schools offer programs that lead to bachelor’s degrees. Two-year programs lead to a certificate or associate degree.

- Liberal Arts: Liberal arts schools offer a variety of courses in liberal arts, which includes literature, history, languages, mathematics, and life sciences. Most liberal arts schools are also four-year programs.

- University: A university is often larger than a college and typically offers more choices for majors and degrees. Most are made up of smaller colleges, such as engineering, health sciences, education, or liberal arts.

- Community College: Community colleges are two-year programs that can provide a certificate or associate degree. They also prepare students to transfer to a four-year school to finish their bachelor’s degree, if they wish. Their credits typically transfer to four-year schools and they are known for their affordability.

- Vocational or Technical: Vocational and technical programs offer training in a specific industry or career, like medical records, dental hygiene, mechanics, or culinary arts. They typically offer certificates or associate degrees.

Once you know the types of schools and programs available to you, you need to determine what will be the best fit. Ask yourself these questions to help you narrow your search:

- Am I more interested in a two-year or four-year program?
- How close to home do I want to be?
- Would I be happier at a campus with a lot of students or in a smaller setting?
- Do I want to be around people like me or with a more diverse group?
- How important is cost?
- Do I know what major I want to pursue? If not, what types of classes do I want to take?
- What type of learning environment do I want?

After you have considered these questions, make a list of the qualities you are looking for. As you search for colleges and review materials, like their brochures and websites, keep the list you made in mind. The College Board website has a great search tool called “College Search Step-by-Step” (https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/find-colleges) that allows you to enter your criteria and find those schools that fit your list.

After you have narrowed down your choices to the ones that most interest you, schedule a college visit to learn more and see the campus. The checklist below can help you get the most out of your visit.

Picking a college or university takes time and planning, but it is an important step for your future. Be sure to begin your search early, so you have enough time to explore your options and make the best decision for you. Don’t be afraid to ask a lot of questions and to turn to those you trust, like your parents, school counselor, and others for advice.

Information adapted from the College Board

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Choosing a College Checklist:

- Arrange for a tour of the campus.
- Sit down with an admissions officer to learn about application requirements.
- Pick up financial aid forms.
- Sit in on a class that you find interesting. If it isn’t available or classes aren’t in session, see what the classrooms look like.
- Be sure to get business cards for people you meet, in case you have follow up questions.
- Talk to a current student to find out what they like and don’t like about the school.
- Visit the dorms and learn about housing choices.
- Check out the fitness center, library, bookstore, and common areas.
- If you want to play a sport, meet with the coach or athletic staff.
- Explore the community around the campus.
- Find out what clubs and activities are available.
- Read student newspapers and other publications to learn more about the school’s culture.

School-Based Health Centers

Convenient care for students

Services Provided: Counseling, dental, vaccines, and medical including treatment for illness or injuries and much more

Cherry Health
cherryhealth.org
### Michigan Colleges & Universities

#### Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>Website</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Central Michigan University</td>
<td>989-774-4000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cmich.edu">www.cmich.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastern Michigan University</td>
<td>734-487-1849</td>
<td><a href="http://www.emich.edu">www.emich.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ferris State University</td>
<td>231-591-2000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ferris.edu">www.ferris.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Valley State University</td>
<td>616-331-5000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.gvsu.edu">www.gvsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kendall College of Art &amp; Design</td>
<td>800-676-2787</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kcad.edu">www.kcad.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Superior State University</td>
<td>906-632-6841</td>
<td><a href="http://www.lssu.edu">www.lssu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan State University</td>
<td>517-355-1855</td>
<td><a href="http://www.msu.edu">www.msu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan Tech University</td>
<td>906-487-1885</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mtu.edu">www.mtu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Michigan University</td>
<td>906-227-1000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nmu.edu">www.nmu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakland University</td>
<td>248-370-2100</td>
<td><a href="http://www.oakland.edu">www.oakland.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saginaw Valley State University</td>
<td>989-964-4000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.svsu.edu">www.svsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Michigan-Ann Arbor</td>
<td>734-764-1817</td>
<td><a href="http://www.umich.edu">www.umich.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Michigan-Dearborn</td>
<td>313-593-5000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.umdearborn.edu">www.umdearborn.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Michigan-Flint</td>
<td>810-762-3300</td>
<td><a href="http://www.umflint.edu">www.umflint.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne State University</td>
<td>313-577-2424</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wayne.edu">www.wayne.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Michigan University</td>
<td>269-387-1000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wmich.edu">www.wmich.edu</a></td>
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#### Public Community Colleges (continued)

