



WE ARE GR

In This Issue:

City of Grand Rapids and Public Library News - Section A

Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation Programs - Section A

Grand Rapids Public Schools News - Section B

Section A Contents:

City News - 1 - 7

Community Recreation - 8

GR Public Library - 9 - 12

July 2024 | Vol. 22 | Issue 1 | Section A

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The Power of Resident Engagement



Dear Community Member,

I am pleased to share with you the results of the recently completed National Community Survey (NCS), a bi-annual, statistically valid survey that offers valuable insights into the sentiments and opinions of our residents. Conducted from January 31 to March 21, the survey gathered feedback from a representative sample of 4,500 Grand Rapids residents, providing us with a detailed understanding of how our community perceives various aspects of city life. More detailed information about the NCS results is available on page 2 in this issue.

The 2024 NCS results reveal that Grand Rapids' overall economy continues to thrive, with many residents expressing satisfaction with the city's affordability, cultural opportunities, and inclusivity. In

particular, our cultural opportunities received overwhelmingly positive reviews, surpassing both national benchmarks and those from comparably sized cities. This feedback highlights the impact of our ongoing efforts to enhance the quality of life for all residents through thoughtful investments and community programs.

The survey identified 36 areas where ratings were significantly higher than those in 2022, reflecting the positive changes we've made. Notably, inclusivity in our community has seen marked improvements, with residents recognizing the city's growing openness and acceptance towards people from diverse backgrounds. This progress is a testament to our commitment to fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment for all.

However, the NCS also highlighted areas where we need to focus our efforts. While most residents continue to feel safe in Grand Rapids, there is room for improvement in crime prevention and law enforcement services. Additionally, street repair, public parking, and alternative transportation remain key areas for enhancement. We take these findings seriously and will work diligently to address these challenges, prioritizing initiatives that directly impact residents' daily lives.

The NCS is just one of the many ways we seek feedback from our community. We believe in the power of resident engagement and regularly use surveys, public forums, and community events to gather input and ensure that our policies and programs align with your needs and expectations. Your voice is crucial in shaping the future of Grand Rapids, and we are committed to maintaining an open and transparent dialogue with all residents.

I am also proud to announce that Grand Rapids has recently been recognized as one of the best-managed cities in the United States by WalletHub, a personal finance firm that annually ranks cities based on various metrics of operational efficiency (see related story in this newsletter). This recognition is a tribute



to the City's elected officials and staff who dedicate themselves to public service. We strive every day to live up to our core values of accountability, collaboration, customer service, equity, innovation, and sustainability in serving our community. We lead with these values, hold ourselves accountable, and work to meet our mission to elevate quality of life through excellent City services.

Engaging with the city government is one powerful way for residents to impact the quality of life in their neighborhoods. Throughout the year, there are numerous opportunities for you to contribute your voice and ensure that our City government remains responsive to the needs of our diverse community. The City Commission conducts two meetings a month; three of these per year are Commission Night Out (CNO) meetings – one in each ward. Information about the next CNO, which will take place on July 30 at the Gerald Ford Academic Center, is available on page 2 of this issue. Other boards and commissions meet throughout the year, each focusing on a particular subject matter area such as affordable housing, parks and recreation, mobility, economic development,

planning, etc. You can attend a meeting or apply to serve on one of these boards. There are abundant opportunities for you to voice your opinions and perspectives through these various channels.

However, engagement with the city government is just one avenue. Residents can also make a significant impact by joining local neighborhood associations, engaging with arts and culture, attending events, volunteering, and participating in nonprofits like service organizations and faith-based institutions.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement. Together, we can create a brighter future for Grand Rapids, one that reflects our shared values and aspirations. I am confident that, with your input and collaboration, we will continue to make meaningful progress and enhance the quality of life for everyone in our community.

Regards,

Mark Washington, City Manager

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Survey: Community Gives Grand Rapids Improved Ratings, Identifies Areas Needing Focus

Results of Grand Rapids' 2024 National Community Survey™ (The NCS™) show that the local economy remains strong with Grand Rapids' affordability ratings holding steady. The City's cultural opportunities received overwhelmingly positive reviews and many aspects of community inclusivity increased over the 2022 survey results. These are among 36 ratings that were statistically significantly higher than 2022 findings. Overall, 85 areas received similar ratings and six received lower ratings.

Polco's National Research Center (NRC) – a nationally recognized civic engagement firm – conducted the statistically-valid survey from January 31 to March 21. The final survey report provides the opinions of a representative sample of 4,500 residents of the City of Grand Rapids. Weighted survey results reflect an overall 95% confidence interval with a +/- 4% margin of error around any reported percentage based on a 16% response rate (600 completed surveys). Weighted results ensure that the demographic profile of respondents is representative of the demographic profile of adults in Grand Rapids.

"These results show that our efforts and investments in many areas are improving resident satisfaction, but there are still opportunities for improvement," City Manager Mark Washington said. "I want to thank the public for taking part in the survey in even greater numbers this year to rate our performance. This feedback will help us identify areas where they feel work still needs to get done. We will continue to do a deep dive and examine the results with the City Commission and community in the coming months to prioritize and focus our energy and resources appropriately."

NCS allows municipalities across America to assess resident opinions about their communities and local governments. It focuses on the "livability" of Grand Rapids by categorizing survey questions into 10 main "facets" that are most impactful to residents' quality of life. The NCS includes items within each of these ten facets to provide a full picture of how residents feel about their community.

"Survey data can monitor trends in resident opinion over time, measure government performance and ratings of public trust, and inform budgeting processes and strategic plans," NCS representative Joe Dell'Olio said. "Results also allow Grand Rapids to benchmark its community's specific characteristics and services against those same characteristics within other communities in our benchmark database."

Lowest-performing areas:

- Despite some small gains in Grand Rapids' mobility services, survey results



- Most aspects of community inclusivity increased over previous survey results.

indicate room for improvement in street repair, public parking, and alternative transportation.

- While most residents continue to feel safe in the community, crime prevention and law enforcement services remain an opportunity for additional focus.
- Evaluations of K-12 education scored below national averages but remained in line with both prior results and custom benchmarks.
- The availability of affordable quality childcare/preschool received slightly more favorable reviews this year but was still lower than in 2019.

Greatest increases since 2022

- Attracting people from diverse backgrounds (+16%)
- Affordable high-speed internet access (+15%)
- Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds (+13%)
- Street repair (+11%)
- Valuing/respecting residents from diverse backgrounds (+10%)

Greatest decreases since 2022

- Ease of travel by public transportation (-10%)
- Bus or transit services (-10%)
- Cost of living (-9%)
- Air quality (-7%)
- Ease of travel by bicycle (-7%)

City officials plan an abbreviated presentation of NCS results with a 5:30 p.m. workshop/engagement session with the community at the July 30 Commission Night Out (CNO) event at Gerald R. Ford Academic Center. See more details on the CNO event in the story to the right.

Complete results of Grand Rapids' 2024 National Community Survey are available on the City's website: grandrapidsmi.gov.



- The local economy is still strong, with several related items exceeding national averages.
- In contrast to nationwide downward trends in affordability markers, Grand Rapids' ratings held steady for affordable housing, affordable quality food, and residents' personal economic outlook.



- Grand Rapids' cultural opportunities received overwhelmingly positive reviews that surpassed both national benchmarks and those from comparably sized cities.



City Announces Second Neighbor Engagement and Commission Night Out Meeting of 2024

The City Commission invites you to its second City Commission Night Out (CNO) meeting of 2024. The Tuesday, July 30 event takes place at Gerald R. Ford Academic Center, 851 Madison Ave SE. This is the second of three CNO meetings this year and includes an engagement session and a business meeting with public hearings.

Doors open at 5 p.m. with dinner provided. An engagement period follows at 5:30 p.m. City departments will host information tables and offer giveaways beginning at 5:30 p.m. The evening's City Commission meeting begins at 7 p.m.

During the 5:30 p.m. session, City officials will detail results of the National Community Survey and will gain additional

feedback from you and fellow community members about what the findings mean to you. Those who participate in the engagement activity will be eligible for City of Grand Rapids pool passes and John Ball Zoo tickets. For those interested in interacting with additional departments, resource tables will be set up at the event. Staff from 311, Water, Public Works, Code Compliance, and Planning will be available for selected services. Grand Rapids Public Library staff will be present with age-friendly activities and in-person library card sign ups.

The 7 p.m. City Commission meeting will air on Comcast Channel 26 and be live streamed on the City of Grand Rapids Facebook page and YouTube channel.

GRVOTES

We've Got You Covered for the 2024 Elections

It's a busy year of elections, and your City Clerk wants to make sure you're prepared. Here are important dates and information for each election:

August 6:

Partisan Primary Election for federal, state and county offices – Democratic and Republican candidates are listed on the ballot. You need to select one or the other – can't cross between parties.

Non-Partisan Primary Election for Mayor, 1st Ward Commissioner, 3rd Ward Commissioner, Circuit Court Judge and Probate Court Judge.

There are also 2 Kent County Proposals on the ballot – Reay by Five Early Childhood Millage and Sports/Entertainment Facilities Proposal.

November 5: General Election

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

Proposal 2 of 2022 gives voters more options.

Early Voting - Voters may go to an early voting site to get a ballot, vote and place the ballot in the tabulator during a nine-day period between July 27 and August 4. Hours of operations are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. – Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday. You may also bring your absentee ballot to the EV site to tabulate that ballot. Sts Peter and Paul School (1430 Quarry NW) GRPS University (1400 Fuller NE) Ottawa Hills High School (2055 Rosewood SE)

Absentee Voting – Voters may choose to be placed on a Permanent Ballot List. A voter will apply once for all future elections. A voter may still choose to fill out an application for every election.

