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**BOARD
REPORT**

GRC'S

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

Tom DeJonge, Superintendent

DECEMBER
2021



2021/2022 BOARD REPORT

December 2021

Tom DeJonge, Superintendent



GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

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

MISSION

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

CORE VALUES



ROOTED IN CHRIST



EDUCATED FOR LIFE



CALLED TO SERVE



**CONNECTED THROUGH
RELATIONSHIPS**



**UNITED WITH HOME
AND CHURCH**

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.



 ONE

ANOTHER

JOHN 13:34-35

LOS UNOS 

A LOS OTROS

JUAN 13:34-35

*A new command I give you: Love one another.
As I have loved you, so you must love one another.
By this everyone will know that you are my disciples,
if you love one another.*

— JOHN 13:34—35

*Este mandamiento nuevo les doy: que se amen los unos a
los otros. Así como yo los he amado, también ustedes deben
amarse los unos a los otros. De este modo todos sabrán que
son mis discípulos, si se aman los unos a los otros..*

— JUAN 13:34—35



CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

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.

JANUARY 2022

DATE	TIME	WHAT	LOCATION
5	7:00 am	GRCS Executive Committee Meeting	GRCS Board Room
6	7:30 am	GRCS Finance Committee Meeting	GRCS Board Room
17	12:30 pm	GRCS Education Committee Meeting	HUB
18	10:00 am	Foundation Board Meeting	GRCS Board Room
19	6:00 pm	GRCS Board of Trustees Meeting	HUB
25	7:00 am	Cultural Competence Committee	Iroquois Learning Commons

FEBRUARY 2022

DATE	TIME	WHAT	LOCATION
2	7:00 am	GRCS Executive Committee Meeting	GRCS Board Room
17	8:00 am	New 2 You Board Meeting	GRCS Board Room
17	12:00 pm	Advancement Committee Meeting	GRCS Board Room
17-21	NO SCHOOL	Mid-Winter Break	All Campuses
21	6:00 pm	GRCS Annual Meeting	HUB
22	7:00 am	Cultural Competence Committee	Iroquois Learning Commons

MARCH 2022

DATE	TIME	WHAT	LOCATION
2	7:00 am	GRCS Executive Committee Meeting	GRCS Board Room
3	7:30 am	GRCS Finance Committee Meeting	GRCS Board Room
21	12:30 pm	GRCS Education Committee Meeting	HUB
21	6:00 pm	GRCS Board of Trustees Meeting	HUB
22	7:00 am	Cultural Competence Committee	Iroquois Learning Commons
31	NO SCHOOL	Professional Development for Staff	All Campuses



MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Board:

Christmas greetings to you during this season of Advent and Christmas joy! The season brings great excitement in the life of a school and throughout the hundreds of classrooms at each of our own school campuses.

At the school level, there has been a great deal of energy preparing for the end of the first semester. Here at the central office, we have been busy preparing for a number of 2022-2023 admissions events, end-of-year fundraising, and the preparation of the 2022-2023 budget. That, along with the increase in the number of students testing positive for COVID, has kept things moving at a rapid pace throughout the system as we close out the calendar year and prepare for 2022.

Relative to COVID, you may be interested in knowing some important details related to our student / staff health and safety protocols:

- I meet every two weeks with the Kent County Health Department and our area's major hospital officials to review health data and the impact the data has had on our hospitals and in public / private schools throughout our county. Along with the superintendent of the Catholic Diocese, I attend those meetings with each of Kent County's public schools' superintendents. The meetings are very informative and serve as an invaluable resource to each of us.
- On November 29, 2021, I requested that each of our building principals notify their respective staff members about the need for our increased due diligence related to existing health and safety protocols. This reminder, in part, included monitoring and implementing social distancing within classrooms to the extent possible given space restrictions and other factors.
- In order to keep kids in school, we have instituted daily rapid antigen testing for students who are determined to be "close contacts" of an individual who has tested positive for COVID. This, along with masks being required for those students at the grades where masking is optional, allows students to avoid being quarantined and miss in-person learning. The daily testing, conducted with as many as 50 students daily at our larger schools, has substantially increased the busyness of morning school routines, in particular for the office staff who are responsible to complete this added duty. It has been a task requiring "all hands on deck", as they say, and it is done with great care and respect to the privacy of the students being tested.