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<tr>
<td>Southwestern Michigan College</td>
<td>800-456-8675</td>
<td><a href="http://www.swmich.edu">www.swmich.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washtenaw Community College</td>
<td>734-973-3300</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wccnet.edu">www.wccnet.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wayne County Community College</td>
<td>313-496-2600</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wcccd.edu">www.wcccd.edu</a></td>
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#### Non-Public Two-Year and Four-Year Colleges and Universities

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<tr>
<td>Adrian College</td>
<td>800-877-2246</td>
<td><a href="http://www.adrian.edu">www.adrian.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albion College</td>
<td>517-629-1000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.albion.edu">www.albion.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma College</td>
<td>989-463-7111</td>
<td><a href="http://www.alma.edu">www.alma.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrews University</td>
<td>269-471-7771</td>
<td><a href="http://www.andrews.edu">www.andrews.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquinas College</td>
<td>616-632-8900</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aquinas.edu">www.aquinas.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ave Maria College</td>
<td>239-280-2500</td>
<td><a href="http://www.avemaria.edu">www.avemaria.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baker College (multiple locations)</td>
<td>800-964-4299</td>
<td><a href="http://www.baker.edu">www.baker.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvin College</td>
<td>616-526-6000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.calvin.edu">www.calvin.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleary University</td>
<td>800-686-1883</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cleary.edu">www.cleary.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College for Creative Studies</td>
<td>313-664-7400</td>
<td><a href="http://www.collegeforcreativestudies.edu">www.collegeforcreativestudies.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concordia University</td>
<td>734-995-7300</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cuaa.edu">www.cuaa.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornerstone University</td>
<td>616-949-5300</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cornerstone.edu">www.cornerstone.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davenport University (multiple locations)</td>
<td>800-686-1600</td>
<td><a href="http://www.davenport.edu">www.davenport.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finlandia University</td>
<td>906-482-5300</td>
<td><a href="http://www.finlandia.edu">www.finlandia.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace Bible College</td>
<td>616-538-2330</td>
<td><a href="http://www.gracechristian.edu">www.gracechristian.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Lakes Christian College</td>
<td>517-321-0242</td>
<td><a href="http://www.glcc.edu">www.glcc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillsdale College</td>
<td>517-437-7341</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hillsdale.edu">www.hillsdale.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope College</td>
<td>616-395-7000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hope.edu">www.hope.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalamazoo College</td>
<td>800-253-3602</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kzoo.edu">www.kzoo.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kettering University</td>
<td>810-762-9500</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kettering.edu">www.kettering.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuyper College</td>
<td>616-222-3000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kuyper.edu">www.kuyper.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence Technological University</td>
<td>800-225-5588</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ltu.edu">www.ltu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madonna University</td>
<td>734-432-5300</td>
<td><a href="http://www.madonna.edu">www.madonna.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwood University</td>
<td>800-602-9000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.northwood.edu">www.northwood.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Olivet College</td>
<td>800-456-7189</td>
<td><a href="http://www.olivetcollege.edu">www.olivetcollege.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rochester College</td>
<td>248-218-2000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.rc.edu">www.rc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacred Heart Major Seminary</td>
<td>313-983-8500</td>
<td><a href="http://www.shms.edu">www.shms.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Siena Heights University</td>
<td>800-521-0009</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sienaheights.edu">www.sienaheights.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring Arbor University</td>
<td>800-968-0011</td>
<td><a href="http://www.arbor.edu">www.arbor.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Detroit Mercy</td>
<td>313-993-1245</td>
<td><a href="http://www.udmercy.edu">www.udmercy.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grand Rapids Public Schools is hosting Exploration Week, March 23-27, to help families prepare for the exciting transition to kindergarten. Each of our elementary schools (listed on the next page) will host their own kindergarten event. Explorers can expect to tour the school, visit our world-class preschool classrooms, discover what your child will learn in kindergarten, and get answers to your questions.

Pre-K for 4 year olds is available at all GRPS elementary schools. Students must be 4 by September 1st. There is potential for an age waiver, if eligible.

Complete your intake online at preschool.kentisd.org/apply or by calling the Early Childhood Office at (616) 819-2111. Placements take place through the Early Childhood Office beginning in July.

