

2021

2021 School Performance Report: Innovation in Learning

Grand Valley State University

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2021

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REPORT

INNOVATION IN LEARNING



GRAND VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY
CHARTER SCHOOLS
OFFICE

Grand Valley State University
Charter Schools Office

School Performance Report

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INNOVATION

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LEARNING

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Some of the photos shown in this report were taken prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Philomena Mantella, Ph.D.
President
Grand Valley State University



Robert T. Kimball, Ed.D.
Associate Vice President and
Executive Associate to the President



Dear friends:

When the pandemic hit, the Grand Valley community responded. Nowhere was this more evident than in the public schools that we charter. Educators, parents and communities acted boldly – and continue to do so today – to create opportunities focused on improving student outcomes. We challenged the givens. Prior practices were re-examined, questions were raised, and new answers were discovered. Together, more was achieved than anyone thought was possible.

This year's School Performance Report tells the story of our schools' immediate responses to the pandemic. The report showcases innovations, broad and singular, that made teaching more equitably support all our learners. It captures what the conditions were like for staff and students and how school leaders successfully navigated them. It tells the story of our classroom heroes, what they were able to achieve, and how they were able to do it.

Most importantly, this report shows that our schools were able to keep public education moving forward through months of uncertainty, even as many said it couldn't be done.

Throughout the past year, the public schools we charter exemplified and advanced Grand Valley's mission to transform lives through incredible learning environments. Their work is an extension of our drive to rapidly uncover and support meaningful, scalable education innovations that are accessible to all learners. Now, more than ever, we have the opportunity to further equity and innovation in public education.

With best wishes,

Philomena V. Mantella, Ph.D.
President
Grand Valley State University

Robert T. Kimball, Ed.D.
Associate Vice President and
Executive Associate to the President
Grand Valley State University

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES – GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

MISSION

Grand Valley State University authorizes charter schools to join together professors, practitioners, policymakers, and communities (3P+C) in new ways to solve problems in education.

VISION

We strive to be the model university authorizer by accessing the university's collective resources and diversity to contribute to the enrichment and constant improvement of all Grand Valley State University-authorized schools.

VALUES

At Grand Valley State University's Charter Schools Office, the primary focus is understanding complex problems in the GVSU network of schools, facilitating the design of solutions, and advancing remarkable change in teaching and learning. Our mission, vision, and strategic outcomes reflect the seven core values. These core values provide a foundation and framework for all of the Charter Schools Office's decision-making processes:

- Excellence
- Integrity
- Inquiry
- Inclusiveness
- Community
- Sustainability
- Innovation

Mikya S. Aaron

Taylor, MI
2021-2028

Victor M. Cardenas

Novi, MI
2015-2022

Randall S. Damstra

Ada, MI
2017-2024

Elizabeth C. Emmitt

Byron Center, MI
2019-2026

Susan M. Jandernoa

(vice chair)
West Olive, MI
2019-2026

Noreen K. Myers

East Grand Rapids, MI
2021-2028

Megan S. Rydecki

(chair)
Grand Rapids, MI
2015-2022

Kate Pew Wolters

Grand Rapids, MI
2017-2024

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READY FOR WHATEVER IS NEXT

At Grand Valley, next is opportunity and innovation. Next is global, connecting and uniting us. It's local, shaping the spaces in which we work and live. It's a commitment to progress. Next is where minds are free to imagine what could be. At GVSU, next is now. And whatever's next, we will help our students, our communities, and our partners get there.

23,350

STUDENTS

300+

AREAS OF
STUDY

4

CAMPUSES

gvsu.edu/next





SCHOOL COMMUNITY



SCHOOL COMMUNITY

At GVSU, we ensure that each school we authorize is a good fit for the community, provides new opportunities for families to benefit from innovative teaching and learning that can't be found nearby, or improves upon current options in a specific area.

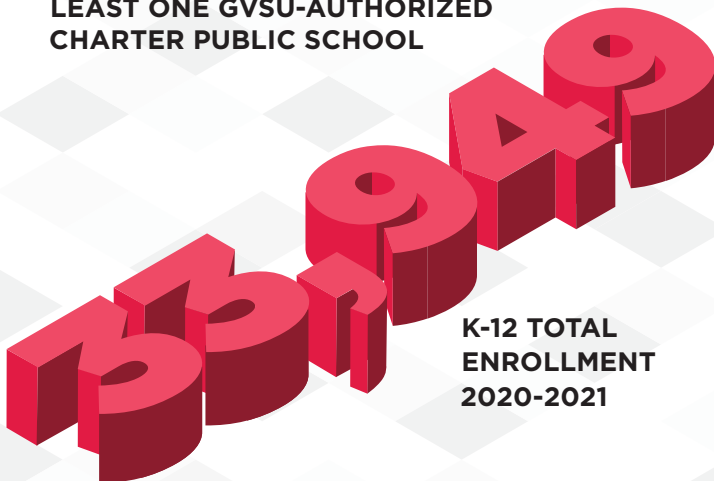
In this section, you will learn more about students and communities that GVSU charter public schools are serving across the state.



TOTAL NUMBER OF CHARTER SCHOOLS AUTHORIZED IN 2020-2021



MICHIGAN COMMUNITIES WITH AT LEAST ONE GVSU-AUTHORIZED CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL



K-12 TOTAL ENROLLMENT 2020-2021

OUR SCHOOLS

As COVID-19 continued to impact everyday aspects of education to varying degrees, GVSU's charter public schools remained havens that families could depend on to keep kids moving forward. Whether instruction was conducted safely in person or through digital platforms, nearly 34,000 students turned to one of GVSU's 78 charter public schools to guide them through the 2020-2021 school year.

More than half of our students (55 percent) enrolled in a school located within Wayne County, which includes Detroit and its metropolitan communities. Nearly one quarter of our students (23 percent) enrolled in schools found in West Michigan counties, including the cities of Grand Rapids, Muskegon, and Holland. Smaller percentages of students enrolled in schools located in 13 other counties, including Traverse City, and the cities of Kalamazoo, Lansing, Flint, Saginaw, and Big Rapids.

In total, you could find at least one GVSU charter public school in 31 distinct communities across Michigan's lower peninsula.



