



The Leader

BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Regular Meeting of the Board

June 24, 2024

All reports for this meeting can be found [here](#).

Recognizing Outstanding Achievements and Contributions in Grand Erie

Patti McCleister Memorial Award

The Patti McCleister Award is given annually to the Grand Erie employee or employees who exemplify outstanding leadership, inspire others, and are a driving force in realizing the board's goal of learning, leading and inspiring. This year, it is an honour to be recognizing two outstanding leaders who carry on Patti's legacy of leadership, wisdom and kindness in all that they do. This year's winners include:

Philip Kuckyt

Manager of Transportation Services

Ensuring thousands of learners across the district get to and from school safely, efficiently and in an environment that sets a positive tone for their days is the tall order Philip Kuckyt, Manager of Transportation Services, oversees each day. To do so requires meticulous attention to detail, prompt reactions, creative problem solving, a calm approach, and ongoing learning to continuously update technology and improve practices. His leadership and involvement in Ontario-wide committees allows other school boards to benefit from his knowledge and experience. The logistics involved in meeting the department's ultimate goal is an enormous feat and a crucial team effort; Phil's ability to motivate, model best practices and hard work, and understand what others need to succeed in their roles is unparalleled.



Above: Phil Kuckyt, Manager of Transportation Services at Grand Erie receives the Patti McCleister Award from Ted McCleister.



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Patti McCleister Memorial Award Contd.

His dedication to sharing his wisdom and lessons learned, and building up those around him in their own skillsets and specializations makes him a truly inspiring leader. The result is a Transportation department that consistently exceeds expectations and takes the safety and well-being of Grand Erie's learners to heart.

Julie Chaplin

Educator, St. George-German Public School

In her nearly 24 years as an educator at St. George-German Public School, Julie Chaplin has quietly fostered a culture of care, compassion and inclusion among students, staff and volunteers that has extended to the local community, and had a global impact. In her guidance of the school's Student Leadership team, which she's spearheaded for decades, she's inspired countless learners over the years to understand their own capabilities in making the world a better place, raising awareness and resources for local initiatives as well as international projects that show students what's possible as she humbly leads by example. She does so with the understanding that everyone can do their best when they're in a safe, welcoming and supportive learning space. Her ability to create those conditions has also inspired her colleagues, and set a high standard for their own leadership practices, instilling empathy and promoting respect as skills that are as essential in today's world as any other lessons they'll learn.



Julie Chaplin

Julie's leadership has and will continue to have a lasting impact as the next generation of leaders leaves St. George-German School as caring, aware and empowered ambassadors for positive change.



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Learn Lead Inspire Award

Learn Lead Inspire awards honour the students, staff members and community members whose efforts each day stand out in contributing to Grand Erie's collective goals and priorities in building a culture of learning, well-being and belonging.

Scott Parsons

J.L. Mitchener Public School

The dedicated efforts of custodial staff happen largely behind the scenes: they are clean and safe learning spaces that operate efficiently and predictably. Scott Parsons of J.L. Mitchener Public School, however, stands out in the best ways possible. Students, staff and visitors to the school notice his dedication not only to his job, but also in his unique ability to positively shape the environment there. Scott stands out for his involvement in school efforts supporting the well-being and belonging of its students. He takes part in spirit days, assemblies, events, and the school's morning announcements. He greets students by name, setting a welcoming tone for their day. He collaborates with school staff to ensure a wrap-around approach to supporting learners' needs. Staff members have called him 'the heart and soul of the Mitch,' and his abilities and willingness to go above and beyond to foster a welcoming space for everyone truly captures the spirit and intention of the Learn Lead Inspire awards.



Above: A large contingent from J.L. Mitchener Public School joined Scott Parsons as he received his award.

Geza Revai and Hospitality Students

Pauline Johnson Collegiate and Vocational School

Educator Geza Revai has an extensive background in the culinary sector, and since 2006, has brought his knowledge and skills to the teaching kitchen, inspiring the next generation of chefs, bakers and hospitality workers.



