



# The Blackboard

Grand Erie District School Board's Highlights from the Boardroom

REGULAR BOARD MEETING | JANUARY 30, 2017

**A Statement from Brenda Blancher, Director of Education about the tragic events in Quebec City:**

*"Grand Erie District School Board stands united against hatred and violence. Our thoughts are with all those affected by the senseless event in Quebec City on January 29, 2017. Supports have been shared with administrators for staff and students who have questions about this tragic event. Grand Erie embraces inclusiveness and our caring staff welcomes diversity."*

## *Student Recognition Program*

The recognition program is Grand Erie District School Board's way to honour and celebrate students who excelled in the areas of academics, athletics, and the arts, as well as in the community. All recipients were presented with a certificate from Brenda Blancher, Director of Education and Trustee James Richardson.

### **Zach Thomas, Paris District High School**

Last summer, Zach Thomas' talent in the sport of rugby took him places few other Ontario players have been. Zach was one of just four Ontario athletes qualifying for the Canadian Rugby League Association's Under-17 team, a feat achieved through a commitment to excellence he consistently demonstrates. Being selected for the Under-17 team gave Zach exposure to international competition, travelling to Jamaica where the Canadians defeated the Jamaican national team, adjusting to new sets of rules and a level of play they'd never experienced before. Beyond athleticism, rugby has been an outlet for Zach's sense of responsibility, perseverance, and integrity.



### **Weibin (Benny) Liu, Pauline Johnson Collegiate & Vocational School**

Weibin (Benny) Liu immigrated to Canada three years ago, and spoke very little English at the time – an experience that was lonely and isolating. It gave him a unique understanding of the experiences and struggles of others. He joined the YMCA Youth Fusion, and soon made it his mission to help other newcomer youth while he continued to learn himself. His aim was to improve experiences for new Canadians to the area, building understanding and awareness to prevent feelings of isolation and instances of bullying. Last fall, Benny received the well-deserved honour of a nomination for the YMCA Peace Medal for his community-building work. He is a role model of compassion, cooperation, and inclusiveness.



## Ryan McCulligh, Waterford Public School

Ryan McCulligh is one of the younger members of the Delhi Pop n' Jay Men's Archery team; in fact, most of his teammates are adults while he is in Grade 7. But it was Ryan's skill that led the team to victory last spring at the national championship, bringing home the top trophy for their merit. This was no small feat, and is a testament to the maturity, perseverance, and cooperation Ryan exhibits. Archery is its own lesson in physics, coordination, and precision, and Ryan is right on the mark.



*Do you know a student to nominate for this recognition? Learn about the criteria and the nomination process by visiting the Student Recognition section on the Board's website under the Student tab or directly through this link: <http://bit.ly/1T2CS1v>*

## United Way Presentation to Grand Erie

Representatives from Brant United Way and the United Way of Haldimand Norfolk came with the final amounts that Grand Erie District School Board raised during the 2016 Campaign, which ran from Thanksgiving to Halloween. Together, Grand Erie raised \$49,683 and received recognition for 100% school and site participation in Brant and 86% school and site participation in Haldimand and Norfolk.



## Camp SAIL

A literacy and numeracy camp designed to promote ongoing learning over the summer holidays was celebrated at Board. Offered in seven schools, Camp SAIL (Summer Adventures in Learning) proved to engage students. The unique program offers a focus on literacy and numeracy in the morning, and the learning is continued in the afternoon in a recreation program.

- Learn more here: <http://bit.ly/2joobe8>



## PJ Student is heading to Harvard

In the spirit of Success for Every Student, Director Blancher highlighted Josiah VanWyngaarden, a Pauline Johnson Collegiate student, who has been accepted to Harvard University. Read more about his accomplishment in an article published in The Brantford Expositor (Photo credit Brian Thompson):

- <http://www.brantfordexpositor.ca/2017/01/18/hes-going-to-harvard>



## February is Black History Month

Students and staff in Grand Erie commemorate Black History Month in schools through a number of literacy-based activities and lessons on Black history with a focus on Canadian heritage. Black History Month is a key piece to the Board's Equity and Inclusive Education strategy. This year's Legacy Poster 2017 highlights African-Canadians who have excelled in science, technology, engineering, the arts and math. The poster features scientist/politician Howard McCurdy, Leesa Renee Hall (Technology), engineer Nasri Agil, artist/singer Jully Black and educator Kenneth Fells.



## Walking Together at Woodland Cultural Centre

On Saturday, February 4, 2017, at noon, Director Blancher and Chair Dean will attend the opening reception of *Walking Together* at Woodland Cultural Centre in Brantford. *Walking Together* is a work produced by eleven Indigenous students at Pauline Johnson Collegiate and Vocational School, in collaboration with survivors of the former Mohawk Institute residential school. Together, the students discovered the heartbreaking legacy the former residential school students have harboured, and, inspired by their courage and resilience, used this legacy to inform the project. The resulting work of encaustic art serves as a reminder of this chapter in Canadian history, and of the importance of having the freedom to speak one's language and live one's culture. The exhibit runs February 4 until May 2.



## ADDITIONAL ITEMS

Approval of Minutes: Trustees approved the minutes of December 12, 2016 (Inaugural Board Meeting) and January 16, 2017 (Committee of the Whole).

Trustees received the following as information:

- Major Construction Update (FT2): <http://bit.ly/2kkqgav>
- Quarterly Budget Report (FT2): <http://bit.ly/1SHc9XA>
- Proponent Award – New Construction at Fairview Ave School, Dunnville: <http://bit.ly/2jM1aQI>
- Summary of Accounts - November 2016: <http://bit.ly/2jw8lni>
- Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Minutes – November 3, 2016: <http://bit.ly/2jw9LUl>
- Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Minutes – December 8, 2016: <http://bit.ly/2jM4fAt>
- Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee Minutes - December 15, 2016: <http://bit.ly/2klm5VX>
- Native Advisory Committee Minutes – November 15, 2016: <http://bit.ly/2jnwXsK>
- Student Senate Virtual Minutes – December 8, 2016: <http://bit.ly/2jMbGHR>