

In October 2024, Michigan State University and Grand Rapids Public Schools launched the inaugural Grand Rapids Community Teachers cohort, an innovative initiative designed to cultivate the next generation of educators from within our own community. This groundbreaking program provides high school scholars with a seamless pathway into the teaching profession, allowing them to begin taking college courses while still in high school, earn their education degree at no cost, and ultimately return to teach in Grand Rapids Public Schools. To capture the excitement and impact of this initiative, we produced a feature video highlighting the voices of scholars in the first cohort. These inspiring students shared their personal stories, their aspirations to become educators, and what this opportunity means for their future. The video debuted at a special community event announcing the program, where families, educators, and local leaders gathered to celebrate this milestone for GRPS and the broader Grand Rapids community. Following its premiere, the video was shared across our website and social media platforms, where it received widespread engagement and support. By amplifying these stories, we aim to showcase how this initiative is helping young people in our community break barriers, overcome financial obstacles, and achieve their dreams of becoming educators.