

**Launch U**  
**Kent ISD**



**Student**  
**Guidebook**  
**2024-2025**

## **KENT INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT**

2930 Knapp NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49525

Dr. Ron Gorman, Superintendent

**Launch U Purpose:** The purpose of Launch U Early Middle College is to increase access and affordability to college credits in order to help students discover their interests and find direction in post-secondary academic and career goals.

**Launch U Mission:** The mission of Launch U Early Middle College provides students from Kent County schools an opportunity to complete an Associate Degree, earn industry credentials, and develop skills for industry. This will allow students to successfully enter the workforce or continue their education at a four-year university.

### **Launch U**

1655 East Beltline Ave  
NE Grand Rapids, MI  
49525

<https://www.kentisd.org/students/launchu/>

616.447.5670

### **Mr. Gerry Verwey**

Launch U Principal

### **Stacy Smith**

### **Ashley Fritz**

Launch U EMC Mentors

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## Launch U session times

Monday - Friday

First Session: 6:55-8:55 A.M.

Second Session: 9:30-11:30 A.M.

Third Session: 12:00-2:00 P.M.

## **Launch U Student Calendar for Kent ISD campus – 2024/2025**

**(13th year students should follow GRCC's Academic Calendar)**

Monday-Thursday	New Student First Year FUNdamentals Orientation	Launch U	August 19-22
Monday	Launch U Start Date	Launch U	August 26
Friday & Monday	Labor Day Weekend – No classes	All Schools	August 30-September2
Friday	Staff PD Day - No classes	All Kent ISD Programs	September 27
Wednesday	Count Day	All Schools	October 2
Friday	Accuplacer Assessment	Launch U	October 4
Tuesday-Friday	Thanksgiving Holiday	Launch U	November 26-29
Thursday	Last day of semester for Launch U	Launch U	December 12
Friday-Friday	Holiday Break – No classes	Launch U	Dec 13 - Jan 3
Monday	Launch U returns - First day of 2nd Semester	Launch U	January 6
Monday	No classes	All Kent ISD Programs	January 20
Wednesday & Thursday	Community Open House at Kent ISD	All Schools	February 5 & 6
Monday	Staff PD Day - No classes	All Kent ISD Programs	February 7
Wednesday	Count Day	All Schools	February 12
Monday	Mid-Winter Break – No classes	All Kent ISD Programs	February 17
TBD	Launch U Lowdown	All Schools	February
Monday-Friday	GRCC Mid-Semester Break – No classes	Launch U	February 24-28
Friday-Friday	K-12 Spring Break – No classes	All Kent ISD Programs	April 4 - 11
Wednesday	Launch U Last Day of Classes	Launch U	April 23
Thursday	Launch U/GRCC Commencement	Launch U	April 24
TBD	ALEKS Math Assessment	Launch U	May

## **Goals of Launch U Early Middle College**

Goals of the Launch U Program are to: Create a first-class learning community in partnership with Grand Rapids Community College where all who participate (students, staff, teachers/professors, parents and community members) are valued as both learners and teachers; provide real-world learning experiences for students in a potential career; and support students in a college environment as they learn to utilize the college's resources. Communication is vital between students, parents, high school and Early Middle College. Launch U will provide support, guidance and academic rigor to students. Launch U strives to:

1. Provide an opportunity for students to earn up to 60 transferable college credits and/or an Associate's Degree, Technical Certificate, and a MEMCA Certificate.
2. Prepare students for successful transfer to four-year colleges and universities, and encourage pursuit of higher-level degree opportunities.
3. Guide students in critical thinking, communication, and desire to become life-long learners.
4. Prepare for assessment and/or improvement for learning skills and attitudes for a successful educational experience.
5. Create and promote a mentality of civility.
6. Foster an atmosphere where diversity is acknowledged and encouraged.
7. Provide student services that are conducive to student learning.
8. Promote an atmosphere where all parents and community college stakeholders are part of the shared vision of Launch U and Kent ISD.

