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City Making Decisions Based on Strategic Plan and Values, Guided by Sustainability and Equity



Climate change continues to be a key area of focus for the City. While some milestones have been established and achieved, there is still much to be done to address the climate change crisis. Climate change already affects our community and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. A major challenge is that the City and our community are facing multiple challenges at the same time: health pandemic, economic disruption, climate change, community safety and social tension. During these challenges, the City continues to focus on making decisions guided by our strategy and values. Sustainability and equity are two of the City's six core values. We live these values through focused work on environmental justice and climate change.

Environmental justice seeks to reduce and eliminate the disproportionate negative impacts that climate change and environmental pollutants have on people of color and low-income communities. Data shows that Kent County households earning less than 50% of the federal poverty limit are spending 33% of their annual income on energy bills; 49507 has a higher percentage of residents of color and the highest percent of childhood elevated blood lead levels (due to lead in paint); and our neighborhoods across the city with the highest percentage of residents of color have the least urban tree canopy coverage.

A second challenge is the scientific complexity of "climate change / global warming" as well as the confusion or lack of awareness as to how climate change has and is expected to impact Grand Rapidsians. The climate in Grand Rapids is changing. These changes are causing immediate threats to our citizens, our health, our economy and our community's overall vitality. We know that over the last 40 years, Grand Rapids has experienced increased annual winter and spring temperatures (number of cold days are declining), 16% increase in annual precipitation with the greatest increase in the spring, and increase in frequency and intensity of severe storms (40% increase in number of heavy precipitation events annually).

These changes have caused flooding, extreme heat days, polar vortexes, power outages and increased mosquitoes and ticks (along with the diseases they carry). This impacts our community's infrastructure, economy, social networks, cultural identity, and safety and are likely to be more extreme as the climate continues to change. Scientists have estimated future climate changes expected for Grand Rapids, including increased temperature (3°F to 5°F); increased frequency and

intensity of rain and snow (with more rain occurring in winter; flooding, lake effect snow); and more severe weather events (causing power outages).

It's difficult when encountering a big challenge to know what to do. Discouraging data can lead to feelings of helplessness, fear and anxiety. However, connecting with others, taking actions and sharing solutions can bring hope and empowerment. We encourage you to have conversations on the challenge of climate change with your friends and neighbors. Here are some opportunities that the Office of Sustainability recommends you consider:

- Share what you have in common
- Connect the dots between what you both care about and climate change
- Identify ways to work together to tackle the problem in a way that is compatible with shared values

While the City was one of the first municipalities to address environmental sustainability in earnest, beginning in 2005, I want to share with you some of our recent achievements:

- Finalized construction of a nearly 1 megawatt solar array at our Lake Michigan Filtration Plant that will generate a net savings of \$1.55 million over 24 years and moves our renewable energy performance from 37.5% to 41%
- Completed construction of the biodigester and began producing renewable natural gas that is used by The Rapid and the City's fleet
- Submitted a draft five-year Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan that identifies and assesses climate change risks
- Established our municipal goal for greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction: 85% reduction by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2040 (as compared to 2008)
- Reduced our GHGs by 30% and estimate that we will achieve a 47% reduction by 2025
- Passed a City Commission resolution declaring climate change a crisis
- Hired two full time staff for the Office of Sustainability and three full time graduate fellows for the summer
- Received gold status from the Michigan Green Communities Challenge, ranked 31 out of 100 on the national ACEEE City Clean Energy Scorecard, and joined the White House CEQ Building Performance Standard Coalition.
- Progressed on our Equitable, Healthy and Zero Carbon Building Initiative (E.H.Zero) by fundraising \$1 million, hiring a full-time staff, establishing a Black, Indigenous and People of Color consultation team, and hosting a 6-part webinar education series for commercial building

stakeholders

We also have some exciting work planned for fiscal year 2023, which kicked off July 1. In April and May, I proposed, and the City Commission adopted a FY2023 budget that includes \$208.5 million in health and environment investments, including equitable climate action and adaptation planning, lead service line replacements, increased parks/green space, equity-focused transit solutions, and sustainable equipment and infrastructure. Some of the key work that is planned for this upcoming year includes:

- Completing the installation of LED lights for our 18,000 streetlights
- Completing a communitywide greenhouse gas inventory
- Continuing to explore opportunities to install solar on the Butterworth Landfill including a low-income community solar option
- Including climate change in the updated 20-year Community Master Plan
- Updating our website to include more resources, training and information on climate change and environmental justice
- Launching our E.H.Zero home renovation pilot and offering a wide variety of opportunities for commercial building stakeholders, community-based organizations and residents to help design policies and programs that the City can support or pass to equitably reduce GHGs from our commercial buildings and homes
- Co-creating a climate action and adaptation plan in partnership with the Community Collaboration on Climate Change (C4) and other stakeholders that will be informed by data as well as a climate vulnerability assessment
- Optimizing processes at the biodigester and increasing renewable natural gas production
- Launching our stormwater permit trading program

I invite you to join us on our journey. Sign up for the Office of Sustainability newsletter at grandrapidsmi.gov/sustainability to keep up with what's happening on climate change and environmental justice at the City and throughout the community. We need residents, organizations, educational institutions and businesses across the community to work together to successfully address the climate change crisis.

In partnership,

Mark Washington, City Manager

FY2023 Fiscal Plan Continues Essential Services and Enhances Public Safety Oversight

The City of Grand Rapids' 2023 Fiscal Plan is a blueprint for how we plan to fund essential City services and enhance service delivery. In May, the City Commission approved the City budget based on the fiscal plan. The budget spends \$598 million over the course of the next twelve months, from July 2022 through June 2023, on a wide range of services to support our mission to elevate quality of life through excellent City services.

At 546 pages, the fiscal plan document can seem overwhelming when considered as a whole. We're breaking down key elements of it and highlighting the programs and services that it funds. Our first installment of this series is a general overview of the budget. Future budget features will focus on

- Police/Public Safety/Office of Oversight and Public Accountability (OPA)
- Housing
- Homelessness
- Economic Development/Job training & creation
- Roads/mobility
- Equity
- Engagement and Connected Communities
- Sustainability, Climate Change and the Environment

Look for these deep dives into the budget in our e-newsletter, GR Connected. To subscribe or view current and past editions, visit grandrapidsmi.gov/grconnected.

What's generally included in this year's budget?

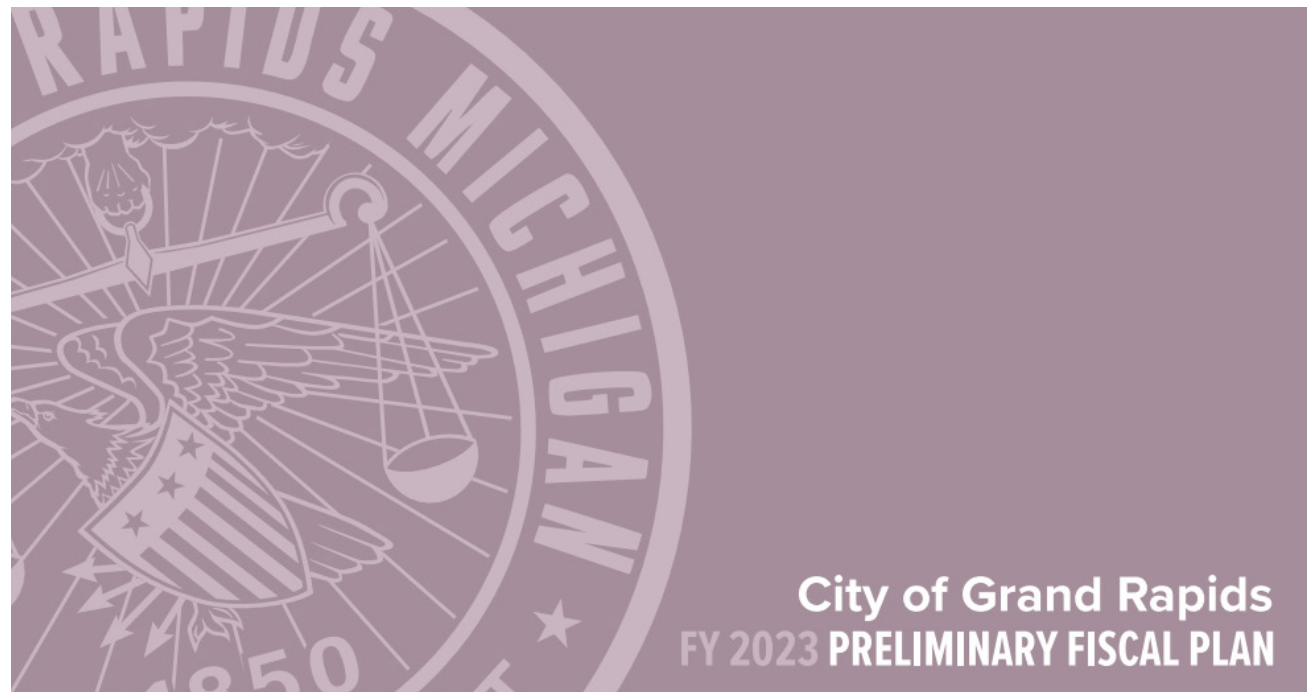
Overall, the 2023 Fiscal Plan is a continuation budget that recognizes and supports basic services (a "continuation budget" continues services provided with minor changes for inflation and contract increases). These include road/streets, water/wastewater, streetlights, parks, library, public safety, courts, refuse, economic development, community development, code compliance, permitting, tax assessment/collection, customer service and other support services. It continues progress on our City's equity journey with more than \$36 million dedicated to equity investments.

It focuses on climate justice, climate adaptation and carbon reduction with the greening of infrastructure, electrification of vehicles, expansion of parks, and puts more emphasis on recycling education. Over \$200 million will be used to fund water production, water treatment, stormwater management, climate resilience, carbon reduction, parks and green spaces.

Our budget contains significant investments in police oversight, Cure Violence and mental health co-response for public safety. It provides for additional de-escalation training for police officers that is community-informed and community engaged, transfer the oversight of the body-worn camera contract procurement and enforcement from Police to OPA. Funding is also included to accelerate engagement with our refugee and immigrant community along with other key stakeholders to improve community police relations.

Our Safe Alliances for Everyone (SAFE) Task Force is active in suggesting ways to reduce violence in the community and are working on holding a SAFE gathering which would serve as a listening session for community partners involved in violence prevention efforts. It also is organizing a gun buyback event, completing previously approved Pitch Night projects and is anticipating sponsoring a future Pitch night.

We will use our strategic plan and equity, accountability, collaboration and innovation values as guides for public



safety reform, including accelerating some of that work with investments included in the budget. We will continue to collaboratively seek innovative public safety reforms that intentionally remove and prevent barriers created by systemic and institutional injustice.

That reform will be community-informed and collaborative. To that end, we are pursuing partnerships with the National Civic League to conduct a series of discussions around public policy issues within each Ward this summer. Additional engagement and educational opportunities include planned events on Know Your Rights, Let's Talk About It, and T.R.U.E. Action. These complement the GRPD's ongoing engagement efforts which include the Police Chief's Advisory Team, Clergy on Patrol, Explorers, Boys & Girls Club, OnBase, and numerous meetings with faith leaders, the refugee community, LINC Up, Greater Grand Rapids NAACP, Urban Core Collective, Grand Rapids Housing Commission, business leaders and Advocates and Leaders for Police and Community Trust (ALPACT).

Our pledge to reform is bolstered in this new budget as resources for the Office of Oversight and Public Accountability (OPA) increased from \$405,781 to \$1.7 million. That investment will allow OPA to:

- Hire an additional dedicated full-time staff person
- Lead the coordination of additional police training for officers that is informed by community. The co-created training may include – without limitation – cultural competency, understanding immigrant and refugee experiences, bias reduction, impacts of racism on building trust, and history of policing in America
- Address topics such as cultural competency and de-escalation that officers co-experience with community members
- Transfer the oversight of the body-worn camera contract procurement and enforcement from Police to OPA.

Additionally, OPA will leverage \$600,000 in federal funding for violence reduction and a recently announced \$250,000 grant for staff capacity for FY2023, bringing OPA's total FY2023 budget to \$2.55 million, which is a 537%

increase over last year.

The intentional investment of resources in areas outside of the Police Department – along with budget reallocations to OPA – has resulted in the FY2023 Police budget accounting for 33.97% of the General Operating Fund, which down from 38.6% in the 2021 fiscal year budget.

We are also investing \$700,000 for an enhanced mental health police co-response mobile crisis intervention team, offered by Network180, the City's Kent County public health mental health authority partner. This will allow mental health and behavioral health clinicians to either co-respond or lead the response for certain calls for service for which civilians are more trained to respond than law enforcement.

The City's 2023 budget also supports other high priorities such as community-led participatory budgeting, Third Ward Equity funding, affordable housing, investments with Micro Local Business Enterprises (MLBEs), climate action and equity focused transit solutions. Specifically, it maintains the \$2 million allocation in the budget for community-led participatory budgeting including allocations of \$1 million for the Third Ward, \$600,000 for the Second Ward and \$400,000 for the First Ward to fund investments that are recommended by the community.

We've also allocated an additional \$1 million in the budget for the Third Ward Equity Fund to make sure it intentionally invests in historically underinvested areas of the community.

Over the course of the next year, we will invest a total of \$26.7 million in housing and housing stability to include nearly \$6 million identified for the Affordable Housing Fund. We've also included \$8.4 million in our federally-funded Neighborhood Investment Plan and related programs that help a variety of neighborhood and non-profit organizations.

As you can see, our 2023 Fiscal Plan not only maintains the quantity and quality of public services that you deserve, but it also makes a series of investments designed to be more responsive to the challenges and expectations of the community.

City Investing \$28 Million in Street and Sidewalk Improvements

We're in the ninth season of ramped-up improvements to streets and sidewalks throughout the city. This year, we plan to work on an additional 29 miles. We're also dedicating a total of \$1.8 million for various sidewalk repair and construction projects in all three city wards.