GRAND VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOLS

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS IN EACH COUNTY

2020-2021 ENROLLMENT BY COUNTY

WAYNE
18,854

KENT
5,113

OTTAWA
1,810

MACOMB
1,530

CALHOUN
871

MUSKEGON
846

OAKLAND
794

JACKSON
721

INGHAM
656

GENESEE
615

WASHTENAW
543

KALAMAZOO
493

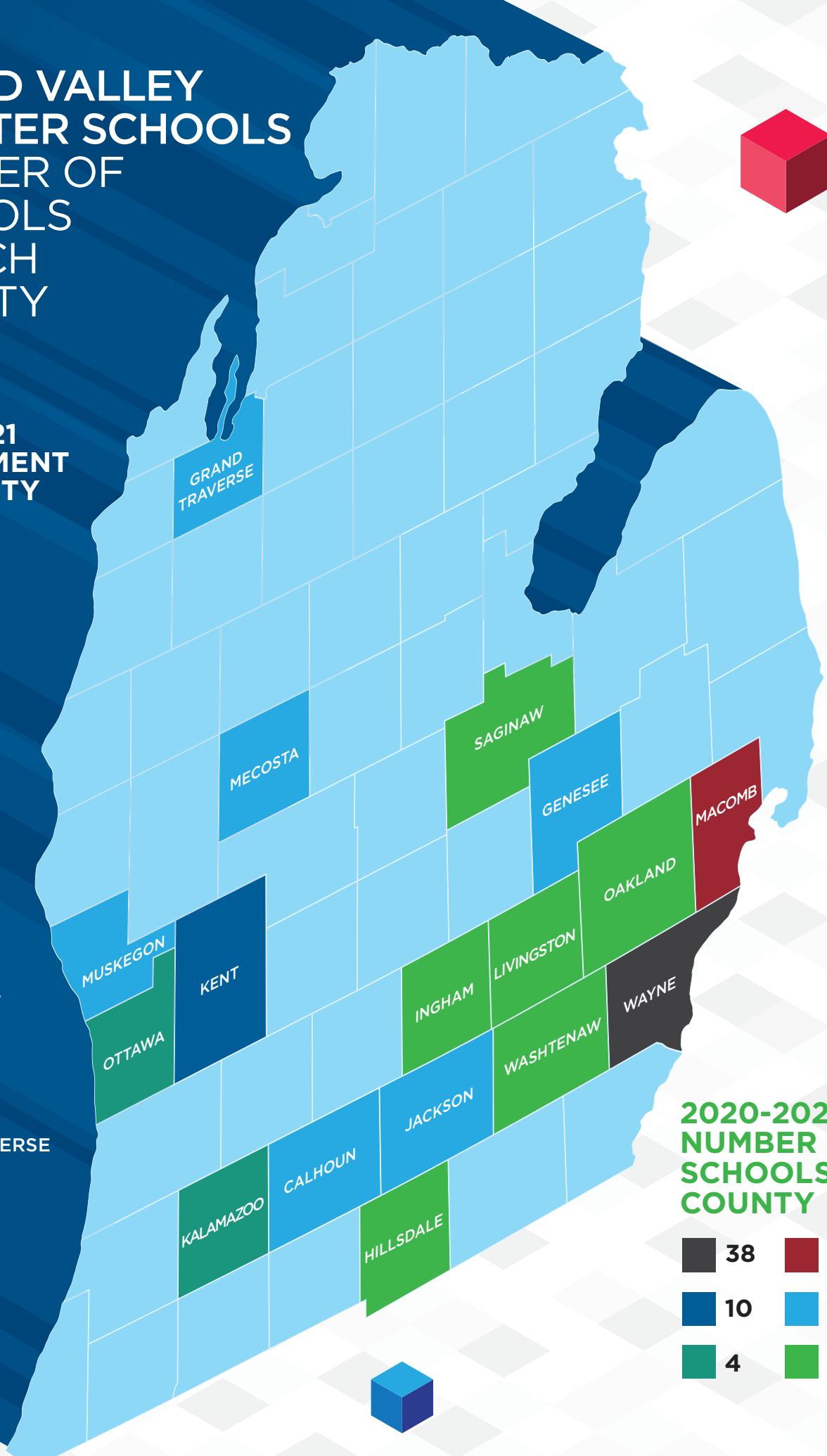
MECOSTA
414

GRAND TRAVERSE
281

LIVINGSTON
241

SAGINAW
103

HILLSDALE
64



2020-2021 NUMBER OF SCHOOLS BY COUNTY

38	3
10	2
4	1

SCHOOLS BY COUNTY



CALHOUN

Arbor Academy
Endeavor Charter Academy

GENESEE

Eagle's Nest Academy
Flint Cultural Center Academy

GRAND TRAVERSE

Old Mission Peninsula School
The Greenspire School

HILLSDALE

Hillsdale Preparatory School

INGHAM

Windemere Park Charter Academy

JACKSON

Francis Street Primary School
Paragon Charter Academy

KALAMAZOO

Augusta Academy
Forest Academy
Kalamazoo Covenant Academy
Oakland Academy

KENT

Byron Center Charter School
Chandler Woods Charter Academy
Covenant House Academy Grand Rapids
Excel Charter Academy
Grand River Preparatory High School
Knapp Charter Academy
PrepNet Virtual Academy
Vanguard Charter Academy
Walker Charter Academy
William C. Abney Academy

LIVINGSTON

Light of the World Academy

MACOMB

Michigan Mathematics and Science Academy Dequindre
Michigan Mathematics and Science Academy Lorraine
Reach Charter Academy

MECOSTA

Crossroads Charter Academy (7-12)
Crossroads Charter Academy (K-6)

MUSKEGON

Muskegon Covenant Academy
Timberland Charter Academy

OAKLAND

Grand River Academy

OTTAWA

Black River Public School Elementary
Black River Public School Middle/High
Vanderbilt Charter Academy
West MI Academy of Arts and Academics

SAGINAW

Saginaw Covenant Academy

WASHTENAW

East Arbor Charter Academy

WAYNE

Achieve Charter Academy
Canton Preparatory High School
Cornerstone Health and Technology School
Cornerstone Jefferson-Douglass Academy
Covenant House Academy Detroit - Central
Covenant House Academy Detroit - East
Covenant House Academy Detroit - Southwest
Detroit Achievement Academy
Detroit Enterprise Academy
Detroit Merit Charter Academy
Detroit Premier Academy
Detroit Prep
Fostering Leadership Academy
Global Heights Academy
Hanley International Academy
Legacy Charter Academy
Lincoln-King Academy: Adams-Young Campus
Lincoln-King Academy
Martin Luther King Jr. Education Center Academy
Metro Charter Academy
New Paradigm College Prep
New Paradigm Glazer Academy
New Paradigm Loving Academy
South Canton Scholars Charter Academy
Taylor Preparatory High School
University Preparatory Elementary - Ellen Thompson Campus
University Preparatory Elementary - Mark Murray Campus
University Preparatory High School
University Preparatory Middle School
University Preparatory Art & Design Elementary
University Preparatory Art & Design Middle/High
University Prep Science and Math High School
University Prep Science and Math Middle School
University Prep Science and Math Elementary - Miller Campus
Warrendale Charter Academy
Washington-Parks Academy
Westfield Charter Academy
Westfield Preparatory High School

OUR STUDENTS BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

Students have the unique opportunity to attend a GVSU-authorized charter public school from the time they start kindergarten to the moment they celebrate their high school graduation. This is because Grand Valley’s portfolio of public charter schools serves all grades through a variety of options. As students grow and advance through their K-12 pathway, Grand Valley has the ability to assist them every step of the way.

Grand Valley also proudly invites all students into its charter schools. Like all public schools, charter schools welcome every learner and work diligently to accommodate every child. Our charter public schools are for all families seeking a choice for their child’s education.

The following graphics and tables offer a deeper look at the students in our schools, including the major services each school’s population receives and how they compare to state averages.

