



SUCCESS for Every Student

Welcome to **Kindergarten** **GUIDE 2020-21**



Welcome to Kindergarten

The first day of school is an exciting event. At Grand Erie, our caring educators and staff are ready to welcome your child to Kindergarten. Your child will be challenged and encouraged to do their best. We appreciate that you have made Grand Erie your choice for education.

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Multi-Year Plan 2016-20

In 2016, Grand Erie approved a new strategic direction to guide the work the school board is doing. At the centre of this 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 plan are: Achievement, Community, Environment, Equity, Technology and Well-Being.

For more information on Grand Erie's Multi-Year Plan, visit: granderie.ca



How to Register Your Child

Children eligible for Kindergarten must be four years old by **December 31, 2020** to register.

Find your home school and register online at: granderie.ca

You can also call or visit your nearest Grand Erie School today.

The Following Information Will be Required When You Register Your Child:

- A document to confirm Canadian Citizenship and a birth date (one of the following): Canadian Birth Certificate, Canadian Citizenship Card, Permanent Resident Card, Other documents to verify status in Canada
- Your child's address including: 911 civic address (fire number), lot, concession, county and postal code
- Parent contact information, work and home
- Emergency contact person and telephone number
- Custody information, if applicable
- Doctor's name, address and telephone number
- Medical information - a Request for School Assistance in Health Care form, provided by the school, must be filled out if medication needs to be administered by school personnel



Voluntary Indigenous Self-Identification

Students entering Kindergarten who have Indigenous ancestry may consider self-identifying as First Nation, Métis or Inuit when registering. Grand Erie promotes initiatives which support Indigenous students across the board.

For more information, contact **Sabrina Sawyer, Indigenous Education Lead** at **226-387-0357**.



Grand Erie's Kindergarten Program



Grand Erie's Kindergarten program will provide an interesting and interactive learning environment for your child. Here, your child will be engaged in a variety of learning activities.

Ask about Before and After School Child Care programs offered at many Grand Erie Elementary Schools or visit granderie.ca

The Kindergarten Program

Grand Erie follows *The Kindergarten Program* as set out by the Ministry of Education. This program is organized into four frames:

- Belonging and Contributing;
- Self-Regulation and Well-Being;
- Demonstrating Literacy and Mathematics Behaviours; and,
- Problem Solving and Innovating

All play and inquiry in Kindergarten classrooms are structured around these four integrated areas of learning.

Children will be offered a variety of materials such as sand, blocks and books both inside and outside the classroom to encourage their learning and development.



The Kindergarten Program

Belonging and Contributing Means Learning About and Developing:

- A sense of connectedness to others;
- Relationships with others, and their contributions as part of a group, a community, and the natural world;
- Understanding of relationships and community, and the ways in which people contribute to the world around them; and
- Understanding and sharing ideas about stories that are read by the teacher; learning and other activities.

Self-Regulation and Well-Being Means Learning About and Developing:

- Thinking and feelings, and their recognition of, and respect for, differences in the thinking and feeling of others;
- Regulating emotions, adapting to distractions, and assessing consequences of actions in a way that enables children to engage in learning; and,
- Physical health and wellness.

The Kindergarten Program

Demonstrating Literacy and Mathematics Behaviours Means:

- The ability to communicate thoughts and feelings through gestures, movements, words, symbols, representations and through the use of a variety of materials
- Use of language, images, and materials to express and think critically about ideas and emotions, as they listen and speak, view and begin to read and write
- Use of concepts of numbers and patterns during play and inquiry, and experience an emergent understanding of mathematical relationships , concepts, skills and processes
- An active engagement in learning and developing a love of learning, which can instil the habit of learning for life



The Kindergarten Program



Problem Solving and Innovating Means Learning About and Developing:

- The world through natural curiosity, in ways that engage the mind, the senses, and the body;
- Making meaning of the world by asking questions, testing theories, solving problems, and engaging in creative and analytical thinking; and,
- Exploring innovative ways of thinking about and doing things that naturally arise with an active curiosity, and applying those ideas in relationships with others, with materials, and with the environment.

