



# 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:

GRPD Strategic Plan - 2

Voting Information - 3

City Recreation Programs - 6

Ice Skating at Rosa Parks Circle - 9

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## City Leans on Organizational Values to Guide Work and Decision-making



As I look out the window today, it's a beautiful fall afternoon here in Grand Rapids. From here, you could say everything looks and feels exactly how we expect the season to be. And in many ways, we're doing our best to make it that way – for ourselves, our friends and our family. We just wrapped up a six-week season of special events called The Bridge GR.

We've seen a renaissance in outdoor activity, dining and social gatherings. More people are biking and walking.

In any other year, we'd be highlighting those things as successes in and of themselves. But we know that under the surface, this has been – and continues to be – a struggle. Kids are back at school, but not in the way we expected. Fall sports have resumed, but not the way we know them. Fresh, seasonal items are on the menu, but only for pick-up or in modified spaces. Conversations around the country regarding race, equity and inclusion are occurring with more intensity and tension than in recent years. As a husband, as a parent and as a leader in this city, I feel it. I know that you do too. So, what do we do?

Each of our situations are unique, and I can't claim to have a single solution. However, what I can share is how we've managed it here at the City. In short, we've leaned heavily on our organizational values to guide our work and our decision-making. With situations changing on a near-daily basis, it has been the best way for us to maintain clarity in an otherwise cloudy situation. In difficult times, difficult situations and facing difficult choices, our values are our North Star.

**Accountability. Collaboration. Customer service. Equity. Innovation. Sustainability.**

Staying centered is vital given the extraordinary and disparate impacts of COVID-19. That's not just the health effects, but the mental health, economic and societal impacts. It tugs at the roots of who we are as a community, but our roots here run deep and strong.

That foundation allows us to take meaningful and intentional steps to face challenges such as police reform, homelessness, crime, health disparities and economic insecurity. Those roots will help us grow stronger as we navigate our way through and out of this pandemic. We will continue to partner with the community to find, test and implement solutions in real-time – always with equity in mind.

I want to thank our staff, our community and our local leaders for the creativity and resilience they've shown. I want to thank everyone for making your voices heard in this critical time. We'll always be better together – whether that's on Zoom or expressing ourselves during public demonstrations. I, like all of you, look forward to the day that we can once again gather fully as a community to celebrate our successes and chart our shared future.

All along the way, know that we'll be keeping our values in focus.

### Grand Rapids Police Department Strategic Plan

The creation of the Police Department's strategic plan is extraordinarily timely in light of local and national social justice issues, demonstrations and rising crime rates across the country. Law enforcement is being closely scrutinized. While our officers continue to professionally do their job, they have become the object of public criticism based on the actions of a few who do not uphold the same standards.

The COVID-19 pandemic has fully revealed something we've known for some time. It has laid bare the disparities that persist for people of color in the 21st century. Black and Latinx residents across the country have been disproportionately impacted by the virus. This can be traced back to a history of disinvestment in Black and Brown communities, where

limited access to health services, healthy food and clean air have led to disparate health outcomes beyond the current crisis. These life-or-death disparities were even more exposed when images and details regarding the murders of George Floyd and our City's own Breonna Taylor at the hands of police officers have become international flashpoints. Across the country, and here, we must do better. As crime has increased the police department will build upon its foundational values to rise to the challenge and obtain their vision to ensure people feel safe and are safe at all times. Read more about our police department's strategic plan on page 2.

As a City we have shown tremendous resilience to re-engage with one another and local businesses during the age of COVID-19. Here are a few accomplishments I'd like to highlight as success stories within our new normal.

### The Bridge GR

This year's restrictions on social gatherings led to the cancellation of many of our most popular events. In response, the City of Grand Rapids helped facilitate The Bridge GR, which celebrated Grand Rapids' art, culture and community. The Bridge GR incorporated elements of these much-missed celebrations and empowered local artists of all kinds – painters, sculptors, musicians, dancers, chefs and more – to present and profit from their work. It served as a platform to amplify important community conversations happening around social justice and equity.

The Bridge GR celebration was designed to create an opportunity for community conversations and create a path from our current COVID-19 reality to an even brighter future. The Bridge GR leveraged events and activities to promote resiliency, healing, shared understanding and progress in Grand Rapids.

### Social Zones and Social Districts

On May 21, the City Commission authorized the creation of social zones – outdoor dining areas where restaurant and bar customers can dine on to-go fare from nearby restaurants. These areas are set up on City streets, sidewalks and other City-owned property. The social zones are helping businesses recover by expanding the number of customers they are able to serve, which is helping them sustain their payrolls. The zones also provide an open-air environment where some customers feel more comfortable than being indoors. Regular sanitizing of furnishings is required, along with appropriate physical distancing between groups to keep the social zones clean and safe.

On July 21, the City Commission established two

NON-PROFIT ORG  
ECRWSS  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
GRAND RAPIDS, MI  
PERMIT #319

ECRWSS  
Postal Customer

GRPS  
my choice  
Grand Rapids Public Schools  
1331 Franklin S.E., PO  
Box 117  
Grand Rapids, MI 49501-0117

social districts – outdoor refreshment areas where alcoholic beverages sold by permitted businesses can be consumed by purchasers. These areas overlap with the social zones and include most of the seating areas. Nearly 40 businesses have been permitted to sell to-go beer, wine and cocktails. These drinks must be sold in specially labeled containers and remain within the designated refreshment area while allowing the community to power the economy and re-connect with one another.

By moving quickly to establish social zones and social districts, the City has demonstrated its support for economic recovery and commitment to the success of local businesses. We intend to continue the zones and districts through the winter months and are working with our partners on modifications needed to adapt to cold weather and winter conditions.

#### Grand Rapids Homeless Outreach Team

The Grand Rapids Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) was formed in April to assist in reducing the spread of COVID-19 among homeless and unsheltered persons in the community. The team initially consisted of two firefighters and two police officers working in pairs for a “boots on the ground” approach to addressing health and safety issues

across the city.

Launched at the height of the pandemic, the team assisted in decompressing shelters and worked with the Kent County Health Department in isolating those afflicted with COVID-19 to prevent its spread in this vulnerable population. The team also canvassed the community daily providing education on disease transmission and prevention. This included education about the importance of wearing masks and social distancing.

Education quickly transitioned into a larger scale effort to identify the immediate health and safety needs of persons experiencing homelessness. HOT helped secure portable restroom and handwashing facilities and weather-appropriate clothing. Other successes include securing donated bicycles for employment transportation, partnering with local businesses to provide employment opportunities and connecting homeless persons with jobs and housing.

The team has partnered with citizens, business owners and neighborhood associations to identify the impact of homelessness and to collaborate on problem-solving. In response, two social workers and two addiction/recovery coaches will be added to the HOT staffing through a partnership with Network180 to provide immediate assistance and referrals. Additionally, the City has created a

Homelessness Coordinator position to align City services, enhance community partnerships and support sustainable, long-term solutions.

Through strong partnerships with existing community organizations, HOT will continue to lower hurdles, remove barriers, and connect persons experiencing homelessness with needed services and resources. The combined efforts of public safety and community organizations will improve the quality of life for all persons who live, work or visit our great city.

These are only a few examples of the amazing work taking place in 2020 making Grand Rapids a great place to live and work even through adversity. I appreciate all the municipal workers as they use our values as rudders that steer us towards success. Circumstances change but the values in our Strategic Plan persist. Accountability, customer service, collaboration, innovation, equity and sustainability will see us through this time while growing stronger together.

It is an honor to serve you and our community.



Mark Washington, City Manager

## Police Department's Strategic Plan to Transform Policing in Grand Rapids

Police Chief Eric Payne earlier this fall presented our police department's three-year strategic plan. The plan provides defined action steps with measurable outcomes using a neighborhood-based policing model that will help the Grand Rapids Police Department (GRPD) ensure all people feel safe and are safe at all times throughout the community.

The strategic plan is closely aligned with the City of Grand Rapids' strategic plan, specifically the priority areas of safe community, governmental excellence and engaged and connected community. It establishes a new vision for the police department to partner with the community to make Grand Rapids the safest mid-sized city and make GRPD the most trusted police department in the U.S.

With a focus on community policing, the plan emphasizes improved interactions with the community while reversing violent trends across the City with a data-driven approach.

These values are:

**Service-** Through compassion, empathy, and courage, we are driven to meet the public safety needs of our community.

**Equity-** We acknowledge that historically, segments of our community, including people of color, low-income residents and others, have been disproportionately impacted by City policies, policing practices and the criminal justice system. We are committed to providing fair and just services for all individuals.

**Integrity-** We will do the right thing at the right time for the right reasons.

**Accountability-** We are committed to transparency and will always take responsibility for our actions. The values above help the Police Department move forward to achieve their vision and mission, which are:



**Vision-** In partnership with our community, we will become the safest mid-sized city and most trusted police department in the United States.

**Mission-** Protect life and property, prevent crime, and ensure all people feel safe and are safe at all times throughout our community.

The values, vision and mission of our Police Department will lead to better safety outcomes while allowing the community to be policed in the way it wants to be.

The plan's equity statement acknowledges that, historically, segments of the community, including people of color, low-income residents and others, have been disproportionately impacted by policing practices and the

criminal justice system. It also includes a commitment to providing fair and just services for all individuals.

“This plan lays out a vision for reimagining policing in our community,” Payne said. “Through compassion, empathy and courage, we are driven to meet the public safety needs of our community.”

“Our nation is undergoing a significant social awakening that demands both recognition and a commitment to change. This moment is the turning point for our department's relationship with the community. Our strategies will help build a stronger bond and safer neighborhoods.”

To read more about the plan, visit: [grandrapidsmi.gov/GRPDstrategicplan](http://grandrapidsmi.gov/GRPDstrategicplan).

## Everything You Need to Know Before You Vote

With only days until election day, the Grand Rapids City Clerk's Office is prepared for one of the most anticipated ballots in recent memory. Record voter registration, expanded voting rights, the presidential election, and state and local ballot initiatives are driving interest in this year's election.

The City Clerk's Office is working diligently to address the increased demand for voting services in the midst of a global pandemic.

"Our office is energized, excited and ready for election day. We're working diligently to make sure every vote is counted securely and safely," said City Clerk Joel Hondorp.

In preparation for November 3, Hondorp answers residents' frequently asked questions regarding voter registration, safety protocol, and more.

### How do I register to vote?

If you are a Grand Rapids resident, you can register to vote by mail, online or at a Secretary of State Branch by October 19. Beginning October 20 until and including Election Day, you will need to register at:

- City Clerk's Office, located on the 2nd floor of City Hall (8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday)
- Election Central, located on the 2nd floor of 201 Market Avenue SW (noon to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday)

### What are your office hours?

In addition to our normal 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. office hours, we are offering extended office hours on:

- Every Tuesday and Thursday in October – 5 to 7 p.m. – City Hall and Election Central
- Sunday, October 11 – Noon to 5 p.m. – New Hope Baptist Church, 130 Delaware, SW
- Sunday, October 25 – Noon to 5 p.m. – City Hall, 300 Monroe, NW
- Saturday, October 31 – 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. – City Hall and Election Central

### What's on the ballot?

The November 3 ballot will have three sections – Partisan, Non-Partisan, and Proposal – on the two-sided ballot with a straight party option available. By choosing the straight party option, you select a party, which selects all the candidate for that party in the partisan section. You also have the option to vote a split ticket. You can select a straight party and select candidates from a different party. The third option is a mixed ticket, where you can skip the straight party selection and choose individual candidates in each race. You must make individual choices in each section of the non-partisan and proposal sections.

### Do I need an ID?

Yes! Whether you are voting at the polls or requesting an absentee ballot in person, all voters must present photo ID such as a Michigan Driver's License or Identification Card. If you do not have an acceptable form of photo ID or don't bring it, you can still vote by signing a brief affidavit stating that you are not in possession of a photo ID.

You can also get an absentee ballot in person until 4 p.m. Monday, November 2. If you request an absentee ballot in person on October 31 and November 2, you must vote in the Clerk's Office, and the ballot must be left with staff.

### What should I know before I vote?

Hondorp encourages everyone to feel confident in where to vote, how to vote and who they are voting for. You can find information on the status of your registration, your polling location, a sample ballot, and absentee ballot status at [michigan.gov/vote](http://michigan.gov/vote).

### What can I expect on Election Day?

All 76 polling locations in Grand Rapids will be open on Election Day from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Anyone in line at 8 p.m. may still vote. Due to physical distancing protocols, voting lines may appear to be longer than they are, so do not get

discouraged by the length of lines as they will move quickly.

### What are the safety protocols at the polling locations?

All polling locations will follow COVID protections, including physical distancing markers throughout the polling location and providing masks, gloves and face shields for election workers. Surfaces and pens will be cleaned regularly by poll workers with disinfectant wipes. We encourage you to wear a mask to protect yourself, election workers and other voters.

