



GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS
**INTERNATIONAL
STUDENT
PROGRAM**

Handbook for Prospective International Students and Their Families



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*Other useful ISP materials:

ISP Brochure

ISP Legal Agreement and Policies

Student Recruiting agreement

ISP Newsletters

Grand Rapids Christian High School Curriculum Guide

Grand Rapids Christian High School Profile

www.grcs.org/international

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM (ISP) FEATURES

Academic Excellence

- Rigorous college preparatory curriculum with high expectations
- Teacher to student ratio of 1:15
- 15 Advanced Placement (AP) classes
- STEM emphasis
- Winterim: two-week in-depth learning experience in January
- State-of-the-Art Facilities
- 1:1 Laptop program with MacBook Air
- Student body 825 (International students make up 4% of student body)
- Strong Fine Arts program

Individual Support

- Two full time staff work exclusively with our international students
- Two-week orientation camp to ensure students are well prepared
- English Lab for first year students (see pg. 8)
- Private Tutoring
- Emotional, Spiritual, Social Support

University Preparation

- University Guidance Counselor: personalized guidance throughout the college search and application process.
- SAT/ACT Preparation: International students on average improve their SAT English score by 117 points and their ACT English score by 6 points after 2 full years at GRCHS.
- University Visits: day and weekend trips to a variety of well-known universities are offered.

*All International student graduates in the past five years have attended university, many of them top universities including Duke University, University of Michigan, Penn State University, UCLA, New York University, Purdue, Drexel University, Wake Forest University, University of Washington, Wheaton College, Calvin College, Carnegie-Mellon University, Baylor University, Virginia Tech, Fordham University, Illinois Institute of Technology, and James Madison University.

Home-stay Program

- Host families are carefully selected and receive ongoing training and support. Our host families welcome their students as a true part of the family, provide a nurturing environment, and help their student develop life skills.

Character Development

- A core value of our International Student Program is the importance of living a balanced and well-rounded life. To support our students to this end we actively nurture all areas of their life so they are able to develop into a well-rounded individual of high moral standard. Integrity and life skills are essential to success.

DATES FOR 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR

3 August 2019: new students arrive for orientation

19 August 2019: first day of classes at the high school

21 December – 5 January: Christmas Break

*All students must return home or travel with an adult during this break. Students must leave December 20 after 3pm, December 21 or 22 and must return on January 4 or 5 (classes resume January 6).

4-12 April: Spring Break

*A 5-day trip is provided for international students (no additional cost) but they are also free to travel with approved friends, host family, or visiting family during this break.

29 May: last day of high school

*International students must leave May 30 or 31.

CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION

Grand Rapids Christian Schools enroll international students into 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th grade and occasionally into 11th and 12th grades for exceptional situations. We highly recommend that international students begin in 8th or 9th grade.

Listed below are the criteria for admission:

- English proficiency general guidelines:

	7 th -8 th grade	9 th -10 th grade	11 th -12 th grade
TOEFL	50	60	70
TOEFL Junior	550	650	800
iTEP	2.5	3.0	4.0

*The Skype interview is also a very important factor in determining English proficiency.

- Students are not required to be Christian but they do need to respect Christian beliefs and be interested in learning more about them.
- Students and parents must understand that Grand Rapids Christian Schools provides a faith-based education and that all our host families are church attending Christians.
- The student must be eager to fully participate in school and home activities.
- The student must show evidence of emotional stability, a good behavior record, and adequate social adjustment.
- The student must demonstrate character qualities of integrity, self-discipline and motivation, consistent effort, obedient spirit, positive attitude and respectful behavior.
- The student must live in a homestay provided by the school.

Grand Rapids Christian Schools Mission Statement:

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

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT APPLICATION PROCESS

STEP 1 – APPLICATION

A completed application must include the following in English:

- General application
- Student essays
- Student photos
- English teacher reference
- Math teacher reference
- Personal reference
- Official school transcript
- TOEFL score (or equivalent language test)
- Immunization records (students must meet Michigan’s immunization requirements – completion can be done in Michigan)
- Copy of Birth Certificate

STEP 2 – INTERVIEW

The successful student will be contacted to arrange a Skype interview

STEP 3 – ACCEPTANCE

Based on the application and interview, acceptance will be determined by Grand Rapids Christian and an enrollment agreement will be sent with further instructions

STEP 4 – TUITION PAYMENT

After receipt of the tuition payment and required documents the school will issue the I-20. Failure to pay tuition will result in a forfeit of enrollment.

