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## ArtPrize momentum welcomes Grand Rapids fall and winter activities



Dear community member:

Hundreds of thousands of visitors and artists from around the world spent a wonderful September here in Grand Rapids at a new and invigorated ArtPrize. For 17 days, public spaces, parks, museums, galleries, businesses, storefronts, bars and even bridges served as venues for discovery and inspiration. Preliminary results show that the public welcomed ArtPrize's rebirth and attended in large numbers, generating millions of dollars of economic impact.

Executive Director Catlin Whittington and the ArtPrize staff are to be commended for their efforts to bring new energy and creativity to the world's largest open art competition. Kudos also to the ArtPrize partners – the City of Grand Rapids, Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. (DGRI) and Kendall College of Art and Design of Ferris State University – for their dedication to ensuring Grand Rapids' signature event continues to manifest the independent creative spirit that defines Grand Rapids and captures the imagination of people from around the world. From the leadership of our ArtPrize Steering Committee to the employees of our ArtPrize partners, they all played a crucial role in carrying out this year's event

and building a strong foundation for the future of ArtPrize. I can't wait to see what the team will dream up for our event's 15th Anniversary next year!

ArtPrize would not be possible without the many generous sponsors whose backing allows us to produce this world-class event. Foremost among them, we continue to build upon the work of ArtPrize Founder Rick DeVos, whose vision 14 years ago catalyzed this destination event. We remain committed to that vision of the largest international public art event that benefits artists and our community.

While the excitement of ArtPrize might have wrapped up with the announcement of Public Vote 1st Place Winner Abdoulaye Conde and the 20 other public and juried winners. ([artprize.org/2023-winners](http://artprize.org/2023-winners)), we look forward to a variety of events and happenings in our community throughout the fall and winter months. From Friday night lights, symphony concerts, fall orchard tours, Broadway performances, and the return of the Griffins ice hockey and Gold basketball teams, to events in neighborhoods across the city, there are dozens of activities to keep you and your family entertained and engaged. Check out an expansive list of all activities at [experiencegr.com/things-to-do](http://experiencegr.com/things-to-do) and [grandrapidsmi.gov/Our-City/Events-Activities](http://grandrapidsmi.gov/Our-City/Events-Activities)

In Grand Rapids, the fun times continue even as

temperatures drop. We kick off the holidays on Saturday, Nov. 18 at the Gentex Grand Rapids Santa Claus Parade. Our annual holiday tree lighting and skating at Rosa Parks Circle returns December 1. And our official celebration of winter arrives in January with World of Winter, produced and managed by DGRI, which is the largest winter festival in the United States! With over 100 FREE events, activities and outdoor art installations over two months, the festival provides an opportunity for families and adults to enjoy Michigan's beautiful winter and experience the four-season offerings of downtown Grand Rapids.

As you can see, Grand Rapids is truly a four-season destination city. We welcome the changing seasons and the opportunity each provides for year-round activities and entertainment options for all Grand Rapids residents and visitors to enjoy.

In community,

Mark Washington, City Manager

## City, volunteers and Gentex team to bring the Grand Rapids Santa Claus Parade back downtown November 18



Santa Clause IS coming to town, after all! The Gentex Grand Rapids Santa Claus Parade will return Saturday, Nov. 18 after volunteers stepped up to continue the cherished holiday tradition down

the streets of downtown Grand Rapids.

The 2023 Gentex Grand Rapids Santa Claus Parade kicks off at 10 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 18 from the corner of Lyon Street and Monroe Avenue NW and travels down Monroe to Monroe Center Street to Division N. to Fulton Street E to Jefferson Street NE. Parade events conclude at approximately 11 a.m. in the parking lot of First United Methodist Church where organizers will host a party for kids and families. The Grand Rapids Children's Museum and Family Promise of West Michigan will be on hand to provide fun activities. Santa also will stop by to visit with families.

After learning of its cancellation last week, the City's

Office of Special Events (OSE) pulled together event organizers, volunteers and business leaders who were saddened by the news and rallied to continue this family-friendly event. The group, including folks with experience organizing major events such as the Amway River Bank Run, St. Patrick's Day Parade, Grand Rapids Fireworks and other signature events, quickly organized and worked out a plan with the JR Chamber to save this year's parade.

City of Grand Rapids Special Events Manager Evette Pittman said that several people contacted the Special Events office after the announcement and "asked us to do everything possible to keep this great tradition alive. We went to work immediately to do just that. I am very pleased with the collaborative response from our community and staff and am proud that we will celebrate a 102nd Santa Parade here in Grand Rapids on November 18."

Gentex, learning of this renewed effort, enthusiastically agreed to return as the Santa Clause Parade's lead sponsor. Likewise, past corporate sponsors – such as Meijer, Experience Grand Rapids, AHC Hospitality and WOOD TV8 – also announced their support of this year's holiday event.

"Like everyone, we were saddened by the news of the parade's cancellation," said Craig Piersma, Gentex vice president of marketing and corporate communications. "But we're beyond thrilled to be back as the event's title sponsor, knowing that so many have stepped up to make sure our kids have a great Santa Parade again this year."

Grand Rapids Mayor Rosalynn Bliss thanked all who stepped up in the spirit of unity and community to continue this holiday institution.

"I love welcoming hundreds of families downtown every year to kick off the holidays and welcome Santa back to Grand Rapids," Bliss said. "I thank the JR Chamber for their years of hosting this event. Its institutional knowledge has been invaluable to help our committee plan this year's event. I also appreciate those who have stepped forward to save this year's event and encourage the community to support it with their attendance and participation."

For more information on the 2023 Gentex Grand Rapids Santa Claus Parade, please visit [facebook.com/GRSantaParade](https://facebook.com/GRSantaParade).

**Join us for “Visualizing Outcomes,” the next round of Bridge to Our Future Workshops, November 14-16!**



We’re creating a new Community Master Plan (CMP) that will define the vision of how our city will grow and develop over the next 20 years and we need your help. Please consider attending one of our November workshops and help shape the future of Grand Rapids.

These meetings are all about visualizing outcomes. They will cover topics such as housing, economic development and transportation and will dive deeper into the public input gathered earlier this year. Each meeting will provide an opportunity to give feedback in an interactive setting.

This is the first chance to see the big ideas that will drive development of the CMP.

Community members are invited to attend whichever meeting is most convenient. The city encourages people from all backgrounds and points of view to attend the workshops.

The workshops are family-friendly events and dinner will be provided. Attendees are welcome without registering, but completing the RSVP will help ensure there is enough food and materials. RSVP here: [BridgeToOurFuture.com](https://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/Services/Report-a-Parking-Complaint).

**Tuesday, Nov. 14**

GRPS University  
1400 Fuller Ave. NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49505

**Wednesday, Nov. 15**

Center for Community Transformation  
(The 1530 Event Space)  
1530 Madison Ave. SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49507

**Thursday, Nov. 16**

Leslie E. Tassell M-TEC  
622 Godfrey Ave. SW  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503



# WINTER PARKING

*Help keep yourself and your neighbors safe:  
Following winter parking rules on posted streets*

Seasonal parking restrictions throughout our city allow us to clear roads of leaves, tree debris and snow in addition to allowing cars and our service and emergency vehicles to travel safely on neighborhood streets in the winter. These restrictions include odd-even and same-side parking.

Our plow crews work hard to clear streets of snow in line with parking regulations. That’s why they need your help. 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. We may not be able to return to plow this street until all regularly scheduled plow routes are complete.

Seasonal parking restrictions are in effect November 1 to April 1. For a map of the restrictions, visit [grandrapidsmi.gov/oddeven](https://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/oddeven). You don’t have to worry about seasonal parking restrictions if your street doesn’t have odd-even or same-side parking signage. Keep in mind that the normal regulations apply to all streets. These include distance from:

- Curb
- Driveways
- Fire hydrants
- Stop signs

Seasonal parking restrictions are enforced whether or not there’s snow. Follow these rules to avoid a parking ticket:

- Park on the even-numbered side of the street on even-numbered days from 1 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Park on the odd-numbered side of the street on odd-numbered days from 1 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- From 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. the next day, you can park on both sides of the street unless there are signs that say otherwise.
- ***Think ahead before you go to bed!***

To report a parking complaint please dial 311 or 616-456-3000 or go online at <https://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/Services/Report-a-Parking-Complaint>



## November 7 Special Election is Almost Here

**November 7:** Special Election – Grand Rapids Public Schools and Forest Hills Public Schools will hold a special election for its millage proposals.

To find out more information on these proposals, you may check out the following websites:

<https://grps.org/our-district/district-news/?StoryId=1232>

<https://www.fhps.net/2023-bond-proposal/>

### Some reminders before you vote:

- **Voter registration** – Citizens who are 18 or older are automatically registered to vote when they make a transaction with the Secretary of State. You may register to vote by mail up to 15 days before an election and/or in person at the City Clerk's Office within 14 days of the election up to Election Day. You need to prove residency in the city.
- **Michigan Voter Information Center** - Check your voter registration status,

register to vote, update address, apply for an absentee ballot, check status of absentee ballot, view a sample ballot or find your polling location at [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote). *Know before you go!*

- **Election Day voting** – Polls are open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Any voter in line at 8 p.m. may vote.
- **Absentee voting** – All registered voters are eligible to receive an absentee ballot without a reason. To receive a ballot, simply fill out an application.

### **NEW, FOLLOWING THE APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL 2 of 2022:**

Voters are now eligible to be placed on a permanent Absentee Ballot List. You now have the option to fill out one application for all future elections.

Voters may apply online at [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote) or you may fill out an application at the City Clerk's Office at City Hall, 300 Monroe Ave. NW, between 8 a.m.

and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Validated parking is available in the Government Center Ramp off Monroe and Ottawa avenues.

### **You have several options available to return your signed absentee ballot:**

#### **In person:**

City Clerk's Office, 300 Monroe NW (Mon-Fri, 8am-5pm)

#### **Election Drop Boxes (24/7 access):**

1. 300 Ottawa NW (Across from Calder Plaza)
2. 1563 Plainfield NE (VanBelkum Library – Curbside on Plainfield)
3. 1017 Leonard NW (West Leonard Library – East Parking Lot)
4. 1100 Cesar E Chavez SW (Cook Library Center – curbside on Cesar E Chavez)
5. 1150 Giddings SE (Ottawa Hills Library – Curbside on Giddings)
6. 2350 Eastern SE (Seymour Library – Rear of building by the book drop)

7. 2025 Leonard NE (Yankee Clipper Library – by the bike rack)
8. 713 Bridge NW (Westside Library – Parking Lot side by the book drop)
9. 1201 Madison SE (Madison Square Library – Building Entrance)
10. 110 Fountain NE (Main Library – Next to the book drop)

### **Election Drop Box (Mon–Fri, 8 am – 5 pm):**

300 Monroe NW (City Hall – Monroe Level and Calder Level Lobby)

### **By Mail:**

(no postage required) IF MAILING YOUR BALLOT, PLEASE ALLOW ENOUGH TIME FOR YOUR BALLOT TO GO THROUGH THE USPS MAILING PROCESS. YOUR BALLOT MUST BE RECEIVED BY 8PM ON ELECTION DAY IN ORDER TO BE COUNTED – THE POSTMARK DATE DOES NOT APPLY.

## 150 Years of the Grand Rapids Water System

The early water sources in the City of Grand Rapids came from large, natural springs on the city's hillsides. It was said that people could dig a few feet into the ground to find fresh water. As the city grew, natural springs became unsustainable to meet the water demand. To address this problem, a group of private investors established the Grand Rapids Hydraulic Company (GRHC) in 1848. However, after various disastrous fires and poor water quality, city officials began to discuss a water system owned by the city. This led to a vote on July 20, 1873, where 96% of Grand Rapids voters said yes to using \$250,000 (\$6.3 million in 2023) to establish a Water System.

The vision shown by our leaders and residents in 1873 paved the way for a bright future in securing our city's water supply. The GRHC was eventually dissolved by the Michigan State Supreme Court in 1908. As

a result, our city emerged as the exclusive water provider to our community, taking full control of all the GRHC assets. As the city grew, it embarked on a series of transformative steps in its water management.

In 1912, the city started pumping water from the Grand River and built its first filtration plant along Monroe Avenue. The Monroe Plant underwent various expansions during the 1920s and 1930s. Ten years later, the city constructed a pipeline connecting Lake Michigan to the Monroe Plant. In 1962, the city constructed the Lake Michigan Filtration Plant (LMFP) at its current location along Lake Michigan. These two plants jointly served the city and its surrounding communities for several decades. In 1992, the city achieved a significant milestone with the expansion of the LMFP, increasing its treatment capacity to 135 million gallons per day. This marked the decommissioning of the

Monroe Plant.

Today, the Grand Rapids Water System is a testament to progress, employing just over 116 dedicated employees. What was once a community reliant on springs and creeks has transformed into a resilient system that pumps water from Lake Michigan and delivers it to our community through a network of 1,300 miles of water mains, supported by 16 storage tanks and 11 pumping stations.

The decision made by voters 150 years ago has stood the test of time, impacting the lives of over 325,000 people in our community every single day. The City's Water System continues its commitment to providing our community with the highest quality water and service to



our community.

To learn more about the Grand Rapids Water System or schedule a plant tour, visit [grcity.us/water](http://grcity.us/water).

## Office of Emergency Management Offers Safety Tips for the Holiday Season

As holiday season quickly approaches, here are a few safety reminders:

### **Holiday Safety**

- Keep an eye on what you fry! Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove so no one can bump them or pull them over.
- In case of an oven fire, turn off the oven and keep the door closed until it's cool. Call 9-1-1 to get help started your way!
- Water your Christmas tree daily—a dry tree is more flammable.

- Make sure your tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights, and not blocking an exit.
- Don't overload extension cords and outlets and replace worn cords
- Keep a fire extinguisher available and have an evacuation plan. Make sure to practice it with your household!

### **Holiday Online Shopping**

You can avoid cyber risks by taking step in advance:

- Limit the personal information you share online. Change privacy settings and check your account statements and credit reports regularly.
- Keep software applications and operating systems up to date and use antivirus and firewall protection.
- Check your account statements and credit reports regularly.
- Do not click on links in texts or emails from people you don't know. Scammers can create fake links to websites. Think before you click and when in doubt,

DON'T click!

- Remember that the government will not call, text, or contact you via social media about owing money—when in doubt, call your local law enforcement agency to confirm!
- Keep in mind that scammers may try to take advantage of financial fears by calling with student loan repayment plans and false work opportunities or use financial extortion by way of blackmail or threatening personal safety.