If you have any questions about the upcoming elections, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 456-3010 or visit the website at [grandrapidsmi.gov/election](http://grandrapidsmi.gov/election). Check your voter registration status, find your polling location, view a sample ballot, and track the progress of your application and absentee ballot at [michigan.gov/vote](http://michigan.gov/vote).



## Neighborhood Match Fund Uplifts Local Businesses and Organizations

The City of Grand Rapids Neighborhood Match Fund provides funding for resident-led projects designed to uplift our neighbors and neighborhoods. Examples of projects we recently funded include:

- Rising Grinds Café to support local businesses and connect them to resources.
- Anishinaabek Essential Care Packages to assess and help address COVID-19 prevention needs in the Native American community.
- Grand Rapids Area Mutual Aid Network to provide emergency food and other aid for local families.
- Our Kitchen Table to educate on nutrition and support local families to grow and harvest their own food.
- The Black Book Exchange Box GR to provide book houses in Grand Rapids neighborhoods filled with books for all ages that represent Black people and culture.

The Neighborhood Match Fund will accept submissions throughout December 2020 for projects taking place between March 1 and August 31, 2021. Don't miss out on this opportunity to connect with your community and lead a project which can uplift social justice and community in your neighborhood.

Visit [grandrapidsmi.gov/nmf](http://grandrapidsmi.gov/nmf) for more details and to submit your project idea.



A recent NMF project, The Black Book Exchange Box GR, provides book houses in Grand Rapids neighborhoods filled with books for all ages that represent Black people and culture.

## River for All Breaks Down Social and Economic Barriers to Build Community

The City of Grand Rapids' massive River for All project focuses on the restoration of the Owashtanong – known to many as the Grand River. This precious community asset will serve as a bridge to link the historically siloed sections of our city.

The City's Office of Equity and Engagement recognized that river-related decisions today will have immense generational impact on the residents of our city. Thus, it has an unprecedented opportunity to use the construction and development of the Grand Rapids as a catalyst to advance recreation, health, environmental justice and racial and economic equity. The end result of this endeavor must be to truly create a river for all residents of our community.

A large part of ensuring the Grand River will be for all requires us to look at both systemic and social barriers within our community. Far too often, outdoor recreation

– particularly water recreation – is treated as a privilege for a select group of people. This is because participation often requires significant time, cost, transportation and knowledge of explicit and implicit safety rules and practices. Additionally, many people of color experience social stigma when they do participate in outdoor recreation activities.

Through the Equitable Grand River Restoration Initiative (EGRRI) funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, our goal for the River for All project is to reduce racialized wealth disparities. The additional four years of funding we recently received from the Grand Rapids Community Foundation will help us achieve this goal through a two-fold approach: developing partnerships for resident engagement with strategic, culturally relevant outdoor recreational programming and intentional investment in Micro-Local Business Enterprises (MLBE).

We must prepare MLBEs now so that they can be prepared to successfully bid and receive contracts for the construction phase of the river, which is expected to cost millions of dollars. This is why the City of Grand Rapids is currently midway through a county-wide initiative to add 30 to 40 new MLBEs to the City's certification list in preparation for future in-river and river-bank opportunities. We believe that combining both approaches is the best way for us to achieve equity within this project.

If you own a business in Kent County and would like more information on being certified as an MLBE, type "MLBE" in search box at [grandrapidsmi.gov](http://grandrapidsmi.gov). Also follow the Office of Equity and Engagement (@EquityAndEngagement) on Facebook for continued updates, outreach events and to learn more about the great work the community is doing to make it more welcoming, inclusive and equitable.

## Seasonal Parking Rules Begin November 1 on Many Neighborhood Streets

It's that time of the year again: Seasonal parking rules are coming to a street near you. Odd-even and same-side parking restrictions start Sunday, Nov. 1. That's so City crews can clear roads of leaves and other tree debris over the next six weeks and so you and City service and emergency vehicles can safely travel neighborhood streets during the winter.

Odd-even and same-side parking restrictions take effect at 12:01 a.m. Nov. 1 of each year, regardless of whether there's snow. The restrictions are in effect until 11:59 p.m. April 1 of the following year. Streets with restrictions have odd-even or same-side parking signs posted. Check out a map of the streets at [grandrapidsmi.gov/Our-City/Maps/OddEven-and-One-Side-Parking-Map](http://grandrapidsmi.gov/Our-City/Maps/OddEven-and-One-Side-Parking-Map).

Odd-even parking restrictions mean that on each even numbered day starting at 1 a.m. and until 6 p.m., parking is prohibited on the odd numbered side of the street. On each odd numbered day starting at 1 a.m. and until 6 p.m., parking is prohibited on the even numbered side of the street. From 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. each day, parking is permitted on both sides of the street unless signs indicate otherwise.

Same-side parking restrictions require residents to park only on a designated side of the street from Nov. 1 to April 1. On some of the narrowest of streets, there may be no parking allowed.

Parking restrictions allow City street sweepers and snowplows easier access to neighborhood streets. They also help to keep one lane of traffic open and available for

emergency and public service vehicles.

"We need the community's help as we work to clear streets of leaves and other tree debris that naturally fall into the road," said James Hurt, the City's managing director of public services. "Following the parking restrictions allows us to effectively clean the streets and ensures we don't have flooded streets this winter due to clogged catch basins."

Reminder: It's against City ordinance to rake leaves and place tree debris into the street. For information on City yard waste services, visit: [grandrapidsmi.gov/Services/Yard-Waste-Services](http://grandrapidsmi.gov/Services/Yard-Waste-Services).

Once snow has fallen, the parking restrictions allow City plows to easily navigate neighborhood streets to effectively clear snow.

"If you park on a restricted side of the street and the plows come through, your street won't get completely plowed and your car may get buried in snow," Hurt said. "That's not fun for anyone."

Vehicles parked in violation of these restrictions may be ticketed. The City begins enforcement of seasonal parking regulations whether there's snow on the ground or not. To avoid a \$20 parking ticket, drivers are encouraged to comply with the signs posted on the street where they're parking.

Grand Rapids has about 90 miles of streets with odd-even parking and about 5 miles of streets with same-side parking.

For questions about the seasonal parking restrictions, call the City's Customer Service Center at 616.456.3000.



## In an Emergency, Every Second Counts. Keep Them Clear



Adopt a hydrant and keep your neighborhood safe! Become a Hydrant Hero!

### What is "Adopt-a-Hydrant"?

The Adopt-a-Hydrant Program is a collaboration between our Grand Rapids Water System, Fire Department and you. The City of Grand Rapids Water System owns, operates and maintains more than 7,000 hydrants in the city limits. Volunteers are a tremendous help in ensuring hydrants are in good repair and ready for use by our Grand Rapids Fire Department.

Individuals, businesses, neighborhoods, civic groups and other organizations can select a nearby hydrant and accept responsibility to:

- Clear snow

- Trim tall grass and vegetation
- Report damage or water leaks

We encourage you to get involved and adopt a hydrant near you!

### Get Involved

Would you like to partner with us to keep our community safe? It's easy!

- Visit [www.grandrapidsmi.gov](http://www.grandrapidsmi.gov)
- Search "Adopt a hydrant" in the Search bar
- Fill out our online adoption form— use our hydrant map to pick out a hydrant near you

Need help? Call 311 Customer Service at 3-1-1 or (616)456-3000 for assistance.

## Our Police Department is Impacting the Community Through its Victim Services Program

Our Grand Rapids Police Department (GRPD) is only four months into its victim services program and the results are already exceeding expectations. This program, along with our new victim services coordinator with the GRPD, Clorissa Novak, have significantly impacted the lives of victims affected by crimes in our community through tactics emphasizing compassion, empathy and courage.

As part of our philosophy in reshaping and reimagining policing, the GRPD and the City Commission approved a civilian victim specialist position to help fill the gaps in services to victims of violent crime – especially focusing on victims of crime who do not have established support services in the community and those whose cases are not prosecuted. It is the first time we have offered this type of service to aid victims of crimes reported to GRPD.

As the head of the Victim Services Unit, Novak is responsible for:

- Managing victims' cases
- Connecting victims to resources
- Educating them on victims' rights and the criminal justice process
- Crisis intervention
- Assisting with crime victim compensation applications
- Helping to connect victims to investigators, if the victims desire

In addition to these responsibilities, Novak also co-runs a volunteer victim advocate group that provides on-scene assistance to first responders with death notifications, offers

support to surviving family members, and provides family members with information on next steps and resources. Since the creation of the victim services program in June, Novak has made significant progress in not only assisting victims of crimes, but also making the community aware that these new services are available to them.

"I want to make sure that victims have access to services and let them know what's out there to hopefully help them in their healing," says Novak.

Novak highlights that she is available to help any victim regardless of their involvement in or the outcome of the case. Even if a victim does not want to engage in the case in any way, they still have the option to reach out for any level of assistance. All interactions with victims are dependent on their needs. While some victim interactions are as simple as a phone call, others may include long-term involvement. Novak can be in regular contact with the victim trying to get their basic needs met, helping them process what they are feeling or walking them through complicated systems.

"I hope they take away that there is hope and that they are not in this alone in what they are going through," Novak said. "I can't take everything that they are feeling away, but I hope they realize that there are people that support them and want to help."

Through this approach, Novak has made great strides in assisting victims, exceeding program goals and service projections. Our Police Department expected to assist 2,020 victims over a three-year period (1,080 through correspondence



and 940 by personal phone call). Since June 1, Novak has already corresponded with 664 victims and spoke to another 315 victims on the phone.

Chief Eric Payne said Novak is a great addition to the department. "She takes immense pride in the service she provides." Payne said. "I know our residents value the service. Many victims of crime that she contacts say they had no idea that this service was available; others are at least glad that someone from our department checked in with them. This type of engagement is a key aspect of the future of policing and I am proud that our City and our department are able to offer this service."

To stay up-to-date with news from the GRPD and to read the GRPD's full strategic plan, visit [grandrapidsmi.gov/Police-Department](http://grandrapidsmi.gov/Police-Department).

## City's 2020 Performance Report Shows Progress



In light of unprecedented challenges, we are happy to report positive progress in the first year of our four-year strategic plan. Despite facing significant and unanticipated challenges presented by a global pandemic, economic recession and nationwide calls for immediate and significant policing reform, our 2020 fiscal year (FY2020) plan shows that we are on track to accomplish the goals laid out in the strategic plan.

"While these issues may have dominated the headlines

and placed new demands on City services, we've been able to use the strategic plan as our guide in decision-making," said City Manager Mark Washington. "This has uniquely positioned us to lean in on these challenges while still making progress on the issues we prioritized in 2019."

The four-year strategic plan, created in 2019, identifies six priorities:

- Governmental excellence
- Economic prosperity and affordability
- Engaged and connected community
- Health and environment
- Mobility
- Safe community

The FY2020 performance report highlights how far we have come in accomplishing objectives related to these priorities, as well as highlights what measures we have taken to address COVID-19 recovery and response and what we have accomplished in relation to our core values: accountability, collaboration, customer service, equity, innovation, and sustainability.

Alison Waske Sutter, sustainability and performance management officer, said while the City continues to refine how to identify, measure and report on progress, "I'm proud of staff's commitment to measuring performance under the plan. Some projects take more than one year to complete. This report demonstrates the work we are doing to be more strategic, transparent and accountable with respect to the desired outcomes established in our strategic plan."

To view the full report with objectives and key metrics, visit [grandrapidsmi.gov/Government/Departments/Office-of-the-City-Manager/Strategic-Plan](http://grandrapidsmi.gov/Government/Departments/Office-of-the-City-Manager/Strategic-Plan).

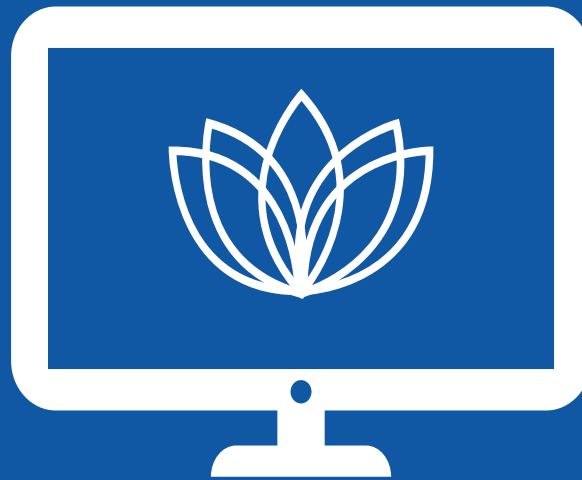
## Fire Prevention is Elementary

Due to COVID-19 safety precautions, our Grand Rapids Fire Department is not doing in-school 2nd grade fire prevention presentations this year.

Even though our firefighters can't be in the schools at this time, we hope parents take a few minutes to gather the family and watch a previous school presentation at: [youtu.be/Bzxm33KqgiY](https://youtu.be/Bzxm33KqgiY).

