



# Media Release

For Immediate Release  
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## Grand Erie Honours National Indigenous Peoples Day by Adjusting its 2019 Exam Schedule for Secondary Students

**Brantford Ont.** – Grand Erie District School Board is amending its 2018-19 School Year Calendar for secondary students to re-designate Friday, June 21, 2019 as an instructional day instead of an exam day.

The decision, which was approved by Trustees on Monday, will ensure Indigenous students are not required to choose between writing an exam and participating in important cultural events to commemorate National Indigenous Peoples Day, which is honoured each year on June 21. The decision aligns with Grand Erie's Multi-Year Plan, *Success for Every Student*, and its commitment and focus on Equity.

"In the past, when an exam was held on National Indigenous Peoples Day, students have been accommodated by their school and were allowed to write their exam on an alternative date," said Brenda Blancher, Grand Erie's Director of Education. "While it was a great compromise, it's not an acceptable one moving forward."

"National Indigenous Peoples Day is an important and culturally significant day, for both our students and our Board," said Blancher. "This decision is evidence of our fierce commitment to the ideals of equity and inclusion. It also demonstrates our long-term focus on Reconciliation, and our sincere commitment to creating relationships built on mutual respect and understanding with our Indigenous communities."

Prior to bringing the recommendation to Trustees, staff consulted with a wide range of groups, including the Safe and Inclusive Schools Committee, the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee, Executive Council, the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) and the School Year Calendar Committee.

"While this decision results in a small alteration to our traditional exam schedule, I think it's an important and significant way for us to demonstrate to our community what we stand for as a Board," said Greg Anderson, Chair of the Grand Erie District School Board. "I'm also confident that our teachers and our schools will have students prepared for exams as they always do."

The Ministry of Education has confirmed its approval of the revisions to Grand Erie's 2018-19 School Year Calendar.

Grand Erie approved its Multi-Year Plan in 2016. At the centre of this plan is the goal of *Success for Every Student*. Equity is one of six success indicators included within the

plan. The others are: Achievement, Well-Being, Community, Environment and Technology.

Grand Erie District School Board represents more than 25,000 students in 58 elementary and 14 secondary schools within the City of Brantford and the counties of Brant, Haldimand, and Norfolk.

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