## Fire Cadet Program Helping to Further Diversify the Grand Rapids Fire Department

The Grand Rapids Fire Department (GRFD) has a vision: to provide world-class fire services by a diverse group of people to the community of Grand Rapids. The belief of leadership in both the GRFD and the City of Grand Rapids itself is that a more diverse workforce provides a greater variety of ideas and approaches. It also enables more people to connect to and communicate more effectively with the citizens of Grand Rapids and the department's other members.

In its efforts to continue to find qualified firefighters from all backgrounds, the GRFD has used multiple approaches. One of those approaches was to create a Fire Cadet Program. The program is a paid internship that provides a path for people to learn about the fire department while working alongside its members. In October 2022, the GRFD began its first ever fire cadet class with six people. Each week, these cadets engaged in fire department activities. Some days the cadets

would perform drills designed to teach them what firefighters do on scene of an emergency. Other days the cadets sat in class and learned about emergency medical care. The cadets performed community service, such as teaching young people fire safety. There was a daily emphasis on physical fitness. Cadets even tackled the more mundane "chores" that firefighters must do daily: washing the fire apparatus, station maintenance, cleaning, yard work, and other tasks.

This diverse group of GRFD fire cadets spent one year in the program learning what it takes to be a Grand Rapids firefighter. They bonded with each other as a cadet class and forged good working relationships with GRFD personnel.

As their year ends, what were the results from this endeavor? The cadets sharpened their skills, improved their physical fitness, and developed a rapport with the men and women of the GRFD. While all six entered

the program with a degree of uncertainty as to whether the fire service was for them, all six cadets enjoyed their year in the program so much so that all of them entered the hiring process for the City of Grand Rapids Fire Department. Of the six cadets, two were hired in the most recent academy class of recruit firefighters, three are still in the process and eligible to be hired for future classes, and one was able to transition to the Grand Rapids Police Department's hiring process.

The City of Grand Rapids leadership has seen the value of this program and has provided funding for a fire cadet class for 2024. The GRFD will continue to develop this program so that it provides future opportunities for area residents to understand the fire service and to develop the skills and mindset to possibly one day protect their own community. This will help the GRFD find further diverse candidates who otherwise would not have a chance to learn about this



unique opportunity.

Does this program interest you? Do you know someone who would want to know more? If so, go to [www.joingrfire.com](http://www.joingrfire.com) for details.

## PBGR Community Projects/Ideas in Progress



The City of Grand Rapids reports that 11 of 12 projects and ideas selected through the PBGR public vote process held last year have been awarded or bid out. The final project request for proposal (RFP) – addressing lead risks in homes in the Third Ward – will be forthcoming later this fall.

In September, the City Commission awarded the Youth Affordable Housing Support for the First Ward project to AYA Youth Collective. It also awarded the Supporting Victims of Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking for the First Ward to Puertas Abiertas.

Bids are currently being reviewed or will be reviewed soon for award for the following projects:

- Cleaning up GR in the First Ward
- Affordable daycare for 2nd and 3rd shift workers in the First and Third Wards

- Mental Health First Responder Program for the Second Ward
- Community-based Violence Reduction Program to serve the Third Ward

The PBGR projects, which span across the City's three wards, are funded by \$2 million of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. The graduated ward distribution of funds includes: First Ward - \$600,000, Second Ward - \$400,000, and Third Ward - \$1 million.

The public vote for projects recommended by the public and finalized by the PBGR Steering Committee Votes by ward took place online during Vote Week – September 30 to October 5, 2022 at [PGRG.org](http://PGRG.org), in-person at all Grand Rapids Public Library sites and at a series of neighborhood events. Residents, 13 years of age and older, were eligible to vote.

Based on the voting results and project rankings using ranked-choice voting methodology, the PBGR Steering Committee formally adopted the following projects (with estimated costs) to advance in the community.

### In Ward 1 - \$600,000 Total Investment

1. Affordable Childcare for 2nd and 3rd Shift Workers (\$150,000)
2. \*\*Supporting Victims of Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking (\$100,000)
3. \*\*Youth Affordable Housing Support (\$145,000)
4. \*\*Cleaning Up Grand Rapids (\$75,000)
5. \*Community Reading Initiative for Violence Reduction (\$50,000)
6. \*Citizen Advocacy Skills Academy (\$80,000\*) – Partially funded (from a requested \$100,000) due to reaching total investment limit

### In Ward 2 - \$400,000 Total Investment

1. Mental Health Community First Responders (\$350,000)
2. CURE Violence – 2nd Ward (\$50,000 PB\*\*\* + additional possible investment)  
\*\*\*Partially funded (from a requested \$250,000) due to reaching total investment limit

### In Ward 3 - \$1 million Total Investment

1. Lead Water Line Replacement (\$500,000)
2. Affordable Childcare for 2nd and 3rd Shift Workers (\$150,000)
3. Youth Affordable Housing Support (\$145,000)
4. Community-Based Violence Reduction Initiative (\$205,000\*)  
\* Projects distributed in first round of RFPs – March 2023  
\*\* Projects distributed in second round of RFPs – June 2023

For a list of these projects with descriptions of each, please visit [PBGR.org](http://PBGR.org). For the final vote tally, please [CLICK HERE](#).

The City of Grand Rapids' participatory budgeting initiative is a democratic process that allows residents the opportunity to help determine how public funds are spent. To learn more about the project, please visit [www.PBGR.org](http://www.PBGR.org), [instagram.com/PBGrandRapids](https://www.instagram.com/PBGrandRapids), [facebook.com/PBGrandRapids](https://www.facebook.com/PBGrandRapids) and [twitter.com/PBGrandRapids](https://twitter.com/PBGrandRapids).

## What Do You Think About Climate Change? Share Your Thoughts In Our Survey!

Are you interested in sharing how climate change affects your life? Would you like to have your voice heard on the steps our community will take to address climate change? If so, the Office of Sustainability would like to hear from you!

The Office of Sustainability is working to co-create a Climate Action and Adaptation

Plan (CAAP) with community. Collectively, the CAAP will be a roadmap for how the Grand Rapids community will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the impacts of climate change. For the first round of CAAP community engagement we'd like to know what you think should be in the plan in the following survey. Scan the qr code or head

to our website to take the CAAP survey.

Let's connect:

The Office of Sustainability wants to connect with you for our latest news and updates! To subscribe to our newsletter please visit our website:

<https://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/Government/Departments/Sustainability>



## Grand Rapids Housing Commission to Open Waiting List for Largest Rental Subsidy Program October 23 - 27



The Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) will open the waiting list for its Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program to new applicants October 23-27. The program provides a subsidy to low-income households renting privately owned property in Kent and Ottawa counties and is part of a GRHC affordable housing portfolio that includes nearly 4,300 units.

The HCV waiting list application process will be exclusively online. Those seeking a Housing Choice Voucher are invited to apply from 12:00 a.m. October 23 through 11:59 p.m. October 27 by logging on to [www.GRHClist.org](http://www.GRHClist.org). Applicants in need of assistance with the online application process can phone a dedicated helpline at (616) 235-2653 October 23-27 between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Once the application period has ended, the GRHC will draw 5,000 names through a random selection process and these applicants will be added to the agency's HCV Program waiting list. Because both the selection of applicants and their placement on the waiting list will be random, there will be no advantage to applying early during the application period.

"This is the first time since late 2019 that the GRHC's HCV Program waiting list has been open to new applicants," said GRHC Executive Director Lindsey S. Reames. "It's unfortunate that the demand for rental assistance far exceeds the number of vouchers we have available, however, we are pleased that we can now open the HCV Program to 5,000 additional families. The Housing Commission will continue to work with HUD, the City of Grand Rapids and other partners to narrow the gap between affordable housing demand and supply in our community."

For more information about the HCV Program and updates regarding the October open application period: [www.grhousing.org](http://www.grhousing.org)



# SNOW PLOWING

## *Here's how we clear snow throughout the city*

We're constantly improving our winter operations, so we can deliver the highest level of service to our community.

Our plow operators use de-icing materials on major streets to minimize snow and ice. Pretreating material may be applied to bridges, hills and curves before a snow event, if needed. We work hard to minimize our salt use as part of our commitment to environmental sustainability as it reduces runoff in our rivers and streams. This is also part of our commitment to be a good steward of funds. Plus, many of our plow trucks have side wings that plow an additional half lane of snow.

When we do have to use salt, our plow trucks have liquid storage capabilities. This allows for the



*An example of a wing blade plow*

*Our primary goal is to clear all roads of snow within 24-36 hours of a weather event.*

pre-wetting of salt as plows spread it on street surfaces. Pre-wetting salt reduces the bounce to keep it on the road. It also helps us reduce the amount of salt we use by 30 percent – another money saver. Plus, salt activates faster when treated.



## **Priority plowing on first-attention routes**

The major high-traffic roads in our city are first-attention streets for snow plowing. We apply salt to all first-attention streets. Examples of first attention streets include:

- Burton
- Division
- Fulton
- Leonard
- Monroe

## **When do plows go onto secondary (local) streets and alleys?**

We monitor weather conditions and clear secondary streets and alleys when there are more than 3 inches of snow. De-icing salt typically is not applied to secondary streets. We may salt these streets if there are hills, severe curves or special circumstances in the city.

Extended snow events may require snow plow crews to leave secondary streets and return to first-attention roads to ensure safety on high-traffic streets. While we make every effort to clear bike lanes our main priority is to keep the automobile travel lanes clear of snow and ice.



## REFUSE & RECYCLING TIPS

### Avoid frozen trash

- Bag your trash – it keeps your cart cleaner and helps us do our job
- Unbagged trash can freeze in the cart, making it difficult to empty
- Avoid a partial tip and keep bags and materials from freezing to the bottom by putting a small amount of rock salt in the cart

### Don't block sidewalks and streets

- Keep the curbs clear when setting out your trash and recycling carts on collection day – our vehicles need access to your carts
- Keep a clear path between the carts and street

### Keep the cart lids closed

- Melting snow and rain can easily fill and freeze bags to the cart. We will not return to empty carts with bags frozen to the cart.
- Frozen trash or recycling can result in an overweight or cracked cart



## Shoveling out refuse and recycling carts

*Want to make sure we can pick up your trash and recycling this winter? Follow these tips:*

1. Clear a path 3 feet wide from your refuse and recycling carts to the alley or street and make sure the carts can be moved freely
2. Shovel out your refuse and recycling carts the night before your collection day
3. Shovel out your carts the following collection day if a heavy snow-fall prevents you from doing so in time for your scheduled pickup



Not Proper Placement

### Yard Waste

Residents can drop off yard waste year-round at our Compost site. Though curbside collections will stop for the season on the second Friday in December, you can take advantage of year-round operations at our Compost site. You can continue to bring yard waste and Christmas trees as needed. Please remember that no plastic bags or other trash is allowed on site. The site is closed on Thanksgiving day but opens again on Friday.

### Refuse & Recycling Holiday Schedule

We collect refuse and recycling one day later during the weeks following:

- Thanksgiving
- Christmas
- New Year's Day

Service will not be delayed if the holiday falls on a weekend day.

## 61st District Court Revives its Community Outreach Court



The 61st District Court is reigniting its Community Outreach Court (COT) with enthusiasm and optimism. Established in 2014, COT takes a holistic approach and individualized treatment to a certain subset of cases. Specifically, as an outreach court, it helps members of the public resolve issues that may be negatively impacting their lives without the barriers associated with an in-court appearance. The Court partners with community agencies such as Mel Trotter Ministries and Dégagé Ministries. The goal is to reach those individuals who may not receive notice of their court date due to being unhoused, those who may have anxiety about appearing in court due to being unaware of any potential outstanding matters or help with generally reducing anxiety and stress for individuals who are trying to focus on basic needs.

After decreased meeting frequency, exacerbated by the pandemic, the COT team, led by Chief Judge Michael J. Distel, is back on track. It is the hope that with the collaboration of community partners, those citizens who are most in need can reach services and resolve matters without barriers. The goal is meeting people where they are to improve their lives and have a positive impact on the community.

The judge and his team go out into the community every other month and assist citizens with knowing, understanding, and possibly resolving any pending matters they have in court. This helps in reducing the cost associated with law enforcement and jail time and requires no additional funding as most of the agencies and court personnel perform these duties as part of their existing jobs. Court personnel and partner agencies help individuals by answering questions, lifting bench warrants, running record checks, and providing information regarding the court process and next steps. Some receive action plans to address obstacles they may have around housing, substance abuse, or mental health. There is, absent extreme circumstances, no threat of jail during this court session. This provides relief to many individuals that have been living in fear regarding their unresolved court matters.



# COMMUNITY RECREATION

Happening November through February

## NOV/DEC SESSION

### REGISTRATION OPENS

October 2

### CLASS DATES

November 12 - December 23

(unless noted otherwise)

No classes November 23, 24, 25, 26

### ADULT PROGRAM PRICING:

\$32 per 6-week class

\$27 per 5-week class

### YOUTH PROGRAM PRICING:

\$42 per session

## JAN/FEB SESSION

### REGISTRATION OPENS

December 4

### CLASS DATES

January 8 - March 3

(unless noted otherwise)

### ADULT PROGRAM PRICING:

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

### YOUTH PROGRAM PRICING:

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



### Register online

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



### Register by phone

616.456.3696, option #1



### Register in person

201 Market Ave SW

## YOGA

NOV/DEC CLASSES RUN FOR 6 WEEKS, JAN/FEB CLASSES RUN FOR 8 WEEKS

Classes will be held on the same days/times for both sessions unless otherwise noted.


Register online: [grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr](http://grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr)  
Registration for Jan/Feb opens Dec 4.

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR
<b>BASIC YOGA (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</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	201 MARKET SW	SARA R.
	MON	5:30 - 6:25 PM	201 MARKET SW	SARA R.
	MON	5:30 - 6:25 PM	VIRTUAL	TERRI S.
	TUE	6:30 - 7:25 PM	201 MARKET SW	AMY K.
	WED	9:00 - 9:55 AM	201 MARKET SW	SARA R.
	WED	5:30 - 6:25 PM	201 MARKET SW	MELISSA H.
	WED	6:00 - 6:55 PM	VIRTUAL	SARA R.
	SAT	9:00 - 9:55 AM	VIRTUAL	SARA R.
<b>GENTLE YOGA (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</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	9:15 - 10:10 AM	VIRTUAL	TERRI S.
	THU	9:15 - 10:10 AM	VIRTUAL	TERRI S.
<b>FIRESIDE BASIC YOGA (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> Enjoy a peaceful evening of Yoga in a cozy clubhouse complete with a fireplace. 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. Please bring a yoga mat	MON	6:00 - 6:50 PM	INDIAN TRAILS GOLF COURSE	DARCEL S.
	MON	7:00 - 7:50 PM		DARCEL S.
	THU (JAN/FEB ONLY)	6:00 - 6:55 PM		MELISSA T.
<b>SLOW FLOW YOGA (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb) *starts November 19</b> End your weekend and set the tone for the week ahead with this calming and gentle yoga class. Each class will begin and end with a variety of restorative postures, with a slow yoga flow in between. Find a cozy comfortable space, light a few candles, and grab as many blankets and pillows as you can!	SUN	7:00 - 7:55 PM	VIRTUAL	SARA R.
<b>POWER YOGA (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> This energetic class is designed to build strength, flexibility, and balance! Challenging peak poses, breath to movement flows, and mind body connections will encourage students to find their edge. Modifications are always offered and body awareness is always encouraged.	TUE	6:30 - 7:25 PM	VIRTUAL	SARA R.

