

GRAND RAPIDS  
CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

JAMES & SHIRLEY BALK CENTER  
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

# OPPORTUNITY PROFILE



## SUPERINTENDENT GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

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

# GREETINGS



Dear prospective superintendent candidate,

For 100 years, Grand Rapids Christian Schools has provided Christian education that seeks to fulfill our mission: *preparing students to be effective servants of Christ in contemporary society.*

As our faithful God leads us into the next 100 years, we thank Him for enabling students and this institution to flourish. We are thankful for the 20 years of servant-leadership of our retiring superintendent, Tom DeJonge. Tom has served us well through his faith in God, his leadership, and his genuine love for Christian education and Grand Rapids Christian Schools. He is leaving this school community in a strong position of faith, cultural diversity reflective of the Grand Rapids Community, and financial health.

Grand Rapids Christian Schools seeks a superintendent who will bring Christ-centered spiritual leadership, strategic visionary thinking, passion for cultivating philanthropy, team-focused leadership, and a commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. The next superintendent will build upon the strong legacy of the schools. The position offers a unique opportunity to be part of a thriving Christian community as reflected in our Core Values, the “Three Cs”: Christ (We are rooted in Christ) - Community (We are better together) - Commitment (We lead lives of purpose).

Thank you for your consideration of this vitally important position at Grand Rapids Christian Schools. We understand that joining our community is a decision for you and your family to prayerfully consider together. We encourage you to read through the Opportunity Profile and explore the GRCS website ([www.grcs.org](http://www.grcs.org)) for additional information. If you are interested in pursuing this opportunity, please reference the Process of Candidacy page to begin the application process. If you have any questions, please contact Laura Coverstone or Ed Poff (615.261.4623), the JobfitMatters Consultants who are aiding Grand Rapids Christian Schools in this search.

Sincerely,

Caleb Doezeema  
Secretary, Board of Trustees  
Chair, Superintendent Search Committee



# OVERVIEW



Grand Rapids Christian Schools (GRCS) exists to put Christ at the center of students' lives and learning. Serving more than 2300 students from 18 months through 12th grade on five campuses, GRCS is the largest member of Christian Schools International (CSI). With over 30,000 alumni around the world, GRCS is a highly respected academic community committed to integrating biblical principles in all curricular and co-curricular programs.

GRCS stands out as a truly distinctive institution in many ways. GRCS welcomes families of all Christian faith backgrounds who desire a Christian education for their children. GRCS educators embrace the opportunity to strengthen each child's faith and develop a deep understanding of the glory of God's handiwork through instruction in bible studies and religion, science, language arts, math, world languages, the arts, physical education, performing arts, and athletics. GRCS was founded in the Reformed tradition of Christian schools. The Reformed tradition is a stream of Christianity which sees God as sovereign over all spheres of life. He is Lord over every area of study, so God is glorified both when we study scripture and when we learn equations. A GRCS education seeks to shine the light of Christ into all areas of study so that children learn to love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Because believers are vertically reconciled and redeemed through the blood of Christ, the community at GRCS is committed to be horizontally reconciled to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. GRCS fosters an inclusive environment that celebrates and values multicultural perspectives, and over 24% of the student body are children of color. GRCS is committed to offering an exceptional Christian education to students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, so a variable tuition program adjusts the tuition rate based on each family's specific financial circumstances. Grand Rapids Christian Schools strives to foster an inclusive environment where learners of diverse abilities flourish and feel embraced, educating a wide spectrum of students ranging from the academically gifted to those with mild to moderate learning disabilities, as well as individuals facing moderate to severe physical, cognitive, or emotional challenges.

GRCS' dedication to embracing and educating students from various Christian traditions, ethnic and racial backgrounds, diverse socioeconomic statuses, and a wide range of academic, intellectual, and physical abilities contributes an unparalleled richness that distinguishes it from numerous other Christian schools. The next leader for Grand Rapids Christian must appreciate and advance these commitments.