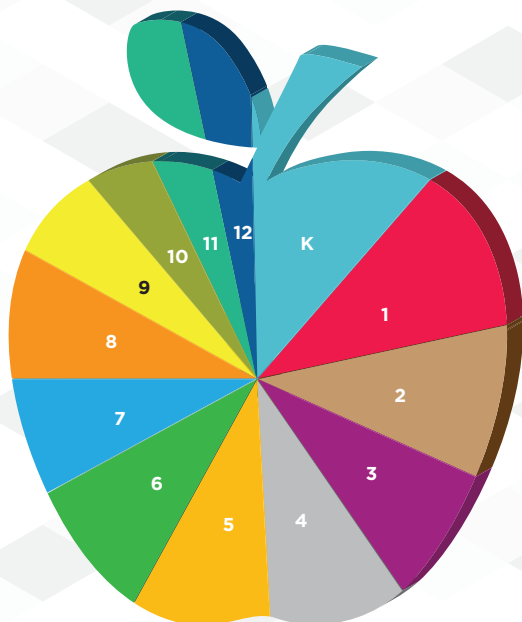


DEMOGRAPHIC ENROLLMENT



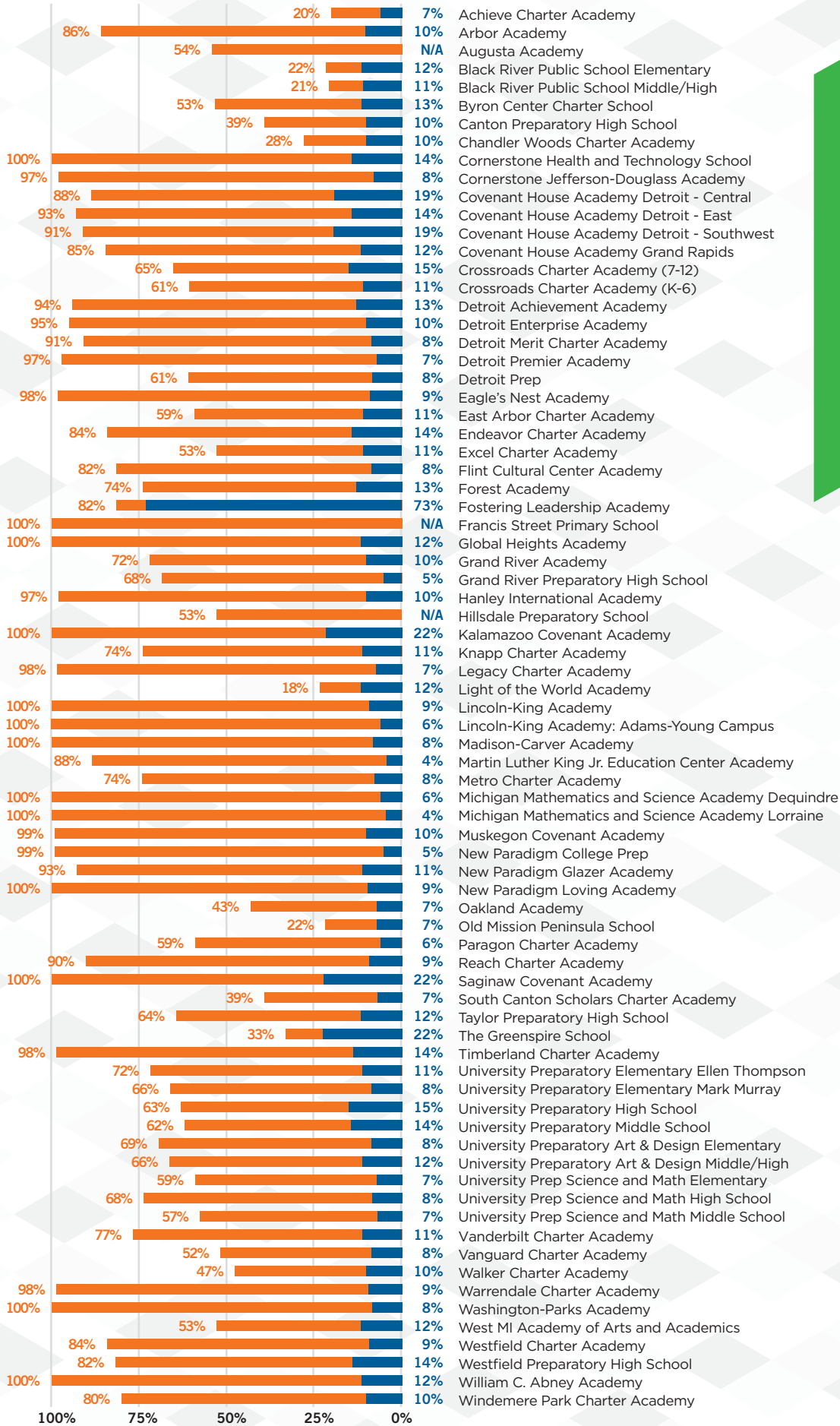
AA	African American	57.7%
WH	White	24.9%
AI	American Indian	0.3%
AS	Asian	3.4%
HS	Hispanic	7.9%
HW	Hawaiian	0.7%
TM	Two or More Races	5.1%

ENROLLMENT BY GRADE



K	Kindergarten	10.1%
1	1st Grade	9.8%
2	2nd Grade	9.7%
3	3rd Grade	9.2%
4	4th Grade	9.3%
5	5th Grade	8.9%
6	6th Grade	8.9%
7	7th Grade	8.4%
8	8th Grade	8.1%
9	9th Grade	5.8%
10	10th Grade	4.8%
11	11th Grade	3.6%
12	12th Grade	3.3%

FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH AND SPECIAL EDUCATION OVERVIEW



Students receiving free or reduced lunch (FRL) (percentage of enrollment)

Students receiving special education services (percentage of enrollment)

74%
GVSU-authorized Charter Schools FRL Average

51%
Michigan FRL Average

11%
GVSU-authorized Charter Schools Special Education Average

14%
Michigan Special Education Average

N/A=Data suppressed by Michigan Department of Education in compliance with FERPA regulations.

CLASS OF 2020

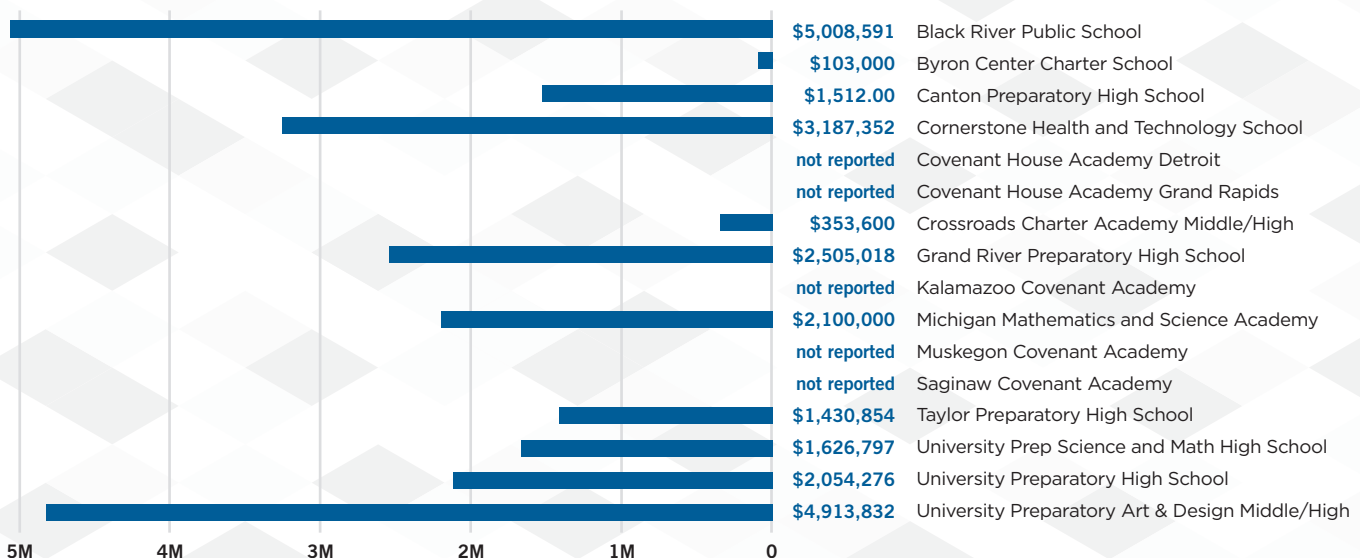
In a year significantly altered by a pandemic, high school students in GVSU-authorized charter schools remained resilient in their pursuit of graduating and moving into the next phase of their educational journey.

