

A young man with short dark hair, wearing a grey cardigan over a white collared shirt and dark blue trousers, is sitting on a speckled floor in a school hallway. He is leaning against a row of grey metal lockers, smiling at the camera. His hands are clasped together, and he is wearing black sneakers with white laces and white soles. The lockers behind him have small blue labels with numbers like 890, 892, and 894.

CHOICES in EDUCATION

TECHNOLOGY

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MUSIC EDUCATION

The benefits of music instruction for young learners



PHOTOS COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Many children are introduced to music instruction at school. After being introduced to band, chorus and various instruments, students may be eager to explore music.

Young students are often introduced to the recorder or ukulele in the early grades and then given the opportunity to join primary bands as they move through elementary school and into middle school. Some children also may want to supplement school music lessons with private music tutors, who can provide more in-depth instruction.

Parents considering making a commitment to music instruction may find that kids benefit from being involved with music in many ways, some of which may be surprising.

▪ The New England Board of Higher Education says several studies show that consistent

music education improves vocabulary and reading comprehension skills. Emerging evidence points to an area of the brain that controls both musical ability and language comprehension as being more closely related than previously thought.

▪ Music education may help young children learn words and how to pronounce them, as learning to play music enables them to process the many new sounds they hear from others.

▪ Researchers have discovered a strong relationship between participating in school arts and academic success as demonstrated by students' grade point averages, according to the National Association for Music Education.

▪ The relationship between music and academic performance has been studied for decades. As far back as 1988, studies have been conducted about

The relationship between music and academic performance has been studied for decades. As far back as 1988, studies have been conducted about the benefits of music education. An analysis of data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 demonstrated a significant correlation between participation in school music groups and achievement in math and English.

the benefits of music education. An analysis of data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 demonstrated a significant correlation between participation in school music groups and achievement in math and English. And a 1996 study published in *Nature* found first graders who participated in special music classes as part of an arts study program saw their reading skills and math proficiency increase dramatically.

▪ Introducing music lessons to young children can have profound effects on their social development. Music fosters greater trust and cooperation, as well as a sense of community and belonging.

▪ Another benefit of music education is it allows children to harness their creativity and express it in a healthy way.

▪ The music instruction company Music U says children with developmental disorders

and mental health issues might be able to unlock their potential with music. Music therapy has been shown to affect significant change in children with autism-spectrum disorders, learning disabilities, attachment disorders, cerebral palsy, and more.

Music instruction both in and out of the classroom can be a benefit to young learners.

Story courtesy of Metro Creative Connection



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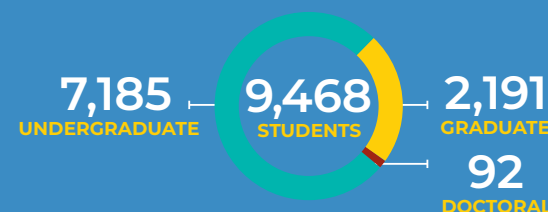
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* Based on middle 50 percent of incoming freshmen for Fall 2018

27%
STUDENTS
OF COLOR

17:1
STUDENTS TO
FACULTY RATIO

26
AVERAGE
CLASS SIZE



COUNSELING

The benefits of a strong school counseling program

Educators deserve recognition for their hard work as they help to develop the minds and attitudes of tomorrow's leaders. When offering such gratitude, it's important that school counselors, who are often the unsung heroes of the educational landscape, receive their due.

Counselors are a support system through which students can manage emotions, navigate social changes and set goals. According to the Southington Public School District in Connecticut, school counseling services are vital to improving students' academic performance by identifying barriers to learning. Counselors work with students individually or in small groups to help children work through difficult issues and get the

most out of school.

School counselors also serve as a liaison between the student and parents. They may be the first person a student looks to for advice when trying to work through an issue. However, counselors also may facilitate communication when students are experiencing difficulty discussing challenging subjects with their parents.

Counseling teams also work with teachers to offer support. Counselors may gather and share resources with teachers to help improve teaching efficacy, making suggestions after observing students in the classroom environment, according to the counseling career resource Best Counseling Degrees.

