GRAND ERIE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Learn Lead Inspire

READY, SET, KINDERGARTEN



A Family Guide to Starting School



The First Day of School is an Exciting Event!

The caring educators and staff at the Grand Erie District School Board 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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How to Register Your Child

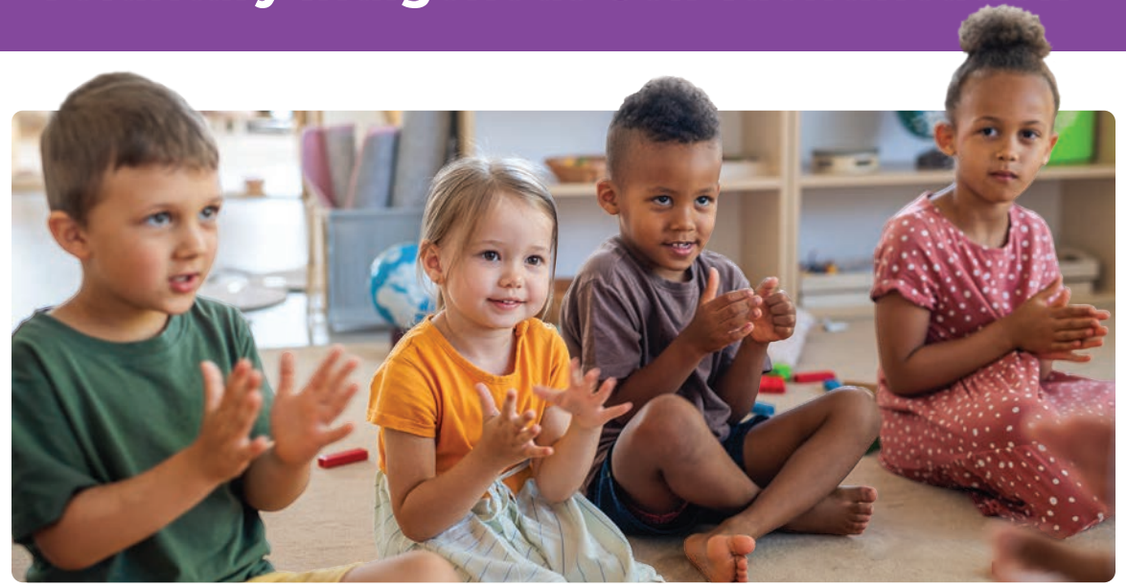
- Children eligible for Kindergarten must be **four years old** by **December 31st** of that year.
- Find your home school and register online at **granderie.ca/kindergarten**

The following information will be required when you register your child:

- A document to confirm Canadian Citizenship and 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/caregiver contact information, work and home
- Emergency contact person and telephone number
- Custody information, if applicable
- 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



Grand Erie recognizes the importance of student success for Indigenous students. Our dedicated staff are committed to improving services and programs for all Indigenous students attending schools within our board.

With the goal to improving the overall student experience for Indigenous students, Grand Erie encourages the development of strong partnerships with Indigenous families, communities, and organizations – both on and off the reserve.

Voluntary Indigenous student self-identification is a way to advise Grand Erie that a student is of Indigenous ancestry. A student may self-identify at any time.

Simply complete and return the form to the school's principal.

For more information, contact **ies@granderie.ca**



The primary goals of the Kindergarten program are:

- to establish a strong foundation for learning in the early years
- to help children make a smooth transition from home, child care, or preschool to school
- to provide evidence-based systematic and explicit instruction of the foundational language, mathematics, and science and technology knowledge and skills required for students to continue their learning in Grade 1 and beyond
- to allow students to realize the many proven benefits of learning through social interaction

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**

Grand Erie's Kindergarten Program

Areas of Learning

Grand Erie follows the Kindergarten Curriculum as set out by the Ministry of Education. This curriculum is organized into four areas of learning.

- **Strand A**
  Foundations of Language and Mathematics
- **Strand B**
  Problem Solving and Innovating
- **Strand C**
  Self-Regulation and Well-Being
- **Strand D**
  Belonging and Contributing

Kindergarten educators will work together to help each child build foundational skills through evidence-based, explicit instruction in play and inquiry-based learning environments through these four integrated areas of learning.