This month's meeting will provide the board with updates on several important issues. I look forward to seeing you on Monday, December 6, 2021 at 6:00 pm. We will meet in the Hub and will send a Zoom link for anyone unable to attend in person.

Thank you for your ongoing support, prayers, and diligence as you represent GRCS and our mission to prepare students to be effective servants of Christ in contemporary society. Your efforts are important and mean so much to all of us as we fulfill God's call to serve His kingdom here at school!

See you soon,

Tom



CAMPUS THEMES STORIES

BRAD MOCKABEE — GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

Safe Haven Ministries is a faith-based organization that provides both residential and non-residential services for victims of domestic violence. They also work proactively in the West Michigan community by educating local churches and schools on healthy relationships. The GRCHS Service Branch of student congress led our school in a Thanksgiving food drive for the clients of Safe Haven. Safe Haven is only about one mile from our campus and we are thankful for the opportunity to partner with our neighbor!



SARA SETH — GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

A group of 6th grade MS students lived out our theme One Another as they took a trip to David's House to spend some time with the residents there. They learned about the mission of David's House as they strive to provide quality Christian care and facilities for adults with developmental disabilities and traumatic brain injuries. The students were met by our very own Eagle alumni, Mr. Dave (David Worst). They spent some time making snack bags for a local organization and then helped the residents decorate for the big U of M vs. Michigan State game that was going to take place the following day!





BEN BUURSMA — ROCKFORD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



The leaves seemed to stay on the trees a bit longer this year, but when they finally did fall, the 4th graders at RCS saw an opportunity to bless others by doing some fall clean-up. Here's a conversation that was shared with me by a teacher:

Teacher: Hi girls, where were you this afternoon?

Girls: We were gone practicing being a thoughtful neighbor.

Teacher: What do you mean?

Girls: We were raking leaves.

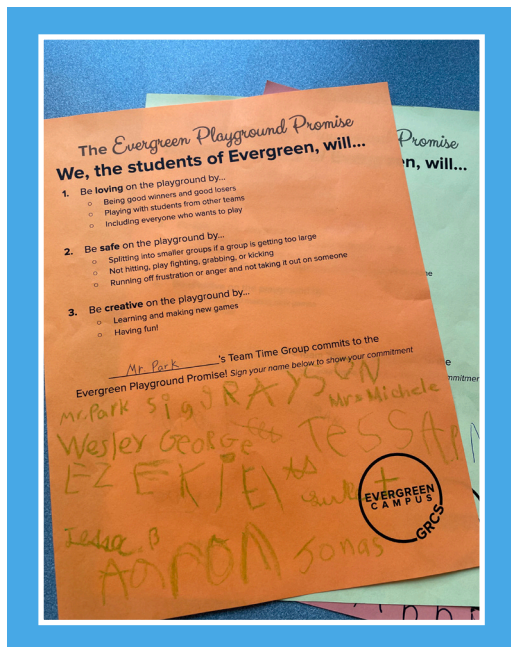
Teacher: Huh? Why?

Girls: Because there was a need and it's the right thing to do...

It is so wonderful to see our students internalize our theme and portrait of a graduate in meaningful and authentic ways.

GRAHAM SCHULTZE — EVERGREEN CAMPUS

The call to love **One Another** isn't always an easy call to answer. As this year has included the reintroduction of full-school recess at the Evergreen Campus, we noticed that students had become used to the ease of smaller recess groups over the past year and a half. Through brief meetings with the Team 2 and Team 3 classes, staff has been able to tie our theme to how we play with One Another. Students came up with recess why recess is important and what types of skills are needed in order for our school-wide recesses to reflect our year's theme. In Team Time, each student reviewed and signed a "Playground Promise", a commitment to being loving, safe, and creative during recess.



JOHN BARKEL — IROQUOIS CAMPUS

The students and families of Iroquois participated in the annual food drive with East Congregational Church right in the Ottawa Hills neighborhood. All families were invited to participate, and our 4th-grade students and teachers helped unload cars of groceries to restock the food pantry at the church. We were told the shelves were becoming empty, and we are glad to have helped! The action of bringing in food and unloading cars is great for our kids to be part of, and it certainly honors our theme this year of **Loving One Another**. We want our kids to think about how this food will be used, and to be grateful for that which they have, whether it's food or a warm coat. We look forward to serving One Another in this way again in the years to come.