Some reminders before you head to the polls:

Absentee voting – All registered voters are eligible to receive an absentee ballot (AV) without a reason. To receive an AV, simply fill out an application before every election. The application is available at grandrapidsmi.gov/Services/Apply-for-an-Absentee-Ballot or in the second-floor City Clerk's Office at City Hall, 300 Monroe Ave. NW, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Validated parking is available in the Government Center Ramp off Monroe and Ottawa avenues.

Straight party voting (for November only) – You can vote the partisan section of the ballot by selecting the party only.

Voter registration – Residents who are 18 or older are automatically registered to vote when they make a transaction with the Secretary of State. You may register to vote by mail up to 15 days before an election and or in person at the City Clerk's Office within 14 days of the election up to Election Day. You need to prove residency in the city.

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

Get involved – Become an Election Worker

To run successful elections, we need help from the community. Election workers are on the frontline of democracy. You will be able to see firsthand how the election process works. Election workers report how rewarding it is to experience the voting process, especially when you see someone vote for the first time.

Please check out this website about becoming an election worker.

grandrapidsmi.gov/Residents/Elections/Election-Workers

Important Election Websites:
grandrapidsmi.gov/grvotes
michigan.gov/vote



BRIDGE TO OUR FUTURE

Community Master Plan



Join Us for the Formal Approval Process for Our New Community Master Plan

We've created a draft Community Master Plan (CMP) that will define the vision of how our city will grow and develop over the next 20 years and we need your feedback. Please consider participating in the formal CMP adoption process to shape the future of Grand Rapids.

We completed our fourth engagement round in June, which gathered input on the plan's draft recommendations, and have incorporated the feedback gathered into an updated draft that will now go through Planning Commission and City Commission on the path to adoption.

The CMP contains recommendations, based on public input and data analysis, for great neighborhoods, vital business districts, a strong economy, balanced mobility and desirable development character. Additionally, the recommendations incorporate the themes of equity, safety, vibrancy, culture and sustainability.

The Planning Commission and City

Commission will discuss the draft plan at several meetings over the summer and fall. Each meeting will offer residents the ability to make public comments about the plan. Additionally, the draft will enter a 63-day public comment period during which residents are welcome to submit written comments. Please watch our website at BridgeToOurFuture.com or join our mailing list via the website to be informed of the complete schedule and input opportunities.

The CMP is expected to be presented to the Grand Rapids City Commission for adoption later this year. Leading the initiative, among others, are planningNEXT, a nationally recognized municipal planning consultant; the Grand Rapids City Commission; the city's Planning Commission and Planning Department; and the Community Master Plan Steering Committee. Grand Rapids' last plan was developed in 2002 and has been updated since.

City Extends Enforcement Hours for Paid On-Street Parking Meters August 1

Mobile GR is announcing an extension of the enforcement hours for paid on-street parking meters. Starting Thursday, August 1, it will extend the hours of enforcement by one hour – changing from the current 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. schedule to a new 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. schedule. Mobile GR will still enforce all parking meters Monday through Friday,

unless otherwise noted by signage. The City Commission approved the new hours as part of its adoption of the FY25 budget.

The extension of enforcement hours for paid on-street parking meters is part of the City's ongoing efforts to improve parking availability and accessibility for residents and visitors. By extending the enforcement

hours until 7 p.m., the City aims to address the growing demand for parking during the evening hours, particularly in areas with high foot traffic.

The City encourages all residents and visitors to familiarize themselves with the new enforcement hours and parking rates to avoid any inconvenience or penalties. Hours of

enforcement will be posted to notify drivers of the updated enforcement schedule.

For more information and updates on parking regulations and rates, please visit the City of Grand Rapids' Mobile GR Department website: grandrapidsmi.gov/MobileGR or contact 311 Customer Service at 616-456-3000 or 311.

City Named One of America's Best Run Cities/Tops in Michigan

Grand Rapids improves score in new overall rankings

WalletHub's annual best and worst managed cities list for 2024 names the City of Grand Rapids municipal government as one of its Best Run Cities in America. Michigan's second largest city also captured the top honors for operational efficiency in the State of Michigan. Grand Rapids earned an overall ranking of 23 in the new ratings – up from 28 last year. It scored 33 in its “Quality of City Services” and 31 in “Total Budget per Capita” rankings.

WalletHub, a personal finance firm, annually puts together a list of Best- & Worst-Run Cities in America. The list compares 149 of the most populated cities across six key categories: 1) Financial Stability, 2) Education, 3) Health, 4) Safety, 5) Economy and 6) Infrastructure and Pollution. It evaluates those dimensions using 36 relevant metrics. Next, it calculates an overall “Quality of City Services” score for each city based on its weighted average across all the metrics. Finally, for each city, it divides the “Quality of City Services” score by the “Total Budget per Capita” (dollar amount) to construct a “Score per Dollar Spent” index — displayed as “Overall Rank” in the sample.

City Manager Mark Washington said the recognition is a tribute to the City's elected officials and staff who dedicate themselves to public service.

“This news is assuring as we strive every day to live up to our core values of

accountability, collaboration, customer service, equity, innovation, and sustainability in serving our community,” he said. “We lead with these values, hold ourselves accountable and work to meet our mission to elevate quality of life through excellent City services.”

Cassandra Happe, WalletHub analyst said, “One way WalletHub measures the effectiveness of local leadership is by determining a city's operating efficiency. In other words, we can learn how well city officials manage and spend public funds by comparing the quality of the services residents receive against the city's total budget. Using that approach, we compared the operating efficiency of 149 of the largest U.S. cities to reveal which among them are managed best. The best-run cities in America use their budgets most effectively to provide high-quality financial security, education, health, safety and transportation to their residents. Many of the top cities also have a very low amount of outstanding government debt per capita, which can prevent financial troubles in the future.”

Washington invites you to learn more about your municipal government how it manages your tax dollars. The City offers a comprehensive budget library online at grandrapidsmi.gov and offers a Resident's Guide to the Fiscal Plan, Final Fiscal Plan, and Strategic Plan.



The City and Partners Work Toward Improving Residential Recycling

A boost of new technology will help local households step up their recycling programs, alongside a new multifamily recycling program giving access to hundreds of residents.

We've joined the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE), The Recycling Partnership, and Prairie Robotics in launching a six-month pilot project that uses high-tech cameras, global positioning systems and computers on city recycling trucks.

“Residents who want to recycle can have good intentions to recycle everything, but when contaminants (non-recyclable material) are added, sorting them out costs extra time and money,” said Nicole Rapacki, public works recycling coordinator at the City's Public Works Department. “Recycling can save taxpayers money by reducing the number of times residents pay to have their refuse cart tipped. It also reduces the amount of good recyclable material going to the Waste to Energy facility. Additionally, recycling supports jobs and improves the health of the environment. We know residents want to recycle and through this program, more Grand Rapids residents will be able to do so.”

The project is a modified version of The Recycling Partnership's “Feet on the Street” cart tagging recycle program – a community-wide initiative to improve the quality of

material in curbside recycling carts by providing residents personalized and real-time curbside recycling education and feedback. Traditionally, crews do this by individuals tagging carts on the street if contaminants, such as plastic bags, are in the recycling cart.

In this project, instead of a person reviewing contents and placing a tag on curbside recycling carts, Grand Rapids will utilize the technology provided by Prairie Robotics to retrofit the city's recycling collection trucks with camera technology, global positioning systems, and computers to scan material as it is mechanically dumped from each recycling cart into the truck. The technology recognizes unacceptable items, such as plastic bags, polystyrene foam, yard waste and trash. The truck flags such items in real-time, allowing the City to send customized feedback via a postcard or digital notification to individual households with information about how they can recycle properly.

Residents can learn more about proper recycling at grandrapidsmi.gov/Government/Programs-and-Initiatives/Feet-on-the-Street-2.0

GRPD, Community Partners Remind Residents About Youth Curfews

As summer kicks into high gear, we are encouraging young people and families to be aware of the City’s curfew. The curfew ordinance spells out the hours that young people can be out in public without an adult present.

The City of Grand Rapids Curfew Ordinance:

- Children under 12 need to be in by 10 p.m.
- Children under 15 need to be in by 11 p.m.
- Children under 17 need to be in by 12 a.m. (midnight)

The curfew ordinance does not apply when parents/guardians accompany a minor. Adults (21 and over) designated by a parent/guardian may also be with a child.

“While there are penalties outlined in the ordinance for both children and parents/guardians, we prefer education and voluntary compliance over enforcement,” said Chief Eric Winstrom. “This ordinance is designed to keep kids safe. That’s our goal as a police department and we are asking parents and guardians to do the same.”

Larry Johnson, Chief of Staff & Executive Director of Public Safety for Grand Rapids Public Schools, agrees. “Our parents and caretakers must stress to our youth that being



out after curfew can be a dangerous experience. We encourage the cooperation of our parents to embrace curfew rules because we love our kids, care about them and desperately want to keep them safe,” said Johnson. “Out of school time should not be a time when youth are not supervised. Our collective work to embrace curfew rules must include all our community

partners as we look for additional solutions to keep our youth safe and healthy over the summer and beyond.”

“As President and CEO of the Urban League of West Michigan, I wholeheartedly support the youth curfew laws in Grand Rapids,” said Eric Brown, who is also a member of the City’s Public Safety Committee.

