



Grand Rapids Public Schools
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Proudly offering parents the largest selection of school choices in West Michigan

Every child is unique. There is no “one-size-fits-all” education to ensure every child – regardless of age, income, ability or nationality - achieves their academic potential. GRPS is proud to offer the region’s largest, most comprehensive selection of educational choices -- so parents and students can choose the best school and education program for academic growth and success.

A decade of ‘right sizing’ reforms and improvements creating success

- **GRPS is a “model” urban school district.** The district was recognized as a model for urban school districts in Michigan by the Detroit News Editorial Board (November 24, 2008). GRPS was also one of only 14 districts selected as a “Demonstration Site” in the state’s bid for a share of the \$4.3 billion “Race to the Top” funds for bold, innovative school reforms.
- **Significant academic gains.** GRPS is gaining state and national attention for the dramatic improvements in academic achievement across the district.
 - o From 2006-2010, GRPS nearly doubled the number of schools meeting federal standards and benchmarks, jumping from 26 to 49 schools.
 - o From 2006-2010, GRPS nearly quadrupled the number of school earning a “B” grade or better on the state Education Yes report. The number of schools increased from 7 to 27.
- **New school choices** are available to parents thanks to the creation of the “Centers of Innovation” – a new public-private partnership that led to the development of the University Prep Academy and four new high school choices.
- **Safe schools are even safer** with new/expanded security training, technology and relationship building that has reduced the number of major incidents for five consecutive years.
- **Offering new, state-of-the-art schools** with eleven new/renovated elementary and middle schools complete with the latest technology and educational designs to support student achievement and instruction.
- **Effort-based learning model is driving systemic change** thanks to the generous support of the Doug and Maria DeVos Foundation and a partnership with the nationally renowned Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh.
- **New and Improved Extracurricular Opportunities** are available thanks to federal support and a partnership with local foundations. As a result GRPS now offers the LOOP after school program at all elementary, middle, and K-8 schools. The district is also establishing a comprehensive middle school athletics program.

Highlights on GRPS School Choices and Programs

- **The diversity of people, cultures, ethnicities and backgrounds provides a value-added educational experience that is unlike any other experience in the region.**
 - o We live in a global economy with new educational and workforce demands that require a broader skill set above and beyond the basics
 - o Students will be connected locally and internationally with people from other nations with different cultures, languages and socio-economic backgrounds
 - o GRPS student population represents 70 countries with 49 different languages

- **City High-Middle School is the top performing school in West Michigan; second highest performing school in the entire state; and first school in the region to offer the coveted International Baccalaureate Program.**
 - o In 2007, 2008, and 2009 City students achieved the highest scores on the Michigan Merit Exam.
 - o City was ranked among “America’s Top Schools” by U.S. News and World Report three years in a row.
 - o City High-Middle is the first school in region to offer the coveted International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (Grades 7 – 10).

- **New “Centers of Innovation” schools choices with college prep focus and strong public-private partnerships with local businesses, universities, foundations, and others.**
 - o In its first year, students in High School “Centers of Innovation” outperformed all other 9th grade students at the comprehensive schools.
 - o **University Preparatory Academy:** Small Class Sizes 17 to 1 ratio / 90% graduation rate and college enrollment (Grades 6-9)
 - o **School of Health Science & Technology @ Central:** Located on the “medical mile”, HST is the region’s top secondary education program in health science, technology, and law in partnership with Spectrum Health, MSU Med School, GVSU Health Sciences, GRCC and many more.
 - o **Engineering and Biomedical School @ Creston (GRAPCEP):** Region’s top secondary education program for engineering and biomedical careers with a 99% graduation rate.
 - o **Academy for Design and Construction @ Union:** Partnered with the top architecture and construction companies in the region.
 - o **School of Business, Leadership & Entrepreneurship @ Ottawa Hills:** Partnered with the top corporations and universities like Amway and Davenport University, the School of Business offers newly renovated, state-of-the-art learning space.

- **GRPS is the only public school district in Kent County to offer “Montessori” schools; one of only a few in the state to offer Pre-K – 12th grade Montessori programming.**
 - o Grand Rapids Montessori (Pre-K-12) ranked in “America’s Top Schools” by U.S. News & World Report.
 - o North Park Montessori Academy ranks among the top performing schools in the region; one of only a few schools to earn an “A” grade on the Michigan Education Yes Report.

