

18 | 19 BOARD REPORT

GRCS

Tom DeJonge, Superintendent

December 3,
2018



THEMES

thoughtful
NEIGHBORS

CREATIVE
SOLUTION
FINDERS 

2018-2019 BOARD REPORT

DECEMBER 3, 2018

Tom DeJonge, Superintendent

GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS CALENDAR OF EVENTS — LOOKING AHEAD

Below is a brief summary of our school schedule and upcoming events where you are either scheduled, or may wish to attend. For a full list of Grand Rapids Christian Schools event options, please visit grcs.org/calendar

DECEMBER 2018			
3	6:00 pm	Board of Trustees Meeting	GRCS Board Room
4	6:00 pm	Expedition Iroquois	GRCES Iroquois Campus
4	6:00 pm	Evergreen Cookies and Carols	GRCES Evergreen Campus
6	7:30 am	Finance Committee Meeting	GRCS Board Room
8	7:30 pm	Holiday Pops Concert	DeVos CAW
11	7:30 pm	GRCHS Band & Orchestra Concert	DeVos CAW
12	7:30 pm	GRCMS / GRCMS 7th -12th Choir Concert	DeVos CAW
13	7:30 pm	GRCMS 5th/6th Band, Orchestra & Choir Concert	DeVos CAW
17-20		GRCHS Exams	GRCHS
18	7:00 pm	GRCES IQ Christmas Program (K-2)	DeVos CAW
24- Jan. 4		Christmas Break (No School)	

JANUARY 2019			
7-18		GRCHS <i>Winterim</i>	GRCHS
7	7:00 am	Executive Committee Meeting	GRCS Board Room
10	7:30 am	Finance Committee Meeting	GRCS Board Room
14	12:30 pm	Education Committee Meeting	GRCHS Conference Room
14	5:00 pm	Board of Trustees Meeting (Sandra Upton)	GRCS Board Room
15	6:00 pm	The Internet & Anxiety: Keeping Kids Safe	The Garage @ GRCHS

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MISSION

VISION

VALUES

GOALS

GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS MISSION

Preparing students to be effective servants of Christ in contemporary society.

GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS CORE VALUES

Rooted In
Christ

Connected Through
Relationships

Called to
Serve

Educated
for Life

United with Home
and Church

GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

PORTRAIT OF A Graduate

By using their unique gifts to glorify God, pursue personal faith, and bring about shalom in the world, graduates of Grand Rapids Christian Schools will be...

CULTURALLY COMPETENT

Prepared to engage with a diverse range of people and ideologies.

COMMUNICATORS AND COLLABORATORS

Prepared to work in a team environment, articulate ideas, and consider multiple viewpoints.

THOUGHTFUL NEIGHBORS

Prepared to practice hospitality, compassion, service, and empathy for those around them.

JUSTICE SEEKERS

Prepared to actively pursue greater wholeness in the world by working for justice and practicing stewardship.

CREATIVE SOLUTION FINDERS

Prepared to identify issues, engage in critical thinking, and persistently work toward solutions.

LIFELONG EXPLORERS

Prepared to live a life of discovery and wonder in God's world.

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

Prepared to follow Christ with faithfulness, resilience, and humility in a broken but hopeful world.

GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Board,

Portrait of a Graduate has provided our faculty and staff the opportunity to think purposefully about our work and what we are called to accomplish in the lives of our students. I am thankful for the process we implemented last year as we engaged our faculty at each campus to clearly define the desired attributes and characteristics of Grand Rapids Christian Schools' students. This month, we will highlight two of the **Portrait** themes: **Creative Solution Finders** and **Thoughtful Neighbors**. The principal reports include just a few examples of the numerous ways our focus on the themes are reflected each and every day.

I was recently reminded of the importance of this work. On November 19, I received a call from a parent of one of those graduates. She called me in response to having received this year's Annual Report. She reported to me that, though she did not initially think to give me a call, a friend had called her and asked if she had read through the Report. In their conversation, they talked about my introductory letter and each story of the students and schools. She shared how impressed they each were by its contents and how we highlighted the **Portrait** throughout the Report. Following their conversation, she was moved to give me a call and let me know how impressed she was with the focus on our students, how our diverse student body was authentically embedded in the stories we shared, and how wonderful her son's experience had been as a student at Grand Rapids Christian. We spoke for over 30 minutes about her deep appreciation for what our staff had offered her son, how it was distinct from his educational experiences in other schools prior to enrolling at GRC, and how truly equipped he was for success in college.

