

**GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY**

**CITY HIGH MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
Class of 2024



Monday, May 20, 2024 at 7:00 pm  
Houseman Field | Grand Rapids, Michigan

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

**GRPS**   
my choice®  
Grand Rapids Public Schools

## Dear Graduating Seniors of City High Middle School,

Congratulations on reaching this remarkable milestone! On behalf of the entire Grand Rapids Public Schools community, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to each and every one of you.

Take a moment to pause and look around you right now. You are surrounded by community. Everyone is here to honor the dedication, hard work, and perseverance you and your classmates have invested in reaching this milestone. We are all here for you.

I want to express my profound gratitude to all who have supported you along the way. From your families and friends to your teachers, mentors, and the entire GRPS community, their unwavering support, guidance, and encouragement have been invaluable in shaping the individual you are today.

During your academic journey, you have faced challenges, celebrated triumphs, and experienced personal growth. Your resilience, determination, and grit have been evident throughout this journey, and they will undoubtedly continue to serve you well as you embark on the next phase of your life.

No matter where you go from here, remember that the GRPS community stands behind you, cheering you on every step of the way. I have no doubt that each of you will go on to achieve incredible things, and we eagerly anticipate celebrating your future successes.

Sincerely,

Leadriane Roby, Ph.D.  
Superintendent

# WELCOME

## TO THE CITY HIGH MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASS OF 2024 COMMENCEMENT

### CLASS FLOWER

White Rose

### CLASS COLOR

Rose Gold

### SENIOR CLASS OFFICERS

Sabino Lobo, President

Richard Xiao, Vice President

Jennifer Dinh, Treasurer

Miller Broughton, Communications Director

### REGALIA KEY



# CITY MIDDLE HIGH SCHOOL

Class of 2024

## VALEDICTORIANS

Eva R. Alfonso  
Sparsh Aiyar  
Makenna E. Beckett  
Anna M. Blanchard  
Eliza J. Bott  
Miller M. Broughton  
Bo K. Chambers  
Zoe E. DeWeerd  
Jennifer T. Dinh  
Arely M. Gomez-Maldonado  
Keira Mei Y. Harrell

Ella N. Hengeveld  
Maura J. Hunt  
Romy J. McKellar  
Paula A. Mireku  
Lena M. Reeves  
Matias J. Rizkalla  
Sofie J. Vaandrager  
Naia J. Wainer  
Richard Xiao  
Ryan W. Yon

## SALUTATORIANS

Claudia A. Duimstra  
Merlot M. Petrella

Andrew S. Portinga

## SEAL OF BILITERACY RECIPIENTS

Deborah Donahue-Andrade  
Yaneli Gonzalez-Quintino  
Efren Leon-Calderon  
Sabina Lobo  
Katie Merlos

Christian Pena-Paniagua  
Kevin Perez-Romero  
Morgane Thibault  
Ximena Torres-Mora

## SENIOR CLASS ADVISORS

Mr. Damon Brown

Mr. Craig Travis

# COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

## PROCESSIONAL MARCH

“Pomp and Circumstance” by Edward Elgar,  
performed by City High Middle School Orchestra

## NATIONAL ANTHEM

Colors presented by Union High School JROTC Color Guard  
“Star Spangled Banner” performed by Jeweltones

## WELCOME

Mrs. Charlie VanderVliet

## SUPERINTENDENT’S REMARKS

Dr. Leadriane Roby

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REMARKS

Mr. Matthew Beresford

## PRINCIPAL’S REMARKS

Mrs. Charlie VanderVliet

## JEWELTONES VOCAL PERFORMANCE

“Bridge Over Troubled Water”

Senior Soloists: Nizair Acree, Gwendolyn Kirkbride, Lena Reeves,  
Richard Xiao and Ryan Yon

## VALEDICTORIAN’S REMARKS

Bo Chambers

Matias Rizkalla

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER’S REMARKS

Dr. Mark Washington, City Manager

## PRESENTATION OF THE DIPLOMAS

Ms. Erin Burke, Ms. Nicole Muzio, Mr. Joe Wierda

## CERTIFICATION OF DIPLOMAS/TASSEL CEREMONY

Grand Rapids Board of Education Trustee

## RECESSIONAL

“Good Old Days” by Macklemore

# CLASS OF 2024

**CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!**

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Nizair Acree

Fiona Aeschlimann

Alexsandra Aguilar-Delgado

Sparsh Aiyar

Eva Alfonso

Selma Anderson

Clementine Bahr-Attanasie

Sienna Barstow

Nyleese Bazan-Hernandez

Makenna Beckett

Anna Blanchard

Grace Blanchard

Eliza Bott

Miller Broughton

Jaime Calderon Jr.