1

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.

TOM DEJONGE — SUPERINTENDENT

2022 —2027 STRATEGIC PLAN

One important topic we will spend time discussing at this month's meeting is our upcoming strategic planning week, which is scheduled for the week of March 21, 2022. The development of a strategic plan is one of several critically important board functions, and the full board's engagement is crucial in the establishment of the goals of the plan. A tentative schedule has been included in this month's board packet. In that schedule, you will notice it contains several important dates and times where either the full board or designated board members are asked to engage. Please take a careful look at the tentative schedule so that you are aware of and may reserve the times on your personal calendars as soon as possible!

BOARD OF TRUSTEES NOMINEES

The Nomination Committee began its work on November 16 with a second meeting scheduled on December 6. The committee identified the qualities and skill sets desired of incoming board members to serve board term 2022-2025. They include:

- Finance background
- Legal expertise
- CEO/strategic mindset
- Knowledge of effective leadership transition
- Institutional knowledge
- Prior board service

The committee determined that three (3) new board members are desired to strategically position the board favorably in light of future board member transitions. The committee has already identified a number of possible individuals who meet these characteristics and, once the committee's work is complete, the names of nominees will be shared with the full board for review. I anticipate it will be prepared and ready to submit to the board in mid-January.



2

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.

BRAD MOCKABEE — GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

“Final assessment week” is December 13 - 16. Throughout the week, there are two finals each morning, with students taking the afternoons to prepare for the next day’s assessments. Finals are normally cumulative and provide students with one final opportunity to show their mastery of essential skills in each course. Teachers use these additional pieces of data as evidence of learning that assists them in assigning a final grade in the course. For many of our freshmen, this is their first time experiencing a cumulative assessment in a course. Our freshman skills teachers will spend a great deal of time assisting ninth-graders in getting organized, planning their time, and reviewing the material.

Our first cohort of Spanish Immersion students are currently juniors and are currently enrolled at Calvin University taking Spanish 300. Spanish 300 is a “bridge class” designed to support students in their transition to college-level curriculum. Next semester, our immersion students will begin taking courses that fit with their skill level and academic interests. Some students will take Spanish 341, Syntax, and Sociolinguistics, while others will take 302 Advanced Grammar, Compositions, and Conversation II. Although the transition has not always been easy for these students, we are thankful for their hard work and for our growing partnership between GRCS and Calvin.

SARA SETH — GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Ravine Project: 5th — 8th Grade Science

It’s long been a staple in the sixth grade to spend time learning outside. This used to take place by walking down Hall Street to Kreiser Pond, but upon our move to our current campus, this has been made much easier. We are uniquely blessed with about 3 acres of woods on the east end of our property. This space has allowed us even more opportunities to be creative in how we use the outdoors to teach science and math. In doing so, other grade-level teachers are getting excited to develop new projects and activities that utilize this space. This has allowed our staff to collaborate as we work to find the best ways to engage students out in God’s Creation.

In the fall of 2020, we took our first step in making this outdoor learning space accessible to all students by having a wheelchair path and outdoor classroom installed. It is only the first step, however, as the path doesn’t quite allow students

to reach the bottom of the ravine and the creek. We are currently partnering with senior engineering students at Calvin University to determine the best place for this pathway and the necessary steps for construction. Our hope is to be able to begin construction before next school year so that all students, regardless of their mobility, will have true access to the ravine.





GOAL 2 — CONTINUED

The **School Leadership Team** at GRCMS is working on looking at the school's vision. A vision statement clearly provides the rationale every step of the way as the school grows and evolves to best serve the students. What makes our middle school unique to middle school-aged students? The team is also setting some goals for what we can expect a middle schooler to experience at GRCMS to grow them in the seven characteristics of the *Portrait of a Graduate: Lifelong Explorers, Culturally Competent, Thoughtful Neighbors, Justice Seekers, Communicators and Collaborators, Creative Solution Finders and above all Disciples of Christ.*

BEN BUURSMA — ROCKFORD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

A subcommittee of RCS teachers, focused on **Relational Community, Culture, and Service** met to discuss and draft a framework for service learning. This work will help support teachers as they create service opportunities that integrate learning with core academic curricula, meet a genuine community need, provide opportunities for student decision making, establish partnerships in diverse settings, and work toward creating reciprocity between those serving and being served.

