



# Media Release

For Immediate Release  
September 10, 2019

---

## Results from Grand Erie's First Student Census Will Inform the Board's Next Steps for Planning and Supports for Students

**Brantford, Ont.** – The results are in from Grand Erie District School Board's first student census, a survey of students in Grades 4-12 conducted last spring. The data collected will be used to better understand student needs, remove barriers to inclusion, and effectively plan programming and supports for all students.

"The census findings provide a more accurate picture of our student populations and school communities, an understanding which is crucial to ensuring equity and addressing systemic barriers," said Wayne Baker, Superintendent of Education responsible for Grand Erie's Safe and Inclusive Schools team, which led this initiative. "To help students succeed, we need to understand who they are."

The confidential and voluntary student census was completed in class, and asked students about themselves and their experiences both inside and outside of school. Grand Erie's participation rate was 83 per cent. Responses are secured in a database accessed only by authorized research staff.

"It was extremely important that the census capture a multitude of student voices," said Baker. "What we now know is that we have diversity in all areas of our Board, and this information will help us close the gaps for marginalized students."

The census initiative follows Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan, the province's strategy for identifying and eliminating discriminatory practices, barriers, and biases from schools and classrooms, and is a critical step to ensuring equity and addressing the factors affecting it. The census was supported by Grand Erie's Board of Trustees, Senior Administration, and a host of community groups and organizations.

Key findings from the census report include:

- 12 per cent of respondents identified as Indigenous (Six Nations, First Nations, Metis, or Inuit)
- A majority of Grand Erie students identified as white (81 per cent), with more racial diversity in the City of Brantford where 29 per cent of respondents identified as non-white, followed by Haldimand County (21 per cent), and the Counties of Brant and Norfolk (both 13 per cent)
- 31 per cent of respondents indicated some form of disability (including mental health, learning, or medical-related)
- Students in Grades 9-12 were asked about sexual orientation. From those students, 16 per cent identified as other than heterosexual (gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual or pansexual)

- Overall, respondents had a positive view of school, with 74 per cent indicating they feel accepted by adults at school, and 73 per cent indicating they feel their teachers care about them.

For the full report on the student census and its findings, visit: <https://bit.ly/2ksExUT>.

- 30 -

**Contact:**

Kimberly Newhouse

Manager of Communications and Community Relations

Grand Erie District School Board

349 Erie Avenue, Brantford, Ontario, N3T 5V3

Office: 519-756-6301 ext. 281147 | Cell: 519-732-8540

**GrandErie.ca**