

# A Bold New Vision for Grand Erie



Introducing our  
Multi-Year Strategic  
Plan for 2021-26 and  
Annual Learning  
and Operating Plan  
for 2021-22





## Introduction

### Director's Message



We have a new direction at Grand Erie. One we can only achieve together. Our vision to Learn, Lead and Inspire, and our shared mission to build a culture of Learning, Well-Being and Belonging for each learner is reflected in the strategic goals and annual learning and operating plans highlighted here.

I want to thank the Board of Trustees, our leadership team, staff, students and communities who came together to help shape a vision to lead us through the next five years. It identifies how best to support the cognitive, social, emotional and physical needs of each learner. It recognizes the importance of nurturing curiosity, and underscores how vital inclusive and responsive environments are to student success. Now the work begins.

Connected to the multi-year strategic plan is our annual learning and operating plan, articulating goals to move Grand Erie forward toward our vision. It lays out strategies and success criteria for our academic and operational goals. Everything we do, from the classroom to the boardroom, will reflect our priorities of Learning, Well-Being and Belonging.

Despite the impacts of a global pandemic, this multi-year strategic plan is rooted in optimism. It represents hopes for tomorrow while challenging us to think differently today. My hope is that you find within this plan the support and direction needed to learn, lead, and inspire.

**JoAnna Roberto, Ph.D.**  
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION,  
SECRETARY OF THE BOARD

### Our Vision

Learn

Lead

Inspire

### Our Mission

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

### Chair's Message



On behalf of the Board of Trustees for Grand Erie District School Board, I am excited to present the following pages detailing Grand Erie's bold new multi-year strategic plan. It represents a collective roadmap to show us the way, and a focus on accountability to ensure we reach our destination together through continuous improvement and meaningful action.

We worked with principals, teachers, students, parents, the leadership team, the Board of Trustees and community partners to create a plan from the inside out. We invited stakeholder groups to complete a survey to let us know what they value most about Grand Erie and ways in which we can focus moving forward. We had 750 community members share their ideas and priorities through an online public participation platform.

This is your plan. We share in its ownership, and together we share

responsibility to deliver. A responsibility to Learn, Lead, Inspire.

I trust you will join us in our pursuit of this vision, because nothing is as important as the future we can all help shape for all learners.

**Greg Anderson**  
CHAIR OF THE BOARD



### 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 Goals

### Learning

#### Mathematics

Increase mathematics learning outcomes for all students.

#### Literacy

Increase the overall reading proficiency of all students (with a focus on grades 1-3).

#### Graduation

Prepare every student for their post-secondary destination (apprenticeship, community, college, university, workplace).

### Well-Being

#### Mental Health and Well-Being

Increase the knowledge and skills of staff to better support learners in developing the capacity to tend to their own well-being.

### Belonging

#### Safe and Inclusive Schools

Create multiple experiences where all learners feel a sense of belonging at school and are engaged in their learning.

#### Indigenous Education

Deepen our system commitment to reconciliation and improve education achievement outcomes for all First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

### Support Services

#### Communications

Enhance Grand Erie's position in its communities as a learning, leading and inspiring organization.

#### Business Services

Develop flexible resource allocation strategies to provide equitable enhancements to learning environments resulting in positive classroom cultures that foster individual and collective well-being.

#### Facility Services

Establish physical and environmental standards across the system to increase the overall sense of belonging for all staff and students.

#### Human Resources

Revise and improve the employment and promotion policies, procedures and practices resulting in a workforce that reflects, understands and responds to our diverse population.

#### Information Technology Services

Embed technology opportunities for staff and students through professional learning and enhanced technology tools.

#### Leadership

Identify future leaders, actively develop new leaders and responsively support current leaders.

# Learning

**Priority:** We build a culture of **learning** where curiosity and opportunities are nurtured for each learner.

## GOAL MATHEMATICS

Increase mathematics learning outcomes for all students.

### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

#### How will we achieve this goal?

- Provide professional learning pertaining to assessment for learning strategies and responsive instruction to effectively implement the Ontario Mathematics curriculum.
- Provide coaching to support the implementation of effective instruction and assessment strategies to develop students' mathematical skills.

### SUCCESS CRITERIA

#### How will we know we are successful?

- Educators will use data to design and deliver responsive instruction to support the mathematical skill development of all students.
- By the end of the year, students will demonstrate improvement in mathematics as evidenced through summative data.

## GOAL LITERACY

Increase the overall reading proficiency of all students (with a focus on grades 1-3).

### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

#### How will we achieve this goal?

- Provide professional learning pertaining to the effective use of the Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) to identify student instructional and independent reading levels.
- Provide coaching to support the implementation of effective instruction and assessment strategies to develop students' reading skills (with a focus on grades 1-3).