The video is appropriate for all first, second and third graders and their families. Look for more fire education material later this year on GRPS Parent University's website: [parents.grps.org](http://parents.grps.org).



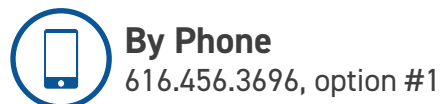
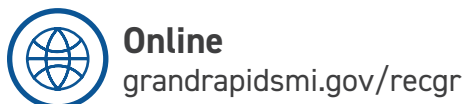


## LIVE VIRTUAL FITNESS SESSIONS

Join us online for the classes and instructors you know to stay fit and connect with fellow community members. All classes will be held live on a secure Zoom video conference.

**PRICING:** \$16 per 4-week session, \$12 per 3-week session

## THREE WAYS TO REGISTER



## YOGA

CLASSES RUN FOR 4 WEEKS STARTING THE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 2

Register online: [grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr](https://grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr)

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR
<b>BASIC YOGA</b> Discover your inner yogi in a class that builds strength and body awareness. Begin with gentle stretching and move to flowing through and holding poses. Class will come to a restful end.	MON	12:00 - 12:55 PM	VIRTUAL	KATIE V.
	MON	5:15 - 6:10 PM	VIRTUAL	TERRI S.
	TUE	6:30 - 7:25 PM	VIRTUAL	SARA R.
	WED	12:00 - 12:55 PM	VIRTUAL	KATIE V.
	WED	6:00 - 6:55 PM	VIRTUAL	SARA R.
	SAT	9:00 - 9:55 AM	VIRTUAL	SARA R.
<b>GENTLE YOGA</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	VIRTUAL	TERRI S.
	THU	9:00 - 9:55 AM	VIRTUAL	TERRI S.
<b>VITAL MOVEMENT</b> Strength, flexibility and balance are vital to our well-being. This class combines yoga stretches and poses (from the chair and standing only), along with light core work. No mat required. Perfect for anyone needing to stretch, improve their range of motion, or modify their practice as they recover from injuries. This class is great for any age, especially those 50+.	WED	9:00 - 9:45 AM	VIRTUAL	TERRI S.

## CARDIO & STRENGTH

CLASSES RUN FOR 4 WEEKS STARTING THE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 2 UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

Register online: [grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr](https://grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr) 

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR
<b>BOOTCAMP</b> Get ready to push yourself harder than you would on your own. With a mix of strength and cardio, this class is developed to help you improve your body composition, strength and endurance. Each week's workout will vary, challenging your body in different ways.	MON	6:00 - 6:55 PM	VIRTUAL	VALARIE J.
<b>CORE CAMP</b> Incorporate weight training and cardio blast intervals to keep your muscles and heart pumping. Combined with today's hottest music, this class is as much fun as it is effective.	TUE	5:30 - 6:25 PM	VIRTUAL	KRISTIN P.
<b>HIIT/STRETCH YOGA</b> Show your body some love. All you need is a mat for this high-intensity interval training (HIIT) & gentle yoga combo class. Get your heart rate up and burn fat through quick, intense bursts of exercise, followed by short, sometimes active, recovery periods. Finish class with a gentle yoga flow to stretch and soothe your body.	MON	8:00 - 8:55 AM	VIRTUAL	TABITHA R.
<b>KICKBOXING</b> Mix up your routine with balance, coordination and strength-building moves. Strengthen your legs, upper body, abs and burn calories.	WED	6:00 - 6:55 PM	VIRTUAL	VALARIE J.
<b>POP PILATES</b> POP Pilates is a combination of ab chiseling and total body defining moves choreographed to music! Not only will you focus on strengthening your core, but you will also improve your posture, flexibility and tone your muscles. This type of workout requires no socks and shoes, just a yoga mat and water.	TUE	6:00 - 6:45 PM	VIRTUAL	TABITHA R.
<b>POUND®</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. Punch card holders must have their own Ripstix®. Ripstix® available at registration for \$20. <b>\$12 for 3 classes.</b>	THU NOV 5 - 19	5:30 - 6:15 PM	VIRTUAL	KRISTIN P.
<b>STRONG30</b> STRONG30 packs a total body workout into 30 minutes. It combines HIIT (high intensity interval training), body weight exercises, and cardio moves. In every class, the music and moves sync together in a way to help push you past your limits and reach your fitness goals.	SAT	9:00 - 9:30 AM	VIRTUAL	AMY K.

## DANCE FITNESS

CLASSES RUN FOR 4 WEEKS STARTING THE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 2 UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

Register online: [grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr](https://grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr) 

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR
<b>GROOVE</b> Sweat away stress and dance some joy into your heart while following simple steps and easy toning moves. Groove is perfect for anyone who wants to add some fun into their current workout routine.	WED	5:15 - 6:10 PM	VIRTUAL	TERRI S.
<b>ZUMBA</b> A fusion of Latin and International music. This class combines high-energy and motivating music with unique moves and combinations. <b>\$12 for 3 classes.</b>	THU NOV 5 - 19	6:30 - 7:25 PM	VIRTUAL	AMY K. & BRI C.

## IN-PERSON FITNESS SESSIONS

We're offering outdoor and indoor in-person recreation throughout the month of November. Physical distancing, participant maximums and frequent sanitization of shared equipment will be in place for safety.

### THREE WAYS TO REGISTER

	<b>Online</b> <a href="http://grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr">grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr</a>		<b>By Phone</b> 616.456.3696, option #1		<b>In Person</b> 201 Market Ave SW
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## INDOOR CLASSES

CLASSES RUN FOR 4 WEEKS STARTING THE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 9

Register online: [grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr](http://grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr)

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR
<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. <b>\$16 for 4 classes.</b>	MON SAT	5:45 - 6:30 PM 8:00 - 8:45 PM	P&R CYCLING STUDIO (201 MARKET AVE SW)	CAROL S. CAROL S.
<b>PILATES</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. <b>\$16 for 4 classes.</b>	MON	6:00 - 6:55 PM	P&R FITNESS STUDIO (201 MARKET AVE SW)	ZIYAH D.


## OUTDOOR CLASSES

Register online: [grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr](http://grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr)

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR
<b>FREE GROOVE</b> Sweat away stress and dance some joy into your heart while following simple steps and easy toning moves. Groove is perfect for anyone who wants to add some fun into their current workout routine. <b>No registration necessary, just drop in! Weather permitting.</b>	TUESDAY NOV 3	6:15 - 7:00 PM	555 MONROE AVE NW	HEATHER W.
<b>FREE STRONG NATION</b> Strong Nation is a HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training) class that includes body weight strength exercises, fast cardio moves, plyometrics, and agility training. Music and moves sync together to help push you past your limits to reach your fitness goals. <b>Bring your own mat. No registration necessary, just drop in! Weather permitting.</b>	TUESDAY NOV 10	6:15 - 7:00 PM	555 MONROE AVE NW	AMY K.
<b>FREE KICKBOXING</b> Mix up your routine with balance, coordination and strength-building moves. Strengthen your legs, upper body, abs and burn calories. <b>No registration necessary, just drop in! Weather permitting.</b>	TUESDAY NOV 17	6:15 - 7:00 PM	555 MONROE AVE NW	VALARIE J.
<b>FREE ZUMBA</b> A fusion of Latin and International music. This class combines high-energy and motivating music with unique moves and combinations <b>No registration necessary, just drop in! Weather permitting.</b>	MONDAYS NOV 2 - 23	6:30 - 7:25 PM	ROSA PARKS CIRCLE	AMY K. & BRI C.
<b>STRONG NATION</b> Strong Nation is a HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training) class that includes body weight strength exercises, fast cardio moves, plyometrics, and agility training. Music and moves sync together to help push you past your limits to reach your fitness goals. <b>Bring your own mat. \$16 for 4-week session. Register at <a href="http://grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr">grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr</a>.</b>	WED NOV 4 - 25	6:30 - 7:25 PM	555 MONROE AVE NW	AMY K.
<b>TURKEY BURN ZUMBA</b> Join us for a 90-minute Zumba dance party on Thanksgiving morning. You'll burn off the calories before the big meal and feel great while you're doing it. It starts early so you can come out and get your dance on then get right out without missing your Thanksgiving day plans. <b>\$5 per person. Space is limited - register early at <a href="http://grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr">grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr</a></b>	THURSDAY NOV 26	8:30 - 10:00 AM	555 MONROE AVE NW	AMY K.



## YOUTH - DANCE

Register online: [grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr](https://grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr) 

CLASS	SESSION(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)
<b>BALLET (AGES 4-7)</b> This class will develop coordination, balance and rhythm through basic ballet/tap moves and creative movement. Participants should wear ballet shoes. <b>\$20/resident, \$30/nonresident.</b>	MONDAYS NOV 9 - 30	10:00- 10:45 AM	201 MARKET AVE SW
<b>HIP HOP (AGES 4-9)</b> Learn the fundamentals of hip hop movement and develop body control in an upbeat and high-energy environment. <b>\$16/resident or nonresident.</b>	TUESDAYS NOV 10 - DEC 1	6:00- 6:45 PM	VIRTUAL - JOIN FROM HOME!
<b>JAZZ/FUNK (AGES 4-7)</b> Gets kids up and moving! An upbeat class that explores jazz technique while adding in some funky hip-hop moves. <b>\$20/resident, \$30/nonresident.</b>	WEDNESDAYS NOV 11 - DEC 2	10:00- 10:45 AM	201 MARKET AVE SW

## YOUTH - ENRICHMENT CLASSES

Register online: [grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr](https://grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr) 

CLASS	SESSION(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)
<b>SAFE SITTER ESSENTIALS (GRADES 6-8)</b> Designed to prepare students in grades 6-8 to be safe when they're home alone, watching younger siblings, or babysitting. The Instructor-led class is filled with fun games and role-playing exercises. Students learn skills in safety, child care, first aid & rescue, and life & business. <b>Virtual session: \$49; In-person session: \$49/resident, \$59/nonresident.</b>	TUE & THU NOV 10, 12, 17, 19	4:00- 5:15 PM	VIRTUAL - JOIN FROM HOME!
	SATURDAY NOV 14	9:00 AM - 2:30 PM	201 MARKET AVE SW
<b>SAFE AT HOME (GRADES 4-6)</b> A 90-minute class designed for students in grades 4-6 that teaches them to stay safe and learn safe habits when they are at home alone for a short period of time. Students learn safe habits (indoor safety, outdoor safety, online safety and personal safety), rules to follow, handling emergencies (weather emergencies, power failures, smoke/fire/gas/carbon monoxide alerts, break-ins), preventing injuries and injury management. Handbook included. <b>Virtual session: \$39; In-person session: \$39/resident, \$49/nonresident.</b>	TUE & THU NOV 17 & 19	5:20- 6:05 PM	VIRTUAL - JOIN FROM HOME!
	SATURDAY NOV 11	4:00 - 5:30 PM	201 MARKET AVE SW

## EASY MANDALA MAKING (VIRTUAL)

Register online: [grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr](https://grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr) 

Looking for something mindful + creative to do with the whole family, or just by yourself? Join Terri for this virtual Zoom workshop to learn the basics of mandala making and how this meditative practice can bring calm to your world. There are no mistakes in mandala making, and no complicated patterns to master, making it a perfect activity for all ages and skill levels. Mandalas help improve your memory and focus, reduce stress, and can clear your mind. Every mandala is as unique as the person creating it. **\$10/household, all ages.**

### Supplies needed:

- Blank white paper
- Pencil + eraser
- Black marker for outline
- Color markers, gel pens, crayons
- Circles of various sizes (get creative with whatever is around your house! Vases, plates, cans or circle templates, if you have them)
- Ruler or straight edge of some sort

### Sessions:

- Saturday, November 7 from 10:00 - 11:30 am
- Saturday, November 14 from 1:00 - 2:30 pm
- Thursday, November 19 from 7:00 - 8:30 pm



# 2020/21 PARK MILLAGE PROJECTS

## RECENTLY COMPLETED

- **Belknap Park** – Electrical upgrades to pickleball and bike polo courts.
- **Foster Park** – New ornamental fencing, new bench and picnic seating, new chess table, and improved landscaping.
- **Mackay-Jaycee Park** – Playground updates including new poured-in-place surfacing, new outdoor exercise equipment, new beach volleyball courts, and upgrades to athletic fields, and concession/restroom building.
- **555 Monroe North** – Skate/Bike/Scoot facility in partnership with Downtown Grand Rapids, Inc.
- **Plaster Creek Family Park** – New nature playscape, outdoor classroom, accessible walkways, and green infrastructure in partnership with Wege Foundation, Environmental Services Department and GRPS.