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Learn Lead Inspire Award Contd.

Pauline Johnson Collegiate and Vocational School's Hospitality program provides senior students with skill development, career exploration, teamwork, collaboration and creative expression, preparing learners to step confidently into the work world as well-rounded, capable professionals.

Over the past year, learners in the program have competed in skills competitions, garnering awards, and developed and executed many menus, catering large-scale events and high-profile meetings at their school and throughout the Grand Erie community. They have done so with skillful proficiency and exemplary attitudes, and are a true testament to what's possible when inspiring educators lead the way, and students reach their full potential to become leaders in their own right.



Above: Educator Geza Revai (fifth from left) and Pauline Johnson Collegiate and Vocational School's Hospitality class accept their award.

Student Showcase

Science Fair Winners

This spring, Grand Erie was well represented at regional and international science fairs, and four learners sharing projects that showcased curiosity, innovation and creative problem-solving, with practical applications in the world. Kiera Mitchell and Brodi Ouwendyk, both students at Delhi District High School, and Lily Song and Cordelia Simmons, both of North Park Collegiate and Vocational School, were all honoured for outstanding projects in a range of scientific fields.



From left: Lily Song, Cordelia Simmons, Kiera Mitchell and Brodi Ouwendyk



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Director's Report Highlights



West Brant Elementary School Groundbreaking

Students, staff members and community partners were on hand in West Brant at the site of a future Grand Erie elementary school, part of a larger hub which will also be home to a recreation centre, public library branch and park. The facility, a partnership with the City of Brantford and Brantford Public Library, will be a destination for residents of West Brant and a new generation of learners when it opens its doors in September 2026.

Student Trustees Conclude School Year

Student trustees Maggie Baker, Keira Gayowski and Aleena Skye are wrapping up their school-year responsibilities as representatives for their fellow learners, leading three working groups while also successfully managing academic workloads and student life. They've established the groundwork for next year's student trustee team to build on to continue the positive momentum generated this year. At Monday's board meeting, they presented the Student Senate Report, highlighting progress made over the previous ten months, the results of actively seeking student feedback on initiatives and elevating student voice. Grand Erie wishes each student trustee an excellent summer, and continued successes as they move on to post-secondary.





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Summer Learning Institute

This August, Grand Erie is hosting the Summer Institute Learning Program, open to all employees and taking place at Simcoe Composite School. There are 38 unique sessions offered between August 19 – 29 with a mix of half day, full day and multi-day learning sessions. The program offerings are designed to empower and support employees in building a culture of learning and nurturing curiosity, with topics ranging from equity and inclusion, universal design for learning, physical health and well-being, Indigenous perspectives and awareness, health and safety, first aid and a bus tour of Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.



In Memoriam

Statements were read to honour Josh Carrier, a Grade 12 student, and Sophia Love Solis Caro, an educator at École Dufferin. Carrier began his high school career at Valley Heights Secondary School before moving on to the School Within a College program through Fanshawe, where he continued to be involved with its welding course. He had been working towards completing his secondary school diploma through Waterford District High School's Turning Point program.

Sophia Love Solis Caro (nee Milbin) was a dedicated teacher at École Dufferin. She began her career with Grand Erie in 2016, and over her time as an educator, was a friend and inspiration to countless students and staff members.

Our sincerest condolences go out to Josh's and Sophia's families, friends, staff members, school communities, and everyone connected to these losses.



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Multi-Year Plan Stories

In 2021, 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 the vision to Learn, Lead and Inspire, and a mission to build a culture Learning, Well-Being and Belonging for each learner.

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

Learning

- **Grand Erie Writers Recognized in Laurier Stedman Competition**
- **Pauline Johnson Student Learning, Leading and Inspiring**
- **Still Cool for School After 40 Years (and Counting)**

Belonging

- **Rainbow Ball Shines Bright: Over 250 Students Celebrate Inclusivity at the Space Glow Dance**
- **UISC Year-End Event Celebrates the Spirit of Powwow**