Zach Nordling hosted five elementary teachers in his first-grade classroom at the Rockford campus on Friday, November 12. **Morning Meeting from Responsive Classroom** was the focus of the Learning Lab.

GRAHAM SCHULTZE — EVERGREEN CAMPUS

As mentioned below, learning labs have returned to the calendar, and multiple Evergreen staff members are excited to attend in the future. We have several more **Learning Labs** scheduled for this school year including Visual Notetaking in the Bible Classroom which will be hosted by Linda Jonker, Reading Horizons which will be hosted by Kate Traylor, Preschool which will be hosted by Jessie Connell and by Dominique Van Hill, and Math Workshop which will be hosted by Kate Faber.

The GRCMS elementary teachers gathered at the Evergreen Campus On Wednesday, October 20 for professional development. Teachers spent the morning working with their Professional Learning Teams. Each team of teachers is working together to complete a **Language Arts Mentor Texts Cultural Inventory** spreadsheet which was developed by the elementary school principals. Teacher teams enter information on the spreadsheet about the title, author, genre, setting, and theme. They also enter details about main characters: name, human/nonhuman, gender, ethnicity, race, religion, socioeconomic status, family structure, ability, and other significant identifiers. The information from the teacher teams will assist us as we make decisions about the books that we use in our classrooms, which will support the mission and vision of Grand Rapids Christian School.

JOHN BARKEL — IROQUOIS CAMPUS

Learning Labs are back! Classroom Learning Labs are a wonderful opportunity for teachers to learn from each other in a school-based professional development model. They are comprised of four parts. First, the host teacher meets with the Learning Lab Facilitator to plan the lesson that will be observed. Then the facilitator, host teacher, and guest teachers meet to set goals for the observation. That is followed by a classroom observation. Finally, the facilitator, host teacher, and guest teachers gather after the observation to share noticings and wonderings.

Elizabeth Triminio hosted six elementary teachers in her third grade Spanish Immersion classroom at the Iroquois Campus on Tuesday, November 9. The focus of the observation was a math workshop. Math Workshop is an instructional model that includes a whole class mini-lesson followed by students working in targeted math groups while the teacher instructs small groups of students.

The elementary Spanish Immersion teachers spent the afternoon on October 21 working together to further the work that they are doing to develop a comprehension grammar curriculum for the Spanish immersion students in grades K-4.



3

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.

BRAD MOCKABEE — GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

Each fall, GRCS partners with **FACES**, an organization from Guatemala. This organization provides an 8-week cultural exchange program where these “cultural ambassadors” stay with volunteer host families from our school. GRCHS has had the privilege of hosting three exchange students from Guatemala this fall. These amazing students have participated in all aspects of our school community, including taking a full load of classes. They stayed with us from October 18 - December 7. We are sad to see them leave, but are thankful for the opportunity to learn more about their stories and God’s world. We hope to send GRCHS students to Guatemala this summer as part of the cultural exchange.

SARA SETH — GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Prior to Thanksgiving, the middle school students worshiped together to celebrate with a **Tapestry of Thanks**. Many students (MS Thanksgiving chapel photo) shared their musical talents by leading our chapel in worship with singing, playing instruments, prayer, and a litany. Some of our students have had the opportunity to serve Kids’ Food Basket (KFB) this year by decorating sack supper bags or packing sack suppers at the KFB Grand Rapids location. We invited Mrs. Afton DeVos, Chief Operating Officer of KFB and GRCS parent, to talk to our students about how proximity breeds empathy. She asked some of our middle school students to share about their own personal experiences of serving others within our community.

Student leadership is important at GRCMS. This is the third year that middle school students have the opportunity to be a part of a **Student Advisory Board (SAB)**. Students express interest in being on this leadership team and submit their answers to questions as to what leadership at GRCMS means to them, how they would positively impact the student body, and why it is important to them to be a member of this Board. We currently have seven eighth-grade students and five seventh-grade students serving in this capacity. The SAB meets twice per month during Focus Time to discuss upcoming school events, bring up student body concerns, and give input on school decisions regarding students. Mrs. Seth and Mr. Riley lead these meetings where the students open with prayer, read their agreed-upon norms and then dive into the agenda at hand. We are blessed with so many strong young leaders in our school and the SAB gives them one way to show their gift of leadership.