Plaster Creek Family Park



Foster Park



Mackay-Jaycee Park



Mackay-Jaycee Park

## CURRENT AND UPCOMING CONSTRUCTION

- **Aman Park** – Expected to start this winter. Improvements will include erosion control, new pedestrian bridge, entrance drive improvements and signage upgrades.
- **Bike Park Phase II** – Anticipate bidding this winter. Improvements will include a new picnic shelter and building removal.
- **Burton Woods** – Expected to start this winter. Improvements will include improved entryways, new benches and litter receptacles, fence removal (along the north and northeast portion of the property) and a small natural play area.
- **Camelot Park** – Expected to start Spring 2021. Improvements will include a new splash pad.
- **Caulfield Park** – Expected to start this winter. Improvements will include new lighting, drinking fountain, swing set, and custom bench designed by students at Cook Arts Center.
- **Clemente Park** – Under construction. Improvements will include a new restroom building and picnic shelter, outdoor discovery play area, pathways with pedestrian lighting and green infrastructure improvements.
- **Covell Dog Park** – Expected to start in Spring 2021. Improvements will include separate areas for small and large dogs, new shade structure, new drinking fountain and play components.
- **Eastern Park** – Under construction. Improvements will include new pathways, swing set, basketball court, benches and grill.
- **Ken-O-Sha Park** – Construction has started and will last through next spring. Improvements will include new nature play, outdoor classroom, green infrastructure, pathways, and trailhead upgrades.
- **Kensington Park** – Expected to start this winter. Improvements will include an upgraded picnic area with tables and grills, improved athletic field drainage, improved playground and a new entrance pathway.
- **Lexington Park** – Construction complete. Improvements include new shelter, seating, swing, hammock grove, and tree plantings.
- **Pleasant Park** – Expected to start this winter. Improvements will include a new swing set and shade sails for the playground, new water spigot, entryway improvements and rain garden upgrades.
- **Rosa Parks Circle** – Expected start in Spring 2021. Improvements will include upgraded and new seating, steps, granite, lighting, stage space, restrooms and landscaping.
- **Richmond Park** – Under construction. Improvements will include new path around the pond, stairs and fencing for the sledding hill, new trailhead signage and upgrades to the trails and pool house entrance. Fundraising for future playground improvements is underway with the Mitten Foundation.
- **Riverside Park** – Project was on hold due to frozen state funding. Construction expected to start Spring 2021. Improvements will include a new picnic shelter and restroom, new accessible kayak launch, upgrades to tables grills and benches throughout the park and native plantings at the lagoon edge.
- **Sigsbee Park** – Expected start this winter. Improvements in coordination with GRPS will include a new nature-based play structure, new landscape beds with trees and bikeable landscape, and repainted plaza embankment.

Learn more about past, current, and future projects at [grandrapidsmi.gov/parks](https://grandrapidsmi.gov/parks)



# ICE SKATING

## AT ROSA PARKS CIRCLE

### THE 2020/21 SEASON BEGINS NOVEMBER 27, WEATHER PERMITTING

#### ADMISSION

Youth (17 and under): \$1  
Adult (18 and up): \$3

#### PUNCH CARDS\*

12 punches: \$10  
24 punches: \$18

\*Youth admission is 1 punch, adult admission is 3 punches.

#### SEASON PASS

Youth (17 and under): \$20  
Adult (18 and up): \$50

#### RINK UPDATES

New guidelines amid COVID-19 will be announced on Facebook (@RosaParksSkating) and the rink website in early November.

Special events, weather, and maintenance may change the open skate schedule. For up-to-date information please visit [grandrapidsmi.gov](http://grandrapidsmi.gov), keyword: "rosa", visit our Facebook page @RosaParksSkating, or call the cancellation hotline at 616.456.3699.

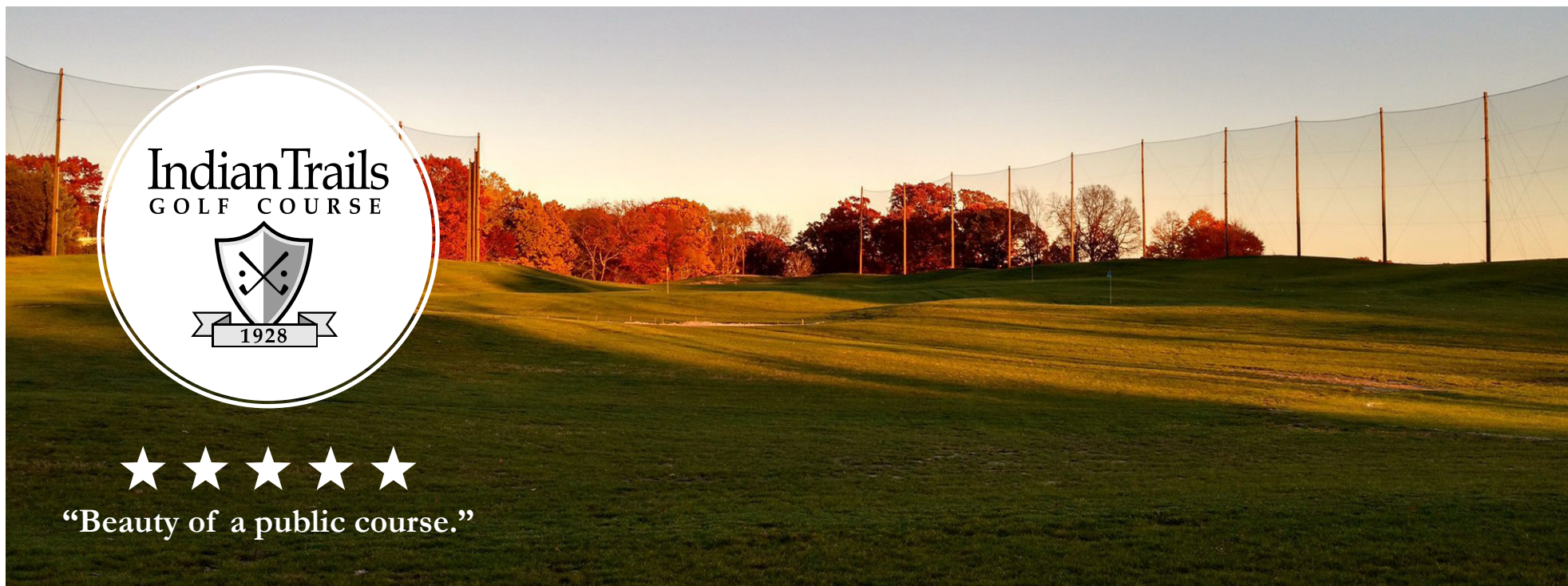


Join us at Indian Trails Golf Course (2776 Kalamazoo Ave SE) for family-friendly winter activities! Explore marked trails for fat tire biking, snowshoeing and cross country skiing. The clubhouse will be open during select hours for hot chocolate sales and snowshoe rentals.

**Pricing:**  
\$3 for the day, \$15 for the season

**Learn more:**  
[indiantrailsgc.org/winterfun](http://indiantrailsgc.org/winterfun)





“Beauty of a public course.”



## Daily Fall Rates Dawn to Dusk

**9 Holes Walking**  
\$12.00

**9 Holes With Cart**  
\$20.00

**18 Holes Walking**  
\$16.00

**18 Holes With Cart**  
\$29.00

## Practice Facility Open Daily

**Free Admission**  
Open to the Public

## Driving Range Open Daily

**Mondays, 11:00 am – Dusk**

**Tuesdays, Dawn – Dusk**

**Wednesdays, Dawn – Dusk**

**Thursdays, 11:00 am – Dusk**

**Fridays, Dawn – Dusk**

**Saturdays, Dawn – Dusk**

**Sundays, Dawn – Dusk**

## Range Rates

**50 range balls**  
\$7.50

**100 range balls**  
\$12.50

Learn more at [indiantrailsgc.org](http://indiantrailsgc.org) or 616.245.2021



Grand Rapids  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

## OPEN HOURS

### MAIN LIBRARY\*

111 Library St NE | 616.988.5400

Monday | 1 – 7 pm  
Tuesday | 1 – 7 pm  
Wednesday | 10 am – 4 pm  
Friday | 10 am – 4 pm  
Saturday | 10 am – 4 pm

### MADISON SQUARE BRANCH

1201 Madison SE | 616.988.5411

Monday | 1 – 7 pm  
Tuesday | 1 – 7 pm  
Wednesday | 10 am – 4 pm  
Friday | 10 am – 4 pm

### OTTAWA HILLS BRANCH

1150 Giddings SE | 616.988.5412

Monday | 1 – 7 pm  
Tuesday | 1 – 7 pm  
Wednesday | 10 am – 4 pm  
Friday | 10 am – 4 pm

### SEYMOUR BRANCH\*

2350 Eastern SE | 616.988.5413

Monday | 1 – 7 pm  
Tuesday | 1 – 7 pm  
Wednesday | 10 am – 4 pm  
Saturday | 10 am – 4 pm

### VAN BELKUM BRANCH

1563 Plainfield NE | 616.988.5410

Monday | 1 – 7 pm  
Tuesday | 1 – 7 pm  
Wednesday | 10 am – 4 pm  
Friday | 10 am – 4 pm

### WEST LEONARD BRANCH\*

1017 Leonard NW | 616.988.5416

Monday | 1 – 7 pm  
Tuesday | 1 – 7 pm  
Wednesday | 10 am – 4 pm  
Saturday | 10 am – 4 pm

### WEST SIDE BRANCH

713 Bridge NW | 616.988.5414

Monday | 1 – 7 pm  
Tuesday | 1 – 7 pm  
Wednesday | 10 am – 4 pm  
Friday | 10 am – 4 pm

### YANKEE CLIPPER BRANCH\*

2025 Leonard NE | 616.988.5415

Monday | 1 – 7 pm  
Tuesday | 1 – 7 pm  
Wednesday | 10 am – 4 pm  
Saturday | 10 am – 4 pm

\*Offers GRPL To Go

[WWW.GRPL.ORG/REOPEN](http://WWW.GRPL.ORG/REOPEN)

# Welcome Back to GRPL: All Locations Reopened October 12

The Grand Rapids Public Library reopened all of its locations starting October 12, 2020. GRPL's buildings have been closed to the public since March in response to COVID-19.



During Phase III of the Reopening Plan, limited services will be available to the public, including:

- Library account assistance
- Public computers and WiFi
- Reference questions
- Holds pickup
- Free printing, copying, and faxing
- Material browsing in the stacks at all branch locations. The Main Library's stacks will be closed but will offer a retrieval service.
- Research by appointment only in the Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
- GRPL To Go Curbside pick up at select locations
- Virtual programs

To ensure the safety of patrons and staff, masks are required for entry and visits will be limited to 30 minutes. Buildings have been modified with plexiglass shields and signage to ensure social distancing. Other safety measures include limiting the number of people in buildings at one time and reduced open hours.

“Since we closed our doors in March, GRPL staff has been working behind the scenes to create safe and innovative ways for patrons to use their library,” remarked Library Director John McNaughton. “In the past six months we have launched virtual programs, a curbside pick up service, online library card registrations, virtual reference services, family-focused outdoor events, collaborative outreach initiatives, and much more. Our facilities staff have modified our buildings and developed procedures that ensure the health and safety of everyone who walks through our doors. We took our time to get it right, and now we are ready to welcome our community back into our buildings.”

The complete GRPL reopening plan is available at [www.grpl.org/reopen](http://www.grpl.org/reopen).

## Get Your Library Materials with GRPL To Go



GRPL To Go is a safe and easy way to get physical books, movies, and music from the library.

To get started, browse the online library catalog and place holds on the items that interest you. You can have up to 25 holds at one time.

When the items you placed on hold are available and ready for pick up, the library will notify you by text, email, or phone. You have up to 14 days to pick up your items after you are notified that they are in.

Drive to the GRPL location you selected to pick up your holds. Park your vehicle in a GRPL To Go spot and call or text the number on the sign. Please give your full name and a description of your vehicle. If there is more than one person with your name, we may also need your date of birth or library card number. A staff member will bring out your library material to you.

Our staff are using Personal Protection Equipment like face masks and are practicing social distancing to ensure that GRPL To Go is safe for both patrons and staff.

When you are done with your items, please return them to any outside GRPL book drop. All returned material will be heat treated and quarantined for five days. GRPL has eliminated late fees on overdue material, so don't worry if you need an extra day or two to finish your book.

GRPL To Go is offered at the Main Library, Seymour Branch, West Leonard Branch, and Yankee Clipper Branch. GRPL To Go hours are the same as building open hours. To learn more about GRPL To Go, visit [www.grpl.org/togo](http://www.grpl.org/togo).

## GRPL's New Mobile Library Brings the Library to You



GRPL's new Mobile Library brings internet access and library services to community hubs. Each week, it will visit schools and community centers to expand access to technology and library resources.

### Mobile Library Schedule and Stops

*Hispanic Center of West Michigan*  
1204 Grandville Ave SW  
Tuesdays, 4:00 – 6:00 pm

*Boys & Girls Club Seidman Center*  
139 Crofton St  
Thursdays, 3:30 – 5:30 pm

*LINC Up*  
1167 Madison Ave SE  
Saturdays, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

### What services does the Mobile Library offer?

#### *Holds pick up*

Place a hold through your account on our online catalog or call 616-988-5400. When you call, tell library staff that you want your items to go to a mobile library stop. You will receive a notification via phone, email, or text when your request is ready for pick-up.