The class of 2020 continued to actively seek and earn financial support to enroll in postsecondary learning, even as students transitioned to learning environments outside of their classrooms. By the end of the 2019-2020 school year, graduating students had earned more than \$23 million in combined scholarship money to pursue their higher education dreams. This number may even be lower than the actual amount, as a few schools did not report the amount of scholarship money their students were awarded.



TOTAL REPORTED AMOUNT OF SCHOLARSHIP MONEY EARNED BY CLASS OF 2020

SCHOOL-REPORT SCHOLARSHIP TOTALS FOR CLASS OF 2020





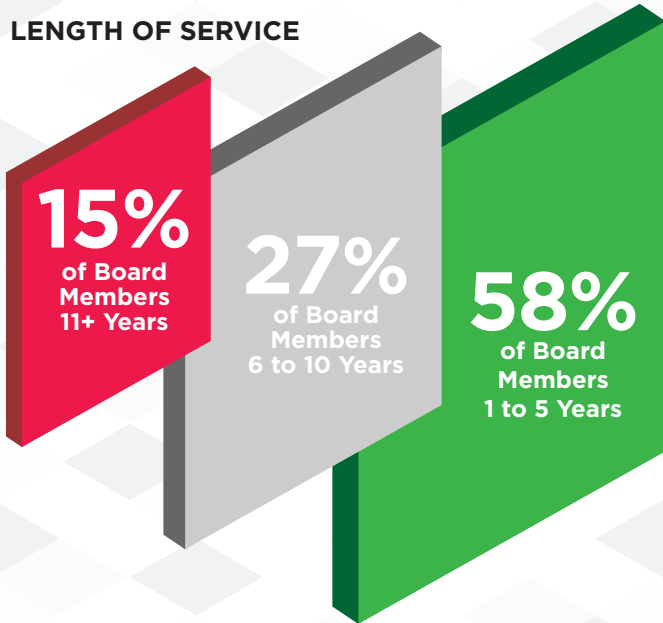
TOTAL SCHOOL BOARDS



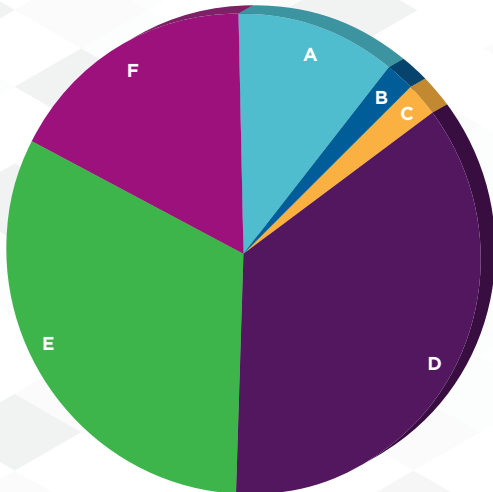
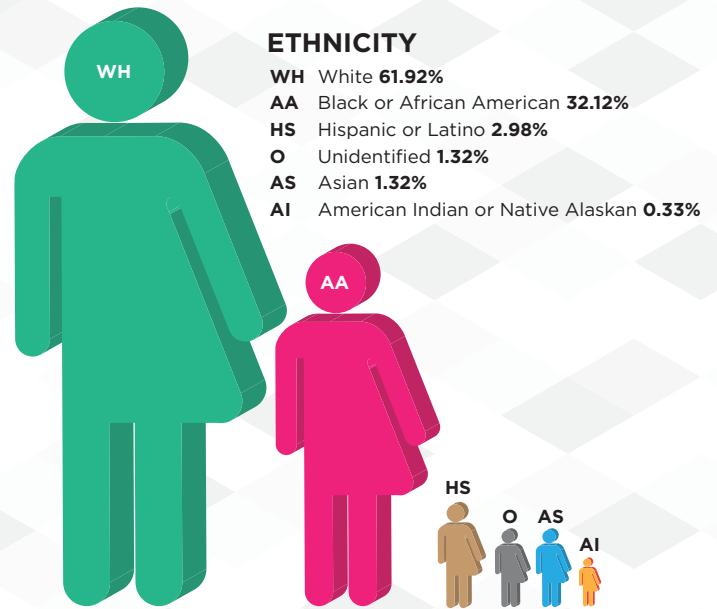
TOTAL BOARD MEMBERS SERVING GVSU-AUTHORIZED CHARTER SCHOOLS

OUR SCHOOL BOARDS AND STAFF

LENGTH OF SERVICE



ETHNICITY



BOARD MEMBER EDUCATION BACKGROUND

- A High school diploma 11%
- B Associate 2%
- C Trade 2%
- D Bachelor 36%
- E Master 32%
- F Doctorate 17%



TOTAL TEACHERS AND STAFF MEMBERS IN GVSU-AUTHORIZED CHARTER SCHOOLS

DEDICATION TO EDUCATION: BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS

Successful school stewardship starts with community members who volunteer their time to serve on school boards. These publicly appointed leaders are dedicated to improving student outcomes and strengthening their community for future generations.

We sat down with a handful of board members who govern GVSU-authorized charter schools to learn a little about their roles and what drives them to help students.



"It's exciting to see the potential we have to help kids succeed."

DAN WEST FOSTERING LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Dan West says that some of the best advice he received was in the early days of his career when he was a small-town reporter. A colleague told him that to truly understand a community he had to wholeheartedly be an active part of it. That advice stuck with him to this day and motivates him as he completes his 15th year as the president and CEO of the Livonia Chamber of Commerce. "My job is to connect people to solutions in their community," he said.

Dan is also using that passion toward a new community leadership experience: serving on the board of a charter public school. Dan is the board treasurer for Fostering Leadership Academy, which opened in 2020. The academy is designed to provide additional support to middle-school students through a trauma-informed education model. To Dan, the school represents another possible solution for families navigating difficult personal situations. "I love the concept of the school," he said. "It's a great alternative for families and kids getting through a tough time, and it provides a unique experience that really helps them learn."

After years of planning, he is inspired how the vision for the school has come to fruition and the big steps the school has made in its first year while dealing with the pandemic. "It's exciting to see the potential we have to help kids succeed," he said. "I think Fostering Leadership Academy will be something our community appreciates and respects."

"I believe in the mission."



ASALINE SCOTT MUSKEGON COVENANT ACADEMY

As Asaline Scott progressed through her career, the GVSU alumna says she was passionate about roles where she could connect with the people in her community. That same passion is what drew her to the Muskegon Covenant Academy board. When she first learned about the vision behind the school, she was compelled to serve. "I believe in the mission," she said. "There were a lot of young people in our community falling through the cracks because there was no program that also made them feel loved." Today, she is completing her seventh year on the board, serving as its president.

Asaline said she is inspired by the way the community has embraced the school. She mentioned that one of her proudest moments was seeing the creation of Covenant Hall, an on-campus residence center, and how happy people are because of the support it provides. "We were able to go a step further and ensure everybody at the school felt safe and had a home they could turn to if they needed it."

She also is inspired by the school leadership and educators at the school who continue to find ways to give students the spark they need to believe in themselves, even amidst a pandemic. She noted that as long as the staff and board remained focused on the heart of the school, they would overcome whatever was ahead. "Things are going to be different, and learning is going to evolve," she said. "That's what it's all about, and we're going to succeed."



“...our existence has improved education across the whole ISD.”

LAURA VALLETTE CROSSROADS CHARTER ACADEMY

Laura Vallette has had a special relationship with Crossroads Charter Academy for almost 25 years. Shortly after the school opened, Laura enrolled into the eighth grade. She continued as a student until she graduated, meeting her future husband along the way. Now, she helps guide the school as the school board vice president.

