

**Register for  
Spring Soccer**

See page 10

January 2018 | Section B

Adult Fitness Classes: 6-8 Youth Programs: 9-10 Other Classes: 11 Library News: 12-15

## Street and Park Improvements Enhancing Neighborhood Livability

The investment of income tax and millage dollars into improving our city's streets and parks is generating tangible results. Since voters approved these funding measures, 58 percent of Grand Rapids streets are now in good or fair condition and 40 parks and pools have seen more than \$10 million in upgrades.

### Vital Streets

Since the approval of the income tax extension dedicated to Vital Streets and Sidewalks in May 2014, the percentage of city streets that are in good or fair condition has increased significantly, according to Rick DeVries, assistant city engineer. City streets in good or fair condition have risen to 58 percent from 37 percent, DeVries said. The City is on target to reach the goal of 70 percent of streets in good to fair condition by the end of the income tax term in 2030, he said.

Sidewalk investments have improved walkability and accessibility for neighborhoods and business districts. Over 3,600 sidewalk ramps have been replaced. 157 miles of sidewalks have been inspected and repaired as necessary. And, 2.7 miles of new sidewalks have been constructed to connect important walking routes.

### Other milestones:

- 50 miles of streets received preventative maintenance during the 2014 construction season.
- Another 53 miles were addressed in 2015.
- Through the end of fiscal year 2017, more than 200 miles of streets received preventative maintenance (such as crack sealing), nearly 30 miles received rehabilitation (such as rotomilling) and more than 10 miles of reconstruction work was completed.

Residents can track progress on the Vital Streets and Sidewalks work online at <https://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/Government/Programs-and-Initiatives/Vital-Streets-Program>.

### Park Improvements

Since the passage of the Parks millage in 2014, more than 40 of the City's 74 urban parks have seen investments. Since 2014, the City has committed nearly \$3.5 million into park improvements. It has also invested more than \$5.6 million into rehabilitation and repair of our parks and dedicated more than \$2 million into pool operations.

In 2017 alone, the City redeveloped and reopened Camelot, Campau, Dickenson, Douglas, Mary Waters



and Mulick parks. Amenities in these parks include new splash pads, new restroom facilities and new playground equipment.

The City engages in community-based park redevelopment and rehabilitation aimed at touching every Grand Rapids park in some way through the life cycle of the millage. This strategy increases interest and turnout at public design events. By engaging in robust and meaningful conversations the process has generated a greater understanding of the work necessary to get parks projects off the ground.

According to Parks and Recreation Director David Marquardt, the improvement program includes

■ SEE STREET AND PARK IMPROVEMENTS/ B2

## City Commission Takes Action on Proposals Aimed at Creating Housing Choices



*"These actions will significantly affect our community for generations to come and advance equity through wealth creation from homeownership."*

-- City Manager Greg Sundstrom

The Grand Rapids City Commission continues to draft and adopt progressive proposals to create housing choice and opportunities for all. In November, City Manager Greg Sundstrom presented a Housing NOW! package to the City Commission containing a series of proposed ordinances and policies to advance the recommendations from the City's Housing Advisory Committee.

The Housing NOW! package (available online at [grandrapidsmi.gov/Directory/Programs-and-](http://grandrapidsmi.gov/Directory/Programs-and-)

Initiatives/Housing-NOW) provides an actionable basis for the City Commission to consider each of 11 recommendations over the coming months. The City Commission hopes to complete its review, discussion and consideration of all proposals by mid-winter.

### The Housing NOW! package includes:

- Proposed ordinance amendment to reduce PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) fees
- Proposed policy amendment to provide homeownership incentives
- Proposed ordinance to provide incentives for small-scale development
- Proposed policy amendment to provide incentives for affordable housing in the Neighborhood Enterprise Zone tool
- Proposed policy to encourage voluntary development agreements for affordable housing
- Proposed ordinance to provide incentives for increased density

• Proposed policy to provide requirements for affordable housing whenever the City is a partner in an affordable housing project

• Proposed ordinance to permit accessory dwelling units by right

• Proposed ordinance to permit non-condo, zero-lot-line housing

• Proposed ordinance to regulate rental applications

• Proposed policy to establish the Affordable Housing and Preservation Fund

In December, the City Commission began discussion and debate on these recommendations. The Commission approved one of the recommendations and set public hearings on four others. It referred four of the items to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation. The remainder of the Housing NOW! recommendations were scheduled to be discussed by the City Commission in January.

## Street and Park Improvements

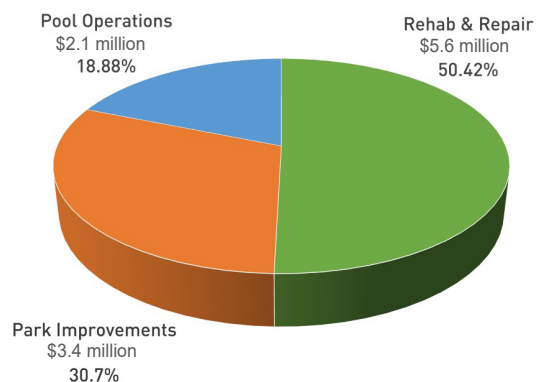
Continued from B1

several community partners that make development possible. These include Friends of Grand Rapids Parks, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Disability Advocates of Kent County, Seeds of Promise, Creston Neighborhood Association, Union Oaks Neighborhood, Boys and Girls Clubs of Grand Rapids Youth Commonwealth and the North East Citizen Action Association.

### 2018 Projects on Tap

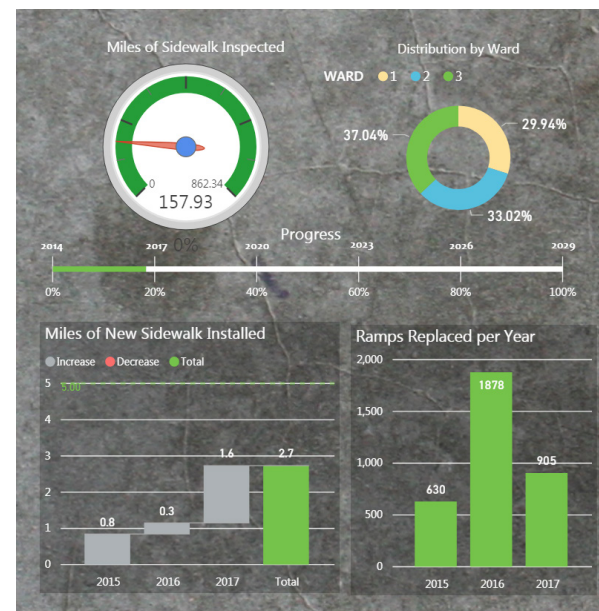
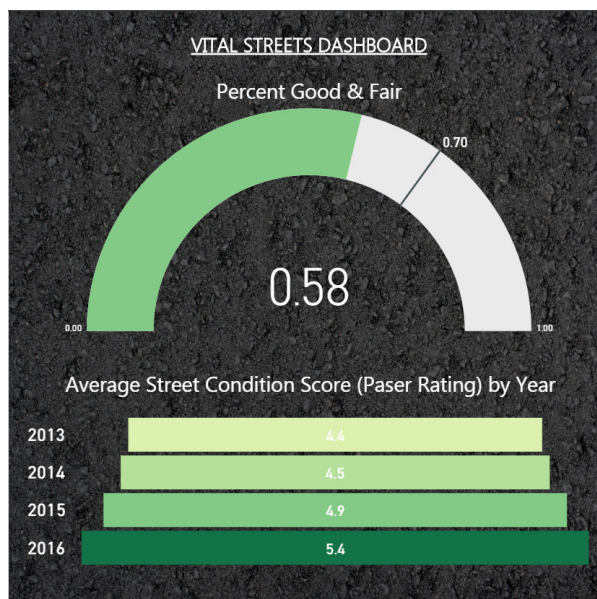
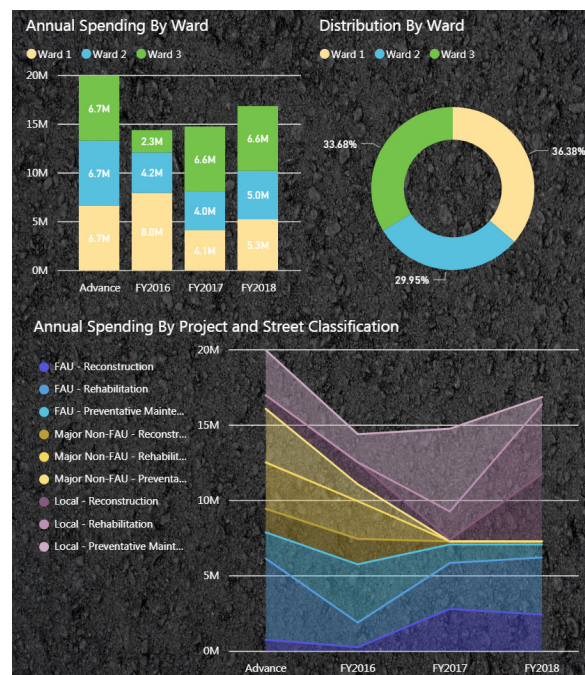
The City's Engineering and Parks departments are gearing up for the next construction cycle. Please read the upcoming Spring 2018 edition of We Are GR for updates on upcoming road projects and park upgrades.

### Parks Millage Investment Breakdown, FY14-FY17



### Parks Millage Investment Breakdown, FY14-FY17

	Millage Investment Guidelines	FY14 - FY17 Millage Investment
Rehab & Repair	45% - 55%	50.42%
Park Improvements	25% - 35%	30.70%
Pool Operations	15% - 20%	18.88%



## What is a River for All?



### RIVER FOR ALL

The City of Grand Rapids and Downtown Grand Rapids Inc., in conjunction with Grand Rapids Whitewater, are working to implement the community's vision for the Grand River corridor as established in Green Grand Rapids, GR Forward and the Parks Master Plan. The River For All process

includes creating guidelines to build a continuous river trail throughout the city and finalizing plans for the creation of parks and open spaces along the river for the community to enjoy.

Recognizing that the river corridor implementation planning must build on past efforts, it is the group's goal to learn from community members with a stake in the corridor's future.

For more information or to sign up for project updates, visit [riverforall.com](http://riverforall.com). A community forum will be held in February. Look for meeting announcements through neighborhood associations, Facebook and MLive.

For questions or to be added to the project mailing list, contact David Marquardt, Director of Parks and Recreation, (616) 456.3696 or [dmarquardt@grcity.us](mailto:dmarquardt@grcity.us).

Here are some frequently asked questions about River for All:

### 1. What are the Grand River Corridor Implementation Plan and River Trail Design Guidelines?

The Grand River Corridor Implementation Plan and River Trail Design Guidelines (Project) are part of the broader City and Grand Rapids Whitewater initiative to transform the Grand River from a dramatically underutilized corridor into a distinct riverfront amenity. The Project builds on the community's GR Forward Plan and the Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan, which envision transforming the Grand River waterfront into a 7.5-mile river edge recreation trail that reconnects Grand Rapidsians to the riverfront, maintains or increases the level of flood protection, and catalyzes private investment in new mixed-use projects. The Project furthers the vision of GR Forward and the Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan into the next step toward implementation. The Project

## River For All

Continued from B2

will identify design guidelines for the Grand River corridor (such as materials, site furnishings and river edge prototypes) to be utilized as development occurs along the riverfront and the continuous riverfront trail is built, creating an engaging, dynamic and safer river corridor. As part of the project, preliminary designs will be developed for five opportunity sites along the river corridor. The preliminary designs will demonstrate the elements of the design guidelines and the future integration with the river restoration project.

### 2. Why is it called a River for All?

River for All symbolizes the significance of the Grand River to our city and region beyond its natural beauty to a prominent feature that enhances our daily lives through activation, beautification, connection and restoration. The river improvements and public spaces along the riverfront will be an amenity for all residents and

guests of Grand Rapids to enjoy. Bike routes, pedestrian trails and tributaries will provide connections to residents outside of the river corridor and into the communities. The Grand River Corridor Implementation Plan and River Trail Design Guidelines, Restoring the Rapids in the Grand River and enhancing Flood Protection are all part of the vision to create a river for all.

### 3. What is the extent of the Grand River Corridor Project?

The corridor project includes the Grand River and riverfront within City of Grand Rapids' limits. It is approximately 7.5 miles of riverfront.

### 4. What are the five opportunity sites?

The five sites are: the current Water Department Storage Yard site on Monroe Avenue NW between Leonard and Ann Streets, Canal Street Boat Launch, the Monroe North Park property

immediately and adjacently north of I-196 and Monroe, and the Grand Rapids Public Museum. The 201 Market Avenue SW site has a conceptual programming layout until a decision is rendered for a proposed developer. At that time, a more coordinated effort will take place on the site. Other opportunity sites will be developed as the process evolves.

### 5. When will the project be built?

Construction of the overall project will be phased, and the exact timing is unknown. An estimated cost estimate for the trail and each of the opportunity sites will be developed to assist in future funding for construction.

### 6. Where can I go for more information and to be involved?

The website is [RiverForAll.com](http://RiverForAll.com).

## Police Department Taking Steps to Improve Interactions with Youth



The Grand Rapids Police Department is taking concrete steps to ensure equitable outcomes in all interactions with the community, including children and youth.

Police Chief David Rahinsky said interim actions include:

**Work on policies affecting children:** Chief Rahinsky has assigned Deputy Chief Eric Payne to lead the development of a youth interaction policy. This

proposed policy will detail procedures that officers shall take specific to dynamic situations involving children. This team will share its work with the Police Policy and Procedure Review Task Force for discussion, revisions and implementation. Deputy Chief Payne's team will involve key members of the department, including those who are assigned to the Boys and Girls Club.

**Staffing:** The Grand Rapids Police Department commits to an immediate comprehensive examination of its staffing model.

- Chief Rahinsky will request additional lieutenant positions to support each patrol shift. These positions will provide experienced supervision, coaching and mentoring to patrol officers specific to dynamic situations involving children.

- These operational lieutenants assigned to each shift will undergo unique training in cultural competency and de-escalation techniques.

**Training:** All sworn personnel will receive additional dynamic-scenario training that includes children. This innovative approach is not standard for police agencies

across the country.

**Interaction with children:** Effective immediately, all road patrol officers will have increased interaction with our community's children on a rotating schedule.