# OVERVIEW

*Continued*



Effective, collaborative, and consistent strategic planning have been instrumental in enabling GRCS to make significant progress in all areas of the school program. Each of the Schools' five campuses have been constructed or redesigned since 2010 to inspire high levels of student learning and innovative instructional practices. Strong financial leadership during the past 12 years has resulted in an enviable financial position that includes no debt and a substantial endowment. An exceptional faculty and staff feel called to their craft and are dedicated to professional learning communities where they collaborate and coordinate their lessons, leveraging their expertise to create an enriching educational experience. GRCS is recognized for its academics, its fine arts, its athletics, and its dynamic instructional culture, all facilitated by an innovative educational environment.

Remaining committed to GRCS foundational Reformed, biblical principles, while continuing to welcome a variety of perspectives into the community, the next superintendent of Grand Rapids Christian Schools must lead with great wisdom, humility, and dependence on a deep faith. The next superintendent of Grand Rapids Christian Schools will be fully responsible for the implementation of the recently approved five-year strategic plan, will have the opportunity to shape a leadership team for the coming season, and will begin planning for GRCS's long-term future. GRCS desires to continue meeting and exceeding the growing needs of this distinct West Michigan community with excellence and be a model school for how to fully embrace its mission, "Preparing students to be effective servants of Christ in contemporary society." GRCS seeks an energetic, engaging servant leader who continues to learn and grow, and who consistently asks, "What can we do better?" This leader needs to skillfully navigate the challenges inherent in GRCS's much-valued diversity, embracing its richness and ensuring its continued growth. GRCS desires to be a place where, although not all in the community will agree, the way differing opinions are discussed will shine a light of Christ in this community and beyond.

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



# ABOUT GRCS



## MISSION STATEMENT

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

## VISION STATEMENT

We are a community of Christ-followers who love God and our neighbors, cultivating Christian learning environments where students discover their potential, develop their talents, and passionately share their gifts with the world (portrait of a GRCS graduate), leading lives of purpose as living testimonies for Jesus Christ in a broken but hopeful world, generation after generation.

## CORE VALUES

At GRCS, everything is inspired by and anchored in the 3 Cs - **Christ**, **Community**, and **Commitment**. These three enduring pillars are our firm foundation, unifying lens, and cultural framework guiding us collectively and individually. They are not meant to be an extensive or exhaustive list of all the values we seek to live out, but rather the fundamental core values that we build upon. The 3 Cs challenge us to keep God first in everything, love our neighbors as ourselves, and personally commit to leading lives of purpose.

CHRIST —  
**WE ARE  
ROOTED IN  
CHRIST**

COMMUNITY — WE ARE BETTER  
**TOGETHER**  
COMMITMENT WE LEAD LIVES OF  
**PURPOSE**

# GRCS STATEMENT OF FAITH



We believe in one God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who has revealed himself in the Holy Bible. This God is present today and controls both humankind and history. We believe and confess that:

- God shows himself through all he has made - for God has made everything.
- God shows himself in justice and mercy over against the sin and evil which has invaded God's creation.
- God shows himself and the way of salvation in his Word the Holy Scriptures.
- God shows himself most fully in his Son Jesus Christ who, by a miraculous birth, became a human being for our sake, suffered, died and was raised to conquer the power of sin and the curse of death under which we all live.

Further, we believe and confess that:

- Jesus Christ is now the Lord of all things, both in the created world and in the Church - the fellowship of the redeemed.
- Jesus Christ is now gathering and preserving his Church so that her members may be his servants in this world.
- Jesus Christ shall return on the day of the Father's choosing to judge all humanity, the living and the dead.

This faith clearly has consequences for the church and the Christian home. It also has special consequences for those involved in Christian day schools, which exist in concert with the home and the church for the nurturing of Christian teaching and life. Because the Lord is Lord of all life, we profess and declare that:

- Our students will be presented with the basic message of Scripture and the redemption that has been given in Christ.
- Our students will be instructed in Scriptural principles that will guide them in mature living - in its spiritual, intellectual, and behavioral dimensions.
- Our students will be encouraged to recognize the greatness and the mercy of our Lord in every area of life.
- Our students will be guided into a true knowledge of God's world, of its history, and its culture.
- Our students will be enabled to assess the values of the age from the perspective of Christ's redemption and rule over all the world.

Because our Lord is Lord of all life we further profess and declare that:

- Obedience to God involves us in a thorough investigation of all reality, and that students and teachers alike should seek to integrate their personal faith with all areas of learning.
- Obedience to God involves us in an urgency to promote this Lordship of Christ within the communities of our schools and throughout the entire world through the agency of the schools as well as the church and family.
- All this we profess and declare in the sure and certain hope that as we nurture our children in the knowledge and love of the Lord, God himself will guide, preserve and bless these efforts through the work of the Holy Spirit.