In a high school or higher

education setting, counselors may help students identify skills, strengths and potential career paths. They can act as advisors and help students choose their courses.

Counselors may have experience in various disciplines. While some counselors may offer psychological counseling, others may specialize in identifying learning disabilities or work in career placement capacities.

Counselors generally serve as advocates for students. They help children adjust to new schools, recognize causes and effects of their behaviors, develop social skills, and navigate the often challenging world of academics.

Story courtesy of Metro Creative Connection



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION



Grand Valley State University offers its nearly 25,000 students the adventure of a lifetime, preparing them for both a fulfilling career and a life of impact. Lakers learn how to become a positive force for change - giving, creating, and making a difference. That's the Laker Effect.

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Grand Valley also helps shape students' futures through a liberal education foundation that emphasizes critical thinking, creative problem solving, and cultural understanding — preparing students for life in a fast-changing world. In addition, the university fosters a commitment to economic, social, and environmental sustainability and an inclusive campus that values diversity.

Meanwhile, state-of-the-art facilities promote academic achievement and a fulfilling living experience. Grand Valley's main campus in Allendale is home to modern classrooms and labs, some of the newest and most inviting living centers in Michigan, outstanding fitness and sports facilities, a comprehensive library, and much more. Just 15 miles east, in the heart of Michigan's second largest city, the 69-acre Robert C. Pew Grand Rapids Campus offers a dynamic urban academic setting. The Pew Grand Rapids Campus features the Cook-DeVos Center for Health Sciences, which is part of an expanding synergistic health campus that includes Raleigh J. Finkelstein Hall and the Daniel and Pamela DeVos Center for Interprofessional Health scheduled for a May 2021 completion date. This setting has made Grand Valley a catalyst for health care partnerships and joint ventures that put students in the heart of unique learning experiences along Grand Rapids' Medical Mile.

The combination of cutting-edge facilities and rigorous, supported academic pursuits leads to success on Grand Valley's campuses, where the graduation rate is consistently one of the highest in the state. And Grand Valley's forward-thinking education empowers students to expand their horizons to prepare for success both on the job and in the community.

The ultimate result: Graduates leave with the knowledge, real-world experience, and confidence to make their mark in the world, giving Lakers a clear path as they begin their next adventure.

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SCHOOLING CHOICES

Pros and cons of public and private schools

Parents may have a number of options when choosing schools for their children. Public schools are responsible for educating millions of youngsters every day, though private schools also may make great options for certain students. Families must weigh the pros and cons of schooling decisions carefully to find the best fit, as school helps set the foundation for life ahead.

Private schools

While most people think of religion when they consider private schools, many such schools in the United States are not affiliated with a religious organization. According to data from Niche, more than 30 percent of the roughly 25,000 private PreK-12 schools in the United States are not based in religious education.

Private schools can benefit kids in various ways. Each private school follows its own direction, which means there can be varied educational goals and approaches. Private schools have more flexibility than public schools in regard to their curriculum, as they are not bound by state or federal mandates. This can be a boon to a student who learns in a specific way. Private schools tend to have small class sizes and student bodies, which can make for individualized attention.

The most prominent drawback for private schools is the cost. Many private schools cost thousands of dollars per year, and such costs may not include uniforms and supplies. Another potential con is some private schools simply cannot offer the same vast level of options



PHOTOS COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION



as a public school. Through taxpayer funding, public schools may be able to bring in more resources and offer a greater array of classes.

Public schools

Public schools are often a natural choice because they are free to attend.

With a more varied curriculum and greater propensity to offer more after-school activities than smaller schools, public schools can be a great draw. Plus, children who attend local schools may feel more in touch with the community and take pride in partaking in the town or city's traditions.

Enrollment is often considered a downside to public schools. Many public schools

have a higher teacher-to-student ratio than private schools. This may lead to a "lost in the crowd" feeling for students who may otherwise benefit from more individualized attention. What's more, because public schools are bound by set curriculums, teachers may not have the same flexibility in what or how they can teach as their colleagues who teach at private schools.

There are other pros and cons to public and private schools that families can work through together. Ultimately, parents and their children should work to find the best match for their needs.