## **Student Conduct and Expectations**

It is a privilege to be a part of the Launch U program. All students are expected to follow this Guidebook, the Grand Rapids Community College policies, as well as your local school district's rules and guidelines.

Students in Launch U are held to high standards and expectations. The College expects all students to conduct themselves as responsible citizens and members of the academic community. It is the responsibility of each student to know, observe, abide by and adhere to [GRCC's Student Code of Conduct](#), rules and regulations. Additionally, students are to abide by all rules applicable to conduct in a classroom environment and at college-sponsored activities. Students, by enrolling in the college, are automatically placed under the rules and regulations established by the college. Therefore, it is the student's responsibility to familiarize themselves with the rules and regulations affecting them.

The students are ultimately responsible for their success, with the support of their instructors, parents, mentor and the Launch U coordinator.

Students who are enrolled into Launch U must meet the following expectations:

- Attend school daily.
- Arrive at school and all classes on time and ready to participate. Students are expected to attend all college classes and it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they have transportation.
- Be a self-advocate: aware of your academic and personal needs and able to communicate and pursue them.
- Check email daily; respond appropriately.
- Devote additional time to studying daily.
- Keep parents/legal guardians aware of academic progress.
- Complete all Michigan Merit Curriculum graduation requirements.
- Behave in a professional manner that shows respect for oneself, classmates, high school and college faculty, and the facilities and equipment.
- Follow the handbook rules and policies.
- Meet with the academic mentor regularly to discuss academic progress.
- If a student, parent or guardian has a change of address, phone number, or email address at any time during the program, it is critical that notification be given to the Launch U mentor, coordinator and updated in PowerSchool.

## **Attendance Policies (Launch U and GRCC)**

Regular attendance is an essential component to success for an Early Middle College student. Students must have good attendance at high school as well as college. All attendance policies through Launch U and Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) will be enforced, as well as those established by individual instructors. The Launch U mentor will provide support for students. It is the responsibility of the student to contact their instructor and mentor or coordinator to let them know of their absence and make up any assignments according to the instructor that are missed due to the absence.

GRCC believes that attendance is essential to student success, and sees excessive absenteeism as a very serious matter. GRCC also believes that the classroom instructor is the best evaluator of the impact attendance may have upon student success in any given class.

GRCC makes no distinction between “excused” and “unexcused” absences. If students are not present in a class for which they are enrolled, they are absent, regardless of the reason.

Attendance will be marked in PowerSchool as P = Present, A = Absent, SR = School Related Absence.

*Faculty and staff will comply with the requirements of state and federal law, including the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) and [Title IX](#).*

## **Communication**

GRCC provides an email service for all students to use. Upon enrollment, students are required to use this college issued account for all Launch U and GRCC email correspondences (sending and receiving). This email account will be used for official notification by Launch U and for GRCC related communications. GRCC will not respond to emails that are sent from current students’ personal email accounts.

## **Closing of Schools**

Students should follow local TV and radio stations for school closures. Parents and students can sign up for the Bright Arrow text alert system for Kent ISD (text YES to 79041) and Rave Alert for GRCC. If a high school is closed that does not mean that Launch U and GRCC are closed. It is the student’s responsibility to assure that they are attending school whether they attend class at the GRCC campus or at the Kent ISD campus. Students will still need to complete coursework as assigned.

## **Launch U Early Middle College (EMC) Mentor Supports**

An EMC Mentor will be assigned to assist and guide students participating in Launch U. Regular meetings with the mentor are required throughout the program. The mentor supports students can expect include, but are not limited to:

- Monitoring progress with college courses
- Listening to the student needs, concerns, and aspirations
- Guiding student to advocate for themselves
- Offer feedback, support, praise, and constructive criticism to help the student improve their college success skills and academic performance
- Communicate to parents/legal guardians and high school counselors, as needed

Students are required to check in with their mentor on a regular basis to discuss progress or concerns. Students will be responsible for checking email regularly, signing up for check-ins and communicating with their mentor if they need to cancel and reschedule the meeting. Missing mentor check-ins may result in removal of the student from Launch U.