BEN BUURSMA — ROCKFORD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

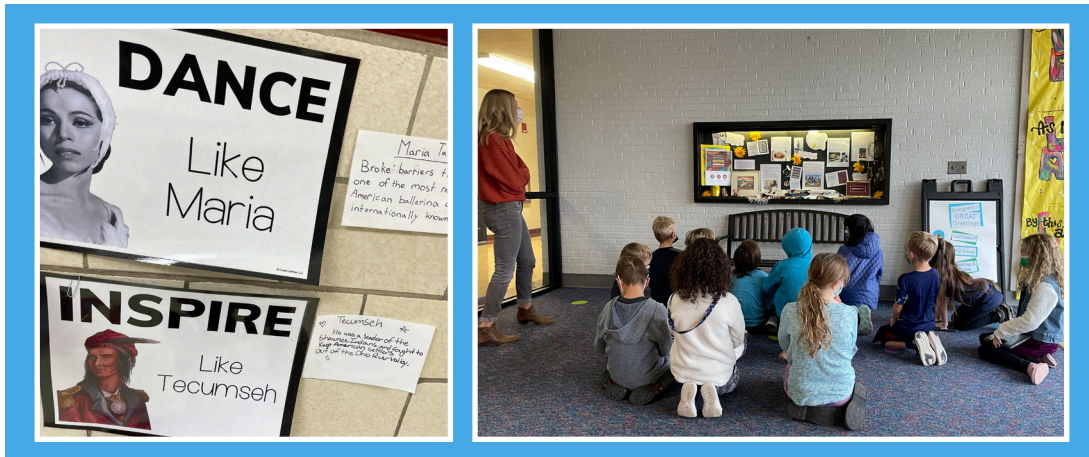
Mr. Phil, and Mr. Buursma recently met with the newly-formed **Student Leadership Group** at RCS. Similar to the Student Advisory Board at GRCMS, this group of student leaders seeks ways to deepen relationships in the school setting and includes 2 members from each middle school grade. The group’s stated purpose statement is “to bring teachers and students together, in order to build a Christ-centered community.”



GOAL 3 — CONTINUED

GRAHAM SCHULTZE — EVERGREEN CAMPUS

To celebrate **Native American Heritage** month, each Team 3 student researched a significant person of Native American heritage, wrote a paragraph about the person and posted it alongside a picture somewhere in the school. Alongside this, a PTO member decorated our Shadow Box in our entryway with Native American artifacts and information.



Keeping students of all ages in front of each other is a priority at Evergreen. With that in mind, we had our first “**Celebration of Learning**.” The Celebration of Learning took place during a regular chapel/prayer circles time on a Friday morning. We highlighted our Portrait of a Graduate and students from every Team shared different things they’ve learned recently that fit within three of the different Portrait categories — *Lifelong Explorers*, *Communicators and Collaborators*, and *Creative Solution Finders*. Preschoolers participated by displaying their recently learned ability to write their name or first letter. Preschoolers also shared a song and motions that they’ve been working on. It was a joy to see the whole school celebrating individual students and class learning accomplishments.

JOHN BARKEL — IROQUOIS CAMPUS

November was **Native American Heritage Month**, and our staff put together a great experience for our students at Iroquois. The decorations and gallery walk that were on display gave imagery to the life and culture of Native Americans that existed many years ago up to today. It was great seeing kids learn about our Native brothers and sisters from the past and how they continue to influence our American culture to today.

KIM PRIMUS — DIRECTOR OF INCLUSION SERVICES

In order for all students to be full participants in all activities, we must provide the necessary resources to make this possible. A couple of our current students at the middle school are outgrowing the sports wheelchair and will need a larger one very soon. With donation monies designated for Kim Primus’ discretion, Kim was able to purchase a larger sports wheelchair. We now own three light blue wheelchairs with embroidered Eagle heads. The recently purchased wheelchair will be delivered to the middle school after Thanksgiving. Our middle schoolers and staff will be excited!