She noted that Crossroads Charter Academy is one of the few – if not only – charter public schools available to Big Rapids families, and having that additional option is crucial. “When there is choice, value tends to increase as a whole,” she said. “I believe our existence has improved education across the whole ISD, and all Big Rapids-area students are getting a better education because of it.” Laura says she enjoys informing others about charter public schools, and loves that being part of a charter school community ties her to a community much larger than just Big Rapids and Crossroads.

This year, the school’s commitment to families in the community has been even more evident to Laura due to the pandemic. “I have so much appreciation and admiration for the school staff,” she said. “The teachers are basically working two full-time jobs so that our virtual instruction blends seamlessly with what is going on in the classroom.” She says that work will pay off in the long run for the school, as the staff and leadership have now added extra tools to their toolbelts. “We have more resources and will be even better equipped to use technology well to keep doing what’s best for students and their families.”

“...I want to make sure the kids are staying safe.”



ERICKA BRUNSON-GILLESPIE EAST ARBOR CHARTER ACADEMY

Ericka Brunson-Gillespie is a nurse practitioner for neurological surgery working in the University of Michigan health system, and the Michigan state representative for the American Association of Nurse Practitioners. Ericka said she and her colleagues join nonmedical boards to lead through their knowledge of health and science, and she knew a school board was where she wanted to be. “I was always involved in the schools with my children, and I wanted to figure out where I could best help out with what I know,” she said.

Ericka said she is still amazed that of all the years she picked to join a school board, she picked 2020. Ericka joined the East Arbor Charter Academy board in November 2020 after completing the Detroit Chamber of Commerce’s Charter Leadership Board Program virtually.

“I was one of the first people in the program, and was doing orientation right when COVID hit,” she said. Now, she is using her professional expertise to help the school navigate the pandemic. “I try to ask thought-provoking questions about infectious diseases, especially in Washtenaw County. It’s important to discuss these realities because I want to make sure the kids are staying safe.”

Ericka said joining the school board was also important because of the inspiration she can offer to the students just by being present. She has already assisted the school staff with checking temperatures as students arrive to the school and is eager to do more in person. “There is a need for young children to see people in various career positions,” she said. “I always say, ‘If you can see me, you can be me.’”



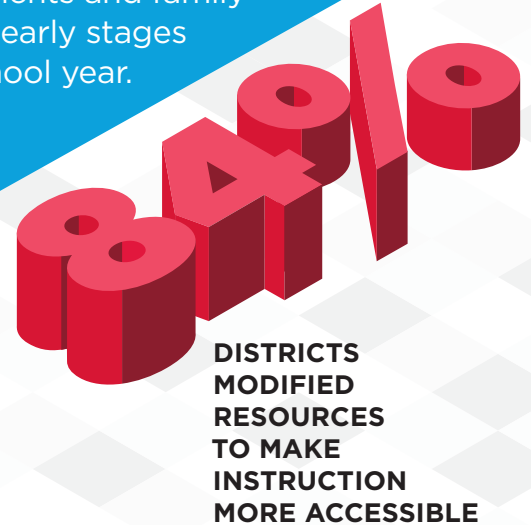
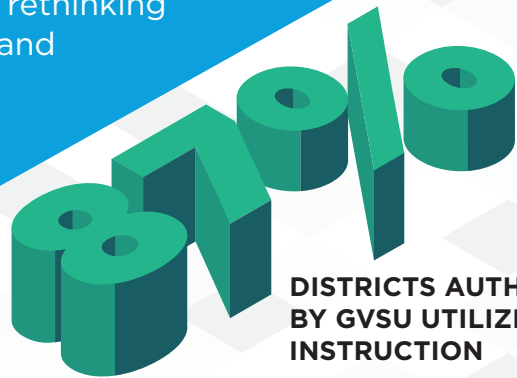
LEADING THROUGH INNOVATION



LEADING THROUGH INNOVATION

In March 2020, K-12 schools in Michigan and across the country began shutting their doors in response to the spread of COVID-19. While communities managed the new hurdles created by the pandemic, GVSU's charter public schools quickly modified practices to match new state-issued requirements and family expectations. Many of the practices that started in the early stages of the pandemic continued through the 2020-2021 school year.

In this section, you'll learn a little about how our schools are uniquely equipped to navigate unknown circumstances. You'll also read about how educators in our buildings are rethinking common practices and reshaping what is possible to help kids succeed.



ADJUSTING THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN A MOMENT'S NOTICE

Learning during the COVID pandemic has widely occurred through three methods: in-person, hybrid, or virtually. Much of the instruction initially offered was virtual, with students and teachers connecting through devices from their homes. As county and state-level health guidelines changed, schools had more opportunities to transition to hybrid learning methods, like having students at the school a couple days each week and learning from home the rest of the time.

As schools dealt with initial building closures, Grand Valley's charter public schools quickly took charge. School leadership and teachers worked together to create Continuity of Learning Plans (CLPs) that detailed how schools would support students through the pandemic for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year.

An independent study of the CLPs found that, within weeks of the first closures, 87 percent of the K-12 districts authorized by Grand Valley immediately moved to a hybrid instruction mode. As they made the shift, the districts expanded the possibilities of school operations for teaching and learning to continue. School support staff focused their work on the mental and physical health of the students. Schools added new communication channels to ensure families were receiving vital updates. Nearly 90 percent of district leaders dedicated budget funds to infrastructure that improved Wi-Fi access or personal hotspots.

These rapid adjustments gave families a sense of stability they could depend upon in times of hardship. Being able to change directions and still support kids is a catalyst for innovation in education. Grand Valley's charter public schools have shown what schools are capable of accomplishing when they are designed for adaptation.

LIFTING THE COMMUNITY

In the early moments of the pandemic — and continuing still today — Grand Valley charter public schools across the state rapidly and significantly transformed their operations to support others first. Their extraordinary efforts exemplified how a school's impact on its community stretches well beyond the building walls.

Crossroads Charter Academy in Big Rapids, for example, was one of 58 schools that became food distribution hubs that helped feed thousands of families each week, no matter if they had a child enrolled in the school or not. Parents also relied on dozens of schools for the distribution of face coverings and other critical supplies.

Two schools in particular received national attention for their extraordinary efforts in the community: New Paradigm Loving Academy and Detroit Achievement Academy. In the spring of 2020, NBC News featured New Paradigm Loving Academy as part of a story on educators in Detroit going house to house to ensure students who were missing from virtual class were safe. At the beginning of 2021, Detroit Achievement Academy was highlighted by the Today Show for creatively finding ways to keep students, families, and staff mentally healthy.

Actions like these call attention to the capacity charter public schools have to adapt and lift up those around them in times of significant need. By also fearlessly tackling the nonacademic challenges head on, Grand Valley's charter schools found ways to relieve additional stress outside of the classroom and keep families moving forward.

Detroit Achievement Academy staff



New Paradigm Loving Academy principal Jacqueline Dungey (top right) on Meet the Press



SCHOOLS DIRECTLY DISTRIBUTED FOOD TO COMMUNITY MEMBERS



REDESIGNING INSTRUCTION

Within Grand Valley’s charter public schools, educators were encouraged to use creative methods to deliver content when outside of a normal classroom setting. The same CLP study examined how teachers would engage with students during the pandemic, and nearly 80 percent of districts reported they would use a blend of physical materials, live instruction, and prerecorded videos.

Schools embraced this opportunity to tackle their instructional goals creatively. At West Michigan Academy of Arts and Academics, for example, staff members created an Amazing Art Adventure to keep students engaged in the school’s art-centric curriculum from afar. Each week, students would complete new activities related to visual arts, dance, music, and drama. Students who completed each week’s goals would receive a decorative badge for their bookbag. Students from other schools were also invited to participate in case they were missing art opportunities from their own school.

