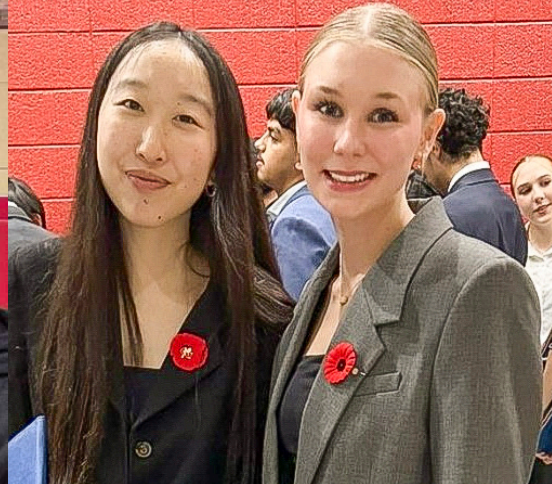




Winter
2024-25

Director of Education Highlights

December | January | February



Introduction

Every day, I am inspired by the incredible work across the Grand Erie District School Board. With a vision to learn, lead, and inspire, we see innovative learning experiences, student achievements, staff excellence and community partnerships shaping the future of education.

As we support more than 28,000 students across 58 elementary and 14 secondary schools, Grand Erie focuses on building a culture of learning, well-being, and belonging for all. This is made possible by a dedicated team of more than 3,700 educators and support staff, whose commitment to student success is at the heart of everything we do.

Each month, I share a Director's Report with the Board of Trustees, highlighting the progress, successes, and milestones shaping Grand Erie. We thank students, families and staff for sharing their incredible work and accomplishments with us. We will bring those stories together, offering a window into the classroom, into this publication and share with the Grand Erie community in the Fall, Winter and Spring.

I invite you to explore this edition and celebrate the many ways Grand Erie schools and students are growing, innovating, and thriving.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

Dr. JoAnna Roberto, Ph.D

Director of Education and Secretary of the Board
Grand Erie District School Board



December 2024



December 2024



PROSE Module Launch

In partnership with local police services, Grand Erie released the Police Resource Outreach Supporting Education (PROSE) modules, aligned with Ontario curriculum expectations. Educators and police officers worked collaboratively to develop the first two modules, which are focused on Grade 9 Physical Education and Grade 10 Career Studies.

EA Professional Development

On November 15, Educational Assistants gathered for learning and professional development. The learning focused on engaging in inclusive conversations, health and safety, and sharing Indigenous knowledge: Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe perspectives in an educational setting.



December 2024



Project SEARCH

Project Search intern Alaine Zufelt-Crabb shared that she would really like to be a writer. Norfolk General Hospital offered her a chance to contribute to the internal newsletter that is shared with more than 700 staff and volunteers.

McKinnon Park in Competition

Ten students from McKinnon Park Secondary School attended the Distributive Education Clubs of America's (DECA) business competition, focused on human resources, marketing, hospitality services, business law and ethics, sports and entertainment.

Hannah Smuck, Judy Gao, Adalyn Vanderburg, Ben Hurley and Ronin Crawford placed in the top 10 for oral case study presentations. Judy also placed in the top 10 for written exams.



December 2024



Click to watch the video



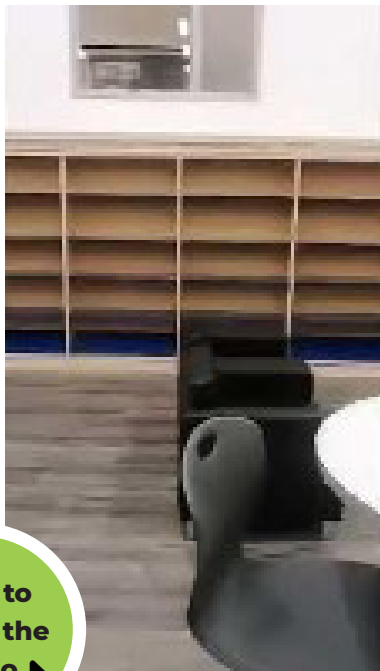
Click to watch the video

Tech is Grand

Tech Is Grand is an opportunity to showcase students and educators while highlighting pathways in technology at Grand Erie. One initiative was promotional videos created by schools to highlight what makes their school grand.