Keep your items until the due date or return them at your next mobile library stop. Grand Rapids Public Library is a fine free library. The mobile library will not be able to process any fines or fees at its location. Renew your items in person, phone, or online by accessing your account in our library catalog.

#### *Order a book bundle*

Check out a book bundle for children or adults. Book bundles are an assortment of titles for kids and teens selected by GRPL staff. A book bundle can be requested at [www.grpl.org](http://www.grpl.org).



#### *Library Card Sign-up*

Sign up for a library card at any one of our mobile library stops! Please bring identification and verification of mailing address. In addition to checking out books and other materials, you can access online collections of eBooks, eAudiobooks, digital magazines, and streaming movies and TV shows with your library card.



#### *Free WiFi and technology help*

At each of our stops, you will be able to use our free WiFi, get technology help, and use a public computer.

### Questions?

Learn more about GRPL's mobile library at [grpl.org](http://grpl.org) or contact us by emailing [mobilelibrary@grpl.org](mailto:mobilelibrary@grpl.org).

## Mobile Hotspot Lending Program Bridges Technology Gap

The Grand Rapids Public Library has collaborated with five community partners to lend hot spots to families without internet access. This new service expands internet access to local students and families as they navigate distance and hybrid learning.

GRPL has partnered with HQ — Runaway & Homeless Youth Drop-in Center, Early Learning Neighborhood Collaborative, Cook Arts Center, Baxter Community Center, and The Urban League to provide free mobile hotspots across Grand Rapids to households that lack high-speed internet connection. Mobile hotspots can deliver strong and secure internet connection from anywhere.

“With the expansion of virtual education across the city due to COVID-19, it’s imperative that we confront the digital equity gap,” remarked Jessica Anne Bratt, Community Engagement Coordinator at GRPL. “Students without access to high-speed internet experience an immeasurable disadvantage during distance learning. Providing hot spots to neighborhoods with high need promotes equitable learning opportunities.”

To reach deep into the communities who are most in need of mobile hotspots, GRPL identified and partnered with neighborhood organizations who actively engage and serve a large population of tech-disadvantaged households and residents.

Bratt continued, “COVID-19 has further compromised access to the internet as families experience unemployment or underemployment. Many struggle to pay for high-speed internet. GRPL is committed to bridging this technology gap through our community hotspot lending service.”



# GRPL Celebrates Hispanic Heritage with Family-Friendly Virtual Experiences

## Art & History Lecture | Día de los Muertos

Tuesday, October 27, 6:00 pm  
Virtual Program | GRPL's Facebook and YouTube channel

Join local artist, Rolando Mancera, for a virtual discussion! Learn more about Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) and the significance of the folk art figures and motifs often associated with this Mexican holiday.



## Watch Party | Macario (1960)

Friday, October 30, 2020, 6:00 pm  
Virtual Program | Watch2Gether, a link to this event will be shared a week before the event.

*This film is not rated.*



Photo Courtesy: El Globo Restaurant

## Latin Flavor Weekend Showcase

Saturday, October 31 and Sunday, November 1, 1:00 – 4:00 pm

Drop by a participating restaurant and present your GRPL library card to receive a delicious sampler plate for take out while supplies last. Limit one sampler plate per restaurant.

Participating restaurants include:

- El Globo Restaurant
- El Granjero Mexican Grill
- Panaderia Margo
- Tamales Mary

## Día de los Muertos Educational Altar Kits

GRPL is offering educational altar kits for local teachers, parents, and caregivers to share the traditions of Día de los Muertos at home or in the classroom. Altar Kits contain information about altar building and the supplies (like paper sugar skulls, plastic fruit, cut paper banners, and more) to create your own! Altars are available by request to any teacher or parent in Grand Rapids while supplies last. Limit one per classroom or household.

*GRPL celebra la Herencia Hispana con Experiencias virtuales para toda la familia*

## Discurso sobre arte e historia | Día de los Muertos

Martes, 27 de octubre, 6:00 pm  
Evento Virtual | Facebook Page y YouTube Channel de la GRPL

¡Júntate con el artista local, Rolando Mancera, para una discusión virtual! Infórmate más sobre el Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) y el significado de figuras y motivos populares asociados con esta fiesta mexicana.

## Watch Party [Fiesta para ver] | Macario (1960)

Viernes, 30 de octubre de 2020, 6:00 pm  
Programa Virtual | Watch2Gether [Mirar juntos] Se compartirá un enlace a este evento una semana antes del evento. *Esta película no está clasificada.*

## Sabor Latino | Muestra de fin de Semana

Sábado, 31 de octubre y el domingo, 1° de noviembre, 1:00 – 4:00 pm  
Pasa por uno de nuestros restaurantes participantes y presenta tu tarjeta de la biblioteca GRPL para recibir un delicioso plato de muestra para llevar, hasta agotar existencias. Límite: un plato de muestra por restaurante.

Restaurantes Participantes:

- El Globo Restaurant
- El Granjero Mexican Grill
- Panaderia Margo
- Tamales Mary



## Kits de Altar Educativo para el Día de los Muertos

GRPL ofrece kits de altar educativo. Comparte las tradiciones del Día de los Muertos con tus estudiantes a través del aprendizaje práctico. ¡Los "Altar Kits" contienen información sobre la construcción del altar y lo necesario (como calaveras de azúcar de papel, trozos de fruta falsos, carteles de papel cortados, etc.) para crear tu propio altar!

Los altares están disponibles a pedido de cualquier maestra o maestro de escuela o padres en Grand Rapids, hasta agotar existencias. Límite de uno por sala de clase.

## Free Events and Resources for Kids

### Social Justice Begins with Me: A Book Club for Kids

Saturday, November 14, 2020 & December 12, 2020  
10:30 – 11:30 am  
Virtual Program | Zoom  
Pre-registration required.

Social Justice Begins with Me is designed for children ages 4-11 and explores social justice topics that impact their daily lives through children's literature. Staff and community volunteers will read children's books on that month's social justice topic.

After the readings, we virtually discuss the month's topic in small groups. Participants will leave with instructions to a creative activity that can be done at home. This program is a partnership between the Grand Rapids Public Library, Safe Haven Ministries Gender Equity Reading Initiative, and the School of Social Work at GVSU.

November's topic: Racial Justice  
December's topic: Human Rights

### Phone-A-Storytime

Call the library's Phone-A-Story line each week to hear a new story read aloud by a GRPL Youth Librarian. Listen to pre-recorded stories, songs, and rhymes in English or Spanish. This service is accessible 24/7. Dial 616-988-5494 and follow the directions when prompted.

- For a preschool story in English, press 1
- For a preschool story in Spanish, press 2
- For a song or rhyme in English, press 3
- For a song or rhyme in Spanish, press 4
- Want to suggest a story or song, or provide feedback? Press 0

### Storytime Kits

Available November 2020 – January 2021

Stop by any GRPL branch and pick up a free Storytime Kit. These take-home kits include age-appropriate activities for babies, toddlers, and kids, and have helpful tips to support early literacy through reading, singing, talking, playing, and writing.

Request an English or Spanish kit by calling any GRPL location. Storytime Kits can be picked up using GRPL To Go, our curbside holds pickup service. Available while supplies last.

## Getting a Free Grand Rapids Public Library Card Has Never Been Easier



In order to provide library cards for students who are remote learning, the Grand Rapids Public Library built an online card registration system that allows for a quick and streamlined way for adults and kids to get a library card.

Most online card registration systems are expensive and designed for only adult card registrations. With the advent of COVID-19 and all Grand Rapids Public Schools moving to distance learning for the fall of 2020, the challenge was to create an online card system that could accommodate both adult and youth card registrations. The new system allows families to register for cards and enjoy access to library resources from home.

Registration is easy. Patrons simply fill out the application form and upload pictures of their identification and proof of address. Once submitted, GRPL staff verify the information, create a library card, and mail it to the address on file. The form was designed to make the sign-up process easy by allowing co-signers to request multiple youth cards at once rather than submitting separate applications.

### Sign up online for your free library card

To get a library card, you must be 18 or older and live within the city limits of Grand Rapids. Sign up by filling out the form at [www.grpl.org](http://www.grpl.org) and uploading pictures of your photo ID and home address. You may also use this form to register a child for a library card.

Your picture identification should be valid and include your current home address. Examples include:

- A driver's license or state identification
- A passport
- A military identification
- A green card

We will process your application within 2-3 business days. Your library card will be mailed to the address on your application. Once we verify your information, we delete any uploaded documents.

Online library cards are good for one year and provide access to GRPL's digital collections. During the COVID-19 pandemic, online cardholders can also use the GRPL To Go services and check out physical material.

Students who attend a college or university located within the City of Grand Rapids can also register online for a library card. College students do not need to live in Grand Rapids. Please upload documentation showing proof of current enrollment when applying for a library card.

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## The Grand Rapids Public Library Offers Remote Resume Help to Job Seekers

GRPL has a new service to help job seekers be successful in their employment search. Library patrons and Kent County residents can now upload their resume using the library's online form and receive feedback from trained library staff.

"Job-seeking is difficult when there's not a worldwide pandemic," said Steven Assarian, GRPL's Business and Career Librarian. "It makes us vulnerable, and it's a process that's difficult to navigate well. That's why we created our Remote Resume Review service. We want to ensure our patrons get the help they need, especially those who've been

impacted by COVID-19. With this service, we can help our patrons put their best foot forward and be primed for success while staying safe and healthy."

GRPL's remote resume service offers timely support from trained professionals that are tailored to each patron's needs. Resume evaluation includes feedback on format, design, recommendations on what to include, copy-editing, and more.

In addition to GRPL's Remote Resume service, the library's Small Business Resource Center offers 1:1 career consultations with staff. Patrons and

Kent County residents can schedule an appointment with the library's Business and Career Librarian to fine-tune their job seeking process, prepare for future interviews, identify strengths, or work on effective business plans.

Assarian continued, "Now more than ever, we need to help each other. The Small Business Resource Center is just one way your library helps entrepreneurs, nonprofits, and jobseekers get the information they need to be successful. Through our suite of SBRC services and resources, The Grand Rapids Public Library continues to be in your corner, helping you ask the



important questions to help you through your journey, wherever it may lead."





October 2020 | Section B

Renovations: 4

Theme Schools: 6-8

Turkey Trot: 11

## City, Schools Come Together to Create Green Schoolyards for Students

### *Parks at school sites provide play spaces, ecological benefits*

By Phil DeHaan, Courtesy of School News Network

The recent completion of a new green schoolyard and natural playscape at Burton Elementary/Middle School and Plaster Creek Family Park wrapped up a year-long project that saw numerous partners, including the City of Grand Rapids and Grand Rapids Public Schools, come together to create a better space for students and their families.

And over the next 12-18 months, similar makeovers will be completed at other parks as part of city/GRPS partnerships, including Brookside Elementary, Buchanan Elementary and Sigsbee Park.

The \$1 million project at Burton Elementary/Middle included valuable contributions already at the planning stage from Burton students and families. Those included design charrettes to get input from the young people who would be most using the new space. Students even took the designers on walks through the park on several occasions, showing them what they would like to see changed. The 19-acre park's northeast border is located just south and west of

Burton Elementary/Middle, at 2133 Buchanan Ave. SW.

Taking just over a year from groundbreaking to completion, the project added a raft of improvements, including an outdoor classroom called “The Nest” and a natural playscape called “The Meadows” that features a stump forest made from local trees harvested and stored by the Grand Rapids Forestry Division. The park also has a rain garden, a native plantings meadow, a picnic area for neighbors and more.

The goal for Burton students is more outdoor time, something Middle School principal Michael Perez, a native of Los Angeles and a graduate of an urban school district, can't wait to see happen if GRPS returns to in-person instruction.

“I think this park represents the idea that learning is not, nor should it be, confined to the classroom,” Perez said. “It's very exciting to see the project completed. Unfortunately, due to COVID, we have not been able to take full advantage of this great

■ SEE GREEN SCHOOLYARDS/ B2



A log tangle made from local trees in the center of ‘The Meadows’ natural playscape, which features a hillside slide and other natural play areas created from logs and boulders.

## From Trauma to Empathy

By Maleika Brown, Director of Equity and Inclusion, GRPS



In the past months, media and community conversations have been filled with trauma. Traumatic events such as those caused by COVID-19, the killing of black men and women at the hands of law enforcement, news of inhumane treatment of men, women, and children in ICE detention centers at our southern border, the current, yet unacknowledged, negative impact of stolen culture and language on our Native community, as well as rhetoric and images filled with hurt, anger, and hate continuously inundate our psyche. We unwittingly process this hurt over and over.

We know that our children's brains are formed and molded by stimuli and conversations beginning at birth. What have your children learned about handling tough topics and challenging situations surrounding race and racism; more importantly, from what or whom have they learned?