## **College and Career Readiness Curriculum**

Launch U is committed to the success of our Early Middle College students. As part of Launch U, students are required to fulfill College and Career Readiness (CCR) Curriculum over the course of the 5-year program. This is designed to provide college strategies, life-long learning, and professional skills for continued success. CCR Curriculum is part of the requirements for the students to earn the Michigan Early Middle College Association (MEMCA) Certificate upon graduation from Launch U.

Students will receive a calendar and checklist of workshops at the beginning of each school year. Students are highly encouraged to mark their calendars with the required dates they are to participate in CCR activities. If students miss a day due to extenuating circumstances, they will be responsible for making up the CCR hours by doing handouts, only up to two missed days each semester.

If students fail to participate in the CCR Curriculum each semester, they may be removed from Launch U.



## **Tuition Fees, Textbooks, and Materials**

As part of the Launch U program, students are not required to pay for tuition, textbooks or fees. Also, any materials that are required on the class syllabus are covered through the program.

Furthermore, all textbooks will be loaned out to the students. Students will receive the needed textbooks for each course they are taking at the beginning of each semester. It is the responsibility of the student to return them after the semester ends in good working condition.

If a student does not successfully complete a course, **students are required to retake the course, pay for all fees** (including textbooks) associated with the course, and earn a passing grade during the summer session following the unsuccessful completion. Failure to retake, or pass the class may result in being removed from Launch U.

## **Retaking/Failing Classes**

Students who need to retake a course because of a failing grade (received an "E"), withdrawing from a course, being dropped from a course due to lack of attendance, or earning a grade below the acceptable level for a prerequisite in a course, will be responsible for the cost of retaking the course, including books and fees. Neither Launch U or the high school will cover the cost of students retaking a course. If the course is a prerequisite, the student must retake, and pass the course at the required performance level, before moving on to the next course. Failure to retake and pass the course in the summer of the same school year, will result in removal from Launch U.

Students who fail, withdraw, or are dropped from two courses, will be removed from Launch U. Students who have extenuating circumstances, such as a hardship, can apply for a Hardship Withdrawal from GRCC. If approved, the student may continue in Launch U.

## **Academic Intervention Plans**

Students who fail (received an "E") in one class in a semester will be placed on an Academic Intervention Plan the following semester. Students who received two D's in the same semester will also be placed on an Academic Intervention Plan the following semester. Academic Intervention Plans will be created and signed by the student, their mentor, their parent/guardian, and their high school counselor. Students who fail to comply with the Academic Intervention Plan may be removed from Launch U after the semester.

## **Program of Study**

The goal of Launch U is for students to earn an associate degree or industry recognized certificate; however, this is not a requirement to graduate from Launch U. Students in Launch U are required to follow their Program of Study with their cohort class. Any courses taken above and beyond the expected Program of Study is the responsibility of the student. The Program of Study cannot be modified by the student, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

All Launch U students are required to fulfill at least one math/math-related course and one other course or experience as part of their high school requirements toward their diploma in the 13th year. One course/experience in each semester is required. Which course/experience required is determined by the student's sending school not Launch U. Launch U may help with scheduling the required course/experience.

## **Graduation**

The student's local school district is the authorized body to determine whether the student participates in graduation exercises with their original class in their home district. School districts allow students to participate in commencement after grade 12 if they are on track in their program of study. Please check with your local school district for their policy. Students will not receive their high school diploma until after the 13<sup>th</sup> year when they complete all their high school graduation requirements. The high school diploma will have the 13th year graduation date on it.

If a Launch U student returns to their high school before completing the EMC requirements, the student must comply with the home districts graduation requirements in order to obtain their high school diploma.

In order to graduate from Launch U, students must complete all of the Michigan Merit Curriculum requirements and CCR Curriculum. Students must also complete at least one of the following: 60 transferable college credits, an associate degree, an industry recognized certification, or a MEMCA Certificate.