Aamiyah Castro

Clara Chambers

Alison Clark

Cooper Dahl

Makeda Dam

Columbia College Chicago

University of Vermont

Grand Rapids Community College

University of Michigan

University of Miami

Syracuse University

Loyola University of Chicago

Michigan State University

Real Estate & Builder's License

Michigan State University

New York University

University of Minnesota

Loyola University Chicago

University of Michigan

Grand Valley State University

Lansing Community College

Kalamazoo College

Michigan State University

Kalamazoo College

Howard University

Harper Davis	Kalamazoo College
Margaret Davis	Michigan State University
Laura DeBoer	St Olaf College
Eliza Dengerink-Van Til	University of Michigan
Zoe DeWeerd	Wheaton College
Jennifer Dinh	University of Michigan
Wyatt Dixon	Ferris State University
John Dombrowski	Michigan Technological University
Deborah Donahue-Andrade	Calvin University
Berit Doublestein	University of Michigan
Claudia Duimstra	University of Michigan
Alliyah Franklin	North Carolina A&T University
Tony Fuentes Flores	University of Wisconsin
Jonathan Gabriel-Ramirez	Grand Rapids Community College
Clayton Gearhart	Michigan State University
Azael Gomez	Grand Rapids Community College
Arely Gomez-Maldonado	University of Michigan
Yaneli Gonzalez-Quintino	University of Michigan
Andy Guillen	Grand Rapids Community College
Centia Hakimana	Calvin University
Keira Mei Harrell	University of Toronto
Akira Harris	Georgia State University
Ella Hengeveld	University of Michigan
Henry Hernandez-Madriral	Grand Rapids Community College
James Hollister	Grand Valley State University
Maura Hunt	University of Michigan
Parker Joldersma	Michigan State University
Thomas Jonker	Michigan Technological University
Caleb Kaiser	Grand Valley State University
Gwendolyn Kirkbride	Michigan State University
Ellie Kladder	Grand Valley State University
Claire Kuiper	George Fox University

Dominik Lamberts	University of Northern Colorado
Luis Leon-Avila	University of Michigan
Efren Leon-Calderon	University of Michigan
Ayla Lipscomb	Grand Valley State University
Sabina Lobo	Michigan State University
Rayna Love	North Carolina A&T University
Logan Markham	Michigan State University
Alejandro Martinez Jr.	Otis College of Art & Design
Romy McKellar	Aquinas College
Katie Merlos	Virginia Tech
Sophie Meyer	Michigan Technological University
Paula Mireku	Michigan State University
Geramiah Mitchell	Grand Rapids Community College
Jorge Morales Montes	Aquinas College
Marcos Munoz	Grand Rapids Community College
Anya Nash	Tennessee State University
Caleb Oldenberg	Calvin University
Emily Paz-Corona	Michigan State University
Christian Pena-Paniagua	Grand Valley State University
Dolores Perez	University of Michigan
Layla Perez	Grand Rapids Community College
Kevin Perez-Romero	University of Michigan
Eli Petersen	Northern Michigan University
Merlot Petrella	Michigan State University
Melinda Pham	Grand Valley State University
Taylor Pierce-James	University of Michigan
Andrew Portinga	University of Toronto
Hadley Pyper	Grand Valley State University
Lena Reeves	University of Michigan
Matias Rizkalla	University of Michigan
Detroit Ruiz	The American College of the Mediterranean France



