

February 2026



Second Quarter Program Highlights

GAP School Student Life In Photos



Construction Pathway Updates: Solar Panel Installation Pilot Program

In a highly competitive process, GAP School's YouthBuild program was selected by YouthBuild Global to run a Solar Panel Installation Training and Certification Pilot Program, in partnership with Menlo Academy.

The Solar Panel Installation Training Pilot started at Menlo Academy on January 27th with 15 students and will run for 10 weeks. Their first task is to build a mock roof.

Over the following weeks, students will learn about how solar energy works, different racking and mounting systems for commercial and residential solar panel installation, how to use different tools, how to identify and work with different roofing materials, and even learn a little electrical engineering.

For the final week of the program, a team from Step Up Solar will travel to Minneapolis and work the entire week with the students, testing them for certification. This all leads to "graduation" of the program with a \$250 stipend and professional certification in Solar Panel Installation, equipping participants with the skills needed to enter the solar workforce.



Construct Tomorrow Event

Construction Pathway students attended the Construct Tomorrow event. Students were exposed to different trades of construction and learned about their apprenticeship programs. Students also got to practice on excavator simulators and more.



Healthcare Pathway Updates

Healthcare Pathway Students Xee and Zeki volunteer in Guest Services at Region's Hospital each week. They are responsible for knowing all areas of the hospital so they can assist visitors and patients in finding where they need to go. Both work closely with the guest services team to make sure things get done. Xee is also training with our group of twelve CNAs and just completed her online training and is preparing for CNA clinical training.

Both Zeki and Xee bring great energy to the hospital with a passion for learning about working in a hospital and eager to grow their resumes and eventually work in a setting like this after graduation.

Twelve Healthcare Pathway Students are preparing for their online courses and training to end and will begin their CNA training in person at Heart Cert MN. All of them are working so hard and will be testing for their license in late April or early May 2026.

Service Learning at Living Well and Episcopal Nursing Home

GAP School Healthcare Pathway students led a themed bingo event at Living Well Disability Services in during second quarter. We enjoyed prizes and a pizza party afterwards. We were joined by GAP School alumnus, David Asunge, who worked for Living Well as a CNA at the time. He was just hired in early January to work as a Cardiac Unit CNA full-time at Regions Hospital!

Healthcare Pathway students also painted nails on and arranged flowers with residents from Episcopal Nursing Home.



Healthcare Pathway Manager, Erika Ryan, and GAP School alumnus David Asunge

Writing Project with Author Ross Gay

During the second quarter, GAP School MIT English classes collaborated with the Minneapolis chapter of the national nonprofit organization 826MSP (826MSP.org), which promotes creative writing for youth. For 10 weeks, GAP English teacher, Alla Boulos, and the guest teaching artist, Kathy Seipp, worked with our high school students on the publication of a collection of essays themed after Ross Gay's "The Book of Delights." Students composed poems, vignettes, stories, and essays highlighting their positive mindset and experiences, got introduced to the publication process, and participated in a Zoom workshop with the author, Ross Gay, to refine their craft. This publication is due to come out in May 2026. Sponsored by 826MSP, students and GAP School community members will receive free copies of the book. Congratulations to our published authors!



Important Dates:

- March 6: Half-Day (Mid Quarter Negotiations)
- March 11: Half-Day (Professional Development)
- March 12: Remote Learning Day/ Afternoon Conferences (MIT Only)
- March 13: Remote Learning Day/ Morning Conferences (MIT Only)
- April 2: Half-Day (End of Quarter 3)
- April 3-10: No School (Spring Break)

GAP SCHOOL'S MISSION STATEMENT

GAP School's mission is to empower communities challenged by transition and poverty through education and enrichment opportunities, social and emotional support, and training that leads to employment.

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