Many families qualify for free preschool through the Great Start Readiness Program grant. If a family’s income exceeds grant eligibility, there is a potential tuition option. Please contact the Early Childhood office at 616-819-2111 to further discuss these options.
GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS OFFERS THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE SELECTION OF SCHOOL CHOICES. WE INVITE YOU TO VISIT AND LEARN MORE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>ABERDEEN PK-8</td>
<td>928 ABERDEEN ST NE 49505</td>
<td>616-819-2868</td>
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<td>BROOKSIDE ELEMENTARY PK-5</td>
<td>2505 MADISON AVE SE 49507</td>
<td>616-819-2242</td>
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<td>BUCHANAN ELEMENTARY PK-5</td>
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<td>CA FROST ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE ACADEMY ELEMENTARY PK-5</td>
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<td>KENT HILLS ELEMENTARY PK-5</td>
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<td>MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. LEADERSHIP ACADEMY PK-8</td>
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<td>MULICK PARK ELEMENTARY PK-5</td>
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<td>SOUTHWEST COMMUNITY CAMPUS PK-8</td>
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<td>616-819-2947</td>
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<tr>
<td>STOCKING ELEMENTARY PK-5</td>
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<td>616-819-3130</td>
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EACH SCHOOL HOSTS EVENTS. FOR SPECIFIC DATES AND TIMES, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR SCHOOL OR VISIT GRPS.ORG.

MARCH 23-27
GRPS EXPLORATION WEEK
$17 MILLION RENOVATION AND 2 NEW COLLEGE AND CAREER-PREP ACADEMIES

Academy of Media Production prepares students with the advanced skills and abilities necessary to pursue a successful career in the development and/or delivery of media – radio, television, online, social media, print. The core curriculum integrates media competencies. The academy features elective courses that allow students to select their own path with assistance from their advisor.

Academy of Public Safety Services emphasizes a career in police, fire, cybersecurity, private security, and military. Principles of police and firefighting are integrated into the core curriculum. Class is a balance of classroom learning and hands-on field experience interacting with local, state, and federal agencies. Students learn about their community and the many social dynamics which exist.

APPLY TODAY
grps.org/ottawahills

Academies will prepare students for jobs on either side of Michigan’s Hot 50, the highest-demand, highest-wage careers.
The Battle is On! GR8 Sports, Great Kids announces the third season of Battle of the Brackets.

The excitement is mounting, and the competition is preparing - preparing for another great season of Battle of the Brackets. Embracing the Grand Rapids workforce's competitive spirit, while also raising money for Grand Rapids Public Schools K-8 student athletics, GR8 Sports, Great Kids is excited to announce its third March battle, Battle of the Brackets. And a battle it will be!

GR8 Sports, Great Kids – a program of the Grand Rapids Student Advancement Foundation – relies on the generosity of residents and companies throughout Grand Rapids to continue offering free middle-school and elementary-level sports at GRPS. With more than 70% of the school districts in the Ottawa – Kent (O-K) Athletic Conference requiring some form of pay-to-play, this funding is needed now more than ever.

This is where Battle of the Brackets comes in!

The Battle is essentially the perfect storm, if you will, to create an opportunity for Grand Rapids companies to gain bragging rights and a pretty awesome trophy while also coming alongside GRPS athletics. Last year, 24 business participated - pitting accountant against accountant, bank versus bank, law firm against law firm, in an all-out, knockdown, drag-out fight (we're kidding, sort of) – all to provide funding for both middle and elementary school sports at GRPS.

We joke, but this event is important. Here's its story: basketball has been in our blood from our very beginning. Remember those Gus Macker Tournaments? Well, the Grand Rapids Student Advancement Foundation was created as a vehicle through which funds raised from those Gus Macker Tournaments would support GRPS athletics. But then Gus left, and so did the funding for athletics.

The good news, season after season, student athletes make their way out to fields, courts and swimming pools representing GRPS with pride. Because of donor dollars, participants in events like Battle of the Brackets, and the continuous support of our wonderful community, 15 middle-school and four elementary-level sports are offered. This support allows more than 6,000 GRPS K-8 students to participate in soccer, basketball, volleyball - the list goes on – all at no cost to the students or their families!

Although the probability of filling out a perfect bracket is only 1 in 9.2 Quintillion (that’s 18 zeroes!), the likelihood of making a tremendous impact on GRPS student athletes is 100%. Of course, the Battle will render teams winners and losers - all in good fun - most importantly it will help make possible opportunities for Grand Rapids Public Schools students to access sports, to participate, to cross finish lines and to try something new.

For information on how you can get involved with GR8 Sports, Great Kids or how your business can participate in Battle of the Brackets, visit www.grsaf.org/battle20.
Top Honors
City one of three high schools in Michigan named Blue Ribbon

By Phil de Haan, Charles Honey, Originally published by School News Network on October 11, 2019

In the almost 40 years the U.S. Department of Education has been recognizing exemplary elementary, middle and high schools as National Blue Ribbon Schools, a GRPS school had never been so honored.