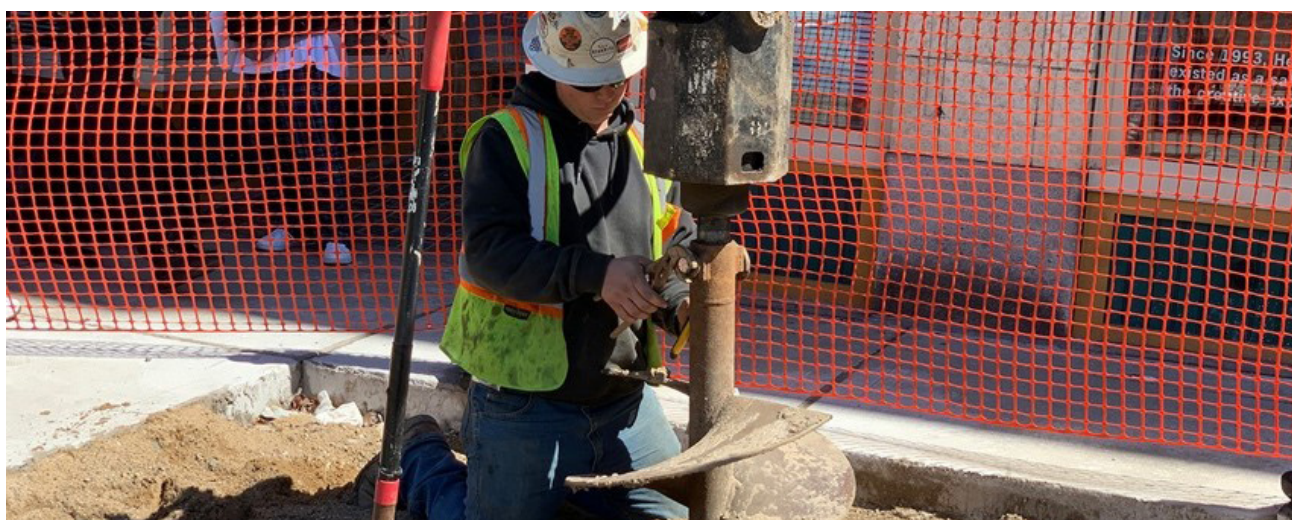
Vital Streets projects not only improve the streets and sidewalks for drivers, but they also concentrate on improving these spaces for pedestrians and cyclists. Last year, we added 3.4 miles of new bicycle facilities with nearly seven miles of new bicycle trails added in Neighborhoods of Focus. We also emphasized the increase of green infrastructure by adding over 561 street trees, 3,400 square feet of porous pavers and 20 porous tree grates. This year, we plan to add two more miles of bicycle facilities in addition to making changes to existing bicycle facilities for better signage and cyclist access.

Vital Streets projects are backed by a voter-approved plan in 2014 that extended a local income tax levy for 15 years. Since 2014, the Vital Streets millage has allowed us to complete preventative maintenance and reconstruction of 543 miles of streets. Vital Street investment, along with a road funding commitment by the State of Michigan, ensures that 70 percent of Grand Rapids city streets reach fair to good condition by 2030. Since 2014, Grand Rapids has gone from 37 percent of streets in good or fair condition to 62 percent thanks to the Vital Streets program.

Below is a partial list of 2022 road construction projects with no start dates set to date. Street projects, listed in alphabetical order, may be carried over to the next construction season. A partial list of street paving projects planned by the City's Public Works Department also is included. Other locations may be added.

Rotomill/resurfacing (* may include Lead Water Service Replacement)

- 29th Street – Breton to East City Limits (2022)
- 9th Street NW – Fremont to Alpine* (2023)
- 12th Street NW – Tamarack to Alpine*
- Alto Avenue SE – Worden to Franklin*
- Ball Avenue – Leonard to Knapp (2023)
- Ball Avenue – Michigan to Plymouth (2023)
- Ballard Street SE – Kalamazoo to Giddings*
- Beechwood Street – Plainfield to Diamond
- Benjamin Avenue NE – Elmdale to Parkway
- Benjamin Avenue SE – Hope to Fulton*
- Beulah Street SE – Lafayette to Madison*
- Botsford Place NE – 3 Mile to Wolverine
- Brookfield Avenue NE – Lambertson to Kendalwood
- Butterworth Street – O'Brien to Marion (2023)
- Calvin Avenue SE – Hall to Franklin*
- Capen Street NE – Eastern to Houseman
- Coit Avenue NE – Bradford to Matilda*
- Collindale Avenue – Lake Michigan to Leonard (2022)
- Country Club Drive NE – Sweet to Westlane and Westlane Drive NE – Washtenaw to Country Club
- Courtney Street NW – Valley to Garfield*
- Crescent Street NE – Grand to Fuller* (2023)
- Crescent Street NE – Lafayette to Grand
- Cranbrook Street – Perkins Street to East end
- Crescent Avenue NE – Lafayette to Grand
- Dale Street – Monroe to Center and Coit to Plainfield
- Dawson Avenue – Knapp to Calgary and South end to Aberdeen



- Division Avenue - Quigley to Cottage Grove
- Eastern Avenue – 400' South of 44th to 28th (2023)
- Edgewood Avenue SE – Ridgcroft to Burton
- Effie Place NE – Jessie to North End
- Emerald Avenue NE – Flat to Arbor
- Francis Avenue SE – Burton to Crofton*
- Fremont Avenue NW – Myrtle to Webster*
- Fuller Avenue NE – Knapp to 3 Mile (2023)
- Garfield Avenue NW – Walker to 12th*
- Gold Avenue – Butterworth to Fulton*
- Grand Avenue NE – Flat to Lydia*
- Grand Avenue NE – Frontage to Flat* (2023)
- Griggs Street SE – Kalamazoo to Giddings*
- Hall Street SE – Sylvan to Plymouth
- Harlan Avenue NE – Frontage to Flat* (2023)
- Hollister Avenue SE – Wealthy to Fairmount
- Innes Street NE – Diamond to Fuller
- Kendalwood Street NE – Coit to East end
- Kendalwood Street NE – Waterford to Kensoro
- Kensoro Avenue NE – Plainfield to Stokes
- Kentridge Drive – 44th to Kendall
- Kentwood Street NE – Oakwood to Plainfield*
- Leffingwell Avenue NE – South of Leonard to Leonard
- Linden Avenue SE – Griggs to Dickinson*
- Lyon Street – Monroe Avenue to Division Avenue
- Merrifield Street SE – Blaine to Nelson
- Mulford Drive SE – Ridgemoor to Woodcliff
- Orville Street SE – Kalamazoo to Giddings*
- Powers Avenue NW – Webster to Richmond*
- Race Street – Diamond to Fuller
- Raybrook Avenue SE – Claystone to South End
- Raybrook Avenue SE – Claystone to Burton
- Silver Street SE – Orville to Boston
- Stilesgate Court – Stilesgate to North End
- Thelma Avenue SE – Burton to Ardmore
- Turner Avenue NW – 6th to US131 SB On-Ramp and US131 SB Off-Ramp to Richmond
- Union Avenue NE – Lyon to Crescent
- Union Avenue SE – Worden to Franklin*
- Walnut Street NE – Benjamin to Carlton
- Wealthy Street SW – 300' West of Front to Grand River
- Webster Street – West End to Fremont*
- Wilbert Avenue NE – Oakwood to Plainfield*

Other road projects

- Burton Street Alley – Marshall Alley to Marshall and Marshall Avenue Alley – Merritt to Burton (Reconstruction)
- Cesar S. Chevaz Avenue – Beacon to Franklin (water main, sewer separation, reconstruction)
- College Avenue – Leonard Street to Sweet Street (water main, reconstruction)
- Chestnut Street SW – 570 feet west of Godfrey to Godfrey (sewer separation, reconstruction) (2023)
- Eastern Avenue SE – Burton to Ardmore (water main, reconstruction) (2023)
- Emerald Avenue NE – Leonard to Sweet (water main, reconstruction)
- Fuller Avenue – Adams to Alexander (water main, reconstruction)
- Fuller Avenue – Kalamazoo to Adams (water main, rotomill/resurfacing) (2023)
- Garfield Avenue – Fulton to Bridge, Veto Street – Valley to Garfield and California Street – Valley to Garfield (water main, reconstruction)
- Giddings Avenue SE – Burton Street to Boston Street (water main, reconstruction)
- Houseman Avenue – Leonard to Spencer (water main, reconstruction)
- Jackson Street – Valley Avenue to Garfield Avenue and Lane Avenue to Jackson Place (water main, sanitary sewer, reconstruction)
- Lake Eastbrook Boulevard SE – East Beltline to 28th Street (water main, reconstruction)
- Market Avenue – Wealthy to Fulton and Fulton Street – Grand River to Market (sanitary sewer, reconstruction)
- Milton Street SE – Carlton to Norwood (reconstruction, lead water service replacement) (2023)
- Norwich Avenue SW – Curve to Hayden (sewer separation, water main, reconstruction, resurfacing)
- Ottawa Avenue NE – Hastings to Newberry (water main, reconstruction/resurfacing)
- Ottawa Avenue/Monroe Avenue/Coldbrook Street Intersection (water main, reconstruction) (2023)
- Oxford Street SW – Norwich to Godfrey (sewer separation, reconstruction) (2023)
- Page Street NE – West end to Carmen; Lister Court NE

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- West end to Plainfield; Plainfield Avenue NE – Leonard to Grove and Carrier Street NE – Plainfield to Lafayette (water main, reconstruction/resurfacing)
- Prospect Avenue – Burton to Griggs and Garden to Highland (water main, reconstruction)
- Richards Avenue – Fulton to Sibley (water main, reconstruction)
- Robinson Road – Lake to Plymouth (water main, reconstruction/rotomill/resurfacing) (2023)
- State Street – Lafayette to Madison/Cherry (water main, reconstruction) (2023)
- Straight Avenue – Wealthy to Emperor and Wealthy Street - Straight to Grand River (water main, reconstruction/resurfacing)
- Valley Avenue NW – Fourth to Walker (water main, reconstruction)

Preventative Maintenance of Bridges:

- Division Avenue
- Alpine Avenue
- College Avenue
- Leffingwell Avenue

Public Works Department resurfacing projects:

- 2nd NW from Valley to Garfield
- Aberdeen NE from Ball to Fuller
- Adams SE from Allerton to Calvin
- Adams SE from Plymouth to Gladstone
- Alexander SE from Eastern to Union
- Arlington NE from Fuller to Diamond
- Bates SE from Benjamin to Fuller
- Benjamin SE from Adams to Hall
- Blyth NW from Richmond to Ducoma
- Botsford NE from Wright to Wolverine
- Bradford NE from Service to Ball
- Cedar NE from Ball to Benjamin
- Clancy NE from railroad tracks to Fairbanks
- College NE from 4 Mile to North Park
- Comstock NE from Oakwood to Union

- Cora NW from Valley to Van Buren
- Cottage Grove SE from College to Madison
- Covell NW from Richmond to Leonard
- Doroll NE from Doroll to Fuller
- Ecklund NE from east dead end to Fuller
- Elkhart NE from east dead end to Fuller
- Elmdale NE from Coit to Briggs
- Emerson NW from Webster to Richmond
- Front NW from Myrtle to Webster
- Front NW from Webster to Leonard
- Garfield NW from 2nd to Bridge
- Giddings SE from Wealthy to Thomas
- Grand NE from Michigan to Lyon
- Hillmount NW from Walker to Derby
- Kentview NE from West Kentview to East Kentview
- Lafayette SE from Pleasant to Sycamore
- Lafayette SE from Brown to Burton
- Lane NW from 4th to 2nd
- Lane SW from Fulton to Butterworth
- Maridel Place SW from Butterworth to Park
- Mayfield NE from Lyon to Fulton
- Milford NW from west dead end to Covell
- Norfolk SE from Woodlawn to Rosemont
- North Park NE from Eastern to Coit
- Northwood NE from Plainfield to 3 Mile
- Paris NE from Elmdale to North Park
- Parkhurst NW from Milford to Leonard
- Perkins NE from Knapp to Leonard
- Phillips SW from Stevens to Hall
- Pleasant SW from Oakland to Grandville
- Richard Terrace SE from Wealthy to Lake Dr.
- Ridgcroft SE from south dead end to Alger
- Riverside NE from Boltwood to Cheshire
- Riverside NE from Russwood to Sligh
- Sligh NE from Union to Coit
- Spencer NE from Diamond to Portland
- Union SE from Hoyt to Alger
- Watson SW from Front to Winter
- Webster NW from Scribner to Front
- West Kentview NE from south dead end to Kentview

Sidewalk Repair

The repair and replacement of sidewalks throughout Grand Rapids neighborhoods are an important part of the Vital Streets program. This summer, City inspectors will be in each neighborhood marking out the sidewalks to be replaced. Properties that have sidewalk repairs in sections that cross through their driveways will get 48-hour notice posted to their property informing of them of the upcoming work and expected duration the driveway will be unavailable. The duration of work in front of any home will average one week, which includes removal, forming of sidewalks, pouring of concrete and restoration of lawns.

Systematic sidewalk work will take place in the following areas:

First Ward – The contract will be partially in the Shawmut Hills and West Grand neighborhoods. Sidewalk repairs will be in the general area bounded by Leonard Street, Tamarack Avenue, Greenwood Cemetery, and Arianna Street, as well as the area south of Leonard Street from the West City Limit, 8th Street and Garfield Avenue. Work is scheduled for April through June.

Second Ward – The contract will be partially in the Michigan Oaks and Midtown neighborhoods. Sidewalk repairs will be in the general area bounded by I-196, Fulton Street, College Avenue, and Somerset Drive. Work is scheduled for September through November.

Third Ward – The contract will be partially in the Ottawa Hills, Southeast End, and Eastgate neighborhoods. Sidewalk repairs will be in the general area bounded by Hall Street, Boston Street, Kalamazoo Avenue, and East City limit. Work is scheduled for July through August.

Updates on the City's Vital Streets projects are available at grandrapidsmi.gov/vitalstreets or by calling 311 or 616.456.3000.

Fixing Up Your Home? New and Expanded Resources Are Available

Summer is a great time for making home repairs. But be careful because renovation can release toxic lead dust that poisons children. If you have an older home, we want to make it easier for you to renovate lead safe.

There are now two programs to help people fix lead hazards in their homes. One is brand new, and the other just got bigger.

New income limits mean even more Grand Rapids households are eligible for help from the City of Grand Rapids Lead Hazard Control program. The program can now serve families with higher incomes. Households must still be low to moderate income, but now a family of four can make up to \$71,600, and larger families can make even more.

The City of Grand Rapids program provides up to \$20,000 to fix lead paint hazards in homes built before 1978 where children under age six live. Homeowners who stay in their home for five or more years will have 100% of the loan forgiven interest free! For more information call (616) 456-3030.

If your family income is too much to qualify for the



Renovate lead safe.

Protect your family when improving your home.

VISIT DONTPLAYAROUND.ORG

DON'T PLAY AROUND

City's program, the State of Michigan recently launched the Michigan Saves Lead Poisoning Prevention Fund. Michigan Saves offers low-interest loans with easy eligibility. Borrow \$1,000- \$50,000 and take 1-15 years to repay. Interest rates

vary by lender. To apply for Michigan Saves, call (877) 867-8522 or apply online at michigansaves.org/loancenter.

For more information on renovating lead safe, visit dontplayaround.org.

City, CMS Energy Dedicate Lake Michigan Filtration Plant Solar Array

Our Lake Michigan Filtration Plant (LMFP) is now partly powered by onsite renewable solar energy. Earlier this summer, Mayor Rosalynn Bliss, city commissioners, City Manager Mark Washington, Grand Rapids sustainability and water system staff, energy advisory committee representatives, CMS Energy Senior Vice President and Chief Customer Officer Brian Rich and Harvest Solar representatives flipped the switch on a 0.90 megawatt (AC), 2.95-acre ground-mounted behind-the-meter solar array in the northwest corner of the LMFP property, 17350 Lake Michigan Dr, West Olive, Mich.