“These regulations are crucial for protecting our young people from the potential exposure to crime and other hazardous situations. Our primary mission is to foster a safe and nurturing environment where our youth can thrive and envision a promising future. The curfew laws are intended to safeguard them during vulnerable hours and provide parents and guardians with a framework to ensure their children’s safety.

“These laws are merely one aspect of a comprehensive approach required to support our youth effectively. The Urban League of West Michigan remains dedicated to collaborating through our foundational pillars and the Cure Violence Initiative. We will work closely with community leaders, local authorities, community organizations, faith-based groups and families to offer holistic programs that encompass educational support, mentorship, employment, and recreational activities. These initiatives are essential in providing our youth with positive alternatives and meaningful opportunities.”

The full City ordinance can be found at library.municode.com/mi/grand_rapids/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIOLRE_CH156CU.

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OCC interns Ah'Nyah Dudley and Niyla Mosby checking attendance at GRow Further Fridays at Grand Rapids City Hall

OCC Interns GRowing This Summer and Beyond

Our Community's Children (OCC) is dedicated to improving the lives of young people to ensure they are learning, working, thriving, connecting and leading. The office values authentic youth voice and active participation in city projects with the Mayor's youth Council; promotes access and opportunities for youth through afterschool and leadership programs with the ELO Network; provides training and employment to youth in marginalized communities to enhance economic security through the GRow1000 Summer Youth Employment Program and the GRow1000 Academy; and coordinates a place-based response to increase post-secondary degree attainment among GRPS scholars, first-generation and students of color with the To College, Through College Initiative and the T2C Studio.

This summer OCC has the distinct pleasure of hosting two college interns to support its programs and initiatives. Get to know about the work they are doing and their future aspirations.

What school do you attend?

Niyla: Howard University

Ah'Nyah: 2024 high school graduate; attending GRCC in the fall

What is your major?

Niyla: Political Science

Ah'Nyah: Nursing

Why did you seek an internship with Our Community's Children?

Niyla: I applied for the internship with OCC to become closer with the people from Grand Rapids. I hope to teach kids the value and importance of going to college and having the mindset to finish. I wish I had an opportunity and place like OCC before college to gain insights and assistance with things such as college-readiness, scholarships, and financial aid. I like telling the story about attending a Historical Black College & University (HBCU) and being a model to others who wish to attend a HBCU.

Ah'Nyah: A thorough understanding of professional manner is necessary to start any career. For this reason, working as an intern for Our Community's Children is a valuable experience. While there, I'm learning to exhibit professionalism in dress, speech, and use of time. As an OCC intern, I also get the opportunity to demonstrate compassion and be personable.

What are you learning about yourself as a result of this internship?

Niyla: I hope this opportunity will enhance my professional skills like verbal and written communication and time management. This opportunity will push me and maximize these skills for future use -- eliminating my comfort zone and putting me into new

spaces.

Ah'Nyah: I am discovering that I favor the customer service tasks. It surprises me how much I enjoy answering people's questions about the GRow1000 program and connecting with employers. The goal of GRow1000 is to build a sense of community and a resource for networking since working can be intimidating. It is a great feeling when you are in a position to explain program concepts and alleviate the GRowers' stress. Introductions to the workforce through internships and youth employment can ease this type of anxiety.

Why are internships and youth employment programs critical to youth/young adult development?

Niyla: Internships are critical because of the experience and connections they bring to youth. It is said that "25% of workers

found out about job listings through their professional network" (St. John's University, 2023). Youth employment and internships equip youth with areas for personal and professional growth necessary to benefit individuals in their future endeavors.

Ah'Nyah: The transition from youth to adulthood comes with many intimidating adjustments. Entering the workforce is also one of the most recognized and important transitions.

What are your future career goals?

Niyla: Public policy work or lawyer

Ah'Nyah: Registered Nurse

For more information about Our Community's Children, please visit ourcommunitychildren.com or email Shannon L. Harris, OCC Executive Director, at sharris@grcity.us.

Emergency Management Offers Summer Safety Tips

Oh, sweet summertime! The season for sunshine, adventures and making unforgettable memories. But as the temperatures rise and the storm clouds gather, it's also a season that calls for a little extra caution. From sizzling heatwaves to sudden thunderstorms, and the thrill of summer road trips, knowing how to stay safe can make all the difference.

The Office of Emergency Management wants you to have a safe season, therefore we will dive into some essential tips to help you along the way. Whether you're lounging by the pool, exploring the great outdoors, or hitting the open road, these tips will ensure your summer is not just fun, but safe and worry-free!

Beat the Heat

Hydration is key: When temperatures rise, your body can lose water quickly. Drink plenty of water throughout the day, even if you don't feel thirsty.

Dress Smart: Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing to help reflect the sun's rays. Don't forget to protect your face and eyes with sunglasses and a hat!

Find Cool Spots: Spend time in air-conditioned places like libraries, museums or community centers. If you don't have air conditioning at home, create a cool environment by closing blinds during the hottest parts of the day. Did you know that 40% of unwanted heat buildup in a home is through windows?

Storm Safety

Be Informed: Summer storms can be sudden and fierce, so it's essential to have multiple ways to be notified. Sign up for

the Grand Rapids Emergency Alert System at grandrapidsmi.gov/emergencyalerts and receive notifications of local weather watches and warnings. If you hear an outdoor warning siren during inclement weather, seek shelter immediately!

Prepare a Plan: Create a family emergency plan that includes a safe meeting place and emergency contacts. Practice your plan so everyone knows what to do when a storm hits.

Build an Emergency Kit: Keep essential items like flashlights, batteries, non-perishable food, water and a first aid kit in a designated spot. Make sure everyone in the household knows where it is.

Outdoor Safety: If you're caught outside, seek shelter at once. Avoid tall objects like trees and poles and stay away from water.

Travel Preparedness

Pre-Trip Planning: Before hitting the road, check your vehicle. Ensure tires are properly inflated, the battery is in good condition, and all fluids topped. Pack an emergency kit with items like a first aid kit, water, snacks, a flashlight and blankets.

Weather Awareness: Always check the forecast for your route. Plan your trip around severe weather and be prepared to adjust your plans if necessary.

Enjoy your summer to the fullest by taking a few simple steps of preparation—it can go a long way! You can follow the City of Grand Rapids Office of Emergency Management on Facebook, Instagram and X (Twitter) for more preparedness tips and information

Meet the 61st District Court's Two Newest Judges

The 61st District Court warmly welcomes Judge Kellen A. Dotson and Judge Brian O. Neill as its newest members to the bench. Judge Dotson, with a commendable background in legal education and public defense, and Judge Neill, known for his expertise and judicial acumen, bring a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to justice to their new roles.

Judge Kellen A. Dotson, celebrated for his investiture on September 26, previously served as an attorney in the Kent County Office of the Public Defender, an adjunct professor at Western Michigan University

Thomas M Cooley Law School, a trial skills trainer for the Michigan Indigent Defense Trial Skills Training Program, and a mediator with the Kent County Friend of the Court. His dedication to justice was further highlighted by his role as managing attorney with the Hennepin County Public Defender's Office in Minneapolis. Judge Dotson's investiture was a proud moment, marked by the presence of his family, Cooley Law School faculty and graduates, and fellow judges, underlining the strong community support for his appointment.

Judge Brian O. Neill, appointed

to the 61st District Court by Governor Gretchen Whitmer in July 2023, brings extensive legal expertise from his tenure as an Assistant Attorney General in Michigan. His background includes significant work in state and federal appeals, federal habeas petitions, and gaming issues, alongside serving as legal counsel and director for the Bureau of State Lottery. Neill holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan Dearborn and a Juris Doctor from Ohio Northern University College of Law. His comprehensive experience in both advisory and administrative roles in legal

contexts positions him as a valuable addition to the court.

The 61st District Court looks forward to the contributions of Judge Dotson and Judge Neill. Their appointments are a testament to their professional achievements and their dedication to serving the community with fairness and integrity. The court and the community it serve are indeed fortunate to have judges of such caliber joining its ranks.

MAKE YOUR HOME FIRE-SAFE!



1.

Install smoke detectors on every floor and in bedrooms. Replace batteries at least once a year, and test monthly.



2.

Stay in the kitchen while you're cooking on the stove or broiling, and in the house if you're baking.



3.

Keep anything flammable at least 3 feet from space heaters. Turn off space heaters when you leave or go to sleep.



4.

Ask smokers to go outside and provide deep, fireproof cigarette receptacles. Never smoke in bed!



5.

Never use extension cords for appliances. Don't use damaged, cracked, or frayed cords.



6.

Keep matches and lighters up high, out of the reach of children. Use child safety locks on cabinets.



7.

Keep candles at least a foot from anything flammable. Blow out candles before leaving the room or going to sleep.



8.

Close the door before you doze. Shutting the bedroom door helps protect occupants against both the flames and toxic smoke.



9.

Have a fire extinguisher and know how to use it. Don't try to use it on large fires - just get out and call 911!



10.

Get out and stay out. Once out of the burning house, never go back in. Once outside, go to your meeting place.