This will include the daily activities of the following programs and outreach collaborations:

- Grand Rapids Area Boys and Girls Clubs/Camp O'Malley
- Explorer Program
- Youth Police Academy
- Pathways to Policing
- IMPACT
- Grand Rapids Public Schools Partnerships

"We are confident that this introspection and these new measures will lead to tangible outcomes, making a real and lasting difference in our community," Chief Rahinsky said. "We look forward to continuing our partnerships and dialogue with the community."

## Residents Must File Income Tax Returns

Grand Rapids is a vibrant city with many new residents relocating to take advantage of the economic vitality of the area. Most residents learn of the city income tax and file their required income tax returns. Unfortunately, a small number do not. If you have not filed your Grand Rapids income tax return each year when you file your federal and Michigan returns, you are encouraged to file the delinquent return(s) and request a waiver of penalties under the voluntary compliance policy of the City.

**Individuals** - For 2017, the exemption amount to use on your income tax return is \$600.

Most income of a resident that is taxable on his or her federal income tax return is also taxable on the

Grand Rapids return. Social Security and qualified pension and retirement benefits are not taxable under the Income Tax Ordinance.

Please review your check stubs to see that Grand Rapids tax is withheld at the correct tax rate. If you work in the City of Grand Rapids and your employer is not withholding taxes from your wages, please contact our office so we can assist in getting your employer in compliance. Call 456-3415.

Quarterly estimated income tax payments are required if you work for an employer who is not withholding Grand Rapids income tax or you are self-employed and your tax liability exceeds \$100.

**Businesses** – Businesses are requested to file withholding for all employees who work in Grand Rapids and all residents of Grand Rapids regardless of where they work. They also may need to file a Corporate return and/or individual return as the business owner.



Grand Rapids income tax forms, instructions and information are available online [www.grcity.us/income-tax](http://www.grcity.us/income-tax).

For questions or concerns about the Grand Rapids income tax, please contact the Income Tax Office at 616-456-3415.

## City Responds to Citizen Questions Regarding Police Officer Hiring Practices

In August 2017, City officials responded to 254 questions raised at community meetings held earlier in the year. Questions came from residents who attended meetings at the Traffic Stop Study Final Report Community Meetings, the LINC UP Gallery Community Meeting and the City's Listening Sessions. The answers to all community questions are available at [grcity.us](http://grcity.us).

The City also is publishing answers to the most frequently asked questions raised at those GRPD meetings in quarterly issues of We Are GR. This issue addresses police officer hiring practices.

### Question

What are the hiring policies/procedures for police officers?

### City Response

The City replaces retired police officers by hiring either:

- Police Recruit positions (which do not require any formal law enforcement training)
- Police Officer positions (which require that an applicant already possess the certification or be certifiable)

Hired Police Recruit candidates are hired by the City and sponsored to attend the Grand Valley State University (GVSU) Police Academy. Police Recruits

who are sponsored to attend the GVSU Academy will be paid as a Police Recruit, and will receive all the benefits provided by the City while attending the police academy. Upon successful completion of the police academy, recruits will return to the Grand Rapids Police Department (GRPD) for additional training and will be sworn in as Police Officers.

The recruitment processes allow the GRPD to maintain its current staffing level and address future succession needs. Retirements of current personnel continue to present an opportunity to hire new law enforcement representatives who will strengthen the department's future. GRPD is committed to hiring qualified professional candidates who share its passion for public service, integrity and honor. GRPD is interested in hiring those who meet the minimum qualifications outlined in each of the job descriptions and are interested in serving and protecting our community.

This application process is open to everyone, including:

- Individuals who have no formal training in law enforcement but are willing to serve our community – please apply for the Police Recruit job
- For anyone who is currently certified as a Police Officer or is already certifiable as one, please apply for the Police Officer position

- Graduates of an MCOLES (Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards) police academy

All applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Must not be less than 18 years old
- Possess U.S. citizenship
- Possess a high school diploma or GED
- Possess a valid Michigan driver's license
- No felony crimes (see MCOLES website for additional disqualifying criminal history information)
- Good moral character
- Pass a comprehensive background investigation
- Pass MCOLES Reading, Writing, and Physical Fitness examinations
- Pass MCOLES Psychological Evaluation
- Pass MCOLES Medical Evaluation and Drug Screening
- Pass the City of Grand Rapids Civil Service Exam
- Pass an oral board interview

Please visit the MCOLES website at [mi.gov/mcoles](http://mi.gov/mcoles) for information on minimum licensing standards.

## SAFE Pitch Night Unveils New Ideas to Reduce Neighborhood Violence

The City of Grand Rapids and the Safe Alliances For Everyone (SAFE) Task Force congratulate the six winning "pitches" getting the go-ahead to make their ideas a reality.

A panel of judges at the recent SAFE Pitch and Highlight Night have green-lighted the following projects designed to reduce violence in our city. Each project brings a fresh perspective to fighting this issue. We wish the individuals and organizations well during implementation of these great ideas!

### Individuals:

#### Nahshon Cook-Nelson, SpeakLightTv

SpeakLightTv will entertain and empower students on finding direction in their lives, believing in themselves and understanding the power of their mind. The succinct program will be dedicated to eliminating violence by working with students from the inside out. In collaboration with corporate entertainer Tim Cusack and mentorship from mind development leader Bob Proctor, SpeakLightTv will develop a program that will get students throughout Grand Rapids laughing, loving and being inspired.

#### Michael Anthony Booker

Booker's idea is to reduce violence among 15- to 24-year-olds by having them become active stakeholders of the community through positive changes in how they



engage with one another. Booker will organize a group of responsible adults in the community and match them with youth ages 15 to 24 to build positive relationships. Adults and the youth will participate in Neighborhood Cleanup Days picking up debris/trash, snow shoveling during the winter months, and participating in recreational activities at local gyms. These activities will foster positive relationships between this targeted age group and mentors in their own communities.

#### Cole and Nathan Williams, Son to a Father Project

The Son to a Father Project is a prevention program that provides workshops to young fathers between the ages of 15 to 24. The project is run by Cole and Nathan Williams, who are bonded by a 22-year journey as father and son. They have 10 years of experience working together as family facilitators. Their primary goal is to model, for incarcerated and adjudicated male fathers, healthy ways to sustain, maintain and remain connected to their children and communities.

### Organizations:

#### Restorative Justice Coalition of West Michigan

The Restorative Coalition will create a radio and/or television show (maybe a series) called "Reality RJ West Michigan" and use real people with real events and real solutions to model restorative justice solutions to violence. The Coalition will recruit a team of youth ages 15 to 24 who are willing to participate in the restorative process and share their stories. Youth who have been involved in violent lifestyles in the past and want to change are the key demographic. The program

will provide mentors who can teach about restorative conferences, circles and dispute mediation.

### Dreams Take Work

Duke Turley will create events and workshops that build healthy relationships among males ages 15 to 24 and local organizations, businesses and law enforcement.

#### Crossroads Bible Church with Songbird Justice Initiative

The first phase of the Songbird Justice Initiative is to assess the nature and scope of sex trafficking in Grand Rapids. The SAFE Task Force grant will help advance this comprehensive plan. It will support a collaborative design-thinking process with multi-disciplinary partners to ideate solutions based on gathered research to combat trafficking. The second phase will increase the capacity of research partner Leslie King to increase her direct service provision in the southeast area of Grand Rapids with those exploited in the sex industry. Funding for a safe space for those caught in trafficking has been identified has a pressing need to address the violence.



## Neighborhood Summit Focuses on Going Beyond a Seat at the Table

Registration is now open for the March 3 event

### New Look

The fourth annual Neighborhood Summit is scheduled for Saturday, March 3.

The Neighborhood Summit has always been resident and community centric. The purpose - to increase residents' awareness, skills, and networks for improved sustained change for stronger neighborhoods and a stronger city - is not changing. However, to better reflect these values, the Summit's branding has changed.

The new logo reflects residents and their voices. Individuals from different backgrounds and experiences standing together, hand in hand, sharing their voices equitably.

A critical component of the Summit - ensuring every resident's voice is heard - is better signified through this new symbol.

### Creating Positive Social Change

This year's keynote is Dr. Rasheda L. Weaver, an



assistant professor of community entrepreneurship at the University of Vermont.

Born and raised in New York, Dr. Weaver is of Jamaican and Cuban descent with a passion to improve the world by equipping people with the knowledge and skills to advance human and community development. Her award-winning research and teaching focuses on community development strategies in diverse geographic contexts and the use of business as a tool for creating positive social change. She conducted the first large-scale study of United States-based social enterprises, which are businesses that strive to combat social problems. In April 2018, she is launching Weaver's Social Enterprise Directory, an online directory that will connect the public to more than 1,000 social enterprises in the nation.

In addition to the keynote, participants will be able to attend three workshops from a list of nearly 20 options, including block clubs, entrepreneurship, community organizing, partnering with business districts and improvement corridors, and more.

In order to remove barriers for participants, as well as inspire future Grand Rapids leaders, a Kids Summit is available to provide children ages 5 to 12 with programming. Childcare will also be provided for

children ages 2 to 4.

As in previous years, the Summit is free and includes a continental breakfast, lunch, and a community celebration following the day's activities.

### Register Today

Registration is open, and Grand Rapids residents, resident-based organizations, local business owners, and other stakeholders are encouraged to attend.

To best accommodate participants, registration is required. You may register online at [www.grandrapidsmi.gov/summit](http://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/summit).

Stay connected leading up to and following the Summit by liking it on Facebook: GRNeighborhoodSummit. When sharing your experiences and photos, don't forget to tag #2018GRSummit!

**Who:** Grand Rapids residents, resident-based organizations, local business owners, and other stakeholders

**What:** Fourth annual Neighborhood Summit

**When:** Saturday, March 3 from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Where:** GVSU Downtown Pew Campus

## City Breaks Ground on \$38 Million Biodigester Sludge Treatment System

State-of-the-art project is hailed for advancing City's 100 percent renewable energy goal by 2025



Mayor Rosalynn Bliss, city officials and area environmental and business leaders joined in a groundbreaking ceremony in December to kick off construction of the city's new \$38 million waste-to-energy biodigester and sludge treatment system at the Environmental Services Department's Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF), 1300 Market Ave. SW.

"Our world-class waste treatment system is critical to our city's economic vitality and our neighboring communities," Mayor Bliss said. "We all should be proud of this project, which will become Michigan's most comprehensive waste-to-energy biodigester operation."

The biodigester project has potential long-term benefits across Kent County because the City's Water Resource Recovery Facility goes beyond serving the City of Grand Rapids and includes the communities of

Walker, Kentwood, Cascade Township, Grand Rapids Township, Tallmadge Township, Wright Township, East Grand Rapids, Ada Township, Gaines Township and Caledonia Township.

"This project demonstrates the overwhelming public and private support we have in our region for green infrastructure," Bliss said. She noted Grand Rapids and Kent County were in the top five in terms of agricultural output by county in Michigan as measured by dollars and that Ottawa County ranked first.

Grand Rapids has been named America's Greenest City by Fast Company magazine, was the first city to be recognized by the United Nations as a Regional Centre for Sustainable Development, and has the most LEED-certified buildings per capita in the U.S., according to the U.S. Green Business Council.

"As a national leader in these areas, we have created a culture in which we incorporate sustainable skills and practices into our own lives and businesses," Bliss said.

City Manager Greg Sundstrom said the project was necessary to handle an increasing flow of concentrated wastewater generated by the region's booming economic expansion as well as projected customer growth in organic food waste from the area's thriving agribusiness, brewing and food processing sectors.

"Without this biodigester, Grand Rapids would exceed the capacity of our current system within the next

few years, and that would require spending \$120 million to expand waste treatment operations at the City's Water Resource Recovery Facility," Sundstrom said. "Our plan reduces costs, protects the environment in a sustainable manner and advances progress on our city's important quality-of-life priorities."

Biodigesters are essentially concrete chambers that mimic the work done by fermenters in a brewery, converting carbon to carbon dioxide and methane, according to Tom Almonte, managing director of public services.

The City's plan will take organic waste and combine it with microorganisms in three sealed, air-tight tanks that each have a capacity of 1.4 million gallons. The plan also provides space for an expansion of three additional tanks at the site to allow existing or future high-strength waste customers to tap into the system.

Grand Rapids will pay for the project with tax-exempt municipal bonds. Electricity production from the biodigester will help offset the costs of the investment, which is expected to help keep consumers' rates steady.

Upon completion in 2019, the biodigester system will produce about 95 percent of the electricity needs of the city's Water Resource Recovery Facility. The city generates nearly 30 percent of its electricity from renewable energy and is working to increase that amount to 100 percent by 2025.



**Parks and Recreation**  
CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

### General Information

- Ages 16 & up (all fitness levels welcome) - no one under age 16 is permitted
- Classes begin the week of March 25, 2018 and run for 10 weeks
- We suggest bringing a Yoga mat and water bottle to each class
- Cancelled classes will be announced on the recreation program update/cancellation line at 616-456-3699
- You are encouraged to consult with a physician prior to beginning an exercise program

### Three ways to register



ONLINE  
recreationgr.us



BY PHONE  
616.456.3696, Option #1



IN PERSON  
201 Market Ave SW

### Two ways to save

- 1) Multiple classes equal a reduced rate!
- 2) Early bird-register between Jan 29-Feb 23

### Register between Jan. 29 - Feb. 23\*

Resident Nonresident

1 class per week	\$55	\$65
2 classes per week	\$85	\$95
3 classes per week	\$115	\$125

\*online registration closes February 23.

### Register on Feb. 24, 2018\*\* or after

Resident Nonresident

1 class per week	\$65	\$75
2 classes per week	\$95	\$105
3 classes per week	\$125	\$135

\*\*online registration not available.

### Looking for flexibility?

#### **P** Adult Fitness Punchcards

Purchase a punchcard and attend any of the classes listed with the **P** symbol. You may also use a punch to bring along a family member or friend to try a class, as long as you are present. Cards cannot be transferred and all attendees must sign a waiver before participating.

Reg #	# of Classes /Punches	Fee Resident	Fee Nonresident
466000A	5	\$40	\$50
466000B	10	\$70	\$80
466000C	20	\$100	\$110
466000D	30	\$130	\$140

\*online registration closes February 23.