Many schools that continued to offer face-to-face instruction turned the physical environment into a new learning experience. Teachers at Light of the World Academy decorated the school with road signs and driving lanes that students might see when riding in a car. These additional features, which promoted “one way driving” and stop signs, allowed the school to ensure social distancing among kids while simultaneously teaching them about traffic laws.

Allowing teachers to tap into more resources for delivering instruction has given educators a glimpse at what is possible in the future. By observing how students are engaging with specific materials, we can find new avenues to unlock their academic potential.

ENHANCING PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE

While schools continued to find new solutions for students during the pandemic, the need for additional pathways for college access became much more evident. As students craved more options to enroll in college earlier, school leadership teams successfully responded to what high school students and parents needed during the 2020-2021 school year.

One instance came in the development of PrepNet Virtual Academy, an option created for families who wanted a socially distant pathway for their children. This allowed students to remain enrolled in the PrepNet network while receiving instruction that met their health and safety needs.

More high schools also created early college programs so students could earn college credits sooner at no cost. At schools like Canton Preparatory High School and Grand River Preparatory High School, students can select a five-year education plan where they complete high school in three years and go on to earn up to 60 college credits for an associate degree while still receiving support from school counselors, advisors, and an academic coach.

The pandemic brought increased importance for equity and access in education, especially as every student strives for college success. By acting boldly, Grand Valley’s charter public schools created solutions to meet those needs and open new doors for future students.



Michigan
Mathematics and
Science Academy
student

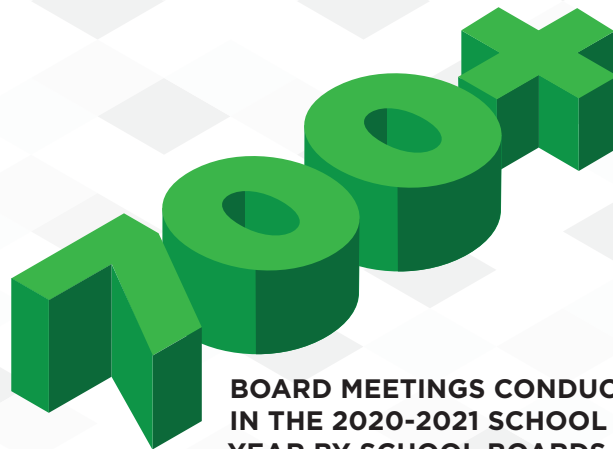
MODIFYING SCHOOL BOARD PRACTICES

Throughout the pandemic, school boards were required to change their own procedures alongside the adjustments students and teachers were making. Board members governing Grand Valley's charter public schools quickly accepted their altered and expanded duties to ensure teaching and learning continued as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Much of the additional governance came through the introduction of the Extended COVID Learning Plan (ECLP), an overview that was required to be submitted to the state each month. The ECLP detailed items like the school's learning environment, health and safety measures, and temporary assessment. Additionally, since the ECLP submission was required each month, all school boards were also required to meet each month.

With schools figuring out what could or could not work, the localized relationships charter school leaders have with their stakeholders gave them insight to know which actions would lead to meaningful results for the most kids. That capacity was crucial for school board members, as it helped make them more effective leaders on the path to returning to the classroom.

By March 2021, all but one of Grand Valley's charter public schools had plans to offer an in-person learning option to families before the end of the school year.



**BOARD MEETINGS CONDUCTED
IN THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL
YEAR BY SCHOOL BOARDS
GOVERNING GVSU-AUTHORIZED
CHARTER SCHOOLS**



CAPTURING THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

With COVID impacting the routine state assessment schedule, it was imperative for schools to figure out if and how student learning was shifting. Since no state assessments were administered at the end of the 2019-2020 school year, GVSU’s charter schools utilized digitally friendly NWEA MAP assessments to get a snapshot of where students were at when they returned to class for the 2020-2021 school year.

Basis Policy Research, an independent research organization, studied the NWEA MAP results from the fall and compared them to student achievement results in math and reading from previous years. Going into the 2020-2021 school year, achievement scores as a whole had remained relatively stable for students in grades 3-8, with the occasional slight increase or decrease.

Fall 2020 results highlighted where COVID was academically impacting kids. Reading achievement scores stayed relatively stable and even improved in a few grades. Achievement in math, however, was down across all grades, with the biggest decreases occurring for kids in grades 3-5.

By investing in assessments that captured real-time data, Grand Valley charter schools reconfigured their student support plans to prioritize student access to high-quality, meaningful intervention. These data-driven actions addressed the students and subject areas that were hit hardest by COVID, and they helped schools continue mitigating learning loss.

HOW DID STUDENTS PERFORM IN FALL 2020 RELATIVE TO A TYPICAL SCHOOL YEAR?