## **Grand Rapids Community College Policies**

### **Grand Rapids Community College's Early Alert System**

The goal of the Navigate Early Alert system is to identify at-risk students and refer them to appropriate resources so that faculty and/or staff may assist before a student withdraws or falls too far behind in their coursework. Risk indicators include such factors as:

- Excessive absences
- Poor performance
- Has not logged on or has not had enough time on task for an online course
- Missing assignments, exams, or homework
- Potential hardship

How does the Early Alert System work?

1. Students are identified based on the above noted risk indicators.
2. When an alert is sent, the Coordinator of Student Success & Retention, or other GRCC faculty/staff member is notified.
3. Students are contacted in order to determine which resources are most appropriate to encourage improved performance.
4. GRCC faculty/staff members who issued the alert are updated with appropriate information once the alert is closed.

### **Academic Standing**

Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) requires all students to maintain good academic standing. Academic Standing is reviewed at the end of each semester of enrollment when grades are posted.

Students in specific programs (both academic and support programs) at GRCC and students receiving financial aid and/or veteran's benefits must also meet the specific academic requirements that determine continuation for these programs.

If students achieve a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.0, students will be in good standing and this will be noted on the student's transcript.

#### **What if I fail to meet the standards?**

Students will first go on academic alert on the first occasion that their cumulative GPA is below 2.0 either after their first enrollment semester or following Good Standing. If a student's subsequent semester GPA is below 2.0 while on alert, students will then be placed on academic probation. If a student's subsequent semester GPA is below 2.0 while on probation, the student will be placed on academic suspension.

When the cumulative GPA improves to a minimum of 2.0, students will be in academic good standing.

## **Academic Alert**

Students who are placed on academic alert will be notified via email at the end of the semester. This is not noted on the transcript.

## **Academic Probation**

Students who are placed on academic probation will be notified via email at the end of the semester. Academic probation is noted on the student's transcript and an indicator will be viewable on the student's account. Students on Academic Probation are required to complete the [Academic Success Workshop](#) in Blackboard. A registration hold will be placed on their account if the workshop is not completed by the end of the following semester.

## **Academic Suspension**

Students who are placed on academic suspension will be notified via email and mailed letter. Students registered for the subsequent semester will be contacted by phone as well. Academic suspension is noted on the student's transcript and an indicator will be viewable on the student's account. They will be prohibited from registering for credit classes at GRCC for one semester. If students are already registered for the next semester, courses will be dropped.

If the student is academically suspended due to circumstances beyond their reasonable control, they may appeal this suspension to the Academic Suspension Appeal Committee. The Committee's decision is final.

## **Return from Academic Suspension**

Students returning from Academic Suspension following a semester of non-attendance at GRCC must meet with an academic advisor prior to being allowed to register for classes.

## **Academic Honesty**

The development, understanding and practice of integrity and academic honesty are expected of all students at Grand Rapids Community College. Personal integrity is important in all aspects of life, and students are expected to conduct themselves with honesty and integrity, both in and out of the classroom. Acts of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and students engaging in such conduct may be subject to classroom and/or institutional disciplinary actions.

Academic dishonesty is any form of cheating and/or plagiarism which results in students giving or receiving unauthorized assistance in an academic exercise or receiving credit for work which is not their own.

## **Cheating**

Cheating includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. Using any sources not authorized by the faculty member (textbooks, notes, websites, the work of other students) to complete examinations or other assignments. Giving or receiving content information relating to assignments/quizzes/test/examinations to/from others unless authorized by the instructor.
2. Using unauthorized electronic equipment
3. Submitting academic work previously submitted in another course without authorization
4. Altering or tampering with grades

## **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is intentional or unintentional use of the intellectual creations of another source, person or organization without proper attribution. Credit must be given for every direct quotation, for paraphrasing or summarizing a work (in whole, or in part, in one's own words), and for information that is not common knowledge. Plagiarism may take two main forms, which are clearly related:

1. Stealing or passing off as one's own the ideas or words, images, or other creative works of another.
2. Using a creative production without crediting the source, even if only minimal information is available to identify it for citation.