Rachel Sackett	Michigan State University
Anthony Salas-Rodriguez	Western Michigan University
Landon Sandee	Michigan State University
Sadie Scheid	Northern Michigan University
Brooklyn Schottke	Michigan State University
Huirong Shi	University of Michigan
Matilyn Sizemore	Grand Rapids Community College
Vivian Smith	Michigan State University
Thaddeus Stack	Michigan State University
Timothy Stack	Grand Rapids Community College
Eleanor Swierenga	Grand Rapids Community College
Willa Taylor	Michigan State University
Hibret Tsegay	Grand Rapids Community College
Naomi Tesfaye	Michigan State University
Morgane Thibault	Michigan State University
Faith Thompson	Lake Superior State University
Mario Torres	DePaul University
Ximena Torres-Mora	Grand Valley State University
Maxim Upright	Grand Valley State University
Sofie Vaandrager	University of Michigan
Anya VanSweden	Northern Michigan University
Joel Vicente-Solares	Grand Rapids Community College
Naia Wainer	University of Michigan
Iana Walker	Calvin University
Jayde West	School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Willie Williams III	Michigan State University
Josiah Willink	Northern Michigan University
Ashton Wilson	Grand Rapids Community College
Richard Xiao	Princeton University
Ryan Yon	University of Michigan

## **CITY HIGH MIDDLE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION**

Charlie VanderVliet, Ed.S.	Principal
Christie Modzeleski, M.Ed.	Assistant Principal
Meghan Jackson, M.A.	Assistant Principal
Jesse Antuma, M.A., M.S.	IB Coordinator

## **CITY HIGH MIDDLE SCHOOL INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF**

Heather Alexander-Leduc, B.A.	English & Science Teacher
April Anderson, M.A.	World Language Teacher
Dawn Austin-McCumber, M.A.	Technology Teacher
Philip Beckwith, B.A.	World Language Teacher
Michael Boosamra, M.A.	Center for Economicology Teacher
Damon Brown, M.A.	Math Teacher
Maia Byrnes, M.A., M.A.	World Language Teacher
Kara Degenhardt, M.A.	Choir Teacher
Josiah Dominiak, B.A.	English Teacher
Dan Droski, M.A.	7th & 8th Grade PE Teacher
Erin Emperor, B.A.	English Teacher
Kendal Exelby, B.F.A.	Visual Art & Digital Media Teacher
Aaron Fillenworth, M.A.	Math Teacher
Lorrie Graff, Ed.S.	Math Teacher
Cloe Hadley, B.A.	MYP Art Educator
Gerrit Immink, M.A.	Counselor
Bekah Jones, B.A.	Social Studies Teacher
Patricia Mapes, M.A.	English Teacher
Esteban Martinez, M.A.	World Language Teacher
Chad Miller, M.A.	Social Studies Teacher
Erin Mitus, M.A.	Math Teacher
Nicole Muzio, M.A.	Science Teacher

Breann O'Shea, B.A.	Social Studies Teacher
Laura Patten Sanchez, M.A.	World Language Teacher
Kelly Pavlovic, B.A.	English & World Language Teacher
Heather Phillips, B.A.	Center for Economicology Teacher
Danielle Ralston, M.A.	Counselor
Kurt Rizley, M.A.	Science Teacher
Greg Schreur, M.A.	English & History Teacher
Jennifer Snyder, B.S.	Science Teacher
Christy Steketee, M.A.	World Language Teacher
Craig Travis, M.Ed.	Social Studies Teacher
Loc Tu, B.A., B.S.	Science Teacher
Kathleen Vande Gevel, M.A.	English Teacher
John Vanden Heuvel, B.A.	Social Studies Teacher
Mark VanGoor, B.A.	Social Studies Teacher
Anita Vecziedins, M.A.	Math Teacher
Katherine Vermeer, B.A.	Band Teacher
Jessica Vogl-Sawicki, B.S.	Science Teacher
Maxwell Warren, B.S.	Science Teacher
Michael Weller, M.Div.	Math Teacher
Meagan Whittle, M.Ed.	Visual Arts Teacher
Joe Wierda, M.A.	Social Studies Teacher
Kelly Williams, M.Ed.	Health & PE Teacher
Katherine Wolfe, B.A.	Social Studies Teacher
Patricia Wunder, M.M.	Orchestra Director