Story courtesy of Metro Creative Connection

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Families with children preschool age through grade five are invited to visit any of the 12 Walled Lake Elementary Schools from 6-8 p.m. on Tues., Oct. 22.



Middle School OPEN HOUSE

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23 | 6-8 P.M.

Families with children grade six through grade eight are invited to visit any of the four Walled Lake Middle Schools from 6-8 p.m. on Wed., Oct. 23.



High School OPEN HOUSE

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24 | 6-8 P.M.

Families with children grade nine through grade 12 are invited to visit any of the three Walled Lake High Schools from 6-8 p.m. on Thur., Oct. 24.

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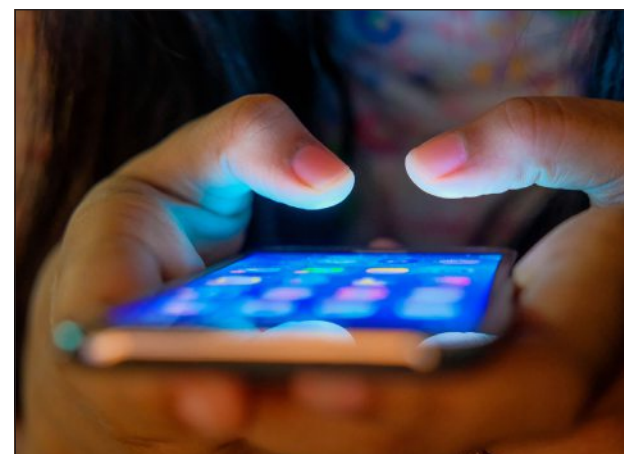
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TECHNOLOGY

Popular classroom learning apps



PHOTOS COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

It is impossible to ignore the immense popularity of digital learning tools in today's schools. Teachers routinely turn to online tools and available applications to offer students all the resources they need to become well-rounded individuals.

According to research from Grunwald Associates, LLC, 71 percent of parents embrace mobile devices and feel they open up learning opportunities for kids that didn't previously exist. The research also suggests that a similar percentage of parents would like teachers to recommend apps for students.

Navigating learning apps can be daunting due to the sheer volume of apps available. According to Apps for Education, there are more than 500,000 educational apps currently available for download. Apps can be stimulating and fun, but finding quality resources may involve sorting through those that aren't necessarily valuable. The following are some apps parents may want to consider.

- **Memrise:** Learning a second or third language can be a boon to stu-

dents of any age. Some schools may be limited in the number of languages they offer. Therefore, an app may be a great resource for students looking to learn a new language. Memrise drills students on vocabulary, phrases, aural recognition, and more.

- **Kahoot:** Kahoot is a platform to create games and review content. Players answer questions on their individual devices, while games are displayed on a shared screen. Kahoot can be an ideal way for several students to prepare for a test in a digital study session.

- **Reading Eggs:** This comprehensive learning system covers essential components of reading: awareness, vocabulary, phonics, fluency, and comprehension. Parents can see progress reports and know if and where extra attention may be necessary.

- **Edmodo:** This app is designed to streamline workloads for teachers and help make it easier for them to stay connected with the classroom and their students. Parents can set up accounts and stay abreast of their children's activities, grades, mes-

sages, and progress. Though it's not a learning app, Edmodo can be a valuable tool for classroom management.

- **Epic:** This online children's subscription book service offers immediate, on-demand access to high-quality reading materials for children ages 12 and under. Voracious readers will always have content they can access, in addition to audio books, educational videos, and educational quizzes.

- **Photomath:** This app enables students to snap pictures of complicated math problems and get step-by-step directions on how to answer them. Instead of simply giving the answer, Photomath provides students with the tools to answer the problems on their own.

- **StudyBlue:** Students can create and share mobile flash cards, study guides, quizzes, and choose from other study materials to help reinforce lessons.

Educational apps play a vital role in educating today's students.

Story courtesy of Metro Creative Connection



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OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

How to prevent busy kids from overextending themselves

Today's teenagers are busy. According to the American Time Use Survey from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average high school student spends just under an hour and a half each weekday participating in extracurricular activities that include playing sports, working/volunteering and religious activities.

