



The Leader

BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Regular Meeting of the Board

June 26, 2023

All reports for this meeting can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3r1eaz>



Patti McCleister Memorial Award Honours Inspiring Leadership

Belinda Benko, speech-language pathologist, and Judy Gardner, elementary educator, are this year’s recipients of the Patti McCleister Memorial Award, which was presented Monday night. The award is the highest honour bestowed upon a staff member, and is given annually to the Grand Erie employee(s) who exemplifies outstanding leadership, inspires others, and is a driving force in realizing the board's vision to learn, lead and inspire.



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Patti McCleister Memorial Award Honours Inspiring Leadership Contd.

Belinda Benko's tireless advocacy for learners and unwavering support of her colleagues has made a crucial difference in the lives and school experiences of students with diverse learning needs. She has dedicated her career to the service of learners with unique communication, speech and language needs, and coordinated efforts with schools, departments and team members to do whatever was needed to ensure students could be successful. A true lifelong learner, her leadership in professional organizations and ongoing commitment to evolving her own professional practices has advanced Grand Erie's approach and understanding, and fostered belonging and trust in the families it serves.



Judy Gardner's inspiring leadership is a perfect example of how big an impact a school can have on the lives of students, staff and the community it serves. Whether it's in her roles as educator, school council representative, teacher-in-charge, or community liaison, she brings people together for common causes, motivating and recognizing the steps needed to increase the opportunities available to learners at Mt. Pleasant School. There is no facet of the school her positive, can-do attitude hasn't influenced, from the little things that make a colleague's day brighter to her ability to connect with students on a personal level, she creates the welcoming, safe and supportive environments that allow everyone to thrive.





Learn

Lead

Inspire

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Above: Olivia Jones was joined by her parents to receive her Learn Lead Inspire award, presented by Chair Gibson and Director Roberto.

Learn Lead Inspire Award: Olivia Jones, Dunnville Secondary School

Olivia Jones's school experience has involved overcoming many obstacles, including other people's perceptions about the capabilities of individuals who learn differently. With an inspiring growth mindset, Olivia has excelled in her academic coursework, and will go on to St. Clair College to study Practical Nursing this fall. Her work ethic, integrity and leadership roles at school and in the community have been an example of what it means to learn, lead and inspire. Olivia listens, takes time to understand other viewpoints, and seeks opportunities to support her fellow learners facing their own barriers to success.



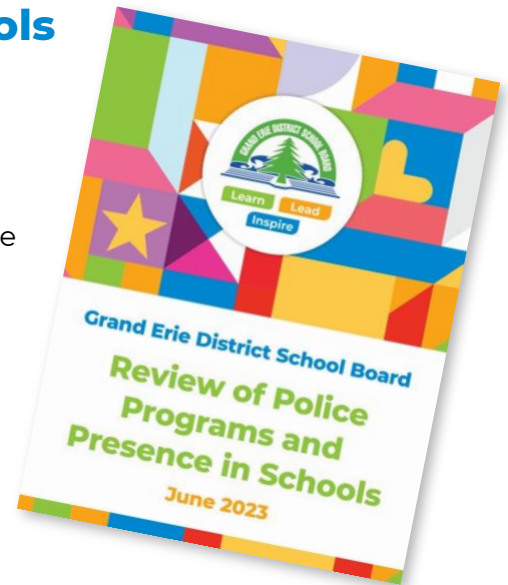


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Review of Police Programs in Schools

Grand Erie has completed an evidence-based review of police programs in schools based on curriculum, and through a human rights equity lens. The review was grounded in the Ontario Human Rights Code, valuing diverse perspectives of stakeholders and partners with the intended outcome to capture experiences and perceptions, and to make recommendations to provide positive programming updates. As a result of the review, police programs in schools will continue, with some changes, enhancements and new program offerings. Visits to schools will be planned and the purpose communicated, with presentations and programs aligned with Ontario curriculum expectations.



Operating and Capital Budgets Approved for 2023-24 School Year

Balanced operating and capital budgets for the 2023-24 school year were approved on Monday. Both budgets will now be submitted to the Ministry of Education. As a result of increased revenues, Grand Erie's operating budget is approximately \$369 million, up \$13.8 million from last year's approved operating budget. This allows for key investments such as increased classroom supports, a strong focus on math and early literacy instruction, supports for student mental health and well-being, and continued renewal projects and upgrades to buildings and facilities to accommodate growing populations. Full details can be found [here](#).





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Director's Report Highlights

New School Design Concept Released

Design renderings showcasing some of the features of the new elementary school development in southwest Brantford were shared Monday. The school, which will serve the growing area around Shellard Lane and McGuiness Drive, will become a neighbourhood hub with a city-operated library and community centre as part of it.



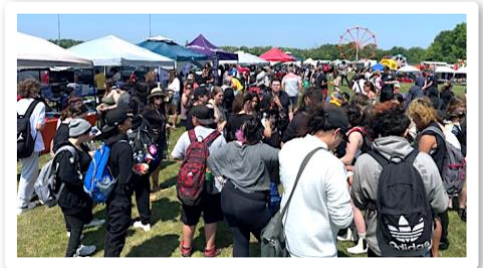


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Honouring National Indigenous Peoples Day

June 21 marked National Indigenous Peoples Day, an opportunity to celebrate and honour the diverse experiences, achievements and contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, and a chance to learn from the histories, rights and realities that have shaped this country. In Grand Erie, more than 200 secondary students visited Ohsweken to mark the day, and many schools and staff members seized the opportunity to enhance learners' knowledge and understanding of collective responsibilities and action.



Special Education Plan

Each school board is required to maintain a Special Education Plan, to review it annually and to make amendments as appropriate. A copy of Grand Erie's updated Special Education Plan 2022-23 is available on [our website](#). Updates made were in response to feedback from the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) and parent/caregiver and community input. The Special Education Report Components Checklist will be completed and submitted, along with the URL to access the updated plan, to the Regional Office of the Ministry of Education.

Multi-Year Plan Stories

Learning

- [Donation Gives Education in Skilled Trades an Industry-Ready Edge](#)

Well-Being

- [The Work of Wellness](#)

Belonging

- [Mural Project at J.L. Mitchener Reflects Community, Identity and Indigenous Knowledge](#)
- [Huddling Up to Take a Stand Against Bullying](#)