



The  
Blackboard

*Grand Erie District School Board's Highlights from the Board Room*

## **Regular Board Meeting | February 22, 2021**

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

### **Student Census Report – Achievements and Suspensions**

In 2017, the Ministry of Education established the Education Equity Action Plan, in response to the persistent underachievement of marginalized student subgroups since the implementation of the Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools (2009). As part of Ontario's Equity Action Plan, the Ministry provided funding to support the collection of identity-based student demographic data.



In March of 2019, Grand Erie staff created a student census that saw 84 per cent of students in Grades 4-12 voluntarily participate. In the fall of 2019, school administrators received demographic reports for each of their schools, along with student satisfaction reports. The plan to roll out additional reports on measuring success was put on hold during job action and the closure of schools due to COVID-19.

On Monday night, Trustees were provided with a report linking the student census data with the board's achievement and suspension data. The results indicate certain subgroups of students have consistently lower or higher achievement levels than the Grand Erie average. Specifically, the data shows that students who identify as Black and Indigenous had lower achievement levels, as did students from lower socioeconomic situations and students from the LGBTQ+ community. The data also shows that Grand Erie students who identified as South Asian or Southeast Asian had higher achievement levels, as did students from higher socioeconomic situations. Additionally, the suspension data indicates that Black, Latino, Indigenous, Jewish, LGBTQ+ and students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds were more likely to be suspended from school. To read the full report, see pages 50-67 here: <https://bit.ly/3btaiUf>.

The report outlines five steps for Grand Erie to take moving forward to address these findings:

1. Equity and inclusion must be a commitment from the highest level of the Board. To enact change, Grand Erie needs to see this work as critical and foundational to the overall success and well-being of all students.
2. Development of a Grand Erie Equity and Inclusion Action Plan, with measurable outcomes and lines of responsibility. This plan must include strategies for addressing identified gaps as well as a system of accountability to ensure the Board is on the right track to make changes now, and into the future.
3. Ongoing professional development for Grand Erie leaders to understand how disproportionality is perpetuated through a critical examination of systems (i.e., systemic racism, heteronormativity) and staff (i.e., awareness of power, privilege and bias).

4. Educate staff, particularly those working directly with students, to be more aware of a student's social location (i.e., the impact of intersectionality) and their roles as allies and change agents. Grand Erie must also ensure staff, particularly teachers, have the resources they need to support change.
5. Consideration of equity as it relates to Grand Erie employees. Through a staff census, the Board will have data about the identities of staff as well as information on their sense of well-being and belonging in the workplace. This data will help inform equity strategies moving forward that focus on staff.

Grand Erie's student census was completed from March 19-28, 2019. Results from the student census were shared with Trustees at the September 9, 2019 Committee of the Whole Meeting. Find those results here: <https://bit.ly/37UebgX>.

This report supports the Equity indicator of Grand Erie's Multi-Year Plan, *Success for Every Student*, through the following statement: "We will promote practices that help students, families and staff feel safe, welcomed and included."

## Director's Report

JoAnna Roberto, Director of Education, shared the following items with Trustees on Monday during her report to the Board:

- **Black History Month at Banbury Heights:** The school wanted students to see that Black History Month is not just about recognizing Black celebrities simply for their fame or notoriety. Their focus for Black History Month was to raise awareness of the contributions of Black individuals to their countries or societies so that students had a better understanding that Black people have been integral and vital in making our society what it is today. They started with daily announcements that included vignettes and poetry. Then, the Grade 3 class began creating murals, including one of Barak Obama and Rosa Parks. The students were asked to go beyond being able to identify these faces and learn about how each of these people contributed to their societies. Grade 8 classes also recognized, amongst others, Viola Desmond and Jackie Robinson. An Early Years class recognized Dr. Martin Luther King, and a Grade 5/6 class recognized Kobe Bryant for his community work. The teachers reported students have been very engaged with these projects and have gained a much better understanding of these important historic figures, and the true purpose of Black History Month.
- **Niigaan Sinclair and Re-envisioning Indigenous Student Success:** On February 16, Grand Erie was pleased to welcome Niigaan Sinclair as a guest speaker. Niigaan shared a message of re-envisioning Indigenous success and a path to the future by redefining measures of success for Indigenous students outside of grades and achievement. He highlighted the importance of connections with community and relationships. In total, there were 130 participants who took part in the live session and Niigaan permitted the recording of his message to be shared with all Grand Erie staff moving forward.
- **De-streaming Grade 9:** Members of Grand Erie's program teams attended the first Ministry information session regarding the new de-streamed Grade 9 Mathematics course that will be offered in September 2021. The Ministry of Education has identified three main goals for de-streaming: cultural shifts in schools and boards to identify and dismantle systemic discrimination and structural inequities; increased educator capacity for effective culturally responsive instruction, assessment and evaluation in de-streamed classes; and, increased student engagement, achievement and well-being. Next steps for the Interdepartmental Board team include: reviewing the De-Streaming Implementation Readiness Assessment Tool, and gathering initial ideas and information for the development of system goals and monitoring tools to measure implementation.