Our water department is expected to save an estimated net \$1.55 million over 24 years based on average annual electricity cost savings of \$200,000 (total of \$2.86 million). The array will generate 1.5 million kilowatt hours per year, which accounts for 10% of the LMFP's electricity consumption. What's more, it's expected to increase the City's renewable energy performance from 37.5% to 41%, helping to continue progress on our goal of 100% renewable energy for municipal operations by 2025. The array will eliminate approximately 1,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents – the equivalent of removing an estimated 230 passenger vehicles from the road.

Read more about the solar array, the LMFP and the City's renewable energy performance at grandrapidsmi.gov/LMFP-solar-array.



City Elections Now Taking Place in Even Numbered Years – Primary and General Elections Held in 2022

City Clerk Joel Hondorp wants you to know that there has been a change in the election year reserved for City elected officials. City elections will now be held in even years. The comptroller, city commissioner in each of the wards, and library commissioners will appear on this year's ballot.

August 2: Primary Election for federal, state and county offices – Democratic and Republican candidates are listed on the ballot. You need to select one or the other – can't cross between parties. Two county tax proposals will also be on the ballot.

November 8: General Election – You may vote a straight party or select candidates individually. This ballot includes federal, state, county, judicial, city and school races as well as proposals.

Some reminders before you head to the polls:

- Absentee voting – All registered voters are eligible to receive an absentee ballot (AV) without a reason. To receive an AV, simply fill out an application before every election. The application is available at grandrapidsmi.gov/Services/Apply-for-an-Absentee-Ballot or in the second-floor City Clerk's Office at City Hall, 300 Monroe Ave. NW, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Validated parking is available in the Government Center Ramp off Monroe and Ottawa avenues. Or, you can be placed on a permanent AV list to receive an application before each election by signing up at grandrapidsmi.gov/avlist or contacting the Clerk's Office at 616.456.3010.
- Straight party voting (for November only) – You can vote the partisan section of the ballot by selecting the party only.
- Voter registration – Residents who are 18 or older are

automatically registered to vote when they make a transaction with the Secretary of State. You may register to vote by mail up to 15 days before an election and or in person at the City Clerk's Office within 14 days of the election up to Election Day. You need to prove residency in the city.

- Check your voter registration status, register to vote, view a sample ballot or find your polling location at michigan.gov/vote.

New Districts drawn for Federal, State, and County Districts

Every 10 years following the Census, U.S. House, State Senate, State House, and County Commission Districts are redrawn to make sure each district contains the same amount of the population. This process is called reapportionment. Because every voter in Grand Rapids will have at least a new number for their State House District, the Clerk's Office mailed every voter a Voter Information Card in June that lists the voter's name, address, precinct number, precinct polling location and list of their districts. This is an information card only and not used for voting.

There has been some slight adjustment to a couple of the boundaries of precincts and precincts 7 – 77 have been renumbered 7-74. Although your precinct number may have changed, most likely your polling location did not. City Ward boundaries did not change. You can go to michigan.gov/vote to view your voter information as well.

Need a passport or document notarized? We can help

Your City Clerk's Office offers passport and notary services. If you need to apply for a passport, simply make an appointment calling 616.456.3010. If you need a document

notarized, visit the second-floor City Clerk's Office at City Hall, 300 Monroe Ave. NW, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The fee for notarization is \$5 per signature. No appointment is needed. To learn more about these services and all that the Clerk's Office has to offer, visit grandrapidsmi.gov/clerk.

You can learn more about these services and all we have to offer on our website: grandrapidsmi.gov/clerk.



Survey: Grand Rapids Maintains High Quality of Life Despite Recent Challenges

Results of Grand Rapids' 2022 National Community Survey™ (The NCS™) show that residents continue to believe Grand Rapids offers a favorable quality of life, but also highlight areas for improvement while the City is facing multiple crises including the health pandemic, economic disruption, climate change and social/racial tension and calls for public safety reform.

The statistically-valid survey was conducted between Feb. 11 and April 1 by Polco's National Research Center (NRC) – a nationally recognized civic engagement firm. The report provides the opinions of a representative sample of 750 residents of the City of Grand Rapids. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 4% for all respondents and the response rate for the 2022 survey was 13%. Survey results were weighted so that the demographic profile of respondents was representative of the demographic profile of adults in Grand Rapids.

"These results demonstrate that despite the challenges of the last two years, Grand Rapids remains a resilient community and a highly desirable place to live, work and raise a family," City Manager Mark Washington said. "The feedback also informs the implementation of our strategic plan and helps us identify areas where attention is needed so we can prioritize our work and focus resources appropriately."

Assistant City Manager Doug Matthews presented the findings at this morning's Committee of the Whole and explained The NCS captures residents' opinions considering ten facets of a community: Economy, Mobility, Community Design, Utilities, Safety, Natural Environment, Parks and Recreation, Health and Wellness, Education, Arts, and Culture, and Inclusivity and Engagement. NRC then compared our local results against a database of resident opinions and perspectives gathered in surveys from over 600 communities – including 38 peer cities – whose residents evaluated the same kinds of topics on The National Community Survey.

Grand Rapids ranked at or near 85th percentile vs. peer cities in eight areas:

- Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities (#1 among peer cities)
- Community support for the arts (#1)
- Opportunities to attend special events & festivals (#1)
- Water resources (#2)
- Bus or transit services (#2)
- Opportunities for education, culture and arts (#3)
- Ease of travel by public transportation (#3)
- Public library services (#3)
- Overall opportunities for music/culture/arts (#3)
- Employment opportunities (#4)

The City scored similar to national benchmark in:

- Mobility
- Built Environment
- Economy
- Parks and Recreation
- Health and Wellness
- Education and Enrichment
- Community Engagement
- Utility Infrastructure

It scored lower than the national benchmark in opinions

of Safety and Natural Environment.

Matthews also outlined several key findings of the report to Mayor Bliss, City Commissioners and City administrators:

Grand Rapids residents continue to experience a high quality of life.

Survey participants provided positive ratings for items pertaining to quality of life in Grand Rapids, on par with the city's 2019 results and with comparison communities across the nation. At least 8 in 10 residents were pleased with Grand Rapids as a place to live, would recommend living in Grand Rapids to others, and were likely to remain in the city for the next five years. In addition, three-quarters gave excellent or good ratings to the overall quality of life in Grand Rapids and the city's overall image or reputation.

Residents identify safety and inclusivity as potential areas of growth for the community.

In the context of continuing calls for public safety reform and rising crime rates across the country, safety remains a priority for residents, with 85% rating safety an essential or very important focus area for the City in the next two years, with opportunities for improvement. Additionally, when asked about the importance of each of Grand Rapids' strategic planning areas, nearly all residents (91%) prioritized ensuring that all people feel safe and are safe in the community. At least 8 in 10 respondents reported feeling safe in their neighborhoods and Grand Rapids' downtown/commercial area during the day. Most respondents also felt safe from property crime (64%), violent crime (71%), and natural disasters (81%), similar to comparably sized communities within the custom benchmarks. However, only about 6 in 10 gave excellent or good reviews to the overall feeling of safety in Grand Rapids; this rating was similar to the City's 2019 results and custom benchmark comparisons, but lower than the national average. In addition, police/sheriff services and crime prevention in Grand Rapids both received ratings that

fell below the national and peer city benchmarks.

Residents have a mixed view of inclusivity in Grand Rapids.

While 55% of all residents feel welcome, a lesser 46% feel the community does an excellent or good job in valuing and respecting diversity and 32% feel the community does an excellent or good job caring for its vulnerable residents. Those are lower ratings than the population and national benchmarks. Most other survey items related to inclusivity remained stable from Grand Rapids' previous iteration of The NCS, but a few new questions suggest room for growth in this area. About half of respondents positively evaluated the community for making all residents feel welcome, on par with national and peer benchmark comparisons. Slightly fewer (46%) felt favorably about Grand Rapids attracting people from diverse backgrounds, similar to the national benchmark but lower than the peer city benchmark.

Grand Rapids' economy remains strong despite challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Results relating to the economy in Grand Rapids tended to be positive and consistent with the City's previous survey iteration, which is worth noting due to the economic challenges and impacts felt nationwide from the COVID-19 pandemic. About 6 in 10 residents gave high marks to Grand Rapids' economic development and the overall economic health of the city, holding steady from 2019. Evaluations of Grand Rapids as a place to work and visit remained strong, with positive ratings from at least three-quarters of respondents. A similar proportion was pleased with the city's overall quality of business and service establishments (81%), a slight increase over the previous survey, as well as with the variety of such establishments (74%). Employment opportunities in Grand Rapids and the vibrancy of the city's downtown/commercial area both received higher-than-

[Continued on next page](#)

Living in Grand Rapids

Nearly

8 in 10



gave *excellent* or *good* ratings to quality of life

Continued from previous page

average reviews, with about 7 in 10 rating each as excellent or good. Shopping opportunities garnered positive ratings from two-thirds of residents, declining from 2019 but remaining on par with comparison communities across the nation.

Residents value the City’s utility infrastructure.

When asked which aspects of the community the City should focus on in the next two years, 86% of residents identified the overall utility infrastructure as a priority. About 6 in 10 gave high marks to the quality of the utility infrastructure in Grand Rapids, on par with the national average. Garbage collection services retained strong ratings this year as well, with 8 in 10 residents offering excellent or good reviews. Positive ratings for the City’s storm water management (65%), drinking water (74%), and sewer services (79%) all improved slightly since 2019. Roughly two-thirds of residents provided favorable marks to the City’s utility billing services and regional power utilities, while fewer than half (43%) did the same for affordable high-speed internet access. All of these were similar to the national and custom benchmark comparisons. Most respondents who had interacted with City in the last six months were also satisfied with that contact – 83% were somewhat or very satisfied with their contact and interaction with the City. What’s more, nearly 7 in 10 Rated the overall customer service of Grand Rapids employees (police, receptionists, planners, etc.) as excellent or good.

Residents prioritize the natural environment, education and enrichment opportunities.

Survey results also showed that residents place significant importance on the overall quality of their natural environment and parks and recreation opportunities. Residents rated these community facets positively for quality – 73% rated the overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities excellent or good, and 64% rated the overall quality of the natural environment excellent or good. Respondents further indicated that it was essential or very important that the community focus on these areas in the coming two years, including natural environment, scoring 84% – up from 79% in the last survey. Residents also voiced that emphasis be placed on overall opportunities for education, culture and the arts (81%) and overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities (77%).


Matthews told the City Commission that the survey was administered during the COVID-19 pandemic, a time of challenge for many local governments. While The NCS provides comparisons to national benchmarks, it is important to note that much of the benchmark data was collected prior to the pandemic. This may impact how Grand Rapids’ 2022 ratings compare to other communities’ ratings from the past five years. Trend data for Grand Rapids represent important comparison data and will be examined for improvements or declines.

In addition to being shared at today’s Committee of the Whole, results will be shared with City executives and departmental leadership, and will inform updates to the City’s Strategic Plan, currently in development, which could impact budget planning and proposals for Fiscal Year 2024.

The key findings will be incorporated as part of in-Ward engagement and discussions in late July and August.


City of Grand Rapids

FY 2021 Citizen’s Financial Summary



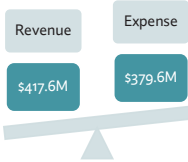
City Revenues
\$417.6M

5.2% increase vs. 2020 driven by an increase in grants and contributions. The City’s primary sources of revenues consist of Charges for Services (Water, Sewage & Parking), Income Taxes and Property Taxes.



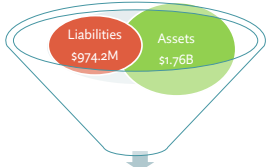
City Expenses
\$379.6M

1.3% increase vs. 2020 driven by an increase in Recreation and Culture expenses. The City’s primary expenses are Public Safety, Public Works, Sewage Disposal, Water Supply, and General Gov’t.




Change in Net Position
+\$38.0M

\$38M is the amount by which the City’s revenue exceeded its expenses during the Fiscal Year. This was largely driven by increase in General Fund operating grants and positive results in Water and Sewer system operations.




Net Position
\$798.7M

The Net Position primarily reflects the amount by which the City’s total assets exceed its total liabilities. As of the fiscal year end June 30, 2021, the Net Position reflected a positive increase of **\$38.0M**.




General Fund Balance
\$45.1M (Unassigned)

The City’s primary operating fund accounts for police, fire, and other government department activity. The unassigned fund balance increased by \$8M vs. 2020. In addition to the unassigned balance the City also has \$14.3M reserved for Budget Stabilization.




Outstanding Debt
\$500.3M

The City’s total long-term outstanding debt decreased by \$54.7M during the fiscal year driven by \$15M final payment on 2015 Capital Improvement Bonds Vital Streets..




S&P Credit Rating
AA

The AA rating means the City’s capacity to meet its financial commitments is very strong as measured by the credit rating agency Standard & Poor’s. AA is one rating below S&P’s highest credit rating of AAA.




Pensions & Benefits
77% Funded

The City’s Pension plans are 77% funded while Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB) are 86% funded as of year end FY 2021. 77% represents the weighted average percent funded ratio for all plans.



JOIN THE MAYOR’S YOUTH COUNCIL

2022-2023



"I know it to be deeply informative, educational, and fun. I left more knowledgeable, more curious, interested in government and met new people who have the same passion as me." - Liam Duncan

"I was able to get involved in the everyday operation of city government and get a feel for what actually happens behind the scenes in our city." - Sophia Ferenczi

"Being a part of Mayor's Youth Council made me feel accomplished and successful this year. I had a very enjoyable and educated year because of this experience!" - Charlotte Beresford.

ELIGIBILITY:
9-12th Grade Students
City of GR Resident

Apply Now:
www.ourcommunityschildren.com



Parks and
Recreation
CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

3 WAYS TO GET ACTIVE THIS FALL

Community fitness happening September through October

1

VIRTUAL FEE-BASED

PRICING:
\$40 per 8-week class

LOCATION(S):
Wherever you are!
Live on Zoom

2

OUTDOOR FEE-BASED

PRICING:*
\$40 per 8-week class

LOCATION(S):
Coldbrook by River's Edge
1101 Monroe Ave NW

*Add \$10 for nonresidents

3

INDOOR FEE-BASED

PRICING:*
\$40 per 8-week class

LOCATION(S):
Parks and Rec Studio
201 Market Ave SW

*Add \$10 for nonresidents



Register online
grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr



Register by phone
616.456.3696, option #1



Register in person
201 Market Ave SW

YOGA

CLASSES RUN FOR 8-WEEK SESSIONS, STARTING THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 12


Classes are subject to change - check online for up-to-date listings on offerings and locations.