## YOGA (CONT.)

NOV/DEC CLASSES RUN FOR 6 WEEKS, JAN/FEB CLASSES RUN FOR 8 WEEKS

Classes will be held on the same days/times for both sessions unless otherwise noted.


Register online: [grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr](https://grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr)   
Registration for Jan/Feb opens Dec 4.

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR
<b>VITAL MOVEMENT (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</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	9:15 - 10:10 AM	VIRTUAL	TERRI S.

## CARDIO & STRENGTH

NOV/DEC CLASSES RUN FOR 6 WEEKS, JAN/FEB CLASSES RUN FOR 8 WEEKS

Classes will be held on the same days/times for both sessions unless otherwise noted.

Register online: [grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr](https://grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr)   
Registration for Jan/Feb opens Dec 4.

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR
<b>BARRE (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> Barre is a low impact, high intensity total body workout that incorporates elements of Pilates, Ballet and Yoga. This workout is fast paced and set to fun upbeat music. During the workout you will use light hand weights, resistance bands, and your own body weight. You will complete small range movements at high repetitions meant to fatigue your muscles to build strength and endurance, and then stretch everything out to increase your flexibility. Barre is a great workout for any fitness level as there are options to level up or down based on your own body. Barre is for EVERYBODY.	WED SAT	5:30 - 6:25 PM 8:00 - 8:55 AM	201 MARKET SW	ABBY S. ERIN L.
<b>HIGH LOW (HIGH FITNESS) (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> A lower impact workout (not intensity!), HIGH Low is the sister format to HIGH Fitness. Offering impact progressions for every move, HIGH Low is a steady state cardio workout tailored to the individual, by the individual. Highly adaptable to all fitness levels, this lower impact format focuses on the same elements of the HIGH brand: fun, fabulous music, and a community-based inclusive environment!	TUE	5:30 - 6:25 PM	201 MARKET SW	AMANDA B.
<b>HIIT EXPRESS (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> This class uses High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) to increase your heart rate, strengthen your muscles, and boost your metabolism. Participants will be given 30 seconds to do as many reps of a single body weight exercise as possible. Then rinse, repeat, with a new move! Class will end with mat routines that includes core and upper body strength exercises. All movements will have modified options as well as progressions, allowing each person to decide their own intensity level. All fitness levels welcome!.	WED	6:30 - 7:15 PM	201 MARKET SW	AMY K.
<b>KETTLEBELL AMPD (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> Kettlebell AMPD is a group fitness format that takes heart-pumping music and kettlebell moves and combines them into a calorie torching fun workout! The program uses lightweight kettlebells, in both traditional and non-traditional ways, to create a fun, effective, full body workout. Combining the benefits of strength training, functional movements and cardiovascular exercise, this program is a safe and effective workout for all ages and fitness levels. No experience necessary!	THU	4:30 - 5:25 PM	201 MARKET SW	MONICA S.
<b>WATER AEROBICS (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> Build core strength, conditioning, endurance and all-over toning. Class features deep and shallow water exercises. A great low/non-impact workout. Float belts are available.	MON WED SAT	6:45 - 7:40 PM 6:45 - 7:40 PM 10:15 - 11:10 AM	UNION HIGH SCHOOL POOL	KATHLEEN H.
<b>PILATES (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</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.	WED	5:30 - 6:25 PM	GARFIELD PARK COMMUNITY GYM	ZIYAH D.
<b>POUND (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</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.	THU	5:30 - 6:25 PM	201 MARKET SW	JANNA S.



## CARDIO & STRENGTH (CONT.)

NOV/DEC CLASSES RUN FOR 6 WEEKS, JAN/FEB CLASSES RUN FOR 8 WEEKS

Classes will be held on the same days/times for both sessions unless otherwise noted.

Register online: [grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr](http://grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr)  
Registration for Jan/Feb opens Dec 4.

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR
<b>STRENGTH &amp; POWER (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> This laser-focused strength class will work all your muscle groups with a variety of exercises to elevate your current routine. It will combine compound exercises to engage as many muscles as possible in a single move, as well as incorporate isolation moves. Modifications and challenges will be given to make the class appropriate for all levels	MON	5:30 - 6:25 PM	201 MARKET SW	MICHELLE D.

## CYCLING & ROWING

NOV/DEC CLASSES RUN FOR 6 WEEKS, JAN/FEB CLASSES RUN FOR 8 WEEKS

Classes will be held on the same days/times for both sessions unless otherwise noted.

Register online: [grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr](http://grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr)  
Registration for Jan/Feb opens Dec 4.

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR
<b>CYCLING (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> Reach your fitness goals while building leg and core strength. Powerful music and pace-setting instruction helps you climb steep hills, move across flat road and master intense intervals.	MON	5:30 - 6:15 PM	201 MARKET SW	CAROL S.
	TUE	5:30 - 6:15 PM		MICHELLE D.
<b>CYCLE &amp; TONE COMBO (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> A combination of high-intensity intervals followed by strength exercises that target the arms, abs, and lower back.	MON	6:30 - 7:25 PM	201 MARKET SW	CAROL S.
	WED	6:00 - 6:55 PM		JULIE S.
	SAT	8:30 - 9:25 AM		MICHELLE/CAROL
<b>STRENGTH &amp; ROW CIRCUIT (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> This high intensity class will improve your endurance and strength to row faster and for longer. Each class will include a rowing and strength training circuit to maximize calorie burn!	TUE	6:30 - 7:25 PM	201 MARKET SW	AMANDA B.
	SAT	10:00 - 10:55 AM		JULIE S.

## THANKSGIVING CLASSES

### GRATITUDE FLOW

Start your Thanksgiving with a Gratitude Yoga Flow! This class will focus on clearing your thoughts, opening your heart, energizing your body, and setting an intention of gratitude to keep with you throughout your Thanksgiving activities!

- November 23, 9:00 - 10:00 AM
- Virtual
- Sara R.
- \$5.00/person

### ZUMBA TURKEY BURN

Join us for a 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 get your dance on without missing your Thanksgiving plans.

- November 23, 8:30 - 9:30 AM
- Garfield Park Community Gym
- Amy K. & Bri C.
- \$5.00/person

## NEW YEAR WORKSHOPS

### NEW YEAR'S INTENTION SETTING FLOW

In this basic yoga flow, set your intentions for the year ahead. Class will focus on navigating how you want to enter into the new year, what you want to let go of, and where you can find strength. All fitness levels welcome.

- Monday, January 1, 10:00 AM
- Virtual or 201 Market SW
- Sara R. (virtual) and Darcel S (201 Market)
- \$5.00/person

### YOGA FOR BEGINNERS

Learn the basic poses of yoga! This is a stripped down version of a basic yoga class, where students will work on proper joint alignment, hand and foot placement, and the correct way to transition between poses. Perfect for first-time yogi's!!

- Sunday, January 21, 10:00 - 11:30 AM or Sunday, February 18, 10:00 - 11:30 AM
- 201 Market SW
- Darcel S.
- \$8.00/person

# DANCE FITNESS

NOV/DEC CLASSES RUN FOR 6 WEEKS, JAN/FEB CLASSES RUN FOR 8 WEEKS

Register online: [grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr](https://grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr)  
Registration for Jan/Feb opens Dec 4.

Classes will be held on the same days/times for both sessions unless otherwise noted.

CLASS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)	LOCATION(S)	INSTRUCTOR
<b>BEGINNER BALLROOM DANCING (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> A beginner class targeted toward couples wanting to learn ballroom dancing. Learn the Salsa, Waltz, Foxtrot, East Coast Swing, Cha Cha, Rumba and Tango.	TUE	8:00 - 9:00 PM	201 MARKET SW	BYRON D.
<b>BALLROOM NEXT STEPS (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> A follow-up to Ballroom Dancing. Continue practicing basic dances and learn new moves to add flair.	WED	7:45 - 8:45 PM	201 MARKET SW	SHANNON B.
<b>GENTLE MUSICAL MOVEMENT (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> This 45 minute class encourages freedom for body, mind, + spirit while working range of motion, strength, flexibility and balance. Class is created around music and combines simple dance and stretch moves for all body parts. Move your body in ways outside of your daily routine, inviting in both fun and freedom of personal expression. Perfect for all ages, especially those 50+. This class can also be adapted to the chair.	MON	9:15 - 10:00 AM	VIRTUAL	TERRI S.
<b>MINDFUL MUSICAL MOVEMENT - FORMERLY GROOVE (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> Move in new ways, get your heart pumping, and infuse your whole body with joy in this not-so-typical dance class set to a variety of great music. Simple steps designed to work your whole body are provided and you are encouraged to supply the intensity level and flair. Perfect for all levels, all you need is space to move freely.	WED	5:30 - 6:25 PM	VIRTUAL	TERRI S.
<b>SWING DANCING &amp; MORE (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> This partner class will focus on the basics of East & West Coast Swing, Hustle, Country Two-Step, Night Club Two-Step, and more! No previous dance experience is necessary. Class is for couples. Each person required to register.	THU	7:45 - 8:45 PM	201 MARKET SW	SHANNON B.
<b>WERQ (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> WERQ is a nonstop cardio dance class with fun and unique routines set to the hottest pop and hip hop music. Participants will get a high calorie burn, and a non stop workout, combining repetitive athletic moves with fresh dance steps. Anyone can WERQ it! Bring your own water bottle and towel.	WED SUN	6:30 - 7:25 PM 1:00 - 1:55 PM	GARFIELD PARK COMMUNITY GYM 201 MARKET SW	JEANNIE W. JEANNIE W.
<b>ZUMBA (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> Zumba is a fast, fun, and upbeat dance fitness class that incorporates latin and international music. Every class feels like a party, so you will burn calories without even realizing it! All fitness levels welcome.	MON THU SAT	6:30 - 7:25 PM 6:30 - 7:25 PM 9:00 - 9:55 AM	201 MARKET SW	AMY K. & BRI C. AMY K. & BRI C. AMY K.
<b>LINE DANCING (Happening in Nov/Dec &amp; Jan/Feb)</b> Enjoy line dancing while exercising mind, body, and spirit. In QK Linedance, we dance to all genres of music and everyone is welcome!	THU	8:00 - 8:55 PM	GARFIELD PARK COMMUNITY GYM	QUEEN J.

# YOUTH ENRICHMENT

6-CLASS SESSIONS. \$42 STARTING NOVEMBER 6

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

CLASS	DATES	TIME(S)	LOCATION
<b>BIG &amp; LITTLE YOGI'S (AGES 18 MONTHS-4 YEARS)</b> Big and Little Yogis class is all about fun and connection! Kiddos and their grownups will practice simple yoga and mindfulness skills through individual and partner poses, other mindful movement, music, games, and more. This is a great introductory class for littles who are learning how to use their listening skills and develop more control over their bodies through both gross and fine motor activities.	THURSDAY NOV 9 - DEC 21	9:45 - 10:30 AM	201 MARKET SW
	THURSDAY JAN 18 - FEB 22		
<b>CHILDREN'S YOGA (AGES 2-6)</b> Class consists of movement, music, yoga, games, mindfulness practice, and breathwork. Designed to be playful while challenging children to develop their focus, awareness, and movement in new ways. Children will build regulation skills, healthy social skills, and positive self-esteem.	THURSDAY NOV 9 - DEC 21	4:15 - 5:00 PM	201 MARKET SW
	TUESDAY JAN 9 - FEB 20		

## YOUTH ENRICHMENT (CONT.)

6-CLASS SESSIONS. \$42 STARTING NOVEMBER 6

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

CLASS	DATES	TIME(S)	LOCATION
<p><b>GENERATION POUND (AGES 6-12)</b></p> <p>Generation POUND® was created not just as a workout geared towards kids, but a MOVEMENT that aims to change the concept of health and fitness for today's youth. The program fuses movement and music to improve focus, coordination, physical fitness and teamwork skills for "Rockstars in Training," ages 6-12. Instructors use Ripstix®-POUND's lightly weighted exercise drumsticks-to learn alternative ways to explore movement.</p> <p>The power of Generation POUND encompasses more than just physical fitness. Combining kid-friendly choreography and group activities, it promotes social and emotional well-being by fostering relationships, building self-esteem and self-awareness, and inspiring the next generation of happy, healthy kids.</p>	<p>TUESDAY NOV 14 - DEC 19</p> <p>TUESDAY JAN 9 - FEB 20</p>	5:00 - 5:45 PM	GARFIELD PARK COMMUNITY GYM

## YOUTH DANCE & GYMNASTICS

6-CLASS SESSIONS. \$42 STARTING NOVEMBER 6

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

CLASS	DATES	TIME(S)	LOCATION
<p><b>BALLET + TUMBLE + JAZZ (AGES 3-5)</b></p> <p>Ballet for 3-5 year old kids is an introduction to ballet basics using methods designed for young imaginative minds and bodies. Students are given the opportunity to move, stretch, and improve self-confidence while being introduced to basic ballet concepts, body alignment, posture, locomotor skills.</p>	<p>MONDAY NOV 6 - DEC 18</p> <p>FRIDAY NOV 10 - DEC 22</p> <p>MONDAY JAN 8 - FEB 19</p> <p>FRIDAY JAN 12 - FEB 23</p>	<p>11:00 - 11:45 AM</p> <p>5:00 - 5:45 PM</p> <p>11:00 - 11:45 AM</p> <p>5:00 - 5:45 PM</p>	201 MARKET SW
<p><b>GYMNASTICS 1 (AGES 4-6)</b></p> <p>For the younger gymnast to encourage success and fun in the gym. Kids learn tumbling and balancing basics with emphasis on strength and flexibility. <b>Required Clothing:</b> leotards, athletic clothing with shirts that can be tucked in, comfortable with stretch.</p>	<p>THURSDAY NOV 9 - DEC 21</p> <p>FRIDAY NOV 3 - DEC 8</p> <p>MONDAY JAN 8 - FEB 19</p> <p>THURSDAY JAN 11 - FEB 22</p>	<p>6:00 - 6:45 PM</p> <p>5:00 - 5:45 PM</p> <p>5:00 - 5:45 PM</p> <p>6:00 - 6:45 PM</p>	GARFIELD PARK COMMUNITY GYM
<p><b>GYMNASTICS 2 (AGES 7-10)</b></p> <p>A follow-up to Gymnastics 1. Activities increase strength, movement, coordination, agility and flexibility. <b>Required Clothing:</b> leotards, athletic clothing with shirts that can be tucked in, comfortable with stretch.</p>	<p>THURSDAY NOV 9 - DEC 21</p> <p>FRIDAY NOV 3 - DEC 8</p> <p>MONDAY JAN 8 - FEB 19</p> <p>THURSDAY JAN 11 - FEB 22</p>	<p>7:00 - 7:45 PM</p> <p>6:00 - 6:45 PM</p> <p>6:00 - 6:45 PM</p> <p>7:00 - 7:45 PM</p>	GARFIELD PARK COMMUNITY GYM
<p><b>PARENT &amp; ME TUMBLE &amp; PLAY (AGES 2-3)</b></p> <p>Laugh, play, and tumble with your child while creating balance, strength, and learning fundamental movements. Also includes activities and games to get the wiggles out!</p>	<p>THURSDAY NOV 9 - DEC 21</p> <p>THURSDAY JAN 11 - FEB 22</p>	5:15 - 5:45 PM	GARFIELD PARK COMMUNITY GYM

# ICE SKATING AT ROSA PARKS CIRCLE

Outdoor ice skating is coming back to Rosa Parks Circle! This year, we're offering pre-booking for open skate time slots as well as walk-ups. The rink will be open daily (weather permitting) November 24, 2023 - February 25, 2024.