St. George German

Check out the latest learning commons renovation at St. George-German Public School.



Click to watch the video

Athletics



Congratulations to the Brier Park Intermediate Boys Volleyball team who progressed to the Elite 8 in their volleyball tournament.

We also want to express our gratitude to Frank Rao, owner of Innovative Traffic Solutions for his generous donation to the Cayuga Football team to buy 25 football helmets.



December 2024

United Way Campaign

Grand Erie launched the annual United Way workplace giving campaign to raise money for local charities.



Grand Erie District School Board @GEDSB · Dec 3

Welcome to Mind Matters Monthly! In this series, we're bringing mental health tips and tools to start your month off right. Did you know there's an entire website full of mental health resources for students, families and educators? Click here: ow.ly/9CUe50UjYPI

Mental Health Resources

We launched a new social media mental health initiative, Mind Matters Monthly, to share resources from School Mental Health Ontario with families and communities in Grand Erie.

Grand Erie District School Board @GEDSB

Dec. 2 marks the Intl. Day of the Abolition of Slavery. Unfortunately, millions of people worldwide are still trapped in horrific conditions, but we have the power to detect and prevent these injustices. A message from the Nation's Secretary-General: ow.ly/9CUe50UjYPI

Grand Erie District School Board @GEDSB

"Persons with disabilities have the right to participate fully and effectively in decisions that affect their lives."

In Grand Erie, it is our shared responsibility to create inclusive and equitable spaces for all students, families and staff.

Days of Significance

In December, we recognized the Day of the Abolition of Slavery, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, Universal Human Rights Month, Accessibility Awareness Month, Winter Solstice, Christmas, Hanukkah/Chanukah and Kwanzaa.

December 2024



Six Nations/MCFN Presentations

On November 26 and 27, Grand Erie presented an overview of the Education Service Agreement Progress Reports to the Six Nations of the Grand River, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. The reports highlighted programs and student achievement.

Course Selection Resources

New tools were created to support educators and guidance teachers with Grade 9 to 12 course selection. The goal was to make course selection an easy process for students and educators.



December 2024



Grand Erie District School Board @GEDSB · Nov 22

Come out to the Education Fair next week and connect with Indigenous representatives from post-secondary organizations! Explore the endless programs and pathways available to reach our career aspirations.

tinyurl.com/2yx768mw



Education Fair

Staff participated in an Education Fair at Six Nations Polytechnic for Indigenous students to explore post-secondary pathways with representatives from several colleges and universities.



School Naming

The naming process for two new schools in Caledonia and West Brant was launched. The submissions closed on February 7 and the Naming Committee received more than 450 responses.

January 2025



January 2025

Math Competition Winners

Walter Gretzky Elementary School students Azaan Asad earned a bronze award, and Dhruva Sandesh received an honourable mention at the 2024 Canada Jay Mathematical Competition's Southwestern Region of Ontario. The success was featured in the Brantford Expositor.



Read Your Way to the Fair

Students at Port Rowan Public School read 2,682 books and placed first in the Read Your Way to the Fair competition. The school won \$1,000 towards items for their school library. Boston Public School placed third.

January 2025

Innovation Hub in Action

Future Ready Citizens' STEAM program, in partnership with Apple Education engaged in storytelling, digital design, and augmented reality at the Innovation Hub @ Grand Erie.



AgScape thinkAG Career Event

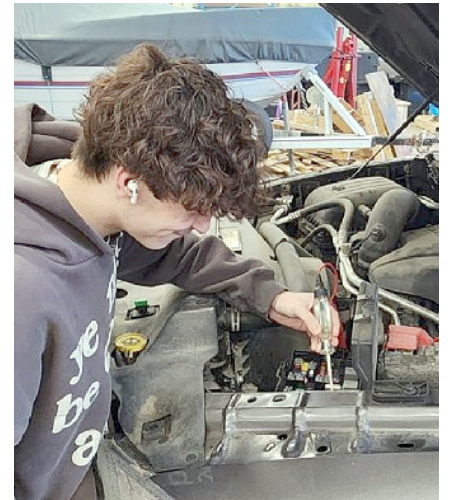
Grade 7 and 8 students visited the Caledonia Fairgrounds to explore diverse career pathways within Ontario's agriculture and agri-food sector and gain insights into the wide range of career opportunities available within the sector.



