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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Thomas J. DeJonge, Superintendent  
(616) 574-6370

**GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS BOARD APPROVES  
FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN**

*Elementary consolidation part of plan to strengthen Christian education for new generation*

**GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., June 17, 2008** — In a 9-4 vote last night, the Grand Rapids Christian Schools Board of Trustees approved its 2008-2013 Strategic Plan, which includes a call for a single-campus consolidation of the four elementary schools Grand Rapids Christian Schools operates within the City of Grand Rapids. The consolidation plan was one of four major strategic initiatives approved as part of the Grand Rapids Christian Schools 2008-2013 Strategic Plan, and is aimed at strengthening core programs, accessibility and funding.

“While the call to consolidate our elementary schools is by far the most visible element of the strategic plan, the plan should be viewed in its entirety as a bold new vision for Grand Rapids Christian Schools,” said Superintendent Tom DeJonge. “We recognize that the environment for Christian education is very different today than it was when this organization was formed 40 years ago. This forward-thinking plan sets us up to define and develop the finest Christian education for a new generation of students in the Grand Rapids area.”

In addition to consolidation, the plan calls for an aggressive advancement campaign; multiple strategies to reduce tuition and make the schools more accessible; a renewed commitment to build and support a socially, economically and culturally diverse Christian school community and strengthening and implementing programs that align with current educational standards and serve to educate and enrich Grand Rapids Christian School students in mind, body and spirit.

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“This vote is a clear call for unity among our schools, our staff and leadership, and our families as we move ahead with significant operational, advancement and program initiatives for the enrichment of our schools and our students,” stated Tim Wiersma, chairperson of the Grand Rapids Christian Schools Strategic Planning Committee, the group charged with implementation of the plan. “We are extremely grateful to the scores of individuals who participated in this strategic planning process. Their work – and their commitment to Christian education – is invaluable. We look forward to continuing this collaborative effort as we implement these strategies over the next five years.”

Over the course of the summer and early fall, the Strategic Planning Committee of the board will continue to work with members of the Grand Rapids Christian School community and the community at large to build a framework for implementation of the plan.

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The largest private, association-governed school system in Michigan, Grand Rapids Christian Schools ([www.grcs.org](http://www.grcs.org)) serves nearly 2,500 preschool through high school students at seven schools throughout metro Grand Rapids and has been in continuous operation since 1889. The mission of Grand Rapids Christian Schools is to prepare students to be effective servants of Jesus Christ.