Register online: grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr
Registration for Sep/Oct opens Aug 1.

| CLASS | DAY(S) | TIME(S) | LOCATION(S) | INSTRUCTOR |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|------------------|---------------|------------|
| BASIC YOGA Discover your inner yogi in a class that builds strength and body awareness. Begin with gentle stretching and move to flowing through and holding poses. Class will come to a restful end. | MON | 6:30 - 7:25 AM | VIRTUAL | DARCEL S. |
| | MON | 5:30 - 6:25 PM | VIRTUAL | TERRI S. |
| | TUE | 6:30 - 7:25 PM | 201 MARKET SW | AMY K. |
| | WED | 6:00 - 6:55 PM | VIRTUAL | SARA R. |
| | THU | 12:00 - 12:55 PM | 201 MARKET SW | MELISSA T. |
| | FRI | 6:30 - 7:25 AM | VIRTUAL | DARCEL S. |
| | SAT | 8:00 - 8:55 AM | VIRTUAL | DARCEL S. |
| GENTLE YOGA A balanced practice that will center you, leaving your body feeling open and relaxed. Basic poses and a slower flow unlock body tension, strengthen your core and help you tune into personal peace. | TUE | 9:15 - 10:10 AM | VIRTUAL | TERRI S. |
| | THU | 9:15 - 10:10 AM | VIRTUAL | TERRI S. |
| SLOW FLOW YOGA End your weekend and set the tone for the week ahead with this calming and gentle yoga class. Each class will begin and end with a variety of restorative postures, with a slow yoga flow in between. Find a cozy comfortable space, light a few candles, and grab as many blankets and pillows as you can! | WED | 7:30 - 8:25 PM | 201 MARKET SW | NICOLE H. |
| | FRI | 6:00 - 6:55 PM | 201 MARKET S | NICOLE H. |
| | SUN | 7:00 - 7:55 PM | VIRTUAL | DARCEL S. |
| POWER YOGA This energetic class is designed to build strength, flexibility, and balance! Challenging peak poses, breath to movement flows, and mind body connections will encourage students to find their edge. Modifications are always offered and body awareness is always encouraged. | TUE | 6:30 - 7:25 PM | VIRTUAL | SARA R. |
| VITAL MOVEMENT Strength, flexibility and balance are vital to our well-being. This class combines yoga stretches and poses (from the chair and standing only), along with light core work. No mat required. Perfect for anyone needing to stretch, improve their range of motion, or modify their practice as they recover from injuries. This class is great for any age, especially those 50+. | WED | 9:15 - 10:10 AM | VIRTUAL | TERRI S. |

YOGA (CONT.)

CLASSES RUN FOR 8-WEEK SESSIONS, STARTING THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 12


Register online: grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr 
Registration for Sep/Oct opens Aug 1.

Classes are subject to change - check online for up-to-date listings on offerings and locations.

| CLASS | DAY(S) | TIME(S) | LOCATION(S) | INSTRUCTOR |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|
| RESTORATIVE YOGA Using breath work, props and holding simple poses this “mindful yoga” class will help you achieve a deep level of relaxation. The slower pace will help you disconnect from your busy life and tune into you, creating mind and body awareness. | MON | 7:30 - 8:25 PM | 201 MARKET AVE | KAYLA M. |
| YOGA EXPRESS Discover your inner yogi in this 45 minute express class that builds strength and body awareness. We will start with gentle stretching and move to flowing through and holding poses. | TUE THU | 6:30 - 7:15 AM 6:30 - 7:15 AM | 201 MARKET AVE 201 MARKET AVE | JEN B. JEN B. |

CARDIO & STRENGTH

CLASSES RUN FOR 8-WEEK SESSIONS, STARTING THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 12

Register online: grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr 
Registration for Sep/Oct opens Aug 1.

Classes are subject to change - check online for up-to-date listings on offerings and locations.

| CLASS | DAY(S) | TIME(S) | LOCATION(S) | INSTRUCTOR |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| BARRE Barre is a low impact, high intensity total body workout that incorporates elements of Pilates, Ballet and Yoga. This workout is fast paced and set to fun upbeat music. During the workout you will use light hand weights, resistance bands, and your own body weight. You will complete small range movements at high repetitions meant to fatigue your muscles to build strength and endurance, and then stretch everything out to increase your flexibility. Barre is a great workout for any fitness level as there are options to level up or down based on your own body. Barre is for EVERYBODY. | MON THU | 5:30 - 6:25 PM <i>EXPRESS</i> 6:30 - 7:15 PM | 201 MARKET SW 201 MARKET SW | CORI M. KELLY B |
| CORE CAMP Weight training meets cardio blast intervals to keep your muscles and heart pumping. This class is as fun as it is effective - set to today's hottest music. | TUE | 5:30 - 6:25 PM | VIRTUAL | KRISTIN P |
| HIGH FITNESS HIGH Fitness is an energetic, fun, fitness class that incorporates interval training with pop music, and easy-to-follow fitness choreography. This dance based class produces a high caloric burn and full-body toning through its carefully formulated choreography, alternating between intense cardio peaks and toning tracks. No equipment necessary, and options will be given for all fitness levels.. | TUE | 5:30 - 6:25 PM | 201 MARKET SW | AHNA S. |
| HIIT EXPRESS This class uses High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) to increase your heart rate, strengthen your muscles, and boost your metabolism. Participants will be given 30 seconds to do as many reps of a single body weight exercise as possible. Then rinse, repeat, with a new move! Class will end with mat routines that includes core and upper body strength exercises. All movements will have modified options as well as progressions, allowing each person to decide their own intensity level. All fitness levels welcome!. | WED SAT | 6:30 - 7:15 PM 9:00 - 9:45 AM | 201 MARKET SW VIRTUAL | AMY K. AMY K. |
| KETTLEBELL AMPD Kettlebell AMPD is a group fitness format that takes heart-pumping music and kettlebell moves and combines them into a calorie torching fun workout! The program uses lightweight kettlebells, in both traditional and non-traditional ways, to create a fun, effective, full body workout. Combining the benefits of strength training, functional movements and cardiovascular exercise, this program is a safe and effective workout for all ages and fitness levels. No experience necessary! | THU | 4:30 - 5:25 PM | 201 MARKET SW | MONICA S. |
| KICKBOXING Mix up your routine with balance, coordination and strength-building moves. Strengthen your legs, upper body, abs and burn calories. | MON | 6:30 - 7:15 AM | 201 MARKET SW | MARIE R. |
| STEP & SCULPT AEROBICS Get your cardio fix in this fun class choreographed around an aerobics step and set to fun music. The instructor will lead you through cardio based intervals where you are up and down on the step, and then you will sculpt it out doing strength based moves utilizing light weights and your own body weight. | WED | 5:30 - 6:25 PM | 201 MARKET SW | KRISTIN P. |

CARDIO & STRENGTH (CONT.)

CLASSES RUN FOR 8-WEEK SESSIONS, STARTING THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 12

Classes are subject to change - check online for up-to-date listings on offerings and locations.

Register online: grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr
Registration for Sep/Oct opens Aug 1.

| CLASS | DAY(S) | TIME(S) | LOCATION(S) | INSTRUCTOR |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|----------------|---------------|------------|
| POUND Using Ripstix®, lightly weighted drumsticks engineered specifically for exercising, POUND® transforms drumming into an incredibly effective way of working out. Instead of listening to music, you become the music in this exhilarating full-body workout that combines cardio, conditioning and strength training with yoga and pilates-inspired movements. Designed for all fitness levels, POUND® provides the perfect atmosphere for letting loose, getting energized, toning up and rockin' out! The workout is easily modifiable, and the alternative vibe and welcoming philosophy appeals to men and women of all ages and abilities. POUND® approved sticks required for everyone. Punch card holders must have their own Ripstix®. Ripstix® available at registration for \$20. | THU | 5:30 - 6:25 PM | 201 MARKET SW | KRISTIN P. |

OUTDOOR CYCLING

CLASSES RUN FOR 8-WEEK SESSIONS, STARTING THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 12

Classes are subject to change - check online for up-to-date listings on offerings and locations.

Register online: grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr
Registration for Sep/Oct opens Aug 1.

| CLASS | DAY(S) | TIME(S) | LOCATION(S) | INSTRUCTOR |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CYCLING Reach your fitness goals while building leg and core strength. Powerful music and pace-setting instruction helps you climb steep hills, move across flat road and master intense intervals. | MON TUE WED THU SAT | 5:30 - 6:15 PM 5:45 - 6:30 PM 5:30 - 6:15 PM 5:45 - 6:30 PM 8:15 - 9:00 AM | COLDBROOK BY RIVERS EDGE* | CAROL S. MICHELLE D. JULIE S. PATRICK F. MICHELLE D. |

*1101 Monroe Ave NW

DANCE FITNESS

CLASSES RUN FOR 8-WEEK SESSIONS, STARTING THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 12

Classes are subject to change - check online for up-to-date listings on offerings and locations.

Register online: grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr
Registration for Sep/Oct opens Aug 1.

| CLASS | DAY(S) | TIME(S) | LOCATION(S) | INSTRUCTOR |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| BEGINNER BALLROOM DANCING A beginner class targeted toward couples wanting to learn ballroom dancing. Learn the Salsa, Waltz, Foxtrot, East Coast Swing, Cha Cha, Rumba and Tango. | TUE | 8:00 - 9:00 PM | 201 MARKET SW | BYRON D. |
| GENTLE MUSICAL MOVEMENT This 45 minute class encourages freedom for body, mind + spirit while working range of motion, strength, flexibility and balance. Class is created around music and combines simple dance and stretch moves for all body parts. Move your body in ways outside of your daily routine, inviting in both fun and freedom of personal expression. Perfect for all ages, especially those 50+.This class can also be adapted to the chair. | MON | 9:15 - 10:10 AM | VIRTUAL | TERRI S. |
| GROOVE Sweat away stress and dance some joy into your heart while following simple steps and easy toning moves. Groove is perfect for anyone who wants to add some fun into their current workout routine. If you like to move to a variety of great music, this class is for you! | WED | 5:30 - 6:25 PM | VIRTUAL | TERRI S. |
| ZUMBA Zumba is a high energy, dance fitness class that incorporates Latin and international music. All fitness levels are welcome. | MON | 6:30 - 7:25 PM | 201 MARKET SW | AMY K. & BRI C. |
| WERQ WERQ is a nonstop cardio dance class with fun and unique routines set to the hottest pop and hip hop music. Participants will get a high calorie burn, and a non stop workout, combining repetitive athletic moves with fresh dance steps. Anyone can WERQ it! Bring your own water bottle and towel. | WED | 6:30 - 7:25 | 201 MARKET SW | JEANNIE W. |

BRICKS 4 KIDZ

4-CLASS SESSIONS. \$58/RESIDENTS, \$68 NONRESIDENTS

Register online: grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr

| CLASS | DATES | TIME(S) | LOCATION |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| BUILD TO LAUNCH (AGES 5-11) LEGO Education & NASA have partnered to guide campers through the journey from the building of the Artemis space craft to it's launch! | AUG 2, 9, 16, 23 | 4:30 - 5:45 PM | 201 MARKET SW |
| ANGRY BIRDS (AGES 5-11) Experience the thrill of the Angry Birds (trademark) game by building different birds with LEGO (trademark) bricks in this fun class! Each week our models will involve different challenges as we build the birds, racing karts, and other motor-powered machines! You don't want to miss it! | AUG 4, 11, 18, 25 | 4:30 - 5:45 PM | 201 MARKET SW |

YOUTH SWIM LESSONS

Dates and locations TBD.
Visit grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr for more information and to register online.

| SWIM LESSON LEVELS | SWIM LESSON LEVELS |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PARENT CHILD (AGES 6M-3Y) Introduce water safety and basic swim skills to parents and children. Parents will learn skills to safely work with their child in the water, including how to correctly support/hold them in the water and how to encourages them. Children will gain confidence in the water through games and songs and receive an introduction to swim foundations, like submerging and kicking. | YOUTH LEVEL 2 (AGES 6+) Builds on the foundations in Level 1 to support the correct execution of foundational swim skills. Focuses on proper technique of foundational skills to ensure participants are strong and capable in the water independently. Repetition is used to build endurance and muscle memory. Participants will learn how to float, glide and move forward in the water with no support and will continue to develop the foundations for future swim strokes. |
| PRESCHOOL LEVEL 1 (AGES 3-5) Introduces water safety and basic swim skills. Children will work with instructors to gain confidence, develop positive attitudes around the water, and receive an introduction to swim foundations like submerging, floating, and the movements of front and back crawl. | YOUTH LEVEL 3 (AGES 6+) Aims to increase proficiency of previously learned skills by providing additional practice with an emphasis on technique. Participants will learn and practice survival floating and improve their front crawl, back crawl, breaststroke, and elementary backstroke technique while swimming longer distances. Participants will also learn safe headfirst entries and begin learning the foundations of butterfly. After successfully completing Level 3, participants will have achieved basic, independent water competency in a pool environment. |
| PRESCHOOL LEVEL 2 (AGES 3-5) Builds on the skills introduced in Preschool Level 1. Children will continue to develop a positive relationship with the water while mastering swim foundations like floating, submerging, and the basics of front and back crawl. | YOUTH LEVEL 4 (AGES 6+) Participants will improve their technique and increase endurance in previously learned strokes. Swimmers will gain better control over front crawl, back crawl, and breaststroke and will continue to learn butterfly foundations. Emphasis will be placed on headfirst entries and swimming underwater to provide the basic skillset for competitive swimming. After successfully completing Level 4, swimmers will be well equipped with the skills needed to transition to a swim team setting. |
| YOUTH LEVEL 1 (AGES 6+) Youth Level 1 aims to develop positive relationships with the water while mastering swim foundations – like floating, submerging, and the basics of front and back crawl. At the end, participants will be able to perform swim foundations independently or with minimal assistance. | |



YOUTH - FALL SOCCER



QUICK INFO

- Practices begin week of September 6
- Games begin September 17
- Each team practices for one hour per week

- Each team plays one game per week on Saturdays
- Children of all abilities are welcome to play
- Shin guards and athletic shoes or cleats required

REGISTRATION

RESIDENTS: \$45, NONRESIDENTS: \$55 (REGISTER BY AUGUST 15 TO AVOID \$10 LATE FEE)

ONLINE
grandrapidsmi.gov
Search "soccer"

BY PHONE
616.456.3696
Option #1

IN PERSON
201 Market Ave SW
Grand Rapids, MI

ADULT SWIM LESSONS

Dates and locations TBD.

Visit grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr for more information and to register online.

SWIMMING ESSENTIALS (AGES 16+)

Swimming Essentials is designed for anyone 16 years of age and older. This class will develop fundamental swim skills including floating, water safety, breathing techniques, and foundational swim strokes while allowing participants to gain confidence in a safe, controlled setting. This class is great for individuals who are brand new to swimming or have an existing fear of the water. After successfully completing Swimming Essentials, swimmers will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to safely navigate aquatic environments.

STROKE DEVELOPMENT (AGES 16+)

Stroke Development is designed for anyone 16 years of age and older. This class will build on fundamental swimming skills by introducing different swimming strokes. This class is great for individuals who are comfortable in the water and looking to expand on their skills and learn different ways to swim. After successfully completing Adult Stroke Development, swimmers will be able to swim using a variety of strokes.

KAYAKING ADVENTURES



Enjoy a 90-minute guided kayak adventure on the Grand River! The Grand River is the longest river in the state of Michigan and offers beautiful sceneries with views from downtown Grand Rapids and a variety of recreation activities.