January 2025

Helping Birds and Bats

Calogero Tirone, teacher at Dunnville Secondary School, and his woodworking students partnered with the Friends of Lafortune Park to build 16 birdhouses and three bat boxes for Lafortune Park in Dunnville.



Ford Auto Parts Donation

Through the Automotive Career Exploration program, Ford Canada donated vehicle parts such as engines, transmissions, turbochargers and more to automotive programs at Brantford Collegiate, Delhi, Dunnville, North Park, Paris District, Pauline Johnson, Simcoe Composite, Valley Heights and Waterford District secondary schools.

January 2025



Tech is Grand

The Tech is Grand initiative continued, and Grade 7 and 8 students from Six Nations and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation experienced hands-on opportunities with STEAM activities. Student leadership teams from Hagersville and McKinnon Park secondary schools helped lead activities that included Lego, digital microscopes and artificial intelligence tools to support learning and transition to secondary school.



Student Trustee Donation

Student Trustees Aidyn Hill, Olivia Prince and Caitlyn Shields collected donations at several high schools, shopped and donated food and personal items to support families that could benefit.

January 2025

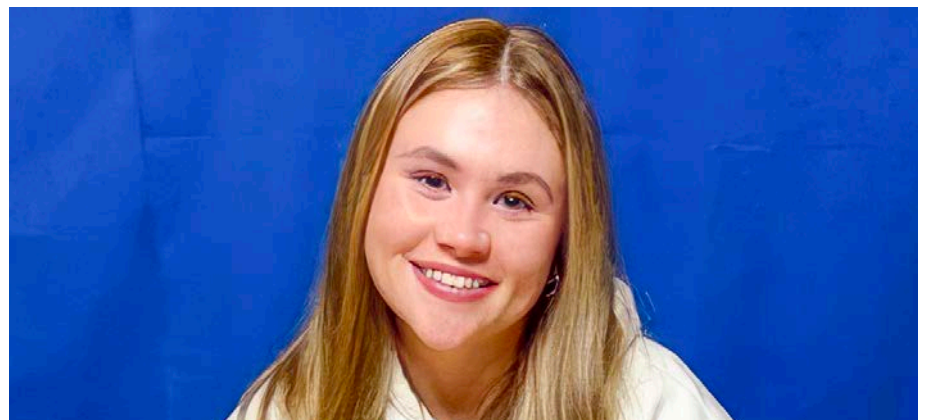
Caring for our Communities

Graham Bell-Victoria Public School gifted poinsettias to patients in the Complex Care and Palliative Care Units at the Brant Community Healthcare System. Cedarland Public School donated a collective 1,200 items for those that could benefit in their community.



Softball Scholarship

Delhi District Secondary student Avyree Sherman signed a NCAA Division I softball scholarship with the Buffalo-based Canisius College Golden Griffins.



January 2025

Conestoga Partnership

On January 13, we announced a partnership with Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning to launch a College-Within-a-School program opening in September 2025. Conestoga will invest \$5 million in renovations, and they will offer electrical techniques, motive power fundamentals and motive power technician programs.



Centre for Excellence Grand Opening

On January 13, we launched the Centre for Excellence: Teaching, Learning and Belonging. The event featured keynote speaker Ellen Ocran, a community engager and Black youth advocate, with a focus on Black Joy. The Centre will host professional learning for all staff and community engagement events.

January 2025

Days of Significance

In January, we celebrated Business Services staff, New Year's Day, Tamil Heritage Month, Poverty Awareness Month, National Ribbon Skirt Day, World Religion Day, Martin Luther King Day, Lincoln Alexander Day, International Day of Education, Lunar New Year, and many more.

Grand Erie District School Board
@GEDSB

Today is World Religion Day, a time to celebrate the beauty of diversity in Grand Erie. Click here for a host of educational resources for learners of all ages: ow.ly/Hmwm50UJLWN

Grand Erie District School Board
@GEDSB

Today, we'd like to recognize Grand Erie's Business Services team. Your attention to detail and accuracy reaches every corner of our complex system.