## YOGA

### CLASSES RUN FOR 10 WEEKS STARTING THE WEEK OF MARCH 25

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR	REG #
<b>BASIC YOGA</b> <b>P</b> Discover your inner yogi in a class that builds strength and body awareness. Begin with gentle stretching and move to flowing through holding poses. Class will come to a restful end.	SUN	6:00 - 6:55 PM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	ANNE F.	166102A
	MON	12:15 - 1:00 PM	CITY HALL	KAYE E.	166102B
	MON	5:30 - 6:25 PM	KEC OAKLEIGH	TERRI S.	166102C
	MON	6:00 - 6:55 PM	GARFIELD PARK GYM	AMY K.	166102D
	TUE	6:00 - 6:55 PM	N. PARK PRESBYTERIAN	ZAC K.	166102E
	WED	6:15 - 7:10 PM	PALMER ELEMENTARY	KATHY W.	166102F
	WED	6:30 - 7:25 PM	KEC OAKLEIGH	TERRI S.	166102G
	THU	12:15 - 1:00 PM	CITY HALL	KAYE E.	166102H
	THU	4:30 - 5:25 PM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	MARLA F.	166102I
	FRI	12:15 - 1:00 PM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	BETH H.	166102J
<b>GENTLE YOGA</b> <b>P</b> 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	9:00 - 9:55 AM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	TERRI S.	166101A
	THU	9:00 - 9:55 AM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	TERRI S.	166101B
<b>RESTORATIVE YOGA</b> <b>P</b> Achieve deep relaxation with breath work, props, and holding simple poses. The slower pace helps you disconnect from your busy life and tune into you, creating mind and body awareness.	SUN	7:00 - 7:55 PM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	ANNE F.	166105A

## CYCLING

### CLASSES RUN FOR 10 WEEKS STARTING THE WEEK OF MARCH 25

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR	REG #
<b>CYCLE &amp; STRENGTH</b> A combination of high-intensity cycling intervals followed by strength exercises that target the arms, abs and lower back.	MON	6:30 - 7:25 PM	P&R CYCLING STUDIO	SADIE R.	166402A
	WED	12:15 - 1:00 PM			
<b>CYCLING</b> 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	9:00 - 9:55 AM	P&R CYCLING STUDIO	TBD	166401A
	MON	5:30 - 6:25 PM		CAROL S.	166401B
	TUE	5:30 - 6:25 PM		NATALIE M.	166401C
	TUE	6:30 - 7:25 PM		STEVE C.	166401D
	WED	4:30 - 5:25 PM		JOAN O.	166401F
	WED	5:30 - 6:25 PM		JOAN O.	166401G
	THU	6:30 - 7:25 AM		TBD	166401H
	THU	6:00 - 6:55 PM		JULIE S.	166401I

Cycling 6-week Class Fees

Resident

Non

Register between Jan 29 - Feb 23

\$40

\$50

Cycling 6-week Class Fees

Resident

Non

Register on February 24 or after

\$50

\$60

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR	REG #
<b>CYCLING (6 WEEKS)</b>	SAT APRIL 14- MAY 19	10:00 - 10:45 AM	P&R CYCLING STUDIO	TBD	166401J

Register online: [recreationgr.us](http://recreationgr.us)

Register online: [recreationgr.us](http://recreationgr.us)

# CARDIO & STRENGTH




CLASSES RUN FOR 10 WEEKS STARTING THE WEEK OF MARCH 25








CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR	REG #
<b>30/20/10</b> <b>P</b> 30 minutes of intense cardio. 20 minutes of targeted muscle sculpting. 10 minutes of relaxing stretching. This class works every muscle in your body! Equipment: weights, exercise bands, and exertubes. Hand weights required (3-10 lb. recommended).	WED WED	5:30 - 6:25 PM 5:30 - 6:25 PM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO KENT CO. HEALTH DEPT.	ZIYAH D. TBD	166501A 166501B
<b>CORE CAMP</b> <b>P</b> 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	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	KRISTIN P.	166504A
<b>HULA HOOP FITNESS</b> <b>P</b> Learn creative movement that goes beyond waist hooping. Bring the hoop up, down, and off the body while moving to music. Burn calories, tone your body, increase rhythm, and learn to move with a hoop. No experience necessary. Hula hoops provided and available for purchase.	WED	5:30 - 6:25 PM	GARFIELD PARK GYM	AUDRIA L.	166805A
<b>KICKBOXING</b> <b>P</b> Mix up your routine with balance, coordination, and strength-building moves. Strengthen your legs, upper body, abs, and burn calories.	MON	5:30 - 6:25 PM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	SADIE R.	166300A
<b>PILATES</b> <b>P</b> Tone muscles, improve posture, and learn flexibility and balance. Focus on moving as one unit with control and grace. Improve circulation, endurance, and reduce stress.	MON	6:00 - 6:55 PM	OTTAWA HILLS HIGH	ZIYAH D.	166200A
<b>POUND®</b> <b>P</b> 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. Punchcard holders must have their own Ripstix®. Ripstix® available at registration for \$20.	THU	5:30 - 6:25 PM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	KRISTIN P.	WITH STIX: 166406B  WITHOUT: 166406C
<b>STRONG BY ZUMBA</b> <b>P</b> A non-dance based workout combining high intensity interval training (HIIT), body-weight exercises, and cardio moves. In every class, music and moves sync in a way that push you past your limits and reach your fitness goals.	WED	6:30 - 7:25 PM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	AMY K.	166505A
<b>WATER AEROBICS</b> <b>P</b> Build core strength, conditioning, endurance, and all-over toning. Class features deep and shallow water exercises. A great low/non-impact workout. Float belts are available.	TUE THU SAT	6:30 - 7:25 PM 6:30 - 7:25 PM 9:00 - 9:55 AM	CITY HIGH CITY HIGH CITY HIGH	KATHLEEN H. KATHLEEN H. KATHLEEN H.	166702A 166702B 166702C

## DANCE

Register online: [recreationgr.us](http://recreationgr.us) 

CLASSES RUN FOR 10 WEEKS STARTING THE WEEK OF MARCH 25

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR	REG #
<b>BALLROOM DANCING</b> Join the growing West Michigan ballroom dance community. Learn the Salsa, Waltz, Foxtrot, East Coast Swing, Cha Cha, Rumba, and Tango.	MON	7:30 - 8:25 PM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	JULIE G.	166800A
<b>BALLROOM DANCING: THE NEXT STEPS</b> A follow-up to Ballroom Dancing. Continue practicing basic dances and learn new moves to add flair and style to your dance floor fun.	FRI	4:30 - 5:25 PM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	JULIE G.	166811A
<b>GROOVE ABOUT </b> Sweat away stress and dance some joy into your heart while following simple steps and easy toning moves. Groove About 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	KEC OAKLEIGH	TERRI S.	166804A
<b>GROOVE-YOGA COMBO </b> Start with 30 minutes of GROOVE: a united and unique dance pairing simple steps with creative expression. End with 25 minutes of stretch-filled yoga. A perfect way to unwind and relax!	MON	6:30 - 7:25 PM	KEC OAKLEIGH	TERRI S.	166810A
<b>OLD SKOOL </b> Old Skool is Dance Cardio that ROCKS. Fly dance moves and all your favorite chart-topping pop and hip-hop beats from decades past combine with serious fitness in the freshest throwback cardio dance class on the planet.	TUE	6:30 - 7:25 PM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	JULIE S.	166812A
<b>WERQ </b> A fiercely fun dance workout based on current Billboard 100 pop, rock, and hip hop songs. You don't have to be a dancer to join but you'll feel like one while you are blasting away calories during this class!	MON	6:30 - 7:25 PM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	MONICA S.	166801A
<b>ZUMBA </b> A fusion of Latin and International music. This class combines high-energy and motivating music with unique moves and combinations.	TUE	4:30 - 5:25 PM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	NATALIE M.	166802A
<b>ZUMBA GOLD </b> Get your body moving with easy-to-follow, low-impact dance steps. Dance your way to better health. Great for the active, older adult.	WED	9:00 - 9:55 AM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	AMY K.	166803A

## FREE COMMUNITY CLASSES

Community classes are offered free of charge to everyone (ages 18 & up). Simply show up to the class you want to attend!

CLASSES RUN FROM APRIL 11 - JUNE 2

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)
MORNING YOGA	WED SAT	6:30 - 7:25 AM 9:00 - 9:55 AM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO

## FAMILY FITNESS CLASS

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	FEE		
<b>ADULT CYCLING &amp; KIDS YOGA</b> Adults can enjoy a 45-minute Cycling class while the kids (ages 5-9) have fun doing Yoga. A great way to get the whole family moving!	SAT APRIL 14- MAY 19	10:00 - 10:45 AM	P&R CYCLING STUDIO (ADULTS)	Resident	Non	
			P&R FITNESS STUDIO (KIDS)	Register between Jan 29 - Feb 23 (for 2 people)	\$65	\$75
				Register after February 23 (for 2 people)	\$75	\$85
			Each additional person	\$25	\$35	



Register online: [recreationgr.us](http://recreationgr.us)

# YOUTH - FENCING

Registration Fee      Resident      Non  
 \$85      \$95

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	REG #
<b>YOUNG SQUIRES (AGES 5-7)</b> Great for beginners - no previous experience necessary. Plastic weapons will be used in this class.	WEDNESDAYS MARCH 7-APRIL 18 APRIL 25-MAY 30	4:30 - 5:15 PM	WEST MICHIGAN FENCING ACADEMY	134101A 134101B
<b>YOUTH (AGES 7-13)</b> Great for beginners - no previous experience necessary.	MONDAYS MARCH 5-APRIL 16 THURSDAYS APRIL 26-MAY 31	5:30 - 6:30 PM	WEST MICHIGAN FENCING ACADEMY	134102A 134102B
<b>CONTINUING YOUTH (AGES 7-13)</b> Must have already completed at least one 6-week class or camp. No additional equipment required.	THURSDAYS MARCH 8-APRIL 19 MONDAYS APRIL 23-JUNE 4	5:30 - 6:30 PM	WEST MICHIGAN FENCING ACADEMY	134103A 134103B
<b>TEEN &amp; ADULT (AGES 14+)</b> Great for beginners - no previous experience or equipment necessary.	THURSDAYS MARCH 8-APRIL 19 APRIL 26-MAY 31	6:30 - 7:30 PM	WEST MICHIGAN FENCING ACADEMY	154100A 154100B

# YOUTH - YOGA

CLASSES RUN FOR 6 WEEKS STARTING THE WEEK OF APRIL 9

Register between Jan 29 - Feb 23      Resident      Non  
 \$42      \$52  
 Register after February 23      \$52      \$62

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	REG #
<b>KIDS YOGA (AGES 5-9)</b> Kids will be introduced to yoga in a fun, active class.	SAT	10:00 - 10:45 AM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	136400A

# YOUTH - GYMNASTICS

CLASSES RUN FOR 6 WEEKS STARTING THE WEEK OF APRIL 9

Register between Jan 29 - Feb 23      Resident      Non  
 \$42      \$52  
 Register after February 23      \$52      \$62

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	REG #
<b>GYMNASTICS I (AGES 4-6)</b> For the younger gymnast to encourage success and fun in the gym. Kids learn tumbling and balancing basics with emphasis on strength and flexibility.	SAT	2:00 - 2:45 PM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	133100A
<b>GYMNASTICS II (AGES 5-9)</b> A follow-up to Gymnastics I. Activities increase strength, movement, coordination, agility and flexibility. Kids must be able to complete cartwheel and back bridge to sign up.	SAT	3:00 - 3:45 PM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	133101A

# YOUTH - DANCE

CLASSES RUN FOR 6 WEEKS STARTING THE WEEK OF APRIL 9

Register between Jan 29 - Feb 23      Resident      Non  
 \$42      \$52  
 Register after February 23      \$52      \$62

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	REG #
<b>CREATIVE MOVEMENT (AGES 3-4)</b> This class is perfect for young kids' first dance class. Kids work on engaging with the instructor and other students. This class helps kids explore through ballet, games, and exercises on the mats.	WED FRI SAT	10:15 - 11:00 AM 10:15 - 11:00 AM 11:00 - 11:45 AM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	127100A 127100B 127100C
<b>HIP HOP (AGES 6-12)</b> Kids learn the basics of hip hop in an upbeat environment. Activities include stretching, isolations, rhythms, and funky footwork along with different body movements.	SAT SAT	11:45 AM - 12:30 PM (AGES 6-8) 12:45 - 1:30 PM (AGES 9-12)	P&R FITNESS STUDIO	100195A 100195B

## YOUTH - SWIM LESSONS

CLASSES RUN FOR 8 WEEKS, APRIL 14 - JUNE 2

Registration Fees      Resident      Non  
    \$38              \$48

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	REG #
<b>PARENT/CHILD (AGES 6 MONTHS - 2 YEARS)</b> Parents and children learn together to increase a child's comfort level in the water. Build a foundation of basic skills such as arm and leg movements and breath control.	SAT	10:30 - 11:00 AM	CITY HIGH POOL	111101C1
<b>PRESCHOOL LEVEL I (AGES 3-5)</b> Orients children in the pool and helps them gain basic aquatic skills.	SAT	10:30 - 11:00 AM	CITY HIGH POOL	121101C1
<b>PRESCHOOL LEVEL II (AGES 3-5)</b> Kids gain greater independence in their skills and get more comfortable in the water.	SAT	10:30 - 11:00 AM	CITY HIGH POOL	121102C1
<b>PRESCHOOL LEVEL III (AGES 3-5)</b> Helps kids start to gain basic swimming skills and get comfortable in and around water.	SAT	10:30 - 11:00 AM	CITY HIGH POOL	121103C1
<b>LEVEL I (AGES 6+)</b> Helps kids feel comfortable in the water.	SAT	11:15 - NOON	CITY HIGH POOL	131101C1
<b>LEVEL II (AGES 6+)</b> Child must have passed or show skills required for Level I. Class builds on fundamental skills.	SAT	11:15 - NOON	CITY HIGH POOL	131102C1
<b>LEVEL III (AGES 6+)</b> Child must have passed or show skills required for Level II. Builds on the skills in Level II through more guided practice in deeper water.	SAT	11:15 - NOON	CITY HIGH POOL	131103C1

## YOUTH - SPRING SOCCER



### A FUN, FRIENDLY EXPERIENCE

Team-building, friendly competition, and improving skills are all part of our youth soccer programs. Choose from two Grand Rapids locations and six co-ed age divisions ranging from 4 to 17 years old.

