



Celebrating Century One

Catholic
Secondary
Schools
of Greater Grand Rapids

NEWS RELEASE

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Grand Rapids Catholic Secondary Schools' Gymnasiums Take the LEED and "Go Green"

Gym groundbreaking ceremonies set for April 24th

GRAND RAPIDS, MICH. — The Grand Rapids Catholic Secondary Schools will break ground April 24 on two LEED-registered gymnasiums. These are the first green school recreational facilities in Grand Rapids and among the first in all of West Michigan.

The Catholic Secondary Schools are in the final stages of an \$8 million capital drive to construct a \$4.5 million competition gymnasium at West Catholic High School and a \$3.5 million practice gymnasium at Catholic Central High School's Cougar Athletic Trails (CAT). The high schools have raised \$7.1 million to date and estimate the projects will be completed by April 2008.

"This campaign was an ambitious effort on the part of alumni, parents, and friends," explained Chad Wieber, development director. "The Catholic Secondary Schools developed a plan to address the needs and finances required to implement an exciting and innovative program."

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) projects, such as Catholic Central and West Catholic's gymnasiums, blend environmental, economic, and occupant-oriented performance. They cost less to operate and maintain, are energy- and water-efficient, have higher lease-up rates than conventional buildings in their markets, and are a physical demonstration of the values of the organizations that own and occupy them.

The new green facilities, being built by Grand Rapids-based companies Rockford Construction and Pioneer Construction, will use state of the art electrical and mechanical systems that improve indoor air quality, reduce energy waste and create a cleaner, more efficient facility. LEED accreditation will be sought after substantial completion and review of the gymnasiums has occurred.

"Rockford Construction continues to be recognized as a socially, economically and environmentally responsible company in large part because we're fortunate enough to work with clients like the Catholic Secondary Schools who's focus remains on sustainability and creating a healthier community," said Rockford Construction CEO, John Wheeler. "We know these new gymnasiums will inspire students and faculty and promote a sustainable future for the Grand Rapids community."

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West Catholic's 35,000 square-foot gym will be located at 1801 Bristol Avenue NW and features a standard court size that enables the high school to host tournaments and frees up the current gym for much needed practice scheduling time. Other highlights include a contemporary design, an updated weight room for weight training and workouts, a multipurpose athletic room for wrestling and competitive cheer and locker room facilities for both sexes.

Catholic Central's 36,000 square-foot practice gymnasium will be located at 2770 Knapp NE and features multiple courts with improved side and end lines, a three-ring indoor track, increased equipment storage and high efficiency standards. The new gym will allow the high school to increase the amount of scheduled practice times, and centralize most athletic practices to one geographic facility.

"These groundbreaking ceremonies are a benchmark for the continued growth of our high schools, but it is particularly meaningful because of the profound effect the gyms will have on the quality of life on our campuses," said Wieber. "The new gyms will provide invaluable experiences for students and promote physical fitness for the entire community."

Since Catholic Central opened its doors in 1906, followed by West Catholic in 1962, the schools have been dedicated to providing a well-rounded, Catholic education in a safe, supportive learning environment to students from the Greater Grand Rapids area. The high schools impart skills that prepare students for the demands of college, as well as their future roles in the Church, business, government, and the community.

Catholic Secondary School students come primarily from metropolitan Grand Rapids, which includes the inner city, residential and suburban areas. Catholic Central has 792 students and West Catholic has 637 students in grades 9 through 12. More than 80% of students participate in an extracurricular activity, including athletics. Each high school provides more than 24 individual and team sport offerings to students.

The high schools are primarily college preparatory with 98% of students enrolling in college after graduation. The Catholic Secondary Schools are accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools as well as The National Catholic Educational Association. Students perform more than 25,000 hours of combined service per year.

Photos and renderings available upon request

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Source: Chad Wieber, Grand Rapids Catholic Secondary Schools, Development Director, (616) 233-5977

Grounded in Christ's teachings, the Catholic Secondary Schools of Greater Grand Rapids will advance the formation and education of each student in spirit, mind and body.