# 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...*



## DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

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



## 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.



## CULTURALLY COMPETENT

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



## COMMUNICATORS & COLLABORATORS

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



## CREATIVE SOLUTION FINDERS

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

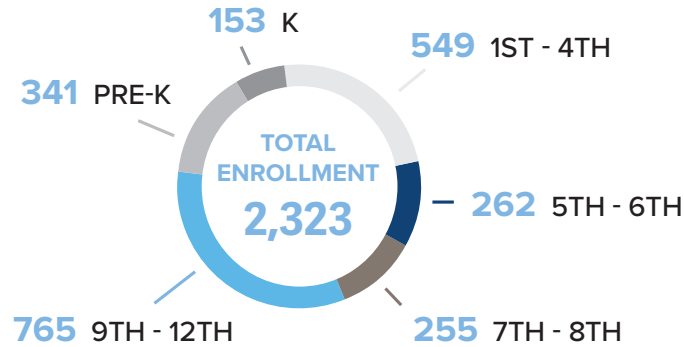


## LIFELONG EXPLORERS

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



## TOTAL ENROLLMENT 2022-2023



\*PROJECTED

YEAR	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
ENROLLMENT	2,285	2,118	2,252	2,325	*2,395

**24%** DIVERSITY (STUDENTS OF COLOR)

**180** EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES STUDENTS  
(MILD TO MODERATE LEARNING DISABILITIES)

**17** INCLUSION STUDENTS

**45** INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FROM **10** COUNTRIES

## FINANCIAL



ANNUAL BUDGET 2022-2023: **\$26.7 M**  
 GIVING FOR 2022-2023: **\$2.56 M**  
 (\$1.25 M ANNUAL GIVING, \$1.05 M CAPITAL GIFTS)  
 TOTAL DEBT: **\$0** ENDOWMENT: **\$21 M**

## TUITION 2023-2024



GRADE K (5 FULL DAYS)	<b>\$9,900</b>	GRADES 5-6	<b>\$10,400</b>
		GRADES 7-8	<b>\$10,900</b>
GRADES 1-4	<b>\$9,900</b>	GRADES 9-12	<b>\$11,900</b>

## FINANCIAL AID 2022-23



**35%** OF THE STUDENT BODY RECEIVED  
NEED-BASED FINANCIAL AID.

MORE THAN **\$3.5 M** WAS AWARDED IN  
NEED-BASED FINANCIAL AID.

## FACULTY

**60%**

HOLD ADVANCED  
DEGREES



**130 TOTAL FACULTY**

**60** IN HIGH SCHOOL

**36** IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

**34** IN EARLY CHILDHOOD  
& ELEMENTARY



DIVERSITY (FACULTY & STAFF OF COLOR)

STUDENT/FACULTY RATIO K-12

**16:1**



## CLASS OF 2023 (191 STUDENTS)



**165 (86%)** 4-YEAR COLLEGE PLACEMENT

SAT SCORES:

TOTAL MEAN: **1118** ERW MEAN: **566**

MATH MEAN: **552**

AMOUNT OF SCHOLARSHIPS SENIORS RECEIVED:  
**\$4,340,300**

## ADVANCED PLACEMENT (2022 SCORES)



TOTAL NUMBER OF AP TESTS TAKEN: **659**

NUMBER OF SUBJECTS: **14**

% OF STUDENTS WITH A 3 OR HIGHER: **81%**



## ACCREDITATION



COGNIA



COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS & ACCOUNTABILITY (CESA)

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- ALL BELONG CENTER FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
- COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS & ACCOUNTABILITY (CESA)
- CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS INTERNATIONAL (CSI)
- NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGE ADMISSION COUNSELING (NACAC)
- WEST MICHIGAN COUNSELING ASSOCIATION (WMCA)
- PROJECT LEAD THE WAY

## ATHLETICS



OVER **60%** OF THE STUDENT BODY PARTICIPATES IN ATHLETICS.