### SUCCESS CRITERIA

#### How will we know we are successful?

- Educators will use data to design and deliver responsive instruction resulting in improved the reading skills of all students.
- By the end of the year, students will demonstrate improvement in reading as evidenced through summative data (with a focus on grades 1-3).

## GOAL GRADUATION

Prepare every student for their post-secondary destination (apprenticeship, community, college, university, workplace).

### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

#### How will we achieve this goal?

- Provide professional learning pertaining to culturally relevant, responsive and sustaining pedagogy and the effective use of data related to key indicators to support students' readiness for their chosen post-secondary destination.
- Develop a centrally-designed tool for use by school teams to track key indicators for each cohort (e.g. mark distribution, attendance, engagement, credit accumulation, community hours, literacy requirement), and use the data to develop supports for individual students to successfully reach their chosen post-secondary destination.



### SUCCESS CRITERIA

#### How will we know we are successful?

- Educators will implement responsive pedagogy to support each learner and identify and implement strategies to support students in attaining the formal requirements for entrance to their chosen post-secondary destination.
- School teams regularly gather data to track student progress towards their chosen post-secondary destination.
- All students make a successful transition to their post-secondary destination, resulting in increased 4- and 5-year graduation rates (Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and Ontario Secondary School Certificate (OSSC)) and a decrease in number of early leavers.

## Well-Being

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

### GOAL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Increase the knowledge and skills of staff to better support learners in developing the capacity to tend to their own well-being.

#### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

##### How will we achieve this goal?

- Professional learning focused on the School Mental Health Ontario Aligned and Integrated Model (AIM) to establish welcoming and inclusive school environments that promote student mental health, mental health literacy, and an understanding of social-emotional learning.
- Combine research and the development of a baseline data set to inform effective practices to implement targeted support and interventions for all students.
- Differentiated, job-embedded coaching supports and system professional development from Child & Youth Workers will be part of In-School Teams, staff meetings and professional learning opportunities to support a tiered approach to wellness.
- Child & Youth Workers will provide tier one social-emotional and wellness resources for staff.

#### SUCCESS CRITERIA

##### How will we know we are successful?

- Improved outcomes based on the understanding of social-emotional learning, mental health literacy and stress management and community and hospital pathways to care.
- A positive trend demonstrating students' increased capacity to tend to their own well-being.
- Members of the school team will demonstrate their learning about the tiered approach to wellness as evidenced by their participation in In-School Teams and their access to resources.



Over the spring of 2021, more than 750 Grand Erie community members and stakeholders shared their thoughts on priorities through an online public participation forum.

“ Everyone should be given an opportunity to learn and grow no matter their ability. The world needs differences - opinions, abilities, interests, experiences. ”

“ Mental and physical well-being of students is also extremely important. Healthy children lead to healthy adults. Schools need to provide a supportive environment for children that have life challenges. ”

“ Prepare students for the future. Connect work to skills they are developing, with more connections to business and problem solving. ”

“ Teach about Canada's history regarding the Indigenous community. Teach what has happened so that it never happens again. Kids are the future. Help them make change. ”

# Belonging

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

## GOAL SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

Create multiple experiences where all learners feel a sense of belonging at school and are engaged in their learning.

### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

#### How will we achieve this goal?

- Invite a greater diversity of community voices to increase capacity and deepen understanding at the Board and school level in the areas of culturally responsive learning, anti-racism, anti-oppression, equity and human rights matters, and the removal of systemic barriers.
- Deliver staff census survey and analyze and act on staff census survey.
- Implement effective practices to support leader learning in implementing practices and responses to student behaviour that are trauma informed and reflect an anti-racist, anti-oppressive, equity and human rights lens.
- Provide system-level professional development for staff in areas of anti-racist, anti-oppressive, equity and human rights matters, enhancing belonging and culturally relevant pedagogy to meet the diverse needs of all learners.
- Enhance the Equity Champion program by placing trained individuals at the school level to provide timely and relevant support, capacity enhancement, resource sharing.

### SUCCESS CRITERIA

#### How will we know we are successful?

- An Equity Advisory Committee will be created representing Indigenous, Black, South Asian, racialized, Two Spirit, LGBTQ+ and other historically marginalized students and families with a mandate to develop an Equity Action Plan for the fall of 2022 reflective of lived experience.
- Reduction in suspensions of students from historically marginalized groups and an increase in use of alternative practices (e.g. restorative).
- All Staff will participate in professional learning resulting in an increase of educator confidence and capacity to identify and respond to issues of equity and inclusion.
- 100% of schools will have Equity Champions to report and highlight work done to support student and educator learning.



## GOAL INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

Deepen our system commitment to reconciliation and improve education achievement outcomes for all First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

#### How will we achieve this goal?

- Professional development to actively engage in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.
- Promote and participate in reconciliation community engagement opportunities.
- Engage in authentic learning with Indigenous peoples, communities, and perspectives.
- Deliver Indigenous courses that allow students to see themselves in their own learning (language, culture etc.).