CITY OF
GRAND
RAPIDS

Parks and
Recreation



Register online
grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr



Register by phone
616.456.3696, option #1



Register in person
245 State St SE

ADULT FITNESS

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2024

SESSION DATES

September 9 - November 3 (8 weeks)

SESSION COST

\$44/residents, \$54/nonresidents

REGISTRATION OPENS

August 5 at 8:00 am

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MINDFUL MUSICAL
MOVEMENT
WERQ
ZUMBA

Full class details will be available online by August 2 at grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr

YOUTH FALL SOCCER

Register online: grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr

AGE GROUP	DATES	LOCATIONS
4-5 AGE GROUP Meet only on Saturdays for 45 minutes. Week one will include time to meet your child's team and practice. Week two will include a practice followed by a scrimmage. Weeks three through six will consist of game play. <i>\$38/residents, \$48/nonresidents.</i>	SAT, SEP 7 - OCT 12	ABERDEEN OR MACKAY-JAYCEES PARK
7 & UNDER AGE GROUP Practice one evening a week on Tuesday or Thursday, with games on Saturdays. <i>\$48/residents, \$58/nonresidents.</i>	PRACTICES TUE, AUG 27 - OCT 8 OR THU, AUG 29 - OCT 10	LINCOLN OR MLK PARK ABERDEEN OR MACKAY-JAYCEES PARK
	GAMES SAT, SEP 7 - OCT 12	ABERDEEN OR MACKAY-JAYCEES PARK
9 & UNDER AGE GROUP Practice one evening a week on Tuesday or Thursday, with games on Saturdays. <i>\$48/residents, \$58/nonresidents.</i>	PRACTICES TUE, AUG 27 - OCT 8 OR THU, AUG 29 - OCT 10	LINCOLN OR MLK PARK ABERDEEN OR MACKAY-JAYCEES PARK
	GAMES SAT, SEP 7 - OCT 12	ABERDEEN OR MACKAY-JAYCEES PARK
12 & UNDER AGE GROUP <i>Practice one evening a week on Thursday, with games on Saturdays. \$48/residents, \$58/nonresidents.</i>	PRACTICES THU, AUG 27 - OCT 8 GAMES SAT, SEP 7 - OCT 12	MACKAY-JAYCEES PARK
16 & UNDER AGE GROUP Meet only on Saturdays for games. <i>\$38/residents, \$48/nonresidents.</i>	GAMES SAT, SEP 7 - OCT 12	MACKAY-JAYCEES PARK

Registration and Season Information:

- Registration is open
- Registration deadline is August 9
- Practices begin Aug 27 & 29
- Games begin September 7
- Season ends on October 12
- Registrations received before deadline are prioritized.

ENRICHMENT

Register online: grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr
Registration for Sep/Oct opens Aug 5.

PROGRAM	DATES	TIME(S)	LOCATION
BEGINNER PICKLEBALL LESSONS (AGES 18+) Learn the basic rules, skills, and strategies needed to play the sport of pickleball!! \$26/residents, \$36/non for 4-class session.	TUE & THU, SEPT 17-26 TUE & THU, OCT 8-17 TUE & THU, NOV 12-21	2:45 - 4:00 PM	GARFIELD PARK COMMUNITY GYM
TAE KWON DO (AGES 7 - ADULT) Learn the basics of the Korean martial art form of Tae Kwon Do. Participants will develop confidence, increase flexibility, concentration, balance, and learn how to defend themselves. \$45/residents, \$55/non for 8-class session, \$35/residents, \$45/non for 6-class session.	TUE, SEPT 10 - OCT 29 TUE, NOV 12 - DEC 17	6:00 - 7:30 PM <small>Green belts and higher will meet until 8:00 PM</small>	GARFIELD PARK COMMUNITY GYM



Main Library
111 Library St NE
616.988.5400

Madison Square
1201 Madison Ave SE
616.988.5411

Ottawa Hills
1150 Giddings Ave SE
616.988.5412

Seymour
2350 Eastern Ave SE
616.988.5413

Van Belkum
1563 Plainfield Ave NE
616.988.5410

West Leonard
1017 Leonard St NW
616.988.5416

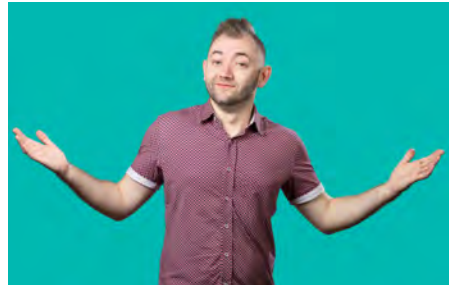
West Side
713 Bridge St NW
616.988.5414

Yankee Clipper
2025 Leonard St NE
616.988.5415

grpl.org

Free Events at the Library

Kids & Teens



Comedy Magic with Cameron Zvara

Cameron's magic show is filled with mind-blowing magic, comedy, juggling, music, and tons of audience participation. For ages 6 – 13.

Thursday, July 25, 3:00 – 3:45 pm
West Leonard Branch – 1017 Leonard St NW

Improv Comedy Workshop for Teens

Thursday, July 25, 1:00 – 3:00 pm
Grand Rapids Civic Theatre –
30 Division Ave N
Registration required: www.grpl.org/register

Do you like to tell jokes? Join teaching artists from the Grand Rapids Civic Theatre for an improv workshop that will teach you how to think on your feet, read the room, and collaborate with those around you to make others laugh! For ages 11 – 18.



Mad Science Mayhem

Thursday, August 1, 5:30 – 7:00 pm
West Side Branch – 713 Bridge St NW

Join us for an evening of fun, kid-friendly science experiments.

What happens when you mix baking soda and vinegar in a sealed bag? How can you build a rocket launcher out of a pop bottle and a pool noodle? Find out the answers to these questions and more.

Special thanks to the Grand Rapids Public Library Foundation – Meijer Fund and Edsko & Claire Hekman Family Fund, Friends of the Library, and Michigan Arts and Culture Council.

All Ages



Comic Geek Out

Saturday, July 27, 1:00 – 5:00 pm
Yankee Clipper Branch – 2025 Leonard St NE

Discover your inner hero at the library's annual comic event. Celebrate the comic books you love and geek out about your favorite fandom. Join us for hands-on activities, snacks, free books, a comic workshop, and other fun events designed for all ages.

Attendees can take home a free 2024 Comic Geek Out poster designed by Cody Coppennoll and enjoy free snacks and refreshments while supplies last. Events take place both indoors and outside. All activities will be moved indoors in case of inclement weather.

Partners: Vault of Midnight, MI Geek Scene

Sponsors: Special thanks to the Grand Rapids Public Library Foundation.

Summer Reading Celebrations

Tuesday, August 13, 6:30 – 8:00 pm
Mulick Park – 1632 Sylvan Ave SE, 49506

Celebrate summer with the Grand Rapids Public Library, ReadGR, and WZZM-13 On Your Side.

Join us for stories, free book giveaways, snacks, craft activities, lawn games, and special guests. Sign up for GRPL's Summer Reading Challenge during this free event series designed for all ages.

Adults

Introduction to Hip Hop Dancing

Thursday, July 25, 6:00 – 7:30 pm
Main Library – 111 Library St NE
Registration required: www.grpl.org/register

Learn an array of hip-hop dance moves before attempting an entire dance. One of the most popular and influential styles of dance, hip-hop combines a variety of movements such as popping and locking. Deavondre Jones of DanceSpire will lead the workshop, which is suited for all skill levels. This workshop is designed for adults, but all ages are welcome.

Sci-Fi Book Club

Wednesday, August 7, 7:00 – 8:00 pm
Main Library – 111 Library St NE

Join other science-fiction readers for a book club led by GRPL staff. Participate in a discussion about each book with members of the community.

August's book selection is *The Long Way to a Small, Angry Planet* by Becky Chambers.

Popular Pages Book Club

Join us for our monthly book club! Enjoy popular fiction and nonfiction titles selected by GRPL librarians and participate in a discussion about each book with members of the community and library staff. Meet new friends, explore real and imagined worlds, and discover new perspectives.

Saturday, August 10, 12:00 – 1:00 pm
Main Library – 111 Library St NE

August's book selection is *This Is How They Tell Me the World Ends* by Nicole Perlroth

Monday, August 19, 6:00 – 7:00 pm
Yankee Clipper Branch – 2025 Leonard St NE
August's book selection is *Big Friendship* by Aminatou Sow and Ann Friedman

Introduction to Smartphone Photography

Wednesday, August 21, 7:00 – 8:30 pm
Main Library – 111 Library St NE
Registration required: www.grpl.org/register

In this workshop led by the Grand Rapids Community Media Center, learn the basic concepts and practices of photography and how they can be applied when shooting with a smartphone or digital camera. This class will cover basic editing and demonstrate tools you can use to improve your photos. Attendees should bring their own Apple or Android smartphones or tablets.

Special thanks to the Grand Rapids Public Library Foundation and the Vander Veen Center for the Book Fund for their support of these programs.

Read S'more This Summer

Join the Summer Reading Challenge! Discover new hobbies, interests, and skills through our fun and educational reading challenge designed for all ages. Participation is free and does not require a library card. Learn more at www.grpl.org/summerreading.

Sign up

Sign up online or in-person at any GRPL location to receive your Summer Reading Challenge booklet. Follow the challenges included in your summer-themed passport and track your progress by marking pages as you go.

Earn mini prizes for meeting reading milestones and, once you've completed all of the challenges in your passport, drop by any GRPL location to get your special badge and pick up your grand prize!

