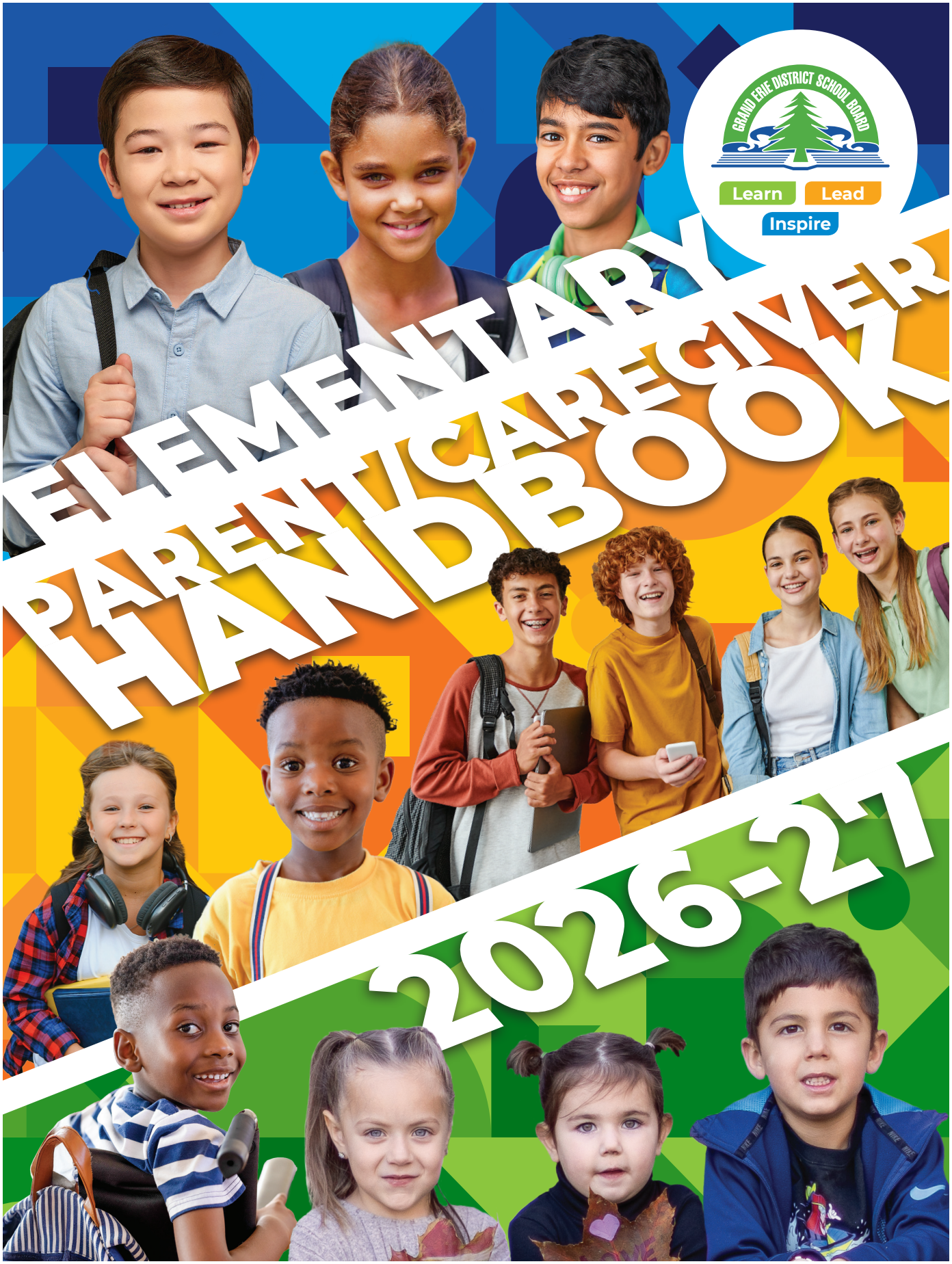
GRAND ERIE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
Learn
Lead
Inspire
ELEMENTARY
PARENT/CAREGIVER
HANDBOOK
2026-27