As you can likely imagine, calls such as this are not frequent. That is understandable. The power of her call was significant as it affirmed our work and reminded me of the importance of our steadfast attention toward achieving our mission to prepare students to be effective servants of Christ. In the defining of the desired attributes of a Grand Rapids Christian graduate, **Portrait of a Graduate** serves as a guidepost for how we view the child, decisions we make about our programs, and what we identify as essential learning for our students. Portrait has become and will continue to be an essentially important document for our faculty and staff, and I look forward to highlighting how we seek to develop those attributes in our monthly Board Reports over the course of the year.



Tom DeJonge, Superintendent

GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE STORIES

THOUGHTFUL NEIGHBORS

Prepared to practice hospitality,
compassion, service, and empathy for
those around them.

GRCS

CREATIVE SOLUTION FINDERS

Prepared to identify issues, engage in
critical thinking, and persistently work
toward solutions.

GRCS

BRAD MOCKABEE — GRCHS PRINCIPAL

Creative Solution Finders: In our curriculum, we have made a push to go beyond learning just content. Teachers are working in their teams to identify skills and dispositions that we want all students to walk away with. This theme of the **PoG** highlights one of these skills. How do we engage in problems and work towards a solution. We have adopted common language across the curriculum to teach the process called “Claim, Evidence, Reasoning,” or “CER” as our students often say. Whether it’s writing a research paper in English class or doing an experiment in science, this common language helps us focus on this essential 21st century skill.

Thoughtful Neighbors: We recognize that becoming a thoughtful neighbor is not something that always happens naturally for high schoolers. Occasionally on Fridays throughout the year, we use a small part of each freshman’s responsibility period/study hall to teach a desired outcome that might not be taught in our core curriculum. On Friday, November 9, I spent my day talking with our freshmen about what it means to be thoughtful neighbors and follow “the Eagle Way.” We spent time together talking about what this means both inside and outside the school, discussing how we practice hospitality and serve each other. The students had great insight into practical ways to put others first in the hallways, the lunchroom, the classroom, and in other areas of the school.

Our Spanish students have found ways to be **Thoughtful Neighbors** as they partner with the students at Bethany Christian’s Bridgeway school. Bridgeway is a school for refugee students who are in transition. Because these students speak Spanish, it’s an awesome opportunity

GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE STORIES

for our Spanish students to host them and hear their stories. It's also a great chance for our students to learn from them and practice speaking the target language.

ERIC BURGESS — GRCMS PRINCIPAL

We focused our GRCMS Thanksgiving chapel on November 16 on being **Thoughtful Neighbors**. We want our children to be prepared to practice hospitality, compassion, service, and empathy for those around them. This can be as simple as something done at home for a sibling or in school for a classmate or teacher, or it can be an act of service for a neighbor like raking leaves or shoveling snow.

Being a thoughtful neighbor comes from having a heart to serve and recognizing a need and stepping in to care for someone else. Being able to do this takes recognizing and acknowledging our neighbors and finding out about their needs.

This year, GRCMS decided to focus its Thanksgiving service project on supporting two area community ministries: Degage Ministries and David's House Ministries. These two ministries are organizations that support folks in our community who either are struggling with homelessness or who are adults living with some level of physical or cognitive disability. These folks are our neighbors in our community, and we want to recognize who they are in Christ and to consider how we as a Christian school community can come together to support them.

Mr. Dave Worst, one of our classroom aides, lives at David's House. Mr. Dave has been in a wheelchair for his entire adult life. The kids have gotten to know David over the past year and are excited for the opportunity to support him and the other residents of David's House through this service project.

It is our hope and prayer through this service project that our students will understand that their neighbors are all around them, often look and act differently than them, and that they can play an active role in being the hands and feet of Christ to our neighbors in the greater Grand Rapids community.