4

STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 4

Implement a comprehensive advancement model where admissions, development, marketing, and communications, and database management work cohesively to advance Grand Rapids Christian Schools' mission.

MICHAEL CALHOUN — CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER

While we continue to develop fresh vision and cultivate greater connectedness across all the mission advancement efforts of Grand Rapids Christian Schools (GRCS), the final months of the calendar year have been filled with a frenzy of activity. The Advancement Team remains focused on building strong momentum as we near the end of 2021, while also continuing to shape the long-term journey ahead so we can carry that momentum into our big 100-Year Celebration and corresponding Go Forth Fundraising Campaign (which will enter its public phase in the Spring of 2022 and run through 2023). The ever present challenges of COVID continue to add an additional layer of complexity to all of these efforts, and yet it is inspiring to see our teams across the district overcoming these challenges advancing the mission together!

With this in mind, let me highlight a few key activities and important updates:

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT AND YEAR-END APPEAL

Our 2020-21 Impact Report arrived in homes a few weeks ago, full of stories that celebrate the resilience of our students, staff, and alumni as they overcame the challenges of a global pandemic. The Impact Report will be closely followed by our year-end Eagles Fund appeal letter, which is currently at the printer and scheduled to be in the mail the first full week of December. This is an important mailing because it supports the replenishment of the Eagles Fund, our \$1.7 million annual fund that enables us to open our doors to families who are not able to afford the full cost of a Christian education. Additionally, the Eagles Fund invests in innovative programs and student support services, helping to ensure that every student has the best opportunity to flourish at Grand Rapids Christian Schools.

100 YEAR CELEBRATION

We are hopeful that we will be able to launch this extended season of celebration in the Spring of 2022. We recently completed an initial insights survey which invited 10,000 of our current families, staff, and alumni to help shape the planning of the upcoming year of Centennial Celebration. This survey offered deeper understanding of the community we serve and will allow us to design experiences that mark this special moment in more personal and meaningful ways. These insights will inform the big idea/rally cry which will be finalized with our creative firm (Grey Matter Group) this month.

We look forward to celebrating this remarkable moment in meaningful ways, while also positioning it as a launchpad for the future through the corresponding Go Forth funding initiative.

GO FORTH FUNDING INITIATIVE

As we look back preparing to celebrate the legacy forged over the last century, we are also looking ahead to the next 100 years and inviting the GRCS community to invest in future generations with the Go Forth funding initiative. This initiative is a three-year \$11.5 million campaign that when fully achieved, will strengthen educational programs and opportunities for all students at all campuses.

As of November 30, 2021 we have raised 65% of our \$11.5 million goal!

2021/2022 BOARD REPORT

December 2021

Tom DeJonge, Superintendent



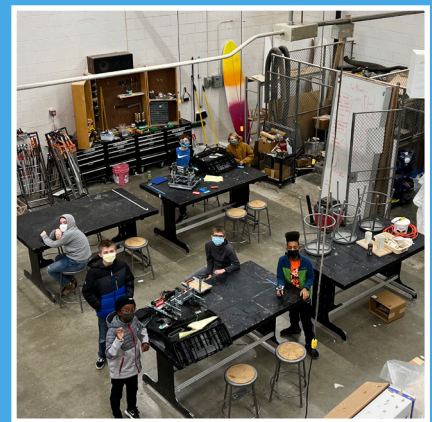
GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

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

GOAL 4 — CONTINUED

Although we are still in the middle of this important multi-year funding initiative and are preparing for its public launch with our 100-Year Celebration in the Spring of 2022, a successful “quiet” phase has allowed us to move forward with some of these important investments and they are already making a tremendous impact. The new Innovation and Robotics Lab (located at Grand Rapids Christian High School) has not only created an elevated space for learning, it has become a force-multiplier for our innovative programs like Robotics Team and Gone Boarding. Through the Go Forth Funding Initiative we are equipping our students to collaborate, problem-solve, innovate, and positively impact the world around them.

We are extremely grateful for the generous gifts that have led the way in this endeavor, helping to advance the goals of the Go Forth funding initiative!



