

Student Achievements

- Annalise Brinks was named a National Merit Finalist and Oliver Vandenberg achieved Commended National Merit status. These honors are the result of their high achievement on the 2014 PSAT/NMSQT test taken in October of 2014.
- Anna Laffrey won Michigan Interscholastic Press Association Journalist of the Year for The East Vision this year.
- Marie LaChance was awarded the Congressional Medal of Merit. She will receive this award from Congressman Justin Amash at a ceremony in April at the Grand Rapids Art Museum.
- Anna Baermann (viola), Andrew Playford (bassoon), and Oliver Vandenberg (trumpet) were named to the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association's 2016 All-State ensembles. Selection was based on auditions submitted by high school students from throughout the state. The All-State ensembles were performed on the stage of DeVos Hall in January at the Michigan Music Conference.
- Three students were named MHSAA Scholar Athletes for their success in both athletics and the classroom. Thirty-two students were selected in the state and EGRHS students earned three of those spots. Finalists included Marie LaChance, Easton Schultz, and Anna Laffrey.
- Justine Banbury, Junior, made the Top 16 at the Budapest Cadet World Cup Fencing competition. Justine is an excellent scholar athlete who committed to fence at Northwestern University upon graduation in 2017.
- Boys and girls swim coach, Butch Briggs, was named State Coach of the Year.
- Grant Williams was named State Diver of the Year.
- Christian Bart was named State Swimmer of the Year.

Student Activities (Athletic, Drama, Music, Arts, etc.)

- The EGRHS Quiz Bowl team won the league championship with an undefeated record and is headed to the state championship in April.
- The EGRHS We the People constitutional debate team took home the district and state championships and will compete in the national championship in Washington D.C. in April.
- Eight students attended the Michigan Youth in Government spring conference in Lansing. Clayton DeJong won the Best Speaker Award for the Red Senate. The students pushed 90% of their bills out of committee, passed by the legislature, and signed by the youth governor.
- The EGRHS Model United Nations program continues to grow into a strong, academic-based club, bringing in 38 new participants this year. In total, 64 Pioneers traveled to at least one of six major conferences throughout Michigan, filling 113 delegations, and winning at least a dozen awards from October 2015 to March 2016. Joining the SEMMUNA league this year, teachers Tommy Kawel and Tad Vandenberg are planning on hosting a day-long inter-league conference at EGRHS in April 2017 welcoming schools from Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. Most recently, at the Model UN Conference at Michigan State University, a conference hosting approximately 850 students from around the Midwest; newcomer, Kaiya Sutton, won a Verbal Commendation for her work representing Yemen; freshman Eric Haun won a Best Delegate Runner-up award, and both Aidan Rosario and Clayton DeJong won Outstanding Delegate awards.
- The EGRHS Mathletes were very successful this year. Teacher Mary Elderkin coaches the teams.
 - The Mathlete team of Tanner Hoppman, Jackson Luce, Robby McKay, Oliver Vandenberg, and Lexi Willison won \$1000 for writing one of the best papers in the national Moody's Mega Math Challenge competition. The team is advancing to the second round of judging. Just 174 of 1,084 teams submitting solution papers were selected to advance to the second round.
 - The Mathlete team of Anneke Avery, Brady Oosse, Gabby Bracken, Jackson Luce, and Oliver Vandenberg finished 2nd in the state at the University of Michigan Mathematics Field Day Competition. The team swished through the Swiss Game and raced through the Relay Race without dropping the baton. Special congratulations to Gabby Bracken and Jackson Luce for finishing 2nd in the state in the Leap Frog, and to Oliver Vandenberg for finishing first in the Chalk Talk.
- Students in the One Act production of "Radium Girls" participated in the West Michigan Theatre Festival in February and were awarded the "Golden Trolley" award for the set and props for our travel show. Rebekah McBane won an Excellence in Acting award for her role as Grace Fryer. Teacher Jane Hazle directed.
- Six students wrote original scripts for our high school "24-Hour Theatre" event, which played to a full house in the Little Auditorium in October. Student writers were: Michael Bender, Kira Christoffersen, Erin Smith, Harry Paluska, Ellie Haun, and Hadley Strickland.
- The Drama Department rolled out an exciting program for the year. "The Diary of Anne Frank" took place in the fall with rave reviews, a fun variety show with over 20 acts entertained us in February, and a production of "A Chorus Line" is sure to delight in the Spring.

