

Talking Points on GRPS Success Story

- **GRPS has a proven track record of academic success and sound fiscal management** as one of the largest school districts and one of the largest employers in the State of Michigan
 - GRPS is the third largest school district in Michigan with approximately 19,000 students with more than 70 countries represented and 50 languages spoken. 85% of the students are eligible for free or reduce lunch, 25% eligible for special education services, and 20% eligible for English Language Learner services.
 - GRPS is the second largest employer in the City of Grand Rapids and the 10th largest employer in all of West Michigan with approximately 3,500 employees
 - GRPS manages one of the largest operating budgets of any public entity in West Michigan with an annual operating budget of \$210 million

- **GRPS has significantly improved academic achievement in just four short years**
 - GRPS has nearly doubled the number of schools meeting federal Adequate Yearly Progress up from 26 to 45 schools meeting AYP today – just 10 schools shy of every school in the district meeting AYP
 - Three of the district’s four comprehensive high schools met AYP for the first time in 7 years
 - Five GRPS schools dropped off the state “Watch List” and earned statewide recognition for the education reforms and turnaround efforts
 - Hispanic/Latino students experiencing significant academic gains with 20-25% improvements
 - GRPS has tripled the number of schools earning a “B” grade or better on the state’s Education Yes Report.

- **GRPS has earned state and national recognition for the right sizing efforts and educational reforms**
 - In November 2008, a Detroit News editorial touted GRPS as a “model” urban schools district due to the right-sizing efforts and education reforms.
 - GRPS was selected as one of only 14 Project Re-Imagine “Demonstration Sites” for bold, innovative educational reforms that could potentially mean millions in federal stimulus funds
 - In January 2010, GRPS was selected as one of only 5 pilot sites for a multi-million dollar investment by the Kellogg Foundation and the Woodrow Wilson Foundation for alternative teacher certification (a.k.a. The Kellogg Foundation’s Woodrow Wilson Michigan Teacher Fellowship Program)

- In October 2006, Dr. Taylor was one of only 50 school superintendents nationwide selected to participate in the “National Superintendent’s Roundtable”

■ **GRPS has significantly increased the level of public-private investment and support for the district**

- More than \$4 million in private donations; with millions *pending* based on existing grant applications and other collaborative opportunities
- New Five Year Strategic Direction aimed at aligning internal and external stakeholders and financial support around common goals and strategies.
- Major support from leading foundations including the DeVos Family Foundation, Steelcase Foundation, Frey Foundation, Kellogg Foundation, Wege Foundation, Bob & Cheri Vanderweide Foundation, the Grand Rapids Student Advancement Foundation, Grand Rapids Community Foundation, United Way, etc.
- Launched five new schools under the “Centers of Innovation” backed with financial, in-kind, and professional support from the region’s leading job providers and universities including Steelcase Inc., Amway Global, Spectrum Health, Rockford Construction, Triangle Associates, Christman Co., Progressive AE, Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids Community College, Davenport University, Michigan State University’s College of Human Medicine, Ferris State University, Michigan Tech University, Van Andel Institute, and more.

■ **GRPS has made significant improvements to the district’s overall infrastructure and technology to support student achievement**

- Completion of work on the 2004 School Construction Bond with 11 new state-of-the-art elementary and middle schools including two projects that became possible due to sound fiscal management of the 2004 School Construction Bond (reconstruction of Cesar E. Chavez Elementary and renovation of Houseman Field)
- Development and approval of Phase II Building Improvement Plan charting public-private opportunities to renovate the district’s high schools among other infrastructure/technology improvements
- \$2 million in new/renovated state-of-the-art libraries and media centers thanks to the Grand Rapids Student Advancement Foundation