

**Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center
2008-2009 Annual Report**

The Mission of the Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center is to continuously expand the potential of children, the experiences of educators, and the involvement of parents within the diverse community of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The Vision is to base all decisions on the principles of Reggio Emilia incorporating current research on learning as well as developmentally appropriate practice.

The Building Renovation Project: A feasibility study was conducted in the fall of 2008 to determine if the current economic recession climate might adversely affect fundraising plans for the school renovation project. The results of the feasibility study informed us that the current economic recession would likely have a negative effect on our plans. It was determined that we should hold off on major fundraising efforts to accomplish the goals of the renovation project until a more favorable economic climate returns. It was also determined that the school should invest time and energy in cultivating long-term relationships with identified individuals and organizations in the greater Grand Rapids Community, with the aim of possibly requesting funding support from them sometime in the future.

Enrollment: The September enrollment count was 197. The February enrollment count was 205. This is the same enrollment number as in the fall of 2007.

Demographics: The Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center is located on the northwest side of Grand Rapids, Michigan. The demographics of the school generally match the demographics of the City of Grand Rapids and surrounding areas.

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Asian American	2%	2%	2%	1%
African American	25%	28%	25%	24%
Native American	5%	4%	3%	4%
Hispanic	29%	30%	23%	22%
White	39%	36%	47%	49%

Parent/Guardian Educational Level:

Non High school graduate	9.5%
Vocational Education	3%
Some college	26%
2 year degree	9.5%
4 year degree	19%
Graduate work	12%

Social Economic Status is indicated by Free or reduced Lunch applications. 65% of students qualified for free and reduced lunch.

Parent/Guardian Involvement: Traditional individual student conferences were held in the fall with 90% attendance by parents or guardians. Spring conferences were structured around group portfolio experiences. Attendance at the spring portfolio event was greater than 90%.

Student Achievement:

2008-09 MEAP Results:

Test	Grade Level	GRCDC Score	State Average
Reading	3	85% proficient	--
Writing	3	50% proficient	--
ELA	3	82% proficient	83
Math	3	85% proficient	91
Reading	4	67% proficient	--
Writing	4	17% proficient	--
ELA	4	54% proficient	77
Math	4	71% proficient	88
Reading	5	74% proficient	--
Writing	5	37% proficient	--
ELA	5	68% proficient	78
Math	5	79% proficient	77
Science	5	74% proficient	83

Overall, the Discovery Center met the objectives for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) again this year. The individual grade level and subject objectives for AYP were met except for English Language Arts (ELA) in grade 4. When compared with state averages, Child Discovery students continued to score below the state average in ELA and Math in grades 3 and 4, and in ELA and Science in grade 5. Discovery students in grade 5 performed better than the state average for Math in grade 5. Discovery Center students outperformed students in grades 3 and 5 in the Grand Rapids Public Schools (GRPS). Students in grade 4 performed at a similar level to those at GRPS.

Comparing Child Discovery student achievement on MEAP scores this year with the previous year's scores, improvements were made this year for grade 3 ELA and grade 5 ELA and Science. Student MEAP scores at the Discovery Center decreased this year for grade 3 Math, grade 4 ELA and Math, and grade 5 Math.

Portfolios: Portfolios are another form of assessment at The Discovery Center. Each child has a portfolio and work is collected in collaboration with the student in two categories; *Who I am?* And, *How I learn?* This collection of work is intended to give an authentic picture of each child's identity and learning in a holistic way. Portfolio Night participation for families this year was once again very strong. Each session was structured to include multiple families and their children who studied each student's portfolio collaboratively. The feedback from students and families was very positive. Teachers, parents and children all learned a great deal about themselves, each other, and the learning process. They celebrated each child's uniqueness as an individual and as a learner and yet recognized that children have so much in common. As this practice continues it is sure to elevate the image of children in the experience of adults as well as highlight the amazing diversity among the families and children. The experience of collaboration in community is also a picture of a way of working that is inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach to education and of its deep value to the Discovery Center and its mission.

Title One Services: The Child Discovery Center receives Title One funding support from the Federal Government. The amount of funding is based on the number of students who qualify for free/reduced lunch. This year, 65% of students qualified for free/reduced lunch.

At Risk Services: Identified children at the Child Discovery Center receive additional support through At Risk services provided by the state of Michigan (Section 31A). 81 students, or 40% of the total student body, qualified for At Risk services based on specified criteria. Criteria include low social economic status, incarcerated parents, teenage mothers, and below grade level reading achievement. At Risk services are delivered mainly through staff hired as counselors to support student behavior and family crisis, as well as Paraprofessionals to support instruction. Compared with last year, there was a 14% decrease in the number of students qualifying for At Risk services.

Michigan Department of Education School EdYes Report Card: The state report card is based on a combination of current status and change in MEAP scores and other indicators of School Improvement. Last year the school received a report card grade of C. This year, the school improved and achieved a report card grade of **B**. This score reflects the overall improvements both on student MEAP scores and the school's goals associated with the five strands of the School Improvement framework: Teaching for Learning, Leadership, Personnel and Professional Learning, School and Community Relations, and Data and Information Management.

Special Educational Services: The Discovery Center provides all the services necessary to fulfill the Individual Education Plans (IEP's) of individual students as well as diagnostic services for students suspected of having a disability. The services are

delivered in the least restrictive way possible with an inclusion model as the foundation for services. A practice called *Child Study* is available to families and teachers concerned when a particular student is not progressing as expected. The educational team gathers to evaluate assessments, reflect on current levels, and discuss strengths and concerns. An individual plan is then developed to address the strengths and challenges of the student. Follow up meetings are scheduled to chart progress of the student's identified goals.

Currently, the school contracts for all of its Special Education services. 13 percent of the total student body was identified as qualifying for Special Education services. Children at The Discovery Center are viewed as rich, strong and powerful, therefore, always measured with a strength model. Each student identified for special education students reached his or her goals set according to the student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP).

Homeless: No families were identified as homeless this year.

Retention Rate: The school experienced less than 1 percent retention rate because of the philosophy of the school and the multi-age groupings.

Family Participation: The Family Team was very active in organizing school-wide events and collaborating with the Staff. The Family Team's by-laws were changed to reorganize sponsorship of events. In the future, individual Discoveries (classrooms) will sponsor events and parents of one or more Discoveries will be responsible for the organization of each event. Parent surveys were disseminated and filled out by parents and guardians to provide meaningful feedback regarding various aspects of parent involvement. All parents are provided opportunities for involvement in the school as part of the school's philosophy and the combined efforts of the Family Team and Staff.

Staff: All teachers and all but one paraprofessional have achieved Highly Qualified status under NCLB regulations. Parents and guardians have been informed that all teachers are highly qualified and that they have the right to inquire about the qualifications of their child's teacher.