Talking with adults about race and racism issues is challenging; the prospect of talking with our children, whom we regard as needing to be protected, is even TOUGHER. However, if we desire our children to grow up to be empathetic,

kind, and compassionate human beings who can stand for what they believe is right, we must endeavor to provide them with the tools to be open to insight alongside discussion. It is important to note that adult conversations and actions are essential catalysts to development. But adults must be prepared. We must begin with ourselves.

As adults, we must acknowledge and honor the importance of recognizing and coming to terms with the effects of trauma within ourselves. None are exempt. Developing the ability to take inventory of our feelings of fear, doubt, anger, and mistrust precedes managing the trauma we face, as well as the development of empathy.

The inside-out work of developing empathy is deeply cultural. Begin this process by connecting with the circle that surrounds you. Take stock of your perspective and the perspectives of those in your ingroup. Can you detect ingroup bias? Commit to understanding how these perspectives affect others. This process involves understanding yourself, your culture, and committing to know and understand other cultures. Managementhelp.org suggests three guidelines for developing empathy:

1. Experience the major differences among other people
2. Learn how to identify your own feelings-develop emotional intelligence
3. Regularly ask others for their perspectives and/or

feelings regarding a situation

Our community offers many opportunities to be in fellowship with groups and cultures different from our own. Consider taking advantage of the unique diversity that we have within West Michigan. We've located multicultural resources for you at HelloWestMichigan.com. Keep in mind that the Grand Rapids Public Schools stands as an advocate and help, whether it be meeting students' and families' needs through counseling and social-emotional health or connecting families with community resources. One such program is the GRPS Native American Education Program. The NAEP program staff serves as a point of reference for Indigenous students and families and the broader Grand Rapids community. There are many more. Our staff stands ready to connect you to the community program that you seek to heal, learn, and grow.

Today, we encourage you to begin the critical inside-out work necessary for a healthy, inclusive Grand Rapids community. Most importantly, however, allow the development of a kind, compassionate, and empathetic future Grand Rapids community to be the motivating factor. Create the conditions in your homes and smaller communities for critical conversations about race, racism, and other forms of trauma experienced daily. These vital discussions and preparation are truly the work that is needed to heal. Find valuable resources at [embracepace.org](http://embracepace.org).

## Green Schoolyards CONTINUED FROM B1

park. Hopefully soon.”

In a statement, GRPS Superintendent Leadriane Roby noted: “The new outdoor classroom gives students and teachers the opportunity to broaden their educational experience through exploration of our natural world. The benefits of green schoolyards go well beyond serving students. The spaces provide countless benefits to the health and wellness of the community and environment.”

Grand Rapids Director of Parks and Recreation David Marquardt heartily agreed.

“This was an important investment,” he said. “It is in a park-deficient area of our city, so to be able to partner with the schools for use of their land was invaluable.”

Marquardt noted that the current projects have echoes of partnerships in the 1950s and 1960s between GRPS and the city’s parks department.

Back then the campaign was called SOS — Save Our Schools, and it saw new schools built in and around neighborhood parks.

At Burton Elementary/Middle, Marquardt is especially excited about a \$101,000 contribution from the city’s Department of Environmental Services, which went toward the construction of a wetland area that allows for a more sustainable approach to stormwater management and resulted in a wetland play space with log bridges and stepped boulder pathways.

“This will likely be a great teaching area,” he said, “and it speaks to the importance of sustainable stormwater management and watersheds.”

Other funding for the project includes a \$270,000 grant from the Wege Foundation and \$786,000 from the city’s 2013 parks millage. Grand Rapids also was among seven U.S. cities

to receive a \$25,000 planning grant from the National League of Cities and Children and Nature Network to enhance connections between children and nature.

The 2013 millage generates about \$4 million annually through property tax and expires in 2020, but the voters of Grand Rapids in November 2019 approved a new dedicated parks millage to replace the current one. It will generate approximately \$5 million of funding annually and is an evergreen millage with no end date.

“Partnerships and collaboration in Grand Rapids are the only way in which great projects like this happen,” said Marquardt. “Many cities speak about great collaborative efforts. Grand Rapids is the first city in which I’ve ever lived and worked where collaboration goes much further than just talk.”



A welcome sign to the recently renovated and reconfigured Plaster Creek Park, a collaboration between area organizations including the City of Grand Rapids and GRPS.



Seating in ‘The Nest’ outdoor classroom made from fallen trees harvested by the Grand Rapids Forestry Division.



At a ‘sneak peek’ event, students from Burton Elementary/Middle School were able to play on a log trench created using local trees that were harvested from the City of Grand Rapids Forestry Division (all photos courtesy City of Grand Rapids).



A bioswale and rain garden that winds through the park, creating a natural filter for runoff that flows from the park to Plaster Creek and eventually to the Grand River and beyond.

## Grand Rapids Public Schools

### WE ARE GR

October 2020

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 Sharron Pitts. Ms. Pitts may be contacted at 1331 Franklin SE, P.O. Box 117, Grand Rapids, MI 49501-0117, (616) 819-2030 or (616) 819-2028. 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) 819-6339 or [titleix@grps.org](mailto: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](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

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## Grand Rapids Community College Promise Zone Scholarship

Grand Rapids Community College welcomed 251 students through the Grand Rapids Promise Zone Scholarship this fall, and is creating personalized support services to help them succeed.

The Fall 2020 semester is the first for Promise Zone students to be enrolled at GRCC. The scholarship covers eligible students' costs of attending GRCC for up to 60 credit hours.

Eligible students who did not attend this fall can still enroll for the Winter 2020 semester, and can learn more at [gppromisezone.com](http://gppromisezone.com), [grcc.edu/promisezone](http://grcc.edu/promisezone) or by calling (616) 234-4321.

The Promise Zone scholarship ensures all eligible students who live within the city of Grand Rapids and graduate from one of the 24 public, public charter, or private high schools located within the city limits will have free access to GRCC's associate degree programs or to the job training and certification programs.

"The Promise Zone scholarships eliminate cost as a barrier to a quality GRCC education," GRCC President Bill Pink said. "Once students are here, we will make sure they have the support available to not just be successful, but to thrive. We are proudly on this journey together."

GRCC created student care teams for all students who enrolled through the Promise Zone, and has partnered with the Michigan College Action Network to bring two college completion coaches to support them.

Each Promise Zone student will be assigned an academic advisor and a success coach. Advisers will make sure the student has an academic and post-GRCC plan, whether that includes transferring to their next institution or entering a career. Career exploration opportunities can be provided for students deciding on a major.

The success coach will help students create an individualized plan, and will also work with

them to develop time management and test taking skills. The success coaches also will help students to explore and identify their strengths.

"We're proud of our strong start," said Evan Macklin, Promise Zone director. "The Promise Zone is a community partnership, leaders from across the city working together to provide opportunities and strengthen our region through higher education."

Eligible students have five years to access these funds from the time they graduate high school. Once enrolled, they must take at least six credits a semester. Students who opt to attend a different college or university can still use the Promise Zone scholarship as a GRCC guest student during the summer semesters.

GRCC has more than 150 degrees divided into 10 Academic Pathways. Students can explore pre-major degrees that will transfer seamlessly to a four-year university, or train for a career in the skilled trades.

- Students eligible for the Promise Zone Scholarship meet the following criteria:
- Live in the City of Grand Rapids
- Enrolled at an eligible Grand Rapids high school
- Graduated, or planning to graduate, from an eligible Grand Rapids high school

If you're eligible for the Promise Zone Scholarship or know someone who is considering enrolling, please note that GRCC has launched a variety of late-starting 10-week and 7-week courses for the Fall 2020 semester. There are job-training programs beginning in October and December and GRCC's winter semester starts Monday, January 11, 2021.

Interested in applying? Learn more at [gppromisezone.com](http://gppromisezone.com) or contact the Promise Zone director at [promisezone@grcc.edu](mailto:promisezone@grcc.edu).



**GRCC  
WEST  
MICHIGAN'S  
BEST CHOICE**

Our graduates who plan to earn their bachelor's degree are recruited by top four-year colleges and universities across Michigan. And our workforce graduates step into high-paying jobs in the skilled trades.

Your promise Zone scholarship covers the cost of Grand Rapids Community College tuition, fees and textbooks for eligible students. Enroll today to start working on your associate degree or career training.

[grcc.edu/PromiseZone](http://grcc.edu/PromiseZone)

**GRCC**

Grand Rapids  
**Promise Zone**

## Asbestos Notice

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

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

activities, periodic surveillance, cleaning, disclosure efforts and school building areas containing asbestos. Any person may review the management plan at the Grand Rapids Public School's Facilities Management Department, 900 Union, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503, during regular business hours (8:00 am to 4:00 pm). Plans may also be found on the district's website at [www.grps.org/facilities-asbestos-info](http://www.grps.org/facilities-asbestos-info). Alternatively, any person may request a copy of the plan by writing the Grand Rapids Public Schools Facilities Management Department, 900 Union, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503. There is a cost involved in reproducing the document of approximately 10 cents per page. The Grand Rapids Public Schools will send a copy out of the management plan within 5 business days of receiving the request.

## Two High Schools, Newly Renovated, Await Return of Students

### Ottawa, Union upgrades part of \$175 million bond in 2015

By Phil DeHaan, Courtesy of School News Network

As Long Nguyen gave a tour recently of the renovations at Ottawa Hills High School, he made a stop in the main office, located on the second level of a brand-new, 4,604-square-foot entry area located on the building's west side.

"How do you like the new space?" his tour guest asked one of the secretaries.

"It's great," she said, "but these drawers don't lock."

Nguyen quickly skirted around the Plexiglas barrier, adjusted his face mask to make sure it was in place and took a look at the offending drawers, pulling out his phone to take a picture and jot down a note.

"We'll take care of it," he said before moving on with the tour.

Just another day in the life of the director of design, construction, and renovation for Grand Rapids Public Schools.

Nguyen is a central figure in the recent renovations of both Ottawa Hills High School, his alma mater, and Union High School. As Long Nguyen gave a tour recently of the renovations at Ottawa Hills High School, he made a stop in the main office, located on the second level of a brand-new, 4,604-square-foot entry area located on the building's west side.

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Just another day in the life of the director of design, construction, and renovation for Grand Rapids Public Schools.

Nguyen is a central figure in the recent renovations of both Ottawa Hills High School, his alma mater, and Union High School. The two projects have consumed countless hours and days for Nguyen since they began in August 2019, for both him and for numerous tradespeople in West Michigan.

The extensive renovations on the approximately 50-year-old buildings will provide safer, more comfortable and attractive learning environments when students return, Nguyen said. Although fall sports have resumed, all GRPS students are taking virtual instruction for the first marking period.

"We want it to look nice but focus on the comfort," Nguyen said, during a separate tour of Union. "It really is (for) the comfort and safety of the kids."

#### Existing Systems Beyond their Useful Life

At Union, about 250 workers will have been part of the project by the time the work is complete next fall. They include almost 70 people in electrical, 70 in mechanical, 40 folks on the concrete and masonry side of things, 23 carpenters and a dozen painters.



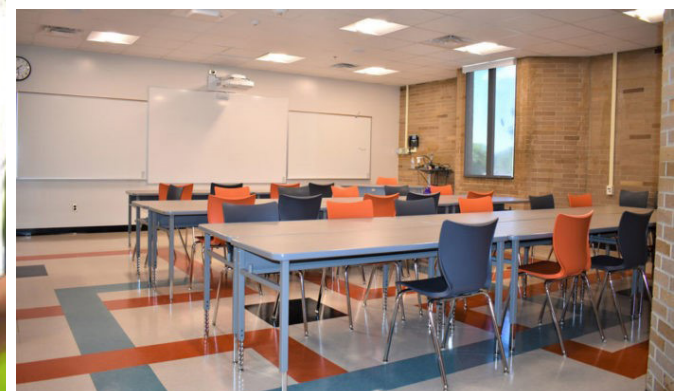
The new entry and drop-off area on the west side of Ottawa Hills High School.



Long Nguyen, director of design, construction and renovation for Grand Rapids Public Schools, at the new and secure main entrance of Union High School.



The main offices on the second floor of a new 4,604-square-foot addition at Ottawa Hills High School.



Classrooms at Ottawa Hills High School were updated with technology, furniture, new paint, improved lighting, re-done floors and more.

The numbers are a little less at Ottawa Hills, where a total of about 150 tradespeople have been part of the renovations, including 22 in concrete and masonry, 15 on drywall, 26 on electrical and 25 on mechanical. Both jobs also included GRPS facilities people to help support the contractors.

Of both schools, Nguyen, a man of few words, said simply: “Existing mechanical and electrical systems were beyond their useful life.”

The \$23 million Union project is expected to be complete in December 2021, while the \$21 million Ottawa Hills project is almost finished — this despite 33 working days lost from March 24 through May 11 because of COVID-19.