**Pricing:**

- Youth admission with skates: \$2
- Adult admission with skates: \$4

Book a skate time two weeks in advance at [grandrapidsmi.gov/skating](http://grandrapidsmi.gov/skating)



## ENRICHMENT & ADVENTURE

Register online: [grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr](http://grandrapidsmi.gov/recgr)  
 Registration for Jan/Feb opens Dec 4.

CLASS	DATES	TIME(S)	LOCATION
<p><b>TAE KWON DO (AGES 7-ADULT)</b>                      Learn the basics of the Korean martial art form of Tae Kwon Do. Participants will develop confidence, increase flexibility, concentration, balance, and learn how to defend themselves.</p> <p><b>\$45 for 8-class session</b>  <b>\$35 for 6-class session</b></p>	<p>TUESDAYS                      NOV 14 -                      DEC 19</p> <p>TUESDAYS                      JAN 9 -                      FEB 27</p>	<p>6:00-7:30 PM</p> <p>*GREEN BELTS                      AND HIGHER                      WILL MEET                      UNTIL 8:00 PM</p>	<p>GARFIELD                      PARK GYM</p>
<p><b>BEGINNER PICKLEBALL LESSONS (AGES 18+)</b>                      Learn the basic rules, skills, and strategies needed to play the sport of pickleball!</p> <p><b>\$25 for 4-class session</b></p>	<p>TUE &amp; THU,                      NOV 9 - 21</p> <p>TUE &amp; THU,                      DEC 5 - 14</p> <p>TUE &amp; THU,                      JAN 9 - 18</p> <p>TUE &amp; THU,                      FEB 13 - 22</p>	<p>2:45-4:00 PM</p>	<p>GARFIELD                      PARK GYM</p>

**FREE!**

## PROGRAMS FOR AGES 50+

At Garfield Park Community Gym  
 (2111 Madison Ave SE)

Programs for ages 50+ are ongoing and run Monday through Friday. All programs are **free** and open to the public.

Visit [grandrapidsmi.gov/recreation](http://grandrapidsmi.gov/recreation) or call 616-456-3696 for more information.

**Programs include:**

- Active Adults - Mon, 10:15-11:10 am & Wed, 11:15 am-12:10 pm
- Stretch and Flex - Tue & Wed, 11:15 am-12:10 pm
- Pilates - Mon, 11:15 am-12:10 pm
- Zumba Gold - Wed, 10-11 am
- Pickleball - Mon-Thu, 12:30-2:30 pm & Fri, 10 am-12:30 pm
- And more!



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

### Main Library

111 Library Street NE ■ 49503  
616.988.5400

### Madison Square Branch

1201 Madison SE ■ 49507  
616.988.5411

### Ottawa Hills Branch

1150 Giddings SE ■ 49506  
616.988.5412

### Seymour Branch

2350 Eastern SE ■ 49507  
616.988.5413

### Van Belkum Branch

1563 Plainfield NE ■ 49505  
616.988.5410

### West Leonard Branch

1017 Leonard NW ■ 49504  
616.988.5416

### West Side Branch

713 Bridge NW ■ 49504  
616.988.5414

### Yankee Clipper Branch

2025 Leonard NE ■ 49505  
616.988.5415

For more information and hours,  
visit [www.grpl.org](http://www.grpl.org).



616.988.5400 ■ [www.grpl.org](http://www.grpl.org)

## Celebrate Hispanic Heritage

September 15 – November 3, 2023

Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month with GRPL! Events include an author talk, a Día de los Muertos celebration, special storytimes, and more. Our celebration is designed for kids and adults.

### Grand Rapids' Día de los Muertos Festival

Saturday, October 28 | 5:00 – 7:00 pm  
Sunday, October 29 | 3:00 – 9:00 pm  
Roosevelt Park – 1340 Godfrey Ave SW

Celebrate Día de los Muertos! Enjoy a free cultural and educational event, created in collaboration with the Grand Rapids Día de los Muertos Festival committee. Latin American altars honoring family and friends who have passed away will be on display throughout the festival. Music, Latino food, workshops, and crafts will also be available.

Join us at 2:00 – 3:00 pm on Sunday, October 29 for a Día de los Muertos procession. The procession starts at Grandville Avenue Arts & Humanities (1100 Cesar E. Chavez Ave SW) and ends at Roosevelt Park. To join the walking parade, meet in the parking lot of Grandville Avenue Arts & Humanities.



### Latinx Figures Craft Kits

September 15 – November 3

Craft Kits include age-appropriate activities for kids and have inserts to help parents and kids get to know three different Latinx figures.

Craft Kits can be picked up at any GRPL location and at the Grandville Avenue Arts & Humanities' Cook Library Center (1100 Cesar E. Chavez Ave SW) while supplies last.



### Altar Kits

October 20 – 30

Parents and teachers, build an educational altar kit with your kids! Share this Día de los Muertos tradition through hands-on learning.

Kits contain information about altar building and the supplies you need to create your own! Each kit will include the following: Día de los Muertos altar fact sheet, tea light candles, incense sticks, fake marigolds, paper sugar skulls, fake fruit pieces, cut paper banners, tissue paper craft, and picture frames.

Altar kits are available to pick up at all GRPL locations and at the Grandville Avenue Arts & Humanities' Cook Library Center (1100 Cesar E. Chavez Ave SW) while supplies last. Limit one kit per family or classroom.

*Special thanks to the Grand Rapids Public Library Foundation for their support of these programs.*



*Mancera Pro – Grand Rapids Día de los Muertos Festival*

## Celebra la Herencia Hispana

15 de septiembre – 3 de noviembre de 2023

¡Celebre el Mes de la Herencia Hispana con la Biblioteca Pública de Grand Rapids! Los eventos incluyen una charla de autor, una celebración del Día de los Muertos, cuentos especiales y más. Nuestra celebración está pensada para niños y adultos.

### Festival del Día de los Muertos de Grand Rapids

Sábado, 28 de octubre | 5:00 – 7:00 pm  
Domingo, 29 de octubre | 3:00 – 9:00 pm  
Roosevelt Park | 1340 Godfrey Ave SW

¡Celebre el Día de los Muertos! Disfrute de un evento cultural y educativo gratuito, creado en colaboración con el comité del Festival del Día de los Muertos de Grand Rapids. Los altares latinoamericanos en honor a familiares y amigos que han fallecido estarán en exhibición durante todo el festival. Música, comida latina, talleres y artesanías también estarán disponibles.

Únase a nosotros de 2:00 a 3:00 pm el domingo 29 de octubre para una Procesión del Día de los Muertos. La procesión comienza en Grandville Avenue Arts & Humanities (1100 Cesar E. Chavez Ave SW) y termina en Roosevelt Park. Para unirse al desfile a pie, reúnanse en el estacionamiento de Grandville Avenue Arts & Humanities.

### Kits de Artesanía para Figuras Latinas

Del 15 de septiembre – 3 de noviembre  
Los kits de manualidades incluyen actividades apropiadas para la edad de los niños y tienen insertos para ayudar a los padres y a los niños a conocer tres figuras latinas diferentes.

Los kits de manualidades se pueden recoger en cualquier ubicación de GRPL (por sus siglas en inglés) y en el Centro de Biblioteca Cook de Grandville Avenue Arts & Humanities (1100 Cesar E. Chavez Ave SW) hasta agotar existencias.

### Kits para el Altar

Del 20 – 30 de octubre

Padres y maestros, ¡construyan un kit de altar educativo con sus hijos! Comparta esta tradición del Día de los Muertos a través del aprendizaje práctico.

¡Los kits contienen información sobre la construcción de altares y los suministros que necesita para crear el suyo propio! Cada kit incluirá lo siguiente: hoja informativa del altar del Día de los Muertos, velas de luz de té, varitas de incienso, caléndulas falsas, calaveras de azúcar de papel, trozos de fruta falsos, pancartas de papel cortado, artesanía de papel de seda y marcos de fotos.

Los kits para el altar están disponibles para recoger en todas las ubicaciones de GRPL (por sus siglas en inglés) y en el Centro de Biblioteca Cook de Grandville Avenue Arts & Humanities (1100 Cesar E. Chavez Ave SW) hasta agotar existencias. Límite de un kit por familia o aula.

*Agradecimiento especial a la Fundación de la Biblioteca Pública de Grand Rapids por su apoyo de estos programas.*

## Library Events for Everyone



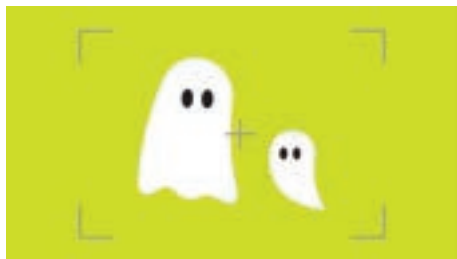
### Read.Walk.Talk

September 1 – November 5  
Ken-O-Sha Park – 1353 Van Auken St SE

Join GRPL for an outdoor reading experience! Follow the Read.Walk.Talk path and find pages of the picture book, *Señorita Mariposa* by Ben Gundersheimer.

Children, parents, and caregivers are invited to read each page aloud as they complete their journey through the park. After the walk, stop by any GRPL location to pick up a nature journal craft kit to take home.

*Read.Walk.Talk is a collaboration between the Grand Rapids Public Library, North End Wellness Coalition, and the City of Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation Department. Funding for this program was provided by the Grand Rapids Public Library Foundation and by Trail Club. Permission to reproduce this title provided by the publisher, Penguin Random House.*



### Paranormal Photography for Teens

Monday, October 30 | 4:00 – 6:00 pm  
Main Library – 111 Library St NE  
Registration required: [www.grpl.org/register](http://www.grpl.org/register)

Celebrate Halloween by learning how to use a green screen and photo-editing software to make your own scary photos. Candy and treats will be available for event attendees. Costumes are encouraged!

### Mindstorm Saturdays

Saturdays, November 4, December 2  
10:00 am – 12:00 pm  
Main Library – 111 Library St NE

Kids ages 10 and up can explore robotics at the library. Join students from the Forest Hills COMETS robotics team and build and code your own robot using the LEGO Mindstorms platform. This is a self-guided, drop-in event.



### Adult Storytimes

Mondays, November 13, December 11  
6:30 – 7:30 pm  
Golden Age at the Creston Brewery  
1504 Plainfield Ave NE

Why should kids have all the storytime fun? Adults enjoy stories, too! Join us at the Golden Age at the Creston Brewery to sit back and relax as library staff and special guests read short stories aloud. Free appetizers are first come, first served, and drinks are available for purchase.

November 13: Lisa Knight  
Join library staff and special guest reader Lisa Knight for an evening of stories about growing up. Lisa is a local actor and the Second Ward Commissioner for the City of Grand Rapids. Lisa will also be joined by Megan Erskine, Chief Executive Officer of Catherine's Health Center.

December 11: Matt McKay  
It's an evening of stories about the joys and struggles of family life. Library staff will be joined by local actor and director Matt McKay.



### Author Talk with Darcie Little Badger

Tuesday, November 7 | 6:30 – 8:30 pm  
Main Library | 111 Library St NE  
Registration required: [www.grpl.org/register](http://www.grpl.org/register)

In celebration of National Native American Heritage Month, GRPL presents an author talk with Darcie Little Badger. Enjoy a discussion with the award-winning writer of *Elatsoe* and *A Snake Falls to Earth*. The event will be followed by a Q&A and book signing. Books & Mortar, a local independent bookstore, will be onsite selling Darcie Little Badger's books.



### Author Talk with Andrea Riley Mukavetz

Tuesday, November 14 | 6:30 – 8:00 pm  
Main Library – 111 Library St NE  
Registration required: [www.grpl.org/register](http://www.grpl.org/register)

In celebration of National Native American Heritage Month, GRPL presents an author talk with Andrea Riley Mukavetz. Andrea Riley Mukavetz will discuss her book *You Better Go See Geri: An Odawa Elder's Life in Recovery and Resilience*. The event will be followed by a Q&A and book signing. Books & Mortar, a local independent bookstore, will be onsite selling copies of Riley Mukavetz's book.



### Popular Pages Book Club

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

Saturdays, November 4, December 2  
12:00 – 1:00 pm  
Main Library | 111 Library St NE  
November 4: *There There* by Tommy Orange  
December 2: *Big Friendship: How We Keep Each Other Close* by Aminatou Sow and Ann Friedman

Thursdays, November 16, December 14  
6:00 – 7:00 pm  
West Side Branch – 713 Bridge St NW  
November 16: *An Indigenous People's History of the United States* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz  
December 14: *Afterparties* by Anthony Veasna So

*Promotional support for GRPL's book clubs and author talks is provided in part by Michigan Radio.*



*Special thanks to the Grand Rapids Public Library Foundation for their support of these programs.*

**Support library events.**  
Donate to the Grand Rapids Public Library Foundation.



GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC LIBRARY  
**FOUNDATION**

[www.grplfoundation.org](http://www.grplfoundation.org)

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## Storytimes at GRPL

### National Native American Heritage Month Storytimes

Join us for a series of storytimes during National Native American Heritage Month. Storytimes will highlight Native American stories and include songs, fingerplays, and hands-on fun. Classes end with a special activity and playtime.