Important Dates

September 8	First day of School
October 6	PD Day
October 12	Thanksgiving
November 20	PD Day
Dec. 21 – Jan. 4	Winter Break
January 22	PD Day
February 15	Family Day

March 15 – 19	March Break
March 26	Good Friday
March 29	Easter Monday
May 24	Victoria Day
June 1	Ontario Day
June 11	PD Day
June 29	Last Day of School

Please see **granderie.ca** for a list of Days of Significance.

Land Acknowledgement

Grand Erie District School Board recognizes Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, as the longstanding peoples of this territory.

We honour, recognize, and respect these communities as well as all First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples who reside within Grand Erie District School Board. We are all stewards of these lands and waters where we now gather, learn and play, and commit to working together in the spirit of Reconciliation.

Safe Arrivals and Departures

Please submit all absences and early departures through **SafeArrival** before 2:30 p.m.

Our school doors are always locked. In order to enter the school, the buzzer located at the front entrance must be activated and then office will open the doors.

Attendance

Regular attendance and being on time are essential for school success. Students are expected to be in attendance and at school on time each school day except for instances of personal illness or family emergencies.

At the beginning of each morning and afternoon, staff members take attendance.

When a student has missed a number of days of school, communication will be made with parents/caregivers. If a pattern of missed school persists, our attendance counsellor may be contacted. Please contact the school if there will be prolonged periods of absence for a student. It is the student's responsibility to complete work missed during periods of absence.

Student Absences and Reporting

Grand Erie uses a student absence reporting system called ***SafeArrival***. This system makes it easy for you to report your child's absence and easy for staff to respond to unexplained student absences.

Using ***SafeArrival***, please report your child's absence in advance using any of these three convenient methods:

1. Using your mobile device, download and install the SchoolMessenger app from the **Apple App Store** or the **Google Play** Store (or from the links at **go.schoolmessenger.com**). The first time you use the app, select Sign Up to create your account. Select Attendance then Report an Absence.

2. Use the ***SafeArrival*** website at **go.schoolmessenger.com**. The first time you use the website, select **Sign Up** to create your account. Select **Attendance** then **Report an Absence**.

Student Absences and Reporting *Cont'd.*

3. Call the toll-free number **1-833-557-9420** to report an absence using the automated phone system.

These options are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Future absences can be reported at any time. There are a number of different absence reasons to select.

We use an automated notification system to contact parents/caregivers whose child is absent when the absence was not reported in advance. If this system is unable to reach the designated contacts, office staff will follow up. If a parent/caregiver has reported an absence in advance through SafeArrival, they will not receive these notifications.

Transportation

Riding the bus is a privilege. We want to ensure the safety of all students while riding the bus and the student behaviour should not infringe on this safety. All bus riders are expected to:

- Get on and off the bus in an orderly fashion and remain seated while the bus is in motion
- Be reasonably quiet and well-behaved. Refrain from using profane or crude language/gestures
- Avoid bringing hazardous or dangerous items on the bus
- Be courteous to the bus driver and patroller and obey their requests immediately
- Refrain from eating or drinking on the bus

Students who break one of the bus rules may receive a bus incident report from the bus driver. This may result in student discipline that could lead to the loss of bus privileges.

Students may not ride a bus other than their own. Also, students who do not regularly ride a bus may not ride the bus to a friend's home. This type of transportation is the responsibility of parents or caregivers.

Inclement Weather

The safety of all Grand Erie students is our top priority. If the forecasted road conditions will not allow for safe transportation during the morning or afternoon travel times and/or when visibility is expected to be significantly impacted, transportation services will be cancelled, resulting in schools being closed to students and staff. If school is closed, asynchronous learning opportunities will be available for students online. Teachers will be in touch with students directly on how to access this.