STEP 5 – I-20 ISSUED

An I-20 will be issued for the student and the student must obtain a visa in his or her home country.

STEP 6 – HOST FAMILY MATCH

When the student has successfully obtained a visa they will be paired with a host family.

STEP 7 – ARRIVAL and ORIENTATION

The student must arrive in Grand Rapids by August 3, 2019 for the international student orientation.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT TUITION AND FEES 2019-2020

Tuition	\$10,000	Base tuition fee
International Student fee	\$16,500	Private tutoring, English Lab, guidance counselor, welcome and farewell banquets, school lunch, university preparation and visits to area schools, SAT/ACT workshops, Academic and Student Life Support Services, book rental, MacBook Air lap top rental and insurance, medical insurance, emergency assistance, freshmen and senior retreats, international student fall retreat, spring break trip, host family placement, ongoing support and training for host families, cap and gown rental for graduation
Homestay Fee	7,000	The host family will provide: 3 meals a day, transportation, a safe and healthy home environment, social, cultural and emotional support, monitoring of student homework and academic progress, family activities and outings, communication with home family
TOTAL	\$33,500	*1st year students pay an additional \$3,000 refundable deposit *\$2,000 for orientation camp

* Orientation camp is a two-week program required for first year students.

* The refundable deposit is to cover costs in the case of an emergency, and if not used will be refunded upon graduation or departure from our program.

* Scholarships are available for students up to \$12,000/year based on need, geographical location, and student application.

* Grand Rapids Christian Schools functions as its own agency and provides all the support services that an international coordinating agency would provide and more!

Tuition is due in full *before* the I-20 is issued.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

(no additional fee)

English Lab

- English Lab is one of 8 semester courses designed just for international students to help improve their academic English skills, including the ability to read and respond to academic texts. All first year international students take English Lab for one year.
- This course serves as a place for discussions about experiences, and a place where cultural differences can be learned and unpacked.
- Students learn essential academic vocabulary based on word lists for the TOEFL, ACT, and SAT.
- Daily and weekly assignments, class discussions, and presentations are aimed at fostering analytical thinking and develop the English skills needed for specific projects and assignments at GRCHS.
- This course also serves as a homeroom for new international students, providing them regular contact with the staff of the International Student Program.

English Tutoring

- One-on-one English tutoring is provided for 1-2 hours a week for first-year students and others who we feel will benefit from the extra support.
- The student will receive individualized help on school work and have access to study materials provided through our school's educational support services.

SAT/ACT preparation

- A series of Saturday workshops are offered by a highly experienced SAT/ACT expert. Students consistently improve their test scores after taking these workshops.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

SCIENCE OLYMPIAD: compete with students from other schools in a variety of Science events

THE VEX ROBOTICS: Building, program, and drive remote controlled robots

FORENSICS: Public speaking and acting competitions

CHESS CLUB

CODING CLUB

DRUMLINE: Play and march with drums for school events

YOUTH CULTURE CLUB: Celebrate diversity and a wider cultural experience

EAGLE EYE: Write stories for or edit the school newspaper

GOSPEL CHOIR

IMPROV: Perform improvisational comedy

MAN 2 MAN: Nurture the spiritual and emotional life of young men

NATIONAL HONORS SOCIETY: Juniors and seniors who have a GPA of 3.7 and have interest in serving the school community

PEER LISTENERS: Peer Listeners are here to listen confidentially to students who are struggling **NEW**

LIFE E-CLUB: Get involved with issues in the surrounding community and planet Earth

PHILOSOPHY CLUB: For all students who have big ideas and even bigger questions.

PLAYS/MUSICALS: Actors, directing, makeup, lighting, set/props collection and construction

STUDENT AMBASSADORS: Lead student tours, host college representatives, and volunteer at school events.

GLOBAL AMBASSADORS: a service-leadership club that aims to have an impact on the entire school community by broadening global perspectives, developing cultural understandings, and creating a passion for God's people

STUDENT CONGRESS: Responsible for grade level special activities

HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS

COED	BOYS	Athletic eligibility rules
Basketball Cross Country Track and Field Lacrosse Golf Soccer	Baseball Football Hockey	*The Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) sets athletic eligibility rules for international students. The MHSAA has determined that international students are eligible to play school sports their first year, then they must sit out their second year, then they can play for the remainder of their stay at our school.
Tennis Swimming Equestrian Bowling Wrestling Skiing	GIRLS	
	Softball Volleyball Cheerleading (sideline and competitive)	

MICHIGAN

Michigan is famously referred to as the Great Lakes State. The sign that greets you when you cross the state boarder reads, *Welcome to Pure Michigan*. Pure Michigan is a state of unique cities, breathtaking landscapes, and a wide array of events and festivals. Michigan is well known for its friendly Midwestern culture. It's a popular tourist destination for good reason.