MARK KROMMENDYK — GRCS IROQUOIS PRINCIPAL

I can share two events that happened here in the last month that are fun examples of students being Creative Solution Finders and Thoughtful Neighbors:

Creative Solution Finders: A family contacted me and asked if they could meet with me after school one day. The mom explained that her two children had developed a presentation they wanted to share with me. When we met, the 3rd grader and his 1st grade sister told me that their family had made a commitment to recycling and to composting and that they wanted our school to put more effort into these two things here. They shared a slide show of hand drawn pictures to support their ideas. They volunteered as a family to get supplies and to bring recycled waste away. They suggested that we use compostable goods for hot lunch (like the middle school does). After meeting with this family, I talked to some teachers and we organized a committee to work with these kids to make some of their suggestions happen. A teacher point person has begun to talk with the family and we are excited to see where this goes.

Thoughtful Neighbors: We get dozens of requests for our school to support various causes, more than we can possibly do. One of the ways we decide where our support is going to go is to look at how the projects we take on further the commitments implied by the **PoG**. We support the food pantry at the East Congregational Church right here in our neighborhood because it is a wonderful way to give and to be thoughtful neighbors at the same time. We hold our food drive over Thanksgiving. The food drive gives teachers a meaningful opportunity to share the importance of sharing our blessings with our neighbors.

HARRY KNOL — ROCKFORD CHRISTIAN PRINCIPAL

RCS is unique and blessed in that we are a preK-8th grade. Having the span of grade levels provides us the opportunity to have cross grade-level supports for student to student. For example, last week RCS wrapped up th service project Operation Christmas Child. Students were charged with gathering items (paper, socks, pencils, small toys, etc.) that would be sent on to less privileged children. When it was time to pack the boxes, the staff and parents partnered upper grades with lower grades. Students worked 1-1 within these partnerships in beautiful and productive ways. I witnessed little students standing in line looking up to their older student partners and engaging in delightful conversations. They then worked diligently on a writing to include in the boxes and a dialogue as to how this project can, even in a small way, help someone less fortunate. This was just a part of being **Thoughtful Neighbors**.

ANN BAKKER — GRCS EVERGREEN PRINCIPAL

At our November 16 chapel, Evergreen students had an opportunity to highlight and share different ways that they are learning about and showing evidence of some of the characteristics of the **PoG**. Evergreen Preschoolers highlighted the characteristic of Thoughtful Neighbors, and Team Three students highlighted the characteristic of **Creative Solution Finders**.

Creative Solution Finders

Team 3 heard from Kids' Food Basket about kids who don't have enough food to eat. We've teamed up Grand Rapids Christian High School to conduct a fundraiser to raise money for KFB. We'll sell pickles at the high school and have made announcements about it through a video on the GRCS website, Facebook page, and at the high school's chapel.



Thoughtful Neighbors

We are **Thoughtful Neighbors** when we help our friends with things they can't do for themselves, like unstick a tricky zipper!

We are **Thoughtful Neighbors** when we listen to and consider the ideas of others, like when we take a vote to see what we should do next.



LINDSAY HART — DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT

In this year's Annual Report, we rolled out the purpose behind and characteristics of Portrait of a Graduate. It was so inspiring to meet as a team about the concept this past June and discuss all of the potential articles. Grand Rapids Christian Schools is brimming with stories from our alum, staff and students. What a place to be! We were excited to share who we are and why that matters with our community in this report. An unexpected but affirming result of this piece has come through the positive feedback we have received. Our hope was for parents to see how their students, grandparents to see how their grandchildren, and supporters to see how our mission comes alive each and every day. One parent wrote:

"I just finished reading the GRCS Annual Report and needed to send you a note. WOW!! The report is not only very well written and creatively laid out, but filled with exciting and encouraging information and truths of GRCS! So very well done! As Todd and I reflect on where all three of our children are today, we are forever grateful for the intentional Christ Centered education and mentoring they each received at GRCS. Each of them, uniquely and differently gifted, would tell you they were challenged individually to follow Christ and claim their identity in Him by their teachers, coaches, counselors and friends.....Blessed! Thank you for your faithful leadership in continuing the legacy of GRCS for our future."

Each student at Grand Rapids Christian has a unique journey and we are excited to celebrate the tangible ways in which they all embody our mission and exemplify these characteristics in life.

GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 1

Strengthen the Board of Trustees' strategic role to ensure its leadership of the institution in order to advance Grand Rapids Christian Schools' mission for future generations of students.

GRCS

TOM DEJONGE — SUPERINTENDENT

There are many reasons why I deeply appreciate you as members of our board, both individually and as a collective body. They include your ongoing commitment to this institution, the support and encouragement you provide to fellow board members, and the time and energy you provide through your engagement in board committees and at board meetings.

Another reason for my sincere appreciation for you is your ongoing support of, confidence in, and respect for Jim, Lindsay, and me. Your engagement with our leadership team is a reflection of your trust. We know that trust is earned, and we commit to sustain and further strengthen that trust every day and in all that we do.

Why do I highlight this? I do so because of the important role you play as members of the board and the important role the leadership team plays in instilling the level of confidence you have the right to expect. Simply stated, in order for you to provide the strategic leadership you are called to provide, it is essential that you are able to count on those you have hired to focus on the strategic goals you have established and effectively accomplish

their responsibilities in ways that align with and advance our mission.

As we seek to accomplish this particular goal, supporting you in your strategic focus will continue to be a high priority. Strategic and effective leadership ensures Grand Rapids Christian Schools will continue to thrive and our mission will be achieved. Thank you for being a part of Grand Rapids Christian's story. And thank you for your continued prayers and support of our students, faculty, staff, and leadership team. You make a significant impact.

— Tom

BEING A PARENT AND TRUSTEE

*Excerpt taken from **Entheos**, by Simon Jaynes*

The role of a Trustee is an important one to the future of a school. As a reminder and source of encouragement:

- *Keep a sense of proportion – you as an individual board member don't have any real power! Why is that? Because the Board operates as a single entity and each individual exerts power only as a part of the whole.*
- *Stay humble.*
- *Keep a sense of humor.*
- *Whether you are on the Board for a few years or multiple terms, it won't be forever.*
- *Your family is still your most important role.*
- *Laugh at yourself a little.*
- *Keep a sense of service. It's not about power anyway. You know that.*
- *You joined the Board to be able to serve the school with your wealth, your wisdom, your energy.*
- *And mostly, enjoy the opportunity to exercise servant leadership and ensure that, at the end, there's nothing that you regret, and that the school is stronger because of the service you were able to give!*

GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 2

Ensure exemplary and aligned PS-12th grade Christian education across all schools that is taught by teachers who embrace mastery and productive Christian citizenship for all students.

GRCS

Programs), Elizabeth Hoving (HS Spanish Teacher), Sara Seth (District SI Coordinator), and I will welcome current 7th and 8th grade SI families and a few SI students from other districts to a dinner introducing them to our high school program. We are thrilled to roll out a program that continues to immerse them in rich cultural opportunities and puts them on a pathway to a potential college minor while still at GRCHS. The program involves a partnership with Calvin College where students dual enroll during their junior and senior years.

ERIC BURGESS — GRCMS PRINCIPAL

Throughout the fall semester, I continue to be impressed by the teamwork and collaboration of the four grade-level teaching teams at GRCMS. They care for one another and plan well together as they share their students at each grade level, and they work hard to implement and document the core curriculum, which is one of our strategic plan goals that must be finished by June 2019. Their teamwork and collaboration was particularly on display in mid-November when we had consecutive visits by teams from Dutton Christian School and also from Des Moines Christian School in Iowa. These middle school teams came out to observe and discuss with our teams what is done intentionally at GRCMS to build community and to foster faith, as well as considering how we implement our schedule in the best interest of middle school-age learners. We had two great days of collaboration and discussion, and our teachers and staff were excellent hosts to our Christian school sisters and brothers from Dutton and Des Moines. It was a great learning time for all involved!

HARRY KNOL — ROCKFORD PRINCIPAL

RCS teachers joined their colleagues from the Evergreen and Iroquois campuses for grade level Professional Learning Team meetings during the month of November. This professional development time focused on curriculum alignment with an emphasis on math curriculum and instruction for teachers in grades preK-4.