- The Drama Department tested a new show in the fall called “Theatre by the Numbers.” This theatrical format was learned from Drama Director Pam Steers through her attendance at the National Thespian Festival. Student participants enjoyed this short, fast-paced format as did the audience.
- At the Scholastic Art and Writing competition this year:
 - Max Condon received a Gold Key Award for a black and white photograph titled *Emergence*; as well as Honorable Mentions for a number of works he created including: *Let’s Get Funky*, *Second Coat*, *Passion for Pizza*, and *The Vest*.
 - Eva Zaharakos received a Silver Key Award for her quilted piece titled *Athena’s Eye*, as well as an Honorable Mention for her work titled *Self-Portrait*.
 - Joan Paluska received an Honorable Mention for her sculpture titled *Feast or Famine*.

We also anticipate a good showing at the Congressional Art Fest in April. This competition is hosted by GRAM.

- Students in the Junior English and AP Language classes created collaborative "text poems" in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and displayed them around the high school. Similarly, students in the Junior English and AP Language classes celebrated the poetry of Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman by illustrating their favorite lines and displaying them throughout the high school for others to enjoy.
- Students in our World Language courses (Honors Spanish, 3rd year French, 4th/5th year French) completed research projects regarding culture and cuisine and presented them in class along with a regional dish. It was a great success! Seven students will be traveling with teacher Ms. Ibara to Spain and France in June to deepen their understanding of the French/Spanish language and culture. Isabelle Saylor, who spent last year studying in Spain, gave a presentation in which she talked about her experience, motivating our current Spanish students. French Club attended a cheese tasting at the Downtown Market, which complemented the unit on French cuisine.
- The EGRHS Band program was very successful in the 2015-2016 school year.
 - During the fall season our marching band hosted the Indiana University Marching Hundred. "The Hundred" joined in the Hearts of Gold celebration throughout the Friday evening including a joint performance by the IU and EGRHS drum lines at the Gaslight Village fountain before pre-game and a joint performance by the IU and EGRHS marching bands at half-time. The EGRHS Marching Band is directed by teacher Bill Bier and assisted by teacher Mark Wells.
 - In addition to performing at the annual EGRPS holiday breakfast, the EGRHS Jazz Band performed at a variety of locations and events throughout the community. Teacher Mark Wells conducts the Jazz Band. Jazz Band is an extra-curricular club that meets before school several days a week.
 - We had eight events at the MSBOA District 10 Solo and Ensemble Festival. Of those events performing at the district level, four students will be performing solos at the state level. Junior and bassoonist Andrew Playford auditioned for and was selected to perform in the MSBOA All-State HS Honors Orchestra. This was a tremendous honor for which only four bassoonists from throughout the state were selected. Also, Senior and alto saxophonist Stevie Triesenberg was selected to perform in the first-ever MSBOA District 10 Honors Jazz Band. Membership for this ensemble was drawn from band programs throughout the Grand Rapids area. In February, we successfully hosted a full-day site for the MSBOA District 10 Band and Orchestra Festival at which middle and high school bands from throughout the Grand Rapids area performed. In addition to helping guide our many guests throughout the day, our Concert Band and Symphony Band students also received "Superior" ratings for each of their own performances.
- This is the first year that we have had two orchestras at the high school level—Varsity Orchestra and 9th Grade Orchestra. Increased student interest warranted this growth in the program and it is very exciting to have this support. Highlights from the year include:
 - The Harmony for Humanity fall event featured the Eclectic String Music Ensemble (ESME), along with both of our orchestras, in the 9th Annual Tribute to Daniel Pearl, former Wall Street Journalist killed while on assignment in Pakistan in 2002.
 - Both orchestras combined in January to perform the National Anthem at a Griffins game, the first Friday back after the holiday break.
 - The Varsity Orchestra was invited to perform at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration in downtown Grand Rapids on Monday, January 18.
 - Both orchestras were scheduled to perform at the MSBOA District X Festival on February 25, but that turned out to be a snow day! The event was not able to be rescheduled, so, instead, Mr. John Varineau, associate conductor of the Grand Rapids Symphony came and gave us a clinic on our festival music - in many ways an even more valuable experience than Festival!
 - The Varsity Orchestra just finished up a very special performance at Arts for Life in which we were able to perform a piano concerto with Mr. Todd Wilkie, outstanding pianist from our community, and a very special arrangement of Stars and Stripes with special guest alumnus Mr. Alex Zsolt, an experience our students will not soon forget!
 - 17 students performed at the district level of MSBOA Solo and Ensemble, 15 of whom qualified for the state competition. Six students chose to continue on to the state competition including Abigail Schneider, Anna Baermann, Zoe Bair, Molly Manguse, Grayson Powell and Katrina VanEss, all of whom received a 1st Division Rating.

