



# **Family Handbook 2016-2017 School Year**

**John Robinson**  
Superintendent, Executive Director, Principal

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Pedagogista

**409 Lafayette Ave SE  
Grand Rapids MI 49503  
616-459-0330**

[grcdc.org](http://grcdc.org)

September 1, 2016

Dear Families,

It is with great pleasure that this Family Handbook is presented to you. It is the product of many hours and many hands. It is meant to be a helpful resource to you as we embark on this year of learning and growth together.

The Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center (GRCDC) is a diverse, urban, K-5 school in the heart of Grand Rapids, MI. The school believes education is based on relationships; relationships to others, to ideas, to the environment and the larger community. This approach is based on the Reggio Emilia method which encourages curiosity, discovery and connectedness. This shared experience in passionate discovery engages all members of our school community in co-constructing a unique and effective education.

We are very excited to have you with us. Families and students play an important part in the education of all students.

If at any time during the school year you have any questions regarding this document, or policies and procedures, the spirit behind these, or our Reggio Emilia approach, please contact us.

Sincerely,

John Robinson  
Superintendent, Principal & Executive Director  
[robinsonj@grcdc.org](mailto:robinsonj@grcdc.org)

Sarah Cooper  
Pedagogista  
[coopesar@grcdc.org](mailto:coopesar@grcdc.org)

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### **Quick Facts @ a Glance**

<b>Main Office</b>	Rachel Harth, Administrative Assistant <a href="mailto:harthrac@grcdc.org">harthrac@grcdc.org</a>  Jessie Hammond, Administrative Support <a href="mailto:hammondj@grcdc.org">hammondj@grcdc.org</a>
<b>Important Numbers</b>	Phone number: 616.459.0330 Fax Number: 616.732.4437
<b>Office Hours</b>	7:50 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
<b>Grades</b>	K-5
<b>Superintendent/Executive Director/Principal</b>	Mr. John Robinson <a href="mailto:robinsonj@grcdc.org">robinsonj@grcdc.org</a>
<b>Pedagogista</b>	Ms. Sarah Cooper <a href="mailto:coopesar@grcdc.org">coopesar@grcdc.org</a>
<b>Special Education</b>	Danielle Starke <a href="mailto:starked@grcdc.org">starked@grcdc.org</a>
<b>President, Board of Directors</b>	Lisa Nuyens Heyne <a href="mailto:Lisa.Heyne.GRCDC@gmail.com">Lisa.Heyne.GRCDC@gmail.com</a>
<b>School Day Hours</b>	M, T, TH, F 8:00am-3:15pm W 8:00am-1:10pm
<b>Before or After School Care</b>	Megan Dillingham, Program Director <a href="mailto:megandgrede@gmail.com">megandgrede@gmail.com</a> 616.459.0110
<b>Family Team</b>	Natasha Nyberg and Jessie Hammond, Family Team Stewards <a href="mailto:grcdfamilyteam@gmail.com">grcdfamilyteam@gmail.com</a>

### Staff Directory @ a Glance

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position/Discovery/Department</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Anne Rasch	Discovery A Teacher	<a href="mailto:raschann@grcdc.org">raschann@grcdc.org</a>
Molly Parker	Discovery A Teacher	<a href="mailto:parkemol@grcdc.org">parkemol@grcdc.org</a>
MaryAnn Peterson	Discovery A Paraprofessional	<a href="mailto:petersonm@grcdc.org">petersonm@grcdc.org</a>
Sana Amash	Discovery B Teacher	<a href="mailto:amashsan@grcdc.org">amashsan@grcdc.org</a>
Molly Swartzlander	Discovery B Teacher	<a href="mailto:swartzm@grcdc.org">swartzm@grcdc.org</a>
Cassie Laninga	Discovery B Paraprofessional	<a href="mailto:laningac@grcdc.org">laningac@grcdc.org</a>
Rosalie Kaser	Discovery C Teacher	<a href="mailto:kaserr@grcdc.org">kaserr@grcdc.org</a>
Harmony Perry	Discovery C Teacher	<a href="mailto:hperry@grcdc.org">hperry@grcdc.org</a>
Val Schultz	Discovery C Paraprofessional	<a href="mailto:schultzv@grcdc.org">schultzv@grcdc.org</a>
Pegeen Jefchak	Discovery D Teacher	<a href="mailto:jefchpeg@grcdc.org">jefchpeg@grcdc.org</a>
Andrew Kleinschmit	Discovery D Teacher	<a href="mailto:kleinschmita@grcdc.org">kleinschmita@grcdc.org</a>
Deb DeJong	Discovery D Paraprofessional	<a href="mailto:dejongd@grcdc.org">dejongd@grcdc.org</a>
Brooke Haslacker	Discovery E Teacher	<a href="mailto:haslackerb@grcdc.org">haslackerb@grcdc.org</a>
Melissa Lantinga	Discovery E Teacher	<a href="mailto:lantingam@grcdc.org">lantingam@grcdc.org</a>
Gabrielle Sorge	Discovery E Paraprofessional	<a href="mailto:sorgeg@grcdc.org">sorgeg@grcdc.org</a>
Sara Dailey	Discovery F Teacher	<a href="mailto:daileys@grcdc.org">daileys@grcdc.org</a>
Elly Cotton	Discovery F Teacher	<a href="mailto:cottone@grcdc.org">cottone@grcdc.org</a>
Ron Wrobbel	Discovery F Paraprofessional	<a href="mailto:wrobbelr@grcdc.org">wrobbelr@grcdc.org</a>
Danielle Starke	Special Education Teacher	<a href="mailto:starked@grcdc.org">starked@grcdc.org</a>
Sarah DeVries	Special Education Teacher	<a href="mailto:devriess@grcdc.org">devriess@grcdc.org</a>
Sherri Faler	Special Education Paraprofessional	<a href="mailto:falers@grcdc.org">falers@grcdc.org</a>

Bryan Snyder	Special Education Paraprofessional	<a href="mailto:snyderb@grcdc.org">snyderb@grcdc.org</a>
Kay Waterson	Studio Coordinator	<a href="mailto:watersonk@grcdc.org">watersonk@grcdc.org</a>
Beth Scarbrough	Literacy Coach, Title 1 Coordinator and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Coordinator	<a href="mailto:scarbroughb@grcdc.org">scarbroughb@grcdc.org</a>
Trevor Gilbert	Community Support Specialist	<a href="mailto:gilbetre@grcdc.org">gilbetre@grcdc.org</a>
Eric Cole	Custodian	<a href="mailto:colee@grcdc.org">colee@grcdc.org</a>
Rachel Harth	Administrative Assistant	<a href="mailto:harthrac@grcdc.org">harthrac@grcdc.org</a>
Jessie Hammond	Administrative Support	<a href="mailto:hammondj@grcdc.org">hammondj@grcdc.org</a>
John Robinson	Superintendent/Principal and Executive Director	<a href="mailto:robinsonj@grcdc.org">robinsonj@grcdc.org</a>
Sarah Cooper	Pedagogista	<a href="mailto:coopesar@grcdc.org">coopesar@grcdc.org</a>

**2016-2017 School Calendars**

**Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center 2016-2017 Academic Calendar**

NO SCHOOL DAYS	SCHOOL EVENTS
<p>Monday, October 31, 2016 &amp; Tuesday, November 1, 2016 Teacher Record/Conferences Day</p> <p>Wednesday, November 23 through Friday, November 25, 2016 Thanksgiving Break</p> <p>Friday, December 23, 2016 through Monday, January 2, 2017 Winter Break</p> <p>Monday, January 16, 2017 Martin Luther King Jr. Day</p> <p>Monday, February 20 through Tuesday, February 21, 2017 Mid-Winter Break</p> <p>Friday, March 31 through Friday April 7, 2017 Spring Break</p> <p>Monday, May 29, 2017 Memorial Day Break</p>	<p>Wednesday, August 31, 2016 Orientation, 2:00 - 7:00 PM, you may come at any time</p> <p><b>Tuesday, September 6, 2016 First Day of School</b></p> <p>Classroom Information Nights in September - schedule TBD</p> <p>Tuesday, October 11, 2016 Math Night, evening event</p> <p>Friday, October 28, 2016 Community Potluck</p> <p>Tuesday, January 3, 2017 School Resumes after Winter Break</p> <p>Wednesday, February 22, 2017 Open House (evening event)</p> <p>Wednesday, March 8, 2017 Literacy Celebration (during the school day)</p> <p>Friday, March 24, 2017 Portfolio Day - alternative schedule</p> <p>Wednesday, June 7, 2017 End of Year Celebration, evening event</p> <p><b>Wednesday, June 14, 2017 Last Day of School (8:00 AM - 1:10 PM)</b></p>

## About Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center

### **Mission and Vision**

**The mission** of the GRCDC is to continuously expand the potential of children, the experiences of educators and the involvement of parents within the diverse community of Grand Rapids, MI.

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

### **The Reggio Emilia Approach**

The Reggio Emilia approach is used throughout the world, but originates in Reggio Emilia, Italy. It is an education of relationships that first began as an early childhood educational approach constructed after World War II. It is fluid rather than a packaged program, allowing us to continually refine our practices and adapt in meaningful ways to our community. The core of the approach is a collection of principles, which guides educators and families. Reggio inspired educational settings may vary in appearance, systems, leadership and approaches to meeting American standards.

The Reggio Emilia principles that guide our work include the following:

- **The image of the child** or the belief that all children are capable.
- **Relationships** or the understanding that a child's education requires connections among the environment, families, teachers, the larger community.
- **The role of parents** is believed to be a critical component of educating all children within the school.
- **The environment and space** supports interactions, meaningful projects and learning.
- **Teachers and children partner to construct learning** experiences
- **Not a pre-set curriculum but a process of inviting and sustaining learning**
- **Documentation** or the use of artifacts to provoke, assess and celebrate learning
- **The many languages of children** or the use of materials (e.g. paint, etc.) to communicate thinking and learning.
- **Projects** or meaningful contexts for learning connects academic subject areas and social/emotional development opportunities

### **Education Based on Relationships**

The Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center (GRCDC) is a diverse, urban, K-5 public school academy in the heart of Grand Rapids, MI. The school believes education is based on relationships; relationships to others, to ideas, to the environment and the larger community. This approach is based on the Reggio Emilia method which encourages curiosity, discovery and connectedness. This shared experience in passionate discovery engages all members of our school community in co-constructing a unique and effective education.