Whether you are an experienced paddler, want to learn, or just crossing an activity off your bucket list, you will love this kayaking trip! Must be 18 years of age or older, no experience necessary. Our Parks and Recreation staff will provide all participants with basic instruction and set-up including paddle, personal flotation device, and kayak. **Register online at grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr.**

DATES

Tue at 6:00 pm

July 26 - Sep 13

Sat at 10:00 am and 12:00 pm

Aug 6, 13, 20

Sep 3, 10, 17

Sat at 11:00 am

Jul 30, Aug 27

FREE!

PROGRAMS FOR AGES 50+

At Garfield Park Community Gym
(2111 Madison Ave SE)

Programs for ages 50+ are back!

Classes are ongoing and run Monday through Thursday from 10 am - 2 pm. All programs are **free** and open to the public.

Visit grandrapidsmi.gov/recreation or call 616-456-3696 for more information.

Programs include:

- Active Adults
- Stretch and Flex
- Pickleball
- Walking Club
- Knitting Club
- And more!



Visit any of the Grand Rapids Public Library's 8 locations

Main Library

111 Library Street NE ■ 49503
616.988.5400

Madison Square Branch

1201 Madison SE ■ 49507
616.988.5411

Ottawa Hills Branch

1150 Giddings SE ■ 49506
616.988.5412

Seymour Branch

2350 Eastern SE ■ 49507
616.988.5413

Van Belkum Branch

1563 Plainfield NE ■ 49505
616.988.5410

West Leonard Branch

1017 Leonard NW ■ 49504
616.988.5416

West Side Branch

713 Bridge NW ■ 49504
616.988.5414

Yankee Clipper Branch

2025 Leonard NE ■ 49505
616.988.5415

For more information and hours,
visit www.grpl.org.



616.988.5400 ■ www.grpl.org

Events for Everyone



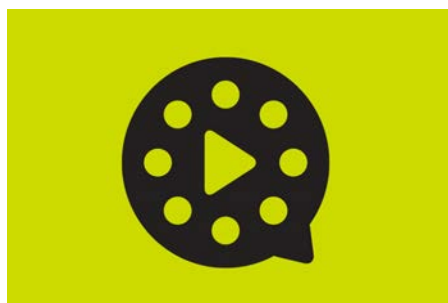
Movies on the Lawn: Moana

Bring a chair or blanket and join us for an outdoor family movie!

Friday, August 5 | 7:30 – 10:00 pm
Yankee Clipper Branch – 2025 Leonard NE

Free refreshments and a take-home craft will also be available. Events will be weather permitting. The movie will begin at dusk for best visibility; some event times may run later than listed.

This program is presented in partnership with Wealthy Theatre.



Short Film Discussion Group: Queer Voices with YWCA

Monday, August 15 | 6:00 – 7:00 pm
Yankee Clipper Branch – 2025 Leonard NE

Do you enjoy discussing short films? Each month we will watch a short film from our Kanopy collection and then talk about it. A film expert and community stakeholders will be on hand to help get the conversation started. Light refreshments provided.

Watch a short film featuring LGBTQIA+ voices and join in a conversation led by Janelle LeBlanc, Director of Crisis Intervention Services & LGBTQ Specialist at YWCA West Michigan, and Grand Rapids Public Library film expert, Sarah Nawrocki.



Trybrary with Muse GR: Charcoal Drawing with Carlos Sampson

Saturday, August 27 | 1:00 – 2:30 pm
Muse GR – 727 Leonard St NW

Have you ever wanted to try your hand at a new art project, but didn't have the necessary know-how or supplies? Now is your chance to get creative! Adult and teen budding artists can try a different art form each month. Each program will feature a local artist giving tips and tricks to master the art project. All supplies will be provided. Space is limited to 15 people on a first come, first served basis.

Join local artist, Carlos Sampson, for an interactive lesson to learn the basics of drawing with charcoal. This workshop is perfect for beginners or those that need a refresher!



Black Lit Book Club

Tuesday, August 23 | 6:30 – 7:30 pm
Seymour Branch – 2350 Eastern SE

Come explore the works of African American authors at this monthly outdoor book club led by a GRPL librarian. Participants will discuss the work of contemporary Black novelists.

August's book selection is *Transcendent Kingdom* by Yaa Gyasi



Summer Series: Writers and Readers

This monthly book series will inspire writers and readers alike. Grow your writing skills in workshops led by local authors. Hear the stories behind the books written by internationally bestselling authors. Meet area booksellers and book lovers. Enjoy delicious eats from area food trucks.

This event is free and open to the public.

Thursday, August 25

5:30 pm | Main Library – 111 Library St NE

Writing Workshop led by Kayla Chenault, a practitioner of Black Girl Magic and author of *These Bones*. Registration required.
www.grpl.org/register

6:30 pm | Fountain Street Church
24 Fountain NE

An Evening with Silvia Moreno-Garcia, the author of *Mexican Gothic*. A book signing will follow the presentation.

5:30 – 8:30 pm | Outside the Main Library
Library Plaza NE

Food, Games, Book Vendors,
Community Resources

The first 100 meals at each food truck are free! Free food is first come, first served and available for purchase after the first 100 meals have been distributed.

Sponsor:



Free Outdoor Storytimes



The Grand Rapids Public Library offers fun and educational storytimes for children ages birth – 5 years old.



Storytime in the Park with StorytimeGR

Join us on Tuesday nights at the park for stories, free books and ice cream, special guests, and a whole lot of family fun!

StorytimeGR is a partnership of the Grand Rapids Public Library, Read GR, Grand Valley State University, the Grand Rapids Office of Special Events, and Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation.

Tuesdays, August 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
6:30 – 8:00 pm | Garfield Park
2111 Madison SE

Tuesdays, August 2, 16
6:30 – 8:00 pm | Martin Luther King Jr. Park
900 Fuller Ave SE

Tuesdays, August 9, 23
6:30 – 8:00 pm | Lincoln Park
1120 Bridge St NW



Family Storytime on the Lawn

Join us for this outdoor storytime held on the lawn of your favorite GRPL branch! Children ages 0-5 and their caregivers will love this half-hour event that features stories, songs, rhymes, and playing on the lawn. In case of inclement weather, this event series will be moved indoors.

Tuesdays, August 2, 9, 16
10:30 am | West Side Branch
713 Bridge St NW

Wednesdays, August 3, 10, 17
10:30 am | Seymour Branch
2350 Eastern SE

Thursdays, August 4, 11, 18
10:30 am | Yankee Clipper Branch
2025 Leonard NE



Outdoor Storytimes with GRPL

If you love stories, songs, and rhymes, join the Grand Rapids Public Library for outdoor storytime. This fun event for kids ages 0-5 is the perfect way to get some wiggles out. Each child will take home a free Storytime Kit at the end of the program (while supplies last).

Monday, August 8
11:00 am | Roosevelt Park
739 Van Raalte Dr SW

Monday, August 15
11:00 am | Briggs Park – 324 Knapp St NE



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Our streamlined mobile app gives you an easy way to browse our collections, access your account, use a digital library card, and more. This free app is available in English and Spanish.

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Database Spotlight: Education & Test Preparation

Looking for test preparation help? These free, online databases can help. Grab your GRPL library card and visit www.grpl.org/research to get started.

Driving-Tests.org

- A driver's education resource offering state specific practice tests
- Includes motorcycle and CDL (Commercial Driver's License) tests
- Offers FAQ section with detailed answers on DMV related questions

Learning Express Library

Test preparation materials and interactive practice exams based on official tests

- Includes ASVAB, SAT, ACT, GED Preparation, Firefighter, Police Officer, Postal Worker, U.S. Citizenship, and improvement tests for students from elementary school through college

LinkedIn Learning

- Choose from thousands of online courses to learn in-demand skills from real-world industry experts.



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- Download the Mango app for language learning from your mobile device!

Service Spotlight



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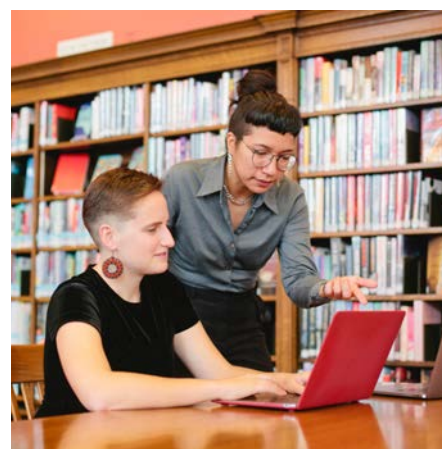
GRPL offers free printing, faxing, copying, and scanning services at all library locations.

Stop by your favorite branch during open hours and visit our Customer Service desk to learn more.

Use our pick-up service, GRPL To Go, to enjoy our nearly contactless pickup option.

Services are free and limited to 50 pages per week. Double-sided printing is considered two pages.

Visit www.grpl.org/printing-faxing to learn more.



One-on-One Technology Help

The library offers One-on-One Technology Help at our library branches. Find individual assistance in learning: basic computers, Internet, email, word processing, eBooks, spreadsheets, and library resources. Call one of our seven branches to set up an appointment.

Visit www.grpl.org/computer to learn more.

Branching Out at GRPL: Spotlight on the Seymour Branch



Fast facts:

- Located at 2350 Eastern SE, in Alger Heights
- Rapid bus route #4
- Hours:
Mon – Tues | 12:00 – 8:00 pm
Wed – Thurs | 10:00 am – 6:00 pm
Fri | Closed
Sat | 10:00 am – 6 pm
Sun | Closed
- Free WiFi and public computers
- Children's library with play area
- Outdoor space with seating, WiFi, and games available for use



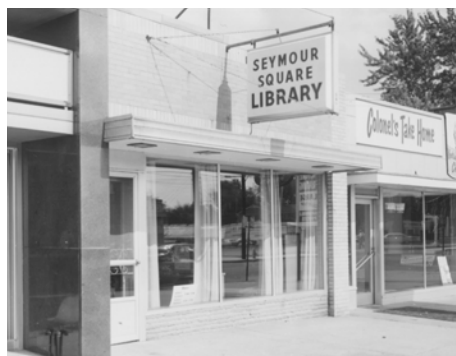
Branch History



One of the bookmobiles that served the Alger Heights community before a branch library was established.

The Beginning

The Seymour Branch came into existence thanks to a dedicated group of parents. In 1960, the principal and Parent-Teacher Association at Alger Elementary learned that bookmobile service would be reduced and that libraries in Henry and Burton schools would be closed. Concerned about the lack of library service for students, parents from several schools in the area met with library representatives and asked for a branch library. The Southeast Library Committee formed to raise funds for a building, and the library agreed to supply books and staffing.



The first home of the Seymour branch was located in a small storefront on Eastern Ave.

A Community-Driven Branch

Led by Harry P. Symes, an advertising executive, the Southeast Library Committee set out to raise \$45,000. In fundraising letters, Symes noted that the effort was driven by a “group of public-spirited citizens who desire to do something for the community, instead of the community being asked to do something for them.” In September 1961, they signed a contract to purchase a former real estate office at 2016 Eastern Avenue SE. Fundraising efforts continued over the next two years and Seymour Square Branch officially opened in June 1963.



A new home for the Seymour branch in the former Metropolitan Life Insurance building on Eastern Ave.

Expansion Plans Begin

After nearly 20 years of service, it was clear that the Seymour branch could use more space. A *Grand Rapids Press* article noted that Seymour was “the city’s smallest and most heavily used branch library, where hundreds of books are stored in boxes or stacked on floors...” In August 1981, the City of Grand Rapids purchased the former Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. building at 2350 Eastern Avenue SE, for use as a library branch. The new library opened in September 1982. Library Director Robert Raz noted that the library had been looking for a larger space for several years.



Construction on a new Seymour branch library

Expansion Begins

The Seymour Branch was located in the former Metropolitan Life building for nearly 20 years. In 1997, the library embarked on a major expansion plan totaling \$28.2 million. The funds were provided by a capital millage and private donations. In 1999, the library purchased a neighboring property at the corner of Eastern and Alger SE. The old library was demolished and a new building was constructed on the enlarged site.



Local children celebrate the opening of the new branch building

Grand Opening

On September 25, 2000, more than 200 community members gathered to celebrate the opening of the new Seymour Branch. The new building was nearly three times the size of the former branch and had more space for technology, seating, and children’s programs.



Seymour Branch's Library on the Lawn

Present Day

Today, Seymour is a popular neighborhood library. It remained busy during the pandemic, with over 85,000 items checked out between July 2020 and June 2021. In 2021, as a part of GRPL's 150th anniversary celebration, the new Library on the Lawn debuted and quickly became a place for family and friends to gather. The outdoor library space is used to relax, play games, or eat treats from Heights Cream, which is just across the street.



WE ARE GR

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Grand Rapids Public Library News - Section B

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Thanks to the generosity of our advertisers, this newsletter was funded using minimal taxpayer dollars.

City High Middle is Ranked as Top Michigan School

Number-one in the state and 18th in the nation By Phil de Haan, Courtesy of School News Network

U.S. News & World Report has released its high school rankings for 2022, and City High Middle School is rated first in Michigan and 18th in the nation, its highest-ever national ranking.

For Grand Rapids Public Schools Superintendent Leadriane Roby, the news was cause for celebration near the end of the 2021-22 school year.

"I want to congratulate all the City High scholars, families and staff on this remarkable accomplishment," she said in a prepared statement.

Principal Ryan Huppert was equally enthusiastic.

"We could not be prouder of our scholars, staff, district and community for this achievement," he said. "These rankings reflect all the hard work that scholars and staff put forth to succeed here. Seeing those efforts translate into such a high level of success and recognition means the world to our school."

U.S. News & World Report took note of City High Middle's International Baccalaureate coursework and exams, commending the school's 100 percent IB participation rate. City High Middle School was the first school in the area to offer the International Baccalaureate Middle Years and Diploma Programme. It also



City High Middle School

noted the school's 50 percent minority enrollment and that 48% of the school's students are considered economically disadvantaged.

City High Middle was also named No. 1 in the state, and 21st in the country, in U.S. News & World Report's 2020 rankings.

The magazine partnered with North Carolina-based RTI International on the 2022 rankings, and schools were rated on six measures:

- College readiness (30% of the ranking)
- College curriculum breadth (10%)
- State assessment proficiency (20%)
- State assessment performance (20%)
- Underserved student performance (10%)
- Graduation rate (10%)

The margins for rising and falling in the annual rankings are razor-thin, U.S. News & World Report said in its press release. If a school scored 97 in 2021 and 98 in 2022, it would rise almost 200 spots in the national rankings. Conversely, just a half point drop from 97 in 2021 to 96.5 in 2022 would mean a drop of almost 100 places in the rankings.



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Original Mastodons Take Next Step

Money will support equipment, training and assessments of industry needs

By Alexis Stark, Courtesy of School News Network



The inaugural graduating class of Grand Rapids Public Museum High School (courtesy Esteban Clark-Braendle)

In the Design Lab at the Grand Rapids Public Museum High School, students can create personal and class projects using computer and printer technology, woodworking and multimedia equipment.