With so much do and lots of encouragement to participate in their communities, teens can easily find themselves overex-

tended. Extracurricular activities are important, and some have even been linked to improved academic performance. But it's equally important that high school students avoid burnout,

which can adversely affect their academic performance and how much they enjoy school and other activities.

Parents can employ various strategies to help busy teenagers avoid overextending themselves.

- Learn the signs of burnout and look for them. Even the most overextended teenager probably enjoys many of the activities he or she engages in. So it's unlikely that kids will self-report burnout to their parents, teachers, coaches, or other authority figures. Parents can learn to spot the signs of burnout to identify if their child is overextended. According to Understood.org, a website sponsored by 15 nonprofit organizations devoted to helping parents of kids between the ages of three and 20, procrastination, negative attitudes, testiness, difficulty concentrating, and a disinterest in things kids once liked are some potential indicators

of burnout. Parents who notice any of these signs in their children might want to look at their kids' schedules to see if their children are simply taking on more than they can chew.

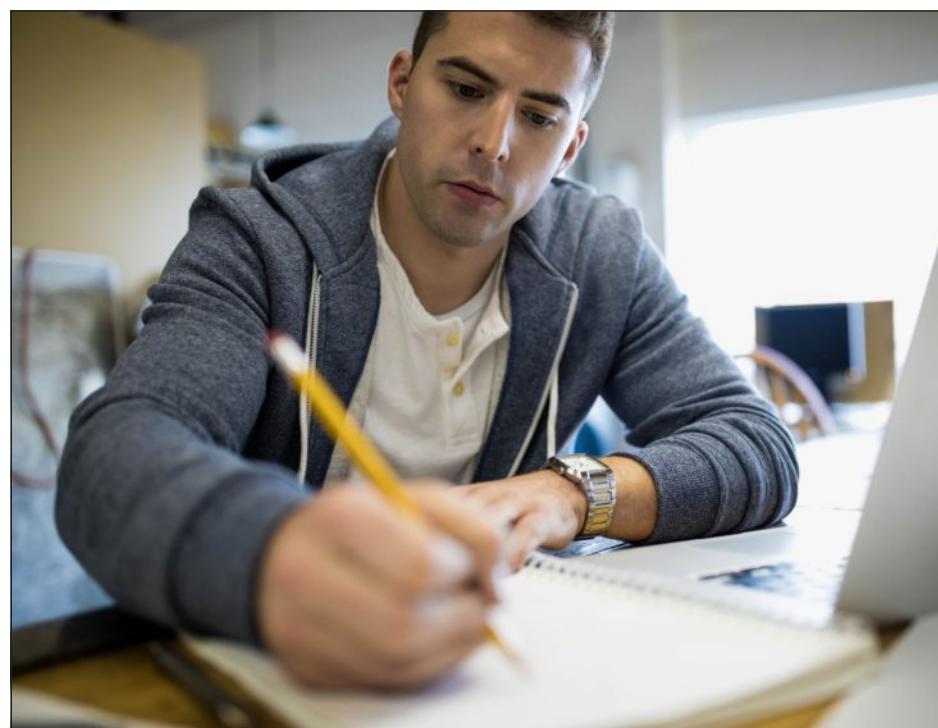
- Teach kids time management skills. Time management skills can help kids make effective and efficient use of their time. Encourage kids who are struggling with their schedules to use a calendar to plan their weeks. Knowing what's expected of them each day can help kids develop a plan to get everything done. In addition, when kids make a list of their daily activities, parents can go over that list with them to see if they're taking on too much. Discuss the calendar with kids, and if kids express feelings of exhaustion or burnout, go through the calendar to see where they can free up some time, even if it means cutting some activities out of their schedules entirely.

- Teach kids the art of

prioritizing. Parents know that some tasks are more important than others. But kids may not be so savvy. Teach kids how to prioritize, emphasizing that academics always come first. Give kids some credit if they're initially resistant to dropping some activities, as that can indicate an admirable willingness to commit. But emphasize that school comes first, and that activities that are low priority might need to be sacrificed during the school year. In addition, point out that certain activities that are not school-related can be revisited in the summer, when kids typically have less hectic schedules.