GRCHS IS FORTUNATE TO SUPPORT MORE THAN 25 DIFFERENT MHSAA VARSITY SPORTS. THESE INCLUDE:

CROSS COUNTRY, EQUESTRIAN, FOOTBALL, SOCCER, SAILING, TENNIS, BASKETBALL, BOWLING, HOCKEY, DOWNHILL SKIING, WRESTLING, BASEBALL, GOLF, LACROSSE, TRACK, VOLLEYBALL, SIDELINE CHEER, SWIMMING, AND SOFTBALL.

FOR A COMPLETE LIST, [SEE HERE](#).



## MATRICULATION LIST

### FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES:

CALVIN UNIVERSITY  
CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
CORNERSTONE UNIVERSITY  
FISK UNIVERSITY  
FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY  
FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY  
GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY  
HOPE COLLEGE  
HOWARD UNIVERSITY  
KUYPER COLLEGE  
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY  
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY  
PALM BEACH ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY  
PENN STATE UNIVERSITY  
PURDUE UNIVERSITY  
SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY  
TAYLOR UNIVERSITY  
TRINITY CHRISTIAN COLLEGE  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
WHEATON COLLEGE



## CLUBS & ACTIVITIES



GRCS OFFERS 27 CLUBS IN HIGH SCHOOL. FOR A COMPLETE LIST, SEE [HERE](#).

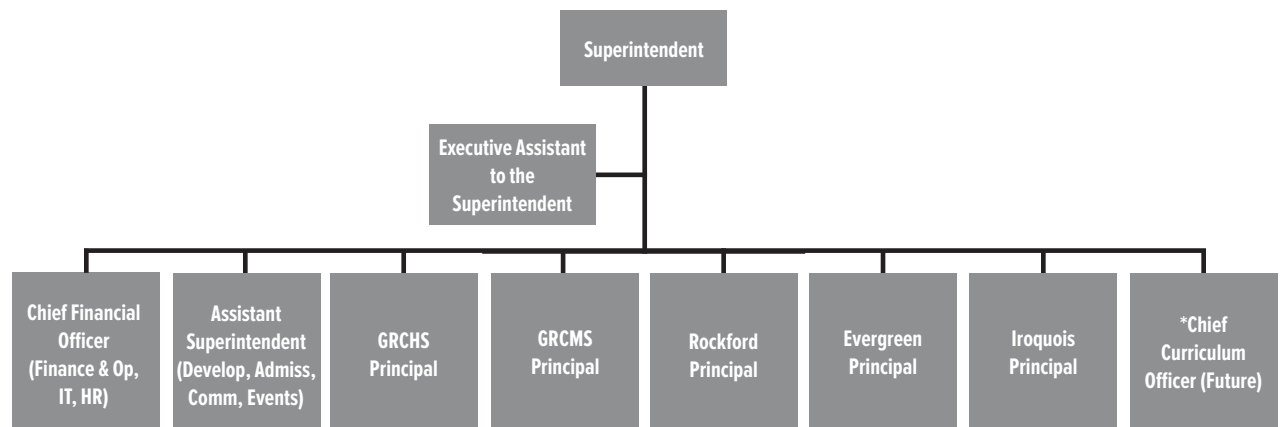
# POSITION



The superintendent of Grand Rapids Christian Schools (GRCS) is the sole employee of the Board of Trustees, serves as the advisor to and executive officer of the Board, and is the professional leader of GRCS' staff. As the advisor to the Board and chief executive officer, the superintendent meets regularly with the Board and all their committees. As the professional leader of the staff, the superintendent is the official through whom the Board acquits itself of its responsibility for providing the best possible program of Christian education for students. The superintendent serves as a key GRCS fundraiser and guides the development of a philanthropic mindset within the internal community and seeks to cultivate philanthropy with stakeholders in and outside of the organization. GRCS raised \$2.56 million in 2022, and in the last 10 years, donors have generously given \$110 million to fund projects and annual needs. The superintendent serves a key role in fundraising, even when a lead advancement officer is in place.