The decision to cancel transportation services in a particular zone or across the district is made by **6:30 a.m.**

Additionally, in the event of extreme cold weather (defined as minus 30-degree temperatures without wind-chill), transportation services will be cancelled – either by zone or across the district – however, schools will remain open to students and staff.

Find your child's school zone at **granderie.ca/myschoolzone**

Find Information about school closures and/or transportation cancellations:

- On Grand Erie's website: **www.granderie.ca** (the Inclement Weather page and Inclement Weather Policy)
- On Student Transportation Services' website: **www.stsbhn.ca.**
- On Grand Erie's X account: **@GEDSB**

Paying for School Trips, Food Days, Miscellaneous Items

Grand Erie uses **SchoolCash Online** as a safe and easy way to manage payments for trips or food programs. This program eliminates the need for students to carry cash to school for such purchases. For safety and efficiency, Grand Erie is reducing the amount of cash and number of cheques coming to our school.

Through **SchoolCash Online**, you can pay for purchases and check out either through eCheque (which requires you sharing some of your banking information) or your credit card (like most online shopping experiences).

Visit **www.schoolcashonline.com** to register, and follow the process outlined on that site. There are flyers at the school outlining more detail about SchoolCash Online.

Paying for School Trips, Food Days, Miscellaneous Items *Cont'd.*

For more information and support contact the Parent Help Desk at:

1-866-961-1803 or **parenthelp@schoolcashonline.com**

Student Cell Phones and Devices

To help reduce distractions in school, students from Kindergarten through Grade 6 will be required to keep phone on silent and out of sight for the duration of the day. For students in Grades 7 and 8, phones can be with the student, but their use will only be permitted during instructional time if explicitly allowed by the educator. Parents/caregivers who need to get in touch with their child(ren) during the school day are encouraged to call the school.

Dress Code

Student dress guidelines support student health, well-being and safety, and foster positive school climates, affirming the diversity of social and cultural identities reflected in student clothing. Students have the right to express themselves at school through what they choose to wear. Students should feel comfortable in what they wear and have the freedom to make choices about their appearance while ensuring schools are safe, welcoming, and respectful.

In some classes and for certain activities, health and safety requirements may include restrictions regarding footwear, loose clothing, jewelry, and personal protective equipment.

Please see **granderie.ca** for a Student Dress Code Procedure.

Illness and Injury at School

At all times, the safety and well-being of students is our priority. It is extremely important that illnesses, undiagnosed rashes, infections (Pink Eye/Conjunctivitis) and lice/nits be treated prior to your child arriving at school. Students should stay home if they are not feeling well and not return for 24 hours after vomiting or receiving medical treatment to prevent infection to others.

School is a busy environment in which accidents can and do occur. We do have First Aid trained staff members who will assess an injury when necessary. Parents or caregivers will be notified through a phone call or note in the planner when a child has injured themselves while at school. All blows to the head, known to staff, are reported to parents or caregivers. If a child is in medical distress, an ambulance will be called, and parents/caregivers will be responsible for the cost of the ambulance. Please ensure that the school has your most current contact information.

If your child is too ill to attend class, you will be asked to take them home.

Please see **granderie.ca** for a Policy on Student Concussion and Head Injury.

Contagious Diseases

Students found to be at school with contagious diseases, undiagnosed rashes, or eye infections will be sent home for medical attention and/or treatment. All cases of these conditions should be reported to the office as soon as possible to reduce spreading to other students.

Head Lice

Head lice needs to be managed in the best interest of students through the partnership of parents or caregivers, students, and the school community. The treatment and eradication of head lice is ultimately a parent or caretaker responsibility. Students identified with head lice do not need to be sent home. They can go home at the end of the day, be treated, and return to class after appropriate treatment has begun.

Medication

Students bringing non-prescription medication to school are responsible to care for it. School staff members are not permitted to dispense non-prescription medication at any time or to hold the non-prescription medication.