- Cellist Abigail Schneider was nominated for the Michigan Youth Arts Festival Honor's Orchestra based on her outstanding performance at State Solo/Ensemble Festival.
- The Madrigals and Bella Voce Choirs earned Excellent and Superior ratings at District Festival. Both choirs will compete at the state competition.
- Kaiya Sutton and Tyler Roberts will compete at the State Solo/Ensemble for Vocal Music.
- Three new clubs, TedX, Robotics, and Science Olympiad are garnering great attention from students. Student participation is strong and successes are following. TedX organized an event around the theme of "Bursting Bubbles" at which students and community members spoke in the TedX format. The First Robotics Team received 2nd Place at districts and moves on to the state competition, an incredible feat for a rookie team!
- EGR Athletics continues to shine:
 - Both the Boys and Girls Cross Country Teams - Regional Champions
 - Boys Ski Team - State Runner-up
 - Girls Cross Country Team – State Runner-up
 - Girls Swim Team - State Runner-up
 - Boys Tennis - State Runner-up
 - Football - State Semi-finalist
- Two members of the EGRHS Sailing Team, Graham Post and Justin Lovell won state championships in their sailing boat categories. The team of Conner Goulet, Murphy Wynsma, Justin Lovell, Graham Post, and Regan Pitts were State Champion Runners-up in their sailing category as well. Four sailing team members (9th grader Kate MacKeigan and Juniors Justin Lovell, Graham Post, and Connor Goulet) were invited to participate in the Cressy National Qualifier in Minnesota. At that event, Graham Post qualified for the Laser Nationals.

Partnerships/Collaborations

- The International Baccalaureate Organization authorized EGRHS as an IB World School. In the fall, 25 students will participate in the IB Diploma Programme and several hundred will take one or more IB courses.
- As part of a collaboration between Portage Central High School's IB Programme, EGRHS hosted three Danish students for two weeks in the fall. The students lived with EGR families and attended school with EGR students.
- Two exchange students joined the EGRHS student body for the year, one from Italy and another from Switzerland.
- The East Grand Rapids Schools Foundation continues its generous support of EGRHS teachers, clubs, and athletics. The Foundation provided thousands of dollars in support of classroom enhancements, Barwis Training, Kabookie Week, and IB resources and materials.
- The High School PTO along with the Academic, Stage, Music, and Team Boosters provide funds, volunteer services, and event sponsorship that support our students and staff. Such events include parent-teacher conferences, student registration, the Academic Booster Awards Ceremony, Winter Whirl Dance, and Arts for Life.
- EGRHS Student Council partnered with Michigan Blood for the school's annual blood drive. EGR students donated over 80 pints of blood in one day.
- The annual Food Drive, a partnership between Arbor Circle and EGRHS, provided dozens of in-need families with meals for the holidays.
- Leadership and Youth Development continues to provide high-quality peer leadership opportunities and student activities. Students, along with the parent volunteer board, successfully completed a Senior Retreat and a Freshmen Connection in August, Healthy High in the Fall, along with TEAM, TATU, and STEP activities. Hundreds of EGRHS students are involved in LYD activities.
- This year, Hearts of Gold partnered with Ele's Place, a healing center for grieving children and teens. The community and schools of EGR raised thousands of dollars in support of this organization.
- Easton Schultz, Sebastian Harrell, Marlana Cole, and Tineisha Edwards are EGRHS representatives for the Grand Rapids Rotary. Johnny Southwell is the EGRHS representative for the Grand Rapids East Rotary.
- The Michigan Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution named teacher Janice Yates "Michigan History Teacher of the Year." Mrs. Yates remains in the running for the "National Teacher of the Year" award.
- Athletic Director, Tim Johnston, is one of a handful of CAP Certified Instructors (Coaches Advancement Program) through the MHSAA. He also presents at conferences and at Davenport University for students interested in Athletic Administration.
- Counselor, Danielle Beller, is MACAC's (Michigan Association of College Admissions Counselors) Secondary at-Large Membership Co-Chair. In this capacity she was on the state conference planning committee and facilitated a session for first time counselors.
- Director of Guidance, Lori Johnston, was invited to the Decemberfest College Tour in California where she visited and explored nine different colleges with other counselors from across the country.
- Latin Teacher, Jason Albaugh, was selected as an IB Reader for the IB Latin Assessments. Teachers, Jenny Frazier and Bill Strickland continued their roles as readers for the AP Spanish exam and the AP World History exam.
- The University of Michigan Department of Classical Studies named Latin Teacher, Jason Albaugh, as the recipient of the 2016 Glenn M. Knudsvig Award for Outstanding Latin Teaching in Michigan Secondary Schools.