### QUICK INFO

- Practices begin March 27 or 29
- Games begin April 14
- Season ends May 19
- 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

### REGISTER BY FEBRUARY 23

(RESIDENTS: \$45, NONRESIDENTS: \$55)



ONLINE

grandrapidsmi.gov  
Search "soccer"



BY PHONE

616.456.3696  
Option #1



IN PERSON

201 Market Ave SW  
Form at [grcity.us/parks](http://grcity.us/parks)

Register online: [recreationgr.us](http://recreationgr.us)

# ENRICHMENT/ADVENTURE CLASSES



CLASS	DATE(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	REG #
<b>BEGINNER KAYAKING</b> Learn the basics of Kayaking! From basic safety, wearing a flotation device, to launching, and paddling. All equipment included. <b>Ages 10+, Resident: \$45, Non: \$55</b>	WEDNESDAYS MAY 9 - MAY 30	6:00 - 7:30 PM	RICHMOND PARK	184104A
	SATURDAYS MAY 12- JUNE 2	6:00 - 7:30 PM		184104A
<b>DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY 101</b> Digital cameras are powerful tools, but they only produce great results when you know how to use all the features. Join Grand Rapids photographer, Josh Weiland, for a hands-on photography course! As the lead photographer at Weiland Studios, Josh has the experience to answer all your photography questions. Designed for anyone who owns a camera and wants to learn how to take better photos of family, friends, or nature. <b>Ages 16+, Resident: \$50, Non: \$60</b>	THURSDAYS MARCH 8, 15, & 22	6:30 - 8:30 PM	WEILAND STUDIOS	184601A
	WEDNESDAYS MAY 9, 16, & 23	6:30 - 8:30 PM		184601B
<b>ECO-PLAY CONNECTION</b> Join a community of children who love to explore, discover the wonder of the natural world, and how they fit into it. Eco-Play Connection uses the natural areas of our parks to offer children something unique: time to play in nature by connecting with the outdoors through active hands-on experiences. Learn to navigate trails, search for salamanders, play games, listen to bird songs, observe life cycles, race sticks down a stream, build forts, climb trees and read nature's signs. Rebecca Brilowski-Podbregar is the creator and instructor of Eco-Play Connection. She has a master's in urban Education and is an experienced elementary Montessori teacher. <b>Ages 6-12, Resident: \$50, Non: \$60</b>	THURSDAYS APRIL 12- MAY 31	5:00 - 6:30 PM	HUFF, RICHMOND, & RIVERSIDE PARKS	137602A
	SATURDAYS APRIL 14- JUNE 2	9:00 - 10:30 AM		137602B
<b>PERFORMING ARTS</b> This Community Theater program is designed for children 7+ years and adults, with or without experience, looking to learn about performing arts and shine on stage in a performance of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream." <b>Ages 7+, Resident: \$50, Non: \$60</b>	MON & THU MARCH 26- APRIL 19	6:00 - 8:00 PM	COLDBROOK BUILDING	184603A

## RESIDENT AND NON-RESIDENT FEES:

You are a resident if you reside within the City of Grand Rapids' boundaries. Nonresidents are welcome to participate, but are charged a slightly higher registration fee.

## REFUND POLICY:

A full refund is granted until the Early Bird Registration Deadline listed on the registration form. A \$5.00 cancellation fee will be charged if the refund is requested after the early-bird registration deadline, but prior to the first session of a class. If a refund is granted to a participant who registered online, the convenience fee will not be refunded.

A pro-rated refund will be granted when a program participant is unable to complete a program due to illness, injury, or relocation.

A full refund is granted when Parks and Recreation cancels a class due to low enrollment (however, the online convenience fee is non-refundable).

## CANCELLATIONS:

If a class or program is cancelled due to weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances, an announcement will be made on the Recreation Program Update/ Cancellation Line at (616) 456-3699. Please call this number if you have any question as to whether classes will be held. This line is updated on a regular basis so feel free to call before you head out to any class or program!

## FEE ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE:

Reduced fees are available for Grand Rapids residents who qualify. Applications may be obtained by visiting our Web site at [www.grcity.us/parksandrec](http://www.grcity.us/parksandrec) or by calling (616) 456-3696. Applications must be submitted prior to the deadline for processing.

## CLASS LOCATIONS:

- City Hall - 300 Monroe Ave NW
- City High - 1720 Plainfield Ave NE
- Coldbrook Building - 1101 Monroe Ave NW
- Garfield Park Gym - 2111 Madison Ave SE
- Huff Park - 2286 Ball Ave NE
- Indian Trails Golf Course - 2776 Kalamazoo Ave SE
- KEC Oakleigh - 2223 Gordon St NW
- Kent County Health Dept. - 700 Fuller Ave SE
- N. Park Presbyterian - 500 N. Park St NE
- Ottawa Hills High - 2055 Rosewood Ave SE
- Palmer Elementary - 309 Palmer St NE
- P&R Cycling Studio - 201 Market Ave SW
- P&R Fitness Studio - 201 Market Ave SW
- Richmond Park - 1101 Richmond St NW
- Riverside Park - 2001 Monroe Ave NW
- Weiland Studios - 2920 Fuller Ave, Suite 203
- West MI Fencing Academy - 1111 Godfrey Ave SW

## GOLF

A great opportunity to learn how to play or sharpen your game for this summer's golf season.

Contact Indian Trails at [info@Indiantrailsgc.org](mailto:info@Indiantrailsgc.org) to sign up or for more information.

### YOUTH (AGES 7+)

May 5 & 6 or May 19 & 20. All play levels. 9:00 am to 11:00 am. Cost \$60. Lunch will be provided.

### WOMEN (AGES 18+)

Women's Clinics May 12 or 19  
All player levels. 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm. Cost \$30.

## LOCATIONS & HOURS

### Main Library

111 Library Street NE • 49503  
616.988.5400

M-Th 9:00 AM – 9:00 PM  
F-Sat 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM  
Sun 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM  
(Sunday hours Labor Day  
to Memorial Day)

### Madison Square Branch

1201 Madison SE • 49507  
616.988.5411

T-W 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM  
Th 12:00 PM – 8:00 PM  
F-Sat 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM

### Ottawa Hills Branch

1150 Giddings SE • 49506  
616.988.5412

T 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM  
W 12:00 PM – 8:00 PM  
Th-Sat 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM

### Seymour Branch

2350 Eastern SE • 49507  
616.988.5413

M-T 12:00 PM – 8:00 PM  
W-Th 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM  
Sat 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM

### Van Belkum Branch

1563 Plainfield NE • 49505  
616.988.5410

T 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM  
W 12:00 PM – 8:00 PM  
Th-Sat 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM

### West Leonard Branch

1017 Leonard NW • 49504  
616.988.5416

M-T 12:00 PM – 8:00 PM  
W-Th 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM  
Sat 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM

### West Side Branch

713 Bridge NW • 49504  
616.988.5414

T-W 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM  
Th 12:00 PM – 8:00 PM  
F-Sat 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM

### Yankee Clipper Branch

2025 Leonard NE • 49505  
616.988.5415

M-T 12:00 PM – 8:00 PM  
W-Th 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM  
Sat 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM



616.988.5400 • WWW.GRPL.ORG

# Free Classes for Adults at the Library!

## Beginner Computer Classes

All computer classes are held at the Main Library (111 Library Street NE) in the Adult Computer Training Center on the Lower Level.

For more information on each of these classes, visit [www.grpl.org/computer](http://www.grpl.org/computer).

### Managing Your Digital Footprint

Monday, January 29  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Wednesday, February 28  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Thursday, March 29  
1:00 pm – 12:30 pm

Monday, April 30  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Thursday, May 24  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm

### Discovering the Internet

Wednesday, February 7  
1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Thursday, March 8  
1:00 pm – 12:30 pm

Monday, April 16  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Thursday, May 10  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm

### Exploring Social Media and Email

Wednesday, February 14  
1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Thursday, March 15  
1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Monday, April 23  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Thursday, May 17  
1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

### Building Basic Computer Skills

Thursday, March 1  
1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Monday, April 9  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Thursday, May 3  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm

## Advanced Computer Classes

### Internet Privacy: Protecting Yourself in the Digital Age

Wednesday, January 31  
1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Monday, February 12  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Wednesday, March 28  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Tuesday, April 24  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

### Social Media Privacy: Taking Control of Your Profiles

Wednesday, January 24  
1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Monday, February 5  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Wednesday, March 14  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Tuesday, April 17  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

### Backup Basics: How to Secure Your Data

Wednesday, March 7  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Tuesday, April 10  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

## One-on-One Computer Help

### Speak to a Geek: One-on-One Computer Sessions

Call one of our seven branches to schedule a time or stop by one of our walk-in question and answer sessions at the Main Library. Call 616.988.5400 to sign up.

Drop-in sessions at the Main Library:  
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

January 25, February 8, March 5,  
April 19, May 7

3:00 pm – 5:00 pm  
January 23, 30, February 6, 13, 27,  
March 6, 13, 20, 27, April 3, 10, 17, 24,  
May 1, 8, 15, 22

## Small Business Resource Center Classes

All business classes are held at the Main Library (111 Library Street NE) in the Adult Computer Training Center on the Lower Level.

### How to Use the Library to Write a Business Plan

Wednesday, January 24  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

### How to Use the Library to Write a Marketing Plan

Wednesday, January 31  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

Wednesday, March 14  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

### Introduction to Finding Grants for Nonprofits

Wednesday, February 7  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

Wednesday, April 11  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

### Introduction to Proposal Writing for Nonprofits

Wednesday, February 14  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

Wednesday, April 18  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

### Introduction to Project Budgets for Nonprofits

Wednesday, February 28  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

Wednesday, April 25  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

### Small Business Research Essentials

Wednesday, March 7  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

# GOOD NEWS TO START THE NEW YEAR!

Starting January 1, 2018, DVD late fines have been reduced  
from \$1 a day to 15¢ a day.

## Smart Kids Start Here!

### Get Your Child Ready to Read with these Interactive Storytimes

Reading to your child from birth not only helps your child's brain grow, it also creates a wonderful bond between the two of you.

#### Baby & Me

0 – 18 months

Bring your babies and bounce along to fun stories, songs, and rhymes! Baby & Me is a 15 minute long storytime, followed by a relaxed playtime where baby and you will meet new friends.

Mondays, January 22 – March 26  
11:00 am | Main Library

Wednesdays, January 24 – March 28  
11:00 am | Yankee Clipper Branch

Thursdays, January 25 – March 29  
10:30 am | Seymour Branch

#### Toddler Time

18 months – 3 years

Bring your toddlers to share fun stories, songs, rhymes, and learn together! Toddler Time is a 25 minute long storytime, followed by a hands-on activity and playtime designed to help your child's brain grow.

Tuesdays, January 23 – March 27  
11:00 am | Main Library

Wednesdays, January 24 – March 28  
10:30 am | Seymour Branch

Thursdays, January 25 – March 29  
11:00 am | West Leonard Branch

#### Family Time

Families with children 5 years and under

Come share books, stories, rhymes, music, and movement with the whole family! Family Time is a 30 minute storytime followed by a hands-on activity and playtime.

Wednesdays, January 24 – March 28  
11:00 am | West Leonard Branch

Thursdays, January 25 – March 29  
11:00 am | Yankee Clipper Branch

#### Pajama Time

Families with children 5 years and under

Come explore learning through fun stories, movement, and music activities in this evening storytime! Pajama Time is a 30 minute long storytime followed by a hands-on activity and playtime. Wear your pajamas and get those wiggles out before bed!

Tuesdays, January 23 – March 27  
6:30 pm | Seymour Branch

6:30 pm | Yankee Clipper Branch

#### Pajama Time in Spanish

Families with children 5 years and under

Join us for a bilingual storytime and share stories, rhymes, music, and movement with the whole family in the evening! Pajama Time in Spanish is a 30 minute long storytime followed by a hands-on activity and playtime. Wear your pajamas and get those wiggles out before bed!

Mondays, January 22 – March 26  
6:30 pm | West Leonard Branch

#### Hora de Pijamas en Español

Familias con niños menores de 5 años

¡Ven a la biblioteca para disfrutar una hora de cuentos bilingüe para toda la familia! Compartiremos cuentos, rimas, musica, y movimiento. La Hora de Pijamas en español incluye 30 minutos de lectura y movimiento seguido por una actividad para los niños y tiempo para jugar juntos. ¡Ven a la biblioteca vestido en tus pijamas para un evento especial antes de dormir!

Cada Lunes del 22 de enero al 26 de marzo

6:30 pm | Sucursal West Leonard



## Partnering for Third Grade Reading Success



The Grand Rapids Public Library is ready to help families with reading! The library has partnered with the Kent District Library (KDL), Kent Intermediate School District (KISD), and the Literacy Center of West Michigan to form the coalition Partners in Reading Success. The goal is to support families and schools in meeting the requirements of the new 3rd Grade Reading Proficiency Law.

This fall, staff from the library received training in the law and the best ways to help students and their families. The workshop, provided by KISD, reviewed Michigan's reading proficiency statistics and then outlined what is required in the law and how schools are meeting those requirements. Finally, the workshop provided library staff with dozens of resources and ideas they can use with students to develop the five fundamentals of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

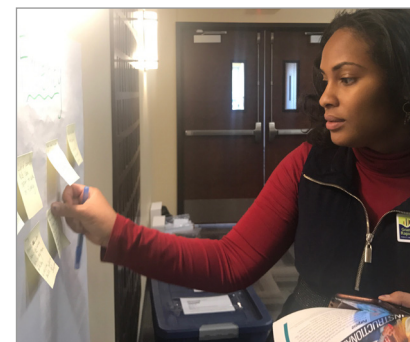
#### GRPL librarians can help you:

- understand your child's Individualized Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP)
- boost your child's reading skills
- find books your child will love
- learn tips for reading with your child
- discover ways to teach your child about sounds (phonemic awareness), letters (phonics), reading smoothly (fluency), and understanding stories (comprehension)

One of the best ways to make sure your young child is ready to learn to read is to join a GRPL storytime. All library storytimes, whether for babies, toddlers, or preschoolers, introduce sounds and letters, increase vocabulary, and help children understand stories. Library staff are experts in finding the right books for helping new readers become strong readers.