Medication *Cont'd.*

Students requiring assistance with non-prescription medication need a parent/caretaker to come to the school at the appropriate time to administer this medication. We do not encourage students to bring non-prescription medication to school, unless there is a medical reason.

In the case of prescribed medication, a Request for Administration of Prescribed Medication in School form (available from the school) must be completed and forwarded to the principal. Prescribed medication needs to be in the prescription container, clearly labelled, and must clearly indicate dosage. An authorization form must be completed by the parents or caregivers and forwarded to the principal for each school year, or whenever a modification of the prescribed medication occurs. It also must be received prior to medication being administered.

Please see **granderie.ca** for a Policy on the Management of Potentially Life-Threatening Health Conditions including the Administration of Medication in Schools.

Bicycles, Skateboards, Inline Skates and Scooters

Parents or caregivers who give permission for their child to ride a bike, scooter, skateboard or rollerblades to school are encouraged to review the traffic safety rules with their child. Remember that the law requires children to wear a CSA approved helmet. Storage racks are provided for bicycles or scooters at the school; however, the school cannot assume responsibility for loss or damage to a bicycle or scooter. Students should lock up their bicycles or scooters since they are not permitted in the school.

Skateboards and rollerblades are to be kept at the cubby area.

If students ride to school they must dismount and walk their bike, scooter or skateboard and remove their rollerblades while on school property.

Nut-Safe Environment

Some people have severe, life-threatening, allergic reactions to certain foods; therefore, students are not allowed to bring any snack, lunch, or treat items to school that have, or may contain, peanuts or traces of any nut products in them. It is critical for the children's safety to keep the classrooms free of peanut or nut-related products e.g., products that say "may contain traces of nuts" which may have traces of nuts such as cashews, hazelnuts, walnuts, pecans, brazil nuts, or almonds in them.

Peanut butter substitutes are often indistinguishable from peanut butter, and therefore are also not permitted at school. Parents/caregivers who wish to find a list of snack foods that are peanut-free can find such information at **snacksafely.com.**

Standards of Behaviour

Grand Erie is committed to partnering with parents and caregivers to build a culture of learning, well-being and belonging to inspire each learner.

It is our goal to provide a positive school climate in which each student can reach their full potential. This is a place where we foster respect, civility, responsible citizenship and safety. We endeavour to create a student-centred educational community whose members support one another with mutual respect, understanding, and acceptance. This community includes students, staff and parents/caregivers.

We all will:

- Show respect for the rights, property and safety of ourselves and others at all times
- Accept personal responsibility for our behaviour
- Demonstrate socially acceptable behaviour
- Refrain from all forms of bullying
- Show respect for the roles and responsibilities of students, principals, teachers, parents/caregivers, volunteers and the school board
- Demonstrate and promote positive behaviour through the avoidance of all types of violence
- Use information and communications technology, including the internet, digital resources and e-communication and all forms of social media in a responsible and acceptable manner

Standards of Behaviour *Cont'd.*

All Grand Erie employees take seriously all allegations of bullying, harassment, racism, gender-based violence, homophobia, sexual harassment, inappropriate sexual behaviour, and any other negative behaviour which would impact on the school climate.

Please see **granderie.ca** for the Code of Conduct policy.

Progressive Discipline

Grand Erie District engages in early and ongoing prevention and intervention to promote positive behaviour. Opportunities for students to learn from their choices is a critical element. We use a variety of approaches that employ a continuum of interventions, supports and consequences to address inappropriate student behaviour and to build upon strategies that promote positive behaviours. Interventions include opportunities for reinforcing positive behaviour while helping students make good choices.

Lost and Found

Found items are typically placed in a bin at the school. Please have your children check if items are missing. Please assist us by putting your child's name on all belongings including gym bags, jackets, shoes, and boots.

Personal Information

Student/family information must be kept current. Any changes in information throughout the year should be reported to the office by phone, e-mail or note. Please report all changes in address, phone numbers, emergency contact numbers and custody arrangements as soon as possible so that all information will remain current.

