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Grand Rapids sells Riverside North Elementary for \$510,000 to company for senior housing facility

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GRAND RAPIDS, MI - Grand Rapids Public Schools sold Riverside North Elementary today for \$510,000 to **G.A. Haan Development** in Harbor Springs to develop a senior assisted living center.

"We are thrilled to have the building," said Kathy Schorfhaar, project manager for Haan about today's closing. "We are still in the design phase. The closing was one more anticipated step in the process."

The school, located at 2420 Coit Ave. NE, opened in 1954 and closed in 2010. City officials signed off on the zoning and land use for the project last March. Plans call for around 50 separate units, a dining hall, recreation area and offices.

Developer Gerald Haan expressed interest in the property last year and the **school board agreed to sell** the 36,686-square-foot building that sits on 7.5 acres that October for the appraised value.

John Helmholt, communications director for Grand Rapids schools, said the district will use the money to pay down outstanding debt and liability.

The district has been forced to close and sell school buildings over the last several year to bring its finances and operations in line with its enrollment, which has fallen to 18,000.

This is the fourth building the board has sold in the last six months. The district received \$1.6 million for Oakdale, Lexington and Eastern elementary schools from Ojibway Development LLC. Oakdale was sold to National Heritage Academies for a charter. The developer says the other two are still planned apartments.

Last month, **Haan told MLive** the Riverside building lends itself to assisted living type facility. He said he would build an approximately 7,700-square-foot addition.

"A building that started as a school for young children in a quiet neighborhood will now be a place



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Katy Batdorff Mlive.com

Grand Rapids Public Schools sold Riverside North Elementary for \$510,000 today G.A. Haan Development in Harbor Springs for an assisted living facility. The school, which closed in 2010, is located at 2420 Coit Ave. NE.

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for people to spend their golden years," he said then. "It really does make sense for the area, when you look at all the alternatives."

Schorfhaar said the exact level of care to be provided is still being determined but will have that resolve later this summer. She said there won't be a construction start date until they complete design work.

Haan points to an assisted living facility in Calumet called **GardenView** as a recent example of his company's work.

Email: mscott2@mlive.com and follow her on Twitter at [Twitter.com/GRPScotty](https://twitter.com/GRPScotty).

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Union High School better be next.

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[Scott_Stuit_971](#)

Is Riverside Middle still a open GRPS school? The heating and cooling were always located at the Middle/Junior High and serviced both buildings though a tunnel connecting the two buildings. Would be interesting to know if the new Senior Living Center would have to install a new facility for such utilities.

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[Monica Scott](#) | mscott2@mlive.com

Are you concerned declining enrollment will force GRPS leaders to close your neighborhood school?

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[Steve Kaminski](#) | Skaminsk@mlive.com

Riverside Elementary is our old stomping ground, Monica. Scott and I were classmates there back in 19....well, let's leave that part out.

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sillylionzz

If GRPS had "neighborhood" schools, enrollment would not have steadily declined since the late 60's and early 70's.

saveGR likes this.

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