Tips to Ease the Transition

There are a number of activities you can plan with your child leading up to the first day of Kindergarten to make their transition easier.

Preparing for Kindergarten

- Drive or walk to the school and look around the playground.
- Establish bedtime and morning routines: practice going to bed and waking up for the new school schedule.
- Have your child practice using lunch containers, thermos caps, zippers, buttons, ties and shoe fasteners.

Things to Bring to School

- Choose comfortable, durable and easy-to-clean clothes.
- Choose clothes and footwear that are easy for your child to put on, take off and fasten.
- Mark all clothing, footwear, school bags and lunch containers with your child's name.
- Choose outdoor clothing that is weather appropriate.
- Have an extra set of clothing at the school for muddy days, spills or accidents.
- Provide your child with a school bag to carry notes, school work, lunches and snacks. It should be easy to open and close, and light to carry.
- Pack small snacks (peeled and cut fruit, vegetables, cheese and crackers, etc.) for your child to eat at school during their nutrition breaks.
- Please avoid pop, candy, peanut products, and hard-to-open containers.

- ✓ Read with your child.
- ✓ Talk with your child.
- ✓ Play with your child and provide opportunities for your child to play with other children.

Tips to Ease the Transition

Children are generally toilet trained before reaching Kindergarten. We encourage parents to work on this milestone before the start of school. If your child is experiencing a toilet training delay, please contact the school where they are registered.

It would be helpful for your child to:

- Know their first and last name
- Know their home address and phone number

Some schools have allergy policies.

- Contact your child's school if they have allergies or if you would like to learn more about the school's allergy policy.

Healthy Options

As part of Grand Erie's commitment to a healthy environment, schools in Grand Erie follow *The School Food and Beverage Policy - SO21*.

The policy includes nutrition standards for all foods and beverages sold in schools.

The policy also applies to food and beverage sold:

- In all venues on school property, such as cafeterias, vending machines, and tuck shops;
- Through all programs, including catered lunch programs; and,
- All events on school property, including bake sales and sporting events.

Food brought from home, purchased on school trips, bought off school property or through fundraising events that occur off school property are not required to meet this policy.

Special Event Days

Schools are allowed 10 Special Event Days throughout the year where they are exempted from these standards. Although these days allow schools greater flexibility with food and beverages, schools are encouraged to offer healthy options.

Tips to Ease the Transition

Bell Times

Scheduling information, including bell times that indicate the start and end of the school day, will be provided to you during registration.

School Year Calendar

Grand Erie District School Board honours a gradual entry model for students who start Kindergarten. The Calendar is approved in the spring before your child attends school in September. This calendar will be posted on the Grand Erie website at granderie.ca.

Balanced School Day

All Grand Erie elementary schools run a balanced school day. The benefits include larger blocks of uninterrupted instructional time that result in greater task completion and improved student focus. As a result, there is more time for nutrition and less time lost through transition.

The school day is divided into three equal instructional segments totaling 300 minutes. The segments are separated by 40-minute nutrition and recreational breaks instead of two 15-minute recess breaks and a one-hour lunch break.

Keep Routines

Kindergarten children can get very tired at night because they are doing so many new and exciting things. For this reason, it helps if you keep routines like bath time, meals and reading time as regular as possible. A good sleep each night is important.



Tips to Ease the Transition

Students with Special Needs

Students who experience challenges with their learning, such as developmental or physical disabilities, language disorders, vision or hearing issues, are supported at the school through the assistance of the Special Education Department.

If your child has special needs, please inform your school principal as soon as possible. If you have not already received a copy of Grand Erie's Early School Transition for Students with Special Needs information package, your principal can provide a copy.

Speech and Language Programs

Communication Services staff includes Speech-Language Pathologists and Communicative Disorders Assistants. Communication Services staff work closely with Kindergarten teachers and Early Childhood Educators. Literacy development, academic success and social skill development are highly dependent on a student's underlying communication abilities.

