



# Media Release

For Immediate Release

September 16, 2021

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## Grand Erie Seeks Input from Parents Around Balanced School-Year Pilot Project

Brantford, Ont. – Grant Erie District School Board is seeking feedback from parents and guardians as it explores the possibility of introducing a balanced school-year calendar to a Brantford-area elementary school for the 2022-23 year.

“Input from families is crucial to understanding the questions and concerns our parent community might have around this concept,” said Wayne Baker, Superintendent of Education, who is leading the working committee looking into this different approach to organizing the school year. “We know there are a lot of benefits to following a balanced school-year calendar, and we’re eager to engage parents in the process.”

To ensure parents and families are informed and have a strong voice in the process, Grand Erie is holding a series of virtual town hall meetings for the communities of schools selected as possible choices for the balanced school-year pilot.

In a balanced school-year calendar, students attend classes for the same number of days and with the same number of holidays as students in schools following a traditional calendar, but holiday breaks are distributed more evenly over the school year. Instead of a two-month break during the summer, students are off for a five-week period, and the remaining holiday weeks are ‘balanced’ throughout the school year. Evidence indicates students enrolled in a school with a balanced calendar retain more learning from year to year, have an easier time establishing and maintaining routines, can experience lower levels of stress and reduced absenteeism, and improved academic results.

“While there are a number of school boards in Ontario that have introduced this type of calendar to one or more of their schools, we appreciate that this is very much a new concept for a lot of families,” said JoAnna Roberto, Director of Education. “Providing as much information as we can will help enable meaningful dialogue.”

To ensure families have the option of opting out of the balanced school-year approach if their current school is selected, each school has been coupled with a nearby school which would receive students opting out. More information is available on the Grand Erie website.

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## **Balanced School-Year Calendar Virtual Town Hall Meetings:**

- **Branlyn Community School & Banbury Heights School**  
September 21 - 6:30 p.m.
- **Agnes G. Hodge Public School & Ryerson Heights Elementary School  
& Walter Gretzky Elementary School**  
September 22 - 6:30 p.m.
- **Brier Park Public School & Cedarland Public School**  
September 23 – 6:30 p.m.
- **Central Public School & King George School**  
September 28 – 6:30 p.m.

Grand Erie District School Board represents more than 25,000 students in 58 elementary schools and 14 secondary schools within the City of Brantford and the counties of Brant, Haldimand, and Norfolk as well as secondary students from Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. With a dedicated staff of more than 2,500, Grand Erie is committed to learning, leading and inspiring.

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