That “never” became a first in 2019 when City High/Middle School broke the drought for GRPS and earned a spot on the list of 362 schools nationwide, including just three high schools in Michigan, newly named Blue Ribbon Schools.

The program honors schools for either overall academic excellence or for progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups, and City was honored in the former category. Principal Ryan Huppert said the award is both recognition and encouragement.

“It affirms that an urban and diverse public school is achieving at the highest levels nationally,” he said. “It recognizes the hard work of all of our kids, our staff, our families, and the whole City community to be an exemplary school nationwide.”

Beyond Academics

He added that City, while deservedly praised for its academic accolades, is more balanced than people might sometimes assume.

“Our kids are academic and athletic and artistic,” he said. “They’re active volunteers in the community, and often those experiences turn into internships and jobs. They get involved in local political campaigns. They make up the majority of the athletes on some of the (high school) teams they’re on (with Ottawa Hills and Union). They’re well-rounded kids.”

Z’nya McSpaden, a sophomore who will be part of Union’s varsity basketball team this winter, agreed with her principal. She said it’s still sometimes difficult for people to get past the old stereotypes of City. “At Union they sometimes see us as just the smart kids,” she said. “But there’s more (to City) than that.”

In fact, less than a week after a ribbon-cutting ceremony at City to mark the Blue Ribbon award, Huppert spent two days camping with 62 City juniors and seniors at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, a trip free for the students, many of whom had never camped before, thanks to funding from the Wege Foundation. There, on the shores of Lake Michigan, students and teachers cooked meals together, cleaned up afterwards, hiked, journaled, read and more, in an experience that Huppert described as “some of the most powerful ways we connect with kids.”

And the day after his return from the camping trip, Huppert found himself participating in an extensive conference call, planning for another recent singular City honor: an invitation for the school’s marching band to participate in the 2020 National Independence Day Parade in Washington, D.C.

Huppert said that the 115-member City marching band, under Director Katie Vermeer, has played in numerous community parades and special days in the past, and regularly plays at Houseman Field in Grand Rapids for GRPS home games, but he admitted that playing in D.C. will be a bit of a jump.

“This is the big leagues of marching bands,” he said with a big smile. “It’s a large and special opportunity.”

For City students the education they are receiving in their historic building on Plainfield Avenue is also a large and special opportunity.

CONTINUED ON A13
Top Honors CONTINUED FROM A12

And for senior Tobin Hanks the recent award provides an opportunity for City as a GRPS school to advocate for funding for public schools as a good place for city residents to invest their tax dollars. “I hope,” he said, “that our school can be an ally (in Grand Rapids) in furthering school for everyone.”

City offers both the International Baccalaureate Middle Years and Diploma Programs, and traditionally has done well in getting students ready for whatever might come after high school. In 2019, City was fourth in the state of Michigan among all public high schools in SAT scores for juniors. The average score for the 123 City juniors who took the test was 1,219, and based on those scores, 81% tested as fully college-ready. City also had a 100 percent graduation rate in the most recent data set from MiSchooldata.org, the State of Michigan’s official public portal for education data.

Yet, in the same year City students were acing the SAT’s and propelling the school to Blue Ribbon status, more than one in three of its 917 students, 36 percent, qualified for subsidized lunch.

GRPS Interim Superintendent Ronald Gorman said that subsidized lunch stat is an important part of the story.

“I believe this school should have been a Blue Ribbon school many years ago,” he said. “When we factor for poverty, if you look at the schools that are ranked just slightly ahead of City, there’s significantly less numbers of poverty in those schools compared to City.”

He believes that Grand Rapids residents should know that they not only have a very good school option in City, but they should also know that there are many schools that are on their way to achievement levels like City.

Or, as Huppert said: “There’s blue ribbon kids and blue ribbon teachers throughout our whole district.”

Asbestos Notice

Asbestos is a general name for a group of naturally occurring minerals composed of small fibers. These fibers are very strong and resistant to heat and chemicals. The mere presence of asbestos in a building does not mean that the health of the building occupants is endangered. When left intact and undisturbed, asbestos-containing materials do not pose a health risk to building occupants. There is, however, potential for exposure when the material becomes damaged or disturbed. Because of these problems associated with asbestos exposure, the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Act, or AHERA emphasizes that asbestos in school buildings must appropriately managed.