MARKETING, ENROLLMENT, AND ADMISSIONS

December marks the unofficial start of the admissions season. It is unofficial because many inquiries and tours are already taking place, with hundreds more to come. We kick things off with *Expedition Kindergarten* at the Evergreen, Iroquois, and Rockford campuses. These events are designed for current preschool students, and kindergarten registration opens up to our current families during these events.

Showcase at Grand Rapids Christian High School will take place on December 9th, just on the heels of the Expedition Kindergarten events. It is a special event that opens the High School campus to both current GRCS 8th graders and students across the Grand Rapids area who are interested in exploring all GRCHS has to offer.

Construction will soon begin on the new *Early Learning Center* at our Evergreen Campus, and once complete, we will be able to move two preschool classrooms from the Iroquois Campus into this brilliant new space, which will also allow for further growth at our Iroquois Campus next fall. In preparation for these exciting changes, we are updating our marketing materials to continue building the connected vision of one GRCS preschool program with two campus locations. We will open preschool registration to all current families and staff the last week of December, while also communicating the details of the classroom shifts at the same time. Then in January, we will host our *Preschool and Kindergarten Open Houses* at each campus and make registration available to new families. Additional *Future Eagle Days*, *Ada Christian Campus Visit Days*, and *Meet Us in the Middle* events will be happening for prospective students from January through April of 2022.



BRAD MOCKABEE — GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

On Thursday, December 9, GRCHS will host our largest admissions event called *GRCHS Showcase*. At this event, we host not only students from GRCMS and RCMS but from all over West Michigan. It is an opportunity for us to show how faith is integrated into all aspects of our school community as we highlight programs like *Winterim*, STEAM, Theater Arts, Student Support Services, and others!

SARA SETH — GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Focus on Your Future — Each year, we look forward to a special visit to the middle school by our 5th-grade Evergreen students. Our wonderful sixth-grade team of teachers meet the oldest Evergreen students to acclimate them to the middle school and share the curriculum, meet the teachers and learn about all of the fun they will have in the years to come as they continue on their journey to be effective servants of Christ in contemporary society. Mrs. Linda Vellenga hosts this welcome event at GRCMS!

BEN BUURSMA — ROCKFORD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

The 5th grade class at RCS is piloting a “Visit Day” program for area students who are transitioning from elementary to middle school. Visiting students get to experience the gift of small classes, high expectations, hands-on learning, a Christ-centered environment, and outdoor education during one of the three designated “Visit Days.”

GRAHAM SCHULTZE — EVERGREEN CAMPUS

As mentioned above, Evergreen 5th graders are excited to attend the *GRCMS Focus on Your Future*. Evergreen often has a small population of 5th-grade students who attend GRPS programming for 6th grades, such as Zoo School or Blandford Nature Center. Ben Buursma and I have been working together to introduce those families to the possibility of RCS’ Outdoor Education program for their students’ 6th-grade year, keeping students in the GRCS community.

JOHN BARKEL — IROQUOIS CAMPUS

There continue to be several tours carried out each week on the Iroquois Campus. Michelle Ogdahl and Jessie Renz do very well on these tours. As we get closer to the full-on enrollment season, it is great to see Michelle and Jessie working diligently on upcoming events and include the Iroquois Admin Team in the process. We have a great admissions team!

KIM PRIMUS — DIRECTOR OF INCLUSION SERVICES

As we work to create interdependent communities for all students, it is exciting to see the interest of families looking for an inclusive model for their children. There are many families wanting a setting like ours for their children. Our admissions team has a process they follow to include the voices that are important as parents gather information about how school would look and how we support students. It is a blessing to be able to share how we are student-centered. We learn about each child’s strengths and struggle areas, and then we work to put supports in place to support a student well. Admissions is definitely a team effort.



5

STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 5

Ensure a business model for financial sustainability that supports the educational program and advances the mission of Grand Rapids Christian Schools.

JIM PRIMUS — CFO

The 2020-21 Audit is complete. Beene Garter Managing Partner Tom Rosenbach, along with partner Roxanne Page, met with the GRCS Finance Committee on November 4, 2021, and gave a very positive report. GRCS received the Internal Control letter at that time and provided written responses to Beene Garter's recommendations and management comments. The GRCS Finance Committee reviewed and approved those responses prior to the letter being returned.