Lynette Kooienga, Academic Program Coordinator for our middle schools, comes to RCS every Thursday morning to meet individually with our 5th - 8th grade teachers. Her focus is on the effective development and communication of middle school Learning Targets as well as instructional practice. She also meets with me on Thursday mornings and

BRAD MOCKABEE — GRCHS PRINCIPAL

In the previous Board Report, I mentioned that we would send two teams to workshops in October. The math team attended a workshop as an entire department and our school leadership team attended a Response to Intervention (RTI) workshop. Both teams had extremely meaningful experiences. The math team left with strategies that they could implement immediately and recommendations for long-term changes in math instruction. The school leadership team was challenged to think deeply about how we deliver core instruction to all students as well as how we intervene when students need additional time and support. It was extremely important for the team to work through these things together and discuss the next steps for our school. We left the workshop with some clear direction for our professional development day the following week. Team leaders reported that they accomplished extremely meaningful work identifying essential standards in their teams.

On December 10, our Spanish immersion transition team, made up of Nick DeKoster (Academic and Innovative

GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

we plan strategies to further develop the middle school's instructional delivery from an already effective middle school teaching team.

Twice each month, Student Support professional staff, individual K-4th grade teachers, and I meet to review classroom performance data and plan intervention groups for students. For some students, individual Reading Intervention Plans are developed and shared with parents in the upcoming month. It is wonderful evidence of how we view each child individually and uniquely gifted by God. And it is a wonderful example of how our RCS teachers partner with parents in the education of their children.

MARK KROMMENDYK — GRCES IROQUOIS PRINCIPAL

One of the foundational values we have at Iroquois and indeed across all of our campuses is that the quality of a child's educational experience may not vary based on what teacher that child has. By example, this means we must guarantee that all 2nd graders get the same high quality and depth of learning in all 2nd grade rooms. This must be true across buildings, programs, and from room to room in buildings where more than one teacher teaches in a grade. One important tool we use as a system to ensure this value is met is the development of a truly collaborative culture. This is the driver behind our Professional Learning Team meetings. Teachers join their colleagues for grade level Professional Learning Team meetings. This happens a minimum of six times each year, and our first collaborative PLT of the year occurred this fall during the month of November. This professional development time focuses on curriculum alignment and best practice instruction. This year we are emphasizing math curriculum and instruction for teachers in grades K-4.

ANN BAKKER — GRCES EVERGREEN PRINCIPAL

Evergreen teachers joined their colleagues from the RCS and Iroquois campuses for grade level Professional Learning Team meetings during the month of November. This professional development time focused on curriculum alignment with an emphasis on math curriculum and instruction for teachers in grades K-4, including Evergreen's fifth grade as well. While it can be tough for a teacher to be out of her classroom, the time is incredibly valuable as - like students - teachers learn from each other and gain valuable professional insights through these important planned experiences. Gone are the days when teachers work in isolation of each other. Instruction is strengthened and student learning is maximized as a result of our investment in teachers' collaborative professional experiences.

GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 3

Establish a Christian learning institution that is reflective of, demonstrates respect for, and supportive of deepened relationships within Grand Rapids Christian Schools' increasingly diverse student body and the broader community.

GRCS

Cultural Intelligence Center as GRCS implements the recommendations from the CQ Plan.

HARRY KNOL — ROCKFORD PRINCIPAL

During the months of September and October 2018 many of the RCS staff professional and support were able to attend one of four CQ trainings held at either GRCS or Holland Christian. These trainings provided the staff an opportunity to learn how they can be more culturally-aware including increasing the participant's own self awareness. Staff reported favorably to the trainings.

ANN BAKKER — GRCS EVERGREEN PRINCIPAL

Classroom teachers carefully and intentionally select literature that reflects the diversity of our student body. Our PTO is generously providing funds for each teacher to purchase classroom books which reflect diversity. As you can imagine, teachers are busily reading many books in an effort to make excellent decisions about book purchases which reflect the diversity of our student body and God's kingdom.

BRAD MOCKABEE — GRCHS PRINCIPAL

In keeping with our efforts to value diversity, equity, and inclusion, Grand Rapids Christian High School will partner with the Christian Learning Center (CLC) to do a comprehensive review of our inclusion and student support programs. The CLC has agreed to both perform an audit of our current programs and assist us in casting a vision for our programs moving forward. We are excited for this partnership and to learn and grow as a school in this area!