Both renovations are part of a 30-year, \$175 million school improvement bond approved in November 2015 with the majority, \$155 million, earmarked for construction.

And both will bring improved safety and security to the two sprawling schools. That includes secure vestibules at each school that route all visitors to the office area before being allowed into the school in a two-step process. The entries require an initial request to enter the vestibule with a video intercom, and a second door release to allow the visitor into the main office area.

#### New Main Entrances for Both Schools

At 323,829-square-foot Ottawa Hills, an old and sometimes hard-to-find entrance off Rosewood Avenue SE on the building’s east side will no longer function as the school’s front door. Rather,

a colorful and easy-to-spot main entrance has been constructed as part of the addition on the west side of the building. That addition features secure entry and an administration office addition with offices on both levels.

Less visible, but also important, said Nguyen, is 4,350 lineal feet of new HVAC rectangular ductwork and 1,725 lineal feet of spiral ductwork in the building. The ductwork replaced old pipes and will now carry air conditioning during months that used to render classrooms inhospitably hot. AC was also added at Union as well as converting the building to hot-water heat instead of steam.

The Ottawa Hills project also includes:

- Classroom renovations (new paint, floors and technology)
- Gymnasium and locker room renovations, including a new, 12,000-square foot wooden floor in the gym
- New kitchen and conversion of mall area to cafeteria

#### ‘About as Good as it Gets’

At 286,000-square-foot Union improvements include:

- Classroom renovations and expansions, including new paint, carpeting, furniture and technology
- Heating and cooling and electrical upgrades, including new boilers
- Gymnasium and locker room renovations, including a new gym floor, main-court basketball hoops and bleachers
- Art/music/science renovations

- Security entrances
- New ceiling tiles
- Renovated bathrooms, including single-user facilities

When Union students return to classes, they’ll also come through a new main entrance, in their case on the building’s north side rather than the former student entrance on the west. They too will be greeted by new floors and lockers, and step into renovated classrooms featuring whiteboards with smart technology.

Kurt Sattler, a government and AP history teacher, was leading an online class from his room on a recent morning. While navigating the tricky business of Zoom instruction, he welcomed the return of students and the room’s enhanced technology, including a new audio system.

“We had been using overheads that weren’t smart,” said Sattler, adding the new smartboards and online tools will be helpful for many teachers. “This is about as good as it can get. We’re doing a good job.”

Principal Aaron Roussey said staff and students are thankful to the community for supporting the 2015 bond that made the Union renovations possible.

“We have a fantastic student body that is eager to put to use all the new technology and facility upgrades,” Roussey said. “A big thank you from the ‘U.’”



Pat Doane of the Schepers Brothers Co. installs new ceiling tile in the lobby outside the Union High gymnasium.



A new kitchen is ready to serve students at OHHS.



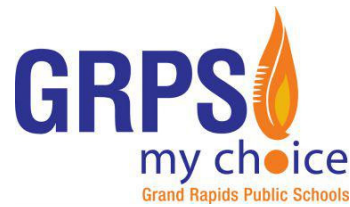
New flooring and lockers brighten the hallways of Union High.



Union High government and history teacher Kurt Sattler teaches remotely from his classroom, featuring new ceiling tile, carpeting and audio-visual technology.



Ottawa’s renovated gym includes a new, 12,000-square-foot wooden floor, new paint and improved lighting.



## THEME SCHOOL APPLICATION OPENS JANUARY 2021!

*The COVID 19 pandemic continues to alter many aspects of our lives. As a result, the theme school application for the 2021-2022 school year will be available on January 4, 2021. The first round deadline will be February 26, 2021. As a district, we want to ensure that every student has the opportunity to participate in our theme school application process. Many of the traditional theme school supports, such as school choice expos, will need to be adapted for the pandemic. We are taking our time and making sure these supports are done correctly. Thank you for your continued patience and understanding. More detailed communications and information will follow as we approach January.*

The Montessori environment contains specially designed, hands-on materials that invite children to engage in learning activities of their own choosing. Under the guidance of a specially trained teacher, children in a Montessori classroom learn by making discoveries with the materials, cultivating concentration, motivation, self-discipline and a love of learning. Students learn in cohorts of three age levels. The multi-age classroom allows the students to become part of a learning community that fosters respect, understanding, and tolerance.



(PK3 - 12)



(PK3 - 8)



(PK3 - 6)



**CA FROST ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE ACADEMY (K - 12)\*** is designed to offer an experiential, hands-on approach for students interested in environmental science. Examples include local flora and fauna studies, ice and fly-fishing/ angling instruction, adventure learning, local habitat studies, rock and mineral studies, naturalist studies, organic gardening and vermicomposting, greenhouse management and supplying local restaurants with hydroponically-grown produce, academy-wide Reduce, Reuse, Recycle program, "leave no trace" primitive camping training, sugarbush maple syrup collection, birding experiences, other wildlife observation, and more!



**COIT CREATIVE ARTS ACADEMY (K - 5)\*** is where artistic students thrive! The arts are incorporated into all fields of learning, including math and science. Visual arts, music, dance, and performance are all used as tools to further students' learning. Students at Coit enjoy exciting trips to the symphony, ballet, plays, musicals and more! Coit is also in the candidacy phase of becoming an International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme school, the global standard of excellence in education.



**GERALD R. FORD ACADEMIC CENTER (K - 8)\*** offers a college-focused culture where students embrace the idea that college is important and prepare for this goal by building habits of excellent scholarship and leadership. Students learn in small classes that foster civic and community leadership, develop character and integrity and participate in service-learning projects. At Ford, expectations are always high, including for parents and guardians, as outlined in the parent/ guardian compact. Placement in the program is contingent on a parent/ guardian interview, according to the selection criteria.



**SHERWOOD PARK GLOBAL STUDIES ACADEMY (K - 5)\*** is where tradition meets technology. Students are prepared for the global economy through language and cultural studies. Sherwood Park Global Studies Academy is located in Grand Rapids' southeast side, in a building filled with artwork that reflects the global studies theme and highlights the diversity of its students. Sherwood Park is in the candidacy phase of becoming an International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme school, the global standard of excellence in education.



**SOUTHWEST COMMUNITY CAMPUS (K-9)\*** offers a proven dual immersion experience in English and Spanish to help students become bilingual and bicultural. Research demonstrates that bilingual people are well-positioned for a successful future with more opportunities at college and in the workplace. Additionally, bilingual students perform better on standardized tests and are significantly more competitive in an increasingly global economy. In partnership with Plaza Roosevelt, Southwest will open a new \$20 million middle/high school campus, which will grow a grade each year until grade 12. SWCC accepts students at all grades, but because of the dual immersion model, students applying to grades 2 and above need to submit a theme school application and then test for proficiency in English and Spanish.



**BLANDFORD SCHOOL (6 ONLY)** extends beyond four walls and into the great outdoors, where your child will learn to identify different types of plants, trees, frogs, and birds. This experience is enhanced by two yearly camping trips where students learn team-building and outdoor skills. Additionally, students learn hands-on business skills by collecting and selling the eggs produced by the chickens. A year at Blandford is one your child will never forget! Nestled into the farm campus at Blandford Nature Center, the LEED-certified building is surrounded by 143 acres of forests, fields, and creeks, creating an organic and hands-on learning experience about the natural world.



center for economicology

**CENTER FOR ECONOMICOLGY (6 ONLY)** is a combination of the words “economy” and “ecology”. Coined by Peter Wege, the term advocates for reasoned, respectful, engaged stewardship of the Earth in service of both people and the planet. There are six guiding philosophies that provide the backbone for the Center for Economicology, known as the “Six E’s”. The Six E’s are ECOLOGY, ECONOMICS, EMPATHY, ENVIRONMENT, ETHICS, and EDUCATION.



**ZOO SCHOOL (6 ONLY)** believes in the importance of learning through collaboration. Students participate in a number of groups as well as individual projects throughout the year. Projects culminate in an independently-chosen final project that allows students to creatively demonstrate their research and presentation skills. Students have exclusive opportunities to participate in exciting activities at the Zoo, including animal feeding, raising salmon, recycling, navigating trials, and water sampling. Students also participate in two camping trips during the year.



**CITY HIGH/MIDDLE SCHOOL (7-12)** is proud to be an International Baccalaureate school. International Baccalaureate (IB), is an international program that expertly prepares students around the world for their post-secondary education. 7-10 grade students follow IB’s Middle Years Programme, or “MYP”, while 11 and 12 graders follow the Diploma Programme, or “DP”. Both programs are designed to encourage students to become lifelong learners who are naturally curious, seek knowledge to consider complex issues, and are able to communicate confidently and creatively. Qualifying math and reading NWEA (MAP) test scores are required for selection to City High/Middle (grades 7th - 9th). Students who are NOT current GRPS students are required to submit test scores with their application. Students who are not eligible based on all of the requirements are notified of ineligibility and are provided the opportunity to appeal with new scores.



**GRAND RAPIDS UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY ACADEMY (6-12)** is for students who value individualized learning plans in a rigorous college and career prep program. Students benefit from a culture of inclusion, innovation, and diversity in small class sizes utilizing project-based learning. Students create an individualized learning plan with input from their advisor and parent or guardian. This plan guides their work and is based on the student’s personal interests, skill level, maturity, and learning style. Students participate in interest-based projects in addition to their traditional classwork. Teachers use narratives, which provide specific and concrete feedback, help to inform the student’s given grade. Note: transportation is not provided for grades 6-8



**GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC MUSEUM SCHOOL (6 - 11)** is filled with unique objects and artifacts from the community as well as around the world! Students have exclusive opportunities to touch, see, and learn from these historical items every day. This hands-on approach to learning activates the mind and a child’s natural curiosity. Primary sources and their stories help students connect history, culture, art, science, and other subjects. Each day at the Museum School is different from the one before and activities often take students outside the classroom into the community. Students will be active every day and outdoors frequently.

**INNOVATION CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL** combines all the innovation, talent, resources, and partnerships of five academies on one campus.



**ACADEMY OF BUSINESS, LEADERSHIP & ENTREPRENEURSHIP (9 & 10)** teaches students about business, management, marketing, and finance through cutting edge classroom instruction, internships, and real-world experience.

**ACADEMY OF DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION (9 & 10)** engages students in architecture, engineering, design, and construction through real-world and hands-on experiences.



**ACADEMY OF HEALTH SCIENCES & TECHNOLOGY (9 & 10)** goes beyond the classroom to develop the skills, knowledge, and personal characteristics needed in the healthcare industry.

**ACADEMY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING & MATH (9 & 10)** combines high-quality STEM education with college and career preparation.



**ACADEMY OF TEACHING & LEARNING (9 ONLY)** is proud to partner with Ferris State University School of Education on curriculum design, dual enrollment opportunities, and hands-on student teaching opportunities. Students will have the opportunity to earn up to 7 credits from Ferris State University through dual enrollment.



**OTTAWA HILLS HIGH SCHOOL** is home to innovation focused on new college-career prep academies offering work-based learning experiences, internships, and apprenticeships.

**ACADEMY OF HOSPITALITY & TOURISM (9 ONLY)** helps students chart career paths in one of the world's largest industries, including lodging, sports, entertainment, travel, food, and event management. Ottawa Hills High School has partnered with the National Academy Foundation to help the students meet the needs of this growing industry, emphasizing customer service and the mastery of tangible skills.



**EARLY MIDDLE COLLEGE (10 ONLY)** is where students, beginning in 10th grade, take college courses along with high school classes. Students in the program complete a 13th year made up primarily of college courses. Students graduate after year 13 with a high school diploma and an associate degree for free, with at least 60 transferable credits. Students must have a minimum of a 2.5 grade point average to qualify.



*Transcripts are required to be submitted with your application for grades 10 (non-GRPS students only). Placement of students in grades 11 & 12 is handled on a case-by-case basis.*



## We Exist to Reinforce Equitable Education at GRPS

The Grand Rapids Public Schools Foundation is on a mission to affect change by inspiring the community to take action in reinforcing enhanced and equitable educational experiences for all Grand Rapids Public Schools students. We do this by implementing game-changing strategies and cultivating partnerships with public education champions.

It is no surprise that philanthropic support is more critical than ever. Amid a worldwide pandemic and budget shortfalls, many districts find themselves forced to make hard decisions resulting in program cuts and neighborhood schools closing. Hit the hardest are districts that serve more students of color. In many communities, the inequitable landscape of education pushes families with means to districts with higher tax bases and traps families with fewer resources in underperforming schools. This churn forces districts to make further cuts, often eliminating programs like music, art, and athletics. Rather than feeling like a pathway to a future where anything is possible, these schools become desolate places.

The Grand Rapids Public School (GRPS) district is not immune to these challenges and has endured difficulty. Yet something significant has set GRPS apart from other urban districts around the country – the Grand Rapids Public Schools Foundation. Born out of the community’s commitment to investing in its kids and ensuring every one of them can learn, grow, and thrive.