Monday, November 13 | 10:30 – 11:30 am  
Main Library – 111 Library St NE

Monday, November 13 | 6:30 – 7:30 pm  
West Leonard Branch – 1017 Leonard NW

Tuesday, November 14 | 10:30 – 11:30 am  
West Side Branch – 713 Bridge St NW

Wednesday, November 15 | 10:30 – 11:30 am  
Seymour Branch – 2350 Eastern SE

Thursday, November 16 | 10:30 – 11:30 am  
Yankee Clipper Branch – 2025 Leonard NE

Thursday, November 16 | 6:30 – 7:30 pm  
Madison Square Branch – 1201 Madison SE

### Pajama Time

Get cozy in your pajamas, grab your favorite stuffed animals or blanket, and come to the library for a special bedtime event! Listen to stories, sing songs, and get those wiggles out before bed. Great for working parents of children age 5 and under.

Mondays, October 23, 30, November 6, 13  
6:30 pm  
West Leonard Branch – 1017 Leonard NW

### Family Storytime

These storytimes feature great books, songs, fingerplays, and hands-on fun. Classes end with an art activity and playtime designed to help your child's brain grow. For ages 0 – 5 years old.

Mondays, October 23, 30, November 6, 13  
10:30 am  
Main Library – 111 Library St NE

Wednesdays, October 25, November 1, 8, 15  
10:30 am  
Seymour Branch – 2350 Eastern SE

### Baby & Me

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

Tuesdays, October 24, 31, November 7, 14  
2:00 pm  
Main Library – 111 Library St NE

Thursdays, October 26, November 2, 9, 16  
10:30 am  
Seymour Branch – 2350 Eastern SE

### Toddler Time

Bring your toddlers to the library for fun stories, songs, and rhymes! Toddler Time is a 25-minute long storytime followed by a hands-on activity and playtime designed to help your child's brain grow. For ages 18 months – 3 years.

Tuesdays, October 24, 31, November 7, 14  
10:30 am

West Side Branch – 713 Bridge St NW

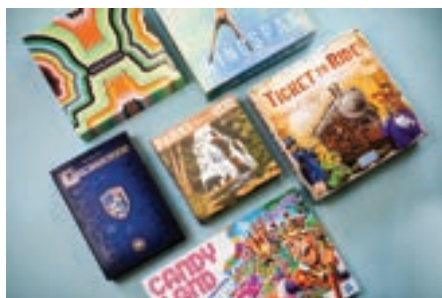
Thursdays, October 26, November 2, 9, 16  
10:30 am

Yankee Clipper Branch – 2025 Leonard NE

### Bilingual Family Time

Join us for an evening bilingual storytime filled with fun stories, movement, and music activities. This 30-minute English and Spanish storytime is followed by a hands-on activity and playtime. Wear your pajamas and get those wiggles out before bed! For families with children ages 0 – 5.

Thursdays, October 26, November 2, 9, 16  
6:30 pm  
Madison Square Branch – 1201 Madison SE



## Collections Spotlight

### NEW! Board Game Collection

Borrow board games with your GRPL card! Drop by our Main Library, West Leonard Branch, or Yankee Clipper Branch locations to explore our collection of popular games for all ages.

### NewsBank

We're pleased to announce the addition of NewsBank to our list of online databases. Now, cardholders can enjoy online access to the Grand Rapids Press without needing an individual paid subscription. Available on any device.



### Friends of the Library Book Sale

Saturday, October 21 – Sunday, October 22  
Main Library – 111 Library St NE

Join us at our biggest book sale of the year! During this annual fundraiser, find bargains to help fill your home bookshelf, office, or classroom. Both cash and credit cards are accepted at this event. All proceeds benefit the Grand Rapids Public Library.

Saturday, October 21 | 9:00 am – 4:00 pm  
All books are 50¢ each or 3 for \$1.00.  
Specialty items are priced separately.

Sunday, October 22 | 1:00 – 4:00 pm  
Fill a bag for \$5.00. Specialty items are not included. Paper bags are provided by the library.

*This event is presented by the Friends of the Grand Rapids Public Library.*

# Small Business Resource Center Spotlight

## Small Business Services

The Small Business Resource Center (SBRC) has books, trade magazines, newspapers, and research databases you can use to help your business. But that's not all the SBRC can do for you! We have a number of services that can be useful to the entrepreneur, the non-profit grantseeker, and the job seeker as well.

*Remote Reference* – If you are looking to start a business, a consultation with our Business and Career Librarian can get you off on the right research foot. We offer remote help to dig into market research to provide you with the information you can use to make your business successful.

*Non-Profit Funding* – Finding funding for your non-profit organization is a big task. The SBRC can make it a bit easier. We not only have books on fundraising for non-profits, but at the Main Library, you have access to the Foundation Directory Online Professional, where you can find the perfect funding source.

*Resume Help* – The resume can be a pretty frustrating document. You can schedule a consultation with the Business Librarian, and they will sit with you and go over your resume. If you like your resume but you'd just like some extra eyes on it, they can do that. If you want to write a resume, but don't know where to begin, the SBRC can help you there, as well. Just go to [www.grpl.org/resume](http://www.grpl.org/resume) to access our Remote Resume Review Service.

*Cover Letter Help* – Some people breeze through resume writing, but they freeze when they come to the cover letter. If you schedule a consultation with GRPL's Business Librarian, they will sit down with you and give you useful feedback on your letter. Call 616.988.5402 x5486 to schedule a consultation, or email [businesslibrarian@grpl.org](mailto:businesslibrarian@grpl.org).

For more information about the Small Business Resource Center and our suite of resources and services, visit [www.grpl.org/sbrc](http://www.grpl.org/sbrc).

## Interview with Rob Llanes from the Right Place



*What do you do for The Right Place? And what's your story?*

I'm Rob Llanes, the Senior Vice President of Business Development at The Right Place, an economic development organization dedicated to fostering business growth and attracting new enterprises to the region.

My career path began in the army, which led me back to school at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Then [I] moved onto management consulting for around seven years. Following this, I pursued a Masters' of Engineering Management at Northwestern University. This gave me the opportunity to participate in a rotation program at a former GE company called SES (Society of European Satellites) which was amongst the top two global satellite fleets. During my rotation program, I found business development exciting, particularly the part around securing large deals. Post that, I became a founder of a venture backed cloud-based communications platform. Then [I] worked with wearable robotics that specialized in exoskeletons for manufacturing or supply chain workforces.

Currently, [I] work at The Right Place in leading the Business Development team, part of that role is focused on the implementation of the Greater Grand Rapids Tech Strategy. One of our key strategic goals at The Right Place is to develop West Michigan into a leading tech hub in the Midwest.

*That's a heck of a background. I can see why they chose you for this role. So what's the current state of tech employment in West Michigan?*

Between 2018 and 2022, there was a 3.9% increase in tech jobs, totaling to 33,500 by the end of 2022. This is a healthy figure for our region, but we aim to elevate it further. Our goal is to increase tech employment to 10% of the regional employment, which entails adding about 20,000 tech jobs.

*How do you define a tech job?*

A tech job broadly involves consistent interaction with technology. This could be anything from coding to everyday tech use. Part of our strategy involves upskilling our workforce to equip them with the necessary skills for tech jobs.

*Why does our region need a multi-pronged strategy to boost tech employment?*

For a region to evolve into a bona fide tech hub, it requires diverse components. Our plan aims to attract tech talents and make West Michigan an attractive place for people looking to kickstart or advance their careers, whether in startups or established companies. This requires that we have the tech companies, roles, and ecosystem in Greater Grand Rapids that is welcoming to techies.

*What are the components that make a really good tech hub?*

It's beneficial to have a sizable population of university students and an established tech presence. It also helps to have successful local startups, especially those that have become unicorns. This helps attract and retain those diverse talents. Successful businesses often lead to successful exits, which can then become seed capital for new businesses, creating a self-sustaining cycle. Additionally, having an attractive place to live adds to the appeal.

*How did The Right Place's tech strategy come together? What did that look like?*

Our new CEO, Randy Thelen, who comes from Denver, brought insights from their tech sector development. His experience, combined with broad-based community support from the private sector, nonprofits, and educational institutions, helped shape our strategy. We held strategy sessions where we discussed relevant strengths and challenges that the community will address to help push regional growth.

*What were the biggest sticking points to come out of those discussions?*

The primary issue revolves around talent. We need to upskill our workforce to match the demands of tech businesses. Additionally, we're also focusing on enhancing our region's quality of life, including our green spaces, trails, and lake access, to make it an attractive place to live.

*Tech layoffs have been big in the news lately. Has the Greater Grand Rapids Tech Strategy changed at all in light of those?*

The strategy hasn't changed, but our effectiveness in implementing it has. One of our key plans is to attract boomerang workers – those who were born here, moved to Silicon Valley (or similar), and now wish to return. We want to show them that we have an emerging tech ecosystem and offer an environment where they can raise their family and build their career. We're actively engaging with such individuals through events and other initiatives.

*Is there anything you would want the wider public to know about what you're doing at The Right Place? What should the public understand about the future of the region in terms of the jobs you're trying to create?*

We're committed to promoting this hub ecosystem, which needs to be a community-wide endeavor, bigger than any single entity. If you're interested in getting involved, there are several organizations such as the Technology Council of West Michigan, Spartan Innovations, Start Garden, and Confluence hosting events. We encourage everyone to be creative and explore tech opportunities, whether it's being an intrapreneur within their current organization or starting a new venture.





# WE ARE GR

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Grand Rapids News and Recreation Programs - Section B

Grand Rapids Public Library News - Section B

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Oct 2023 | Vol. 22 | Issue 2 | Section A

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

# REIMAGINE GRPS *with Us!*

## SAFE, HEALTHY AND HEALING SCHOOLS

### GRPS 'ZERO-TAX-RATE-INCREASE' BOND PROPOSAL

#### NOT A TAX RATE INCREASE

It's a tax rate currently being paid by property owners in Grand Rapids.

**The GRPS Bond Proposal would extend the existing property tax rate (3.85 mills) to generate \$305 million in investment dollars for Reimagining our schools.**

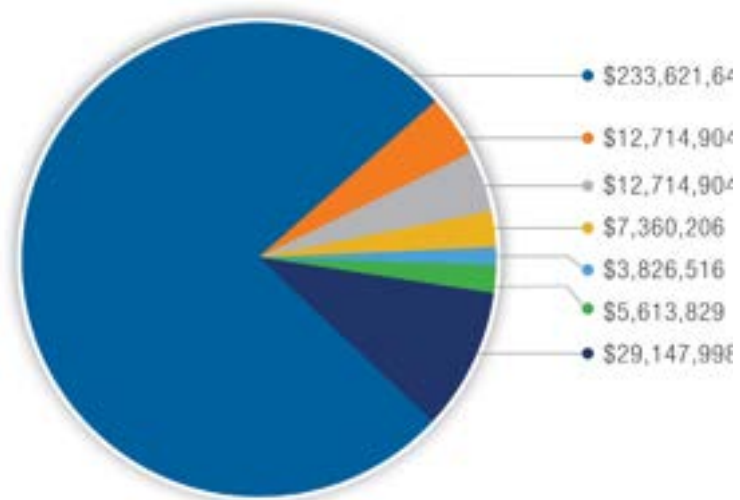
The **Reimagine GRPS with Us!** Plan:

- Informed by community surveys, focus groups, design sessions, community feedback sessions, open houses, virtual idea exchanges and more.
- Focuses on ensuring our money spent is going where it belongs — to benefit the education of our scholars — not to maintain half empty buildings that are costing \$4 million annually.

#### The Zero-Tax-Rate-Increase Bond Proposal prioritizes major challenges facing the district:

- Improving academic outcomes
- Historical inequities
- Safety & security
- Staffing shortages
- Annual structural budget deficit - a result of too many buildings and not enough staff
- Affordable housing

#### Key Themes for No-Tax-Increase Bond Investments Using Repair Criteria to prioritize.



- Educational Building Construction - (New, Add's, Reno's)
- Renovations - Auditoriums
- Renovations - Athletics
- Technology
- Playgrounds
- Safety & Security
- Consolidation Improvements

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## HOW TO VOTE Tuesday, November 7

### ✓ Register to Vote

**By mail:** Register online, by mail, at the City Clerk or at a Secretary of State branch office by Monday, October 23. For more information, scan the QR code below.

**In-person:** Register to vote in person at your city or township clerk's office between Tuesday, October 24 and Election Day.

### ✓ Voting Absentee

Requests to have an absent voter ballot mailed to you must be received by your clerk no later than 5 p.m. the Friday before the election. All voted mail-in and absentee ballots must be received by 8 p.m. on Election Day.

### ✓ Voting In-Person

Polls will be open on November 7 from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Scan the QR code to locate your Absentee Voter Drop Box or Polling Location.



### Proposed Bond Language:

Shall Grand Rapids Public Schools, Kent County, Michigan, borrow a sum of not to exceed Three Hundred Five Million Dollars (\$305,000,000) and issue its general obligation, unlimited tax bonds in two or more series for the purposes of:

- Purchasing, erecting, completing, remodeling, and equipping or re-equipping school buildings, including library buildings, auditoriums, structures, athletic fields, playgrounds, playfields and other facilities, and parts of or additions to those facilities, and acquiring, preparing, developing and improving sites, or parts of or additions to sites, for school buildings;
- Furnishing or refurnishing school buildings and parts of or additions to those facilities; and
- Acquiring, installing, and equipping or re-equipping school buildings and parts of or additions to school buildings for technology, technology infrastructure and safety and security improvements?

The annual millage required to pay the debt service on the proposed and outstanding bonds is estimated to remain at or below the 2023 levy of 3.85 mills. The estimated millage that will be levied for the proposed bonds in 2024 is 1.00 mill (\$1.00 for each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a zero (0) mill increase from the prior year's levy. The estimated simple average annual millage rate required to retire the bonds is 1.83 mills (\$1.83 for each \$1,000 of taxable valuation). The maximum number of years that any series of the bonds may be outstanding, exclusive of any refunding, will not exceed twenty-six (26) years from the date of each issue.

(Pursuant to State law, expenditure of bond proceeds must be audited, and the bond proceeds cannot be used for maintenance costs, teacher, administrator or employee salaries, or other operating expenses.)