Through the first four months of the 2021-22 fiscal year, the operations budget is on track with respect to both revenue and expenses.

GRCS continues to apply for and receive COVID relief funding.

- **Emergency Assistance for Non-public Schools (EANS)** funds are reimbursable Covid-related expenses beginning in March 2020 as well as future expenses until September 2023. GRCS applied for and was approved for EANS funding and began receiving qualifying expense reimbursements last week.
- **The Employee Retention Credit (ERC)** is a tax credit for organizations that have experienced suspensions in business operations as a result of government-mandated shutdowns or the following of health protocols. GRCS has applied for the credit for quarters 2, 3, and 4 of 2020 and quarter 1 of 2021. GRCS continues to work with Synergi, a tax credit, incentive consulting, processing company as it relates to an application for the ERC for quarters 2 and 3 of 2021.
- **The Child Care Stabilization Grant** is part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and provides grants to organizations with licensed child care and preschool programs. GRCS has applied for the grant for its three licensed centers (Evergreen, Iroquois, and Rockford), and at this time, the application is pending approval.

The GRCS Compensation Committee will meet on December 6, 2021, to discuss topics related to 2022-23 staff wages and benefits. These topics include wage increases, steps for eligible faculty, 403(b) plan and employer match, health insurance benefits, and a tuition remission plan for eligible staff who have children enrolled at GRCS. The Committee is chaired by Mike Meeuwesen, as Chair of the Finance Committee and composed of one faculty member from the Evergreen, Iroquois, GRCS, and RCS campuses, two faculty members from GRCS, three BOT members, and GRCS Administration.

Work on the 2022-23 Operating budget continues. A proposed 2022-23 budget, complete with enrollment projections and 2022-23 tuition recommendations, will be presented to the GRCS BOT at its January 2022 meeting.



NEWS + CELEBRATIONS

BRAD MOCKABEE — GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

BEAUTY & THE BEAST

The fall musical, *Beauty and the Beast*, was a hit! This family-friendly show wowed spectators of all ages. We all left the show amazed that it was a high school production. Congratulations to director Rick Hardenberg and his team!

FALL ATHLETICS

It was an amazing fall for GRCHS Athletics! All of our fall teams finished in the top ten in the state and competed strongly in the OK White- the most competitive conference in the state.

- **Girls Golf** — Our Eagle golfers finished 8th in the State Finals at MSU's Akers West after qualifying third at the Regional. Sara Muir finished in 9th place to make All-State.
- **Boys' Tennis** — Our Eagle tennis team finished 4th at the state finals and clinched another Regional title at the Zandee Tennis courts. Tanner Warners and Dream Kwan of 1 doubles and Ethan DeBlecourt and Sam VanSchepen of 3 doubles both finished State Runner Up.
- **Boys Soccer** — We finished second in the OK White overall after earning the top spot in the regular season. The Eagles won the district title at home with a 2-0 victory over EGR. The Eagles then beat Gull Lake to win the Regional title and then clinched the State Title with a 2-1 victory over Brother Rice at Comstock Park HS. This is our first state title since 2001!
- **Football** — Finished second in the OK White with a 6-1 record. We beat Spring Lake in the district semifinals and lost to Unity Christian (State Runner-Up) in the district finals. The team finished 8th in the state in Division 4.
- **Boys Cross Country** — We clinched the OK White Conference championship this past Wednesday. The boys finished 4th at the State Finals at MIS on November 6, only 25 points out of first place.
- **Girls Cross Country** — We just missed the OK White Conference championship by a point. We finished State Runner-Up at the State Finals at MIS on November 6.
- **Girls Swimming and Diving** — Our girls finished 10th in the state at the State Finals meet at Calvin University on November 19-20.
- **Volleyball** — The girls won the district and regional titles for the fourth year in a row before falling in the State Semifinals in a hard-fought 3-1 match to the eventual state champions.





GRAHAM SCHULTZE — EVERGREEN CAMPUS

Evergreen students recently had a fun time celebrating Super Hero Day! To highlight the successful Foot Frolic Fundraiser fundraiser, students wore capes, masks, and more to school in order to portray classics such as Black Panther and The Hulk (as well as lesser-known heroes such as “Super Pig Girl” and “I Don’t Know Man”).