## School Structure

### **Teaming**

Teaming is an important component to support collaboration among children, staff, leadership and families. Teachers work in teams within each discovery or classroom. The teaching team shares vision and purpose. Positive working relationships among team members are based on professionalism, clear communication, collaboration and problem solving. Components of effective teaming involves: a process, clear communication amongst all members, a focus on problems, not people, generosity regarding knowledge, time and materials, professionalism, individual character and integrity amongst all team members.

### **Administrative Team**

GRDC has a co-leadership structure. Two school leaders report to the Board of Directors. The school leaders are John Robinson and Sarah Cooper. Mr. Robinson and Ms. Cooper share the responsibilities of leading the school and also have a leadership team that helps them in this task.

### **Additional Leadership Team members include:**

<b>Ms. Beth Scarborough</b>	<b>Title 1 Coordinator, MTSS Coordinator and Literacy Coach</b>
<b>Mr. Trevor Gilbert</b>	<b>Community Support Specialist</b>
<b>Mrs. Rachel Harth</b>	<b>Administrative Assistant</b>

Generally, the areas of focus for Mr. Robinson and Ms. Cooper are divided in this way:

Mr. John Robinson Superintendent, Executive Director, Principal	Ms. Sarah Cooper Pedagogista	Shared Functions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administration</li> <li>• Facilities</li> <li>• Tier 3 of Intervention</li> <li>• Behavior Support</li> <li>• Human Resources</li> <li>• Special Education Compliance</li> <li>• External Partnerships and Relationships</li> <li>• State reporting and legal compliance</li> <li>• Budget</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curricular Direction</li> <li>• Spotlight on and Alignment with The Philosophy</li> <li>• Teacher Development and Evaluation</li> <li>• Math and Science Lead Teachers</li> <li>• Special Education Instruction</li> <li>• Data Driven Decision Making</li> <li>• Teaching and Learning</li> <li>• Assessments</li> <li>• Paraprofessionals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Vision and Improvement Plan</li> <li>• Reggio Emilia inspiration</li> <li>• Acceleration Team</li> <li>• MTSS</li> <li>• Special Education</li> <li>• School Culture</li> <li>• Teacher Morale</li> </ul>

The **GRCDC Acceleration Team** recognizes and reinforces the district’s sense of urgency to fully realize growth for all children and teachers. The Acceleration Team strives to sustain a high level of urgency around the work and anchors it in a culture of collective responsibility that is collegial, collaborative, and professional. Members of this team include:

<b>Brooke Haslacker</b>	<b>Discovery E Teacher and District Assessment Coordinator</b>
<b>Harmony Perry</b>	<b>Discovery C Teacher</b>
<b>Molly Schwartzlander</b>	<b>Discovery B Teacher</b>
<b>Beth Scarbrough</b>	<b>Title 1 Coordinator, MTSS Coordinator and Literacy Coach</b>
<b>Trevor Gilbert</b>	<b>Community Support Specialist</b>
<b>Sarah Cooper</b>	<b>Pedagogista</b>
<b>John Robinson</b>	<b>Principal</b>

### Family Team

The Family Team is the GRCDC’s version of a PTA or PTO or organization to include families within the life of the school. All parents are automatically included in the Family Team. It is a group of parents that meets monthly to provide the organizing structure for a parent or guardian to become involved at the school. All parents are always welcome to attend the

meetings. It is the place to bring ideas and get connected to the school. Watch the Link Letter for meeting dates and times. School staff attend all Family Team meetings as a way to connect staff and families.

### **The Board of Directors**

As a free public charter academy, GRCDC is holds a charter authorized by Grand Rapids Public Schools. We are an independent charter school, and because of that we are a one-school district. We are governed by a Board of Directors, who approves policy, supports and evaluates the school leadership, and oversees the budget. The Board of Directors is a volunteer group of people who serve three year terms. For the 2016-2017 school year, the Board will meet the second Monday of each month from 6-8pm at the school building. Agendas and meeting notes can be found on the school website.

### **The Board of Directors 2016-2017**

President	Lisa Nuyens Heyne
Vice President	Jon Beer
Treasurer	Andrew Brower
Secretary	Ted Jauw
Board member at large	Abby Sutter
Board member at large	Jason Ferenczi

## **Communication**

### **Commitment to Transparency and Shared Information**

The Board and leadership of GRCDC believe that sharing information and being transparent is essential to a healthy workplace. While it is not possible to share all the details of all things all of the time, we commit to sharing openly as much as legally possible and culturally appropriate.

- The administration of the school will publish the locations of staff and family handbooks on the website and visibly in the school facility.
- Administration will at least once a year reach out to all families, board members and stakeholders with links to relevant handbooks.
- Administrators will provide training for all employees around communication policies and expectations.
- The administration of the school will post notices of the following circumstances both on the web site and in visible notices within the school facility:
  - o Job openings

- o Significant changes in public policies or calendar
- o Incidents that seriously impact the school community's health and safety

### **School-Home Communication**

The school publishes a weekly newsletter called the Link Letter. Families can receive this letter via paper copy at school or via email. Families are added to the Link Letter list at the time of enrollment. If you have questions, contact Mrs. Rachel Harth at [harthrac@grcdc.org](mailto:harthrac@grcdc.org)

Each classroom has a method to communicate with families. This could be through a printed newsletter, an email newsletter, a private Facebook group page, or a combination of these methods. Please contact your child's teacher if you are not receiving regular updates from the classroom.

We are continuing to brainstorm and try more and better practices to connect with our families in a variety of ways! If there is something that you would like to see in terms of communication, please contact Mr. Robinson or Lisa Nuyens Heyne.

### **Phone Calls and Email**

To contact your child's teacher or other staff members, please call the school's main office at 616.459.0330 between office hours: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Outside of these hours, you are welcome to leave a message on the school answering machine.

Each classroom has a telephone, but to ensure minimal interruptions to learning during the school day, the Administrative Assistant may take a message or provide an individual's voicemail for you to leave a message. Time sensitive messages may be delivered by the Administrative Assistant directly to relevant staff. Each staff member has an email address if you prefer written communication. These email addresses can be found at the Quick Facts @ a Glance on pp. 5-6 of this handbook.

To keep our focus on children's learning, staff are asked not to check email or phone messages during instructional time, but will respond to phone or email communications within 48 hours (on school days). We also ask you to refrain from communicating with teachers through their personal cell phones (voicemail and text messages) as we aim to provide equal access and streamlined communication.

### **School Calendar**

A school calendar at a glance can be found on p. 7 of this handbook. The school calendar in printed form is sent home to each family with the teacher introduction letters that are sent in August. This calendar highlights the major events and school breaks for the whole year. In addition, the school has a calendar embedded in our website, [grcdc.org](http://grcdc.org). This also has the major events and school breaks, in addition to other community events that occur during the school year. Everything that is listed on the online calendar is also highlighted in the weekly newsletter, the Link Letter.

## **Parent Teacher Conferences**

GRCDC has two ways each year that families can formally learn about their child's progress: parent teacher conferences and portfolio day. However, you are welcome to schedule a meeting with your child's teacher at any point to discuss questions, concerns and growth.

The GRDC holds formal parent-teacher conferences during first semester. Conferences this year will be during the first two weeks of November. In advance teachers will schedule a specific time when they will share academic and behavioral growth, strengths, relevant data, project work and strategies that might help you support your child's progress at school.

## **Portfolio Day**

Portfolio Day is held in the spring each year. On Portfolio Day, students do not have a regularly scheduled school day. Instead they attend with parents during an assigned time. Children, parents and teachers interact with their child's portfolio! The portfolio is a collection of drawings, writings, paintings, photographs and work samples that speak to academics, developmental milestones, learning strategies, social/emotional growth, project work, your child's daily life and your child's identity. Each piece in your child's portfolio is thoughtfully chosen or created.

During Portfolio Day, families come to school with their child during a designated one-hour time slot. You visit a location within the school (your child's teacher will tell you where beforehand) and receive your child's portfolio. There will be space on the ground for you and your child to arrange the artifacts. At this time, your child will lead you through understanding their work and talking about their learning. You will also connect with other families during your child's time slot to wonder how all of the artifacts (your child's and those of other children) connect together.

## **Report Cards**

Report cards are shared twice each school year and include assessments (or tests). The first report card represents assessments given since the beginning of the school year and are sent home at the beginning of February in your child's weekly Home/School Communication Folder. A second report card will come home at the end of the year with all standards formally assessed.

The attendance and tardy count are located at the top of the first page. Good attendance, marked at less than 10 absences per school year, is the first step in helping your child be present for academic instruction.

What you see is called a standards based report card, which gives information about each grade level expectation rather than one grade for the subject. It is intended to offer you more information. It could, for example, explain that your child has mastered basic addition and subtraction facts, but needs more time with fractions. By the end of the school year, we hope that children master all grade level standards.

Teachers write a narrative summary of your child's reading, writing, math and social/emotional progress. The comments will share current levels, document growth over time and offer opportunities for you to support progress at home.

Children with special education goals will also receive an additional report that summarizes growth on specific goals developed within the Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

As always please contact your child's teacher if you have questions or concerns.

### **School Visits and Protecting Our Classroom Environments**

This school is a community built on relationships. We want families involved and present. We love that families feel welcome here and participate in many ways. There are many ways to be involved through volunteer work, Family Team events/programs, and even in the daily life of the classroom. If you don't know how to connect with the opportunities, please contact your child's teacher, the office at 459-0330 or the Family Team Stewards at [grcdcfamilyteam@gmail.com](mailto:grcdcfamilyteam@gmail.com).