Yes

No

### Grand Rapids Public Schools

## WE ARE GR

October 2023

Grand Rapids

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*Superintendent of Schools*

Equal Opportunity Institution: Grand Rapids Public Schools, as an Equal Opportunity Institution, complies with federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and harassment, including Title IV and Title VII (with amendments) of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the Educational Amendment of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Veterans Readjustment Act of 1974 as amended 38 USC 20-12 and the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990. The District will not discriminate against any person based on race, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and expression, height, weight, color, religion, national origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, disability or veteran status. The District's Civil Rights Compliance Officer is Anya Lusk. Ms. Lusk may be contacted at 1331 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 Anya Lusk, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources & General Counsel via email at [luska@grps.org](mailto:luska@grps.org) or (616) 819-2028.

## WE ARE GR

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## Ottawa Hills Football Wins Detroit Lions Touchdown in Your Town Grant

*A \$20,000 grant will help Ottawa Hills purchase new football equipment, protective gear, apparel, and training equipment and “will help a lot.”*



A mid-August practice for the Ottawa Hills High School football team was a little different than most.

That's because waiting for the scholar-athletes at the end of that day's practice was something beyond the normal shower, get dressed and get on with the day.

On this day, the Bengals were headed to Ford Field to watch the Detroit Lions take on the New York Giants in the first pre-season game of the 2023 season and to receive a big boost to their program.

As the 32 players and coaches came off the field after their 9 a.m. practice, their mood was upbeat. A quick shower, a change into jeans or sweats and their orange Ottawa Hills jerseys and a bite to eat were all that stood in the way of them getting on the bus and headed east to Motown for that night's kickoff.

The trip was made possible through a program called Touchdown in Your Town, presented by Kroger, that benefits high school football programs around the state of Michigan.

In partnership with Kroger, the United Dairy Industry of Michigan and Planet Fitness, the Lions provide support to schools in need of equipment, technology, apparel and/or grant funding.

Coaches, athletic directors and football staff members from Michigan high schools were eligible to nominate their program via an online portal, and submissions were reviewed by a committee comprised of members from the Lions organization and partners.

And that's where the big boost came into play for the Bengals.

“We did receive the Touchdown in Your Town grant,” said GRPS Athletic Director

Marcus Harris with a broad smile. “The grant is in the amount of \$20,000 and will purchase new football equipment, protective gear, apparel and training equipment. It will help a lot.”

Former Ottawa Hills head coach Christian Verley pursued and wrote the grant for the Bengals and did a great job said Harris.

“This would not have been possible without Coach Verley,” he said. “He really deserves all the credit for making this happen for our students.”

For his part, Verley, now a GRPS school renewal specialist under the Promise Neighborhood program, said it was an honor to write the grant proposal and a thrill to get the award.

“To get the email that Ottawa Hills was chosen meant the world to our student-athletes,” he said. “The money will mean much-needed

field equipment to help scholar-athletes practice with the state-of-the-art football equipment. Having the tools to practice and get better is a huge component to building a competitive program.”

The Lions worked with all of the schools that won grants to reveal the new resources and/or funding at a pre-season game.

Harris joined the Ottawa Hills squad for the ride to Detroit and was with them every step of the way during their experience at Ford Field. He said it was a great experience from start to finish and the Bengals represented GRPS with honor and pride.

“We arrived around 5 p.m.,” he recalled. “We were greeted by Terrance Thomas, the Detroit Lions Foundation Program Officer, at Gate C and every scholar received a Detroit Lions pennant. We then made our way to the Lions Den to meet all the other schools that also received the Touchdown in Your Town grant.”

While entering the Den, scholars were given a mini Detroit Lions replica helmet, the grants were then announced, and every team dove into an extensive buffet-style meal before heading to their seats in the stadium.

The long but memorable day ended with a 10 p.m. departure from Detroit and an after-midnight arrival in Grand Rapids, but Harris said it was all worth it.

“Our scholars had a great time,” he said. “And they represented their school and our district so very well. In fact, during the game, a spectator walked over to one of our coaches and had extremely positive things to say about our scholar-athletes overall.”



## Zoo School Anniversary Party on October 14

As Zoo School turns 50, volunteers are planning an open-house style event with a taco dinner, music, games and more to highlight the commitment to excellence in education offered by Grand Rapids Public Schools.

Zoo School is turning 50.

And “Zooies” from the past half century are invited back to celebrate on October 14 from 2-7 pm at the school (located inside John Ball Zoo).

The event will be open-house style. Admission is free and includes a taco dinner, fry bread, music, games and activities, and more.

And, for just \$12, attendees can add a special 50th anniversary t-shirt that they can tie-dye at the event. That \$12 charge also includes admission to the John Ball Zoo, giving former Zooies several hours to explore their alma mater’s home since 1973.

To register for the event and/or to purchase the ticket and T-shirt combo, go to: <https://cityptsa.com/product/zoo-school-50th-anniversary/>

Founded in 1973, Zoo School annually brings some 60 sixth graders together for what principal Brad Lundvick said is one of the most unique theme schools in GRPS.

“Our Zooies are immersed in a learning atmosphere that includes not just our classrooms, but the entire John Ball Zoo and Park,” he said. “Being at Zoo School prepares scholars for middle and high school with fun, challenging and intense learning. We believe that our small

sixth-grade program creates memories that last a lifetime, making all who attend Zoo School part of our big Zoo School family.”

Those organizing the October 14 event agree.

Stacia (Fejedelem) Barczak, Zoo School Class of 1986, is one of the volunteers planning the October 14 event.

She said that while many might not remember their sixth-grade academic year, hers is crystallized in her memory.

“My connection is sparked any time I see a ginkgo leaf or hear a John Denver song,” she said with a smile. “The opportunity to engage in environmental education sets the stage for curiosity in learning in a way other experiences can’t. My sixth-grade math wasn’t textbook. It was ‘Go figure out how tall that tree is.’ I learned problem-solving by being handed a compass and being told to find my way back to camp. My physical education was learning how to steer a canoe—and carry that canoe!”

Barczak is working to organize the upcoming event with Stacey (McClellan) Smith, whom she has known since the age of 4.

Together the pair is hopeful that the October 14 reunion will allow past scholars to reconnect with others from their class as



well as with school staff and faculty past and present. They also hope the event highlights the commitment to excellence in education offered by Grand Rapids Public Schools.

Zoo School’s home base is a brick building on John Ball Zoo property (accessible without having to pay to enter the Zoo), but much of the learning happens outside the four walls of the building’s classrooms.

The Zoo School curriculum is led by two

teachers and explores not just the core content areas but also topics such as astronomy, zoology, forestry, chemistry and physics. Scholars do everything from animal feeding and raising salmon to recycling and water sampling. They also participate in two camping trips during the school year.

In the past decade, it was named one of the most innovative schools in America.

## City High Middle School Scholar Joshua Kortenhoven Wins Consumers Energy’s 2023 SmartArt Competition

Consumers Energy, ArtPrize, GRPS celebrate 20 students for Clean Energy-Themed Artwork



City High Middle School scholar Joshua Kortenhoven won the 2023 SmartArt competition at ArtPrize with artwork titled “Green Shoes.” The SmartArt contest is an annual student art competition focused on clean energy-related subjects.

Joshua’s art, along with the art from top finalists, is on display during ArtPrize on a large banner hanging outside the Consumers Energy

electric substation downtown at Fulton Street and Market Avenue. Kortenhoven won a \$2,000 scholarship courtesy of Consumers Energy.

“Consumers Energy is so proud of these students and their art that demonstrates we all can make a difference by taking small steps today,” said Cathy Wilson, Consumers Energy’s executive director of corporate giving. “Over the past decade, SmartArt participants have created

works of art that inspire all of us to learn more about how we can help better protect our planet. This contest is such a wonderful opportunity for these students, and we are grateful for the partnership we have with GRPS and ArtPrize.”

“The artwork these scholars presented represented a collection of thoughtful and meaningful work about an issue that is near to their hearts and minds,” said Dr. Leadriane Roby, GRPS superintendent. “We often talk about the fact that it takes a community to support our scholars and these partners are serious about uplifting our children. To our scholars – we are proud of your work, this community is proud of you, and you should be proud of your work.”

Consumers Energy’s SmartArt competition blends art with sustainability and environmental stewardship. For the 10th consecutive year, Grand Rapids Public Schools’ high-school students created artwork embodying the themes of renewable energy, energy efficiency, and

sustainability. View the students’ art on display at 40 Monroe Center St NW #105, Grand Rapids, MI 49503 through October 1.



## GRPS launches 'Reimagine' dashboard to help community track progress

The dashboard highlights progress in key areas of the "Reimagine GRPS with Us!" plan.



The Grand Rapids Public Schools launched a new dashboard to help the community visualize the progress of the "Reimagine GRPS with Us!" plan.

The dashboard highlights progress in key areas of desired improvement including culture, academics, safety and security, air quality, and arts programming. It is a direct response to calls for increased transparency from the district as a whole.

"Our community members have made it clear that they want to know more about what's happening 'behind the scenes' when it comes to educating our children," GRPS Superintendent Dr. Leadriane Roby said. "This is just one of the ways we are pulling back the curtain and holding ourselves accountable to the commitments we are making to our families."

The dashboard will evolve as the priorities shift with the needs of GRPS scholars.

Check regularly for updates by visiting: <https://grps.org/reimagine/dashboard/>

Reimagine Vlog: New Dashboard launches to track progress

GRPS Superintendent Dr. Leadriane Roby is showing off the new "Reimagine GRPS Dashboard" in this week's vlog.

The dashboard highlights progress in key areas of desired improvement including culture,

academics, safety and security, air quality, and arts programming. It is a direct response to calls for increased transparency from the district as a whole.

This week's vlog also highlights our Parent Action Leaders, the 31st Annual Turkey Trot and the Zero-Tax-Rate-Increase bond.

MORE: Watch all of Dr. Roby's previous 'Reimagine' Vlogs here.

## Asbestos Notice

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

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

actions, operation and maintenance activities, periodic surveillance, cleaning, disclosure efforts, and school building areas containing asbestos. Any person may review the management plan at the Grand Rapids Public School's Facilities Management Department, 900 Union, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503, during regular business hours (8:00 am to 4:00 pm). Alternatively, any person may request a copy of the plan by writing the Grand Rapids Public Schools Facilities Management Department, 900 Union, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503. There is a cost involved in reproducing the document of approximately 10 cents per page. The Grand Rapids Public Schools will send a copy out of the management plan within 5 business days of receiving the request.





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## Campus Elementary Principal Wins Davenport Alumni Award

*Pastor's daughter and former GRPS student persevered to earn two degrees and a lifetime of experience to share with her scholars.*



When Campus Elementary principal Yamaka Bracey gets excited during conversation, she slips into a pastor's cadence, repeating certain phrases for a powerful effect, driving home her message so that any listener leaves with no doubts about what she's saying.

Being asked about a recent award she received from Davenport University—the university's College of Urban Education Alumni Award—immediately creates the condition.

"I answered the phone that morning, and I remember sitting up in my chair when the young woman told me I'd been nominated for this award and not only that, that I'd won it," she recalled. "And I remember I said 'wait, wait, I won what,' and I just started crying, I just started crying."

Bracey continued.

"It could have been anybody from my cohort (at Davenport), but me? Me? No, it could have been anybody. But it felt good. And more than that, it's a reminder to me that I'm in the right place as a principal, I'm in the right place at GRPS. And it's a reminder to not give up, a reminder that God is not through with me yet. It motivated me to keep going, and it motivated me to thank the people around me."

Bracey's dad was a longtime Grand Rapids pastor, so she said she comes by her rhetorical flourishes naturally, the product of many hours sitting in pews listening to him inspire his parishioners, but beyond that, she said, her faith is undeniable in all she does.

She came up through Madison Park, Westwood and Iroquois Middle, and finally Ottawa Hills High School, class of 1995.

"I was born and raised in GRPS," she said with a chuckle. "I've been surrounded by GRPS all my life."

But her journey from GRPS scholar to GRPS teacher and now principal at Campus Elementary School, has by no means been a straight line.

Her undergraduate degree from Aquinas College saw her juggling motherhood with being a student and sometimes, she said, all those balls didn't always stay up in the air.

"There were times I wanted to quit," she recalled. "I just kept telling myself 'Struggle for a little while to make it for a lifetime.' I tell my students now the same thing, 'Struggle for a little while to make it for a lifetime.' But, whooo, it was not always easy, I know that. But I just kept trusting God and trusting God and

thanking him for my family and my support community."

There were times when she had to get creative, she said. Bringing her kids to class or to campus was not uncommon. But she made it, and she graduated, standing, she said, on the shoulders of many.

And she wasn't done. Later she went to Davenport to earn a master's degree, this time juggling motherhood and her work as a GRPS teacher. More challenges, more creativity and more struggling for a little while to make it for a lifetime. But she made it, and she is deeply thankful to GRPS for the financial support the district provided to pay for her master's degree.

"So thankful," she said with a wide smile. "And I would encourage others (in the district) to take advantage of these opportunities that are offered."

Her lifetime of experiences, she added, gives her a deep empathy for her students and their parents and a story to share with many.

She talked about that in a recent story on the Davenport website.

"I share the experience and lifestyle of many of my parents, whether it's struggling at home,

not having enough food; whether it's being on the welfare system and trying to get off; whether it's trying to make a difference and feeling like you're stuck – I can relate," she told Davenport's Mary Eileen Lyon.

"I'm not afraid or ashamed to tell my story. It's not perfect, but I'm here, and I've overcome a lot of obstacles. I'm always believing and pushing and striving, and I want to be that example for my parents, my families and my students. I know what it's like to struggle and to be in an urban community. They're like, 'Oh, so you do get it?' Yes, baby, I get it."

Bracey is the first winner of what Davenport plans to be an annual award to honor a graduate of the College of Urban Education who has "shown outstanding professional accomplishments in a related field and who has demonstrated leadership in and dedication to the profession. The recipient is engaged in the vision and advancement of the College of Urban Education and its respective alumni community while exhibiting a commitment to public service."

Bracey will receive the award on Saturday, October 7 at DU's main Lettinga campus as part of Homecoming festivities.

## Hundreds show up to bid farewell to the old Kensington School

*More than 400 community members showed up to say goodbye to the old Kensington School building on the southwest side of Grand Rapids Thursday evening.*

More than 400 community members showed up to say goodbye to the old Kensington School building on the southwest side of Grand Rapids Thursday evening.

The building is located in the Black Hills neighborhood and is nearly 100 years old. Grand Rapids Public Schools leaders decided to take the building down and restore green space to the area. District leaders and the Board of Education made this decision after garnering extensive feedback from the community on offers to purchase the building.

GRPS held a final public walkthrough of the building which brought back memories for some of those who once attended Kensington School.

In the years since the building closed as a school, the site had become a significant cost for the district and posed a safety concern as vandals broke into the site. Restoring the building for any use would've cost millions to bring the building up to modern codes.