Currently, the positions which report to the Superintendent are the Chief Financial Officer, the five building principals, Director of Development, Director of Technology, Director of Communications, Director of Events, Elementary Curriculum Coordinator, Middle School Academic Program Coordinator, High School Director of Academic and Innovative Programs, Director of Inclusion Services, and Executive Assistant. A project to restructure the executive team is under consideration and would include the addition of an Assistant Superintendent (during the 2023-24 school year) and a human resources lead (reporting to the CFO). These will be critical to supporting the needs of the 2,300 student organization (with the potential to grow to 2,800 in five years). A Chief Curriculum Officer is a future position which may be considered as well.

## PROPOSED GRCS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



\*Currently, three Academic Program Coordinators and the Director of Inclusion Services all report to the Superintendent.

# RESPONSIBILITIES



## Internal and External Communications

- Is visible and present in the school community and at GRCS functions.
- Participates actively in community affairs and projects a positive image for the district. Represents GRCS with the statewide Michigan Association of Non-Public Schools (MANS), engages with the CSI pension board, Federal grants, Athletic associations, and the local public school superintendent group.
- Diligently supervises and implements effective internal and external communication strategies, ensuring that faculty, staff, parents, and the wider community remain well-informed. These strategies are thoughtfully crafted to actively communicate the GRCS story and proactively share positive news. Adeptly communicates, both in writing and verbally, with diverse stakeholders and news media, effectively addressing complex and challenging contemporary issues in a compelling and engaging manner.
- Maintains an appropriate level of transparency with administrators, faculty, and parents regarding decision-making and policies.

## School Governance and Board Relations

- Guides the board in planning for future potential growth from 2,300 to 2,800 in five years.
- Develops a plan of long-range goals and objectives and provides opportunities for staff and community to engage in long-range planning activities.
- Advises the Board on the need for new and/or revised policies and makes policy recommendations based on data and input from staff and advisory committees.
- Ensures the submission to the Board of necessary financial and budgetary reports.
- Assists in the development of, and is responsible for the implementation and execution of, policies adopted by the Board.

## School Program

- Establishes a wholesome spiritual, emotional, and professional atmosphere that characterizes the schools as Christian schools.
- Ensures the ongoing development and review of a GRCS strategic plan.
- Leads the Board, staff, and community in a cooperative and continuous effort to improve the total school program.
- Celebrates the diversity of God's creation and is committed to championing and advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging efforts at GRCS.
- Motivates and coordinates the best of individual and corporate efforts of the Board, staff, parents, students, and supporters of the school.



# RESPONSIBILITIES

*Continued*



## School Operations

- Builds and leads an effective executive leadership team.
- Oversees systems for continuous evaluation of all aspects of school performance.
- Acts as the official and legal chief administrator in matters pertaining to the state, the law, and the community. Ensures all applicable laws are followed. Secures legal opinions when needed.
- Ensures sound financial procedures and practices that ensure accountability for all revenues, expenditures, and allocations are developed.
- Oversees the evaluation of each staff member and identifies appropriate opportunities for continued professional development.
- Works with the CFO to prepare and submit to the Board the budget for the upcoming year and revises the budget or takes other related action as the Board designates.

## WHAT IT TAKES

*Just as these qualities define the portrait of a GRCS Graduate, they also embody the leader who will guide and steer the school forward.*



**DISCIPLE OF CHRIST**



**THOUGHTFUL NEIGHBOR**



**JUSTICE SEEKER**



**CULTURALLY COMPETENT**



**COMMUNICATOR & COLLABORATOR**



**CREATIVE SOLUTION FINDER**



**LIFELONG EXPLORER**

# EXPECTATIONS



The expectations of the next superintendent of Grand Rapids Christian Schools can best be summarized by the Strategic Plan. The current superintendent, Board, and administrative leadership team are actively engaged in the strategic planning process and implementation and are held accountable for goals and strategies. The current Strategic Plan covers 2022-2026, so the next superintendent will complete this Plan in the first years of his or her tenure, and then collaboratively begin the next Strategic Planning process. Below is a high-level view of the Strategic Plan. Each priority has several measurable objectives, and each of those has action items, dates, person responsible, and the source of funding identified. The full Strategic Plan can be found [here](#).

## **Strategic Goal A-1: Mission and Core Values**

Ensure Grand Rapids Christian's mission and values are at the center of all school functions, inspiring a deeper clarity of why we exist and aligning each member of our community to our fundamental purpose.

## **Strategic Goal A-2: Strategic Board Governance**

Ensure the Board and its individual members understand the role and responsibilities of the Board and respective board members and the Board's strategic rather than operational governance.