"This is where we set stuff on fire," senior Esteban Clark-Braendle told a visitor about a box that fumigates chemicals.

While Esteban gave a tour, freshmen worked in groups to develop sessions for an end-of-semester conference, featuring topics such as urban planning, feminism, race relations and climate change.

Across the common area-slash-lunch room, music and English classes share a space filled with rolling chairs that allow for daily seating reconfigurations, and the schools' Artifact Lab, filled with items from the Grand Rapids Public Museum's collections.

"Curriculum here is proficiency based, not based on letter

grades," Esteban explained. "Students are encouraged to showcase their knowledge in certain subjects outside of tests."

He recalled his sixth grade class of 60 kids learning at the Van Andel Museum Center in 2015.

"It was a new thing and we were guinea pigs," he said. "Whenever they tried something new, they tried it with us and fixed it for future classes. We built this school through trial and error.

"It was very bare bones when it started. We didn't have hot lunches and only had access to two classrooms at the museum. In seventh grade, we were granted use of the whole fourth floor."

Now he is part of the first graduating class of the museum's high school and one of 30 of the "original mastodons" who attended from sixth through twelfth grade.

'Freedom' in Project-based Learning

Since opening in 2018, the high school set out to build on the work the students completed in middle school.

The high school, partially funded by a \$10 million grant from the XQ Super School Project, developed from a cooperative effort between the City of Grand Rapids and GRPS.

Additional school partners include the Grand Rapids Public Museum, Kendall College of Art and Design, and Grand Valley State University's College of Education.

Museum archives collaborate with modern technology to provide hands-on learning experiences for students to apply conceptual knowledge to real-world projects.

During his four years, Esteban rented camera and video equipment from the Design Lab to pursue his passion for photography and film, while completing class assignments.

"We have a lot of freedom to pursue personal projects, as well as class projects," he said. "We build on skills that were already growing

Continued on page 3



Seniors Bella DeLong, left, and Natalie Carmichael are members of the Grand Rapids Public Museum High School's first graduating class (courtesy Esteban Clark-Braendle)

Grand Rapids Public Schools

WEAREGR

July 2022

Grand Rapids

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Title IX Annual Athletics Compliance Report: Grand Rapids Public Schools is committed to securing athletic equity and provides annual Title IX reporting to the athletes and parents in an effort to bring increased attention and resources towards ensuring that gender equity as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments for 1972, Grand Rapids Public Schools annual report is available at www.grps.org.

To comply with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), parents may request information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers.

Please contact Micky Savage, Director of Human Resources, in Human Resources via email savagem@grps.org or at (616) 819-2028.

WEAREGR

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Kaitlyn Califf, *Webmaster & Multimedia Designer*

Javier Cervantes, *Communications Coordinator*

Lynn Ritsema, *Executive Assistant*

Original Mastodons *Continued from page 2*

and then you can present your work and have a teacher tell you it's proficient.

"I don't know what 'normal school' is like," Esteban said. "(Project-based learning) is more freeing than I expected."

He described teachers there as facilitators rather than full-time lecturers. Each lesson module starts with an explanation and then students are encouraged to develop and create projects that fit their interests and skills.

"Students come to me with ideas and I give them insight or access to equipment," said career and technical education teacher Alex Lawton, dubbed by Esteban as the "master of making things."

And on paper, science teacher Ben Hoff explains his role simply as "I teach science."

"But he's also a life coach," Esteban added.

Said Hoff, "Our seniors have spent the last four years learning how to solve problems and create projects using and strengthening skills they'll use for the rest of their lives. I know they'll continue to use those skills in whatever they pursue."

Sending Off the Class of 2022

At the commencement ceremony, Principal Christopher Hanks acknowledged the "long, strange road" traveled by the inaugural graduating class.

"When the class of 2022 stepped into the building four years ago, (they) boldly stepped into the unknown," he said. "You all are so capable of overcoming obstacles along the way, even when disruptions can seem overwhelming."

He added: "The future is always uncertain, but I believe in you; everyone here believes in you and we are always in their corner. You are all talented and resilient, curators of stories and stewards of your community."

Dale Robertson, president and CEO of Grand Rapids Public Museum, also shared his remarks with the senior class.

"The museum school education you've received is a unique asset, one that allows you to lead, and lead change," he said. "You're steps ahead of the world already with this combination of skills and experience, and that sets you apart... you made this reimagination of an XQ super school high school into a reality."

Jordan Fridsma spoke at commencement as one of five class

valedictorians.

"As the first graduating class, we were free to build a culture that was wanted; a family that is dynamic, passionate, accepting and quirky," she said. "We leave a legacy as the founders of museum school culture and laid the groundwork for future students."

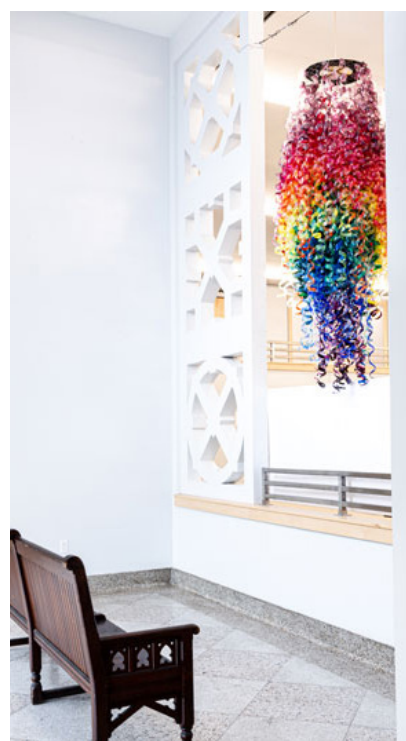
Despite the thorns of the last four years, Jordan thanked her peers, teachers, parents and the community for not giving up on "this little rosebud of a school."

"I believe our generation's struggles make us exceptionally resilient against hardship," she said.

Jordan concluded her speech with lessons learned from her time at the Public Museum High School.



'Each student is an architect who left their mark on our school,' said senior Esteban Clark-Braendle



Above the entryway of the Public Museum High School hangs a chandelier made of recycled plastic bottles and paint, constructed by art teacher Chloe Hadley and her students (courtesy Esteban Clark-Braendle)

"Be flexible and kind, and don't go with the flow of inequality. Remember the danger of a single story; ask for help even when you don't know how, set realistic and flexible goals and remember to give yourself grace," she said.

Jordan plans to attend Calvin University in the fall.

Esteban is taking a gap year to pursue work in film and media in Grand Rapids.

His advice to future museum school students: build relationships with your teachers and to take advantage of their connections outside of school.

"This school is something that is living and always changing," he said. "Each student is an architect who left their mark on our school. It made us stronger, more empathetic and curious people."



The inaugural Public Museum High School graduates opened a time capsule from 2015, re-filled and resealed it to open at their 20-year reunion

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, the 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 be 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). 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.

At This Student-Run Café, Coffee Comes With a Smile and Life Lessons

New Redhawk Café sees Union teacher and her students make special deliveries, learn life skills

By Phil de Haan, Courtesy of School News Network

Emily Padron likes to get her steps in. Most days this year the Union High School teacher averaged 6,000 or so. On Fridays until recently she doubled it.

The reason?

Multiple, early-morning trips between the high school's kitchen and the rooms of various teachers and administrators who ordered food and drinks from the Redhawk Café.

This was the first year for the café, named for the Union High mascot, and it was run by Padron and the 23 students in her life skills class.

Most of the students have autism. With coaching from Padron and a variety of clear visual supports, orders got filled, Union teachers and staff got a Friday treat and Padron's students learned valuable life lessons.

On the café's final Friday morning of the 2021-22 school year, one of Padron's students, junior Derrick Echols, was shy when asked about his work but said his favorite things included making the coffee and the deliveries.

"I like seeing the teachers," he said. "I feel happy."

And with that he and Padron, who is in her 11th year of teaching and fourth year at Union, were off to deliver the first order of the day.

Next came sophomore Timothy Hickox, who was keen to get on his Redhawks Café apron before he and Padron set out to fulfill order No. 2.

"We talk about when we get a job, how do we look," said Padron. "That's important."

Timothy nodded.

When asked if he's looking forward to getting a job someday, Timothy nodded again and "probably," was his quick reply. Timothy likes the word "probably" quite a bit.

Teaching Valuable Skills

He was more verbose when given a choice of who he'd like to deliver to: Jessica Maat or Pat Baker.

"Maat. Is she vice principal? Probably. Yes, I'll do Maat."

Padron pulled the order form with Maat's order.

"Does she want chocolate milk?" she asked.

Timothy grimaced.

"Chocolate milk: never will," he replied.

Padron laughed. "Looks like we're making cookie sandwiches for Mrs. Maat," she said. "They're 50 cents each. What's 50 plus 50?"

"100," Timothy said. "So, one dollar?"

"Exactly, one dollar," said Padron, and with that she and Timothy were off to make the day's next delivery.

And thus it went every Friday morning this year, week by week, order by order, student by student, step by step.

Padron said the café was a success as an experiment, a way to



Rali Dahir listens carefully as Emily Padron goes over details of an order (All photography by Dianne Carroll Burdick)



Gary Kirkbride, left, and Emily Padron get in their steps on a Friday delivery

teach her students valuable skills. It had a loyal clientele and most months operated at a small profit of \$40-\$60, which Padron and the students donated to local charities, including Safe Haven Ministries and Kids Food Basket.

The café's system was pretty simple, Padron said. On Wednesdays, staff members received an order form from Padron.

"Next school year, I will want the students to start creating the order form," she said.

Giving Every Student a Chance



Kim Miller, resource teacher, accepts a coffee order from Derrick Echols

Staff could choose from a variety of drink and food options, including such morning staples as orange juice, coffee and chocolate milk as well as donuts and cookies.

One regular café customer was science department head Nicole Durso, who said it was easy to support Padron and the students.

"The coffee and treats definitely provided a morale boost after a long week," she said. "And so did seeing the smiles on the faces of the scholars who were delivering them. And I love that they frequently donate their profits to local charities."

Continued on page 5

Student-Run Cafe *Continued from page 4*

Maat, of the “never will” chocolate milk, agreed.

“I love that our scholars, a few who are non-verbal, are using this experience to develop important communication skills,” she said. “We have an extraordinary group of ASD teachers who are continually looking for ways to include scholars in the day-to-day routines of the school while incorporating valuable life and job skills.”

Part of that day-to-day routine, Padron said, included previewing the weekly orders. As the forms came in, Padron would pull them up on the class overhead and show her students who was ordering what.

Then, mostly early on Friday mornings, she would head to Family Fare or Meijer to purchase whatever baked goods were needed and to replenish drinks as needed. Beginning at 7:45 a.m. or so, the orders would get fulfilled and individually delivered – one student with Padron for each delivery – some mornings to as many as 15-20 staff members.

“It might take longer that way, but I wanted to make sure every student had an opportunity to work on their life skills,” Padron said. **‘It Makes It All Worthwhile’**

Some students used a little script Padron created for deliveries. She’d go over it with them before they left the kitchen.

“It might say “Good morning, and then a blank. Here is your



Timothy Hickox makes a cookie sandwich for an order

blank. You owe me blank dollars,” Padron explained. “We fill in the blanks before delivering, and then they have the piece of paper with them to read as they deliver.”

Padron, who has a bachelor’s degree in learning disabilities from Michigan State University and a master’s in autism from Grand Valley State, proudly noted that by the end of the year she had a few



Assistant Principal Jessica Maat is excited to receive her order of cookie sandwiches from Timothy Hickox

students who no longer needed the sheet of paper and felt confident enough to deliver without the prompts.

“It’s great to see that progress in some of the students,” she said. “It makes it all worthwhile.”

And, she added, the extra steps weren’t bad either.

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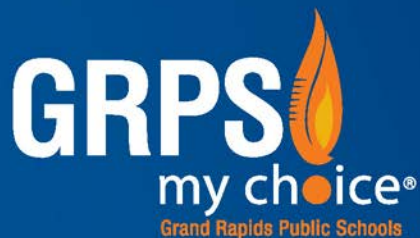
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NEW DRESS CODE POLICY FOR 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR

In June of 2022, the District made an important decision regarding school uniforms and a new dress code for the 2022-2023 school year.

One of the priority outcomes for our new GRPS Strategic Plan is to “increase scholar empowerment, belonging and agency.” The Superintendent’s Scholars Advisory Council strongly advocated for the district to eliminate the school uniform requirement. Based on this feedback, we agreed to conduct a survey of scholars, families, and staff to gauge whether we should make a change. The survey results showed families and staff were largely split about the uniform requirement, while our scholars were overwhelmingly opposed to it.

In keeping with the priority outcomes identified in our Strategic Plan, we have made the decision to eliminate the PK-12 school uniform requirement and implement a new dress code policy for the 2022-2023 school year.

The new GRPS Scholar Dress Code Policy will be presented to and voted on by the Board of Education in the coming weeks. When the Scholar Dress Code Policy is finalized, we will send it out to scholars, families, and staff.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please do not hesitate to contact your scholar’s school directly. You may also call the Communications Department at 616-819-2149 or email communications@grps.org.

‘Wow, I’m a Real Artist’

Citywide Art Show offers ‘life-changing’ experience for student artists

By Alexis Stark, Courtesy of School News Network



Innovation Central High School senior Caitlyn Battle, right, and her mom, Cai Hunter, stand in front of Caitlyn’s watercolor painting at GRPS’ 2022 Citywide Art Show (All photos by Dianne Carroll Burdick)

Innovation Central High School senior Caitlyn Battle and her family were on a mission to find her watercolor painting.

On the fifth floor of Western Michigan University Grand Rapids, 200 Ionia Ave. SW, there is art as far as the eye can see.

Their search ended with help from Innovation Central art teacher Carolyn Hintz, and Caitlyn’s mother shared the reason why her daughter came home crying from school: She had received her acceptance letter from her dream school, Ferris State University, where she will pursue her goal of becoming an art teacher.

Teachers selected student art from all grades, schools and abilities to put on display at the Grand Rapids Public Schools’ 2022 Citywide Art Show.

The show opened with a reception on April 27 and runs through Friday, May 6.

Ottawa Hills art teacher Tiffany Oliver said she felt “so proud of our students and impressed by the work they produced.”

“We’re so thankful for this,” she said, “It boosts (students’) confidence to see their art on display.”

Oliver teaches upper level painting and printmaking art classes, while her colleague Joe Martin teaches art foundations for freshmen and sophomores.

“I try to keep art projects fun and am just trying to teach (students) that they can do art,” Martin said. “I know not everyone is going to be an artist or love art, but anyone has the ability to create art.”

Show Resumes Post-pandemic

This art show marks the first since 2019, before the coronavirus pandemic.

GRPS Fine Arts Director Maggie Malone said the WMU gallery space was a “point of pride” for the citywide art show.

“We strive to display student artworks like professionals, providing the opportunity for our students to see themselves as real artists,” she said. “We’re really excited to show student work and have people gather in a unique space.”

Malone also described the art show as “life-changing” for students.