GRPS is hopeful in the long term future that the site might be attractive to a community partner interested in utilizing the space in a way that benefits the school system and is welcomed by the community as a whole.

In the immediate future, the property will feature space for recreation and will be beautified with wildflowers.

The process of taking down the building on the site will begin in early October.



# Move your feet before you eat!

Join 5,000 participants on Thanksgiving morning to support the GRPS Turkey Trot. Your registration provides the opportunity for all GRPS students to participate in athletics.



GRPS STUDENTS – Visit your school administration office to receive your FREE registration code.

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## WHY GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

Grand Rapids Public Schools is the third-largest employer in the city of Grand Rapids, serving over 14,000 students with over 2,800 employees, including 1,084 dedicated teachers. The student population represents more than 80 countries with over 70 different languages spoken, creating a value-added educational experience and benefit that is above and beyond basic education.



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## Full STEAM ahead at the zoo

*Day of learning attracts educators, scholars & families*

*Courtesy of School News Network*

Lexi Trudeau admitted that one thing she forgot when she designed her beaver habitat to have a place where zookeepers could take care of the toothy rodents.

“I discovered that there needs to be a place where the beavers can be separated in case one is sick, or a place where they can have well checkups,” said the sixth-grader.

Lexi and her classmates at Grand Rapids Montessori Academy were among many who showcased STEAM projects and programs on Sept. 23 at John Ball Zoo’s STEAM Day.

Kent ISD hosted one of 17 stations featuring science, technology, engineering, art and math-themed activities. Their station included opportunities for students to test temperature, create buildings using various blocks, and check out a tool known as a Vernier Dynamics Track and Cart System.

Kent ISD educational consultant Wendi Vogel and educational technology consultant Sarah Wood shared about STEAM activities available through Kent ISD and other intermediate school districts.

John Ball Zoo IT Solutions Engineer Sydney Tripp said he enjoyed meeting with guests and talking about the evolution of the computer.

“It is amazing how we have gone from a large board to a small SD card,” Tripp said. “This is important because we need to reduce waste to help with climate change.”

Also hosting booths were the Grand Rapids Children’s Museum, Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, Kendall College of Art and Design, Van Andel Institute for Education, GVSU’s Regional Math and Science Center and the Greater West Michigan region MiSTEM Network.



*Grand Rapids Montessori Academy fourth-grader Nora Doornbos points to the habitat she created for polar bears*



*Grand Rapids City High eighth-grader Jack Morgan performs a short duet with Sarah Stickney, Grand Rapids Symphony director of education*



*Grand Rapids Montessori Academy sixth-grader Lexi Trudeau next to the beaver habitat she created*

## Prestigious Fulbright Award goes to Sibley Principal

*Roselyn Charles-Maher will journey to Germany in early November, joining her fellow Fulbright Leaders for Global Schools Program award winners for 10 days in Berlin and Frankfurt, learning and listening and looking for ideas to bring back to Grand Rapids for the benefit of Sibley and GRPS*



Sibley Elementary principal Roselyn Charles-Maher never planned to apply for the prestigious Fulbright Leaders for Global Schools Program award.

But as she walked with a good friend through that friend's cancer journey, the friend's husband encouraged Charles-Maher to consider it, telling her she'd be a perfect fit for the program which sends school administrators on a 10-day intensive international exchange and professional learning program.

"So, I applied for it, and I started writing the application essays while I was helping my friend through chemo," Charles-Maher said. "In between helping my friend and my work, that's when I wrote. But never did I think that I was going to get it. Never."

So, when she got the word that she had indeed won the award, her friends were one of her first calls.

"I think what I said was 'You are not going to believe this,'" she recalled. "And we started crying."

Now, Charles-Maher is getting ready to make a trip to Germany in early November, joining her fellow Fulbright Leaders for Global Schools Program award winners for 10 days in Berlin and Frankfurt, learning and listening and looking for ideas to bring back to Grand Rapids for the benefit of Sibley and GRPS.

"I'm still flabbergasted," she said. "But I'm excited. I can't wait."

Charles-Maher said she also hopes her own

experiences as a teacher and an administrator might be of benefit to her fellow Fulbrighters and perhaps educators in Germany as well.

"I can share my own lived practices in education," she said. "Perhaps I can offer wins and successes to other administrators, while being a recipient of best practices from administrators from across the world. The goal of these connections and conversations will be to return to my school and district with pioneering and engaging ideas that would spark change and access at Grand Rapids Public Schools."

Her own educational journey as a student will also be a component of her Fulbright trip to Germany, she added. She became a citizen of the United States when she was 14 years of age after having experienced a life prior to that marked by constant moves and a fragmented passage through numerous school systems. Indeed, even after becoming a citizen, her four years of high school took place in four different states: California, New York, Texas and Kansas.

Though difficult at the time, she said she now draws on those sometimes traumatic experiences daily in her work as Sibley's principal.

"Students in the community in which I work and live do not necessarily have equitable entries to success," she said. "I know what that's

like—I understand it deeply—and I know it needs to be changed. I also know the cycle can end, and it can end with you. That's what I tell my students too. It's not easy but it is possible."

Charles-Maher believes that her global perspective is part of who she is. Born in Venezuela, she also lived in Colombia, Bolivia and Trinidad as a young girl before coming to the U.S. And she thinks a global outlook is becoming more and more important for GRPS administrators.

"In order to bring about change to the education system at GRPS, leaders have to seek global perspectives and adventures outside themselves," she said. "Leaders have to be humble and brave enough to look elsewhere for answers to an educational system that needs much change. I will have this opportunity through the Fulbright Program."

Charles-Maher is a 1997 graduate of Grand Valley with a bachelor's degree in English, and she earned a master's degree from Aquinas in 2009. She has been with GRPS since graduating from GVSU, including as Sibley's principal since 2016, two years prior to that as an assistant principal and almost 20 years as a teacher at Ottawa Hills, Central and Union high schools.

## Training from tragedy: Grand Rapids-area school security teams learn from former Oxford High School officer

*Grand Rapids Public Schools hosted county-wide school security officer training to share best practices with teams throughout the county.*

Grand Rapids Public Schools hosted county-wide school security officer training to share best practices with teams throughout the county.

This year about 100 officers throughout Kent County participated in the training just before the start of the school year and they learned from an officer who lived through the tragic school shooting at Oxford High School where four students were killed.

Jason Louwaert was an Oakland County Sheriff's Deputy who worked as the school resource officer at Oxford High at the time of the tragedy in 2021. He was the officer who ultimately took the shooter into custody.

"There was just pure evil in operation that day from the person that did this," Louwaert said of the tragedy in an interview after the training.

Louwaert has since retired from the sheriff's department and he now works for Secure Education Consultants, a team of public safety professionals who partner with

school communities to enhance their work in protecting children at school.

"You have to be prepared to do your job," Louwaert said. "You can't make this up as this event is unfolding. You're not going to come up with good ideas that you've never thought before when there's bad things happening all around you and there's chaos."

Louwaert's experience demonstrates how serious the work of school security can become in an instant. While much of the information he shared relates to tactical preparations, he also emphasized the importance of the relational side of school security.

"I think there's a lot more stories out there about 'Hey, I didn't go down this path' because of this interaction with this security guard, or this teacher, or this counselor, or even the custodian that was just nice to somebody that nobody else is nice to," Louwaert said. "I think kids that are troubled are often looking for that and it can be very simple to give it to them if we just look for that opportunity."

The training session Louwaert conducted was part of a week-long intensive training period for officers. Participants go through 48 hours of back-to-school training which includes additional training hours in their home districts. Other collaborative training sessions include mental health first-aid, threat assessment, diversity equity and inclusion, and professional conduct.

"We have a wealth of knowledge when it comes to public safety and school security in the community. Coming together for training

allows us to learn from one another and enhance our ability to partner effectively when the need arises," Larry Johnson, GRPS Chief of Staff and Executive Director of School Security said. "While each team represents a different school district, at the core we all want to protect school children wherever they are."

Superintendents from GRPS, Kentwood Public Schools, and Rockford Public Schools also participated in the training. The leaders shared insight on their vision for the future of school security.



## New principal envisions ‘a bright future’ at his alma mater

Meet Your Administrator: *Tim Mabin*

Courtesy of School News Network

Faith and foundation are central to the philosophy Tim Mabin is bringing to his alma mater, Ottawa Hills High School, as its new principal.

The faith component manifests in the way Mabin endeavors to treat others, while “foundation” is, in this case, all about doing what he can to help teachers succeed.

Mabin comes to Ottawa Hills after spending six years as principal of Shawmut Hills Elementary School, and though he was a beloved administrator at Shawmut, he never intended to stay there forever.

When he was asked to make the move to his old school last spring, he said he was happy to do so.

“I knew that this is where I was supposed to be, right away,” Mabin said of Ottawa Hills.



*Tim Mabin and his wife, Amy, pose for a photo with their kids, 11-year-old Rosalie and 7-year-old Rexley*

Prior to his tenure at Shawmut, Mabin served as the assistant principal of Grand Rapids University Prep Academy. He also spent 10 years teaching math at various posts, including Grand Rapids Montessori High School, the prep academy and Ottawa Hills.

Though becoming a high school administrator was always the goal, Mabin said he cherishes his time as a teacher and elementary school principal.

“For me, personally, at this point in my career, it’s nice to have preschool through 12th-grade experience,” Mabin said. “It gives a broader understanding of the developmental process of kids, and what they need at each level.”

### Making an Impact

Mabin said he made the move to administration to maximize his impact on students.

“I’m an educator because I love kids, and I want to support them and support their families,” Mabin said. “I left the classroom not because I didn’t love being with kids anymore, but (because) I wanted to figure out how I could expand my influence.”

He champions “taking really good care of teachers so they can take really good care of kids.”

“If you can set teachers up to be successful, then you can ultimately have a more positive impact,” he said.

Mabin tries to foster environments in which teachers feel they’re part of a team, supporting one another and not “working in a silo.” He said he prides himself on building personal — as well as professional — connections with staff members.

As a man of faith, Mabin said the song “Children of God” by the band Third Day is always on his mind.

“I have a faith-based approach to education,” he said. “Living as a Christian person in our world and trying to be a reflection of God’s love for people — that’s kind of like the grounding of the core of where I start from and who I am.”



*Ottawa Hills’ new principal, Tim Mabin, used to teach math at the school*

Mabin said he routinely ponders how best to treat others and provide them with the love, support and resources they need.

He counts the opportunity to inspire others and seeing kids “take ownership over their lives and envision a bright future” as some of the best parts of his job.

### Back at Ottawa Hills

Mabin said it’s great to be back at the school where he spent time as a student and teacher, and where he met his wife when the two were first-year teachers during the 2005-06 school year.

His outlook is informed by his former principal, Sidney Bailey, who led the high school when Mabin was a student.

“I remember Ottawa as being ... a very diverse school, with lots of different family makeups from the southeast side of Grand Rapids attending school, and having lots of opportunities with advanced classes and dual

enrollment classes, exposure to opportunities for summer camps and things like that. I think about the way the school environment felt when Mr. Bailey was here, and I think that’s really what I strive to achieve here.”

Mabin’s goals for the year include filling all the vacant teacher postings and getting everyone properly credentialed. He’s already filled a majority of the open seats, and he expects the school will be “100% staffed and certified” by fall 2024.

Mabin holds a Ph.D. in pre-K-12 educational leadership from Western Michigan University, and a master’s degree in education and bachelor’s degree in secondary teaching, math and history, both from Cornerstone University.

Mabin and his wife, Amy, live in Jenison with their 11-year-old daughter and 7-year-old son.

***“I’m an educator because I love kids, and I want to support them and support their families.”***

— Ottawa Hills High School Principal Tim Mabin



# PARENT UNIVERSITY

## Parent University

The GRPS Family and Community Engagement (FACE) office is committed to supporting and encouraging GRPS families and community partners to ask questions, reflect, and learn more about diversity, equity, and inclusion. To do so, check out the October edition of the Power Parent Magazine located in Parent University.

## PARENT UNIVERSITY CALENDAR

October-December 2023

Visit <https://parents.grps.org/events/> to learn additional information about these courses.

## EXPUNGEMENT RESOURCE FAIR

Thursday, October 19, 2023, from 5:30-7:00 p.m. at Alger Middle School located on 921 Alger St. SE.

GRPS' Family & Community Engagement, the Urban League of West Michigan, LINC Up, and Safe & Just Michigan have partnered to host an Expungement Resource Fair for GRPS Families.

If you're a parent or family member of a GRPS Scholar, our community partners at the Expungement Resource Fair can help you:

- Get involved at your child's school
- Polish your resume
- Find affordable housing
- Get professional clothing
- Finish your degree
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OCT. 19  
5-7 PM**

ALGER MIDDLE SCHOOL

**DINE AND DIG INTO SEL** – Learn how to support your scholar's social-emotional needs.

- Monday, November 6, 2023, from 5:30-7:00 p.m. at C.A. Frost Elementary School located on 1460 Laughlin Dr. NW.
- Thursday, December 7, 2023, from 5:00-6:30 p.m. at Riverside Middle School located on 265 Eleanor St. NE.

**LGBTQ+ SAFE SCHOOLS** – This course will review LGBTQ+ vocabulary terms, inspire meaningful discussions, and encourage caregivers to become strong allies for our district's LGBTQ+ community.

- Tuesday, November 28, 2023, from 5:30-7:00 PM at the GR Pride Center located on 343 Atlas Ave SE.

Let's become allies and create a safer school environment for our scholars, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

**IMPROV at the GRAND RAPIDS CIVIC THEATER** - This highly energetic family class is geared toward the basic tenets of improv acting. It is an ideal opportunity for families hoping to perform, expand their performance abilities, and develop enhanced communication and creativity skills. Registration required.

- Tuesday, November 28 from 6:00-7:30 p.m. from 6:00-7:30 p.m. at the Grand Rapids Civic Theater located on 30 Division Ave. N

## FACE IN THE COMMUNITY

Grand Rapids Public School families participated in "Paint the Calder" at ArtPrize. This ArtPrize entry, created by Howard Wright, a local commercial artist, consisted of a 12' x 6' canvas containing 1500 2"x 3" color by number spaces. One hundred spaces were designated for GRPS families. On the evening of Tuesday, September 19, 2023, GRPS family members selected their color of choice. Then they were given a small cup of paint and a paint brush to paint their corresponding number. This collaborative project absolutely captured the spirit of the community and of Grand Rapids Public Schools.