Sponsors



Meijer Fund
Edsko & Claire Hekman Family Fund
Vander Veen Center for the Book Fund
Friends of the Library
Michigan Arts and Culture Council
Office of Special Events Sponsorship
Toys for Tots Literacy Program
TEGNA Foundation/
WZZM 13 On Your Side

SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

MAY 28 – SEPTEMBER 7, 2024

JOIN THE CHALLENGE

Free Summer Storytimes

Outdoor Storytime

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

Mondays, July 22, August 19
10:30 am | Lincoln Park
231 Marion Ave NW

Monday, August 12
10:30 am | Mulick Park
1632 Sylvan Ave SE

Family Storytime

Parents and caregivers are invited to bring their children ages 0-5 years to this storytime featuring great books, songs, fingerplays, and hands-on fun. Classes end with an art activity and playtime designed to help your child's brain grow.

Mondays, July 22, 29
6:30 pm | West Leonard Branch
1017 Leonard NW

Tuesdays, July 23, 30
10:30 am | West Side Branch
713 Bridge St NW

Storytime on the Lawn

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

Wednesdays, July 24, 31
10:30 am | Seymour Branch
2350 Eastern Ave SE

Thursdays, July 25, August 1
10:30 am | Yankee Clipper Branch
2025 Leonard St NE

Bilingual Family Time

Join us for an evening bilingual storytime filled with fun stories, movement, and musical activities. This 30-minute English and Spanish storytime is followed by a hands-on activity and playtime.

Thursdays, July 25, August 1
6:00 pm | Madison Square Branch
1201 Madison Ave SE

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GRAND
RAPIDS
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

Spotlight on Collections & Services



Open Lab | Walk-in Technology Help

Wednesdays, May 1 – August 28
11:00 am – 1:00 pm

Main Library – 111 Library St NE

Need help with your computer, laptop, or smartphone? Have questions about email, the Internet, or the library's digital resources? Stop by during our drop-in sessions, and library staff will help answer your basic technology questions.



On Exhibit: For the Love of the Game

May 23 – September 30, 2024

Main Library – 111 Library St NE

Exhibition open during Main Library building hours.

For the Love of the Game highlights Robinson Studio images from the Library's archives, with up-close views of Detroit Tigers, Grand Rapids Chicks, and Grand Rapids Black Sox baseball players in the 1940s and 1950s. Exhibit curator: Dr. William M. Anderson with support from GRPL staff.



Board Game Collection

Borrow board games with your Grand Rapids Public Library card!

Drop by our Main Library, West Leonard Branch, or Yankee Clipper Branch locations to explore our collection of popular games for all ages.

Questions? Email custserv@grpl.org or call 616.988.5400.

Visit the Mobile Library



We're visiting community centers, preschools, and apartment complexes throughout the city to share library services with our neighbors.

Drop by any stop on our route to sign up for a library card, check out books and movies, access free WiFi, and more. Find more information about our scheduled visits and Mobile Library route by visiting www.grpl.org/mobile-library this summer.

Creston Plaza Apartments

Mondays, July 22, August 5, 12:00 – 1:00 pm
1080 Creston Plaza NE, 49503

Campau Commons Apartments

Tuesdays, July 23, August 6, 12:15 – 1:00 pm
821 Division Ave S, 49503

Hope Community

Tuesdays, July 23, August 6, 1:30 – 2:15 pm
1024 Ionia Ave SW, 49507

Boston Square

Wednesdays, July 24, August 7, 1:00 – 2:00 pm
1551 Kalamazoo Ave SE, 49507

Harrison Park Apartments

Mondays, July 29, August 12, 1:00 – 2:00 pm
1400 Alpine Ave NW, 49504

Walnut Grove Apartments

Tuesdays, July 30, August 13, 1:00 – 2:00 pm
875 Sheffield St SW, 49503

Early Learning Center

Tuesdays, July 30, August 13, 2:30 – 3:30 pm
641 Vries St SW, 49503

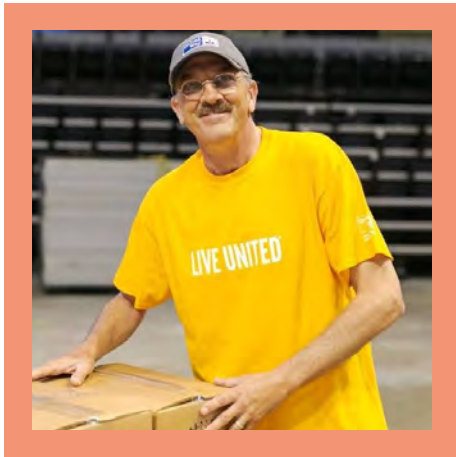
Eastern Lofts Apartments

Wednesdays, July 31, August 14,
12:15 – 1:00 pm
623 Eastern Ave SE, 49503

Steepleview Apartments

Wednesdays, July 31, August 14,
1:30 – 2:15 pm
501 Eastern Ave SE, 49503

Small Business Resource Center News



This interview is an excerpt from GRPL's quarterly Small Business Resource Center eNews. Sign up for the newsletter by visiting www.grpl.org/sbrc

Interview: Dan TenHoopen, AFL-CIO Labor Liaison for the Heart of West Michigan United Way

By Steven Assarian, Business and Career Librarian

Steven Assarian: There's been quite a lot of ink spilled about unions and union organizing in the last few years. What's your experience with labor unions?

Dan TenHoopen, AFL-CIO Labor Liaison for the Heart of West Michigan United Way: I started my career in restaurants. I'd just left a restaurant job and I was walking down the street. Saw a help wanted sign and put in an application. It was a union job at Harlo Corporation.

As a kid, I remember my dad always talking about the battles between him, his union (the UAW), and Kelvinator. Both he and my grandfather were in unions. It was dinner table conversation at all times, especially around contracts. I've been on picket lines with them, all that stuff through the 70s, multiple strikes, stoppages here and there. I never really understood the inner workings of unions, but I was familiar with them.

So when I got that job and my 30 day probationary was up, I signed my dues authorization card. I thought, you know, this is pretty cool. Signing that card was the best, the smartest thing I've ever done in my entire life. I think at the 60 day mark I became an actual union member. That's how I became a member of IBEW Local 275. I still am, to this day.

Steven: IBEW, which is the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

Dan: Right. At Harlo, I helped to negotiate three or four union contracts. I was a steward there for 20 years as well.

Steven: One thing I think a lot of people don't understand is the lingo of unions and union workplaces. With that in mind: what exactly is a union contract? What is a steward?

Dan: A union contract is a work contract between the unionized workers and the employer. Typically, a contract will have specific start and end dates. When you get close to your end date, you do internal work: meetings, fliers, polling your membership as to what they want to see in the next contract. You're preparing to bargain collectively, union and management, negotiating what the next contract will look like.

So as you start negotiations, you need to make sure your membership is on the same page, make sure that you know and understand what people are really concerned with. You try to find common ground on what you see in language, wages, benefits, safety, health, all the different ways you can change working conditions for the better.

The steward is the person that guards the contract after it's hammered out. It's probably the most important part of the whole process of being in a union. They don't get much accolades, but it's the ground floor grassroots work of being in a union. And if you don't have a good one, it can make things difficult.

Steven: Okay, so now you're at the Heart of West Michigan United Way. What does your job look like now?

Dan: Now, I'm the AFL-CIO Labor Liaison for the Heart of West Michigan United Way. It's different work. More mental than physical, but still exhausting, which was surprising. I thought it would be a lot easier. It's just a different kind of difficulty.

I work to raise money and organize volunteers within the scope of many different unions inside of our portfolio of campaigns. I see people that continue to need help, and that's difficult. You don't get a lot of attaboys, but the work itself is very rewarding. I know that every day I come into work and I'm making a difference.

We just did a volunteer effort for Operation United, which is for veterans services, where we're trying to make sure that veterans get their lawns taken care of and their houses cleaned up. With our Stuff the Bus School Supply Drive, we help make sure kids have the school supplies they need to succeed.

You might've seen the Letter Carriers Stamp Out Hunger food drive. If you look at all the national sponsors, you got United Way, AFL-CIO, National Association of Letter Carriers, etc. I think we had 11 different drop off zones and seven different post offices and buildings, collecting food for the hungry. We did a lot of work on that as well, organizing volunteers and getting the food where it was needed.

Steven: I do want to backtrack a little bit. So you're a liaison with the AFL-CIO, right? What is the AFL-CIO?

Dan: The AFL-CIO is a group of different unions, both the national and the local level, that come together to work on different things that have to do with labor issues. There's kind of a three legged stool approach. There's a political program, contracts and negotiations, along with the leg of community service, giving back to your community.

There's around 60 national unions that are affiliated directly with the AFL-CIO. We have about 34, 35 unions that are affiliated at the local level. So what you have is the structure as national AFL-CIO, the state AFL-CIO, that takes care of the whole state of Michigan, and then local chapters of the AFL-CIO. Ours is the West Michigan Area Labor Council, which encompasses Kent County, Ionia, Muskegon, Ottawa, etc. We work on multitudes of different things, whether it be a contract, whether it be organizing, helping with some members, community service projects, you name it.

Steven: What are a few books you'd recommend for someone who's looking to understand the labor movement?

Dan: I love the biography of *Mother Jones*, *Mother Jones: The Most Dangerous Woman in America* by Elliot Gorn. One of my favorite books. And there's a book on the Grand Rapids labor history called *Strike!: How the Furniture Workers Strike of 1911 Changed Grand Rapids* by Jeff Kleiman. That's a great one.

Steven: Well, thanks very much for sitting for this interview Dan.

Dan: You're very welcome. Thanks for your interest.

Visit the Small Business Resource Center

Turning your questions into forward motion.

The Small Business Resource Center is located on the Lower Level of our Main Library and provides the timely and reliable information you need to start, manage, and grow your business or career.



Business Research Consultation

Call 616.988.5400 or contact the Business Librarian for a consultation. You can also request business research assistance.