As stated above, we want families to feel welcome at GRCDC. At the same time, we have also come to recognize that we need to draw some boundaries around the expectations families have regarding access to the classroom and even to their student during the school day. Boundaries help protect the environment of the classroom during instructional time, minimizing distractions and maximizing opportunities for learning.

Please join our efforts and follow the following guidelines when entering the building during the school day:

- If you need to drop something off for your student during the school day, please bring it to the office. We will take care of it!
- If you need to pick up your student early, please sign them out in the office and the office will call the classroom to get the student for you.
- If you come to visit your child during lunchtime, please sign in and out at the office.
- If your student is tardy, please sign them in and make sure they get to class right away. Once school has started, it is usually not a good time to have a conversation with the teacher.
- If you want to hang out in the classroom, please email/ contact the teacher ahead of time and be prepared to participate and help out!
- If you do participate in the classroom during the day, please leave behavior management issues (with other students) to the teacher to handle.

Every classroom is different, each day is different, each teacher is different. What works one day, may not work the next day. The important thing is to ask the teacher, "Is this a good time to \_\_\_\_\_? If not, when would be a better time?"

## **Ways to Participate at School**

There are many ways to participate at the school. You may participate in the monthly Family Team meetings and various Family Team work groups. You may volunteer your time to help during the lunch and recess period. You may support your child's classroom by assisting the teacher with certain tasks. You will find opportunities to participate highlighted in the weekly newsletter or through the classroom communications.

## **Family Grievance Procedure**

GRCDC takes our connection and partnership with families seriously. We hope that all conflicts or issues can be worked through directly with families and the school-based adult involved with the child's best interest being at the center of all we do. We are committed to encouraging an open, team-based atmosphere in which any problem, complaint, suggestion or question receives a timely response from school staff. To that end, we encourage everyone to treat each other with respect and generosity of spirit.

If a student, parent/guardian, or visitor disagrees with established rules of conduct, policies or practices, or feels that he/she has been treated unfairly, he or she may express his or her concerns through the following problem resolution procedure. No person will be retaliated against or penalized formally or informally, for voicing a complaint with Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center in a reasonable, professional manner or for participating in the investigation of a complaint pursuant to the grievance procedure.

A student, parent or guardian may initiate the grievance procedure to appeal any final decision of school personnel except as provided in section A below. A person may initiate the grievance procedure to resolve complaints of discrimination based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. This grievance procedure does not bar individuals from filing claims in other forums to the extent permitted by state or federal law.

A. This policy does not apply in the case of suspension or expulsion or in the case of alleged sexual harassment where the provisions of the Sexual Harassment Policy apply.

**Step I – Principal Conference** – A parent or guardian wishing to invoke the grievance procedure shall make a written request for a conference with the principal to discuss the grievance and seek resolution. If a complaint of discrimination is being made against the Principal, the written request can be submitted to the President of the Board of Directors, who will designate an appropriate individual to investigate the complaint. The request shall state in detail the basis for the grievance, name the specific policy, rule or law believed to have been violated, and specify the relief being sought. The written complaint can be sent or delivered to the Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center.

- (a) No grievance will be heard unless it has been filed in writing within thirty (30) calendar days after the act or condition giving rise to the grievance and such filing must state with particularity the basis for the grievance, the policy regulation and/or procedure, rule or law believed to have been violated, and the remedy sought.

- (b) The principal shall initiate an adequate, reliable and impartial investigation and grant a conference within five (5) school days following receipt of the written complaint.
- (c) The person making the complaint will be permitted to present any information, documents, or witnesses that he/she would like to be considered as part of this conference and investigation. All information related to the conference and investigation will remain confidential.
- (d) Within ten (10) school days of the conference, the Principal (or President of the Board of Directors) will respond to the complaint in writing summarizing the outcome of the investigation and any corrective or remedial action necessary.

**Step II – Appeal to President of the Board of Trustees**– If the grievance is not resolved at Step I, the grievant may appeal the decision in writing to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees. The written appeal can be sent or delivered to the GRCDC Office, specifying it is for the Board President only.

(a) The appeal must be made within five (5) school days following receipt of the principal’s written response. The President of the Board of Directors, or her designee shall review the complaint, the principal’s response, and all information presented as part of the investigation, and meet with the individuals involved if necessary.

(b) Within 15 school days of receiving the appeal, the President or her designee shall respond in writing summarizing the outcome of the appeal and any corrective or remedial action necessary.

### **The School Day**

#### **Drop Off and Pick Up**

Our Greenspace Project work this past summer has changed our drop off and pick up, and thus we now have a new route. Now, pick up and drop off will happen on Cass Ave. Cass is becoming a one way headed north. Similar to our previous drop off and pick up routines, we will have two lanes. If you have not experienced our drop off and pick up before, you might imagine the process at the airport. In both cases, you move to the right to pick up or drop off your passenger, and you move to the left to head to your next destination.

Specifically, the east (right) lane of Cass is the one you will use to pull over to pick up and drop off. The west (left) lane is what you will use to drive away after. At this point, we recommend coming south on Lafayette, to west on Logan (parking will be prohibited during school hours on the north side), to north on Cass (parking will be prohibited on both sides of the street). This will avoid any left turns that will likely cause you and others longer delays.

These new processes will be new learning for all of us, and may require tweaking during the year. We will be sure to send out notices of new information in our Link Letter. Meanwhile, if you have any questions about drop off and pick up, please be sure to contact us.

Students may be dropped off in the morning 7:45-7:55 am. Students line up with their classes during this time, and enter the building together at 7:55 am. Students may alternatively be dropped off for breakfast according to the cafeteria schedule. Please contact the office for the current times.

### **Parking**

Parking for families is on the south side of our grounds, adjacent to Logan. (The lot on the east side is dedicated for staff.) Please note, our parking lot will have a delayed exit 15 minutes after the start of school and after the end of school. You may also park on the streets around the school where parking is allowed by the city and local ordinances. For special events, we may have additional parking available. When that happens, we will communicate this through the Link Letter.

### **Walkers and Bikers**

Students are welcome to walk and bike to school. It is a great part of a healthy lifestyle. Please educate your child about the important safety tips they will need to know, as the streets around the school are very busy, particularly around drop off and pick up. If your child needs assistance with locking up their bike, please have them see one of our staff members in the morning.

### **Daily Schedule**

School begins at 8:00 am. Any student arriving after 8:05 am ***must be signed in at the office***. Each classroom has a 20 minute lunch period followed by a 15 minute recess period. Children will also have additional recess time each day, scheduled by their teachers. The school day ends at 3:15 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday and 1:10 pm on Wednesdays. Afternoon meetings are held in the gym between 3:05-3:15 p.m. each Friday afternoon. It is an opportunity to gather in community as children, teachers and families. Please join us as you are able. Afternoon meetings include music, performances, information sharing and student learning. Younger or older siblings are invited to attend with parents too!

### **Lunch and School Meal Program**

Grand Rapids Food Service is our vendor for school meals. We serve breakfast and lunch daily. We participate in the National School Lunch Program which provides free meals to families who meet the qualifications. Every year, families will complete the online application for school meals: [grss.mealapp.org](http://grss.mealapp.org) or they may complete a paper copy of the meals application. Families who do not qualify for free and reduced meal may still purchase

school meals for their children, this can be done by sending money with your child or setting up an online account.

If you choose to pack your child's lunch, please follow these guidelines: do not send food that must be heated, send food that your child can open and access independently.

### **Lost and Found**

A lost and found section is located across from the main office. Families may feel free to look through this section when they visit school to attempt to reconnect with lost items. Students, please talk to your teacher about the best times to visit the lost and found section.

### **Discovery Care: Before and After School Care for Students**

GRCDC has partnered with the Grand Rapids Early Discovery Center (GREDC) to provide Discovery Care (before and after care) for our students. This program is a contract with the school, and will be staffed and run by the GREDC. To enroll, or for more information, please reach out to Becky at 616.459.0110.

### **Home/School Communication Folders**

Each child has a Home/School Communication Folder that will be sent home each Monday with relevant notes, student work, permission slips, classroom newsletters, the Link Letter (school newsletter) and any homework. Individual classrooms will ask for the folder to be returned at different times. The older classrooms may ask for it to travel between home and school daily where it may go home for the week in a younger classroom. Please refer to instructions from your child's teachers and thank you for looking through it each Monday!

### **Standardized Testing**

The Michigan Department of Education requires annual, standardized testing at the elementary level called the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress or M-STEP, first given during the 2014-15 school year. It is conducted online and the testing period arrives each spring between April -June. The writing and reading assessments are combined into one English language arts (ELA) score. Other content areas included in the testing are math, science and social studies.

#### **Which tests will my child take and when?**

- 3<sup>rd</sup> graders: Math and ELA between
- 4<sup>th</sup> graders: Math, ELA and Science
- 5<sup>th</sup> graders: Math, ELA, and Social Studies

#### **How important are the test scores?**

This question raises great debate among educators, families and policymakers. The M-STEP scores are intended to measure what children learn from year to year. These scores will be used in our teachers and administrators' evaluations as they must include student achievement data. For families, the testing results are often required for some middle school enrollment procedures and private school admissions. Our educational system puts a great value on achievement scores. The testing and scores are required, measure what a child knows and helps school districts make strategic curriculum and instructional

decisions. However, we also know that the snapshot it takes is about one moment in time. The GRCDC imbeds other measures to see the whole child.

### **How can I help my child?**

The online format requires desktop computer skills. At home you can join our preparations year round. Children need to be able to capitalize letters, insert punctuation and operate the mouse (left and right clicking). Keyboarding skills are needed including understanding keys such as the backspace, enter/return, shift, tab and the space bar. By the third grade, children need to be able to type paragraphs in response to reading, read and interpret a split screen, scroll on the screen in different ways, use tools like cut and paste and highlight.

As always, we need your support to make sure your child does his or her best. Please help us prepare your child physically and emotionally in the following ways:

- Get plenty of sleep
- Eat a healthy breakfast at home or school
- Follow our attendance policy – make sure they are at school each day, all day
- Reschedule appointments if possible
- Discuss how the test went and allow for a little extra time to manage stress
- Talk about strategies for dealing with frustration
- Remind them it is okay to take breaks

During the M-STEP testing periods, teachers will be offering brain breaks, movement, snacks and water to ensure children do their best.

## **Parent and Family Involvement, Support, and Responsibilities**

### **Family Team**

Families play an integral role in the learning experience of the children, and at the same time, help ensure the welfare of all children in the school. The Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center Family Team System provides the organizing structure for parent and guardian involvement at the school.

**Mission:** 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.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the Family Team is to support the theory of the Reggio Emilia approach to education which includes the rights of Family to be actively involved in the daily life of the school; to realize the mission for the Discovery Center; to provide opportunities for family involvement and collaboration with staff; and to join in a partnership with teachers and community to build a quality school.

**Membership:** The Family Team consists of all parents and guardians of children enrolled in the Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center.

**Rights & Responsibilities of Family Team Members:**

Grow their understandings about the philosophy of the school.  
Participate in the life of the school in various ways.  
Help ensure the welfare of all children in the school.  
Help develop community with other members of the Family Team.  
Find a voice in and cultivate a relationship with the Discovery of his/her child.

**Board Meetings and Subcommittees or Special Projects**

The Board of Directors meet the second Monday of each month at GRCDC from 6-8pm. Parents and families are welcome and encouraged to attend these meetings. This year, we will also be launching some new ways for parents to learn about the Board and participate in our work. Stay tuned to learn about those, as they are still being built.

The Board always welcomes help and involvement from parents and families. We have many different projects and types of work happening throughout the year. To find out more, contact Board President Lisa Nuyens Heyne at [Lisa.Heyne.GRCDC@gmail.com](mailto:Lisa.Heyne.GRCDC@gmail.com).

## **Volunteer Policies and Opportunities**

The GRCDC encourages parent and community involvement and welcomes participation at a variety of levels. Volunteers may be solicited by classroom staff, administration staff or board members. Volunteers may be asked to provide additional supervision (in school or on field trips), specialized training on topics of interest, general participation in a specific project, support in the lunchroom or playground, etc.

To insure the safety and wellbeing of students and classrooms, the GRCDC asks all regular volunteers to provide an annual, basic volunteer application that can be kept on file for one school year. For the purpose of this policy:

Volunteers are regular, weekly visitors to the school for the purpose of supporting the Discoveries or school operations and will be supervised by staff, teachers or administrators unless otherwise noted.

Volunteers, per this policy, might stuff homework folders, help in the classroom, or serve lunch. This policy does not apply to those dropping off or picking up children daily or attending school events.

Volunteer applications will include contact information, emergency contacts, acknowledgement that they are not staff and will not be asked to act as staff or treated as staff. Applicants wishing to volunteer will also need to include their date of birth, race and full name in order for the school or a designee to conduct a background screening with the Michigan Department of State Police Internet Criminal History Access Tool (ICHAT). ICHAT results will be printed out and kept on file during each school year.

All volunteers, even those that are parents, will not have unsupervised contact with children if the volunteers have been convicted of any of the following:

1. A listed offense, as defined in section 2 of the sex offenders registration act, 1994 PA 295, MCL 28.722.
2. Child abuse or neglect
3. A felony involving harm or threatened harm to an individual within the 10 years immediately preceding the date of application.

Volunteers will act in the best interest of the school and students and helping to maintain a safe environment for children, families and staff. Applicants will understand and comply or they would be asked to no longer volunteer.

The application requires GRCDC volunteers to be free of communicable diseases, drugs, alcohol and all weapons when present in the school community or at school sponsored events.

Persons filling out the application will be notified if they are unable to serve as a volunteer based on the ICHAT results. All others are to assume they are cleared.

To fill out a volunteer application, please see the main office.

## **Dress Code**

Students at GRCDC are not required to wear a school uniform. We do ask that children dress in clothes appropriate for the weather and layer when possible. Layering helps children stay comfortable and focus on learning in a variety of ways.

## **Attendance**

Children are expected to arrive at school by 8:00 am. Children who arrive after 8:05 am are considered tardy. Children arriving after 10:00 a.m. will be marked absent for the morning. And student leaving before 1:30 p.m. to be considered absent for the afternoon. A family member or designee must accompany your child to the school office to sign him/her in if he/she arrives to school late, beginning at 8:05 am. The school staff will be contacting you if your child is absent and we have not received a call from you. Please remember to call the office early if your child will not be at school. "Excessive absences" is defined as 10 excused or unexcused absences. If your child presents a pattern of absences, your child's teacher will be contacting you to find a way to improve your child's attendance. If your child's attendance does not improve, a referral to the office and a meeting with the principal will be necessary. If your child's attendance still does not improve, a referral to the truancy officer may be necessary.

## **Compulsory Attendance**

Michigan law governing compulsory attendance requires a parent, legal guardian, or other person having control of a child age six to sixteen to send the child to school during the entire school year, except under limited circumstances.

## **Reporting Absence**

Please be sure to call the school office ([616-459-0330](tel:616-459-0330)) to notify us each time your child is absent from school. If we do not receive a call regarding an absence and we are unable to contact you, your child will receive an unexcused absence. Excused absences are those due to illness of the child, visits to the physician or dentist, and attendance at a funeral or memorial service for a member of the immediate family. Please plan your family vacations to coincide with school vacation periods.

## **Truancy**

The school tracks excused and unexcused absences for all students each day. If we experience a pattern of absences or tardies, we will notify you that a problem with school attendance exists and request that you attend a meeting with the school principal to discuss the matter. Our aim is to offer whatever help and support we can to you so that you can address the problem and bring your child regularly (and on time) to school. At the meeting you will create a plan of action to address the problem of truancy. In the event that the pattern of truancy continues, the school will issue a written Referral of Truancy to the KISD Office of Truancy and School Attendance, which has the legal standing to hold parents and guardians responsible for their child's attendance at school.

## **Parent Responsibilities and Involvement in Education**

As a Reggio Emilia-inspired school, we see parental involvement as an absolute necessary in a child's education. This means that a child's education is a partnership between the

parent, the child, and the teacher. More information about specific ways to connect with your child's education is outline each week in the Link Letter, both in the "Coach's Corner" (aka "Principally Speaking") by Mr. Robinson and "The Philosophy" by Ms. Cooper.

**We ask that all parents, to the extent that they are able, do the following:**

- Ensure that your child attends school regularly and is on time
- Attend school-wide events such as Open House, Math Night, Literacy Night, etc.
- Read with your child at least 20 minutes per night, or for older children provide a quiet space and the expectation that your child reads silently 20 minutes per night
- Look over your child's Home/School Communication folder and ask questions
- Sign all papers that require a parent/guardian's signature
- Ask questions to your child about their experience in school and what they are learning
- Attend parent-teacher conferences and Portfolio Day
- Communicate with your child's teacher regularly and promptly when concerns arise

**Behavior System and Support**

**Choice Theory**

William Glasser's Choice Theory is the theory that we all choose how to behave at any given time, and cannot control anyone's behavior but our own. The behaviors that we choose are directly related to one of five basic needs that we are driven to fulfill: survival, belonging/connecting, power/competence, freedom/autonomy, and fun/learning. Identifying the need that drives a child's behavior leads to conversations and planning about how to find good and healthy ways to meet that need.

**Be Kind**

The Be Kind Behavior Matrix lays out common language surrounding "Be kind to yourself," "Be kind to others," and "Be kind to the environment." The matrix, complete with procedures for classroom and common spaces, will be posted and visible for staff, families and children.

**Classroom Supports**

Classrooms are the first and second tiers of support for behavior. The classroom staff develop systems for teaching expectations, providing acknowledgements, and managing rule violations. Additional tiers of support can be provided at the classroom level.

Additional tiers of support may be provided through staff from outside of the classroom. In either case, staff use behavioral data to match student needs with appropriate supports.

**Community Support Specialist**

The GRDC employs a Community Support Specialist, Mr. Trevor, to help facilitate, in part, the support of student behavior needs. Through proactive supports like relationship building, interventions of tiered support beyond the classroom, and use of data to

determine support needs, Mr. Trevor helps our team meet the behavioral and socio-emotional needs of our students. He helps us carry out our research based interventions for children under our Multi-Tiered Systems of Support model around behavior. He supports students and families in a responsive manner when needed, as well as proactively when possible. He is responsible for managing data, and regular progress monitoring as well.

## **Student Code of Conduct**

### **I. STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

The School Board firmly believes that learning can best take place in an orderly environment and that students can best learn individual and collective responsibility and gain maturity if they are provided opportunities in which to exercise responsibility within the school setting. This School Discipline Policy is intended to communicate expectations regarding acceptable conduct in school in order to provide a positive learning environment for all students.

It is a responsibility of the School Board, administrators and teachers to safeguard the health and safety of each student. The School Board and district administrators will support district personnel who, in dealing with students on disciplinary matters, act in accordance with State Law, Department of Education Regulations and School District policies.

The School Board recognizes its responsibility to meet the educational needs of students who do not respond well to normal school programs. Such efforts may include utilizing special services personnel and outside referral agencies and/or adjusting normal school procedures. If a student does not respond to these efforts and consistently exerts a disruptive influence on the educational environment of a school, the needs of the other students and staff must become a major factor in planning alternatives.

With due consideration to these obligations, it is the responsibility of the School Board and administrators to make reasonable rules and regulations for the governing of student behavior and conduct. Building principals and appropriate staff will annually review this policy to assess its effectiveness. All rules and regulations regarding student behavior will be approved annually by the School Board.

### **II. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT**

#### **A. Elementary Student Code of Conduct**

The Elementary School Student Code of Conduct is in effect from the time a student arrives at GRCDC at the beginning of the day until the student is picked up at the end of the day and at all times when students are participating in school-sponsored activities.

1. Parental/guardian involvement and cooperation is vital in the discipline process.
2. The elementary discipline procedures will apply and be consistently enforced. At the same time, the School Board realizes the uniqueness of each classroom and recognizes that there may be individual classroom procedures to implement and supplement these District procedures.
3. All elementary staff and parents/guardians will work together to correct the misbehavior of the student and to maintain a written record of incidents of moderate and serious misbehavior.
4. Measures to correct misbehavior will depend upon the nature of the behavior, the frequency, and the willingness of the student to correct the undesirable behavior. The use of these measures is intended to encourage acceptable behavior. Corrective action will normally begin at a minimal level and proceed to more serious action.

B. Behavior Expectations

1. The following rules will apply to all elementary children:
  - a. Students will show respect and courtesy to other people at all times.
  - b. Students will show respect for property inside and outside the buildings.
  - c. Students will behave in a manner that does not endanger themselves or others.

This follows our behavior matrix seen around the build of:

- Be kind to yourself
  - Be kind to others
  - Be kind to your environment
2. When unacceptable behavior cannot be readily corrected by the classroom teacher or support specialist, the child's parents/guardians will be informed of the problem by the teacher or the principal and requested to participate in solving the problem.
  3. If the situation is such that special services personnel are needed, the teacher shall refer the student to the appropriate special service.
  4. If the problem is not resolved the Principal may require a parent meeting or refer designee for further action before the student returns to school.

C. Unacceptable Behavior

Disciplinary action may be taken as a result of any behavior which is disruptive or which violates the rights of others. The following acts are examples of unacceptable behavior and subject to disciplinary action in GRCDC elementary school and activities. School sponsored activities include, but are not limited to, co-curricular events, field trips, and club activities.

The listing of minimum actions does not imply or require that a “step-by-step” progression of increasing severity be employed by an administrator in dealing with a violation. However, there shall be a relationship between the severity of the offense and the administrative action.

1. Violation Against Persons

a. Fighting

Mutual combat in which all parties have contributed to the situation by verbal and/or physical action.

Minimum Action: Student conference and parent/guardian contact. Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

b. Harassment

Participating in, or conspiring for others to engage in acts that injure, degrade, or disgrace other individuals.

Minimum Action: Student conference and parent/guardian contact. Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

c. Sexual, Racial and Religious Harassment and Violence

Sexual, racial and religious harassment and violence as defined in Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000e, et. seq., and the Michigan ELLIOTT-LARSEN CIVIL RIGHTS ACT, Act 453 of 1976. It is the policy of GRCDC to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment, and prohibits any form of discrimination.

Minimum Action: Student conference, parent/guardian contact, and possible referral to Social worker or other needed services.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

d. Bullying

“Bullying” means repeated behavior by an individual student, an individual student within a group of students, or group of students that is intended to cause the victim(s) to feel frightened, threatened, intimidated, humiliated, shamed, disgraced, ostracized, or physically abused. Bullying implies an imbalance in power or strength in which the student being bullied has difficulty defending him or herself. Bullying can take many forms, including physical, verbal, social/relational and/or cyberbullying. (Further clarification can be found in School Bullying policy which is available on the district’s website)

Minimum Action: Student conference and parent/guardian

contact. Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

e. Abusive/Inappropriate Language

(1) Disrespectful language to others.

(2) Threatening language to others.

Minimum Action: Student conference and/or parent/guardian contact. Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

f. Interference/Obstruction

Any intentional action taken to attempt to prevent a staff member from exercising his/her lawfully assigned duties.

Minimum Action: Student conference and/or parent/guardian contact. Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

g. Possession of a Firearm

Minimum Action: Immediate suspension, notification of law enforcement agency.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

h. Possession of a Weapon Other than a Firearm Which Could Cause

i. Minimum Action: Student conference, parent/guardian contact, 1 day suspension and possible notification of police.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

j. Possession of a Weapon Facsimile (See also School Board Policy #532)

Minimum Action: Student conference, parent/guardian contact and possible notification of police and suspension.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

k. Assault

“Assault” is doing an act with intent to cause fear in another of immediate bodily harm or death or intentionally inflicting or attempting to inflict bodily harm upon another.

Minimum Action: Student conference, parent/guardian contact, and possible notification of police.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

l. Aggravated Assault

“Aggravated Assault” is committing an assault upon the person of another with a dangerous weapon or an assault which inflicts great bodily harm upon the person of another.

Minimum Action: Student conference, suspension, parent/guardian contact and notification of police.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

m. Hazing

GRCDC Family Handbook 2016-2017 (9/1/2016), p. 27

“Hazing” means committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a substantial risk of harm or embarrassment to a person, in order for the student to be initiated or affiliated with a student organization, or for any other purpose

Minimum Action: Student Conference and Parent/Guardian Contact.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

2. Violation Against Property

a. Unauthorized Use of School Property

The unauthorized/illegal use of school property.

Minimum Action: Student conference, parent/guardian contact and notification of police or juvenile authorities.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

b. Willful Damage of School Property

Minimum Action: Student conference, parent/guardian contact and recommended restitution.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

c. Willful Damage to Property of Staff Members and Others

Minimum Action: Student conference, parent/guardian contact and recommended restitution.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

d. Theft

The unauthorized taking or possession of the property of another.

Minimum Action: Student conference, parent/guardian contact, restitution and

possible

Notification of police or juvenile authorities.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

e. Robbery/Extortion

The obtaining of property from another where his/her consent was induced by a use of force or a threat of force.

Minimum Action: Student conference, suspension, parent/guardian contact and immediate notification of police.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

f. Tampering with Food or Beverages

Adding or attempting to add foreign substances to food or beverages, including spitting into food or beverages or spitting on food trays.

Minimum Action: Student conference and parent/guardian contact.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

3. Violation Against School Administrative Procedures

a. Insubordination

Refusal to follow school rules and regulations as directed by staff.  
Minimum Action: Student conference and parent/guardian contact.  
Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

b. Disruptive Behavior

Actions which interfere with effective operations of the school.  
Minimum Action: Student conference and parent/guardian contact.  
Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

c. Record and Identification Falsification/Forgery

(1) Falsifying signatures or data on official record.  
(2) Refusal to give correct identification or giving false identification when requested to do so by a staff member.  
Minimum Action: Student conference and parent/guardian contact.  
Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

d. Unauthorized Distribution

Unauthorized distribution of literature on or near school property of inflammatory, libelous or slanderous material.  
Minimum Action: Student conference and parent/guardian contact.  
Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

e. Leaving School Building or Grounds

Leaving school buildings or grounds during school hours without proper clearance. Minimum Action: Student conference and parent/guardian contact.  
Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

f. Chronic and Unexcused

Absenteeism Minimum Action:  
Student conference. Maximum  
Action: Report to truancy officials  
and possible expulsion.

g. Truancy

Minimum Action: Student conference and parent/guardian contact.  
Maximum Action: Report to truancy officials and possible expulsion.

Chronic and Unexcused Tardiness Minimum Action: Student  
conference. Maximum Action: Report to truancy officials and  
possible expulsion.

h. Student Attire

Manner of dress or personal grooming which presents a clear danger to the

student's health and safety, causes an interference with work, or creates classroom or school disorder. The wearing or display of confederate flag, swastika and KKK signs or symbols is not permitted on school property or at school sponsored events. The wearing of any clothing that displays tobacco, alcohol, drug, or drug paraphernalia and offensive words, pictures or

symbols is not permitted on school property or at school sponsored events. Clothing must cover back, shoulders, midriff and cover chest, buttocks and underclothing.

School property is defined as school buildings and grounds, including the parking lot.

Minimum Action: Student conference and parent/guardian contact.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

i. Trespassing

Physically present on a school campus or at a school activity after being requested to leave by school principal or other person lawfully responsible for the control of said premises.

Minimum Action: Student conference and possible referral to police or juvenile authorities.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

j. Student Cell Phone Use in School

The following rules are intended to outline minimal expectations regarding cell phone use in school. Principals can enforce rules that are more strict.

(1) Cell phones must be turned off in classrooms and stored in a purse, briefcase, backpack, pocket, etc.

(2) Cell phones must be turned off in locker rooms and bathrooms and stored in a purse, briefcase, backpack, pocket, etc.

(3) Cell phones that are stored in lockers must be turned off.

(4) Failure to follow these directives may result in the loss of all cell phone privileges at school and may result in other disciplinary actions including suspension and/or expulsion.

Minimum Action: Student conference. Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

k. Student Camera Use in School

The use of cameras in school by students is generally prohibited because of the disruption that can occur. However, in some very restricted instances, camera use by students is permitted.

- (1) Cameras cannot be used in bathrooms.
- (2) Failure to follow this directive may result in the loss of all camera privileges at school and may result in other disciplinary actions including suspension and/or expulsion.
- (3) These rules are intended to outline minimal expectations regarding camera use in school. Principals can enforce rules that are more strict.  
Minimum Action: Student conference. Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

4. Rules Governing Student Conduct:

The rules governing student conduct are included in this Elementary School Code of Conduct. Students will be informed of these rules by their classroom teacher during the first week of each school year. Students enrolling after the school year starts will be informed of these rules by a designated staff member.

5. Grounds for Removal From Class:

The grounds for removal are as follows:

- a. Willful conduct which materially and substantially disrupts the rights of others to an education;
- b. Willful conduct which endangers School District employees, the student or other students, or the property of the school;
- c. Willful violation of any rule of conduct established in the discipline policy.

6. Authority to Remove Students:

The teacher or supervisor in immediate charge of the class from which the student is being removed; or the building Principal or lead teacher; may remove a student from that specific class as specified under M.S. 121A.61. A student may be removed from class when in the judgment of the teacher, supervisor or administrator authorized to remove said student, the student has violated one or more of the grounds listed for removal from class.

7. The Procedure for Removal

- a. The student will be informed of the reason for removal.
  - b. The student will be given an opportunity to respond.
  - c. The principal/designee will be informed of the removal.
  - d. The classroom teacher will be informed.
  - e. The student will report to the area designated by the teacher or supervisor. If, in the judgment of the teacher or supervisor, allowing the student to move unescorted may endanger the student, other individuals, or School District property, the teacher or supervisor should escort the student or request assistance from the office in escorting the student.
  - f. The student will be provided and expected to complete the assignments missed due to being removed from the class.
8. Length of Time of Removal:
- Any removal which is longer than the activity being participated in or 45 minutes will come under the jurisdiction of this policy. The removal shall not exceed one hour per day for three consecutive days or three consecutive hours in a day unless by administrative action.
9. Responsibility For and Custody of a Student Removed
- From Class: The Principal or designee will make the necessary arrangements.
10. Procedures for Returning the Student to Class:
- The Principal or designee will return the student to the classroom.
11. Notifying Parents/Guardians:
- The school employee removing the student will communicate with the parent/guardian.
12. Procedures Determined Appropriate for Encouraging Early Involvement of Parents/Guardians:
- Teachers will attempt, if possible, to discuss behavior problems with parents/guardians prior to invoking the removal procedures.
13. Students with reoccurring behavior problems will be referred to the school's SST team.

14. Students with current IEPs will be brought to the student study team for further review.

D. Other Violations

1. Gambling

The playing of a game of chance for stakes.

Minimum Action: Student conference and parent/guardian contact.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

2. Disorderly Conduct

Engaging in offensive, obscene, or abusive language or in boisterous and noisy conduct. Minimum Action: Student conference and parent/guardian contact.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

3. Use or Possession of Tobacco and/or Tobacco Products

Use of and/or possession of any type of tobacco product by any student, regardless of age, will be governed by Michigan Statute and School District rules.

Minimum Action: Student conference and parent/guardian contact.

Maximum Action: Suspension

4. Use, Possession, Distribution or Sale of Illegal Drugs, Alcohol, Narcotics, Drug Paraphernalia, or Simulated Drugs

Students who violate the rules concerning the use of alcohol and drugs will be subject to one or more of the following procedures:

- a. Parent/guardian conference.
- b. Notification of local law enforcement agency or other appropriate agencies.
- c. In-school restrictions and/or suspension.
- d. Dismissal from school (Suspension or Expulsion).

5. Fire Alarms/911

The sounding of false fire alarms or false 911 calls.

Minimum Action: Student conference, parent/guardian contact, and notification of appropriate Police and Fire Department officials.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

6. Inappropriate Use of Technology (See also School Board Policy 540)

Technology instruction includes computers, televisions, video or audio recorders and players, and other related technological equipment. Students must follow all appropriate use of technology procedures as established by the School District.

Technology misuse includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Using unauthorized programs, software, videos, CDs or audiotapes.
- b. Attempting to bypass or alter computer security.
- c. Unauthorized modification of computer configuration (desktop pattern, sounds, etc.).
- d. Attempting to access, add, delete or alter information or files of another person or organization without permission.
- e. Using technology to access, transfer, copy or store inappropriate materials or messages.
- f. Use technology resources for commercial, personal profit or illegal enterprises. Minimum Action: Student conference.  
Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

7. Academic Dishonesty

It is expected that students pursue their academic studies in an honest manner and with integrity. Work that is turned in for credit needs to result from the student's own efforts. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to two major areas: cheating and plagiarism. Cheating is a deceptive act in which a student attempts to show knowledge which is not theirs. Plagiarism is presenting information from someone else, as though the ideas, words, or facts are the student's own.

Minimum Action: Student conference, parent/guardian contact.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

8. Terroristic Threats (a bomb threat is an example)

The making of bomb threats or other terroristic threats either verbally, by telephone, by letter or through any other means of communication.

Minimum Action: Immediate suspension, notification of law enforcement agency.

Maximum Action: Expulsion or exclusion.

E. Corrective Measures

Discipline should not be confused with punishment. The goal of discipline is a self-regulated individual with mature attitudes and socially-acceptable standards of conduct.

Corrective measures used will depend upon the nature of the behavior, the frequency, and the degree to which the student is willing to try to correct undesirable behavior.

With the exception of serious violations of the Student Conduct Code, corrective measures will normally begin at a minimal level and then proceed to more serious levels. These procedures may include but are not limited to: conferences with teacher, counselor, or principal; detention; loss of school privileges; parent/guardian conference with school staff; modified school program; school transfer; dismissal for one day; suspension; referral to

District Administration; expulsion; police referral; court referral and home instruction.

1. Student Conference

Conferences will be conducted with students regarding disciplinary matters to insure due process. (Conferences by school administrators are not required for discipline action under or for Removal of Student From Class by the Teacher.) Each student facing the imposition of disciplinary action under this code of conduct must be informed, orally or in writing, of the facts and the nature of the conduct which has been challenged and be given an opportunity to explain his or her version of the facts or conduct which has been challenged prior to the imposition of discipline.

2. Parent/Guardian Contact

Depending on the violation and the seriousness of the action, a student's parent/guardian may be contacted by telephone or mail in addition to a student conference. The intent of the contact is to inform the parent/guardian of the violation and the student's attitude during the conference and to elicit parent/guardian support for correcting the unacceptable behavior.

3. Parent/Guardian Conference

The principal, assistant principal, counselor, or teacher may request a parent/guardian conference, with or without the student present, to insure parent/guardian understanding of the student's academic and/or behavior problem and to mobilize a cooperative effort to correct the difficulty.

4. Referral to Community Services Agencies

Referral to Community Services agencies is to be by school authorities. The parents/guardians will be consulted when appropriate if any community service is to be used for a student or if a student will be referred to a community resource.

5. Suspension (M.S. 121A.41 Subd. 10)

"Suspension" means an action taken by the school administration prohibiting a student from attending school for a period of not more than ten consecutive school days. The suspension period may be extended an additional five days when it is determined that the student will create an immediate and substantial danger to persons or property around him/her. The purpose of suspension is to remove the student from the school environment and to provide time for the professional staff, parent/guardian and student to discuss the matter and bring about an agreement on future conduct.

6. Alternative Program

GRCDC Family Handbook 2016-2017 (9/1/2016), p. 35

7. Referral to Police or Juvenile Authorities

When a student's misbehavior is so extreme that it may involve the violation of a law, police or juvenile authorities will be contacted by the Principal or a designated representative. Every reasonable attempt shall be made to notify parents/guardians at the same time juvenile authorities are called. If the officer indicates that he/she is arresting the student, with or without a warrant, that officer shall have complete jurisdiction and responsibility in the matter and the Principal shall not interfere with the student's removal from the building. It is expected that the contact with the student shall be arranged in a manner to make it as unobtrusive as possible.

8. In-School Suspension

In-School Suspension (ISS) may be required of a student for one or more breaches of the Code of Conduct. Students placed in ISS are required to remain in one room for a designated period of time. Students in ISS are under the supervision of school staff and are given ISS and/or homework assignments which must be completed.

9. Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who violate the Student Code of Conduct will receive corrective measures in accordance with applicable state and federal law.

F. Procedures for Notification of Students and Parents or Guardians of Violation of the Rules of Conduct and of Resulting Disciplinary Actions:

1. Violations of Elementary Student Code of Conduct: Students and parents or guardians will be notified of violations and disciplinary actions taken as listed in the Elementary Code of Conduct.
2. Annual Report: The building Principal or his/her designee shall prepare a yearly report consistent with State statute or Minnesota Department of Education rules.

G. Student Searches

1. Personal Possession Searches

The personal possessions of students whether on their person, in desks, lockers or backpacks, may be subject to a reasonable search when the School District has a reasonable, individualized suspicion that evidence will be produced showing that the student violated the law or school rules. As soon as practicable after the search of a student's personal possessions, school authorities must provide notice of the search to

students and the student's parents whose personal possessions were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials.

It is the policy of the School Board of GRCDC to comply with Federal and State Law (and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to regulations issued in support of such laws) prohibiting discrimination against any person on the grounds of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, status with regard to public assistance, age or disability.

Adopted by the School Board of GRCDC on February 8, 2016.

**BE KIND BEHAVIOR Matrix at the Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center**

	<b>Classroom/Gym</b>	<b>Playground</b>	<b>Hallway</b>	<b>Bathroom</b>	<b>Dining Room</b>	<b>Offices</b>
<b>Be kind to yourself.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Contribute your best effort                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take risks and ask questions</li> <li>• Be positive</li> <li>• Make connections</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Know your purpose.</li> <li>3. Be a good friend.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use appropriate language</li> <li>• Encourage others.</li> <li>• Solve problems peacefully.</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Be aware of personal space.</li> <li>5. Follow adult directions.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accept no appropriately.</li> <li>• Be patient.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Know your purpose</li> <li>2. Be a good friend</li> <li>3. Be aware of personal space.</li> <li>4. Stay inside the playground area.</li> <li>5. Follow adult directions to keep you safe.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use a quiet voice.</li> <li>2. Walk quietly.</li> <li>3. Have a pass</li> <li>4. Be aware of personal space.</li> <li>5. Know your purpose and be timely.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use a quiet voice.</li> <li>2. Have a pass</li> <li>3. Know your purpose and be timely.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use a quiet voice.</li> <li>2. Eat your lunch and let others eat.</li> <li>3. Be aware of personal space.</li> <li>4. Raise a hand for help.</li> <li>5. Wait to be dismissed.</li> <li>6. Follow the Zero Waste System.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use a quiet voice.</li> <li>2. Have a pass</li> <li>3. Know your purpose.</li> <li>4. Be a respectful visitor.</li> </ol>
<b>Be kind to others.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use a quiet voice.</li> <li>2. Be part of the community.</li> <li>3. Be a good friend.</li> <li>4. Work and let others</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be a good friend.</li> <li>2. Be aware of</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use a quiet voice.</li> <li>2. Be aware of</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be aware of personal space.</li> <li>2. Respect others and their</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use a quiet voice.</li> <li>2. Eat your lunch and let others eat.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use a quiet voice.</li> <li>2. Be aware of the purpose of others.</li> </ol>

	work.	personal space. 3. Know the purpose of others.	personal space. 3. Know the purpose of others.	privacy.	3. Be aware of personal space. 4. Wait to be dismissed. 5. Follow the Zero Waste System. 6. Leave the space ready for the next group.	3. Wait patiently.
<b>Be kind to the environment.</b>	1. Use a quiet voice. 2. Use materials for their intended purposes. 3. Leave the space ready for the next group.	1. Be aware of the space around you. 2. Use materials for their intended purposes. 3. Leave the space ready for the next group.	1. Be aware of the space around you. 2. Use and touch with permission. 3. Leave the space ready for the next group.	1. Conserve materials. Use only what you need. 2. Leave the space ready for the next group.	1. Use a quiet voice. 2. Follow the Zero Waste System. 3. Leave the space ready for the next group.	1. Be aware of the space around you. 2. Use and touch with permission. 3. Leave the space ready for the next group.