With financial support from Steelcase, the

Temple Emanuel Rabbi Emeritus Fund, and Coldwell Banker Schmidt Realty, FACE was able to bring Girls Choral Academy (GCA) to Campus Elementary School. Their Neighborhood Choirs program provides a safe, engaging, and constructive environment for young women to grow and develop. By participating in the choral arts, singers learn musical skills, create positive relationships, and nurture their individual creativity. The Campus Elementary Choir is comprised of 16 girls in grades 3, 4 and 5. They meet weekly after school in the music room, with outstanding support from staff and volunteers.

This chorus, along with additional GCA choirs, will perform on the following dates. Community members are encouraged to attend.

- Saturday, December 9, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church located on 227 Fulton St. E.
- Saturday, April 27, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. at Cesar E. Chavez Elementary School located on 1205 Cesar E. Chavez Ave. SW.

## PARENT ACTION LEADERS - PALs

All PALs agree...It is great to be back in school! FACE is thrilled to announce that eleven additional folks have joined the PAL program. In total, we have 43 PALs representing the voices of GRPS families.

The PALs attended their first meeting on Tuesday, September 12, 2023. During this gathering, they reviewed the "REIMAGINED: Community Engagement Report" from the Eureka Group and brainstormed ways to successfully integrate PALs into the Reimagine GRPS with Us! Initiative. In addition, they learned about the Grand Rapids Public Schools Zero-Tax-Rate-Increase bond opportunity, and spoke with Jose Rodriguez, a GRPS BOE member.

The 2023-2024 PALs will focus on advocating for their school communities and for the school district. In addition, they will have a strong presence at the GRPS BOE meetings. Following the meetings, they will disperse the new and learned information with the entire PALs team.

To learn more about the PALs program, please visit our page on Parent University by clicking here.

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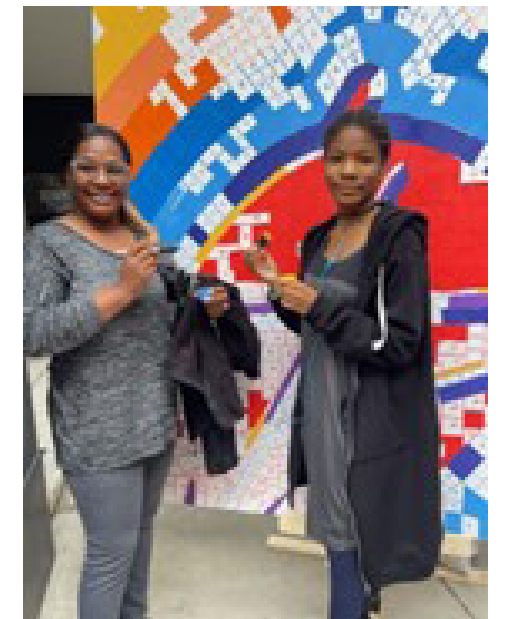
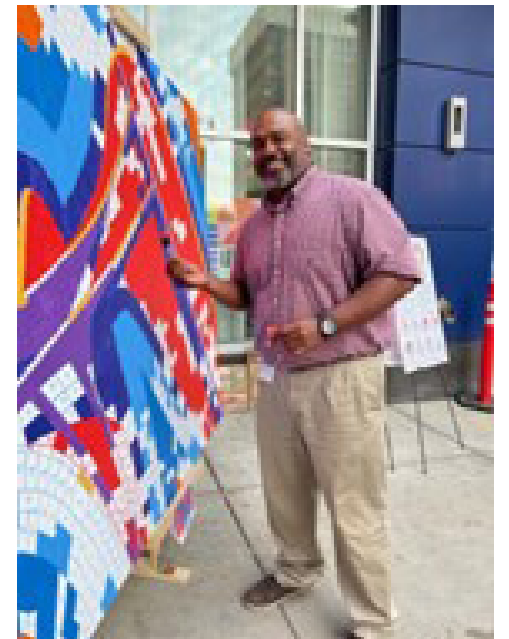
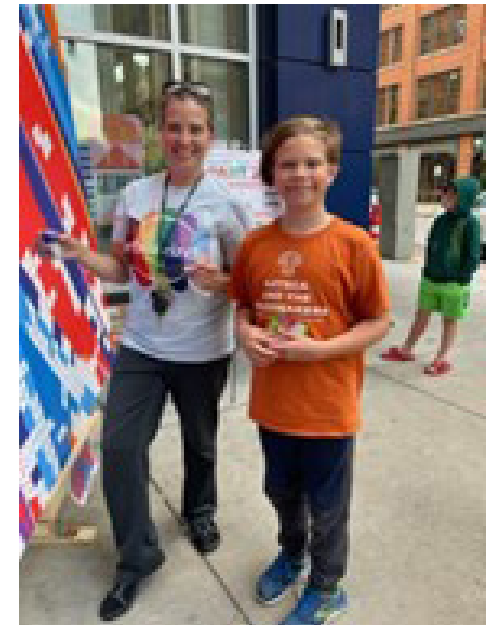
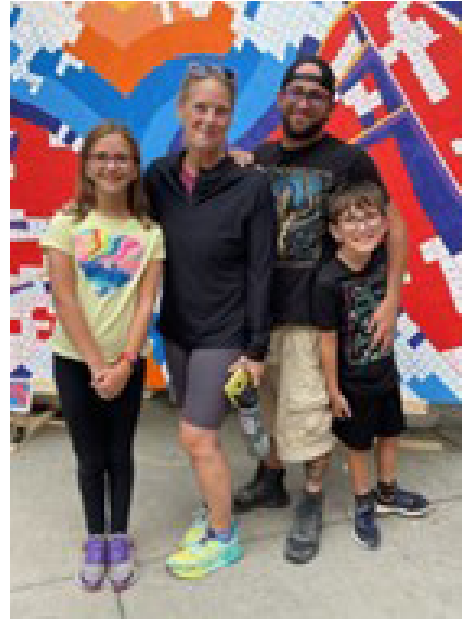
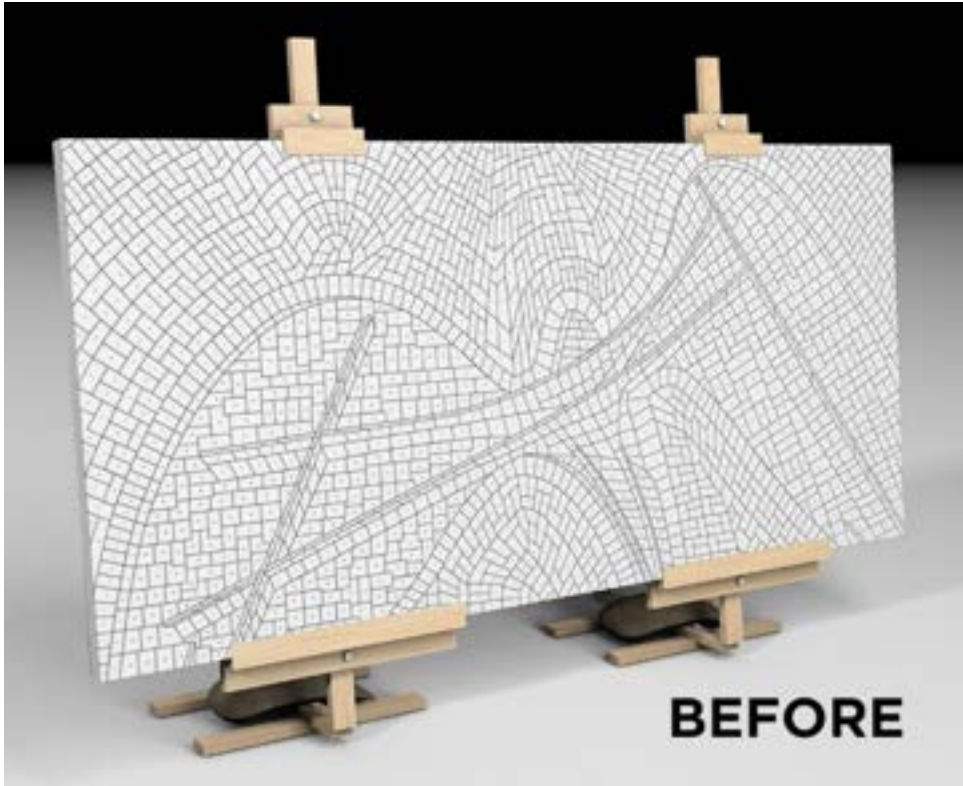
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Continued on next page





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### JOIN OUR TEAM AS A GSRP ASSOCIATE

The GSRP Associate is responsible for working as an instructional team member in providing world-class educational activities for young children through the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP). Other responsibilities include non-instructional and concept/skill reinforcement tasks and providing children the opportunity for additional professional adult/student relationships.

#### Starting pay is \$16.50 per hour.

Those with coursework toward qualifications may be considered if the applicant is willing to sign a compliance plan stating they will continue to work toward the proper credentials.



#### GRCC CDA TRAINING / T.E.A.C.H. SCHOLARSHIP

Courses facilitated by GRCC with 120 training hours required to apply for a CDA while earning 9 college credits. T.E.A.C.H. scholarships cover most or all of the cost for the college credits, books, and the CDA credential fee for eligible participants.



#### FULL-TIME POSITIONS AVAILABLE WITH BENEFITS

GRPS offers a comprehensive benefits program for full-time staff including health-dental-vision coverage, and retirement benefits. Professional development and tuition reimbursement help our staff advance their skills and careers.

### WHY GRPS?

Grand Rapids Public Schools is the third-largest employer in the city of Grand Rapids, serving nearly 15,000 students with over 2,800 employees, including 1,084 dedicated teachers. The student population represents more than 80 countries with over 70 different languages spoken, creating a value-added educational experience and benefit that is above and beyond basic education.

### OUR MISSION

To ensure that all students are educated, self-directed and productive members of society.

## Nudging educators into the great outdoors

*District works to promote environmental learning beyond the classroom*

*Courtesy of School News Network*

Kindergartner Alaya Jackson had to take a minute to consider her favorite thing to draw in her nature journal before deciding on an answer: leaves.

“They’ve got different colors,” she said exuberantly, holding up a freshly fallen leaf. “Lookit!”

Classmate Keiven Flakes was just as excited about the activity as he rattled off what he’d drawn at a breathless clip: “Rain and grass and a coconut tree, sky, some wind, and I also drew a cow. ... And that’s some logs and this is a birdhouse and — I forgot what this was.”

Alaya, Keiven and the rest of Stephanie Nielsen’s kindergarten class at Shawmut Hills Elementary were in the midst of a phenology journaling session, buddying up with fourth-graders from Sarah Westman’s class to explore their outdoor surroundings.

Seated in their grassy “sit-spots” on one of the first chilly mornings of the fall, the kindergartners soaked up nature by drawing things they saw, smelled, heard and felt. The fourth-graders had more specific fields to fill out, like the time of day, the temperature, the location, the season, the phase of the moon and more.

Nature journaling is a prime example of how educators can implement outdoor learning into their daily routines, according to GRPS environmental education consultant Sally Triant.

### Training Teachers

The activity applies concepts Triant discussed during a pair of recent teacher training sessions — one at Shawmut, the other at Ken-O-Sha Elementary — aiming to boost teachers’ confidence in educating outside the classroom, while also helping the district make progress toward achieving a long-standing goal.

“GRPS has a mission and vision for environmental education for every scholar to have an environmental learning experience every year, every grade, pre-K through 12th,” Triant said.

The district previously conducted a survey to determine the main barriers to outdoor education; at the top of the list were the need for outdoor teacher training, the lack of outdoor classroom space and the need for curriculum connections.

The Ken-O-Sha training session addressed those concerns, functioning as a professional development experience and encouraging teachers to make use of school grounds in their lessons, while showing them how nature journals can tie into classroom curriculum.

On hand to help was Ted Malefyt from Outdoor Discovery Center Network. The Holland-based organization works to advance outdoor education and conservation throughout west Michigan, and Malefyt, a former teacher, works on the education side.

“My role is to support schools and teachers



*Kindergartner Keiven Flakes, left, talks about his nature journal with Sally Triant*

wanting to do meaningful work beyond the classroom,” Malefyt said. “We partner with schools long term, doing the nitty-gritty of the work that’s required to confidently and safely have our kids engage in learning outside.”

Malefyt worked with teachers to build understanding of how nature journals can be used to promote literacy in the classroom, supplying handouts that included a variety of ideas for lesson plans and ways to tie outdoor lessons back into the classroom.

The presentation led to “some really insightful conversation” among staff in attendance, Triant said, and the naturescape play area at Ken-O-Sha Elementary was a perfect setting.

However, she added that every schoolyard in the district has the capacity to offer equally engaging environmental learning activities.



*Fourth-grader Shiela Lopez-Rafael, left, works with kindergartner Natalie Martinez-Sanchez during a phenology journaling lesson at Shawmut Hills Elementary*

### Hopes for the Future

Triant hopes more teachers will try out activities like the phenology journals used by Nielsen and Westman at Shawmut.

Nielsen is pleased with the results she’s seen since using more nature-focused lessons after tuning into one of Triant’s webinars a few years back.

“I think it’s really good for (students’) social-emotional health just to be outside,” she said. “It’s just good for them to get outside the four walls of the classroom.”

Westman is also a fan. She said her fourth-graders are learning a lot about the environment, the changing seasons and more, while acting as mentors to their kindergarten counterparts.

Triant’s goal is to continue to stoke that excitement about environmental learning in the district, and to “give teachers that nudge they might need to take scholars outside.”



*Sally Triant, left, examines acorns with kindergartner Brycen Russell and fourth-grader Aniyah Baker*



*Grand Rapids Montessori High School science teacher Franchesca Beningo, environmental education consultant Sally Triant and Ken-O-Sha Elementary Principal Abbie Marr listen to Ted Malefyt of Outdoor Discovery Center during a recent training*

# GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# APPLY TO A THEME SCHOOL

The Theme School Application will open in January 2024!

We are proud to offer a variety of school options for families, including both neighborhood and theme schools. Each theme school offers a customized curriculum focused on a unique "theme," such as environmental science, dual immersion, arts and music, skills training, Montessori, International Baccalaureate, and more!

All theme schools require an application. Select schools have admissions requirements. Seats are limited.

ROUND 1 THEME SCHOOL SELECTION	
<b>Application Open:</b> January 8 to February 9	<b>Testing Dates:</b> February 6 and 8
ROUND 2 THEME SCHOOL SELECTION	
<b>Application Open:</b> February 26 to April 5	<b>Testing Dates:</b> March 12 and 14
ROUND 3 THEME SCHOOL SELECTION	
<b>Application Open:</b> April 22 to May 24	<b>Testing Dates:</b> May 14 and 16

## QUESTIONS?

📞 (616) 819-2150 | ✉️ [enrollment@grps.org](mailto:enrollment@grps.org) | 🖨️ (616) 819-2017

Community & Student Services | 📍 1331 Martin Luther King Jr St SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506

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