ERIC BURGESS — GRCMS PRINCIPAL

Over the course of the fall semester, nearly all of the GRCMS homeroom teachers and a number of support staff were able to attend one of four CQ trainings hosted at either GRCS or Holland Christian. These were meaningful trainings for the teachers and provided them the opportunity alongside colleagues to learn more about themselves personally and how they can be more culturally aware and understanding as we live and learn together in community. The staff reported that the trainings were very valuable and also that they look forward to the next steps in our work with the

GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS



LINDSAY HART — DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT

One important objective of the Advancement Department staff is the focus on retention. Re-enrolling current students is crucial to our school's mission, and efforts to improve student retention should be a priority of every member of our faculty and staff. Understanding the reasons that families may leave, combined with intentional methods aimed at boosting retention, will help build a stable and sustainable future for Grand Rapids Christian Schools. Beginning in late October, I began meeting with faculty at each campus about retention trends and started conversations about targeted retention efforts at each school for the 2019-2020 school year.

Over the past few years, we have enjoyed high enrollment in our preschools. Our next goal is to increase the number of these new preschoolers that choose GRCS for their children's early childhood program and ultimately continue through as a part of our school community. In order to accomplish this, two new events have been planned specifically for current parents and preschoolers to show them the exciting opportunities that lie ahead in

Kindergarten. **Explore Evergreen** took place mid-November where students "took a hike" to Team One and previewed Kindergarten at this camping-themed event. This was a fun and informational night for Evergreen families thanks to the planning and vision of Linda Velenga and the support of all Evergreen faculty.

Expedition Iroquois will take place in early December, at which time more than 100 current 4 and 5 year olds will be able to follow their tour guide and map to a variety of Kindergarten destinations, meeting teachers and participating in exciting classroom activities. We will also open 2019-2020 Kindergarten registration for current students at these events. Each one of these events helps to strengthen and create connections with current parents and their wonderful children. Thank you to all of our admissions staff and faculty for supporting the events and who help to make them come to life!

ERIC BURGESS — GRCMS PRINCIPAL

On December 3, GRCMS hosted the annual **Focus on Your Future** event for 5th grade students and families from our Evergreen campus. This event has become a key event in the fall semester to intentionally reach out to Evergreen 5th graders to make sure that they know we are planning on them coming to GRCMS for 6th - 8th grades! It provides us with an important opportunity to answer the unique questions our Evergreen parents may have. The evening includes a dinner to get to know one another and a presentation made by the GRCMS 6th grade team. The attendance has been very good at this event the past few years and has led to great retention of Evergreen families to GRCMS. Linda Velenga, from GRCS admissions, does a great job putting this event together and of connecting personally with Evergreen families in preparation for it!

HARRY KNOL — ROCKFORD PRINCIPAL

Rachael Seagard, RCS Director of Admissions, is planning an event for PreK students who are prospective K students in the fall. The plan is to have a night for our prospective Kindergarteners (current Preschoolers) to enjoy supper at school with their parents and then have a mini Kindergarten session/class with RCS' Kindergarten and each of the co-curricular teachers. The event is tentatively scheduled for January 9, 2019.

GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

MARK KROMMENDYK — GRCES IROQUOIS PRINCIPAL

One of the keys to accomplish this goal is to assemble a quality team that can plan well together. We have that team. During the month of November, there were a number of meetings with school and admissions leadership to promote enrollment. The team talked about what preschool and kindergarten classes we will offer next year and how we will maximize retention of our current preschoolers. We looked at what parents want for their children and the kind of schedules that are conducive to busy families. We looked at how to best use the spaces we have. We decided how to address issues like the unprecedented demand our current numbers suggest we may be facing. We planned an new special event called **Expedition Iroquois** for December 4 that will give preschool families a personal and firsthand feel for what kindergarten will offer our students. It will be a great night!



ANN BAKKER — GRCES EVERGREEN PRINCIPAL

Linda Velenga, Evergreen Director of Admissions, planned and implemented a new event at Evergreen this year. **Explore Evergreen** was an event on Thursday, November 15 for current and future Evergreen preschool students who are age eligible to be in Kindergarten next school year. These children and their families were invited to Evergreen for a camp themed dinner. After dinner, they hiked to Team One to explore the classroom and learn about Evergreen's Inquiry model of education. The Team One teachers, Mary Witteveen and Beth Nyenhuis, taught an inquiry lesson, read a book, and provided some exploration time for these future Evergreen Team One students. It was a fun and exciting evening.



GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS



JIM PRIMUS — CFO

- The 2017-18 audit is complete. Tom Rosenbach, managing partner at Beene Garter, will be meeting with the GRCS Finance Committee at its January meeting. We expect a clean report.
- The first quarter of the 2018-19 fiscal year is complete and the operations budget is on track with respect to both revenue and expenses.
- The Compensation Committee met on November 5 and on November 28 to discuss staff wages and benefits, with specific discussion related to the CSI Pension Plan (hard-frozen effective September 1, 2019) and a 403(b) replacement plan. The Committee is comprised of one faculty member from the Evergreen, Iroquois,, GRCMS, and RCS campuses; two faculty members from GRCHS,; 3 board members; and Tom and me.
- We are well on the way to developing a budget for the 2019-20 school year. Moving up the timeline, we will provide the board with its first review at the December board meeting and expect to have the work completed in time for the board's final review and review and approval at the January meeting.
- GRCS is excited to move towards continuous enrollment for returning families, beginning this year. This process will improve efficiencies during the enrollment season and will be a welcome one for returning families.

GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS SCHOOL NEWS & UPDATES

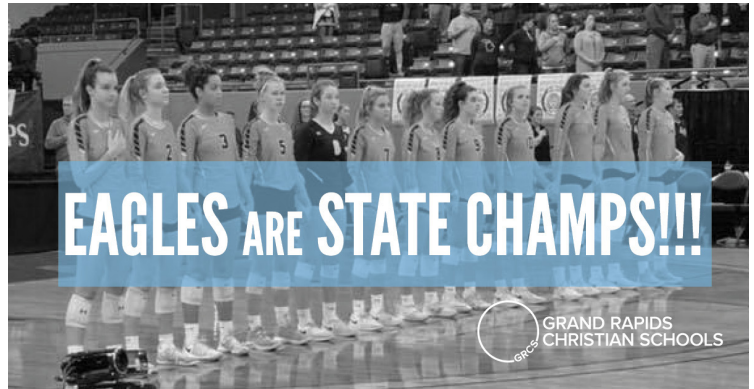


BRAD MOCKABEE — GRCHS PRINCIPAL

We have had some exciting events over the last month at GRCHS! On Tuesday, November 13, we hosted Showcase at GRCHS. Showcase is our opportunity to introduce GRCHS to potential future Eagles, giving students and parents a chance to check out our school and learn more about how our programming leads to our accomplishing our mission. Our faculty and staff welcomed families with breakout sessions highlighting a variety of programs. We also had tables set up in the Town Square to highlight our clubs and extracurricular offerings. I was overwhelmed with the positive comments from families. One conversation that stuck out was with an alum (class of '95) and current parent of an 8th grader at Forest Hills Public Schools. She was blown away by our efforts to treat each student as an individual, unique child of God. She was so excited by the potential of her son receiving this type of education to help him be who God called him to be.

Our volleyball team, led by coach Tiffanie Gates, brought us on an awesome ride to a **DIVISION 2 STATE CHAMPIONSHIP!** The girls were dominant, not losing a set throughout post-season play. It was a great community builder for our school, as great crowds filled

the gym all the way through the championship game. We are so proud of both the excellent play and sportsmanship demonstrated by our team!



This fall, Rick Hardenberg directed the musical *Curtains* and thrilled audiences. Every year when I see one of our productions, I'm blown away. This year was no

different. The acting, the music, and the sets all contributed to *Curtains* being a smashing success!

HARRY KNOL — ROCKFORD PRINCIPAL

During the month of October, I conducted my first Marzano teacher observation at RCS. The pilot included Becca Iverson (3rd Grade). In November, the pilot Marzano launch was expanded to include Julie Barrett, a middle school teacher. The Observation/Evaluation tool is very comprehensive and through conversations with the pilot teachers and fellow administrators, strategies and consistent practices are being developed to ensure a full implementation for fall 2019 and will serve as a process embracing a growth mindset.



**GRAND RAPIDS
CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS**