
2024-2025 ANNUAL EDUCATION REPORT



Gerald R. Ford Academic Center

851 Madison Ave. SE
Grand Rapids, Michigan
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Principal: Denishea Killingham Neal

Grades: K-8

Fall 2023: Enrollment: 230

February 1, 2025

Dear Parents and Community Members:

We are pleased to present you with the Annual Education Report (AER), which provides key information on the 2023-24 educational progress for Gerald R. Ford Academic Center. The AER addresses the complex reporting information required by federal and state laws. The school's report contains information about student assessment, accountability, and teacher quality. If you have any questions about the AER, please contact me at NealD@grps.org or call our school's main office at 616-819-2640 for assistance.

[The AER is available for you to review electronically by clicking this link](#) , or you may review a copy in the main office at your child's school.

For the 2024-25 school year, schools were identified based on previous years' performance using definitions and labels as required in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). A Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) school is one that had at least one underperforming student subgroup in 2023-24. An Additional Targeted Support (ATS) school is one that had a student subgroup performing at the same level as the lowest 5% of all schools in the state in 2021-22. A Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) school is one whose performance was in the lowest 5% of all schools in the state or had a graduation rate at or below 67% in 2021-22. Some schools are not identified with any of these labels. In these cases, no label is given.

Our school has not been given one of these labels.

[Click here to view the School Index Overview for our school.](#) This site provides additional information about key performance indicators.

We continue to implement the district's Academic Plan that focuses on creating a learning culture to advance students' thinking and providing a rigorous and standards-based curriculum to help students achieve College- and Career-Readiness by the time they graduate.

State law requires that we also report additional information.

About Our School

Gerald R. Ford Academic Center is a K8 Theme School within Grand Rapids Public Schools. Our mission is to develop intellectual habits of mind, character traits, and the perseverance needed to ensure career and college readiness, to develop personal integrity, achieve success, to lead and serve the common good of the local and global community. Our school prepares all students to become independent learners with the desires, skills, and abilities necessary for lifelong learning. We have created a learning environment that is student-centered, directed by teachers, and supported by home and community.

Our school offers a structured, disciplined, supportive environment for families committed to academic excellence. Students learn in small classes that foster civic and community leadership, develop character and integrity, and participate in service-learning projects. Parents are required to sign a contract and fulfil parent/guardian expectations for attending parent events and ensuring their child maintains good attendance and behaviour. Our families support the school by being engaged in the school community and by actively participating in their student's education through partnering, frequent communication, and involvement with the school regarding their student's academic and social performance.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to ensure that all students are educated, self-directed, and productive members of society.

Process for Assigning Pupils to Our School

Our school is a theme school requiring application. [Click here to view the GRPS Attendance Area Finder.](#) It shows the neighborhood elementary school, middle school, and high school for your address. Additional options, including K-8 schools, theme schools, and Centers of Innovation are available. Please contact Student Services at 616-819-2150 to learn more about your school choices.

Local Assessment Results

NWEA's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) is the district's local assessment. The following table reflects the proportion of students who scored at or above the 50th National Percentile in Reading and Math during Spring 2023 and Spring 2024.

School	Grade Level	NWEA Measure of Academic Progress			
		Students Scoring At/Above the 50th National Percentile			
		Reading		Math	
		Spring 2023	Spring 2024	Spring 2023	Spring 2024
Gerald R Ford	Kindergarten	100%	95%	94%	95%
	Grade 1	63%	88%	70%	63%
	Grade 2	64%	56%	75%	71%
	Grade 3	37%	47%	11%	42%
	Grade 4	42%	30%	25%	9%
	Grade 5	26%	32%	12%	14%
	Grade 6	56%	24%	25%	5%
	Grade 7	38%	57%	31%	32%
Grade 8	33%	44%	17%	19%	

Core Curriculum

GRPS continues to...

- Align curricula to Michigan Grade Level Content Standards and College and Career Readiness Standards.
- Provide professional development that supports our Academic Plan.
- Assess student learning so teachers have accurate information about each student.
- Define individualized student targets, school-wide targets, and district achievement targets.

[The GRPS Parent University website links parents to resources such as *Milestones* \(provided by *GreatSchools*\), a collection of online videos aimed to help parents understand their child's grade-level expectations.](#) These videos show students demonstrating what success looks like in reading, writing, and math for every grade level.

We are committed to ensuring our students reach their full academic potential. Feel free to contact me if you have questions or need additional information. Thank you for your interest in our school!

Sincerely,

Denishea Killingham Neal
Principal, Gerald R. Ford Academic Center