## **Fabrication**

Fabrication is defined as intentionally falsifying or inventing any information or citation on any academic exercise. Therefore:

1. "Invented" information may not be used in any laboratory experiment or academic exercise.
2. One should acknowledge the actual source from which cited information is obtained.
3. Students must not change or resubmit previous academic work without prior permission of the instructor.

## **Other Examples of Academic Dishonesty**

1. Allowing another student to copy during a test;
2. Giving homework, term paper or other academic work to another student to plagiarize;
3. Submitting any work that is not one's own;
4. Falsifying information to a faculty member or College official;
5. Altering a graded work after it has been returned, then submitting the work for re-grading without the instructor's knowledge/approval;
6. Stealing tests or other assessment items;
7. Forging signatures on College documentation;
8. Giving false or misleading information to a faculty member in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test or other assignment;
9. Accessing computerized College records or systems without authorization (see GRCC AUA);
10. Providing material or information to another person with knowledge that such aid could be used in any of the violations stated above;
11. Unauthorized recording, reproduction, retransmission or redistribution of course materials (e.g. lectures, handouts, podcasts, exams, student projects, group work, online material, etc.).

## **Consequences of Academic Dishonesty at GRCC**

Students who commit acts of academic dishonesty are subject to classroom penalties and conduct sanctions. Withdrawal from a course does not exempt a student from any pending charges of classroom misconduct.

The faculty member may make a referral to the conduct office for additional investigation and potential institutional sanctions in addition to any one or more of the following penalties which may be imposed by the faculty member for any academic dishonesty violation:

1. Giving a warning – an oral explanation by a College official of violation and possible consequences if misconduct continues;
2. Assignment of a reduced or a failing grade on an assignment, paper, project or exam;
3. Lowering the grade for the course;

#### 4. Assignment of an E in the course

Appeals for Academic Honesty penalties imposed by the faculty member that result in a lowering of an overall grade should be directed to the [Grade Grievance Process](#). Appeals for sanctions imposed by the conduct administrator should be directed to “Requesting a Hearing” (as described in section 4 of the Student Code of Conduct).

### **Student Disability Support Services**

Disability Support Services helps to properly administer Early Middle College accommodations for Launch U students. At the college level, the burden of responsibility shifts from the K-12 school to the individual college student. College students must contact Disability Support Services (616-234-4140 or [disability@grcc.edu](mailto:disability@grcc.edu)), prove eligibility, and make their needs known. Support will be provided to ensure student accommodations are met and to assist students as they transition to becoming advocates of their accommodation’s agreement.

An Early Middle College agreement must be created by the GRCC Disability Support Services. High school counselors must provide IEP or 504 plans to the GRCC Disability Support Advisor. The GRCC Advisor will translate the special education plan to be in agreement with disability laws applicable to post-secondary institutions.

### **Student Privacy – FERPA**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

Parents and guardians of each student under 18 years of age and each student who is 18 years of age and older (eligible student) have certain rights in relation to records kept on the student by the Kent Intermediate School District.

Grand Rapids Community College provides information to students on their rights under FERPA on their website at [www.grcc.edu/privacy](http://www.grcc.edu/privacy) and in the [GRCC Catalog](#). In addition, GRCC mails a postcard to all enrolled students in the Fall and Winter academic semester which includes the web address where students may navigate to review their rights. A student may request a paper copy of their rights under FERPA from Student Records.

The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the College receives a request for access. Students should submit to the Registrar written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The College will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the College official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their educational records. They are:

- The right to request the amendment of the student's education record that the student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Students may ask the College to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. The student should write to the College official responsible for the record,

clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the College decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the College will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his or her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the College has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agency); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility to be determined by the provost.
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Grand Rapids Community College to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4605