Resume Review

Need help with your resume? Upload your resume and get feedback from the Business Librarian. This service is available to City of Grand Rapids patrons and residents of Kent County.

Nonprofit Resources

As a Funding Information Network member, we maintain a library of databases, directories, indexes, and guides to help you find your way through the funding maze.

The Small Business Resource Center is funded thanks to a generous grant from the Grand Rapids Public Library Foundation Titche Family Fund.



July 2024 | Section B Enrollment: 4 Athletics: 8 Early Childhood: 12

Reimagine GRPS Projects Underway

It is a busy summer of construction projects at Grand Rapids Public Schools as work to Reimagine GRPS kicks into high gear.

This is the first summer of construction projects funded by the \$305 million bond approved by voters in November 2023.

Teams are hard at work at Coit Creative Arts Academy to build a new playground as Coit welcomes additional scholars from East Leonard Elementary School. There are also upgrades happening at Coit to the heating and cooling systems, masonry restoration, and some doors will be replaced.

Sibley Elementary School is getting upgrades to the roof, floors, electrical system, and heating and cooling systems.

At Kent Hills Elementary School, the boiler is being replaced to ensure the heating system is

ready for winter.

There are also major parking lot projects underway at both Ridgemoor Park Montessori Academy and Shawmut Hills Academy.

Those projects will all be ready for scholars and staff when they return in August.

The Reimagine GRPS facility plan calls for historic investments across the city over the next decade. Upcoming projects include renovating Sigsbee School as the new home of Southeast Career Pathways, renovating Ken-O-Sha Elementary into a new environmental science academy, creating a new Pre-K through 12th grade Montessori campus at Riverside Middle, and building a new elementary school at the site of Aberdeen Academy.

You can learn more about all of the upcoming construction projects at grps.org/reimagine.



Playground at Coit Creative Arts Academy



Parking lot at Ridgemoor Park Montessori

REIMAGINE GRPS *with Us!* SUMMER 2024 SCHOOL UPGRADES

COIT CREATIVE ARTS ACADEMY

<p>NEW PLAYGROUND</p>	<p>HEATING & COOLING UPGRADES</p>	<p>LIMITED DOOR REPLACEMENT</p>	<p>MASONRY RESTORATION</p>
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KENT HILLS ELEMENTARY

HEATING UPGRADES

SIBLEY ELEMENTARY

<p>ROOF REPLACEMENT</p>	<p>FLOORING UPGRADES</p>	<p>HEATING & COOLING UPGRADES</p>	<p>ELECTRICAL UPGRADES</p>
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SHAWMUT HILLS ELEMENTARY

NEW PARKING LOT

RIDGEMOOR PARK MONTESSORI

NEW PARKING LOT



Aberdeen Scholars Lead Effort to Designate State Insect

Michigan has a state flower, state tree, state bird, even a state soil -- but there's no official state insect. Scholars at Aberdeen Academy are leading the movement to change that

Michigan has a state flower, state tree, state bird, even a state soil -- but there's no official state insect. Scholars at Aberdeen Academy are leading the movement to change that.

Emma Witkovsky's fifth-grade class at Aberdeen Academy researched potential options for an official state insect this school year. They settled on stoneflies.

A stonefly is critical to Michigan's waterways. It plays a key role in the food chain and is also a natural indicator of clean water because it is intolerant to water pollution.

Their research caught the attention of Michigan State Rep. Rachel Hood. After visiting with scholars, she introduced House Bill No. 5563 to designate the stonefly as the official state insect.

Scholars presented an update on their efforts to the Board of Education on Monday.

"We worked hard to write a five-paragraph essay that told what a stonefly is, including its life cycle, its importance to the waters of Michigan, as well as its role in many food chains, and its impact on Michigan's economy through fly fishing," said Mike Krivoy, a fifth-grade scholar at Aberdeen Academy.

"Once our essays reached Lansing, Rep. Hood wanted to meet our class," said Mason Malosh, a fifth-grade scholar at Aberdeen Academy. So we prepared a presentation for her where we taught her all about the stonefly."

"Rep. Hood taught us how a bill becomes a law and told us that a lot of people were excited for our hard work and that she loved Michigan waters and hoped every kid in Michigan could learn about the beautiful water surrounding us," said JaMilah White-Lester, a fifth-grade scholar at



Aberdeen Academy.

As part of their research, scholars went outside the classroom to collect data.

"We visited Honey Creek at Seidman Park in Ada to count the number of macro-invertebrates, multiply them by their sensitivity rating, take the sum of our county times the sensitivity and then divide by the total abundance," said Georgia Marshall, a fifth-grade scholar at Aberdeen Academy. "I know it sounds like a lot of math, but it was pretty easy."



"Aberdeen scholars rocked this," said Witkovsky. "They worked incredibly hard and surpassed any and all expectations anyone had for them. They also overcame fears of insects, and some learned how to enjoy the outdoors on a whole new level."

House Bill No. 5563 has been referred to the Natural Resources, Environment, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Committee. If it passes out of committee, it will head to the House of Representatives for a vote.

Grand Rapids Public Schools

WE ARE GR

July 2024

Grand Rapids

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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 Anya Lusk. Ms. Lusk may be contacted at 1331 Martin Luther King Jr. St SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49501, (616) 819-2030 or (616) 819-2028. The District's Title IX Coordinator is Kurt Johnson. Mr. Kurt Johnson may be contacted at 1331 Martin Luther King Jr. St SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49501 or (616) 819-6339 or titleix@grps.org.

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

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

Please contact Christi Atwood, Director of Human Resources, in Human Resources via email atwoodc@grps.org or at (616) 819-2095.

WE ARE GR

is published four times per year by
 GRPS Communications Office
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 Grand Rapids, Michigan 49501
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 Fax: (616) 819-3480

www.grps.org

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GRADUATION RATES ON THE RISE

Join the momentum and
make GRPS your choice for
the 2024-2025 school year.

ENROLL
TODAY!



GRPS
my choice®



Hundreds Celebrate Decades of Learning at East Leonard & Stocking

Hundreds of scholars, staff, alumni, and community members attended farewell celebrations at both East Leonard and Stocking elementary schools as the buildings close following decades of learning.

Hundreds of scholars, staff, alumni, and community members attended farewell celebrations at both East Leonard and Stocking elementary schools as the buildings close following decades of learning.

The celebrations were an opportunity for those who have been impacted by the learning institutions to come together and share memories and look forward to what's next as the work to "Reimagine GRPS with Us!" continues.

"This is part of what makes Grand Rapids special," said Superintendent Dr. Leadriane Roby. "Scholars, staff, alumni, and neighbors are all here to spend time as community."

During the celebration on Tuesday at Stocking Elementary GRPS choir teachers performed 'America the Beautiful,' the same song that was performed at the school's opening on Feb. 1, 1924.

"Our doors are closing, but the spirit of learning, community, and love continues," Stocking Elementary Principal Michael Thomasma told those who attended. "Thank you for being part of our community."

During the celebration on Wednesday at East Leonard Elementary, a time capsule was opened from when the school opened in 1957.

Inside were 1957 editions of the Grand

Rapids Press and Grand Rapids Herald. There were also classroom pictures of all the students from the opening year at East Leonard. The items will be sent to the Grand Rapids City Archives.

"A lot has changed since 1957, but what has not changed is the pride and sense of community felt in this building," East Leonard Principal Nanette Hersberger said. "East Leonard has grown so many bright minds. I was blessed to walk alongside so many this school year and I'm grateful to see and meet so many of you today."

As East Leonard Elementary closes, most scholars will transition to nearby Kent Hills Elementary or Coit Creative Arts Academy. Most Stocking Elementary scholars will transition to nearby Sibley Elementary or Harrison Park Academy.

The building consolidations are part of the Reimagine GRPS Facility Plan that is devoted to bringing more scholars and staff together to direct district resources into classrooms instead of maintaining empty spaces.

The plan also calls for \$305 million to be invested in schools across Grand Rapids, creating 21st-century learning spaces and new programming opportunities.

You can read more about Reimagine GRPS at grps.org/reimagine



SCHOOL INVESTMENTS ON THE RISE

GRPS is on the rise! Join the momentum and make GRPS your choice for the 2024-2025 school year.

As a district, we offer a wide variety of school choices with rich learning experiences for scholars from all over the world. From vibrant neighborhood schools to specialized theme schools, GRPS proudly provides learning opportunities that extend beyond traditional reading, writing, and math.

Enrollment is an important part of joining our district and is required for all neighborhood and theme schools. **Scan the QR code to learn more about the enrollment process and enroll today!**



ENROLL TODAY!

ENROLL.GRPS.ORG

Questions?

 616.819.2150

 Enrollment@grps.org

JROTC Leaders Retire, Leaving Lasting Legacies

Two esteemed leaders of the Union High School Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) are retiring, leaving behind a legacy that will continue to inspire scholars for generations

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First Sgt. Ron Voisinnet and Major Robert Ware retired following the 2023-24 school year, marking the end of an era for the program.

The JROTC program at Union High School was established in 1921, over a century ago. Major Ware, an alumnus who participated in the program as a student, graduated from Union High School in 1979. After 22 years of military service, he returned to Union in 2005 to lead the JROTC.

First Sgt. Voisinnet joined the Union team after 24 years in the military, finding his calling as a JROTC instructor. "Somebody said be a JROTC instructor, and I looked at it, and said this is exactly what I want to do," he said.

"It's been great, it's been a great experience," Major Ware said of leading JROTC with First Sgt. Voisinnet. "We work very well together. It's kind of like a ying and a yang."