Burnout can be harmful to high school students. Parents can work with their children to ensure they aren't overextending themselves.

Story courtesy of Metro Creative Connection



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At CMU, students are more than learners and faculty are more than teachers.



Through mentorship and collaboration, CMU students and faculty are working together to identify and solve problems with worldwide impact and lead groundbreaking research. Through these experiences, students gain hands-on experience and graduate career-ready.

There are experiential learning opportunities across all of CMU's more than 200 undergraduate academic programs.

Students have access to the 227 laboratory facilities starting their freshman year on campus.

In those labs, students are examining antioxidants to find more effective ways to prevent cancer, studying the effects of stress and aging on reproduction to help to solve fertility problems, determining how to cut off energy to a cell's mitochondrial DNA to stop the spread of diseases, and researching how to deliver DNA to cells affected by brain disorders to treat diseases like Parkinson's and Alzheimer's.

"Being able to do cancer research at only 19 years old is amazing. I get to make a big difference," said Gretchen Holtgreffe, a biochemistry major who started researching at CMU during her freshman year and focuses on determining which antioxidants are effective in preventing cancer.

CMU students are not just making discoveries on campus, they're presenting their findings at international conferences. Biology major Lateef Shafau presented his research alongside Dr. Ute Hochgeschwender at the National Society for Neuroscience. His research, which focuses on using light from proteins to help stimulate neurons in the spinal cord, is aimed at improving recovery in the lower extremities after spinal cord injuries. Lateef added an element to the study where swimming is used to help strengthen and practice using the injured limbs.

Through experiences like those of Gretchen and Lateef, students engage with other professionals in their fields of study, challenging them to think about new ways to approach their research.

"It's been an incredible privilege to research as an undergraduate at CMU," Lateef said. "The partnership with Dr. Hochgeschwender and CMU has really shown me the ins and outs of medicine."

CMU's hands-on opportunities spread across all academic programs. Students are developing their critical thinking and problem-solving skills by taking the concepts they learn in class to the real world.

At CMU's Biological Station on Beaver Island, students are working on Great Lakes preservation and conservation. They are researching ways to clean up potential environmental damage in the case of an accidental oil spill, conducting wetlands research through a grant from the EPA and investigating what is causing the disappearance of Great Lakes whitefish in hopes of restoring their population.

CMU's student-driven research also includes a mobile weather observation vehicle outfitted with computers and meteorological instruments to measure temperature, wind speed and direction, humidity, and more. Students use this technology to follow weather-related cold fronts and collect data about storms. CMU is the only Michigan university to have such a vehicle.

CMU students have been cataloging and excavating a site at the Fort Gratiot Lighthouse in Port Huron, Michigan, since 2016. They engage with park visitors, share their findings with the community and answer the public's questions which provides career training for those hoping to pursue jobs in cultural resource management. Their work also helps preserve local heritage sites and creates a greater public appreciation for them.

Students across campus are working collaboratively to help educators position themselves to help children cope with traumatic experiences called Adverse Childhood Experiences. Research has shown that children with a high number of ACEs are more likely to struggle in school and have lifelong health effects. Through an expanded psychiatry residency program and cross-campus efforts to create educational podcasts about ACEs and trauma-informed practices, both CMU students and Michigan educators will be better equipped to understand the effects of ACEs and counteract negative experiences.

Education students are following suit, taking a trauma-informed approach to consider the root cause of classroom behavior and create safe learning spaces. Through a workshop series, students learn about how stress and trauma affect brain development, how it can take form in their students, and how to help children understand and cope with ACEs.

As a Creative Action Partner, CMU collaborates with the Traverse City Film Festival and provides students with on-site learning experiences and resume-building opportunities. Students earn internships with the festival, which is fully run by college students and volunteers. Seven students served as interns, four students had their short films screened and three film school workshops were taught by CMU faculty and students in 2019. From keeping things running smoothly to producing real, meaningful pieces used throughout the event, students showcase skills they've learned and walk away with film credit on their resumes.

