



## Website Requirements

Board Received: November 22, 2021 Review Date: January 2026

### Accountability:

1. Accountability: – As needed
2. Criteria for Success: – All Grand Erie websites will be AODA compliant  
Content on all Grand Erie websites will be current  
Content will comply with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)  
Websites will be a valuable communication outlet for the Board's stakeholders

### 1. Overview:

- 1.1 This document outlines the requirements to be followed when students, teachers and other Board employees publish material on the Internet. It includes website content and student safety requirements.
- 1.2 The availability of Internet access in all Grand Erie District School Board schools provides an educational opportunity for students and staff to contribute to the Grand Erie District School Board's web pages.
- 1.3 The creation of a web page provides a means for sharing information with the Grand Erie District School Board and the world about school curriculum and instruction, school-authorized activities, and other information relating to our schools, our mission and vision; and provides instructional resources for staff and students. While the Board's Senior Administration supports a decentralized approach to administering school websites, the Board's Senior Administration retains the final decision on the suitability of website content and design and can direct schools to change content and/or design.

### 2. Website Content Requirements:

- 2.1 All board and school web pages will provide a section for feedback (e.g., [info@granderie.ca](mailto:info@granderie.ca), Talking Locker). Schools will have in place a mechanism for reviewing and addressing feedback submissions in a timely manner.
- 2.2 All board and school websites must comply with the Visual Identity of the Board (See Policy SO25 – Visual Identity) and must be hosted on the appropriate web platform supported by Information Technology Services. School sites will have a shortened style domain address for ease of access. No alternative domain, site, blog, or server will be used to represent the school in an official or unofficial capacity.
- 2.3 Creators of web pages need to familiarize themselves with — and practice — the following requirements. Grand Erie websites should be relevant, have information that is easy to access, reflect the values of the Grand Erie District School Board and establish brand equity throughout the system. Grand Erie employs communication methods and strategies to convey and strengthen the image and culture of the organization as a quality public educator which reflects equity and inclusivity. Consistent messaging in print and electronic

materials supports this objective and helps our communities identify with Grand Erie, which is essential in maintaining the Grand Erie District School Board as the educator of choice for the communities we serve. Websites must meet the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#) (WCAG) under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

- 2.4 Websites should provide information about the Grand Erie District School Board's schools, programs and services, be easily accessible and reflect a positive image. Information should be organized in a coherent manner that is easy to navigate. Web sites should provide a high degree of customer service and demonstrate how the Grand Erie District School Board is fulfilling its Multi Year Plan.
- 2.5 Content on Grand Erie sites, including school sites, will not be in contravention of any Board Policy or Procedure
  - (a) Content will not promote violence or hatred
  - (b) Content will not contain sectarian or denominational content
  - (c) Content that is focused on issues must inform or educate, create awareness of issues in the community and or/facilitate community discussions
  - (d) Content will not promote a specific political party
  - (e) No advertising from external organizations is permitted
  - (f) Content will not contain criticisms of trustees, staff or students or statements that could cause the Board embarrassment or liability
  - (g) Content must be organized in a user-friendly format
  - (h) Content must be clear, comprehensive and jargon-free. It must be responsive and provide a mechanism for visitors to the site to contact the school or Board e.g. by offering an email address
  - (i) Material must reflect the principles of equity and inclusivity as outlined in the Grand Erie Equity and Inclusivity in Education Policy, SO14
  - (j) Content must adhere to the privacy and information requirements (See section 3)
- 2.6 All board and school websites will provide public pages (accessed by school and local community) and secure pages (accessed by single sign-in authentication; not available to others outside board). Functionality in secure pages will be specific to the users logging in (staff, students and parents/guardians).
- 2.7 External links should be relevant and are subject to the same standards of content quality as Grand Erie websites as noted in Sections 2.4 and 2.5 of this document. All linked pages should open in a new window, thereby maintaining the visitor within a Grand Erie website.

