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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

$5,000 GRANT RECEIVED FOR GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (March 21, 2008) – The Grand Rapids Community Foundation awarded a grant to Grand Rapids Christian Middle School for "Discovering a Creativity/Technology Link."

Dr. Gary D. Schmidt, author of the 2005 novel, "Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy," winner of a Newbery Honor and a Printz Honor, and 2008 Newbery Honor Award for "The Wednesday Wars," published by Clarion, will share with our sixth grade students his journey as a writer and use his skills to assist them in writing their own stories. Students will create podcasts, share their writing and discover how creativity can link with technology.

An important goal for all students at Grand Rapids Christian Middle School is increased proficiency in communication through writing and speaking, and through this grant all students will have the opportunity to learn from the talented Dr. Gary D. Schmidt.

Sixth grade teachers Hilda Quist and Judy Rooy, along with media specialist Tammy Baker and technology director Sheila VanderWoude, collaborated to design the project and wrote the grant application.

Writer's Festival

A Writer's Festival for the Grand Rapids Christian Schools community begins Tuesday, March 25, and culminates in a special event in May celebrating students' work.

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Tuesday, March 25, 2008
9:00-10:00 a.m. Mr. Schmidt will talk with sixth grade students from Grand Rapids Christian Middle School (GRCMS) and Rockford Christian School, in the multi-purpose room at GRCMS.

10:00 a.m. Ruth Bishop, from the Grand Rapids Community Foundation, will present Mr. Schmidt with the $5,000 grant, at GRCMS, in the multi-purpose room.

Wednesday, March 26, 2008
Mr. Schmidt will meet with groups of 40 students throughout the day at GRCMS to advise them as they write their own fiction stories.

Thursday, May 29, 2008
Celebration of Writing—at the Richard and Helen DeVos Center for Arts and Worship on the campus of Grand Rapids Christian High School. Sixth grade students will share their stories in a variety of ways: through artwork, recordings, computer presentations and live readings. Mr. Schmidt will be in attendance.

Dr. Gary D. Schmidt

Mr. Schmidt is author of the 2005 Newbery Honor and Printz Honor book *Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy,* published by Clarion Books. His most recent novel is *The Wednesday Wars,* a 2008 Newbery Honor Award Book. He is a professor of English at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Grand Rapids Christian Schools

Grand Rapids Christian Schools serves nearly 3,000 preschool through high school students at seven schools throughout metro Grand Rapids, has been in continuous operation since 1889 and is the largest private, association-governed school system in Michigan.

Grand Rapids Community Foundation

The Grand Rapids Community Foundation, Michigan's oldest community foundation, was founded in 1922. It continues to fund, initiate, and lead programs that benefit the greater Grand Rapids community in the arts, education, the environment, health, human services, and community development.

Media Invited

Media are welcome to attend the Writer's Festival on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 25 and 26, 2008. Questions? Please contact Mary Broene, principal, Grand Rapids Christian Middle School, at 616-574-6350.

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