

# Immerse Final Report.

*Be curious.* | GRAND  
RAPIDS  
PUBLIC  
MUSEUM

Program Summary and Evaluation.

2018/2019



grpm.org

## ▼ Overview:

The Grand Rapids Public Museum's (GRPM) Immerse program provides a week-long learning experience for schools from the West Michigan region. The experience is crafted and led by the visiting teachers, leveraging exhibition spaces, Museum artifacts and various enrichment programs. Teachers are trained and supported through a rigorous orientation program in the summer and an individualized planning session with the Museum's K-12 Learning Specialist.

The opportunities for teachers to achieve customized learning objectives are endless. They can select from 20 guided education programs and 20 planetarium presentations, all aligned with grade-level curriculum standards. Immerse teachers also have access to 10 thematic artifact kits with lessons and background information that they can use in their own classrooms.

All together, the GRPM Immerse experience provides students with local, hands-on examples of history, science and culture. These experiences connect them deeply to their curriculum and community.



## ▼ Numbers:

Immerse has expanded and grown dramatically since it launched in 2012 with only 6 classes.

- The 2018/2019 Immerse program saw 52 classes, grades 1st through 8th
- 1,247 students participated from 21 schools across:

### **7 public school districts**

Forest Hills Public Schools  
Godfrey-Lee Public Schools  
Grand Rapids Public Schools  
Kentwood Public Schools  
Lowell Area Schools  
Rockford Public Schools

### **4 private schools**

Lake Michigan Academy  
St. Patrick Parnell  
The Potter's House  
West Side Christian School

### **2 charter schools**

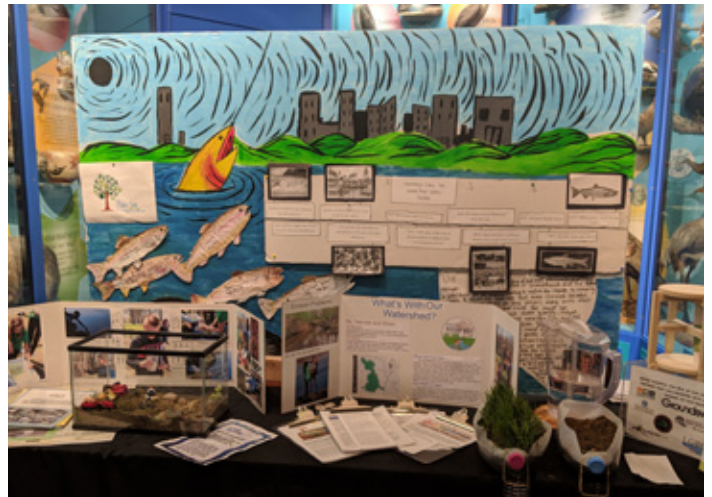
Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center  
Ridge Park Charter Academy



## ▼ Immerse Family Night:

Immerse Family Night is a celebration of the work that each class has done over the course of the school year. It is an opportunity for students to show their community what they learned through Immerse; they become Museum experts and teach family members, other students and school administrators what they think is important to know about the history, science and culture exhibited at the Museum.

Each group is challenged to create a culminating project to demonstrate how Museum learning extended back into the classroom. Students create displays and reflect on inspiring moments from their GRPM visit. This year highlighted the highest variety and quality of student projects. For example, learners at Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center were interested in the visual and symbolic representation of Grand Rapids history in the *Furniture City* mural. They designed their own mural and painted it on an outside wall of their school building. Students displayed pictures of their finished artwork at Family Night, along with written artist statements describing the symbolism and meaning. Other classes developed miniature exhibits, researched artifacts from the Museum collections, wrote stories, displayed timelines of significant events in Grand Rapids history, performed wax museum imitations of influential figures in history and much more!





## ▼ Program Evaluations:

2018/2019 Immerse participants completed surveys to provide qualitative and quantitative feedback on the program. The next few pages provide information on the data and stories collected through this evaluation process.