Photo courtesy of Jaye Beeler, School Network News



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# 50th Dyer-Ives Poetry Competition

## About the Dyer-Ives Poetry Competition

- FREE to enter
- CASH prizes
- PUBLICATION in the annual literary journal, *Voices*
- WINNERS read poems at the Awards Reading held during Grand Rapids' Festival of the Arts in June 2018
- Open to Kent County, Michigan residents of all ages and students attending classes within Kent County including GVSU

## How to Enter

- Submissions will be accepted February 1 – March 1, 2018.
- One poem per person will be accepted. The poem must be original and unpublished.
- Poem must be typed. Name should not appear on poem.
- Email entries to [dyerives@grpl.org](mailto:dyerives@grpl.org) or mail to:  
Grand Rapids Public Library  
Dyer-Ives Poetry Competition  
111 Library St NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

- Send poem on a separate piece of paper and include:

Division Category  
Name  
Address  
Phone  
Email  
Title of the Poem

## Divisions and Awards

First Division –  
Kindergarten through Eighth Grade

1st Place: \$100  
2nd Place: \$75  
3rd Place: \$50

Second Division –  
High School through Undergraduate

1st Place: \$125  
2nd Place: \$100  
3rd Place: \$75

Third Division –  
Graduate Student through Adult

1st Place: \$150  
2nd Place: \$125  
3rd Place: \$100

## Judging & Results

**National Judge:** Azizi Jasper



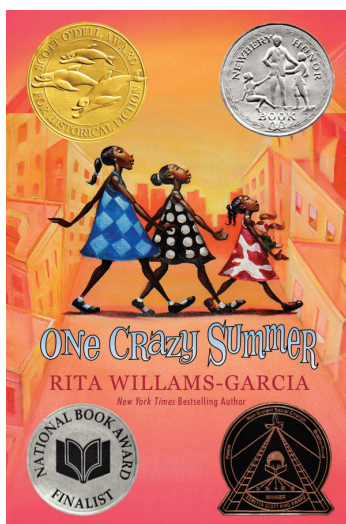
All winners are notified by May 1, 2018. We reserve the right to disqualify any entry not meeting the above guidelines or eligibility requirements.

To learn more, visit [www.grpl.org/dyer-ives](http://www.grpl.org/dyer-ives)

Sponsored by:



## The One Book, One City for Kids 2018 Selection is...



### **One Crazy Summer** by Rita Williams-Garcia.

One Book, One City for Kids is an annual reading program that encourages upper elementary students to read and discuss the same book. The program also helps to develop a lifelong love of reading among school-age readers, to inspire readers to bring story ideas and themes to life through discussion and creative reactions, and to build collaborative ties between public libraries, school libraries and area schools.

### **About the book *One Crazy Summer*:**

Eleven-year-old Dephine has it together. Even though her mother, Cecile, abandoned her and her younger sisters,

Vonetta and Fern, seven years ago. Even though her father and Big Ma will send them from Brooklyn to Oakland, California, to stay with Cecile for the summer. And even though Delphine will have to take care of her sisters, as usual, and learn the truth about the missing pieces of the past.

When the girls arrive in Oakland in the summer of 1968, Cecile is nothing like they imagined. She forbids them to enter her kitchen, never explains the strange visitors with Afros and black berets who knock on her door. Rather than spend time with them. Cecile sends the girls to a summer camp sponsored by a revolutionary group, the Black Panthers, where the girls get a radical

new education about the country, their family, and themselves during one truly crazy summer.

This moving, funny Newbery Honor novel won the Coretta Scott King Award, the Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction and was a National Book Award Finalist.

Copies of the book are available to check out at all Grand Rapids Public Library locations and there will be many events related to the book throughout the winter.

Visit [www.grpl.org/onebookforkids](http://www.grpl.org/onebookforkids) to learn more.

Sponsored by:



# Taste of Soul Sunday 2018

February 18, 2018 | 1:00 – 4:30 pm | Main Library

Join us as we celebrate African American history and culture at Taste of Soul Sunday. Sample African American art, music, literature, history, and food. This event is free and open to the public. Visit [www.grpl.org/tasteofsoul](http://www.grpl.org/tasteofsoul) for more details.

## LISTEN

**Karisa Wilson**

1:00 – 1:30 pm

**Zion Lion**

1:30 – 2:15 pm

**Noel Webley and the Jazzy Friends Quintet**

2:30 – 3:15 pm

**Julius Hight featuring Bedrock**

3:30 – 4:15 pm



## LEARN



**A Team of Her Own: Minnie Forbes & Negro League Baseball**

1:30 pm & 3:00 pm

From 1956 to 1958, Minnie Forbes was owner of the Detroit Stars, the only Michigan team in Negro League baseball. The league offered many Black and Latino athletes the chance to play professional baseball in the first half of the 20th century.

Co-sponsors: Greater Grand Rapids Women's History Council and the Grand Rapids Study Club

**The Spirit of South High School**

2:15 & 3:30 pm

**From Jackie Robinson to Kaepernick: A Brief History of Athlete Activism**

2:15 pm & 3:30 pm

## CREATE

**What Does Your Name Mean to You? Poetry Workshop**

1:30 pm & 3:00 pm

Bring a poem you have already written, a favorite poem by a poet of your choice, or create one at the workshop. The Diatribe, made up of local poets and musicians, will encourage positive self-expression by giving you ideas on how to shape your poem.

**Kids Crafts**

1:00 – 4:00 pm

## EAT

Enjoy free food samples provided by NoLo's Soul, Irie Kitchen, Big Ed's BBQ, and Mosby's Popcorn.

## Related Events

Check out these additional events beyond Taste of Soul Sunday:

**Speak Up GR: Individual Rights and Community Policing**

Tuesday, February 20  
7:00 pm | Main Library

**Black Family History Series: Explore Your Heritage**

Saturday, February 3, 10, 17, 24  
Main Library

**Saturday, February 3**

10:00 am | Why Genealogy: An Introduction to Researching Your African American Ancestry

1:30 pm | Uncovering Your African American Genealogical Treasure Trove Hiding in the Attic

**Saturday, February 10**

10:00 am | Even Gangsters Had to Register: WWI Draft Cards and Selected Service

1:30 pm | Freedmen's Bureau

**Saturday, February 17**

10:00 am | Schedules, Wills, and Probate

1:30 pm | The Census: How to Use It and Track Family Members

**Saturday, February 24**

10:00 am | The ABCs of DNA

1:30 pm | African Americans in Grand Rapids, Pre Civil War and Post Slavery

Co-sponsor: Western Michigan Genealogical Society



# Experience the Arts and More with Your Grand Rapids Public Library Card

Your library card is great for checking out books, movies, and music, but did you know it can do more? The Grand Rapids Public Library has partnered with area attractions to provide our patrons with the opportunity to use their library card to check out a membership to area museums, zoos and botanical gardens, theatre, music and dance performances, and sporting events.



With your Grand Rapids Public Library card, you can check out a pass for up to six people to visit the following organizations one time per year for free. The pass is available on a first-come, first-served basis and must be used within six days of being checked out. Participating organizations include:

- Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park
- Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum
- Grand Rapids Art Museum
- Grand Rapids Children's Museum
- Grand Rapids Public Museum
- John Ball Zoo
- Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts (UICA)

Occasionally, local performing arts venues and local theatre groups provide tickets for Grand Rapids Public Library card holders to check out. These tickets are available in pairs and the circulating membership restrictions apply to performing arts tickets as well.


- Circle Theatre
- Grand Rapids Ballet
- Grand Rapids Civic Theatre
- Grand Rapids Symphony
- Opera Grand Rapids

The Grand Rapids Griffins donated family 4-packs of tickets to most of their home games. They also offer Library Nights with the Grand Rapids Griffins. For every Wednesday home game during the Grand Rapids Griffins' regular season, present your Grand Rapids Public Library card at the Van Andel Arena box office on the night of the game or at The Zone anytime during the store's regular business hours to purchase either an Upper Level ticket for \$14 (regularly \$16 advance and \$19 day of game) or a Lower Level Faceoff ticket for \$18 (regularly \$20 in advance and \$23 day of game). Limit four tickets per card per person, subject to availability.

To learn more, visit [www.grpl.org/checkitout](http://www.grpl.org/checkitout)

## OLDER ADULT ACTIVITIES AT GARFIELD PARK GYM

These activities are suitable for ages 50+, however, everyone is welcome to join in. In addition to these classes, monthly community activities like card games, book club, and knitting are available. Stop in to pick up a monthly calendar of activities or to check out any of our classes. Find more information at [www.grcity.us/parks](http://www.grcity.us/parks) under Recreation, or by calling (616) 456-3696 option 1.

	CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	PRICE
	<b>STRETCH AND FLEX</b> Try your first class for FREE! This drop-in class includes chair exercises, hand weights and standing low-impact aerobics. Monday classes free during the month of January.	MONDAYS WEDNESDAYS	9:00 - 9:55 AM 9:30 - 10:25 AM	\$3/class
	<b>ACTIVE ADULTS FITNESS</b> Exercise class that includes a warm-up, standing cardio, and strength training. Classes are drop-in and ongoing.	TUESDAYS	11:30 AM - 12:25 PM	\$3/class
	<b>LUNCH TIME BASKETBALL</b> Free open gym time for drop-in basketball. Stop in and shoot some hoops or bring in a group and get some games started. Please bring dry shoes to play.	MON & WED	11:30 AM - 1:00 PM	Free
	<b>SACRED FLOW FITNESS</b> This is a yoga style fitness class for everyone. The class includes slightly modified yoga positions done to Classical music and Gregorian chants. Classes are drop-in and on-going. Bring a yoga mat if you have one!	THURSDAYS	9:00 - 9:55 AM	\$3/class
	<b>EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS CLASS</b> Learn what to do in a crisis situation, how to handle emergencies and more. Includes personal preparedness and fire safety.	TUESDAYS FEBRUARY 13 & 20	10:00 - 10:30 AM	Free

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# WE ARE GR

## College Prep



Financial Aid - A5



Choosing a College - A6



Michigan College and University Directory - A7

Grand Rapids Public School News - Section A

Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation Activities - Section B

• Adult Fitness, Youth Soccer, and more!

City of Grand Rapids and Public Library News - Section B

January 2018 | Vol. 17 | Issue 3 | Section A

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

## Community Update on Bond Implementation Your Bond Dollars at Work for Kids

By Teresa Weatherall Neal, M.Ed., Superintendent of Schools



When I asked the residents of Grand Rapids to support our bond in 2015, I pledged to secure, connect, and transform our district. Two years after your overwhelmingly supportive vote, progress is being made.

### SECURE

Student and staff safety is our greatest concern.

Although our schools have had secure entrances and requirements for all visitors to sign in through the office, many of our buildings were not built for the complex security concerns of the 21st Century. Led by Chief of Staff and Executive Director of Public Safety/School Security, Mr. Larry Johnson, building entrances and offices are being redesigned to meet today's standards.

### CONNECT

Our Management Information Services team has been

distributing and installing new technology throughout the district. More than 4,200 Chromebooks and iPads have been distributed to students with a goal to have all remaining devices distributed before the end of this school year. This will help support the district's new science curriculum, Discovery Ed Techbook. Instructional staff devices have also been upgraded as more than 1,400 teachers, staff, and principals have been equipped with new Microsoft Surface Pro 4 laptops. 800 classrooms throughout the district have been upgraded with new state-of-the-art, interactive, wireless projection capabilities. The remaining classrooms are on the schedule for the same upgrade.

### TRANSFORM

*Ridgemoor Park Montessori*  
Status: COMPLETED

GRPS has a proud tradition of Montessori education as one of the first and only districts in the country to offer preschool through 12th grade Montessori education. Due to the success of the North Park and Grand Rapids Montessori programs, we renovated the former Ridgemoor

Park Early Childhood Center to serve as a new Montessori option on the southeast side of town. The building has been transformed and reopened this fall with preschool through 6th grade students.

*Grand Rapids Public Museum School*  
Status: IN PROGRESS

The first class of high schoolers will start in the fall of 2018 at the newly renovated Museum High School. The landmark 54 Jefferson, which served as the original public museum, will become the ultimate place-based learning environment. The dark and dusty building is being rejuvenated with a \$10 million investment to become a first-of-its-kind high school, where students will have access to the museum archives located on-site to enhance their curriculum.

*Buchanan Elementary School*  
Status: IN PROGRESS

If you drive by Buchanan Elementary, you will see the concrete walls rising behind the current building. With a

■ SEE TRANSFORM / A2

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## A New Vision for An Historic School College Tours Part of Ottawa Revamping, Renovation

By Charles Honey, Courtesy of School News Network

Since its founding in the 1920s in the neighborhood bearing its name, Ottawa Hills High School has educated plenty of distinguished students. They include former U.S. District Attorney Patrick Miles Jr., renowned gospel singer Marvin Sapp, and famous athletes such as boxing champion Floyd Mayweather Jr. and former Detroit Tiger Mickey Stanley.

Ottawa has also seen great changes, including a move in the early 1970s to its current site on Rosewood Avenue SE as well as enrollment declines.

Now more big changes are happening at Ottawa, from a major revamping of its academic offerings and an early college program to a new principal, Kaushik Sarkar.

All are part of a planned \$17 million renovation and ambitious initiative for the school, announced last spring by Superintendent Teresa Weatherall Neal in her State of the Schools speech.

"This is where I say, we do not turn this district around until we've flipped Ottawa Hills High School,"

Neal said then.

Sarkar was chosen to lead that effort. He succeeds Rodney Lewis, now GRPS Director of Secondary Education.

Coming from Kalamazoo Public Schools, where he was a leading math teacher and adviser to the prestigious Kappa League for African-American and other students, Sarkar brings

■ SEE NEW VISION / A3



Kaushik Sarkar, Ottawa Hills High School's new principal, says he intends to have "a strong impact on the school"

## Transform

Continued from A1

complete cost of \$13 million, Buchanan Elementary's renovation and addition is scheduled to be completed in August of 2018.

*City High Middle School*  
Status: IN PROGRESS

The \$17 million renovation will update the HVAC system and install LED lighting throughout the building. Thanks to bids coming in under budget, all classrooms and science labs will be updated. Classrooms will receive new window treatments, refinished hardwood floors, and classroom furniture. Science labs will receive the same, as well as new casework and counters, fume hoods, and Smart Boards.