Senior Kindergarten students are eligible for these services. Junior Kindergarten students may be eligible for service through the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Preschool Speech and Language system. Referral to this program must be made by November 30 of the student's Junior Kindergarten year.

Communication Services Staff Provide:

- Assessment, consultation, collaboration and programming related to a student's communication needs
- Intervention sessions may be provided, either individually or in small groups, if deemed appropriate and beneficial by the Speech-Language Pathologist
- Development of home programs
- Referral to and liaison with School Based Rehabilitation Services
- Transition to school planning with preschool speech and language personnel
- Liaison with outside health-care providers
- Implementation of the Kindergarten Language and Literacy in the Classroom Program in some Grand Erie Kindergarten classrooms

Tips to Ease the Transition

Your child's principal can help address any concerns you may have and direct you to the appropriate resources.

English as a Second Language (ESL) and English Language Learners (ELL)

In Grand Erie, our focus is on *Success for Every Student* where diversity is valued, and all members of the school community feel safe and accepted. Every child in Kindergarten is supported and inspired to succeed in a culture of high expectations for learning, and in an inclusive environment where all children see themselves reflected in the program, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment so that they can feel engaged in and empowered by their learning experiences.

Because of the diversity in Ontario schools, planning for an inclusive registration is important to make the transition from home to school a smooth one for ELLs.

Families can book an appointment by contacting the ELL Teacher Consultant at 519-756-6301 ext. 281043 or email info@granderie.ca.

French Immersion

To enable children to become fluent in French, Grand Erie has Dual-Track and Single-Track French Immersion programs. A Dual-Track school offers French Immersion and English, while a Single-Track school only offers French Immersion programs.

Single-Track French Immersion (Kindergarten to Grade 8) is offered at École Confédération and École Dufferin in Brantford. The sites that offer Dual-Track French Immersion serve the communities of Haldimand, Norfolk, and Brant counties.

Dual-Track French Immersion is offered at Burford District Elementary School (Kindergarten to Grade 5); Paris Central Public School (Grades 6-8); Caledonia Centennial Public School (Kindergarten to Grade 3); River Heights Elementary School (Grades 4-8); Lakewood Elementary School, and Walsh Public School.

Visit the French Immersion section at granderie.ca for registration updates and information.

Tips to Ease the Transition

Transportation

Grand Erie is a member of the transportation consortium, Student Transportation Services Brant Haldimand Norfolk (STSBHN). This consortium provides transportation to students who meet the home-to-school distances and to students needing transportation. Learn more at stsbhn.ca or follow @stsbhn on Twitter.

Kindergarten Starter Package

Families will receive a letter before the start of the new school year to inform them of their child's bus route and pick-up location.

For students who transfer between buses, animal names have been assigned to each of the routes in order to assist students in knowing which buses they are travelling on. The animal associated with each of your child(ren)'s bus will be provided in the letter you receive in the summer.

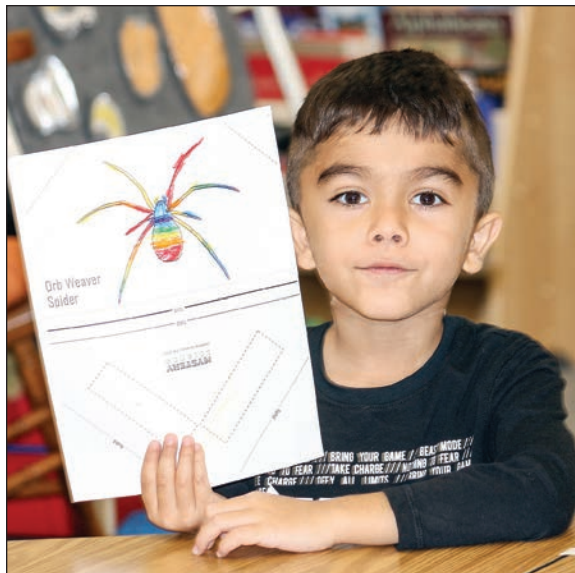
Students will receive a bus tag to attach to their clothing or backpack on the first day of school. Information contained on the bus tag will assist those who help children on and off the bus.