The Grand Rapids Public Schools has an asbestos management plan that addresses contact persons, training, inspections, response actions, operation and maintenance activities, periodic surveillance, cleaning, disclosure efforts and school building areas containing asbestos. Any person may review the management plan at the Grand Rapids Public School’s Facilities Management Department, 900 Union, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503, during regular business hours (8:00 am to 4:00 pm). Plans may also be found on the district’s website at www.grps.org/facilities-asbestos-info. Alternatively, any person may request a copy of the plan by writing the Grand Rapids Public Schools Facilities Management Department, 900 Union, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503. There is a cost involved in reproducing the document of approximately 10 cents per page. The Grand Rapids Public Schools will send a copy out of the management plan within 5 business days of receiving the request.
Something special is taking shape on Grand Rapids’ Southwest Side: a new, 500-student school that will house the city’s first dual-immersion English/Spanish high school.

Cranes are lifting beams and workers are laying blocks at a construction site between Grandville Avenue SW and the U.S. 131 freeway, as crews busily build a four-story school in time for classes to begin next August. The school will be a grades 7-12 extension of Southwest Community Campus, a dual-immersion program a few blocks south at 801 Oakland Ave. SW. Seventh and eighth graders from the pre-K-8 SWCC will move into the new middle and high school next fall, with a grade added each subsequent year.

Recently touring the building for the first time, SWCC Principal Carlos de la Barrera was struck by its light-filled ambience, spacious classrooms and how well it will serve his students and the surrounding community.

“Such an impressive investment validates our belief that our students are smart and that they deserve our full support,” de la Barrera said of the $20 million project. “We always preach that we value our students and their families so this new building is a tangible expression that reinforces our belief.”

A Place for Education, Housing and More

As yet to be named, the new school will anchor Plaza Roosevelt, a 5.5-acre, multi-use development offering affordable housing, health-care services, after-school and community activities and college-level programs. A new city park will abut the school as well.

Five single-family homes and three townhouse units are currently being built by Habitat for Humanity south of the school, and apartments and retail space to the west are planned by Dwelling Place. Nearby Mercy Health’s Clinica Santa Maria and Cook Arts Center plan on increasing their services.

Meetings among eight partner agencies and with neighbors have been integral to the school and larger development, said Jeff Brakefield, the school project superintendent for Rockford Construction. Architects were c2ae and TMP Architecture.

“It’s really been a neighborhood project,” said Brakefield, a 1973 graduate of Ottawa Hills High School, who oversees 28 contractors on-site. “We’ve gotten a lot of positive feedback. Everybody’s on board with revitalizing the neighborhood.”

Let There be Light

The 75,000-square-foot facility is built into the side of a hill sloping towards the freeway east of Grandville Avenue SW, between Graham and Rumsey streets. The district purchased the 1.7-acre property in January from Habitat for Humanity. The project is funded by the $175 million bond approved by voters in 2015.

The school will house two dozen classrooms on the third and fourth floors; art, music and science rooms and administrative offices on the second; and a gym and locker rooms, dining area and kitchen on the first floor. The gym and kitchen will be available for community use, de la Barrera said.

Such an impressive investment validates our belief that our students are smart and that they deserve our full support.

SWCC Principal Carlos de la Barrera
**Dual Immersion** CONTINUED FROM A14

The LEED-certified building features generous natural light, including storefront-style windows on third-floor classrooms – a plus for both energy efficiency and learning. A third-floor “knowledge center” will have an expansive view of downtown.

“It’s very, very important how (natural light) affects your mood and your emotions, in any place, especially in a school where you spend so many hours in a classroom,” de la Barrera said.

It will also feature aesthetic touches such as an entryway mural, and neighbors had input into the warm color schemes chosen for each floor. The community will also weigh in on a mascot for the school, de la Barrera said.

**Applications Being Taken**

Applications have started coming in from families in GRPS and beyond. Besides accepting students now enrolled at Southwest Community Campus, the school’s feeder boundaries were expanded to take in Chavez Elementary School, de la Barrera said. Applications are now being accepted until Nov. 29, with a second round to be held in January.

Neighborhood students get first priority but must pass an admissions test to demonstrate bilingual ability, de la Barrera said, adding current students don’t need to reapply. The school will offer classes in both Spanish and English, including courses in Spanish culture, literature and history, reflecting its commitment to “biculturalism,” he said.

“We prepare our students to succeed in a multicultural society where being literate in two languages and understanding different cultures is an asset. These skills are in great demand and will open the doors to our students when searching for employment in the near future.”

The school will enable SWCC students who might otherwise have moved out of district to continue their program “in our community’s backyard,” he said.

“The new high school is a beautiful state of the art building that will always remind me of how far we can go when we have a strong collaboration between our community and GRPS.”
You can do this
WE’LL PROVIDE THE SUPPORT YOU NEED

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