Strand A

Foundations of Language and Mathematics



In language and math your child will learn:

- listening and speaking skills and how to use facial expressions, gestures and body language
- the relationship between sounds and letters
- to read, understand and create simple texts by learning to use what they know about words, sentence structure, grammar and punctuation
- how to count, estimate, add, subtract and share equally using numbers
- how to identify shapes, objects and patterns
- how to answer questions by collecting data and organizing it into graphs
- how to use a variety of tools and strategies to solve math problems

Grand Erie's Kindergarten Program

Strand B

Problem Solving and Innovation



Developing problem solving and innovating means your child will learn:

- to explore the world through natural curiosity, in ways that engage their mind, senses and body
- a meaning of their world by asking questions, trying things out, designing or making something new or different



Strand C Self-Regulation and Well-Being

Developing self-regulation and well-being means your child will develop the ability to:

- manage their own feelings and emotions
- realize that others may have different thoughts and feelings, and to respect those differences
- deal with distractions
- advocate for themselves
- understand the consequences of actions
- be aware of their physical and mental health and wellness
- participate actively and regularly in physical activities and develop movement skills





Grand Erie's Kindergarten Program

Strand D Belonging and Contributing



Belonging and contributing means learning about and developing:

- a positive understanding of themselves as a person and their unique strengths
- a sense of connectedness to others, to their community and to the natural world
- ways to consider different perspectives and life experiences as well as areas of connection
- understanding of relationships and community and how people contribute to the world around them
- problem-solving skills in social situations



Preparing for Kindergarten

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

- 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.
- Read and talk with your child about what it will be like going to school.
- Play with your child and provide opportunities for your child to play with other children.



Scan this QR code to visit the Ministry of Education's website and discover practical ways to help your child feel confident and prepared as they start Kindergarten.

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 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) for your child to eat at school during their nutrition breaks.
- Please avoid pop, candy, peanut products, and hard-to-open containers.

Tips to Ease the Transition

Keeping 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.



Home Work

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 caregiver's name and the name of their school



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.

Special Event Days

Schools are permitted 10 special event days throughout the year where there is greater flexibility with food and beverages (e.g. pizza days). 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.

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 totalling 300 minutes. The segments are separated by 40-minute nutrition and recreational breaks.



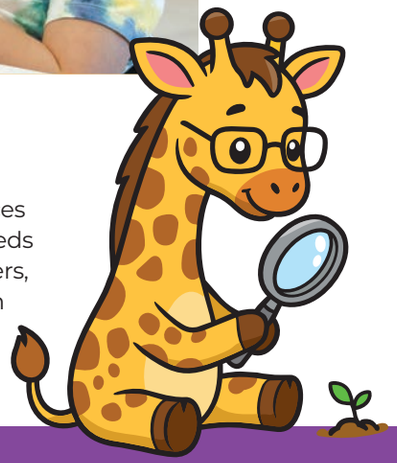
School Year Calendar

Grand Erie honours a gradual entry model during the first week of school who start Kindergarten. The calendar is approved in the spring before your child attends school in September. This calendar is posted on the Grand Erie website at **granderie.ca/schoolyearcalendar** or by scanning the QR code to the right. Your child's school will inform you of their start date and gradual entry timelines.



Specialized Services

Students enter school with a unique set of strengths and needs. The Specialized Services department in Grand Erie can support school staff with inclusive practices to ensure your child finds success upon school entry. If your child has specific needs related to developmental or physical disabilities, speech and/or language disorders, self-regulation, vision, and/or hearing, please inform your school principal as soon as possible. This will ensure more specific transition plans or supports can be discussed before the start of the school year.



Students with Special Needs

Speech and Language Programs

Speech, Language and Hearing Services staff include Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) and Communicative Disorders Assistants (CDAs). Speech and Language 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. Kindergarten students are eligible for these services.

Referrals are based on discussion with the school team regarding student needs and priorities within the school. Private practice speech and language services are available in the community for families who may wish to access support outside of school.

Grand Erie Speech and Language Staff Provide:

- Assessment, consultation, collaboration and programming related to a student's communication needs
- Support for students who are non-speaking and may benefit from Alternative/ Augmentative Communication tools
- 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 (SBRS) Speech Therapy Program
- Transition to school planning with preschool speech and language personnel
- Liaison with outside health-care providers

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



Multi-Lingual Learners (MLL)





Transitioning from Home to School

In Grand Erie, we focus on the success of 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 they 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 MLL students.