Figure 1: Math Achievement Percentiles by Grade Level in Fall 18-2020

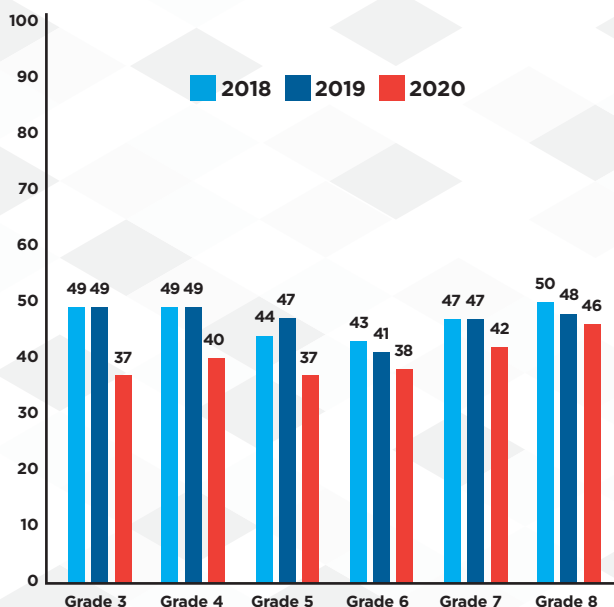
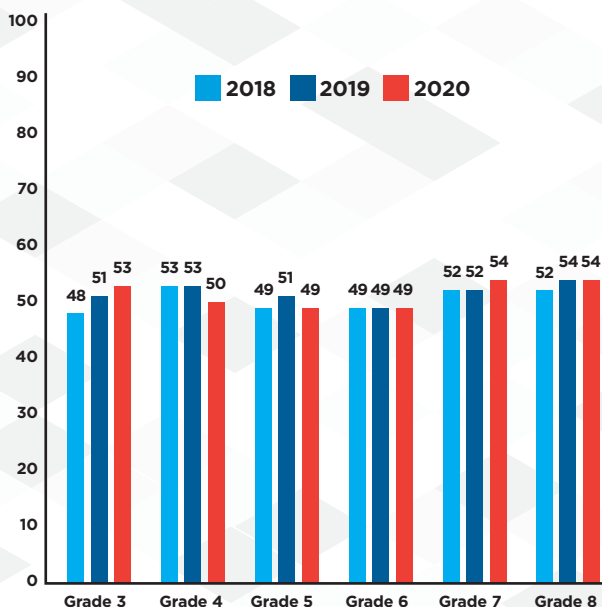
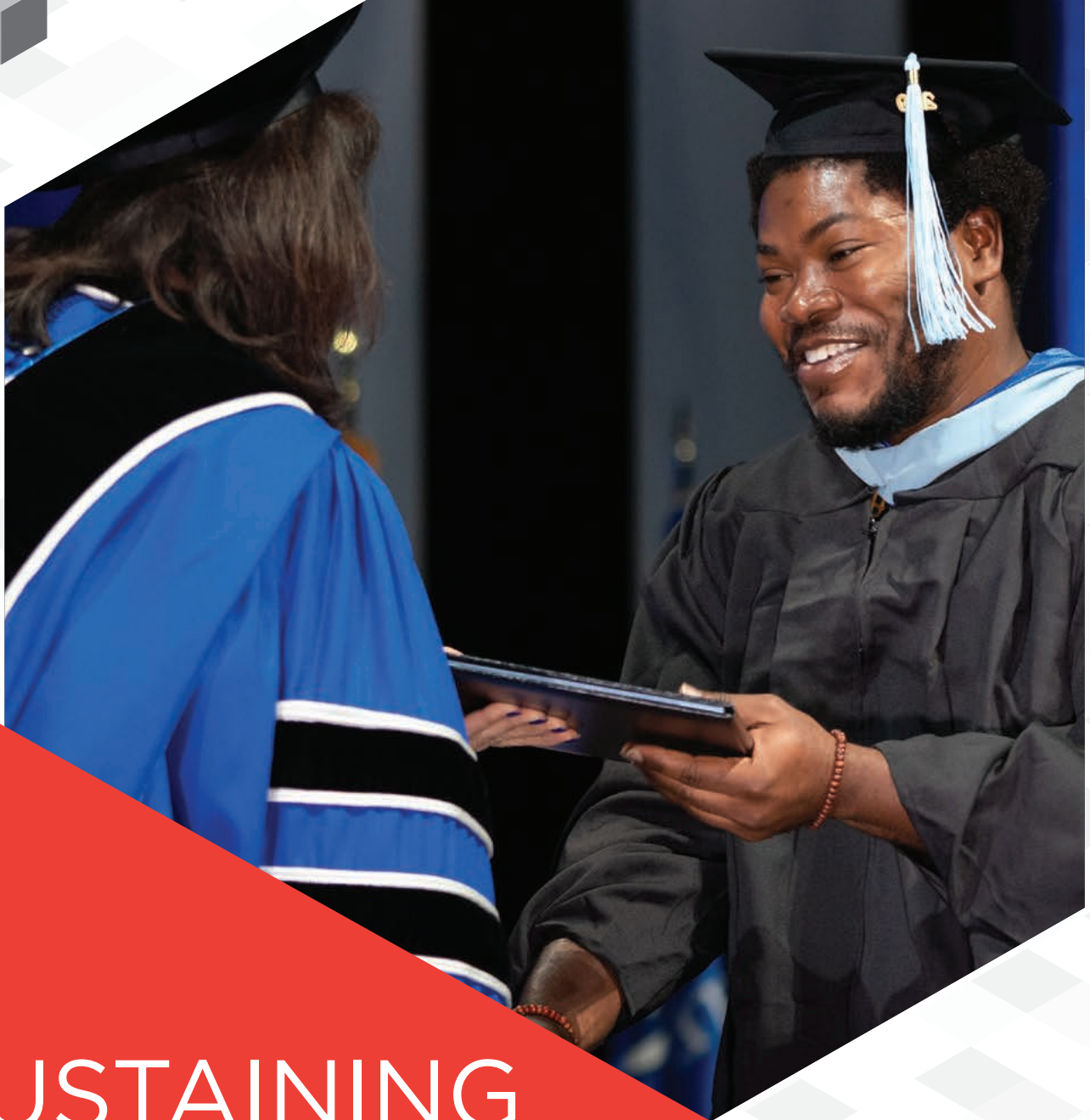


Figure 2: Reading Achievement Percentiles by Grade Level in Fall 18-2020



Source: NWEA MAP Assessment Data, Fall 2018 to Fall 2020



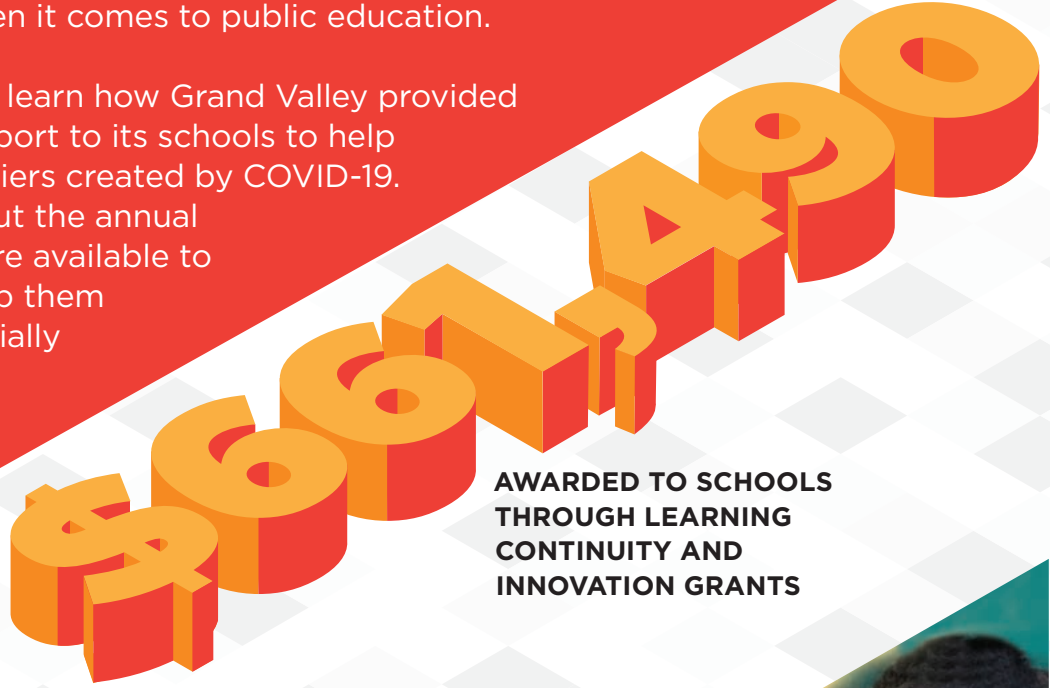
SUSTAINING LEARNING



SUSTAINING LEARNING

Financially stable schools can offer kids and educators the resources they need to succeed in the classroom. It also shows that school leaders are good stewards of public money and can make wise investments that lead to better academic outcomes. Such stability is what taxpayers demand and parents deserve when it comes to public education.

In this section, you'll learn how Grand Valley provided additional fiscal support to its schools to help them overcome barriers created by COVID-19. You'll also learn about the annual opportunities that are available to schools that can help them enhance their financial stability.