“The most rewarding part is right now. What we do matters and shows students they are valued and have

Continued on page 7

Real Artist Continued from page 4

a bright future,” she said. “I watched one student walk in and say, ‘Wow, I’m a real artist.’”

Riverside Middle School seventh-grader Sophie Kempen brought her mom, dad and sister to see her watercolor painting of a bunny on display.

She explained how she experimented with different types of art in class and liked watercolor the best.

“I used a white gel pen to create dots and swirls on top and chose orange and yellow for the background,” Sophie said. “It all ended up looking like fall colors.”

She added: “It was really cool to see (my art) on the wall and see my friend’s art too.”

The WMU gallery hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and is free and open to the public.



Union High School sophomore Angela Perez Velasquez with her artworks, including an acrylic painting and a colored pencil and ink drawing



Ottawa Hills High School art teacher Tiffany Oliver points out the portraits her students made inspired by their favorite people



Riverside Middle School seventh-grader Sophie Kempen stands below her watercolor painting of a rabbit at GRPS' 2022 Citywide Art Show



Union High School sophomore Angela Perez Velasquez, far right, admires cardboard sculptures with her sister, fourth-grader Sheila Perez Velasquez, and her mom, Teresa Velasquez



Innovation Central High School senior Caitlyn Battle, far right, and her family, from left, Cai Hunter, Luther Hunter and C.A. Frost freshman Cagni Battle visit GRPS' 2022 Citywide Art Show to see her artwork



Potter's House High School freshmen Macy VanSolkema and Ashley VanDorp sit on a collage made of quilted rectangles titled 'Three Nobel Laureates'

GRPS Works to Create Direct Teacher Pipeline

First-year program includes seven district schools

By Phil de Haan, Courtesy of School News Network

In a lab at Davenport University, two scientists prepared to analyze a water sample from “Heroesville,” where residents have been complaining of abdominal, muscle and joint pain as well as fever and headaches. Lead poisoning is suspected, but scientific analysis of the water will yield concrete clues.

The scientists in this case were Innovation Central seniors David Martinez-Amaro and Cailyn Battles.

They were two of approximately 80 GRPS students at Davenport as part of a district program called Future Proud Michigan Educator GR Teach Club (or Teach Club for short) that aims to provide a pathway for GRPS students to someday become GRPS teachers.

The program includes clubs at Burton, Harrison Park and Riverside middle schools, CA Frost Environmental Science Academy Middle High School, Grand Rapids Montessori High School and Grand Rapids Public Museum High School.

For David, the exposure to colleges and the behind-the-scenes look at what it takes to be a teacher has been eye-opening and inspiring.

“Seeing the fun and also the impact one can make in someone else’s life is definitely helping me plan for a career in teaching,” he said. “I have really enjoyed going on these trips and activities that we have done in the (Teach Club) program.”

He also enjoyed seeing the Davenport facilities as part of a campus tour.

Opportunity to Bring More Diversity

Cailyn is in her fourth year exploring what a career in education might someday look like. And she too was excited to be in the lab, doing a hands-on activity that was also giving her a chance to consider how people learn.

“I like this experiment,” she said. “And I like that (Teach Club) gives me helpful information about teaching.”

While David and Cailyn worked in one lab, across the hallway and two doors down at Davenport, Esther Mesta and Kimberly Florez were part of a similar science scenario. The pair of seventh-graders at Harrison Park also are thinking about what a career in education might look like.

Still, Kimberly said, she was loving the Davenport visit, and, yes, she could see herself wanting to be a teacher someday.

Cailyn was in a similar spot five years ago, and has been working toward a career in education since becoming part of a precursor to Teach Club (then called the Academy of Teaching and Learning) as a ninth-grader. Now she is on the cusp of college and still on track for her career goals.

Innovation Central teacher Lisa Orban-Cowley, a 19-year veteran of the district, was alongside Cailyn and David for the day at Davenport and is excited about seeing current students as potential future colleagues.

“It’s great that it’s an opportunity to bring more diversity into the profession of teaching,” she said. “And I like that it provides



From left, David Martinez-Amaro, Cailyn Battles and teacher Lisa Orban-Cowley from Innovation Central High School

insights to the students about the training, the experience and the work that goes into teaching each day.”

Teach Club Funded by Michigan Department of Education

Teach Club is in its first year and funded by a grant from the Michigan Department of Education’s Future Proud Michigan Educator program, an effort to grow and diversify the educator workforce and address the significant teacher shortage currently facing Michigan.

GRPS was one of 44 recipients across the state announced a year ago as part of the new program, with each grantee getting \$10,000 in funding per eligible school building.

Tina Watson, director of professional learning for GRPS, said that this year Teach Club was able to offer four events, of which the Davenport outing was the last of the year.

Those included a virtual conference on being a teacher and a change agent, a team-building event that launched the clubs at the participating schools and fall and spring college tours at Grand Valley and then Davenport.

She and Adriana Almanza, the new GRPS Talent Development, Retention & Diversity recruitment manager, are already seeing the energy and excitement that Teach Club brings to the districts, and hope to broaden the reach of GRPS’s diversity and inclusion efforts when it comes to getting grads back in the classrooms as teacher.

Talent Development, Retention & Diversity

For Almanza, getting district students to consider careers as GRPS teachers is a critical part of her work for the district, and



Tina Watson, director of professional learning for GRPS

events like the one at Davenport play an important role.

Adriana Almanza, GRPS Talent Development, Retention & Diversity recruitment manager

“Giving our youth the opportunity to visit institutions of higher education exposes them to the abundance of opportunities that exist for them post-graduation,” she said. “Our goal with these

Continued on page 9

*Teacher Pipeline**Continued from page 8*

visits is to introduce them to colleges and universities and also give them a hands-on experience where they can dive deeper into understanding the educator profession.”

A former West Michigan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Young Professional of the Year, Almanza earned both a master’s in education and bachelor’s in international relations from Grand Valley State University. She worked there for almost a decade, including in diversity and inclusion and as an adjunct instructor.

She began her work at GRPS a year ago, in May 2021, and was quickly thrown into some challenging situations, including 200-plus teacher and staff vacancies for the 2021-22 school year, vacancies that down the road she hopes will be easier to fill because of the Teach Club pipeline.

Patience, she said, will definitely be a virtue.

“Attracting diverse and qualified candidates is an ongoing process,” she said. “It doesn’t happen in one day or one month. I’ve been tasked with talent development, retention and diversity recruitment. It’s important that the students who are in the classroom are represented in administration and in teachers and in support staff across the district.”



David Martinez-Amaro and Cailyn Battles conduct their experiment



Adriana Almanza, GRPS Talent Development, Retention & Diversity recruitment manager

YOUR VOICE, YOUR VISION

Grand Rapids Community Foundation is celebrating 100 years in this community, and we're inviting you to inform our next century of service and impact.

We want to know—what does it take to ensure a thriving community for the future? What do you hope your grandchildren will experience here? **Share your voice and your vision.** We will do our part to build a better Kent County for everyone.



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Grand Rapids Community Foundation está celebrando 100 años en esta comunidad, y te estamos invitando a informar sobre nuestro próximo siglo de servicio e impacto.

Queremos saber: ¿qué se necesita para garantizar una comunidad próspera en el futuro? ¿Qué esperas que experimenten tus nietos aquí? **Comparte tu voz y tu visión.** Haremos nuestra parte para construir un mejor condado de Kent para todos.



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WE'RE LOOKING FOR YOU!

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2022/2023 Bell Schedule

| SCHOOL | DROP OFF/ BREAKFAST | AM BELL | PM BELL | 1/2 DAY BELL | SCHOOL | DROP OFF/ BREAKFAST | AM BELL | PM BELL | 1/2 DAY BELL |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------|---------|-----------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------|---------|-----------------|
| Aberdeen Academy | 8:10 am | 8:30 am | 3:26 pm | 11:40 am | Harrison Park Academy | 8:10 am | 8:30 am | 3:26 pm | 11:40 am |
| Alger Middle School | 7:15 am | 7:40 am | 2:21 pm | 10:25 am | Innovation Central High School | 7:10 am | 7:40 am | 2:21 pm | 10:25 am |
| Blandford School | 7:50 am | 8:10 am | 3:06 pm | 11:20 am | Zoo School | 7:50 am | 8:10 am | 3:06 pm | 11:20 am |
| Brookside Elementary | 8:10 am | 8:30 am | 3:26 pm | 11:40 am | Ken-O-Sha Park Elementary | 8:10 am | 8:30 am | 3:26 pm | 11:40 am |
| Buchanan Elementary | 8:10 am | 8:30 am | 3:26 pm | 11:40 am | Kent Hills Elementary | 8:10 am | 8:30 am | 3:26 pm | 11:40 am |
| Burton Elementary | 8:10 am | 8:30 am | 3:26 pm | 11:40 am | MLK, Jr. Leadership Academy | 8:10 am | 8:30 am | 3:26 pm | 11:40 am |
| Burton Middle School | 7:15 am | 7:40 am | 2:21 pm | 10:25 am | Mulick Park Elementary | 8:10 am | 8:30 am | 3:26 pm | 11:40 am |
| CA Frost Environmental Science Academy | 8:50 am | 9:10 am | 4:06 pm | 12:20 pm | Newcomers Community School | 7:10 am | 7:40 am | 2:21 pm | 10:25 am |
| CA Frost Environmental Science Academy Middle High School | 7:30 am | 8:00 am | 2:45 pm | 10:45 am | North Park Montessori | 8:50 am | 9:10 am | 4:06 pm | 12:20 pm |
| Campus Elementary | 8:10 am | 8:30 am | 3:26 pm | 11:40 am | Ottawa High Transition | 7:10 am | 7:40 am | 2:21 pm | 10:25 am |
| Center for Economicology | 7:45 am | 8:00 am | 2:41 pm | 10:45 am | Ottawa Hills High School | 7:10 am | 7:40 am | 2:21 pm | 10:25 am |
| César E. Chávez Elementary | 8:10 am | 8:30 am | 3:26 pm | 11:40 am | Palmer Elementary | 8:10 am | 8:30 am | 3:26 pm | 11:40 am |
| City High Middle School | 7:45 am | 8:00 am | 2:41 pm | 10:45 am | Ridgemoor Park Montessori | 8:50 am | 9:10 am | 4:06 pm | 12:20 pm |
| Coit Creative Arts Academy | 8:50 am | 9:10 am | 4:06 pm | 12:20 pm | Riverside Middle School | 7:15 am | 7:40 am | 2:21 pm | 10:25 am |
| Congress Elementary | 8:10 am | 8:30 am | 3:26 pm | 11:40 am | Shawmut Hills Academy | 8:10 am | 8:30 am | 3:26 pm | 11:40 am |
| Dickinson Academy | 8:10 am | 8:30 am | 3:26 pm | 11:40 am | Sherwood Park Global Studies Academy | 8:50 am | 9:10 am | 4:06 pm | 12:20 pm |
| East Leonard Elementary School | 8:10 am | 8:30 am | 3:26 pm | 11:40 am | Sibley Elementary | 8:10 am | 8:30 am | 3:26 pm | 11:40 am |
| Gerald R. Ford Academic Center | 8:50 am | 9:10 am | 4:06 pm | 12:20 pm | Southeast Career Pathways | -- | 9:00 am | 2:39 pm | 11:46 am |
| Grand Rapids Learning Center | -- | 7:45 am | 4:15 pm | 11:45 am | Southwest Elementary - Academia Bilingue | 8:50 am | 9:10 am | 4:06 pm | 12:20 pm |
| Grand Rapids Montessori Academy | 8:50 am | 9:10 am | 4:06 pm | 12:20 pm | Southwest Middle/High - Academia Bilingue | 8:35 am | 9:00 am | 3:46 pm | 11:45 am |
| Grand Rapids Montessori Middle/High School | 7:10 am | 7:40 am | 2:21 pm | 10:25 am | Stocking Elementary | 8:10 am | 8:30 am | 3:26 pm | 11:40 am |
| Grand Rapids Public Museum Middle School | 7:50 am | 8:10 am | 3:05 pm | 11:20 am | Union High School | 7:10 am | 7:40 am | 2:21 pm | 10:25 am |
| Grand Rapids Public Museum High School | 8:00 am | 8:15 am | 3:05 pm | 11:25 am | Union High Transition | 7:10 am | 7:40 am | 2:21 pm | 10:25 am |
| GR University Prep Academy | 7:10 am | 7:35 am | 2:16 pm | 10:20 am | Westwood Middle School | 7:15 am | 7:40 am | 2:21 pm | 10:25 am |

*The bell schedule is a working document and subject to change.



A NOTE FROM THE GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOUNDATION:

For over 25 years, the Grand Rapids Public Schools Foundation has uplifted scholars by ensuring they have resources to learn, develop, and thrive.

We continue to expand our reach and impact. Striving to work closely and strengthen our relationship with Grand Rapids Public Schools, the community, and private donors, we endeavor to provide every GRPS student with the best educational experience.

The GRPS Foundation is an independent nonprofit organization serving as the strategic fundraising partner of the Grand Rapids Public Schools. Our purpose is to raise, grow and steward funds and other community resources to support the Grand Rapids Public Schools for the benefit of its students.

Our vision is to provide resources needed for the students of the Grand Rapids Public Schools to learn, develop and thrive and for the Grand Rapids Public Schools to meet its own goals of education excellence.

BUILDING CHAMPIONS

A campaign for the GR Union High School Athletic program

The GR Union Athletics Department strives to develop champions excelling in both the classroom and in competition.

We wholeheartedly believe in sports as a tool to improve self-esteem, encourage education, and positively impact not only one player, but an entire community. We know that being a winner is not just about performance on the field. It also means staying healthy, achieving academically, and finding satisfaction in all areas of life. Our athletes need access to study sessions, grade checks, team meals, rides to practice, and mentorship.

The GR Union staff is in this for the long haul, but we can't succeed on our own.

In order to continue this important work, we need your help.

Our programs require support that just isn't in the GRPS operating budget. Athletic facilities, team gear, equipment, coach salaries, food, fuel, and many other necessities cost money.

Therefore, our challenge is twofold:

- To change lives through athletics
- To raise funds that will support this important work

Through our fundraising efforts, we hope to build a first-rate athletics program from the ground up, giving many young people the chance to succeed. By making a difference in the lives of student athletes, we are sure to see a positive impact on the whole of GR Union High School, including higher levels of student achievement. We also anticipate a tremendous boost in team spirit and community pride, ultimately impacting our city as a whole.

Please join us in supporting the "Building Champions" campaign as we seek to bolster the development of young athletes and the communities they inspire.

Donate and Learn More at grpsf.org/how-to-help/uhs-building-champions.html

UPCOMING EVENTS



August 15: Annual Sports Hall of Fame Golf Outing

Calling all golfers! Here is your opportunity to do something you love while supporting GRPS students!

Proceeds from the 2022 GRSHOF golf scramble will benefit K-8th grade sports through the Grand Rapids Public Schools Foundation.

Thousand Oaks Golf Course
August 15, 2022
Shot gun start 11:00am

Learn more and register at eventbrite.com/e/grand-rapids-sports-hall-of-fame-golf-classic-tickets-354544842167

November 24: Turkey Trot 5K



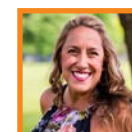
Join us for the 30th Annual Grand Rapids Turkey Trot 5k on Thanksgiving day.