## Resources and Support

### Title I

GRCDC is a school-wide Title I school. Title I is a federal program that provides funds to school districts and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children who are disadvantaged to support a variety of services. Its overall purpose is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and assessments.

### Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)

At GRCDC, Ms. Beth Scarborough works closely under the direction of Mr. Robinson to design and lead a multi-tiered system of support for students- both academically and behaviorally.

The goal of this model is to identify children who can benefit from extra support or interventions and help them to be successful in their classrooms. The MTSS model is built with three levels or tiers of instruction.

- **Tier I** represents the instruction that is given in the classroom to all children. The instruction is considered to be at grade level. Currently, school-wide data analysis monitors progress in reading, writing and math for all students. Tier I also includes instruction and monitoring for age appropriate social, emotional and behavioral skills. Our goal is that all children will be at grade level in academic and behavioral areas; however, approximately 80% of children typically fall into this category to start.
- **Tier II** represents an additional layer of support with targeted, individualized interventions. 15% of students will fall into this Tier, meaning they may be just a little behind grade level expectations. The classroom teacher will notify you if your child is having some difficulty with a specific skill and needing some extra help. Tier II instructional support means your child will receive small group help in either academics or behavioral skills above and beyond Tier I instruction. We want to help your child thrive in Tier I independently and most students no longer need Tier II support after a few months of group work.
- **Tier III** is additional instruction targeted skills in one on one or small group settings 4-5 times per week. We aim for 5% or less of our students requiring Tier III support. With this extra help, many move out of Tier III in a few months. If continued progress occurs, extra help is also continued. If this does not occur, we will ask you to join us and additional experts to determine the next level of support.

MTSS is a research based strategy proven to help children progress. To support each child's individual needs, your child may work outside of the classroom with an expert interventionist on goals written in collaboration with your child's teacher. Before your child works within Tier II or Tier III, your child's teacher will notify you of the process, timeline, areas that need additional support and ways you can support the work at home. Please feel

free to contact your child's teacher with questions or concerns. Your partnership is important to us and your child's growth!

### **Student Support Team**

The GRCDC has a **STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM** (SST) that meets biweekly to help children and their families. The team includes professionals from various fields with a wealth of knowledge and experience. Teachers can refer a child to the SST to help support academic and behavior needs. The team shares information, strategies, answers questions collaboratively, problem solves and can connect families with resources in the community. Parents will be invited to attend these meetings.

The SST is led by Danielle Starke, special education resource room teacher, and includes your child's teacher, teachers from multiple grade levels, our MTSS Coordinator, and may include special education service providers (occupational therapist, speech therapist, school psychologist, social worker, physical therapist) and the Pedagogista as needed.

The SST wraps around you and your child to help address concerns, offer strategies and determine appropriate next steps. If you have concerns and questions, start by contacting your child's teacher. He or she will help you determine if the Student Support Team is the right venue!

### **Section 504 Policy**

Section 504 is a federal law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with a disability in any program receiving federal assistance. The Act defines a person with a disability as anyone who:

1. Has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities (major life activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working);
2. Has a record of such impairment; or
3. Is regarded as having such an impairment.

In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, the school district recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel, students, and their parents. No discrimination against any person solely due to his or her disability will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices in the school system.

The school district has specific responsibilities under the Act, which include the responsibility to identify and evaluate the child who is suspected of having a disability under the Act. When the child is determined to have a current disability and is therefore eligible under Section 504, the school district must afford access to appropriate educational programs.

If the parent or guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the school district, he or she has a right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) specifies rights related to educational records. This Act gives the parent or guardian the right to: 1) inspect and review the child's educational records; 2) make copies of these records; 3) receive a list of all persons having access to those records; 4) ask for an explanation of any item in the records; 5) ask for an amendment to any report on the grounds that it is misleading, inaccurate, or violates the child's rights; and 6) a hearing on the issue if the school refuses to make the amendment.

If there are any questions, please feel free to contact John Robinson, the Section 504 Coordinator for the school district. John Robinson can be contacted through the main office at 616.459.0330.

### **Special Education Services at GRCDC**

For students who are referred to Special Education an evaluation will take place with the consent (REED: REVIEW OF EXISTING EVALUATION DATA (REED) AND EVALUATION PLAN) of the parent/legal guardian. After the school receives the consent for an evaluation, the school has 30 school days to complete any testing and hold the Eligibility meeting and IEP (Individualized Education Program).

The evaluation process involves gathering and reviewing existing information. Trained, knowledgeable personnel will administer the appropriate assessments, determined by the needs of the child. After the evaluation is completed, the evaluation team consisting of parent/guardian, teacher, and evaluators will meet to determine if the child is eligible for Special Education services based on the eligibility criteria. If a child is eligible for special education, an evaluation will take place every three years.

If a child qualifies for Special Education services, the IEP team (parent, teacher, administrator, providers) will develop a plan to spell out the special education or related services the child will receive. The IEP will be reviewed annually by the team, but the team can meet at any time to discuss needs.

For parent rights, please visit the KISD (Kent Intermediate School District) website to access the "Parent Handbook with Procedural Safeguards", or contact the Special Education office at GRCDC for a copy.

## **Social Work and Other Services**

GRCDC works with Grand Rapids Public Schools to provide related services. If a child is eligible for Special Education, they may require related services. Related services may include: School Social Work, Speech/Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, or Physical Therapy. Contact Mr. Robinson to be connected to the right person to address your concerns, should your child qualify for these services.

## **Health and Wellness**

### **Minimum Health Standards to Attend School**

If your child had a fever or has vomited in the last 24 hours, you must keep him/her home from school. Your child must be fever free for 24 hours **without** the aid of fever reducing medicines (Tylenol, Ibuprofen). A fever is defined as a temperature of 100 F taken by mouth or 99 F under the arm. When your child will be absent from school due to illness, please call the office to excuse him/her for that day. Please provide a reason for the absence as it will assist us in tracking the spread of certain illnesses. You may call the office anytime. If you reach our voice mail, please leave a detailed message. The school number is 459-0330.

If your child develops a fever or vomits while in school, you will be notified to pick up your child as soon as possible.

### **Epidemics**

To prevent an illness epidemic, hand-washing is encouraged, all shared surfaces are disinfected daily, and gloves are required in the handling of food or when dealing with any bodily fluids. In the event that a vaccine preventable disease is reported in the school, any student who is not vaccinated against that disease will be excluded from school until the incubation period has ended. The school will follow the guidelines of the local health department during any epidemics.

### **Health Support**

Minor health concerns can be addressed within the scope of what the school has to offer. Depending on the severity, school will contact individuals on file. It is important that you keep your records updated with the school office so that we may contact you for any health/medical needs. If medication needs to be administered, we need a signed form on file in the main office.

## **Student Records**

The GRCDC will maintain educational records of students for legitimate educational purposes per state record retention guidelines. Student records are confidential and information from them shall not be released except as provided by law. The information contained in school student records shall be kept current, accurate, clear, and relevant. All student records, including those maintained in District electronic database(s), shall be safeguarded during collection, maintenance, and dissemination to protect against unauthorized access or accidental release.

Students have individual permanent educational records that follow them to each school they attend and includes official administrative records necessary for operating the educational system. It includes basic identifying information, report cards, attendance records, accident and health reports, withdrawal and re-entry records, information pertaining to release of records, records concerning suspension and expulsion actions against the student, evaluations, teacher observations, special education files and other information deemed to be of permanent value by the District.

### **Access and Copying of Student Records**

Parents and guardians have the right to access their child's records. To do so, please contact the school via the office at 459-0330 or in writing via email to John Robinson at [robinsonj@grcdc.org](mailto:robinsonj@grcdc.org). Access to your child's records will be granted within a reasonable period of time, but in no case more than 45 school days after the request has been made. Where such records or data include information on more than one student, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of any student shall be entitled to receive, or to be informed of, that part of such record as pertains to their child.

A school official competent in interpreting student records shall be present, upon request, to explain the meaning and implications of the records that are examined.

In situations where the parents/guardians of a student are divorced or separated, each parent/guardian, custodial and/or non-custodial, has equal rights to their student's records unless a court order specifies otherwise. GRCDC personnel shall not recognize private agreements between the student's parents/guardians.

Copies of student record(s) will be made for the parent(s)/guardian(s) upon request. Copying fees shall be charged only when multiple copies are requested in a limited period.

### **Privacy**

The school prohibits the use of any video device in or near any restroom, or other location, where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy. Taking or transmitting images or messages during testing in any location is also prohibited.

Desks, lockers and other storage areas provided by the school for student use, may be searched by school personnel when there is reasonable suspicion for a search. Students may be disciplined for interfering with a search. In the course of a search, the student's

privacy rights shall be respected regarding any item that is not illegal or against school policy. A student's personal effects (purse, book bag, backpack, etc.) may be searched whenever a staff member has a reasonable suspicion that a student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized material or evidence in violation of the student code of conduct.

For additional information on privacy, please see Notification of Rights Under FERPA.

### **Student Safety**

GRCDC takes seriously its commitment to student (and staff) safety. The Student Code of Conduct contained within this document helps outline expectations and procedures around school safety. Surveillance cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent (or designee), but shall not be used in locations where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.

### **School Policies**

#### **Notification of Rights under FERPA**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center receives a request for access. Parents should submit to the school principal in a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center to amend a record should write the school principal and clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate

educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service of function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

### **Notice for Directory Information**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that the Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, the Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications such as the annual yearbook, class lists and graduation programs.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent.

If you do not want the Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the District in writing by October 31, 2016. The Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing

- Photograph
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

### Definitions

“Bullying” or “harassment” is any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act that is reasonably perceived as substantially interfering with educational opportunities, dehumanizing, intimidating, hostile, humiliating, threatening, or otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress. This definition includes any form of retaliation or false accusation against someone who reports suspected bullying. [5b]

“Cyber bullying” is activity or communication online, via social media, or using other electronic means of communication which would constitute bullying if performed not using electronic communication.

“Investigator” means the principal or an individual designated by the principal as responsible for determining whether a report of bullying occurred. The principal’s designee may be a teacher, a member of the Bullying Task Force, if formed at the time of a Report, or other individuals as the principal deems appropriate.

“Report” means a formal request that an Investigator determine whether an incidence of bullying occurred. A Report must be in writing unless the reporting individual is excused by the principal and shall include a description of the event. A Report may be made anonymously. [5g]

### Policy

Bullying of any pupil at Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center, including cyber bullying, is prohibited regardless of its motivation. [5a] and [5c]

The principal is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this plan. [5d]

### Procedure for Reporting Bullying

The Bullying Policy shall be published on the Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center website. [5e]

A parent, pupil, teacher, or other interested party may provide a Report to the principal or to an individual designated for receiving such reports. Anonymous bullying reports are accepted.

### Procedure for Responding to a Report of Bullying

Upon receiving a Report, the investigator shall determine whether additional valuable information may be obtained by conducting an investigation, i.e., interviewing pupils, teachers, school staff, parents, or other interested individuals, reviewing other information or documentation available, etc. The principal

or designee of the principal receiving the Report shall not disclose the identity of an individual providing a Report unless authorized to do so and shall maintain written reports in non-public storage spaces in order to prevent accidental disclosure of the reporting party. [5j]

If the Investigator determines that the Report requires an investigation, the Investigator shall endeavor to begin an investigation within five (5) school days of receiving the Report. [5h] After conducting an investigation, the Investigator shall submit an oral or written report to the principal or the principal's designee detailing whether bullying occurred and recommending a course of action. This course may include disciplinary measures against the bullying party based on the severity of the bullying, the bullying party's behavioral history, remorse, or other factors the Investigator deems appropriate. The Investigator shall always seek the best interests of the children involved and should consider whether notifying the victim's parents or guardians or the bullying party's parents or guardians should be made aware of the incident which occurred. [5f]

### Miscellaneous

Teachers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with their students' interactions with each other using electronic communication to understand how cyberbullying could occur and to relay such information to the principal or the principal's designee.

The principal shall periodically consider whether the school's Anti-Bullying should be supplemented by forming an anti-bullying task force, or whether teachers, administrative staff, students, volunteers, or other individuals need training on how to identify and respond to bullying.

The executive committee of Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center shall periodically, at least annually, request a report on Bullying, Reports, and Investigations. [5i]

This document was written by the Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center board with the intention of fulfilling the requirements of MCL Section 380.1310b, also known as the Matt Epling Safe School Law. Please contact the GRCDC board with comments or concerns.

Adopted by the School Board of GRCDC on October 12, 2015.

## **Harassment**

### Descriptions:

Sexual or discriminatory harassment of

- School elected officials,
- employees,
- students,

- Board members and applicants for the Board,
- School employees,
- vendors,
- contractors or others doing business with the School students,
- parent(s),
- guardian(s),
- volunteers or guests

Will not be tolerated.

Discriminatory harassment means

- any harassment,
- intimidation,
- ridicule,
- disparagement,
- purposeful embarrassment, or chiding of any person

Because of their

- race,
- color,
- sexual orientation,
- gender identity,
- height,
- weight,
- color,
- religion,
- ethnicity or national origin,
- age,
- marital status,
- disability
- or veteran status.

Harassment can include “sexual harassment” or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature.

Harassment does not have to be of a sexual nature, however, and can include offensive remarks about a person’s sex. For example, it is illegal to harass a woman by making offensive comments about women in general.

Both victim and the harasser can be either a woman or a man, and the victim and harasser can be the same sex.

Although the law doesn't prohibit simple teasing, offhand comments, or isolated incidents that are not very serious, harassment is illegal when it is so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment or when it results in an adverse employment decision (such as the victim being fired or demoted).

The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, or someone who is not an employee of the employer, such as a client or customer.

Employees:

Sexual or discriminatory harassment involving employees of the School shall not be tolerated by this School when:

- Submission to such conduct or communication is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, to obtain employment,
- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct or communication by an employee/applicant is used as a factor in decisions affecting such employee/applicant's employment, or
- Such conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an employee's employment, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive employment environment, or otherwise adversely affects an employee's employment opportunities.

Any employee or applicant who believes that he or she has suffered any form of harassment for any reason shall immediately report the incident(s) following the guidelines set forth in this policy.

The School guarantees that an employee or applicant for employment, reporting an incident of sexual or discriminatory harassment will not suffer any form of reprisal.

Students:

Sexual or discriminatory harassment involving students of the School shall not be tolerated by this School when:

A student behavior will be classified as harassment when it is in blatant conflict with the Schools policy for acceptable behavior and is not part of any scheduled behavioral correction or discipline program already established.

The School guarantees that the student's family reporting an incident of sexual or discriminatory harassment will not jeopardize the student's ability to attend School or prohibit them from being involved in all activities.

#### Conditions:

In determining whether the alleged conduct constitutes sexual or discriminatory harassment, the totality of the circumstances, the nature of the harassment and the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred will be investigated.

The Principal/Superintendent has the responsibility of investigating complaints of sexual or discriminatory harassment of employees or applicants. If the investigation requires the engagement of legal counsel, the Principal/Superintendent will notify the President of the Board who will inform the executive committee, and engage counsel.

In cases where the alleged harassment involve the Principal/Superintendent, the Board President will review the complaint with the support of the Board's executive committee, and as necessary outside legal counsel will be hired to investigate the complaint.

In cases where the alleged harassment involve the President of the Board, the executive committee will review the complaint, and as necessary outside legal counsel will be hired to investigate the complaint.

The results of an investigation and any action taken thereon will be communicated to the complaining person.

The Board President and the executive committee may, at their sole discretion, elect to employ legal counsel or other qualified, independent investigators to assist them in the investigation. Results of the investigation will be turned over to the School Board.

The School considers harassment to be a major offense, which will result in disciplinary action of the offender. Disciplinary action against a School employee may include termination of employment.

Disciplinary action against a student may include expulsion.

Disciplinary action against a Board member may range from public censure to removal of the Board member from an officer position he/she may hold.

#### Notification

Notice of this policy will be periodically circulated within the School, and incorporated in

teacher, student and parent/guardian handbooks. All new hires of the School will be required to review and sign off on this policy and its related complaint procedure, effective (Date approved by the Board)

Training sessions on this policy and the prevention of sexual or discriminatory harassment shall be held periodically for all Board members, administrators, teachers and employees of the School.

In addition, students and their families will have available as part of their curriculum and instructional program, sessions on this policy and the prevention of student-to-student discriminatory or sexual harassment.

Guidelines:

Any and all incidents of sexual and discriminatory harassment must be reported.

Reporting means, a written report of the incident in question describing, date, time, circumstances, persons involved and witnesses. If a previous incident involving the same person(s) and context was not reported, that must be disclosed in the report. The written report must include the phrase, "This is a request for investigation into sexual or discriminatory harassment". The report must be confidential to the party receiving the report at this stage.

Incident involving a student or teacher, parents, contractors, volunteers and guests, reports are submitted to Principal/Superintendent.

Incident involving Principal/Superintendent, Board member, or committee members reports are submitted to Board President.

Incident involving the Board President reports are submitted to the secretary of the Board.

All Board members, their roles, and contact information as well as committee members, their roles and contact information are to be made available through accessible communication and documentation.

All reports will be acknowledged in writing with a timeline for a response.

Responses may include the outline of scheduling meetings and interviews, scheduling research and investigation, scheduling preliminary hearings and deadline for determination.

Determination would include written and face to face reporting of outcome of investigation. Determination may mean a decision that:

- the alleged offense could not be documented and a request to solve the conflict is made,
- or that an alleged offense may have occurred and requires further review and a new deadline for review is set. This may mean some conditions around confidentiality, a monitored contact between those involved would be requested,
- or that the alleged offense requires the involvement of legal counsel and the process is escalated.

Final determination would be managed case by case.

The process would be reasonably transparent to all non-involved members of management and leadership to support the greatest level of integrity and due process.

Adopted by the School Board of GRCDC on December 8, 2014.

### **Technology Acceptable Use**

Technology use at the GRCDC will be used for educational purposes. Children and teachers have access to desktop computers within the classrooms and during regularly scheduled time in the school's media center. Many Discoveries also utilize iPads for instructional purposes in the classrooms.

Wireless internet can be found throughout the building and it has filters and firewalls to ensure children and staff can only access appropriate internet content.

The GRCDC recognizes that students' personal devices like phones, cameras and tablets can offer meaningful experiences for learning. However, it is school policy that students refrain from bringing these devices to school. If your family determines your child needs to have a phone or other device, then the device shall be turned into the office at 8:00 a.m. and picked up at dismissal. All devices will be stored in the safe with identifying information.

### **Child Abuse And Neglect Reporting Act**

The GRCDC believes children must be protected from abuse and neglect and will report any such suspected abuse or neglect as mandated by law. All school personnel are considered mandated reporters or those required to report suspicions of abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services. GRCDC staff or volunteers will follow Michigan law for reporting,

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investigation and confidentiality. In instances when Children’s Protective Services representatives come to a school to visit a child, the District will cooperate fully in accordance with Michigan laws.