## **CITY HIGH MIDDLE SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF**

Shane Adrianse, B.S.	Public Safety Officer
Alesia Albin	Head Secretary
Trevor Brace, B.A.	Youth Advocate Specialist
Betty Budzinski	Food & Nutrition Services
Matthew Budzinski	Food & Nutrition Services
Landy Castillo	Second Secretary
Paul Gibson	Custodial Sector Lead
Jean Goree	Food & Nutrition Services Manager
Reka Hoving, B.A.	Media Center Paraprofessional
Anthony Kirvan, M.S.W.	Mental Health Clinician, E3 Therapist
Jennifer Lundgren, B.S.N., R.N.	Nurse
Gina Maskal	Registrar
Jeannette Moore	Food & Nutrition Services
Joslyn Palmer	Security Officer
Denise Parish	Custodian
Sewar Sawaked, B.A.	Attendance Office
Molly Vincent, M.A.	Security Sergeant
Karla Vujinovic, B.S.	Health Aide

## **GRAND RAPIDS LEARNING CENTER ADMINISTRATION & STAFF**

Rodney Brown, M.Ed.	Principal
Wilfred Aponte, B.A.	Teacher
Ricky Belton, B.A.	Transition Specialist
Linda Buford, B.A.	Teacher
Maria Cerda	Head Secretary/Registrar
Ashley Covington, M.A.	Counselor
Terence Gaule, M.Ed.	Teacher
Kim Price, M.A.	Special Education Teacher

## **SOUTHEAST CAREER PATHWAYS ADMINISTRATION & STAFF**

Troy Wilbon, M.Ed.	Principal
Wilford Aponte, B.A.	Spanish Teacher
Nicole Beukema, M.Ed.	History Teacher
Lisa Cook, M.S.	Head Counselor
Jeff Czyzyk, M.Ed.	Math Teacher
Bonnie Engebretsen, M.Ed.	English Teacher
Nicole Gonzales	Head Secretary
Donna McIntosh, B.A.	Instructional Parapro
Kim Price, M.A.	Resource Teacher
Kristen Strojny, B.A.	English Teacher

# **GRAND RAPIDS BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Ms. Kimberley Williams, President  
Ms. Kymberlie Davis, Vice President  
Ms. Katherine Downes Lewis, Secretary  
Ms. Jen Schottke, Treasurer  
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Ms. Sara Melton  
Mr. José Rodriguez  
Mr. Raynard Ross  
Ms. Aarie Wade

## **SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

Dr. Leadriane Roby

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Mr. Melvin Atkins II  
Executive Director of Community and Student Affairs

Dr. Mayda Bahamonde-Gunnell  
Executive Director of PK-12 Instructional Leadership  
(Southwest Quadrant)

Mr. Matthew Beresford  
Executive Director of PK-12 Instructional Leadership  
(Northeast Quadrant)

Ms. Bridget Cheney  
Executive Director of PK-12 Instructional Leadership  
(Southeast Quadrant)

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS (CONT.)**

Mr. Erich Harmsen  
Executive Director of Professional Learning and Curriculum

Mr. Leon Hendrix  
Executive Director of Communications and External Affairs

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Executive Director of Special Education, Section 504 and Early  
Intervention Services

Mr. Kurt Johnson  
Executive Director of Athletics and Dual Enrollment

Mr. Larry Johnson  
Chief of Staff and Executive Director of Public Safety and  
School Security

Ms. Rhonda Kribs  
Chief Financial Officer

Dr. Brandy Lovelady Mitchell  
Deputy Superintendent of Preschool-12 Learning & Leadership

Ms. Anya Lusk  
Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and General Counsel

Dr. Karl Nelson  
Executive Director of PK-12 Instructional Leadership  
(Northwest Quadrant)

Mr. Alex Smart  
Executive Director of Facilities and Operations





# PUBLIC SAFETY

A special thank you to Mr. Larry Johnson, Chief of Staff and Executive Director of Public Safety and School Security, and the Public Safety Officers, for their assistance in making this occasion possible.

## DISCLAIMER REGARDING STUDENT MESSAGES AT GRADUATION

The Board of Education, administration, or any school employee has not directed nor endorsed any prayer or religious message of any kind. The student graduation speech/message is given by a student volunteer without review or influence by the Board of Education, by the administration, or by any school employee or school official. The Board of Education, the administration, or school employees exercised no control over who drafted the message or content of the message, or the selection of the student volunteer. The decision as to the content of the speech/message rests solely with the selected student speaker.

## COMMENCEMENT PHOTOGRAPHS

Your graduate is being professionally photographed by GradPix.

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[GRPSGrad.com](http://GRPSGrad.com)