Personal information is securely stored centrally by Grand Erie on servers located in Canada.

Voluntary, Confidential Indigenous Student Self-Identification

If you are of First Nations, Métis, or Inuit ancestry, we encourage you to let us know. Through the voluntary self-identification program, we are able to further improve the educational experience so that Indigenous students can thrive in school.

The information collected through voluntary self-identification helps Grand Erie determine the effectiveness of current programs, monitor student achievement, and provide important information for future decision making.

Students can self-identify their First Nations, Métis, and Inuit ancestry at any time. This can be done when completing registration forms, or by simply notifying the school. The decision to self-identify is voluntary. Information on individual students will not be released and is kept completely confidential.

Visitors

All visitors to the school must check in at the office. For safety reasons no one is permitted to be in our school without a specific purpose approved by the office and known to the staff. This not only increases our security, but also minimizes hallway activity, which distracts many students if their classroom doors happen to be open.

Volunteers

We are grateful for those who are able to volunteer their time. An active school relies on the support of families and friends. There is a wide variety of volunteer opportunities available in our school that enhance the programs and school life. Contact your child's teacher or the office to let us know if you are interested in becoming a volunteer.

Volunteering that involves direct contact with students requires a police check with vulnerable sector clearance to be done. Police checks are valid for three calendar years and are available if a letter from the school is presented to your local police service with the request.

Volunteers *Cont'd.*

Please contact the school for the police check request letter, or to check on your renewal date (if you already have a police check in at the school). There is also a one-time only mandatory Accessibility Awareness Training (AODA) session that is completed online (approx. 20 min). A certificate of completion can be printed out and brought in or emailed to the school.

Please see **granderie.ca** for our procedure on Volunteers.

School Council

The School Council meets regularly to support and promote student learning, achievement, and parent involvement in our school. Notice of meetings will be shared through school communications channels (e.g., newsletters, website, bulletin boards). Contact the school if you would like to get involved.

Communication

Newsletters, notes in the agenda, marked work sent home, conferences, phone calls, presentations and performances are all excellent ways for parents/caregivers to learn about what their child is doing at school and the levels of their achievement. Report cards and interviews represent the formal evaluation of student progress. If you wish to speak directly with a staff member, please phone the school so that a mutually convenient time can be arranged.

Safety Drills

Grand Erie schools are required to practice a minimum of six fire drills throughout the year. We make every effort to practice when the weather is conducive to being outdoors. Typically, these drills are spread throughout the year.

Grand Erie schools also practice a minimum of two lockdown procedures in the school year.

School Security Protocols

"**Hold and Secure**" – Used when it is desirable to secure the school due to an ongoing situation outside and not related to the school (e.g., significant police action occurring near a school but, not on school property). In this situation, the school continues to function normally, with the exterior doors being locked until such time as the situation near the school is resolved.

"**Lockdown**" – Only used when there is a major incident or threat of school violence within the school, or in relation to the school. During a lock down students and staff are directed to a secure room, doors locked, windows and curtains closed, and all sight lines into rooms blocked.

"**Shelter in Place**" – Used for an environmental or weather-related situation, where it is necessary to keep all occupants within the school, to protect them from an external situation (ex. chemical spills, blackouts, explosions or extreme weather conditions).

Exceptional Pupils and Special Programs

The Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) helps determine how schools support students with special education needs. This committee determines whether a child is identified as exceptional, and recommends the most appropriate placement for learning. Parents and caregivers are key partners: you can request a meeting, share insights about your child, and take part in decisions. If your child is identified, the school will create an Individual Education Plan (IEP) outlining goals and supports. The process is collaborative and reviewed regularly to ensure your child receives the support they need to succeed.

Grand Erie District School Board

349 Erie Avenue,

Brantford, Ont., N3T 5V3

Telephone: 519-756-6301

Toll Free: 1-888-548-8878

Email: info@granderie.ca

www.granderie.ca

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