Families can book an appointment for MLL support by contacting **519-756-6301** ext. **281041** or by emailing **welcome@granderie.ca**



French Immersion

Dual-Track and Single-Track Programs

To help children become fluent in French, Grand Erie offers Dual-Track and Single-Track French Immersion programs. Dual-Track schools offer both French Immersion and an English program, while Single-Track schools only offer a French Immersion program.

Single-Track French Immersion (Grades 1 to 8) is offered at **École Confédération Elementary School** and **École Dufferin Public School** 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** (Grade 1 to 8);
- **Lakewood Elementary School** (Grade 1 to 8);
- **River Heights Elementary School** (Grade 1 to 8);
- **Walsh Public School** (Grade 1 to 8);



Families planning to enrol their child in French Immersion in **Grade 1** can register for Kindergarten at their designated French Immersion school. Starting at that school in English programming can help support a smooth transition to French Immersion in Grade 1.

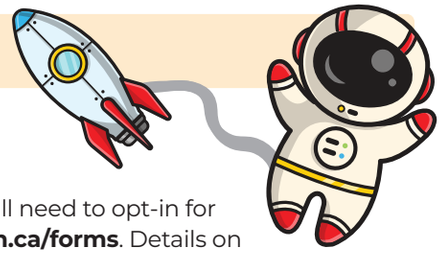
Visit the **French Immersion** section at **granderie.ca/french** for registration updates and information.

Transportation

Student Transportation Services

Grand Erie is a member of the transportation consortium, Student Transportation Services Brant Haldimand Norfolk (STSBHN). STSBHN provides transportation to students who meet the home-to-school distance criteria and to students with particular special education needs.

Learn more at **stsbhn.ca** or follow **@stsbhn** on X.



Kindergarten Starter Package

Families eligible for bus services and looking to secure a seat will need to opt-in for services. To do so, complete a Transportation Request at: **stsbhn.ca/forms**. Details on busing are accessible on the Transportation Portal. Families can register for the portal by visiting: **transinfobhn.ca/login**. Be sure to use the same email address provided at registration so your subscription is linked to your child's profile.

For students who transfer between buses, animal names have been assigned to each route. The animal associated with each bus will be noted on the Transportation Portal.

Students will receive a bus tag to attach to their 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

Creating a parent/caregiver subscription allows you to receive email notifications when bus services are delayed or cancelled. The **Chipmunk app** allows you to track your child's bus in real time. Be sure to use the same username and password as your parent subscription when logging onto the app. More information on the app is available at **stsbhn.ca/faqs**

Being a Part of the School

Participation is Key

Children perform better in school when their parents/caregivers take an active part in their education.

Parents/caregivers are encouraged to:

- Communicate with your child's educator or educator team
- Offer relevant information to the educator about your child
- Ask the educator about your child's progress often



Here Are Some Ways You Can Help:

- Attend Parent/Teacher interviews
- Volunteer at your child's school
- Join School Council or Home and School Association
- 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 in accordance with **Procedure SO46 - Volunteers**.



Encourage Questions and Exploration

As a parent/caregiver, 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, so 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/Caregiver Involvement

Parents/caregivers 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, Indigenous Education Advisory Committee or School Council sections at **granderie.ca**

GEPIC
Grand Erie Parent Involvement Committee

WE LEAD FORWARD

Our Vision

Learn | Lead | Inspire

Our Mission

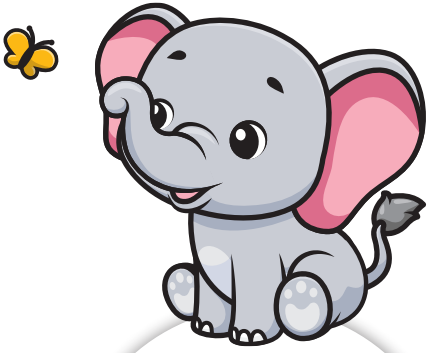
Together, we build a culture of **learning**, **well-being** and **belonging** to inspire each learner.

Our Collective Priorities

Learning
We build a culture of learning to nurture curiosity and opportunity for each learner.

Well-being
We build a culture of well-being to support the cognitive, social, emotional and physical needs of each learner.

Belonging
We build a culture of belonging to support an equitable, inclusive and responsive environment for each learner.



GRAND ERIE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Learn Lead Inspire

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