

**Contact: Tom DeJonge**  
**Superintendent**  
**Grand Rapids Christian Schools**  
**616-574-6370**  
**tdejonge@grcs.org**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**OAKDALE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL HIRES NEW PRINCIPAL**

**GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (May 26, 2006)** – Grand Rapids Christian Schools is pleased to announce the appointment of Ashanti J. Bryant as principal of Oakdale Christian School, effective July 1, 2006. His appointment follows multiple comprehensive interviews conducted by the principal search team (comprised of administrative staff, Oakdale district board, and Oakdale faculty representatives) and the unanimous endorsement of the Grand Rapids Christian Schools Board of Trustees on Monday, May 22, 2006. Mr. Bryant is the Schools first African American principal.

**Credentials**

Currently, Mr. Bryant is serving as principal at Detroit Enterprise Academy, a National Heritage Academies charter school where he has been since 2004. Prior to that, Mr. Bryant served as an administrator in Chicago, an elementary teacher, and a program assistant for the Kalamazoo Community Foundation. Mr. Bryant's administrative experiences include providing leadership in school improvement and accreditation standards, instructional leadership, student assessment, staff evaluations, marketing and public relations, and professional development planning. His wealth of experience, solid understanding of the role of a Christian school principal, and passion for the importance of Christian education uniquely qualify Mr. Bryant for the Oakdale Christian principalship.

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Merging faith and vocation

“Mr. Bryant’s passion for leadership in Christian education is inspiring, and he will be a welcome asset to Oakdale Christian School and the Grand Rapids Christian Schools community,” says Mr. Tom DeJonge, superintendent for Grand Rapids Christian Schools. “Mr. Bryant’s interest in the Grand Rapids Christian Schools stems from a desire to more significantly merge his faith and vocation, and he wholeheartedly believes that skilled, Christian leadership can and will change the world,” says DeJonge.

Oakdale Christian School marks its 114<sup>th</sup> year

Oakdale Christian School, located at 1050 Fisk SE, was founded in 1892 and has a long history within the Grand Rapids community. The sole purpose of Oakdale Christian originated from parents and the Board who desired a strong Christian education for their children—a commitment which still exists today—as the Oakdale Christian community proudly serves 275 Preschool – 6<sup>th</sup> grade students. Oakdale Christian continues to welcome a diverse community of Christian parents and teachers who encourage a diverse learning environment through faith and academic learning for students of all backgrounds.

Grand Rapids Christian Schools

Grand Rapids Christian Schools has been in continuous operation since 1889, serving nearly 3,000 preschool through high school students in the metropolitan Grand Rapids area—the largest private, association-governed school system in Michigan with the primary mission of preparing students to be effective servants of Jesus Christ in a contemporary society.

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