



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 Newsletter

Grand Rapids Christian High School Curriculum Guide

Grand Rapids Christian High School Profile

[www.gres.org/international](http://www.gres.org/international)

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM (ISP) FEATURES**

### **Academic Excellence**

- Rigorous college preparatory curriculum with high expectations
- Teacher to student ratio of 1:15
- 16 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 800 (International students make up 4% of student body)
- Strong Fine Arts program

### **Individual Support**

- Two full time staff work exclusively with our international students
- 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 overnight trips to a variety of well-known universities are offered.

\*All International student graduates in the past 8 years have attended university, many of them top universities including: Duke University, University of Michigan, Penn State University, UC Schools, New York University, Purdue University, Drexel University, Wake Forest University, University of Washington, Wheaton College, Calvin University, Carnegie-Mellon University, Baylor University, Virginia Tech, Fordham University, Illinois Institute of Technology, Michigan State University, Loyola University, 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 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR**

**Early August 2021:** new students arrive for orientation

**18 August 2021:** first day of classes at the high school

**18 December – 3 January:** Christmas Break

\*Except for unique and approved circumstances students must return home or travel with an approved adult during this break

**Early April (5-7 days off school):** Spring Break

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

**End of May:** last day of high school

\*International students must leave by May 30.

## **CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION**

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

Listed below are the criteria for admission:

- English proficiency general guidelines:

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

\*The interview (via Skype, Zoom, FaceTime, WhatsApp, or WeChat) 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
- English proficiency test score (or grades demonstrating English proficiency from another English-based academic institution)
- Immunization records (students must meet Michigan’s immunization requirements – completion can be done in Michigan)
- Copy of Birth Certificate and Passport

### **STEP 2 – INTERVIEW**

Student will be contacted to arrange an interview

### **STEP 3 – ACCEPTANCE**

Based on the application and interview, acceptance will be determined by Grand Rapids Christian Schools 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 student visa they will be paired with a host family.

### **STEP 7 – ARRIVAL and ORIENTATION**

The student must arrive in Grand Rapids in early August, 2021 for the international student orientation and camp.

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT TUITION AND FEES 2021-2022**

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 laptop 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,
Homestay Fee	9,000	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
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$35,500</b>	<b>*1<sup>st</sup> year students pay an additional \$3,000 refundable deposit *\$1,000 for orientation camp</b>

\* 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 and MEN ALOUD 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 there 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 all people

**STUDENT CONGRESS:** Responsible for grade level special activities

## HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS

<b>COED</b>	<b>BOYS</b>	<b>Athletic eligibility rules</b>
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	<b>GIRLS</b>	
	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 12<sup>th</sup> 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

# 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...*

**CREATIVE  
SOLUTION  
FINDERS**

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

**Thoughtful  
NEIGHBORS**

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



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

**COMMUNICATORS  
&  
COLLABORATORS**

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

**JUSTICE  
SEEKERS**

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

**Culturally  
Competent**

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

**DISCIPLES  
OF  
Christ**

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



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CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS**

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