With countless opportunities and hands-on experiences, it's easy to see why more than 90% of our graduates are employed or pursuing an advanced degree within six months of graduating. Nearly every one of those students is in a career related to their major.

OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Successful tips for finding a tutor



PHOTOS COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION



Many children are natural-born students who take to their academics like ducks to water. Others may not catch on as quickly as their parents desire. Every student has unique learning requirements, and sometimes all it takes is some one-on-one intervention with an experienced tutor to turn the academic tide.

The National Tutoring Association reports that the number of individuals offering private tutoring has increased dramatically in recent years, which can make finding a tutor challenging. It also means parents may face stiff competition in regard to procuring the services of qualified tutors. But parents can employ various strategies to improve their chances of finding skilled tutors to work with their children.

- Specify what you need done. The more clearly you define what you and your child

hope to gain from individualized instruction, the more capably you can zero in on a tutor who will meet those needs effectively. Some students need reinforcement for testing, while others may struggle with a particular skill set. The more specific you are when illustrating your needs, the more likely you are to find someone who can help address those areas that need improving.

- Seek recommendations. Ask around for recommendations from other parents or educators. Speak with school personnel to find out if someone on staff may tutor in his or her off hours.

- Try a favorite teacher. Many students may have a favorite teacher, past or present, with whom they developed a rapport. If your child fits that mold, contact this teacher to see if he or she tutors students on the side.

- Call the library. Many times high school or college students

offer free or reduced-rate tutoring at local libraries. These sessions can be just as beneficial to young students as sessions with professional tutors.

- Consider a tutoring center. Nationally recognized tutoring organizations can be invaluable to students struggling with their studies. Explore the cost options of one-on-one sessions versus small group instruction.

- Look for specialized tutors. Certain tutors specialize in certain subjects or skills. Lean toward those tutors for advanced lessons in tricky subjects like maths and sciences.

Upon hiring a tutor, give it a few lessons to see if the tutor clicks with your child. Set benchmarks for success that the tutor can work toward. If the relationship is not working, start the process over.

Story courtesy of Metro Creative Connection



SCHOOL SPORTS

How students can prepare for a coming sports season

Participation in sports can be an important component of a student's overall school experience. So it should come as no surprise that the number of participants in high school sports increased for the 29th consecutive year in 2017-18, according to the annual High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the National Federation of State High School Associations.

Students may have various reasons for joining school-sanctioned sports teams, including engaging in physical exercise, boosting their résumés with extracurricular activities and finding shared interests with fellow students. School sports provide this and more.

Of course, participation in scholastic sports first involves signing up for the activity. To ensure they're eligible to participate in scholastic sports, students typically have to follow some key steps.

- **Physical examination:** A doctor will have to provide medical clearance, confirming a student is healthy enough to play. Check with the school athletic director or school nurse regard-

ing the "expiration date" of a physical. Students are often required to get a physical each year, though some might need to get one before each season. Pediatricians and wellness clinics often get inundated with requests to fill out physical forms prior to sports seasons. So contact physicians well in advance of the start of the season to ensure that the physical can be completed and the forms handed in on time.

- **Health waivers:** Doctors alone are not responsible for giving the okay to participate in sports. Before a child can be deemed eligible, parents often have to fill out a detailed health history for their children, listing any possible allergies or conditions that may affect participation. They also may have to provide a list of current immunizations and eye exam results.

- **Enrollment:** Schools may have different sign-up routes for the various sports seasons. Schools generally offer fall, winter and spring sports. Students may need to sign up on an official list with the athletic director or coach. Other schools may utilize a digital system for enrollments. Schools typ-



PHOTOS COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

ically publicize how students can get involved with sports and provide the steps for signing up.

- **Contact with coach:** Once enrolled, students may have to connect with the coach in a predetermined way. Various apps and tools can be used. Email is always a popular method for contacting the team, but apps like TeamSnap or Remind are other ways coaches may send out blast announcements about practices, meets, games, and more.

Sports can be a great way for students to develop mentally, physically and socially. To participate in sports, student-athletes must follow the right steps for enrollment.

Story courtesy of Metro Creative Connection



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