*Southwest Community Campus*  
Status: IN PROGRESS

A partnership between Dwelling Place, Ferris State University, Grandville Avenue Arts & Humanities, GRPS, Habitat Kent, Hispanic Center of Western Michigan, Mercy Health Saint Mary's, Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Association, and the residents of the neighborhood, Plaza Roosevelt will be a transformation to the Roosevelt Park neighborhood. The area northeast of Franklin and Grandville will include affordable housing, plaza, outdoor art, increased access to healthcare, increased after-school programs, and the new Southwest Community Campus High School. The \$20 million project is anticipated to be completed in the fall of 2020.

*Air Conditioning*  
Status: BEGINNING SUMMER 2018

After the heat wave last fall, I requested the bond schedule be reevaluated to move some air conditioning projects to 2018. Thanks to the hard work of our Facilities and Operations Department air conditioning will be installed at Brookside Elementary, Campus Elementary, CA Frost Environmental Science Academy (Elementary), East Leonard Elementary, North Park Montessori, and Shawmut Hills School this summer.

For a complete listing of current and future projects, please visit [grps.org](http://grps.org) or [wearegr.com](http://wearegr.com).

# BE A

# MAKER.

## What do you want to be?

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## BE A BULLDOG.

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## Grand Rapids Public Schools

### WE ARE GR

JANUARY 2018

Grand Rapids  
Board of Education  
2018

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Equal Opportunity Institution: Grand Rapids Public Schools, as an Equal Opportunity Institution, complies with federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and harassment, including Title IV and Title VII (with amendments) of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the Educational Amendment of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Veterans Readjustment Act of 1974 as amended 38 USC 20-12 and the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990. The District will not discriminate against any person based on race, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and expression, height, weight, color, religion, national origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, disability or veteran status. The District's Civil Rights Compliance Officer is Larry Johnson. Mr. Larry Johnson may be contacted at 1331 Franklin SE, P.O. Box 117, Grand Rapids, MI 49501-0117 or (616) 819-2100. The District's Title IX Coordinator is Kurt Johnson. Mr. Kurt Johnson may be contacted at 1331 Franklin SE, P.O. Box 117, Grand Rapids, MI 49501-0117 or (616) 819-2010.

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](http://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](mailto:savagem@grps.org) or at (616) 819-2028.

### WE ARE GR

JANUARY 2018

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## New Vision

Continued from A1



On a visit to Michigan State University this fall, Ottawa sophomores and football players Elijah Marshall (left) and Reginal Haines (far right) met MSU players Tyriq Thompson and Messiah DeWeaver, both members of the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity (courtesy photo)

leadership and relationship skills to the role, says Assistant Superintendent Ron Gorman.

“Kaushik is incredibly skilled at recognizing quality teaching and learning,” Gorman says. “This is a tremendous benefit to our school district, as our core business is classroom instruction.”

### Career Academies Planned

With a little under 500 students, in a school built for 2,000, Ottawa is now the smallest of the district’s four main high schools – although it grew by nearly 50 students this fall after previous years of decline.

Another encouraging trend: The school’s four-year graduation rates have improved, rising to 68 percent in 2015-16 from 55 percent the previous year. And plans are underway to reconfigure Ottawa into half a dozen specialized programs, possibly including technology, homeland security, manufacturing, cosmetology, hospitality and tourism, arts and entertainment, and communications and marketing.

Ottawa also started the district’s first early college program this fall, in which students spend an extra year in high school while earning an associate degree from Grand Rapids Community College. Openings for 50 sophomores are available this year.

Neal says the new mix of programs aims to provide many pathways to success

for students, whether on the college-career track or in trades and the arts.

“I’ve committed to Ottawa,” she says. “This is my stake in the ground.”

Sarkar says he wants to help students find their passion at Ottawa, and inspire them to aim high and far once they graduate.

“I just want them to be in a frame of mind that, hey, there’s more than just Grand Rapids,” he says.

His mission is well-suited to Ottawa, where nearly 80 percent of students are African American and more than 10 percent Latino. He has long been active in exposing students to higher education, particularly students of color.

### Realizing A Long-held Dream

For Sarkar, the post fulfills a dream he’s had since he was a junior at Kalamazoo Central High School, inspired by a charismatic teacher/adviser, Mark Hill. “I said ‘Before age 30, I want to be an assistant principal or principal,’” Sarkar says. He is 29.

At Kalamazoo Central, Hill took him and other African-American students on a tour of historically black colleges and universities in the South. There he saw black students taking classes – and black

professors teaching them -- far beyond the mostly white confines of West Michigan schools.

The experience proved to be a turning point in his education and his career.

“It was those trips that showed me, ‘OK, even though I do have solid academic grades, maybe college IS the place for me,’” Sarkar says in his office at Ottawa. “The motivation is not there until you can visualize yourself in those seats.”

Sarkar went on to earn a bachelor’s degree in education, and later a master’s in educational leadership, at Michigan State University. He taught high school math for three years in Atlanta Public Schools, then for a year at an Atlanta school in the national KIPP (Knowledge is Power Program) network of nonprofit public charter schools. Following a brief stint as a KIPP assistant principal in Chicago, he came back home to Kalamazoo Central, where he taught math the past two years.

There he started a new chapter of the National Kappa League affiliated with his college fraternity, Kappa Alpha Psi -- the same youth leadership development and college-prep program that Sarkar’s mentor led years before. Sarkar took them on

tours of historically black colleges, giving them the same exposure to high-achieving African Americans he’d had in high school.

At one of those colleges, Sarkar heard an admissions official say something that’s stuck with him ever since: “You cannot be what you cannot see.”

### Time to Hit Refresh

He aims to apply that motto at Ottawa, where he hopes to start another chapter of the Kappa League. He’s already taken a group of 17 students to



Principal Kaushik Sarkar chats with ninth-graders Antanasia Carter, left, and Rosanae Guy

MSU, where they visited dorms and the basketball court at Breslin Center. As they left campus, Sarkar recalls, one student said, “This is the place for me.”

He hopes other students are similarly motivated by visiting other schools, including a tour of historically black colleges next spring. Fundraising is underway to take two busloads of 30 to 40 students each to Florida, North and South Carolina.

Along with the new career-track and early college programs, Sarkar hopes the trips will contribute to a “refreshing” of Ottawa Hills High School – with a big emphasis on school culture and spirit.

“Academics is one piece,” he says, “but just that joy of going to school for the experience -- almost like a mini-college experience in high school. That freedom, that liberty, that comes from increased responsibility.”



Seventeen Ottawa students toured the MSU campus this fall on a trip led by Sarkar, far right

*‘I just want them to be in a frame of mind that, hey, there’s more than just Grand Rapids.’*

*-- Kaushik Sarkar, principal, Ottawa Hills High School*

# KEEP MOVING FORWARD

## City Building Goals

- » Reestablish the Grand River as the draw to the city & region.
- » Develop a true Downtown neighborhood home to a diverse population.
- » Implement a 21st century mobility strategy.
- » Establish an equity-driven growth model in Downtown Grand Rapids.
- » Reinvest in public space, culture & inclusive programming.
- » Retain & attract families, talent & job providers with high quality public schools.
- » Grow more & better jobs & ensure continued vitality of the local economy.

## Fiscal Year 2018 Agenda for Action

- Cut the ribbon on the renovated Veteran's Park.
- Design bike and pedestrian trail connecting Belknap Hill and Monroe North.
- File for State of Michigan permits to restore the rapids in the Grand River.
- Deploy bus shelters to enhance experience for people who ride the Downtown Area Shuttle (DASH).
- Plant 200 trees.
- Add 500 Downtown parking spaces for employees and visitors.
- Evaluate economic impact of improving and expanding the riverfront trail.
- Develop riverfront trail identity and design guidelines.
- Complete bike share business plan.
- Renovate old public museum into new Grand Rapids Public Museum School.
- Complete audit of Downtown's accessibility for people with differing abilities.
- Improve safety for people walking and bicycling on the river trail across Michigan Street.
- Explore opportunities to beautify public plaza at Van Andel Arena.
- Establish program to expand commuting options for employees, employees and residents.
- Support delivery of 350+ new housing units toward residential critical mass in Downtown.
- Recruit car share service provider.
- Support establishment of a fund for affordable housing.
- Pilot protected bicycle lane.

*GR Forward, unanimously approved by the Grand Rapids City Commission in December 2015, is a community plan and investment strategy to transform the Grand River into a distinct asset and support the next generation of growth in Downtown Grand Rapids.*

## GRPS Calendar

January 31	Theme School & Centers of Innovation Application Deadline
February 1-16	NWEA/MAP K-8 testing
February 3	Red Hawk Showcase (Union)
February 7	COUNT DAY
February 15	GRCC Dual Enrollment Application Due (Summer Semester)
March 1	FAFSA Deadline (Michigan colleges and universities)
March 24	District Job Fair
March 29	End of Third Marking Period; No LOOP programming
March 30	NO SCHOOL
April 1	Grand Rapids Community Foundation Scholarship Applications Due
April 2-6	NO SCHOOL, Spring Break
April 9	Beginning of Fourth Marking Period
April 9-30	M-STEP testing
April 10-11	PSAT
April 10	SAT
April 11	WorkKeys
April 12	PreK to Kindergarten Student/Parent Transition Event (GRPS elementary buildings)
April 15	GRCC Dual Enrollment Application Deadline (Fall Semester)
April 16-30	NWEA/MAP K-11 testing
April 28	GR Elite Challenge (Houseman Field)
April 28	Collaborative Youth Fair
May 1-25	M-STEP testing
May 1-11	NWEA/MAP K-11 testing
May 4	NO SCHOOL, Professional Development
May 11	Preschool, Here I Come (GRPS preschool classrooms)
May 14	Union High School Graduation, 5:00pm, Calvin College University Prep Academy Graduation, 7:30pm, Calvin College
May 15	Ottawa Hills High School Graduation, 5:00pm, Calvin College Innovation Central High School Graduation, 7:30pm, Calvin College
May 16	Center-Based Special Education Recognition Ceremony, 5:00pm, Cornerstone University Grand Rapids Learning Center/KEC Beltline Graduation, 7:30pm, Cornerstone University
May 18	City High Middle School Graduation, 7:30pm, Fountain Street Church
May 25	Half Day for Students (am); No LOOP programming
May 28	DISTRICT CLOSED, Holiday
June 2	Last day of LOOP programming
June 6-8	Half Day for Students; Secondary Exams (am)
June 8	LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

## Understanding College Financial Aid

### *Deadline for FAFSA Application for Financial Aid is March 1*

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

#### What is financial aid?

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

- Federal loans
  - o There are two types of federal loans: subsidized and unsubsidized. Both types of loans must be repaid with interest. With a subsidized loan, the government pays the interest while your child is in school. With an unsubsidized loan, the interest is being added to the loan balance while your child is in school.
  - o Some federal loans do not require a credit check or cosigner.
- Private loans
  - o Private loans are usually offered by banks and other financial institutions. Private loans usually have a higher interest rate than federal loans, but not always, so it is important to research any loans you are offered and compare the terms.
- Grants
  - o Grants may come from the government, a college/university, or private organizations. Grants are a gift and do not need to be paid back. Students usually receive grants based on their financial need.
- Scholarships
  - o Scholarships may also come from the government, a college/university, or private organizations. Scholarships, like grants, do not require repayment. Scholarships are different from grants because they usually are awarded based on a characteristic of the student. Examples include academics, athletics, an association you belong to, religious affiliation, or the degree you will pursue in college. Scholarships often have rules that recipients need to follow, such as a GPA requirement.
- Work study
  - o Some students are offered an opportunity to work part-time on campus to help pay for their schooling.

#### How do I sign up to receive financial aid?

Applying for financial aid can seem like a daunting

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

If you need help filling out the FAFSA, you can access a step by step guide at [studentaid.gov/fafsa](http://studentaid.gov/fafsa) or connect with a customer service representative at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov).

#### How often do I need to apply?

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

#### What do I do after the FAFSA is completed?

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

You should also apply for scholarships. Search the web for legitimate scholarship research sites such as

[www.michigan.gov/mistudentaid](http://www.michigan.gov/mistudentaid) and [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com). Research scholarships available through you or your parents' employer, school networks, community organizations, and religious organizations. Locally, the GRCC Foundation (most applications due March 15) and the Grand Rapids Community Foundation (due April 1) are great places to apply for scholarships.

#### Helpful Websites

##### FEDERAL INFORMATION:

U.S. Department of Education - [www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov)

FAFSA - [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov)

Personal Identification Number (PIN) - [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov)

IRS (Tax Forms) - [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

Selective Service - [www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov)

##### STATE INFORMATION:

[www.michigan.gov/mistudentaid](http://www.michigan.gov/mistudentaid)

##### LOAN INFORMATION:

Direct Loan - [www.direct.ed.gov](http://www.direct.ed.gov)

<https://studentloans.gov>

##### SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION:

The GRCC Foundation - [www.grcc.edu/money](http://www.grcc.edu/money)

Other Scholarships - [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)

Other Scholarships - [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)

##### FINANCIAL LITERACY:

SALT At GRCC - 855-469-2724

[www.saltmoney.org/GRCC](http://www.saltmoney.org/GRCC)

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429 S Union Street NW, Sparta 49345



## Choosing a College

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

- **Public, Private, and For-Profit:** Public colleges receive funding from local and state governments. They typically offer lower tuition rates, especially to in-state residents. Private colleges are funded through tuition, fees, and donations. Some private schools offer competitive scholarships to make them more affordable. For-profit schools are businesses that offer degree programs. They typically offer degrees for specific careers. Students may graduate with higher debts than from other types of schools, and credits don't always transfer.
- **Four-Year vs Two-Year:** Four-year schools offer programs that lead to bachelor's degrees. Two-year programs lead to a certificate or associate's degree.
- **Liberal Arts:** Liberal arts schools offer a variety of courses in liberal arts, which includes literature, history, languages, mathematics, and life sciences. Most liberal arts schools are also four-year programs.
- **University:** A university is often larger than a college and typically offers more choices for majors and degrees. Most are made up of smaller colleges,

such as engineering, health sciences, education, or liberal arts.

- **Community College:** Community colleges are two-year programs that can provide a certificate or associate's degree. They also prepare students to transfer to a four-year school to finish their bachelor's degree, if they wish. Their credits typically transfer to four-year schools and they are known for their affordability.
- **Vocational or Technical:** Vocational and technical programs offer training in a specific industry or career, like medical records, dental hygiene, mechanics, or culinary arts. They typically offer certificates or associate degrees.