We connected with Payroll Supervisor, Laurie Campbell. Read more: ow.ly/yhC750UFnJb

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Inclusion Begins at Home

Guest Speaker:
Dr. Andrew B. Campbell
(Dr. ABC)

GEPIC Event

On January 30, the Grand Erie Parent Involvement Committee hosted a virtual presentation by Dr. Andrew Campbell focused on helping families have conversations about equity and inclusion at home.

January 2025



Student Trustee Elections

It seems like just yesterday we were welcoming Aidyn, Olivia and Caitlyn as Student Trustees. Student Trustee Elections were right around the corner, inviting passionate individuals to step up and make a difference in their school communities. Elections were held February 27.

February 2025



February 2025



McKinnon Student Art Exhibition

Callum Macinnis, a McKinnon Park Secondary School student, opened his first solo show at the Dundas Valley School of Art. Callum admits he is more comfortable painting than speaking, and now art lovers can see for themselves that Callum's got a lot to say.



OSSTF Awards

The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation held their annual awards program and three Grand Erie students won. Gracie Smith from McKinnon Park Secondary School won in Prose and Poetry, and Hayden Mitchell and Ethan Harrison from Pauline Johnson Collegiate & Vocational School won in the Visual Art category. The teachers who supported them are Stephen Baxter from McKinnon Park, and Krystal Konior and Jackie Stevenson from Pauline Johnson Collegiate.

February 2025



Building Resilient Classrooms

Reframe, recognize, reduce, reflect and restore.

These five practices lay the groundwork for a dynamic professional learning series called The Shanker Method 101. Partnering with the MEHRIT Centre, Grand Erie offers a micro-credential to help educators understand biological, emotional, cognitive, social and prosocial stressors and learn to create pathways to enhance resilience, learning and well-being for students.

Wrestling Returns to Hagersville

In the 1980s, a group of friends at Hagersville Secondary School bonded over a shared love of wrestling. Now, that group, including current teacher and coach Jonathan Smith, has rallied together to bring wrestling back to the community for its inaugural season. Jonathan and former alumni Scott Bassindale hosted a fundraising golf tournament last summer, with the funds supporting re-establishing wrestling at Hagersville.

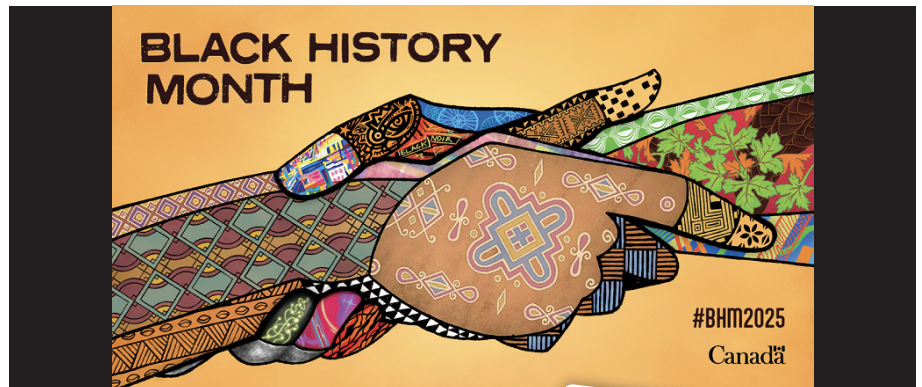


February 2025



Football Scholarship for Delhi Student

Delhi District Secondary School's Carson McKie, a 6-foot-4, 300-pound lineman, signed a football scholarship with the University of Guelph Gryphons.



Days of Significance

In February, we recognized and celebrated Black History Month, Chinese Heritage Month, Heart Month, School Crossing Guard Appreciation Month, World Hijab Day, Canadian School Counselling Week and more.



February 2025

Black Graduation Coach

Shanice Ebanks

- lived experience as a first-generation student
- BSc in Honours Psychology
- a passion to help students achieve their life's purpose

We are excited to welcome Shanice Ebanks to Grand Erie as a Black Student Graduation Coach. As a member of the Afro-Caribbean community and lived experience as a first-generation student, Shanice is familiar with the difficulties of navigating graduation and post-secondary. She holds a BSc in Honours Psychology, graduating on the Dean's Honour Roll List twice for academic excellence from York University. Shanice will shape Grand Erie's strategy for graduation for Black youth. The approach will include individualized plans curated from student profiles, school-based workshops and events and connections





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