**JoAnna Roberto,**  
Director of Education

- **Pink Shirt Day:** Also known as Anti-Bullying Day, takes place on Wednesday, February 24. It is a day when people come together by wearing pink shirts to show their opposition to bullying. Pink Shirt Day is always supported and honoured in Grand Erie. The theme for this year is: “Lift each other up.” Resource were created by Grand Erie’s Child & Youth Workers, including student lessons on expressing feelings and problem solving.

## Multi-Year Strategic Plan Process

[Grand Erie’s Multi-Year Plan](#) was previously approved by Trustees for 2016-20. During the past five years, this plan has served to provide a focused direction for system growth and improvement for staff and programs at all levels of the organization. The creation and monitoring of a multi-year strategic plan was first mandated by the passing of Bill 177, which states there must be an annual review of the plan. Each year, elements of the plan are reviewed and monitored by Trustees.

In the spring of 2020 some Trustees provided feedback regarding to the development of the next Multi-Year Plan. Trustees play an active role in the development of the plan, hence there will be further opportunities for Trustee input during that process.

On February 16, a Trustee caucus session was held to review information and discuss the launch of Grand Erie’s next Multi-Year Plan (2021-25). On Monday night, Trustees received a report outlining the process and next steps for the development of this new multi-year plan. To review the report, see pages 69-71 here: <https://bit.ly/3btaiUf>.

## New Date for April’s Committee of the Whole Meeting

The Board of Trustees decided Monday evening to move the April Committee of the Whole Board meeting to April 6 from the original date of April 12. The new date was selected to avoid having a meeting during March Break. Earlier this month, the Ministry of Education [postponed March Break](#) from March 15-19 to April 12-16 due to COVID-19.



SARA GENERAL  
**PRIDE & REZJUDICE**  
AN ADAPTATION

## Grand Erie Book Club

Vice-Chair Susan Gibson shared with the rest of the Board of Trustees on Monday night that Grand Erie is starting a book club, inspired by the new Grand 11 English course focused on Indigenous authors and content. As a first step, the book club is open to all Grand Erie Trustees, Senior Administration and members of the Board’s committees. The first book will be *Pride and Rezjudice* by Sara General, who is an author from Six Nations of the Grand River. The book was recommended by Indigenous Education Lead and Teacher Consultant, Joe Tice, who believes the book engages readers with the Haudenosaunee culture. Gibson hopes the book club, which will meet virtually, be a great opportunity for learning, sharing and showing Grand Erie students and the community that the Board is focused on life-long learning. *Pride and Rezjudice* is available for purchase at Good Minds: <https://bit.ly/3qJw3Wg>.

## Additional Items

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**Approval of minutes:** Trustees approved the minutes of the following meetings:

- January 25, 2021 – Regular Board Meeting
- February 1, 2021 – Special Board Meeting
- February 8, 2021 – Committee of the Whole Meeting
- February 11, 2021 – Special Board Meeting

### Trustees also received the following reports:

- SO17 Guidelines for Student Accommodation, up to and including Exemption, from Non-Medical or Cloth Masks
- Student Trustee Report
- Committee of the Whole – February 8, 2021
- Workforce Report
- Contract Award – Tollgate Window and Door Replacement
- Summary of Accounts – January 2021
- Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) minutes – December 17, 2020
- Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee minutes – January 21, 2021
- Safe and Inclusive Schools Committee minutes – January 21, 2021
- Grand Erie Parent Involvement Committee (GEPIC) minutes – January 14, 2021
- Privacy and Information Management Committee minutes – February 11, 2021
- Student Transportation Services Brant Haldimand Norfolk (STSBHN) minutes – February 4, 2021

## Multi-Year Plan Stories

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In 2016, Grand Erie approved a new strategic direction to guide the work that the school board is doing. At the centre of this Multi-Year Plan is *Success for Every Student*. Grand Erie will achieve *Success for Every Student* through a focus on students and staff in a culture of high expectations. The six indicators that support the Multi-Year Plan are: Achievement, Community, Environment, Equity, Technology and Well-Being.

The following stories showcase some of the most recent stories related to the Multi-Year Plan.

### Achievement

- Getting to Know Grand Erie: Brenda Stone – Kindergarten-Grade 8 Literacy/Numeracy Teacher Consultant - Elementary Program
  - <https://bit.ly/3pydHWz>
- SOAR Student Hits it Out of the Park and Prepares for Post-Secondary Journey
  - <https://bit.ly/3axGHK0>
- Getting to Know Grand Erie: Wayne Baker – Superintendent of Education
  - <https://bit.ly/37tj4Ar>
- Province Postpones March Break to April Due to COVID-19
  - <https://bit.ly/3s8496v>

### Community

- COVID-19 Outbreak Declared at North Park Collegiate
  - <https://bit.ly/3aIDHdG>
- COVID-19 Outbreak Declared at James Hillier Public School
  - <https://bit.ly/37VH0wD>
- COVID-19 Outbreak Declared at Ryerson Heights
  - <https://bit.ly/3bxhbUm>
- Virtual Event Aims to Help Parents Understand Youth Substance Abuse
  - <https://bit.ly/3umU4Vp>