However, 2020 and beyond looks different and what these



*Through a generous gift from Laurie Huizenga, a visionary and a former teacher, Good Things Happen to Readers encourages GRPS students to discover the joy of reading. This program has impacted thousands of first grade GRPS students by putting books into their hands, hearts, and homes!*

last few months have taught us is that a playbook does not exist, but building and creating successful futures for our students still do. Education, as we know it, is different. As a Foundation, as a community, the way we respond to and meet the district’s needs must change with it. That means the GRPSF must remain flexible and continue to position itself to raise donor dollars that meet the greatest needs.

Regardless of the particular focus area or initiative, the work that GRPSF does in the district and community is taking steps to remove inequities – between different schools and between students – and creating a more level playing field. This work is supported by individuals, businesses, and foundations that recognize an equitable education directly correlates to a more

equitable community. In a perfect world, equity in education would be achieved and supported through a fair allocation of state and federal resources. However, until that day arrives, GRPSF will be there, shining a light on the gaps that still exist and inviting the community to step forward and make a difference.

As the Grand Rapids Public Schools Foundation plans for the future, our commitment and dedication to affording GRPS students the opportunities to reach far beyond their potential are unwavering. And with the help of the community and donors, we can continue to meet the vital educational needs of GRPS. For more information on how you can make an impact on Grand Rapids Public School students, visit [www.grpsf.org](http://www.grpsf.org)



**PROUDLY SUPPORTING GRPS SINCE 1993**



*The arts cultivate a student’s natural creativity, significantly influencing motor skills and language development. Music instruction, like band and orchestra, help students stay connected, active and engaged.*



# Daily Tips Before You Leave for School



## How are you feeling? Symptoms include:

- Cough
- Fever (100.4 degrees or higher)
- Chills
- Achy muscles
- Trouble breathing
- Headache
- Runny nose
- Sore throat
- Difficulty tasting or smelling
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea

Use your school district's screening tool or a symptom checker, like [covid19symptomchecker.spectrumhealth.org](https://covid19symptomchecker.spectrumhealth.org). Check with your local health department for the full list of COVID-19 symptoms.

I have symptoms, not feeling great.

## If you have symptoms\*

- Don't come to school.
- Call your doctor. You can also schedule a free screening through the Spectrum Health COVID-19 hotline at 833.559.0659.
- Check testing locations and other resources, including [michigan.gov/coronavirus](https://michigan.gov/coronavirus) or [spectrumhealth.org/covid19](https://spectrumhealth.org/covid19).
- Follow your school district's attendance policy.

\* Or if you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive.

No symptoms, I feel great!

## Do you have your mask or face covering?

- Make sure it's been washed, or bring a fresh one.
- Bring a paper bag with your name on it to store during lunch or activities where you don't need a mask.

## Bring these supplies in your backpack

- Extra mask or face covering
- Pocket-size bottle of hand sanitizer
- Your own water bottle with your name on it

## Review these important basics



Wash your hands often with soap and water.



Use hand sanitizer when you can't use soap and water.



Stay at least 6 feet apart.



Wear a face covering or mask over your nose and mouth.



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your elbow.



Don't touch your face.



Don't share food, supplies or your water bottle.



Stay home when you're sick, except to go to the doctor.

Make sure vaccines are up to date before school starts and get your flu shot.

Disclaimer - The information provided is for informational purposes only and is not intended for direct diagnostic use without review and oversight by a clinical professional. No physician-patient relationship is created by use of this information. Given the fluidity of the COVID pandemic, this information is likely to change and Spectrum Health does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of the information. Spectrum Health assumes no liability arising out of or related to any use, or misuse, of the information.

*Use your feet before you eat!*

28TH ANNUAL GRAND RAPIDS  
**TURKEY TROT**



PRESENTED BY:



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of Michigan

A nonprofit corporation and Independent Licensee  
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## The Grand Rapids Turkey Trot Has Gone Virtual!

**The 28th Annual Grand Rapids Turkey Trot is now VIRTUAL!**  
Although we will not gather in person on Thanksgiving morning, you can still move your feet before you eat!

- Run/walk your 5K between Nov. 19 and Nov. 26 (Thanksgiving Day)
- Run the course of your choosing – Neighborhood, Track, Trail or even your Treadmill
- Submit your time online via your RunSignup account
- And of course, all registrants will receive a Turkey Trot T-Shirt!
- GRPS students can register for FREE with school code

**Please join us in this fun, healthy tradition to support GRPS Athletics, allowing all students the opportunity to participate in sports.**

<https://www.grps.org/athletics-turkeytrot>

**USE CODE: GR5 for \$5 off**



Unable to participate this year? Donate here!

<https://runsignup.com/Race/Donate/MI/GrandRapids/GRPSThanksgivingDayTurkeyTrot>

Thank you Blue Care Network of Michigan for returning as this year's as presenting sponsor.

Interested in becoming a sponsor?  
Contact Greg McAleenan at [greg.mcaleenan@grpsf.org](mailto:greg.mcaleenan@grpsf.org)

This event is endorsed by:  
**MICHIGAN  
FITNESS  
FOUNDATION**



## A Message from the GRPS Family and Community Engagement Office

Amazing things are happening in the GRPS Family and Community Engagement Office. If you haven't already, please check out the updated Parent University website at [parents.grps.org](https://parents.grps.org). This website is packed with helpful information for GRPS families and the local community.

On the Home page, take time to explore. You will notice Digital Learning topics. This section contains information about the instructional platforms that GRPS students and teachers use.

Examine the Trending topics. Trending topics are updated weekly and currently contain information on Covid 19, Students with Disabilities, the 2020-2021 School Year, At-home Activities, Parent University, and Grab and Go Meal sites.

Explore the online Power Parent magazine. This publication

targets parents and families with timely articles supporting student success. The October 2020 edition focuses on Race, Equity and Diversity. Our very own GRPS Superintendent, Dr. Roby, is highlighted in this issue!

Are you interested in taking classes? Register for Parent University and receive access to free courses and weekly email posts that support parents in becoming educational partners with their

children. Parent University courses will be offered throughout the entire 2020-2021 school year.

If you have an idea for a class or you would like to create a course, please email the Family and Community Engagement Office at [parentengagement@grps.org](mailto:parentengagement@grps.org). You may also call the office at 616.819.1977.



Visit our new website at [parents.grps.org](https://parents.grps.org)

# GRAB & GO MEALS

Beginning October 26th, all Grand Rapids Public Schools will have Grab & Go Meals available for pick up, Monday – Friday, noon to 1:30 pm for any student not doing face-to-face learning.



**All face-to-face learners will receive a free breakfast and lunch on the days they attend school.**

[grps.org](https://grps.org)

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Grand Rapids Public Schools

You

Mindy just tested positive for COVID after her birthday party, I think you might need to get Ava tested. I'm so sorry...

Ava's Mom

[accesskent.com/covid](https://accesskent.com/covid)

Tú

Mindy acaba de dar positivo para COVID después de su fiesta de cumpleaños. Creo que deberías de hacerle la prueba a Ava. Lo siento mucho.

Mamá de Ava

[accesskent.com/covid-espanol](https://accesskent.com/covid-espanol)

Young people between the ages of 10 and 30 are the fastest-growing age group for contracting COVID-19. We can slow the spread, but we need your help.

### Here is what you can do!

1. Wear a mask whenever you are in public (especially indoors)
2. Don't gather indoors with people outside of your "bubble"
3. Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds
4. Get tested if you're feeling any symptoms or have come into contact with anyone who might have COVID-19

Los jóvenes entre 10 y 30 años son el grupo de edad de mayor crecimiento para contraer COVID-19. Podemos frenar la propagación, pero necesitamos tu ayuda.

### ¡Esto es lo que puedes hacer!

1. Usar una máscara siempre que estés en público (especialmente si estás adentro)
2. No te reúnas con gente fuera de tu "burbuja" si no es al aire libre
3. Lávate las manos durante al menos 20 segundos
4. Hazte la prueba si sientes algún síntoma o has estado en contacto con alguien que pueda tener COVID-19





# WORLD-CLASS PRESCHOOL

## FOR YOUR CHILD THIS FALL!

Learning in a Grand Rapids Public Schools world-class preschool classroom prepares children to be successful in kindergarten and beyond. Experts agree that children who have quality early learning experiences are better prepared to be successful in school and throughout life. Preschool is the essential first step in your child's lifelong education.



- Tuition-free for families meeting income and eligibility criteria
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- Culturally diverse staff
- Individualized learning goals
- Full day program
- 26 convenient locations
- Hands-on activities
- Purposeful learning through play
- Outdoor and community learning opportunities

**APPLY TODAY AT [PRESCHOOL.KENTISD.ORG](https://preschool.kentisd.org)**

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# PREESCOLAR DE PRIMERA CATEGORÍA PARA SU HIJO ESTE OTOÑO

El aprendizaje en una clase preescolar de primera clase en la Escuelas Públicas de Grand Rapids prepara a los niños para tener éxito en el kindergarten y después. Los expertos coinciden en que los niños que tienen las primeras experiencias de aprendizaje de calidad son mejor preparados para tener éxito en la escuela y a lo largo de la vida. El Preescolar es el primer paso esencial en la educación continua de su hijo/a.

- Matricula gratis para familias que cumplen el criterio de ingreso y elegibilidad
- Currículo basado en investigación
- Personal de culturas diversas
- Metas individualizadas de aprendizaje
- Programas de días completos
- 26 lugares convenientes
- Actividades manuales
- Juegos con propósitos
- Oportunidades de aprendizaje al aire libre y de la comunidad

**APLIQUE HOY A [PRESCHOOL.KENTISD.ORG](https://www.kentisd.org)**

Siempre estamos alegres de contestar sus preguntas. Por favor contáctenos hoy.  
(616) 819-2111 | [earlychildhood@grps.org](mailto:earlychildhood@grps.org) | [enroll.grps.org](https://www.enroll.grps.org)

Grand Rapids Public Schools | 1331 Franklin St. SE, Grand Rapids, MI

[grps.org](https://www.grps.org)

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## New Interim Director Heads Foundation Support of K-8 Student Sports

By Phil DeHaan, Courtesy of School News Network

Greg McAleenan, an attorney with both sports and fundraising experience, is the new interim director of Great Sports, Great Kids.

The program is part of the Grand Rapids Public Schools Foundation and makes sports available to all K-8 GRPS students, regardless of ability to pay. In a typical year, GRPS fields over 150 middle school teams in 15 sports and offers six sports to elementary students, totaling some 6,000 student participants, according to the foundation.

McAleenan called the Great Sports, Great Kids program “a powerful vehicle that every member of the Grand Rapids community can support to ensure that the young student-athletes of GRPS can explore their athletic interests at no cost while developing their skills and elevating their academic performance, attendance and service to community.”

An attorney, McAleenan has both sports and fundraising experience. He is a member of the Sports Lawyers Association, has represented athletes and sports organizations, and worked in development at Aquinas College and Hope Network.

He called his new position a chance to give back.

“Athletics have always been important to me and my family, and I can’t imagine not having the opportunity to participate because of a lack of resources,” he said. “I look forward to the many conversations that lie ahead with members of the Grand Rapids and surrounding communities to showcase the variety of ways people can support Great Sports, Great Kids and help chart the future of these kids.”

McAleenan carries the interim tag, he said, because the Grand Rapids Public Schools Foundation is focused on providing GRPS with the resources needed to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, and was concerned that the search for a permanent director at this juncture would distract from the task at hand.

### Three-Sport Athlete Remembers Lessons Learned

“My expectation is that a search for the permanent director will occur sometime in 2021,” he said, “but until then, I am excited to be working with others at GRPSF and GRPS who care deeply about the future of the kids.”

In a press release, Sally Andreatta, executive director of the GRPSF, said: “We are excited for Greg to be joining the Foundation team. As

a successful local sports attorney, community leader and fundraising professional, Greg brings an abundance of expertise and passion to support the growth and advancement of the Great Sports, Great Kids vision.”

A former conference athlete of the year in the mid-1970s, McAleenan participated in football, basketball and track from elementary school through high school at East Grand Rapids. He went on to play football at Williams College where he remains in the record books as the NCAA Division III school’s all-time interceptions leader.

“I enjoyed all aspects of being on a team,” he said. “I made friendships that last to this day and learned life lessons such as teamwork, sacrifice, perseverance, how to win and lose with grace, discipline and the like that shaped me into the person I am today. Along the way, I was fortunate to have wonderful coaches of both the technical aspects of each sport and life.”

He passed that love of sports on to his kids as well, including a son who played lacrosse on scholarship at Penn State. He joked, however, that they get their athleticism from their mother, Karin, who rowed crew at Michigan State.



Greg McAleenan is the new interim director of Great Sports Great Kids, a program that makes sports available to all K-8 GRPS students, regardless of ability to pay.



The Great Sports, Great Kids program makes athletics available to all K-8 GRPS students regardless of their ability to pay (photo courtesy Grand Rapids Public Schools Foundation).