- **GRPS offers the largest selection of schools and programs for English Language Learners with 19 schools designated as Language Centers and 170 highly qualified bilingual teachers.**
 - o GRPS also offers the region's most extensive Spanish-English immersion program at Southwest Community Campus
 - o Language Center Schools are Brookside Elementary, Buchanan Elementary, Burton Elementary and Middle School, Congress Elementary, Cesar E. Chavez Elementary, Dickinson Elementary, Harrison Park K-8, Mulick Park Elementary, Palmer Elementary, Sherwood Park Global Studies Academy, Sibley Elementary, Southwest Community Campus, Gerald R. Ford Middle, Riverside Middle, Westwood Middle, and Union High School.

- **GRPS is the only district in the region with schools located at John Ball Park Zoological Garden and Blandford Nature Center.**
 - o Zoo School and Blandford Environmental School rank among the top performing schools in the region and state; available for 6th grade only; test in requirements

- **GRPS offers the largest selection of all-day preschools and all-day kindergarten.**
 - o All Day Preschool at select schools.
 - o All-Day Kindergarten in all but a few elementary schools (see Preschool/Kindergarten brochure)

- **GRPS offers the largest selection of “year round” schools.**
 - o Year round schools run on an alternative calendar that start in early August and end in late June with three one week breaks known as “intersessions” along with traditional holiday, winter and Spring breaks.
 - o Benefits of year round schools include shorter vacation increase student retention rates; less “summer learning loss”; reduced need to review and repeat materials; less “burn out”; and more.
 - o Year Round Schools include Campus Elementary, Campau Park Elementary, Coit Creative Arts Academy, Dickinson Elementary, and Grand Rapids Montessori (Pre-K-8).

- **GRPS offers the largest selection of schools with uniforms.**
 - o Benefits of schools with uniforms include greater sense of unity, pride and safety and a cost savings to parents
 - o GRPS has twelve schools that require uniforms, including Burton Elementary, Burton Middle, Central High, School of Health Science and Technology, Grand Rapids Montessori High School, Martin Luther King, Jr. Leadership Academy, Mulick Park Elementary, School of Business Leadership and Entrepreneurship, Southeast Academic Center, Southwest Community Campus, and Cesar E Chavez Elementary.

- **GRPS offers the largest selection of “theme schools” with customized curriculums and educational programs designed around special themes.**
 - o GRPS theme schools rank among some of the top performing schools in the region
 - o Theme Schools include C.A. Frost Environmental Science Academy (K-8), City High-Middle School 7-12), Coit Creative Arts Academy (Blandford Environmental School (6th grade only), Center for Economicology @ City (6th grade only), Zoo School (6th grade

only), Grand Rapids Montessori (PreK-12), North Park Montessori Academy (PreK-6), Shawnee Park Math, Science and Technology Academy (K-5), Sherwood Park Global Studies Academy (K-8), and Southwest Community Campus (K-8)

- **GRPS offers 10 new, state-of-the-art elementary and middle schools complete with the latest educational technology and classroom designs to support student learning and instruction.**
 - o 8 of the schools are “green built” and 5 are LEED certified – the largest number of green built, LEED certified schools in the state, among the most in the nation
 - o Newly renovated or reconstructed schools include Alger Middle School, Burton Elementary, Burton Middle, Cesar E Chavez Elementary, Dickinson Elementary, Gerald R. Ford Middle School, Harrison Park School, Kent Hills Elementary, Martin Luther King, Jr. Leadership Academy, and Sibley Elementary.
 - o Houseman Field was also recently renovated for football, soccer, track and field, and other events.

- **GRPS has new, state of the art full service health and dental clinics at four schools**
 - o Thanks to a partnership with Cherry Street Health Clinic
 - o Eligible students receive free health and dental services
 - o Clinics are located at Burton Elementary and Middle School, Ottawa Hills High School, Union High School, and Creston High School

- **GRPS has 13 “community schools” with the Kent School Services Network (KSSN) that offer social services, mental health services, health services, and family support services.**
 - o Thanks to a partnership with Kent County Health Department, Kent County Department of Human Services, Network 180, Kent County, Kent Intermediate School District, Cherry Street Health Services, and local foundations.
 - o Staffing includes clinicians and Community School Coordinators as well as DHS caseworkers and more.
 - o KSSN sites include Coit Creative Arts Academy, Alger Middle, Sibley Elementary, Harrison Park School, Gerald R. Ford Middle School, Martin Luther King, Jr. Leadership Academy, Campau Park Elementary, Cesar E. Chavez Elementary, Southwest Community Campus, Burton Elementary and Middle School, Union High, Creston High, and Ottawa Hills High.

- **GRPS offers comprehensive athletics and extra-curricular activities at every comprehensive middle school and high school**

- **GRPS is the region’s leading provider of special education services, including “Center-Based” schools that serve students with the highest needs**