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Grand Rapids Community College Dual Enrollment Signing Ceremony

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Opening remarks

• Good Afternoon, President Ender, Provost Gely (HEH ly), and guests. It is great to be back in Grand Rapids and here on the campus of Grand Rapids Community College with my colleague President Ender.

• It's always good to be here. The Grand Rapids community is a special place for those of us at Western Michigan University. It's been that way for more than 100 years when our first partnerships emerged and WMU began offering extension classes in this city. Today, we have two vibrant graduate education locations here, and we regularly welcome thousands of students from Grand Rapids to our main campus in Kalamazoo.

• I treasure our relationship with Grand Rapids Community College, and we've had a long and close connection. We've collaborated on a number of fronts, and for many years, GRCC students have transferred to WMU in large numbers--more than 130 each year. We've also had an articulation agreement in place for many years to make that transfer process as seamless as possible.

• Today is all about providing even more opportunity for Grand Rapids area students. We're signing an agreement that at its core is about providing more opportunities for students and making their path to higher ed success well coordinated. We're working together to support students and their choices and to ensure that their options for the future are strong.
Specifically, we're here to affix the seal of approval of both institutions on a dual enrollment program that will allow students to enjoy the benefits of being students of both GRCC and WMU from the time they begin their college studies.

Our agreement is intended for business students who begin at GRCC and plan to continue on for a bachelor's degree. The arrangement allows students to earn an associate degree at GRCC and to also engage with WMU in a way that guarantees they can seamlessly transfer, as juniors, to our Haworth College of Business.

**Closing remarks**

Grand Rapids Community College has long been our partner in providing top-notch higher education opportunities to students. This agreement enhances the way both institutions are able to serve students by ensuring continuity and guaranteeing that every class successfully completed puts a student one step closer to his or her degree goal. Students who enroll in the program will be both Raiders and Broncos from their very first days in college."

Today's agreement takes the institutional partnership we've established over the years to the next level by leveraging our resources in a way that will help student families get the maximum benefit when they invest their resources in higher education.

It's the best of both worlds for students--two years laying the groundwork at first-rate community college close to home, and then experiencing a seamless transition to the business college of a major public research university.
• We expect this initial effort in business to be a model--a template--for additional programs in the future as we identify more disciplines that will enhance the educational experience of students from both our institutions. We began with business, because so many transferring students select our terrific business college. President Ender, I look forward to meeting you here on a regular basis as we add new disciplines and hold signing occasions like this one.