### **3. Photographs, Personal Information and Student Safety:**

- 3.1 For the safety of our students, the Board will not use the name of a Grand Erie student or the photograph of a Grand Erie student on any website without consent given through the Freedom of Information Parent/Guardian Information Sheet process collected annually through the registration form or the current information sheets.
- 3.2 A class picture will not be posted online if there is even one student in the photo whose parents/guardians have not provided informed written consent on the Registration/Current Information Sheet based on the Freedom of Information Parent/Guardian Information Sheet.
- 3.3 Grand Erie employees should refrain from taking or posting photographs of a large group when there are students in the group who do not have consent to be photographed.

It should be noted that the Board cannot control or prevent the further distribution or use of photos, videos, or other personal information taken by parents/guardians or members of the community at public functions held inside or outside the school. The Board urges all school guests to protect the personal information and identity of students and seek consent from the parents/guardians of the child(ren) before posting pictures, videos or other personal information on the internet.

Due to the nature of certain types of personal information, some information should never be included on school or school board public facing pages. This would include:

- (i) Student's report card and academic transcript
- (ii) Student's Ontario Student Record (OSR)
- (iii) Student's full name, telephone number, home address, personal/student email address, and social media account/contact information
- (iv) Parent's/Guardian's full name, telephone number, home address, personal email address
- (v) Staff's personal email address, home address, and/or telephone number

#### 4. Content Standards:

##### 4.1 Subject Matter

- (a) All subject matter on Grand Erie District School Board web pages and any links must relate to curriculum and instruction, school-authorized activities, or information about the Grand Erie District School Board or Multi Year Plan.
  - (i) Staff or student work may be published only as it relates to a class project, course, or other school-related activity
  - (ii) Staff and student work should not contain or promote non-school items, events or products unless approved by the school and/or Board administration.
  - (iii) Neither students, staff, nor other individuals may use the Board's or School's public web pages to provide access to their personal pages (non-teaching pages) on other servers or online services. Staff and students may provide links to instructional sites or materials not on Grand Erie servers from within the secure pages, but these links/materials need to be related to class work, curriculum, and instruction and should never divulge personal information of students.
  - (iv) Classroom or individual teacher web pages are to be linked from the landing page of the secure student or teacher page on the school website. Web tools that facilitate communication, learning and dialogue may be used with the permission of the principal e.g. discussion wikis, podcasts etc. These tools may not be used to communicate personal information or facilitate personal conversations, they must be learning focused.

##### 4.2 Copyright

- (a) All posted content must comply with copyright and trademark regulations and Grand Erie Policy SO24 Copyright Fair Dealing Guidelines.
- (b) Graphics, video, audio, or text created by another person may not be placed on a page without demonstrated permission of the author or artist.

##### 4.3 Quality

- (a) All content must be free of any spelling or grammatical errors.
- (b) Documents may not contain objectionable material or point directly to objectionable material (i.e., material that does not meet the standards for instructional resources specified in other related Board procedures).

4.4 Content should be regularly updated and maintained. Content that is no longer relevant will be removed by content owner.

## 5. School Websites:

### 5.1 Roles & Responsibilities

- (a) The principal is responsible for the content of the school website. The principal or a staff volunteer approved by the principal will act in the role of school webmaster. The webmaster will assist the staff members in the school in ensuring these requirements are adhered to and that the content of the school web pages meets these procedures and the principal's approval.
- (b) Students or parent volunteers cannot act as webmaster or have access to update web-content on public pages of school sites.

### 5.2 All school websites are required to adhere to the following:

- (a) School web pages may not contain any commercial or promotional advertising. School web pages may contain small acknowledgements of school partnerships or sponsorships.
- (b) Public school pages' content cannot provide the means for people to contact any student directly. If communication back to the school is needed, it should be directed to the appropriate staff member.

School website training opportunities and resources are available for school staff by connecting with the Communications Department through [info@granderie.ca](mailto:info@granderie.ca)

Reference: SO12 Code of Conduct  
SO14 Equity and Inclusivity in Education  
SO19 Privacy and Information Management  
SO24 Copyright Fair Dealing Guideline  
SO25 Visual Identity  
SO27 Acceptable Use of Information Technology