"We have two totally different personalities," First Sgt. Voisinnet added. He is more laid-back, talking with the kids and helping them with their issues more one-on-one. I am a little more intense."

Their leadership has profoundly impacted many scholars, who praise the mentorship provided by First Sgt. Voisinnet and Major Ware.

"It makes you know who you are," Dilanny, a scholar in the JROTC program, explained. "It makes you know your strengths and weaknesses and what you need to work on."

"They are really good mentors. They explain stuff they have been through when they were



teenagers," Union JROTC scholar Aileen added.

"This program impacted me because now I know how to communicate way better and handle bigger problems and challenges in a better way," Union JROTC scholar Amy said.

To honor their retiring leaders, current Union JROTC scholars organized a surprise retirement party, inviting several former members to join in the farewell celebration.

"It was good to see the kids that had graduated

come back and see what they are doing," said Major Ware. "To know that we had just a small part in making that success happen for the kids.

"The success of these kids is everything," said First Sgt. Voisinnet. "The hours I spend away from my family to spend with the kids makes it really worth it to hear those stories."

As Union High School bids farewell to these two dedicated leaders, their legacy will undoubtedly continue to shape the lives of future JROTC scholars.



Scholars Learn About Waterways while Paddling the Grand River

GRPS 8th graders had the opportunity to learn about the environment around us during the annual Canoemobile experience

Grand Rapids Public Schools 8th graders had the opportunity to learn about the environment during the annual Canoemobile experience.

More than 800 scholars engaged in a number of outdoor activities including paddling eight-passenger canoes on the Grand River, learning about the waterway's history and water quality, nature hiking and cultural history lessons.

Superintendent Dr. Leadriane Roby and Grand Rapids Mayor Rosalynn Bliss both stepped into canoes to learn with scholars.

"We believe in the whole rounded child and making sure that young people understand that learning doesn't only take place in the classroom, it takes place in our community," Roby said.

"Whether it's setting up a tent or learning

about nature or taking a hike, just encouraging them that they can do that," Bliss said. "These aren't experiences that just belong to a few of us."

Canoemobile is a partnership between Grand Rapids Public Schools, the City of Grand Rapids, Wilderness Inquiry, Camp Newaygo, Blandford Nature Center, Outdoor Discovery Center, Bill & Paul's Sporhaus, Kent County 4-H and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

"I really got a feel for the water and the plant life," said Tamire, a scholar at Gerald R. Ford Academic Center, after getting out of the canoe.

"It was nice. It was calm. It was just very cool. It was fun. I liked it a lot," said Kianna, a scholar at Gerald R. Ford Academic Center.

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GRPS Celebrates Officer of the Year

GRPS Public Safety and School Security announced officer awards for the 2023-24 school year

GRPS Public Safety and School Security announced officer awards for the 2023-24 school year.

"We're able to celebrate that you built relationships with our young people, built relationships with our community, built relationships with families," GRPS Superintendent Dr. Leadriane Roby told those in attendance at the awards banquet on June 7.

Officer Milagros Hernandez was named 2024 Bruce Klooster Memorial Officer of the Year.

"There's a lot of scenarios we could give you about this individual that would show you the work that they did," Chief of Staff and Executive Director of Public Safety and School Security Larry Johnson said when announcing Officer Hernandez as Officer of the Year.

Several other officers were also honored with individual awards during the ceremony.

"We want to honor our guys. Our young ladies, our young men that are really dedicated to this," Johnson said.



GRPS Art Teacher Designs Festival of the Arts Poster

The "start of summer" in Grand Rapids will feature a look designed by a Grand Rapids Public Schools educator this year

The "start of summer" in Grand Rapids will feature a look designed by a Grand Rapids Public Schools educator this year.

Ottawa Hills High School Art Teacher Stephen Smith and his wife, Taylor Smith, designed the artwork for this year's Festival of the Arts poster. The duo owns Muse GR, a gallery on Leonard St. NW.

"The poster design was a result of our collective experiences and innovative thinking," Stephen Smith said. "Taylor and I have always enjoyed pushing the boundaries while keeping practicality in mind."

You can view the original artwork at the Visual Arts Exhibition on the DeVos Place Convention Center skywalk. It includes several bright colors along with the shape of "La Grande Vitesse," Alexander Calder's sculpture that is the artistic symbol of Grand Rapids.

"Our inspiration stemmed from the power of

color and shape and how they can evoke joy when combined thoughtfully. By blending our unique styles, we created a design that we believe is both fun and inclusive," Stephen Smith said.

Stephen Smith says he is honored to receive this recognition from such a prestigious festival.

"This vibrant event allows us to witness the city through the diverse perspectives of talented individuals, offering a fresh and unique lens to appreciate our surroundings," Stephen Smith said. "The festival creates an invaluable opportunity for the public to connect with art on a personal level, sparking conversations, emotions, and a deeper understanding of the creative process."

Festival of the Arts runs June 7 - 9 in downtown Grand Rapids.

"What truly excites us is the potential for even more people to be involved, as this festival has the power to engage and inspire individuals from all walks of life," Stephen Smith added.



Asbestos Notice

Asbestos is a general name for a group of naturally occurring minerals composed of small fibers. These fibers are very strong and resistant to heat and chemicals. The mere presence of asbestos in a building does not mean that the health of the building occupants is endangered. When left intact and undisturbed, asbestos-containing materials do not pose a health risk to building occupants. There is, however,

the potential for exposure when the material becomes damaged or disturbed. Because of these problems associated with asbestos exposure, the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Act, or AHERA emphasizes that asbestos in school buildings must appropriately be managed.

The Grand Rapids Public Schools has an asbestos management plan that addresses contact persons, training, inspections, response

actions, operation and maintenance activities, periodic surveillance, cleaning, disclosure efforts, and school building areas containing asbestos. Any person may review the management plan at the Grand Rapids Public School's Facilities Management Department, 900 Union, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503, during regular business hours (8:00 am to 4:00 pm). Alternatively, any person may request a copy of the plan by writing the Grand Rapids Public

Schools Facilities Management Department, 900 Union, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503. There is a cost involved in reproducing the document of approximately 10 cents per page. The Grand Rapids Public Schools will send a copy out of the management plan within 5 business days of receiving the request.

Selma Anderson New Balance Nationals All American

Selma Anderson finished her stellar high school running career this spring at Ottawa Hills earning High School All-American honors at the New Balance Track and Field Nationals in Philadelphia on June 15th finishing 6th in the 2 mile in a time of 10:18.56.

Before moving on to Syracuse University where she will compete in cross country and track and field and study Biochemistry or Biology, she once again re-wrote the school record board, breaking all the records she set last year.

In June, Selma broke all the distance track and field school records she set last spring. At the MHSAA State Finals on June 3, Selma placed second in the 1600m running a time of 4:40.54 which is the 7th fastest time in state history and breaking her previous school record by 8 seconds. She earned All-State honors for her performance and All-State honors for her 6th place finish in the 3200m.

On June 10th she lowered her 800m school record by a second running 2:11.23 at the Michigan Meet of Champions. At New Balance Nationals, enroute to her All American performance, she lowered her 3200m school record to 10:15.56, breaking her previous school record by 13 seconds. And this past weekend on Sunday, June 23 she again lowered her 800m record with a 2:10.65 time at a meet in Germany where she and her family are on vacation visiting relatives. Selma's mom, Stefi Anderson, who is a sixth grade teacher at Zoo School is a native of Germany.

The spring season follows Selma's excellent senior cross country season where she was the OK Gold Conference champion and Regional Champion at the Portage Regional. She lowered her own school record at the D1 MHSAA State Finals at the Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn, Michigan running 17:13 and finishing as state runner-up. She is the tenth fastest all-time on the Michigan Speedway course. She continued her cross country season at the Nike Cross Country Regional in Terra Haute, Indiana where she finished second against top competitors from Midwest states including Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana and Missouri. At Nike Cross Country Nationals she recorded a top 25 finish, finishing 23rd.

Selma is the most decorated distance runner in Ottawa Hills/GRPS history. She started with our GRPS track and XC program in 2017 as a 6th grader at Zoo school. She moved on to City MS after that and began to train with our other experienced runners where she began to flourish. Over her four years at Ottawa Hills, she



first learned from the girls in front of her and then slowly began to carve out her own legacy at Ottawa Hills after the others graduated. In 7th, 8th, 9th and even parts of 10th grade she wasn't the top runner on her own team. But quietly in the fall of 2022 and spring of 2023, Selma worked her way into becoming not only the best runner on her team (rewriting the Ottawa Hills record board), but a conference champion, regional champion and one of the best runners in the state. This fall she took that to another level by becoming one of the top female high school cross country runners in the country and culminating this spring with All American honors on the track.

Congratulations Selma on a great high school career and we look forward to watching you next year at Syracuse University.