THE CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

Grand Rapids was ranked 12th by US News as best place to live in the USA. The city enjoys a reputation as a rising center of arts, business and medicine.

Population

Grand Rapids metropolitan area has a population of about 1,000,000 people. This size is not too big, not too small. Grand Rapids has everything you need for a fun weekend out but does not have the traffic congestion and hassles of a major city hub. Grand Rapids is just a 3.5-hour drive from the city of Chicago and a 2.5-hour drive from Detroit.

Art City

Grand Rapids is home of ArtPrize, the world's largest art competition. For 19 days in September the city is lit up with a display of over 1,500 pieces of art on the streets, in cafes, libraries, hotels, churches and sidewalks. There is artwork literally everywhere. ArtPrize is free and open to the public and attracts over 500,000 visitors annually.

International Business Headquarters

The Amway world headquarters is located in Grand Rapids and the two founders of this world famous business, Jay VanAndel and Richard DeVos are graduates of Grand Rapids Christian High School. Grand Rapids is also home to the international corporations of Steelcase and Whirlpool.

The Medical Mile

Grand Rapids is well known for its world class healthcare facilities. The area known as the Medical Mile in downtown Grand Rapids is lined with world renowned research, clinical, and academic institutions and attracts medical professionals from around the world.

Museums in Grand Rapids

Gerald R Ford Presidential Museum

Grand Rapids Public Museum

Grand Rapids Children's Museum

Grand Rapids Art Museum

Urban Institute of Contemporary Art

THE EAGLE WAY



Our Christian school culture is special and unique; it gives purpose to the educational environment within which we seek to accomplish our mission.

In order to accomplish our mission of preparing students to be servants of Christ in contemporary society, our students must remain teachable by learning and practicing behaviors that align to the mission and values of our school. Our actions demonstrate our alignment to the “heart” of our school; **The Eagle Way**.

A student leading an Eagle Way life seeks to live up to the expectations of these essential elements within our Grand Rapids Christian Schools’ set of Core Values:

ROOTED IN CHRIST

- HONOR GOD** They seek to glorify God in daily decisions and actions in all things in order to fulfill the vision He has placed before us.
- INTEGRITY** They strive to be honest and strong in character, recognizing that dishonesty is a pathway to a stressful and destructive environment.

EDUCATED FOR LIFE

- EXCELLENCE** They use their God-given gifts to be the very best they can be by being lifelong, active learners. By thinking critically and creatively, they strive to be knowledgeable in a broad range of disciplines. They practice self-management in their academics.
- EXPLORE** They take advantage of opportunities to explore new roles and ideas. They are driven to acquire skills to be an active participant in their learning and use the opportunities available to grow and take risks as an independent learner. They persevere in difficult situations. They have a growth mindset, which drives their motivation and achievement.
- BALANCED** They maintain balance across all disciplines in and out of school, seeking to find emotional, intellectual, physical, and spiritual well being.
- RESPONSIBLE** They take responsibility for their own actions and accept the consequences that accompany them. They are organized and prepared, are on time, and follow directions. They are accountable for self and help hold others accountable to the same standard.

CONNECTED THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS

- COMMUNICATE & COLLABORATE** They understand and express ideas articulately, professionally and respectfully. They work effectively and willingly with others.
- HONOR & CELEBRATE** They are thoughtful, compassionate, and considerate towards the needs, values, traditions and feelings of others; intentionally acting to make a positive difference in one’s own life, the lives of others and their surroundings. They understand and appreciate their own and other’s cultures, personal stories, and accomplishments.

UNITED WITH CHURCH AND HOME

- COMMUNITY** They show devotion to their fellow students, teachers, local community, the world and the environment. They lead by example.

CALLED TO SERVE

- MINDSET OF CHRIST** They have a heart for service - a willingness to reach out to others and share each other’s burdens. They show compassion, kindness, and love to their neighbor. They follow the example of Christ and routinely put others before themselves.

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