



# Media Release

For Immediate Release  
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## Grand Erie focused on *Walking Together* During Annual Sharing Our Voices Event for National Indigenous Peoples Day

**Brantford Ont.** – Grand Erie District School Board’s Indigenous Education team, in partnership with the Grand Erie Elementary Teachers Federation, will celebrate the diverse cultures, traditions and contributions of Indigenous communities during its annual Sharing Our Voices gala at the Sanderson Centre on Thursday, June 20.

*Walking Together* connects to the learning that has taken place in elementary schools across Grand Erie around the Two Row Wampum. It also honours the on-going partnerships between Grand Erie and elementary schools from Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

“The children of this generation are going to be leaders in the most significant changes we see when it comes to Truth and Reconciliation,” said Sabrina Sawyer, Grand Erie’s Indigenous Education Lead. “These are the voices we need to hear, support and celebrate if we are going to move forward together.”

*Walking Together* will showcase a variety of student performances from schools across Grand Erie. It will also feature a joint performance between Oneida Public School and Oliver M. Smith Elementary School from Six Nations of the Grand River.

The annual event takes place one day before the country celebrates National Indigenous Peoples Day. The gala runs from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 20 at the Sanderson Centre (88 Dalhousie Street) in Brantford.

To further support Indigenous Peoples Day (Friday, June 21), Grand Erie amended its 2018-19 School Year Calendar for secondary students to re-designate June 21 as an instructional day instead of a traditional exam day. The decision ensures Indigenous students are not required to choose between writing an exam and participating in important cultural events.

“National Indigenous Peoples Day is significant for both our students and our Board,” said Brenda Blancher, Director of Education. “At Grand Erie, we are fiercely committed to the ideals of equity and inclusion. This can be seen through our Multi-Year Plan, *Success for Every Student*. And, the decision to not have exams on June 21 demonstrates our long-term focus on Truth and Reconciliation as well as our Board’s sincere efforts to create relationships with our Indigenous communities built on mutual understanding and respect.”

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