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

- Am I more interested in a two-year or four-year program?
- How close to home do I want to be?
- Would I be happier at a campus with a lot of students or in a smaller setting?
- Do I want to be around people like me or with a more diverse group?

- How important is cost?
- Do I know what major I want to pursue? If not, what types of classes do I want to take?
- What type of learning environment do I want?

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

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

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

*Information adapted from the College Board*



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APPLICATION DEADLINE IS APRIL 1, 2018.



### Choosing a College Checklist:

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

# Michigan Colleges & Universities

## Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities

Central Michigan University	989-774-4000	www.cmich.edu
Eastern Michigan University	734-487-1849	www.emich.edu
Ferris State University	231-591-2000	www.ferris.edu
Grand Valley State University	616-331-5000	www.gvsu.edu
Kendall College of Art & Design/Ferris	800-676-2787	www.kcad.edu
Lake Superior State University	906-632-6841	www.lssu.edu
Michigan State University	517-355-1855	www.msu.edu
Michigan Tech University	906-487-1885	www.mtu.edu
Northern Michigan University	906-227-1000	www.nmu.edu
Oakland University	248-370-2100	www.oakland.edu
Saginaw Valley State University	989-964-4000	www.svsu.edu
University of Michigan- Ann Arbor	734-764-1817	www.umich.edu
University of Michigan- Dearborn	313-593-5000	www.umd.umich.edu
University of Michigan- Flint	810-762-3300	www.umflint.edu
Wayne State University	313-577-2424	www.wayne.edu
Western Michigan University	269-387-1000	www.wmich.edu

## Public Community Colleges

Alpena Community College	989-356-9021	www.alpenacc.edu
Bay College	800-221-2001	www.baycollege.edu
Charles S. Mott Community College	810-762-0200	www.mcc.edu
Delta College	989-686-9000	www.delta.edu
Glen Oaks Community College	269-467-9945	www.glenoaks.edu
Gogebic Community College	906-932-4231	www.gogebic.edu
Grand Rapids Community College	616-234-4000	www.grcc.edu
Great Lakes Maritime Academy	231-995-1200	www.nmc.edu/maritime
Henry Ford Community College	800-585-4322	www.hfcc.edu
Jackson College	517-787-0800	www.jccmi.edu
Kalamazoo Valley Community College	269-488-4400	www.kvcc.edu
Kellogg Community College	269-965-3931	www.kellogg.edu
Kirtland Community College	989-275-5000	www.kirtland.edu
Lake Michigan College	269-927-1000	www.lakemichigancollege.edu
Lansing Community College	517-483-1957	www.lcc.edu
Macomb Community College	586-445-7999	www.macomb.edu
Mid-Michigan Community College	989-386-6622	www.midmich.edu
Monroe County Community College	734-242-7300	www.monroeccc.edu
Montcalm Community College	989-328-2111	www.montcalm.edu
Mott Community College	810-762-0200	www.mcc.edu
Muskegon Community College	231-773-9131	www.muskegoncc.edu
North Central Michigan College	888-298-6605	www.ncmich.edu
Northwestern Michigan College	231-995-1000	www.nmc.edu
Oakland Community College	248-341-2000	www.oaklandcc.edu
St. Clair Community College	810-984-3881	www.sc4.edu

## Public Community Colleges (continued)

Schoolcraft College	734-462-4400	www.schoolcraft.edu
Southwestern Michigan College	800-456-8675	www.swmich.edu
Washtenaw Community College	734-973-3300	www.wccnet.edu
Wayne County Community College	313-496-2600	www.wcccd.edu
West Shore Community College	231-843-5540	www.westshore.edu

## Non-Public Two-Year and Four-Year Colleges and Universities

Adrian College	800-877-2246	www.adrian.edu
Albion College	517-629-1000	www.albion.edu
Alma College	989-463-7111	www.alma.edu
Andrews University	800-253-2874	www.andrews.edu
Aquinas College	616-632-8900	www.aquinas.edu
Ave Maria College	239-280-2500	www.avemaria.edu
Baker College	Multiple Locations	www.baker.edu
Calvin College	616-526-6000	www.calvin.edu
Cleary University	800-686-1883	www.cleary.edu
College for Creative Studies	313-664-7400	www.collegeforcreativestudies.edu
Compass College of Cinematic Arts	616-988-1000	www.compass.edu
Concordia University	734-995-7300	www.cuaa.edu
Cornerstone University	616-949-5300	www.cornerstone.edu
Davenport University	800-686-1600	www.davenport.edu
Finlandia University	906-482-5300	www.finlandia.edu
Grace Bible College	616-538-2330	www.gbcol.edu
Great Lakes Christian College	800-937-4522	www.glcc.edu
Hillsdale College	517-437-7341	www.hillsdale.edu
Hope College	616-395-7850	www.hope.edu
Kalamazoo College	269-337-7000	www.kzoo.edu
Kettering University	810-762-9500	www.kettering.edu
Kuyper College	616-222-3000	www.kuyper.edu
Lawrence Technological University	248-204-3160	www.ltu.edu
Madonna University	734-432-5300	www.madonna.edu
Marygrove College	313-927-1200	www.marygrove.edu
New Tribes Bible Institute	800-555-6824	www.ntbi.org
Northwood University	800-622-9000	www.northwood.edu
Olivet College	800-456-7189	www.olivetcollege.edu
Rochester College	248-218-2000	www.rc.edu
Sacred Heart Major Seminary	313-883-8500	www.shms.edu
Siena Heights University	800-521-0009	www.sienaheights.edu
Spring Arbor University	866-834-2936	www.arbor.edu
University of Detroit Mercy	313-993-1245	www.udmercy.edu

## A Pipeline from K-12 to College - and Back Again GRPS-Ferris Agreement Aims to Train Future Teachers

By Jaye Beeler, Courtesy of School News Network



Innovation Central is the oldest continuously used high school in Michigan

Superintendent Teresa Weatherall Neal figured the solution to attracting and recruiting teachers begins with training future members of the profession in ninth grade.

“Remember playing school when you grew up and how much fun that was?” Neal asked. “We’re starting there, at the beginning -- with that kind of enthusiasm. We want that enthusiasm about teaching here, at this school.”

Partnering with Ferris State University’s School of Education, Neal launched the new Academy of Teaching and Learning at Innovation Central High School.

“We decided to grow our own teachers,” said Neal in signing the partnership agreement with Dr. Arrick Jackson, FSU School of Education and Human Services Dean. The pact is meant to create a talent pipeline from K-12 to higher education and back to GRPS. “We want to boost the careers in teaching because there is an alarming reduction in the numbers of students going into education.”

### Next Generation of Teachers

Innovation Central Principal Mark Frost is looking forward to recruiting the Academy’s first class. The application deadline is Jan. 31 for any eighth-grade resident in the city of Grand Rapids. The new theme school will accept 25 incoming ninth-graders in its

inaugural class when the 2018-19 school year starts in August.

Students enrolled in the Academy will have the opportunity to earn seven credits from Ferris by taking dual-enrollment education courses. The courses will be taught by a Ferris professor in conjunction with GRPS staff. Upon enrollment at Ferris after graduation, students will gain an additional three credits, for a total of 10 credits towards their bachelor’s degree.

With Neal’s challenge -- “just-who-do-we-want-to-teach-our-children?” -- foremost in his mind, Tony Baker, Treasurer of the GRPS Board of Education, helped design a triad approach to recruiting, training and retaining new teachers. He said the Academy is “in many ways a much bigger dream.”

“Imagine the barriers that keep students away from college in general,” said Baker, a Ferris professor of sociology and director for Community Engagement. “We imagine the barriers that keep them from becoming teachers. We need our students to become teachers of our students in the future.”

The Academy will provide an entire curriculum to high school students and offer “automatic acceptance to Ferris for all students that successfully complete the program,” he added.

The GRPS Teacher Cadets program mirrors Ferris’ approach to education by “making sure that our students have an opportunity to engage the workforce prior to graduation,” Jackson said. “We want them to understand what it is like to work in a classroom with a teacher mentor, and also to understand what it is like to work in the field of teaching.”

### Great Expectations

Frost welcomes the Academy to the historic

Central High building, which currently houses four academies: Business, Leadership and Entrepreneurship; Design and Construction; Modern Engineering; and Health Science and Technology.

“Career sampling at the college level is incredibly expensive, so we do career sampling here,” said Frost. He has helped transform the graduation rate at Innovation High to 91 percent last year: a double-digit gain in four years.

“Two summers ago, I read that when you focus your curriculum and electives on careers, then African-American and Hispanic students graduate at a 20 to 25 percent higher rate, and we’re proof of that,” Frost added. “So they see the relevance of the classes. So they’re not just taking classes to take classes -- they see the light at the end of the tunnel.

“We want students to find their passion. This is really a special place.”



Superintendent Teresa Weatherall Neal and Dr. Arrick Jackson, Dean of Ferris State University’s College of Education and Human Services, launch the new Academy of Teaching and Learning, as Innovation Central Principal Mark Frost, right, looks on



Innovation High School students Raquel Santos, Carmen Lopez, Elijah Mangate and Amaica Pellow chat with principal Mark Frost in the library.



### Growing their Own

**What:** Academy of Teaching and Learning

**Where:** Innovation Central High School

**Who:** Grand Rapids Public Schools and Ferris State University

**How:** Innovation Central students will be able to earn up to seven credits by taking dual-enrollment classes in Ferris’ teacher education program, plus three more upon enrollment at Ferris

**When:** Beginning in 2018-19 school year with up to 25 ninth-graders; application deadline is Jan. 31 for current eighth-graders. Applicants must complete a theme school application at [apply.grps.org](http://apply.grps.org).

*‘We decided to grow our own teachers. ... We want that enthusiasm about teaching here, at this school.’*

*-- Superintendent Teresa Weatherall Neal*





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# Dual Enrollment

GRPS high school students can earn free college credit!

**GRCC** | [grcc.edu/dualenrollment](http://grcc.edu/dualenrollment)



## Grand Rapids Student Advancement Foundation Supports Trip to See "Hamilton"

By Salina Bishop

Who will tell the intriguing story about one of America's Founding Fathers' Alexander Hamilton? 45 students from CA Frost and University Prep high schools will!

"Each one of my students took risks and took ownership of their American history assignments," shared Ms. Theis. "Hamilton's history, America's history, became my student's history!"

Recipients of a special grant from the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, a nonprofit organization that promotes K-12 American history education, CA Frost and University Prep high school choir students were welcomed to Chicago's Private Bank Theatre on November 15 to

enjoy "Hamilton – An American Musical."  
"While I was familiar with the musical Hamilton and the craze around it, I never



Connor, Torren and Robert – freshman students making their debut at Hamilton – An American Musical!

thought taking my students to see it would be possible!" said Ann Marie Theis, CA Frost High School Choir teacher.

With ticket prices reaching upwards

of \$1,000, this grant posed a great opportunity for Ms. Theis and her students to be part of an exclusive partnership. However, the Institute wasn't just giving away these highly coveted tickets. Instead, students were challenged to work a Hamilton inspired curriculum project into their everyday learning as a requirement, prior to attending.

The project? Students were asked to pick a point and a player in the Founding Era (the rebellion, revolution and founding of the American nation) of history, take that cue and create a song, a scene, or a monologue from that character's point of view. Using primary sources and historical context to draw from, students rose to the challenge and discovered the sordid past of not only American history, but America's first Secretary of Treasury, Alexander Hamilton!

Responsible for executing the coordination, collection and submission of her student's finished projects to the Institute for review, Ms. Theis uncovered some awesome talent.

"It wasn't until a group of three freshman boys – Robert, Connor, and Torren - came to me asking how they could express anger, frustration, and raw emotion in their writing that I realized this project and this experience could be life changing for my students," explained Ms. Theis.

"Not only were my students talking passionately about music and history, they were critically thinking and making connections within their creative writing!"

The highly anticipated day arrived. For more than two months, students worked on their curriculum assignments, and earned their

way to the Hamilton spotlight! For Robert, Connor, and Torren, this adventure would surely be a memorable one. Selected as one of the top 10 submissions, these three unsuspecting boys would perform their original rap scene about the Constitutional Convention for the cast and the other 2,497 students in attendance.

Through hip-hop, rap, and poetic rhythm rhymes, 45 GRPS students embraced America's story in a truly unique way. Navigating the oftentimes treacherous waters of the Founding Era, Hamilton creatively reintroduced students - using a diverse cast - to key characters and events that shaped American history – our history. Meeting students where they are meant making more of an impact on their learning!

Thanks to the generosity of donors, the Grand Rapids Student Advancement Foundation was able to provide the needed transportation to their destination. If you would like more information about how you can get involved and strengthen the educational experiences of all GRPS students, visit us at [www.grsaf.org](http://www.grsaf.org).



Students gather in Millennium Park Chicago for a Hamilton group photo!

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## Stop, Look and Here's Some Love 50 Years of Getting Kids From Here to There

By Tom Rademacher, photos by Dianne Carroll Burdick, Courtesy of School News Network



Crossing Guard Kattie Eason says she wouldn't leave her crossing guard post, even after 50 years, "because I keep gettin' more kids that I love"

When Kattie Eason first stepped onto a Wealthy Street SE corner to serve as a school crossing guard at Henry Elementary School – now Martin Luther King Jr. Leadership Academy -- she was 21 years old.

Our president was Lyndon Baines Johnson. Gas cost 30-something cents a gallon. The minimum wage stood at \$1.40. A movie ticket went for \$1.50. Kurt Cobain was born. And France was still using the guillotine to execute people.

That was 50 years ago. And today, Kattie Eason, who turns 72 in March, still strolls from her home a few blocks to the school where she now is crossing the kids and grandkids -- and even a few great-grandkids -- of those she helped across the street back in 1967.

In that time, she has developed into so much more than a crossing guard, however, as a breathless Sheena Brown will attest: "She's the principal, the assistant principal, the grammy, the cafeteria lady, the substitute teacher; she's everything," says this MLK special education instructor.

Interjects a parent listening in on the testimonial: "We're talkin' about Ms. Beautiful right here," says Aquenda Doyle.

And from somewhere, from everywhere, you hear this: "Oh yes. ... Mmmm-hmmm. ... Uh-huh. ..."