Bus Cancellations and Delays

In addition to accessing your child's transportation details, parents can subscribe through the parent portal at stsbhn.ca and track any delays or cancellations of the bus route.

Email Notifications

Sign up to receive email notifications about bus cancellations. An email is sent out to the associated email account whenever a delay or cancellation has occurred.





Being a Part of the School

Children perform better in school when their parents take an active part in their education. There are many ways for you to be part of your child's education.

Parent/Guardians are welcome to:

- ✓ Communicate with your child's educator/educator team.
- ✓ Offer relevant information to the teacher about your child.
- ✓ Ask the educator about your child's progress often.

Being a Part of the School

Here are Some Ways You Can Do This:

- Attend Parent/Teacher interviews
- Volunteer in the school library
- Join School Council or Home and School Association
- Help take care of the general school environment
- Volunteer to assist with a school trip

* Please ask your child's principal for volunteer information and how to submit a police check.

All volunteers must have a police check according to Procedure SO126 - Volunteers.

Children learn best through everyday activities. They are always discovering new things to look at and to play with.

As a parent/guardian, you have the important role of guiding your child through the world and answering all of the questions they have.

Being a part of their learning process now will help them perform better in school later. Encourage your child to ask questions and to explore new things.

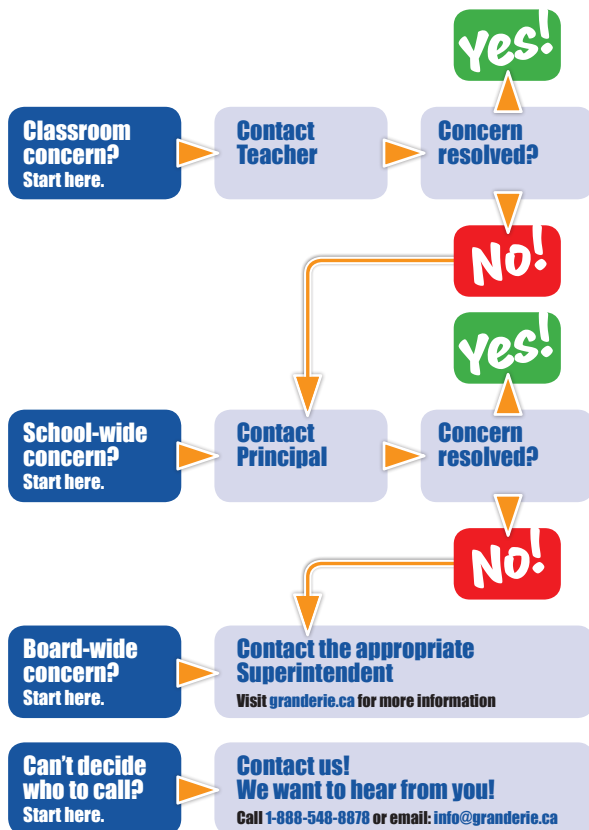
Take them for walks, introduce them to new people, read books, listen to music and open their eyes to the wonders of the world around them.

Parent Involvement

Parents/guardians are the first and most important teachers in their children's lives. Grand Erie believes parent involvement starts at home, working directly with your child. For more ideas and ways to become involved, speak to your principal or visit the Grand Erie Parent Involvement Committee (GEPIC); Indigenous Education Advisory Committee or School Council sections at granderie.ca.

We're Here to Help!

How to Get Help With a Concern:



Your trustee can guide you through this process

Find your Superintendent and Trustee Representative at GrandErie.ca/Board/About

Trustees

Trustees are officials elected or appointed to serve parents, students, and taxpayers. They are the link between communities and the school board.

Trustees ensure Grand Erie schools meet the diverse needs of students in their respective communities. Among other duties, Trustees make policies, approve the budget, and appoint the Director of Education.

Board Meetings and Committee of the Whole Meetings are held on Monday nights at 7:15 p.m. at the Education Centre, 349 Erie Avenue, Brantford, Ontario.

For meeting details, visit: granderie.ca.



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