## **Strategic Goal B-1: Strategic Academic Plan**

To ensure that the Christian faith is woven throughout all areas of our school for the purpose of achieving the schools' mission to prepare effective servants of Christ in contemporary society.

## **Strategic Goal B-2: Belonging**

To foster a culture of belonging in which the rich differences of God's creation are reflected in our curriculum and instruction, supported through institutional practices and systems, and reinforced through professional development.



# EXPECTATIONS

*Continued*



## Strategic Goal B-3: Flourishing and Feedback

To ensure a culture of feedback and growth in which all members of our community are provided a pathway to grow and flourish, and to maintain exemplary and aligned PS-12th grade Christian education across all schools so that all students learn at a high level.

## Strategic Goal B-4: District Campus Initiatives

To ensure continued investment in distinct campus initiatives that further each school's vision and theme and the Schools' mission. (International Baccalaureate Program at Evergreen, Outdoor Education at Rockford)

## Strategic Goal C: Advancement

Establish a comprehensive Advancement model focused on family relationship management and powered by end-to-end connected experience design that maximizes enrollment, deepens community, and cultivates generosity (time, talent, and treasure).

*As outlined across three measurable objectives, this comprehensive approach to Advancement requires all marketing, admissions, communications, brand experience, development, and database management activities to work together, serving as a shared framework and supporting platform for deeper connections between mission advancement and everyday operations at every campus.*



# GRCS CAMPUSES



**Grand Rapids Christian High School** (GRCHS) (9th-12th) has fifty-three classrooms, a newly renovated robotics lab, as well as an updated wood shop. The academic portion of the building was renovated in 2012. Each classroom features flexible furniture and three projectors, creating a collaborative learning community. The science department is all new construction with state-of-the-art lab spaces. The "Town Square" is the center of the building that provides students and staff with a large open space for community building. The high school features large spaces dedicated to student support services: counseling and social work offices, educational support offices and tutoring rooms, inclusion services, and international student program offices. The Learning commons houses a technology innovation lab, library, bookstore, and tech help desk. The DeVos Center for Arts and Worship, a state-of-the-art facility 1100 seat auditorium for chapel, performing arts, and theater productions, also houses band, orchestra, and choir classrooms, as well as a black box theater. The Eagles Athletic Stadium was renovated in 2007 with new locker rooms, and the Quest Center gym is a competitive gym that houses a brand-new weight room and golf room. The elective wing of the building housing engineering, robotics, visual arts, and family and consumer science departments. The Student Life Center houses the dean of student life, school culture coordinator, and chaplain offices.



**Grand Rapids Christian Middle School** (GRCMS) (5th-8th) offers twenty-eight classrooms, a large learning commons, and a new gymnasium built in 2015. The campus also features an outdoor learning garden and ravine classrooms, a water wall, spacious band and orchestra rooms, and a large playground. The school's Village Square serves as a large community space for gathering and worship, and the learning commons houses GRCS's Portrait of a Graduate murals painted by well known artist Joel Schoon-Tanis. GRCMS integrates Spanish immersion for grades 5-8, utilizes block scheduling for grades 7-8, and offers strong student support services (Educational Support and Inclusion) at all grade levels.



**The Rockford Christian School** (RCS) (PK-8th) building was constructed in 2001 (while RCS itself was established in 1997). There are twenty-two classrooms. Special features include the 36-acre campus, complete with trails and outdoor classrooms. The campus also offers a sizable solar panel array. The nature-rich outdoor education program weaves an environmental focus throughout the Preschool-8th grade curriculum. Located on thirty-six acres overlooking Lake Bella Vista, the RCS campus offers a variety of outdoor learning opportunities for students who also enjoy off-campus learning experiences at Camp Roger weekly and in other locations throughout Michigan during the year.



**The Grand Rapids Christian Elementary School - Evergreen** campus (PK-5th) is the only GRCS campus to offer childcare as young as 18-36 months. It has twenty-four classrooms and is uniquely designed for multi-age teams to be flexibly grouped between classrooms and common areas. The Evergreen campus also features a gorgeous nature-based playscape and access to large sports fields on site. The building has a large multipurpose room for gross motor activities in the early learning center.