## ▼ Student Testimonials:

*I loved learning in the Streets of Old Grand Rapids [exhibit] because I really feel like I went in a time machine.*

- Arianna, 3rd grade student, Murray Lake Elementary

*Immerse was a fun experience for me and it taught me a lot about history, what Michigan was like before it was called Michigan, and who lived in Michigan. It also taught me what the early Native Americans did, how they lived and who they are. I hope that you visit for yourself because it is a great place to learn and have fun at the same time.*

- Sophia, 4th grade student, Discovery Elementary

*At school you can sit in a classroom and see pictures but at the Museum you can actually see and touch things in real life!*

- Jadyn, 5th grade student, Stocking Elementary

*At Immerse, we get to be more creative and explore more than we usually do at school.*

- Luis, 5th grade student, Southwest Community Campus

## ▼ Teacher Testimonials:

*We love that the Immerse program gets students out of the classroom and allows them to explore, touch, and learn facts about our history that brings it to life! Not only does the IMMERSE program cover many standards in ELA, Science, and Social Studies, but it also gives students a chance to be curious and get excited about topics that might be new to them or that they weren't excited about before going to the museum. It is hard to think about what it was like before going to the museum with our students. We now rely on this program to teach so many content standards. When we reflect on what was most memorable at the end of the school year, it is always this trip! Past students come up to us and say, 'Remember when we went to the museum for a week?' We love that!*

- Teresa Timmer, 4th grade teacher, South Elementary

*Immerse is a quality program that offers hands on experiences, meaningful discussions, and wonderful opportunities for my English Language Learners. The chance to go to the Museum is a life-changing experience for many of my students who rarely leave their neighborhoods. It is a proven fact that ESL students benefit from visual learning, hands-on experiences, and small group discussions. The Immerse program captures all of these elements. I have seen many of my students excel in this environment! The smiles I see when my students are enjoying activities led by Museum Educators and the questions I hear them ask are memories I will cherish forever.*

- Kristina Morton, 5th grade teacher, Burton Elementary



## ▼ Teacher Surveys

Immerse teachers were asked to provide feedback to improve the effectiveness of GRPM education materials in addressing learning objectives and engaging all learners. Paper surveys were administered on the final day of the weeklong Immerse experience.

Teachers rated their experience on a Likert scale and their responses were converted to a number value. The conversion is as follows; completely disagree - 1, somewhat disagree - 2, neutral - 3, somewhat agree - 4, completely agree - 5.

Question	Average Score
The Immerse PD / program orientation was informative and useful.	4.68
The individual planning session with the GRPM Learning Specialist was helpful.	4.90
The students were engaged and interested in museum learning.	4.81
The Immerse program was beneficial to my students, academically.	4.93
Material was age / grade level appropriate.	4.74
The GRPM educators were prepared and professional.	4.90
The classroom space was clean and comfortable.	4.77





## ▼ Student Experience Surveys

Participating students were asked to reflect on their experience at Immerse with a short student experience survey. One-page paper surveys were administered on the final day of the week. The information below is based on the 904 student survey responses received.

Question	Yes	No
Have you been to the Grand Rapids Public Museum before this week?	83%	17%
Did your experience teach you something new about science or history?	97%	3%
What is the most important thing you learned during your Museum visit?	<b>Various responses. Examples:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I learned that history is not just in a book or in a movie, but history is influencing your life and how you live.</li> <li>The most important thing that I learned was about moving to America. I had to move from my country too, from Myanmar (Burma). We had to move because of the Iraq terrorists- the Rohingya. I had to leave EVERYTHING! There was war there too. I had lost 3 members of my family- my Uncle Biak, my cousin Mawi, and my older brother Jonathan who died before I was born. I just felt so connected with the Newcomers exhibit. Thank you for putting it up.</li> <li>The most important thing I learned is how we affect the water in our environment and what we can do to change it.</li> </ul>	
What was your favorite part about the Immerse week?	<b>Various responses. Examples:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>My favorite part was the Streets of Old Grand Rapids and the marsh diorama (a new word for me). I liked seeing the water magnified by 200 and everything looked so real to me. I also really enjoyed the planetarium shows. Overall, I loved everything. There was so much to do and explore.</li> <li>Everything. There was so much to see and the museum is filled with cool stuff. The Museum teachers keep you on track, make sure that you learn and that you have a good time.</li> <li>The museum has so many artifacts to discover and it's way more fun, writing and being curious!</li> </ul>	



## Question

## Various responses. Examples:

How was your Museum experience different from your usual experience at school?

- I think it was more interactive, because we did a lot of teamwork, sharing ideas, hands on, and deep thinking. I learned so much about animals, cultures, space, toys, and a lot more. Thank you for this experience.
- We got to explore some of the museum that I haven't really looked at before. It was more hands-on, or explorative than Montessori, if that's possible.
- What I think about Immerse is that instead of just learning about history at school we get to touch artifacts and do fun activities that teach us something but are still fun to do. Seeing artifacts gives a first-account and we got to feel some of them. It was fun doing scavenger hunts and other different activities.