Others at MLK may wield more power or command more money, but you'd be hard-pressed to find someone more widely embraced than this woman who for five decades has been calmly standing sentry on behalf of those she calls "my babies," in weather that fluctuates between well below freezing and far beyond torrid.

"I couldn't leave because I keep gettin' more kids that I love," says Kattie (pronounced Katy) Eason. "Then they graduate, and I fall in love with somebody else."

Like little Jaxon Scranton, for instance, who at age 6

is a kindergartener at MLK and greets Eason each weekday after being escorted from his home to the corner by father, Patrick, who works nights.

"If he doesn't see her out there from a block and a half away, he gets concerned," says Jaxon's dad. "Where is she?"

But it's not like Eason to miss. When she does, Earth's axis tilts a bit, and only re-aligns when she returns to the corner of Wealthy at Henry Avenue.

When Jaxon turned a year older this past November, Eason surprised him with a Crayola art set. Patrick was surprised. But not entirely shocked: "The other day, Jaxon was the last one to arrive at the corner," he says. "It was slippery, and he almost fell.

"So she walked him all the way to school."

Possibly arm in arm. Though you can't exactly say so. In recent years, it's become taboo to touch kids as a sign of affection. But 50 years of service gives you secret privileges.

### Reared on Work Ethic

Eason moved from the deep South to Grand Rapids as a tot, the daughter of a construction worker and a mother who worked in a convalescent home. She graduated from Central High School here and attended Central Michigan University before marrying at 17 and having three boys and a girl.

While still living with her three sisters and one brother, their father rose each workday at 4 a.m. and expected everyone else in the family to do similarly. It's a habit that continues today, with Eason greeting the pre-dawn to sometimes take in a prayer service conducted by her brother, the Rev. Robert Dean -- a former GRPS board member and state representative who's served more than 30 years as pastor at New Life Church of God in Christ.

Then it's off to the street corner on foot -- Eason never learned to drive -- to be in place by 7:30 a.m., far ahead of the arrival of her first charge. She'll wave to beeping motorists in between heralding kids across an intersection that is marked by a school crossing sign but boasts no light.

Once, Eason had to toss a kid to the curb to prevent a tragedy, and she's had other close calls due mostly to drivers not paying attention. Read: mobile phones. Eason sighs. "They're just not paying attention."

"We feel safe and protected," says Sharkia

Caldwell, an eighth-grader. "And she's really nice," adds classmate Zaionna Love.

Sometimes, just the sound of Eason's voice can soothe.

"It's horrible," fifth-grader Charlisa Garner opined of early morning weather one day earlier this month, as she braved wind-driven snow that flooded her eyeglasses with flakes. But Eason coaxed a smile from the corners of her shivering lips before walking Charlisa and her younger brother John, 9, across the street.

### 'Energetic' and 'Giving'

Eason made her first dollar babysitting, then tried her hand at factory work before signing on as a paraprofessional with the Grand Rapids Public Schools, a job she performed at Henry-turned-MLK for some 32 years.

She's formally retired from that role, and earns a paycheck now only for her time as a crossing guard for MLK's students, which number nearly 400. She often enters the school each day even before assuming her post -- to brew the first pot of coffee, help set up breakfast fare -- and then sticks around between the first and last school bells to pitch in wherever there's need.

"Two words?" School social worker Glenda Hayden ponders the challenge. "I'd have to say 'energetic' and 'giving.'"

Adds school secretary Theresa Dudley: "I want to be just like her."

Eason shrugs off the compliments with a smile that creases a face her colleagues marvel at because it reflects the countenance of a woman decades younger. Her secret to a youthful appearance, she says, lies in three things: Exercise. Smiling. And "taking care of my skin," upon which "I never use soap." (Pssst: She's an Avon rep.)

When at the address on Prince Street SE that Eason shares with husband Marcus, the couple operates an adult foster care home, something they've done for 20 years, and what qualifies as Marcus' full-time job.

In Kattie's spare time, she giggles to admit playing computer games, especially "Hidden Objects" and "Word Search." And she has a compulsion for shoes and boots. Fact: "I own some that I haven't even worn. I just like the look of them." In all, she supposes she owns 100 pair, "maybe more."

Eason figures she'll continue on as a crossing guard as long as her health holds steady. "I don't think I'd be able to sit at home." She's very involved with not



Eason approaches traffic on Wealthy Street SE to help MLK students cross that busy thoroughfare

only her own church, but several others where she helps direct women's activities.

Outside of losing a childhood friend to a tragedy, and the deaths of an older sister, and a mother who died two years ago at age 102, Eason can't recall many bad days in her life: "My mother had polio and didn't really even have the use of one of her arms, but you wouldn't know it by her attitude. I didn't really realize it until she died, the legacy she left me."

Given a work ethic forged at the knee of both mother and father, Eason hasn't missed many schooldays. Most of her absences were tied to arranging medical appointments and such. When she suffered a spell with some sciatica issues, she was issued a cane. And just took it with her to her post.

Naturally, people are amazed Eason's been at it for as long as she has. "Fifty years she's been standing on that corner," says school health care aide Pauline McGregor. "Fifty years. And she not only crosses those kids, but acts like a mother to them. And it's been a generational thing,

Kids and then those kids' kids and so on. And people come up to her and it's like 'You're still here?'"

For Eason, it's not a job, but an opportunity to serve. No child will ever cross her corner twice without a warm coat and boots and mittens and a cap — expenses for which she is not reimbursed. If it's raining, she'll give some kid the umbrella she'd been using, and goes without.

Her work is also a place to live out her faith. "God is at the center of my life," she says. "You put him first, and everything else falls into place." Of all her young charges, she is non-judgmental, emphasizing that "There are no bad kids. A lot of them just go through things and get frustrated, and you have to understand that."

It's not surprising when she gave this answer to someone wondering what she wanted to receive this Christmas: "I'd like for the world to be a better place."

Her eyes twinkle. "Can't say 'shoes.'"

## Giving Voice to Children GR Opera Oversees Student Production

By Linda Odette, Courtesy of School News Network

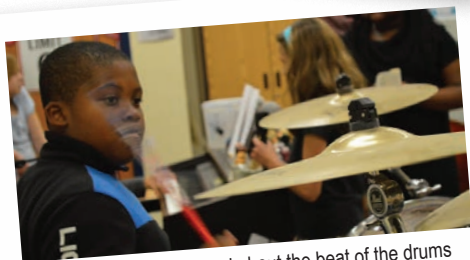
Most elementary students have never attended an opera. Coit Creative Arts Academy fourth- and fifth-grade students have created, produced and performed one.

The project, done in partnership with Opera Grand Rapids Children's Opera, was led by the Creative Connections arts education organization. Twelve students from Coit, a Grand Rapids Public School, went through intensive workshops the week before the Nov. 17 show. They had a lot of fun, but the opera the students wrote, "Feelings Gallery," dealt with serious emotions like being confused, hurt and depressed. It also found positive hope in people and brought out the students' talents.

"It's fun to create," said vocalist Brooklynne Larocque. "It's fun to hang out with other people and create things."



Before each rehearsal, the group focused through calming exercises like those being done by (from left) Javan Lacey, Jack Helak and Amado Huner



Langston Ezell learned about the beat of the drums

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## Contact Us

Ottawa Hills Athletics  
616.819.2879

Union Athletics – 616.819.3168  
Middle School Athletics  
616.819.3243

For schedules, highlights, and  
parent resources check out our  
website at  
[www.grps.org/athletics](http://www.grps.org/athletics)

## Athletic Physicals

Athletic physicals are a MANDATORY REQUIREMENT for all student athletes in 6th – 12th grades. No student will be allowed to participate on an athletic team or practice without a current athletic physical. A current athletic physical must be dated on or after April 15th of the previous school year and is valid for the duration of one (1) school year. Student athletes who want to play sports in the 2017-18 school year need to have a physical dated on or after April 15th, 2017 to participate.

## Calling All Volunteers

Any parents, family, or community member interested in volunteering your time to support GRPS student athletes, please contact the volunteer office at 819-2131 or go to [www.grps.org/volunteer](http://www.grps.org/volunteer) for the volunteer application. This spring, we will gladly use assistance with elementary track and mileage club. Also, we are always looking for elementary coaches for cross country, soccer, and basketball. Please be aware you will need to fill out our volunteer application and be cleared and approved before assisting any programs.

## Sportsmanship Corner

As a spectator of interscholastic athletics, please consider the time and effort that each of these young participants have put forth to represent his/her school. 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 ideals by taking personal responsibility for keeping this contest at a high level of fair, clean, and wholesome competition.

Remember: SPORTSMANSHIP COUNTS!

## Special Events

**Middle School Boys' Basketball Championship**  
January 27th at Innovation Central

**Boys' Basketball Union vs Ottawa Hills**  
January 30th at Ottawa Hills

**Red Hawk Showcase**  
February 3rd at Union

**Ottawa Hills Boys' Swim Invite**  
February 3rd at Ottawa Hills

**Ottawa Hills Red Out Game**  
February 16th at Ottawa Hills

**Ottawa Hills Girls' Basketball Districts**  
February 26th at East Kentwood, 6pm

**Union Girls' Basketball Districts**  
February 26th at Mona Shores, 6pm

**Union Boys' Basketball Districts**  
March 5th at Kenowa Hills, 7pm

**Ottawa Hills Boys' Basketball Districts**  
March 7th at Caledonia, 7pm

**Middle School Wrestling Tournament**  
March 10th at Ottawa Hills

**Middle School Wrestling Championship**  
March 15th at Innovation Central

**Middle School Girls' Basketball Championship**  
March 24th at Innovation Central

**GRPS Elite Challenge**  
April 28th at Houseman Field

For the most current and up-to-date spring schedules, visit us online at [www.grps.org/athletics](http://www.grps.org/athletics).



Come enjoy great games while supporting our student athletes as they finish out the winter sports season and high schools prepare for their post-season tournaments.

### Winter Sports

#### High Schools

Boys' Basketball  
Girls' Basketball  
Bowling  
Competitive Cheer  
Boys' Swimming & Diving  
Wrestling

#### Middle School

Girls' Basketball  
Bowling  
Wrestling

#### Elementary

Basketball (3rd -5th Grades)

### Why Play Sports?

Students who participate in extra-curricular after school sports tend to have overall better school performance in the areas of academic achievement, attendance, behavior, involvement, and school spirit. They also tend to go on to college, graduate from college, have higher paying jobs, assume leadership roles, and enjoy a better quality of life. Start now on improving your future. Get involved in school sports!

Don't forget that the spring sport season is right around the corner!

### Spring Sports

#### High School Start Dates

Baseball - March 12th  
Softball - March 12th  
Boys' Golf - March 12th  
Girls' Soccer - March 12th  
Girls' Tennis - March 12th  
Track & Field - March 12th

#### Middle School Start Dates

Baseball – March 26th  
Softball – March 26th  
Girls' Soccer – March 26th  
Track and Field – March 26th

#### Elementary

Track (2nd -5th Grades) – April 2018

## Popping Into Preschool: Fun Math Activities for the Home

Giving preschoolers a solid foundation in early math skills is critical to their future academic success. Here are some fun and simple activities that support your child's math readiness - with simple materials you already have at home.

- Encourage your child to count food items at snack and meal times. (5 carrots, 10 Cheerios). Create simple numbered placemats and have your child place the corresponding number of food items onto each numeral.
  - Cook together! Allow your child to help you follow a recipe by measuring ingredients. Explore measuring cups and spoons of different sizes.
  - Have your child use a shoe as a measurement tool. Ask, "Can you show me four things in the room that are shorter than your shoe? Longer than your shoe?"
  - Introduce your child to simple bar graphs by sorting and graphing items. Try M&Ms or Skittles! Then ask your child simple addition and subtraction questions as they enjoy their yummy treat!
  - Invite your child to sort their toys and other materials in the home by attribute (color, size, shape, texture, etc.) After an initial sort, challenge them to now sort the materials again using a different attribute.
  - Save empty cereal, macaroni, rice, and other food boxes. Have your child experiment to find out which boxes fit inside other boxes. Use measurement vocabulary, such as longer, shorter, wide, narrow, and taller.
  - Have your child help set the table and count out the plates, napkins, and silverware building one-to-one correspondence.
  - Take out a few cans of food of different sizes from the cupboard.
- Talk about the shape of the whole can (cylinders) and the shape of the top and bottom of the cans (circles). Together with your child, trace each can on a piece of paper. Shuffle the papers and help your child match the cans to the traced circles.
  - With your child, number an egg carton from 1 to 12. Ask your child to place the correct number of buttons in each spot to match the number on the carton.
  - Invite your child to make painted prints with 3-dimensional objects exploring the 2-dimensional shapes that make up these objects. Paint the bottom of a shoe box and press it onto paper to discover the rectangle below.
  - Offer toothpicks, pipe cleaners, straws, spaghetti noodles or popsicle sticks as materials children can use to make into shapes. Discuss the shapes they make. That's a triangle. How could you turn it into a square?
  - Encourage your child to create patterns with toys from around the house (red Lego, blue Lego, red Lego, blue Lego).
  - Play motion games using spatial directions – run behind the tree, climb under the table, jog next to the couch, etc.
  - Bring out the dice from your favorite family board game. Encourage your child to roll the dice, count the dots and then jump, skip, spin, etc. the corresponding number of times.

Did you know that Grand Rapids Public Schools offers free and tuition-based preschool options at 26 elementary schools? Learn more about our world-class preschool program by calling 616-819-2111.

## Feeling under the weather?

## Need a sports physical?

## Or just have some health questions?\*



Medical



Dental



Counseling

Don't be shy, we don't judge.  
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in high school once too.  
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**Innovation High School Health Center**  
**Ottawa Hills High School Health Center**  
**Union High School Health Center**

*\*What you say here, stays here.*

## Prevent what is preventable

# VACCINATE.



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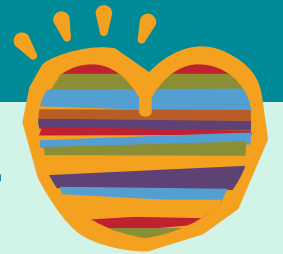
## Cherry Health

616.965.8308 [cherryhealth.org](http://cherryhealth.org)



# Healthy Living

begins in your community



[KentCountyHealthConnect.org](http://KentCountyHealthConnect.org)



# La vida sana comienza en tu comunidad



[KentCountyHealthConnect.org](http://KentCountyHealthConnect.org)