**The Grand Rapids Christian Elementary School - Iroquois** campus (PK-4) was built in 2010, has thirty-four classrooms, and is the consolidation of several GRCS elementary schools into one. The legacy of GRC elementary is represented by this campus, which is built on the former Ottawa Hills High School campus grounds. Iroquois offers a Spanish Immersion Program, where participating students starting in 4-year-old preschool, are taught in Spanish in all core classes.



# LOCATION

## *Grand Rapids, Michigan*



Grand Rapids is a dynamic city with a rich history, beautiful natural surroundings, and a vibrant culture. With a population of over 200,000 people, Grand Rapids is the second largest city in Michigan. The city is located less than an hour from the shoreline of Lake Michigan and is the largest city on the west side of Michigan. The city is situated on the banks of the Grand River (Michigan's longest waterway), which provides a beautiful backdrop for outdoor recreation such as kayaking, fishing, and hiking.

Large numbers of Dutch farmers began immigrating to America in the early 19th century, driven by high taxes and low wages. Many settled in West Michigan around Grand Rapids. A wave of Calvinist immigrants desiring more religious freedom soon joined them. This area of Michigan has been associated with Dutch American culture and heritage ever since. But the area has attracted others. From the Armenians who came to escape Turkish massacre in the early 20th century, young Sudanese, French fur traders, and others seeking a better quality of life, Western Michigan has countless stories of how it has become a melting pot of cultures. Today, more than forty-five ethnic groups now call West Michigan their home including African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans. In fact, 36% of Grand Rapids' population is now ethnically or racially diverse.

At the height of the lumber boom, Grand Rapids was home to forty-four furniture companies and the city was recognized worldwide as America's Furniture City. The city's manufacturing focus has shifted away from residential furniture to office furniture.

In 1945, Grand Rapids became the first city in the world to fluoridate its drinking water – a move hailed as one of the 20th century's greatest public health achievements. Local innovators went on to pioneer advances in rehabilitative care, joint implants, generic drugs, and more before establishing one of the 21st century's fastest-growing life-sciences clusters – the Medical Mile.

Grand Rapids' more than 1,200 acres of city-owned parks provide the setting for scenic walks and community kickball games. At the same time, the Lake Michigan shoreline becomes a popular gathering spot in the summer. Locals can get a taste of the metro area's love for the arts at the Grand Rapids Art Museum, while families learn together at the Grand Rapids Public Museum. In the evenings, residents enjoy performances by the Grand Rapids Ballet – the only professional ballet company in Michigan – and other comedy and theater troupes.

The cost of living in Grand Rapids is lower than in other major U.S. metro areas. While the city's average annual income falls short of the national average, the dollar stretches further in the region. Housing costs are below the national median, and Grand Rapids residents spend less on daily necessities (groceries, health care, etc.) than those who live in other parts of the country.



# PROCESS OF CANDIDACY



If you sense that the gifts and experience God has given you may be a good fit for the superintendent position at Grand Rapids Christian Schools, we invite you to begin the inquiry process. Inquiries and expressions of interest regarding this search may be forwarded to Laura Coverstone at JobfitMatters Executive Search (615.261.4623) and will remain confidential.

Please provide the following for review:

1. A current resume
2. Responses to the following essay questions
  - Describe your testimony of faith in Jesus Christ. Indicate how God is using you in your work, in your church, and in your community. How has your relationship with Jesus shaped your career and influenced your decision to apply for this position?
  - Why are you interested in serving GRCS?
  - Using what you have learned about GRCS from the GRCS website, Opportunity Profile, and any other research you may have conducted, describe how your life, career, and leadership development have equipped you to lead and grow GRCS.
3. Provide the names and contact information (phone number and email address) of four references who know you and your career well enough to comment on your suitability for this position. (Note: References will only be contacted after we have requested and received your permission.)

Submit this information in one document or PDF to:

**Laura Coverstone**  
Practice Leader and Senior Consultant  
JobfitMatters Executive Search  
[grcssearch@jobfitmatters.com](mailto:grcssearch@jobfitmatters.com)  
615.261.4623

Please include **“GRCS Superintendent”** in the email subject line.

## Search Timeline

All candidate information will be reviewed upon receipt. The anticipated timeline is late fall in-person interviews and selection and a summer 2024 start date.