Proceeds from the race help to offset the cost of Grand Rapids Public Schools athletics so that all students have the opportunity to participate.

To learn more and register online, go to runsignup.com/Race/MI/GrandRapids/GRPSThanksgivingDayTurkeyTrot

THE FOUNDATION TEAM

We're all dedicated to the mission of the Grand Rapids Public Schools Foundation and impacting the students of Grand Rapids Public Schools.



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We invite you to call, email or contact us with any questions.



**Grand Rapids Public Schools
FOUNDATION**

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SCAN TO VISIT
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GRPS

FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Parent University

If you haven't already, explore the Parent University website at parents.grps.org. This website contains Academic Resources, Parenting Resources, GRPS News, and Trending News.

Power Parent Magazine

Browse July's edition of the Power Parent Magazine (parents.grps.org/school-info). The July 2022 publication is a compilation of featured articles from the 2021-2022 school year. Highlights focus on Literacy, Relationships, and Academic Transitions. Learn tips and strategies to support scholars as they navigate transitional grade levels. July's Magazine Components:

- Learn how to support your little human while learning to read in GOOD TO KNOW: Literacy.
- Delve into Michigan's high stakes testing in CHECK IT OUT: Standardized Testing.
- Navigate FAMILY CONVERSATIONS: Thanks for a Great Year and read about the 2022 PAL of the Year.
- Search SETTING GOALS: Building Relationships and listen to scholars speak about Black History

Month.

- Find specific ways to support your middle and high school scholars in NAVIGATING ACHIEVEMENT: Middle and High School Transitions.
- Discover ways to talk to students about race in NETWORK FOR SUCCESS: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

PALs - Parent Action Leaders

PALs are Parent Action Leaders who serve as liaisons between families, schools, and GRPS. Every school has at least one PAL and they support their school families.

Congratulations to Angela Deluca-Placencia for earning the 2022 PAL of the Year. Angela is a proud parent of three beautiful scholars who attend North Park Montessori. Thank you, Angela, for your dedication to Grand Rapids Public Schools.

F.A.C.E. in the Community

On July 4, 2022 F.A.C.E. proudly marched in the 88th Hollyhock Lane Parade. FACE also facilitated tables at the Grand Rapids Pride Festival, Linc Up's "Rock the Block", Friends of Grand Rapids Parks "Movies in the Park", Baxter United Community's "Juneteenth Celebration", StorytimeGR's "Storytime in the Park" and "Lids for Kids".

Visit the GRPS Family and Community Engagement team at the following events:

- MLK Park Parties – These parties are free to the community. Prizes and live music will entertain guests. Martin Luther King Park is located on 1200 Franklin Street SE.
 - Art Immersion - July 7, 2022 - 6:00-8:00 p.m.
 - Back to School - August 4, 2022 - 6:00-8:00 p.m.
- Movies in the Park – "Movies in the Park" features games,

music, and recreational activities for all ages. Festivities begin at 7:00 p.m., and the movies start at dusk.

- Encanto - July 15, 2022 at Clemente Park located on 546 Rumsey Street SW.
- Sing 2 - August 20 at Camelot Park located on 2230 Rowland Avenue SW.
- Storytime in the Park – Listen to Dr. Leadrienne Roby, GRPS's Superintendent, read a story, receive free books, and enjoy ice cream treats, on July 19, 2022 from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at Martin Luther King Park, located on 1200 Franklin Street SE.
- Hispanic Festival, located in the Calder Plaza on 300 Monroe Avenue NW., on August 5 and 6, 2022.
- El Informador Backpack Event at City High School, located on 1720 Plainfield Avenue NE, on August 13, 2022 from 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- GRPS Enrollment Expos – Enroll your scholars in Grand Rapids Public Schools for the 2022-2023 school year. A lite dinner will be served at each venue.
 - August 16, 2022 from 5:00 - 6:30 p.m.
 - Second Congregation UCC located on 525 Cheshire Dr. NE.
 - Linc Up Gallery located on 341 Hall Street SE.
 - August 18, 2022 from 5:00-6:30 p.m.
 - Steils Club located on 235 Straight Avenue NW.
 - Hispanic Center located on 1204 Grandville Avenue SW.
- Rhythm Health Fair – Walk, run or roll in the 5K and bring the kids to enjoy free activities, food, giveaways, and games at Martin Luther King Park, located on 1200 Franklin Street, on August 20, 2022 from 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Teacher Leads Students Into the Great Outdoors

Award-winning teacher brings education to the outdoors

By Phil de Haan, Courtesy of School News Network

Erin Fettig is a rockstar teacher. And she has the hardware to prove it: a Swell Teacher of the Year award from Groundswell Michigan.

For Fettig, teaching has become about more than just the traditional classroom. Some days – and not just on Earth Day, April 22 – she thinks her best classroom might be the great outdoors.

And Groundswell loves to see it.

Launched in 2009, Groundswell is housed at Grand Valley State University, in Allendale, and helps teachers who "want to move beyond the classroom walls and teach students through exploring their own communities."

That's exactly what Fettig has done, said Sally Triant, a GRPS environmental education consultant. She has worked with Fettig as she has taken her first-graders at Brookside Elementary into outdoor areas all around the school's physical location on Madison Avenue SE just half a mile north of 28th Street.

Though taking her students outside did not come naturally, Fettig has quickly become more comfortable with the experience,



Valeria Herrera and Declan Kelly work on a puzzle game to help them identify items in a rain garden that help mitigate rain-water run-off

Continued on page 13

Great Outdoors *Continued from page 12*

Triant said. That's something that is true for many teachers who over the years were not taught ways to take lessons beyond the classroom.

But Fettig's willingness to go beyond her comfort zones allowed her students to thrive.

"Erin knew that taking students outside would benefit their mental and emotional health during the pandemic, and though it was completely new to her, she decided to try it, even though it would probably be hard," Triant said.

Fettig agreed with Triant's assessment of her initial misgivings.

25 Kids in an Open Space Can Be Scary

She has been with GRPS for a dozen years now, including a decade at Brookside where this year she has 25 first-grade students. They are full of energy and enthusiasm and some days not nearly as willing to fall in line as the ducks that she and her charges now observe periodically at nearby Plaster Creek. So, she said, yes, the idea of going outdoors took a little time to get used to.

"We are so tied to our standards that sometimes thinking about doing something new feels overwhelming," Fettig said. "When you go outside you also open up a whole new set of variables with kids. One teacher, 25 kids in a large open space can feel a little scary. It feels like you have less control over the situation than when you are inside your four walls."

And control, Fettig admitted, can often be elusive in education.

"There is a lot right now that feels heavy in teaching," she said. "But even before the pandemic, educators have not been supported in the ways that we need. Testing, teacher observations and evaluations, understaffed schools, there's just a lot that doesn't always feel fun or within our control in our classroom."

In the face of all that, getting outdoors seemed like it might be worth the risk.

"I wanted to bring more joy to my teaching and to my classroom," she said. "I love being outside and active, but I am not an expert on gardening or learning outdoors. Often that feels scary and disorganized. But it also feels empowering."

Tapping Into Prior Kroc Center Relationship

Fettig said that being at Brookside provided some built-in



Brookside Elementary teacher Erin Fettig

advantages because of the proximity to backyard neighbor, The Kroc Center. The school and the Center have numerous partnerships, both past and present. So when Fettig began to research how to create a school garden space where flowers, herbs and vegetables could be grown, it was a natural fit for Brookside to use the Kroc Center's community garden space.

In the fall of 2020 her first-grade class planted garlic thanks to a Groundswell grant that allowed her to purchase the grow light that helped start the vegetable seedlings, as well as tools, books, a composter, a garden cart and more.

"I can't even begin to say enough good things about Groundswell," Fettig said. "Obviously without the grant money many of these opportunities that our classroom has been involved in would just not be possible. But Groundswell doesn't just provide you with grant money, they also support teachers with lesson plans, professional development, connections with community partners. They want to see teachers and classrooms succeed at place-based learning."

After garlic, Fettig and her students expanded their efforts, and last summer and into the fall, they harvested beans, peas, cucumbers, kale, lettuce, tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, parsley, basil and more.

This spring they decided to take on a rain garden project at Brookside and have spent time in recent weeks learning all about the topic, including the value of native perennials. That project includes financial support via a state-funded grant facilitated by Groundswell, which is giving her students an opportunity to learn about the Plaster Creek watershed and the benefits of creating habitat for wildlife such as songbirds and pollinators. Plaster Creek runs through Brookside's backyard and in the early 2000s gained infamy as West Michigan's most-polluted stream.

Good Stewards of the Earth

Fettig and her students have spent time observing Plaster Creek, learning where water comes from and where it goes; observing rain and how it flows on the school playground; reading books about ways the earth is being affected by the things that people do; and all along, Fettig said, "recognizing there are ways we can prevent or reverse our negative impacts."

And while Fettig realizes that she and her students won't be completely restoring Plaster Creek via their efforts, she does believe that they can play a small part in its health and in bigger environmental efforts.

"I want my kids to learn to be good stewards of the earth," she said.

She smiles now when she recalls some of the early days of their outdoor adventures together.

"Going to the garden was chaotic," she said. "Every kid wanted to do everything at the same time. Lots of kids didn't want to get their hands dirty, and then they would see a rolie pollie (pill bug) or a spider and everyone would scream. Or want to touch it."

"So just like a classroom, you have to have procedures to be outside. We talk about it a lot, about what it should look like and sound like when we are learning outside. Learning outside should be enjoyable and fun, but it is not recess. By the end of last year, I had kids running to show me worms or spiders, holding them gently in their hands in wonder."

That sounds pretty swell to Triant.

"Erin is offering her students an interaction with nature that is good for their health," she said. "It also will also create a connection that will call them to protect the natural world in the future. That makes her a real rockstar in my opinion."



Erin Fettig's students observing Plaster Creek as part of an outdoor lesson last fall (courtesy)



Jasmine Nelson colors what she thinks a rain garden might look like

WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN ATHLETICS?

YOU WILL NEED:

- A physical dated after April 15, 2022
- Supplemental insurance for each season: \$10 for high school and \$3 for middle schools
- Cherry Health and health offices in the schools ARE PROVIDING SPORTS PHYSICALS
- Fall middle school athletics may have physical nights in August. Dates, times, and location TBD.

ELIGIBILITY RULES:

- All students grade 6-12 MUST have achieved and maintain a minimum GPA of 2.0 prior to the official start of the season (including practices). You must also pass 66% of your classes before and during the season (Michigan High School Athletic Association).
- Students in grades K-5 must be in "good standings" at school with satisfactory attendance, grades and behavior. All students must be eligible to practice FIRST.

REASONS TO BE A MULTI-SPORT ATHLETE:

- Develop different skills that compliment other sports.
- Minimal sport burnout occurs when involved in multiple sports.
- Time management improves
- Athletics help to improve educational success
- Colleges and Universities like to see that you can be multi-faceted.

ELEMENTARY FALL SPORTS

Season begins September

Cross Country: Practices will begin soon after the first week of school. Please check with your elementary school athletic liaison for more information.

- Meet dates: TBD for 2022
- GRPS Cross Country Invitational: TBD for 2022

Soccer: Practices will begin after soon after the first week of school.

- Game dates (Saturdays in September): Registration will be due September. Look for more information at your school's orientation.

MIDDLE SCHOOL FALL SPORTS

Online sign ups can be done via Facebook @GRPSMAthletics. In person sign-ups begin August 23rd (First Day of School)

- Football practices begin Aug. 23rd – Football Scrimmage August 30th or Aug. 31st – First Game Sept. 6th or 7th
- Cross Country, Soccer (Boys), and Volleyball practices begin August 31st – Games begin Sept. 12th
- Football (7th/8th grade only), Volleyball, Boys' Soccer, and Cross Country

HIGH SCHOOL FALL SPORTS

Season begins August 8

- Football, Cross Country, Boys' Soccer, Boy's Tennis, Girls' Golf, Girls' Swimming, Sideline Cheer and Volleyball

For schedules, highlights, and parent resources check out our website at grps.org/athletics

PARENT MEETINGS

Parents/Guardians should attend any and all meetings requested by the athletic directors and/or coaches for a more in depth and clearer understanding about how the team or program will operate.

VOLUNTEERS

Any parents, family or community member interested in volunteering to support GRPS student-athletes, please contact the volunteer office at 819-2131 or go to <http://grps.org/volunteer> for the volunteer application.

We are currently looking for:

- Elementary Coaches for Cross Country, Soccer, Basketball, and Track
- Turkey Trot Volunteers – Sign up now at: volunteersignup.org/ALW3Q

Interested in coaching? Contact the athletic office for more information! We have some vacancies for the 2022-2023 school year.

SPORTSMANSHIP

As a spectator of interscholastic athletics please respect the time and effort that these young participants have put forth to represent their schools. The purpose of all athletic activities is to provide positive learning experiences and opportunities for personal growth for the participants, coaches, officials and spectators.

Everyone who attends can – and is expected to – assist in the promotion and achievement of good sportsmanship by taking personal responsibility for keeping this contest at a high level of fair, clean and wholesome competition. Remember.... SPORTSMANSHIP COUNTS!



Great Sports
G R E A T K I D S

GR8 SPORTS, GREAT KIDS

Our community recognizes the importance, value, and positive impact that after school sports can have on students. Thank you to the Student Advancement Foundation and GR8 Sports, Great Kids for their continued support of these programs!



ATHLETIC DIRECTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Kurt Johnson – Executive Director of Athletics
johnsonk@grps.org 819-2010

Marcus Harris – Ottawa Hills HS Athletic Director
harrismar@grps.org 819-2879

Justin Walker – Union HS Athletic Director
walkerju@grps.org 819-7688

Brodie Larson - Middle School Athletic Office
larsonb@grps.org 819-3243

Dan Covey - C.A. Frost Middle School Athletic Director
coveyd@grps.org (Also responsible for Shawmut Hills, Blandford, and Zoo)

Lanita Hobson – Burton Middle School Athletic Dir.
hobsonl@grps.org

Aaron Fillenworth – City Middle School Athletic Dir.
fillenwortha@grps.org

Kim Ashton – G.R. Ford Middle School Athletic Dir.
ashtonk@grps.org (Also responsible for Dickinson)

Rojeana Calvert – Harrison MS Athletic Director
calvertr@grps.org

Jolinda Lucas – U Prep Athletic Director
lucasj@grps.org (Also responsible for GR Montessori & Museum School)

Kellie Kieren – North Park Montessori & Aberdeen Middle School Athletic Coordinator
kierenk@grps.org

Tammy Wallace – Sherwood Park MS Athletic Director
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Helen Vrugink – MLK Academy Athletic Coordinator
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Don Zomer – Southwest Community Campus Middle School Athletic Director
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Teresa Green - Westwood MS Athletic Director
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Patricia Elliott - Alger Middle School Athletic Director
elliottp@grps.org

William Childers – Riverside MS Athletic Director
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