### SUCCESS CRITERIA

#### How will we know we are successful?

- Increased participation in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Additional Qualification courses and in reconciliation events and cultural competency training.
- Increased opportunities for staff and students to voice their experiences and perspectives in a variety of communication and learning platforms.
- Increased 4- and 5-year graduation rates (OSSD and OSSC) and a decrease in number of early leavers.
- Increase of Indigenous resources within schools across Grand Erie.
- Increase Indigenous language and curriculum offerings across the district.

# Support Services

Connected to all priorities: **Learning**, **Well-being** and **Belonging**.

## GOAL COMMUNICATIONS

Enhance Grand Erie's position in its communities as a learning, leading and inspiring organization.

### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

#### How will we achieve this goal?

- Drive stakeholder engagement in Vision and consistently connect communications to the Vision.
- Focus on data-driven decision-making tools and opportunities.
- Support effectiveness of communication with all communities.

### SUCCESS CRITERIA

#### How will we know we are successful?

- Schools, departments and communities embrace our Vision and Mission.
- Streamlined communication across all channels with appropriate volume, focus and timing.
- Communications channels are simple, targeted and understood.

## GOAL BUSINESS SERVICES

Develop flexible resource allocation strategies to provide equitable enhancements to learning environments resulting in positive classroom cultures that foster individual and collective well-being.

### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

#### How will we achieve this goal?

- Financial supports will be redirected where possible to promote and enhance well-being in school learning environments for staff and students.

### SUCCESS CRITERIA

#### How will we know we are successful?

- Enhanced learning conditions for students and staff as a result of additional school-based projects supported by the Business department in consultation with Superintendents of Family Schools.

## GOAL FACILITY SERVICES

Establish physical and environmental standards across the system to increase the overall sense of belonging for all staff and students.

### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

#### How will we achieve this goal?

- Establish a working group comprised of members from Facilities, school leaders, educators, students, Information Technology Services, Business Services, Curriculum and Special Education, Mental Health and Well-being.
- Develop standards and utilize best practices across sectors (data) to support the re-design standards for Grand Erie Schools. The focus would include main entrances, classrooms, gymnasiums, lighting, flooring and colours.



### SUCCESS CRITERIA

#### How will we know we are successful?

- The development of an articulate framework that will enable schools to have a voice in the selection of their own design elements that are reflective of unique cultures and perspectives in each school community.
- Standards will be established in a menu-style format available to all schools.
- At least one school will undergo a major renovation by the fall of 2022 based on the standards established.

# Support Services

Connected to all priorities: **Learning**, **Well-being** and **Belonging**.

## GOAL HUMAN RESOURCES

Revise and improve the employment and promotion policies, procedures and practices resulting in a workforce that reflects, understands and responds to our diverse population.

### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

#### How will we achieve this goal?

- Review and enhance recruitment practices to reflect the importance of lived experiences and enable the hiring of Indigenous staff as well as staff representatives of diverse communities. This will include the implementation of demographic questionnaires at the point of hire.
- Provide professional learning to those who hire staff, so that the hiring processes are fair, equitable and inclusive.

### SUCCESS CRITERIA

#### How will we know we are successful?

- All hiring managers will be trained in fair, equitable and inclusive hiring practices.
- Human Resources will develop a bank of equitable and inclusive interview questions, accessible to hiring managers.
- Equity and Inclusive recruitment and selection practices will be embedded throughout the hiring and onboarding process.
- Develop a baseline of quantitative data related to diverse backgrounds of new hires to Grand Erie.



## GOAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

Embed technology opportunities for staff and students through professional learning and enhanced technology tools.

### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

#### How will we achieve this goal?

- Educators will use technology resources, engage in professional learning and implement instructional strategies to support the learning styles of their students.
- Provide technology modernization tools that will optimize administrative functions and effective learning practices.

### SUCCESS CRITERIA

#### How will we know we are successful?

- Educator feedback based on professional learning opportunities will indicate how technology resources optimizes effective educator/student interaction, engagement, pedagogy and differentiation to support learning style of students.
- Successful implementation of a phased-in rollout of digital tools to improve efficiency and increase security to support educators and student learning as measured by regular usage.
  - Safe Arrival Absence Tracking Tool
  - Online Field Trip Application
  - Device Refresh
  - Cyber Security
  - Data Literacy -Compass for Success, a data analysis tool

## GOAL LEADERSHIP

Identify future leaders, actively develop new leaders and responsively support current leaders.

### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

#### How will we achieve this goal?

- Differentiated, job-embedded coaching supports and system professional development for Grand Erie Staff throughout the organization.

### SUCCESS CRITERIA

#### How will we know we are successful?

- Future and new leaders will develop the knowledge and skills that will enable them to pursue leadership opportunities with confidence.
- Current leaders will create the conditions to support the successful implementation of the strategic goals in the areas of learning, well-being, belonging.





## Grand Erie District School Board

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