Selma Anderson's Cross Country and Track and Field Honors

- 2020,2021,2022, 2023 All Conference XC
- 2020,2021,2022,2023 All Region XC
- 2020,2021,2022, 2023 State Qualifier XC
- 2020, 2022, 2023 All State XC
- 2022, 2023 Conference Champion
- 2023 Regional Champion XC
- 2023 State Finals Runner Up XC
- 2023 Nike Midwest All Region XC
- 2023 Nike National top 25 XC
- 2021,2022, 2023, 2024 All Conference Track
- 2022 Conference Champion 3200m relay, 1600m, 3200m
- 2023 Conference Champion 3200m relay, 800m, 1600m, 3200m
- 2024 Conference Champion 3200m relay, 1600m, 3200m
- 2023 Regional Champion 1600m run
- 2024 Regional Champion 1600m run
- 2022 State Qualifier Track and Field 3200m relay, 3200m run
- 2023 State Qualifier Track and Field 3200m relay, 1600m run, 3200m run
- 2024 State Qualifier Track and Field, 1600m run, 3200m run
- 2023 All State 1600m
- 2024 All State 1600m and 3200m
- 2024 New Balance All American 2 Mile
- School Record Holder 800m, 1600m, 3200m, 3200m Relay, Cross Country (5k)



GRPS Athletes Planning to Compete at the Next Level

Grand Rapids Public Schools scholar-athletes are planning to continue their athletic journey in college

Grand Rapids Public Schools scholar-athletes are planning to continue their athletic journey in college.

Claire Kuiper, a graduate of City High Middle School, has recently signed her Letter of Intent to join the swim team at George Fox University. Throughout her high school career, Claire was a key member of the Ottawa Hills Girls Swim Team, contributing significantly to their success with her remarkable skills and dedication.

Alphonse Sanders, a standout player from the Ottawa Hills High School (OHHS) boys basketball team, has also taken a significant step in his athletic journey. Alphonse signed his Letter of Intent to play college basketball at Olivet College, where he is expected to bring his talent and hard work to the collegiate level.

Union High School has its share of remarkable athletes making strides as well. Caileb Austin,

a swimmer who graduated from Grand Rapids Montessori, has committed to Aquinas College. Caileb's tenure on the Union Swim & Dive team was marked by exceptional achievements, including winning five individual conference championships and earning four All-Conference awards. He also set records in four events, cementing his legacy at Union High.

Lucia Jacques, another Grand Rapids Montessori graduate, has committed to Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts. During her high school career, Lucia earned All-Conference honors in both her junior and senior years, demonstrating her consistent excellence in swimming.

Both Caileb and Lucia have made history by becoming the first swimmers from Union to advance to collegiate-level swimming, paving the way for future athletes from their school to follow in their footsteps.



New Tennis Courts at Ottawa Hills & Union

The tennis courts at Ottawa Hills High School and Union High School are being restored this summer thanks to a partnership between Grand Rapids Public Schools and West Michigan Community Tennis

The tennis courts at Ottawa Hills High School and Union High School are being restored this summer thanks to a partnership between Grand Rapids Public Schools and West Michigan Community Tennis.

The new Union tennis courts were completed in early June. The courts at Ottawa Hills are expected to be completed in August.

"This is unbelievable to do this and to see this happening," said Bill Schaefer, Union High School's varsity tennis coach. "It's good for another 20 years."

West Michigan Community Tennis secured a \$52,000 grant from the United States Tennis Association Foundation for the projects. GRPS added \$69,000 to fully fund the reconstruction.

"It's going to be really exciting for the team," said Charlotte Beresford, a senior at City High Middle School who plays tennis for Union High School. "It was cracking and I was like scared of falling. Now I can actually play like with good

shoes. It's really nice."

"I play a lot of sports, and it's just nice to know that I'm being invested in at my school and that we have the resources to do these kind of things," said Nigel Doyle, a senior at City High Middle School who also plays tennis for Union High School.

West Michigan Community Tennis hosts "Tennis in the Park" during the summer months at multiple locations in Grand Rapids, including both Ottawa Hills and Union. The program is in cooperation with the City of Grand Rapids Department of Parks and Recreation. "Tennis in the Park" provides instruction twice a week in June and July for children between the ages of 5 and 14 for just \$10. Each session also includes a time of learning using curriculum developed by "Be Nice."

"This is a commitment for the high school, but it's also a commitment for these community kids," said Jack Ponstine, vice president of West Michigan Community Tennis.



GR Union Youth Football Brings Players Together from Across the District

Stop by Union High School on a Tuesday or Thursday afternoon in May, and one will immediately notice the young Redhawks on the football field

Stop by Union High School on a Tuesday or Thursday afternoon in May, and one will immediately notice the young Redhawks on the football field.

The Grand Rapids Union Youth Football Program's spring football league provides 2nd-7th grade scholar-athletes the opportunity to play 7-on-7, non-tackle football. The league is run in partnership with the Union High School Football Program. In fact, all of the 7-on-7 teams are coached by current Redhawk football players from the middle and high school teams.

"The Grand Rapids Union spring football league allows our scholar-athletes to be ambassadors to the game of football and give back to the game," said Curtis Andrews, Head Football Coach at Union High School. "I love the fact that the football league gives our scholar-athletes an opportunity to build on their leadership skills, and it also allows me as a coach to learn who our leaders are on the team."

Over 110 youth players from 25 different GRPS schools participated in the program this year. Split across 11 teams, players practiced for 40 minutes before matching up against other teams for two 20-minute games. At the end of the season, teams squared off in two league-wide tournaments, one for 2nd-4th graders and one for 5th-7th graders.

The league is high-energy and competitive, but the primary goals are to build community and

have fun.

"It's all about keeping the energy up," Jaheim Jones told his players. Jones is a junior at CA Frost and plays on the football team. "These are lessons you can take into football, but you can also take them into life. Stay positive. Stick together. Keep smiling."

Becky Swem, parent of a 5th-grade scholar at Congress Elementary, is grateful for the positive approach.

"What a great experience this was for my son. I really appreciate all the hard work that went into planning and coaching," Swem shared. "It wasn't always easy, but my son learned so much about being part of a team and persevering through difficult times."

The Union Youth Football Program was launched in 2021 with the goal of building a community-oriented football pipeline for GRPS scholar-athletes. The first of its kind in the district's 150-year history, the program has expanded tremendously since its inception.

The program started with two tackle teams and approximately 40 players. Since then, it has grown to include winter clinics, summer camps, and the spring 7-on-7 league, in addition to the original tackle football program in the fall. Since its origination, the program has seen participation from over 400 scholar-athletes.

Chance Hammingh, who played on one of Grand Rapids Union Youth Football's inaugural



teams and is now the quarterback of the Redhawks middle school team, is excited about the continued growth of the program.

"The best part is watching players learn and grow as they love the game of football," Hammingh said. Chance is also one of the volunteer coaches for the spring league. "It's my dream to be a coach one day. This is a great opportunity to help me get there."

Scholar-athletes interested in being part of the Grand Rapids Union Youth Football Program have lots of opportunities to participate. The program will host a youth camp on July 24, 2024, in partnership with the middle and high school teams, and registration for fall tackle football is also open. For more information about their offerings or to sign up for a camp or team, please contact

Megan Persons, Grand Rapids Union Youth Football Program Director, at personsm@grps.org. For information about middle and high school football offerings, please contact Coach Andrews at andrewsc@grps.org. Registration links are also provided below.

- Youth Camp (1st-6th grade): forms.gle/bLiA32KKf3UW7KSW7
- Youth Tackle Football (3rd-6th grade): forms.gle/fACJhnhp7wT9AH4Z9
- Red Hawks Middle School Football (7th-8th grade): forms.gle/ZH4FF3eS1UXPq2si9
- Union High School Football (9th-12th grade): forms.gle/WmzzX9d6Va5w12rP9



Scholars Travel to D.C. to Witness American History, Politics

More than 500 middle and high school scholars traveled to Washington D.C. for one week to visit museums and monuments, and meet Representatives

Grand Rapids Public Schools scholars learn about our nation's history from a young age. This spring, they had a chance to witness that history firsthand.

More than 500 middle and high school scholars were able to travel to Washington D.C. for one week to visit museums and monuments. They also had the opportunity to meet politicians

who represent Michigan at the U.S. Capitol.

"It's nice to be able to tie together what they learned in the textbook and then go on and see and experience it firsthand," said Erin Anderson, principal at Westwood Middle School.

The trips in April and May were part of Close Up, a nonprofit, nonpartisan, civic education

organization that organizes events for students across the country.

"It was a surreal experience," said Daniel, a scholar at Riverside Middle School.

"I saw the White House, the Lincoln Memorial was a great experience," said Valerie, a scholar at Westwood Middle School. "A lot of

walking, too, but it was worth it to see all that."

The trip was free for scholars thanks to Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) funding.

"Thank you for picking me to come to D.C.," said Harmony, a scholar at Riverside Middle School. "This opportunity was great. I liked it."

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You will be contacted by email as soon as a program and classroom placement is made for your child. Placement notifications start in May and continue until all spots are filled. Placements are made based on need using the State of Michigan required placement process.



Questions?

email KCPI@kentisd.org or call 616.447.2409

These materials were developed under a grant awarded by the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential.

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- **Comprobante de ingresos** (para todos los que contribuyen al hogar) - formulario de impuestos, W-2, talón de sueldo, desempleo, declaración escrita del empleador, reembolso por cuidado de crianza, documentación de SSI, manutención infantil, pensión alimenticia u otras pensiones
- **Comprobante de vivienda** - licencia de conducir con dirección actual, factura de servicios públicos actual, recibo de alquiler, factura de impuestos de la vivienda o contrato de terreno
- **Formulario de evaluación de salud** o chequeo físico o de bienestar infantil más reciente
- **Registro de vacunas** o exención del departamento de salud
- Si su hijo tiene un IEP, necesitaremos una copia

Los documentos pueden enviarse por correo electrónico a KCPI@kentisd.org o por correo postal a KCPI, 864 Crahen NE, Grand Rapids MI 49525.

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Estos materiales fueron desarrollados gracias a una subvención otorgada por el Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential.

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