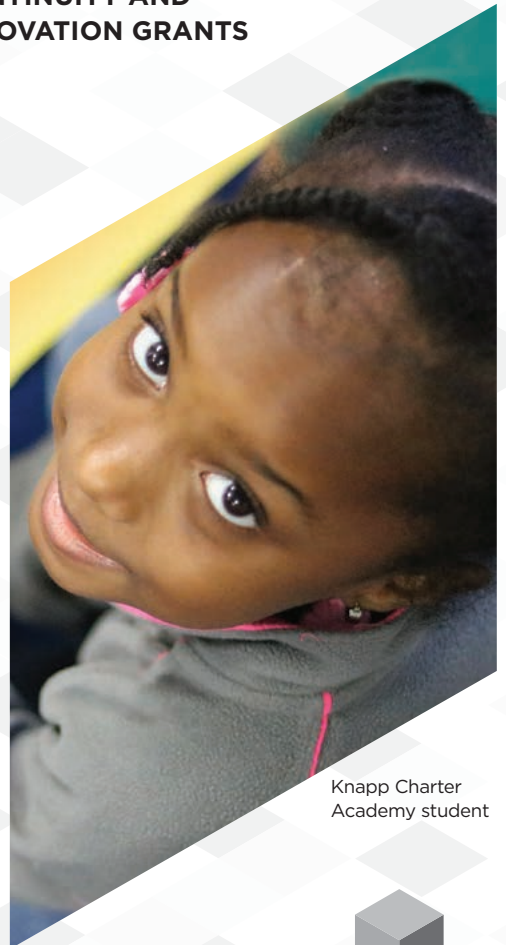
**AWARDED TO SCHOOLS
THROUGH LEARNING
CONTINUITY AND
INNOVATION GRANTS**

ENSURING FISCAL STABILITY DURING COVID-19

One of the biggest tasks K-12 schools faced when they were first impacted by COVID-19 was getting the additional supplies they would need to reach their students from home. For many schools, this meant big shifts in their day-to-day instructional and operational routines, whether it was purchasing devices for every student or recalibrating how school lunches would be prepared and distributed.

Grand Valley stepped in to ease some of the financial burden that accompanied these shifts by creating a Learning Continuity and Innovation Grant for all of GVSU's charter public schools. Schools could use the one-time grant on things like technology, enhanced safety infrastructure, or to support new instructional pathways that had yet to be explored.

The goal of the grant was to help schools address their most pressing needs in that moment while keeping their budget reserves in strong standing. The grant also gave them the financial flexibility to explore truly innovative concepts that could ultimately offer more sustainable, long-term solutions well after the pandemic had ended.



Knapp Charter Academy student



ADDITIONAL ANNUAL SUPPORT FROM GRAND VALLEY

As a charter school authorizer, Grand Valley may retain up to three percent of the per-pupil funds its charter schools receive. Some of these funds are used to cover the operational cost that comes with being a charter school authorizer. A significant portion, however, is given back annually to the schools either directly or through supplemental support opportunities.

One of the direct ways that Grand Valley gives back to its schools each year is through an academic grant. Every school has the opportunity to be awarded additional funds by accomplishing specific educational goals over the course of the school year. The goals may change slightly as new academic and charter contract standards are developed, but are always designed to be inclusive of all schools. The amount each school receives is determined by the amount of students in each building.

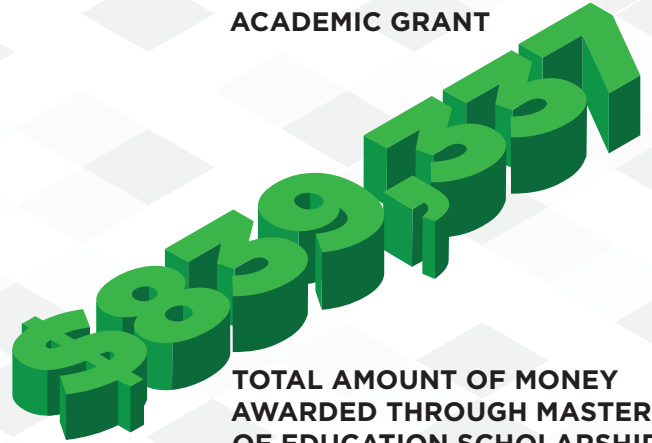
Grand Valley also provides financial assistance for the dedicated educators working in its schools as well as those who are on the cusp of starting their careers. Educators in our schools may apply for our Master of Education scholarship, which gives recipients at least a 50-percent tuition discount when they enroll in graduate courses at Grand Valley. Teachers who have worked three or more consecutive years in a GVSU-authorized charter school are eligible to receive an 80-percent tuition discount.

Additionally, Grand Valley simultaneously supports undergraduate education learners through the Detroit Student Teacher Scholarship. The scholarship covers one semester of tuition for any Grand Valley learner who agrees to complete their student-teaching requirement in a GVSU-authorized charter school located in Detroit. Learners are matched with schools that might need extra staff support, allowing the students to immediately make an impact in the classroom. This ongoing support also creates a talent pipeline between the GVSU College of Education and our schools.



\$8,619

AVERAGE AMOUNT OF MONEY AWARDED TO EACH SCHOOL THROUGH 2019-2020 ACADEMIC GRANT



\$8,619,331

TOTAL AMOUNT OF MONEY AWARDED THROUGH MASTER OF EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP SINCE JANUARY 2020



1482

CREDIT HOURS COMPLETED THROUGH MASTER OF EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP SINCE JANUARY 2020



15

NUMBER OF GVSU EDUCATION STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED STUDENT TEACHING AT A DETROIT CHARTER SCHOOL SINCE JANUARY 2020



\$105,532

TOTAL SCHOLARSHIP DOLLARS AWARDED TO GVSU STUDENTS WHO TAUGHT IN DETROIT SINCE JANUARY 2020

SUSTAINING OPPORTUNITY: TERRY GEORGE AND YOUTH VISION SOLUTIONS

Terry George delivers food to the home of a Covenant House Academy student.



Photo courtesy of Kelly Jordan, Detroit Free Press

Terry George is the president of Youth Vision Solutions (YVS) and the superintendent for Covenant House Academy schools, which has three schools in Detroit and one in Grand Rapids that are supported by YVS.

George is a Detroit native with nearly 35 years of experience working in urban education and with students from low-income families. His first professional experiences in education came during college when he was invited to travel each summer to the Bronx or Guatemala to teach. “I never thought I would be a teacher,” George said, “but I haven’t found anything more worthwhile.”

After graduating college and teaching for a year in New York City, George returned to Detroit. He was a classroom teacher for four years and then a building administrator for 17 years. In the early 2010s, he was connected to Youth Vision Solutions and Covenant House Academies and remained close to the schools until he was invited to step into his current leadership roles.

George’s schools are very unique in comparison to traditional public high schools. Covenant House Academies serve students ages 15–22 who generally face greater challenges than their peers, including financial instability, hunger, and homelessness. “You hear about kids that fall through the cracks, we’re the schools that are under the cracks,” George said. “For our student population, there is very little help out there, so our job is to catch those kids who, for whatever reason, have not been successful in other schools.”

To help kids get back on track, the schools utilize a welcoming and supportive culture led by staff who are fully trained to support students impacted by trauma. “Our schools use the motto ‘Unconditional love and absolute respect,’” George said. “It’s all about helping kids build a better life, not judging them for the situations they are in right now.”

The need for that type of support is clear.

Each of the school campuses serves 150 to 300 students at any time.

The schools support the students with all they need academically, as well as with basic services like laundry and showering facilities. The growing demand for the unique support has even led to a recent move to a more accessible facility for the east campus of Covenant House Academy Detroit so it could connect with more potential students. Ultimately, the services YVS and the schools provide lead to dozens of students graduating each summer and winter, accomplishing a goal that may have previously seemed impossible to achieve.

For George, some of the most important moments for YVS have come during the pandemic. He noted that the academies have been able to safely stay open to ensure their high-risk population continued to receive the support it needed. “We reduced staff and adjusted school hours, but there was not one week this year where kids couldn’t come here to get a meal, see a friendly face, or to work on a computer,” he said. “I’m really proud of that.”

Looking ahead, George said the goal at YVS and the academies is to increase the number of graduates while shortening the time it takes kids to reach graduation so they can continue moving forward. “Whether kids are headed to college or to a long-term career, we are working hard to connect more kids to the next step in their life.”

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Grand Valley State University is an affirmative action, equal opportunity institution. It encourages diversity and provides equal opportunity in education, employment, all of its programs, and the use of its facilities. It is committed to protecting the constitutional and statutory civil rights of persons connected with the university. 05/21

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