



The
Blackboard

Grand Erie District School Board's Highlights from the Board Room

Regular Board Meeting | June 22, 2020

All reports for this meeting can be found here: <https://bit.ly/2V4uxQK>

Lakewood Track Fundraising Plan Update

The Todd Eaton Memorial Track at Lakewood Elementary School is a 400-metre oval track with a rubberized surface. It was built in memory of Todd Eaton, an alumni of Port Dover Composite School, who had exceptional



competitive running skills. Original construction of the track took place in 1996. Due to natural aging and many years of use, the condition of the track has deteriorated to such a degree that a full rubber resurfacing is required. Last June, Trustees approved a fundraising plan that required the school to raise \$200,000 for this project to move forward.

Senior Administration is pleased to report that Lakewood, along with generous community members and local organizations, has raised just over \$225,000. This is \$25,000 more than what was originally targeted. Lakewood Principal David Van Laecke celebrated this fundraising milestone with students earlier this year (photo above). With a Trustee-approved Board contribution, the project's budget was increased to \$275,000.

During the tendering process, bids were received offering a wide range of surfaces, installation durations and warranty periods. These factors were all considered, reviewed and compared by the Board's project consultant. The system chosen offers a polyurethane surface, which is an upgrade, and a 10-year warranty. The estimated construction cost, however, is \$354,000, approximately \$70,000 above the original project estimate.

Given the tremendous efforts in fundraising from both the school and the local community, the upgrade in both product quality and warranty, and the fact that the Board's School Condition Improvement Grant has ample room to support an additional investment, Trustees approved the increased funding amount for the project on Monday night. The Board's contribution will now be approximately \$120,000. This also ensures the track will be ready for use in September 2020.

This report supports the Environment indicator of [Grand Erie's Multi-Year Plan](#) and the following statement: "We will ensure that students and staff have a safe and welcoming environment in which to learn and work." To read the full report, see pages 27-28 here: <https://bit.ly/2V4uxQK>.

Grand Erie Parent Involvement Committee Annual Report

The 2019-20 school year was a challenging one for the Grand Erie Parent Involvement Committee (GEPIC). Due to ongoing job action and COVID-19 restrictions, GEPIC's work was very limited, with many events cancelled or activities postponed.

For the second straight year, the committee re-elected Sarah Nichol as Chair. In the fall, the annual School Council Start-up session took place (October 17, 2019). The event was attended by 54 school council chairs or members, representing 32 Grand Erie schools. A total of 43 exit surveys were collected. On a scale of 1-5, with five being very useful, 95 percent of attendees rated the evening as either a four or five. Additionally, half of attendees gave the evening a perfect score.

This report supports the Community indicator of Grand Erie's Multi-Year Plan through the following goal: "Facilitate opportunities for the use of strategies to encourage and support family involvement in our schools and learning at home." To read the report, see pages 39-40 here: <https://bit.ly/2V4uxQK>.

Quarterly Budget Report

Trustees were provided with an update on the budget for the first nine months of the 2019-20 school year, ending May 31, 2020. The report outlines changes on the financial dashboard (overall budget, enrolment and staffing) as well as revenue and expenditure details. The report also offers Trustees a look at how COVID-19 is impacting the budget, and what staff are doing to mitigate these challenges. To review the report, see pages 41-46 here: <https://bit.ly/2V4uxQK>. This report supports the Achievement indicator of Grand Erie's Multi-Year Plan and the following statement: "We will monitor, measure and reflect on our outcomes."

2019-20 Student Trustees Honoured

Board Chair Greg Anderson recognized Student Trustees Ia'teieká:nerih Doxtador-Swamp (photo - left), Zachary Garbaty (photo - centre) and Alexandra Hauser (photo - right) for their contributions and hard work during the 2019-20 school year. Doxtador-Swamp (McKinnon Park Secondary School) and Garbaty (North Park Collegiate and Vocational Institute) will return in the fall for a second term as Student Trustee.

Hauser (McKinnon Park Secondary School) will move onto Western University in September where she plans to study Medical Sciences and then go to Medical School.



Trustees also took a moment on Monday to congratulate Garbaty for his recent appointment as the Public School Board Vice-President of the Ontario Student Trustees' Association.



2019-20 Grand Erie EcoSchools

Each year, schools across Grand Erie demonstrate admirable commitment and dedication towards environmental stewardship as they work to gain certification as an EcoSchool, and help make the planet a whole lot better in the process. The recognition through EcoSchools honours these achievements in environmental learning and action as students implement a variety of environmental initiatives within their schools. These efforts include: waste-free lunches, implementing recycling programs, energy-conservation initiatives, butterfly gardens, and much more. In 2019-20, all Grand Erie schools registered with the EcoSchools program will receive a special edition EcoSchools Canada seal. In total, 40 Grand Erie schools have been recognized as certified EcoSchools this year. For more information, visit: <https://bit.ly/2Z4ynug>.

Trustees Celebrate Director Brenda Blancher During Final Board Meeting

Monday's meeting marked the final Regular Board Meeting for Brenda Blancher, who will retire this summer after serving five years as Grand Erie's Director of Education. Trustees took time during the meeting to pay tribute to Blancher for her exceptional leadership and commitment to *Success for Every Student*.

"Brenda's a thoughtful, compassionate and humble leader," said Board Chair Greg Anderson. "She always puts the needs of the system first and has remained committed to doing what's right for our students and our staff. In my time working with her, I've found Brenda to be graceful under pressure, incredibly hard-working, and totally unflappable. During the past three months, with COVID-19, she has been our guiding light and we can't thank her enough. We wish Brenda nothing but the best in her retirement. She has certainly earned it!"



Blancher, who announced her retirement in January, will leave Grand Erie after nearly 35 years in education. She was named Director of Education in 2015, and has delivered on several significant milestones including the opening of two new elementary schools and the expansion of the French Immersion program. Blancher also launched Grand Erie's current Multi-Year Plan, providing a strategic direction to guide the work that the school board is doing. At the centre of this plan is *Success for Every Student*, achieved through a focus on students and staff in a culture of high expectations. To learn more about Blancher's illustrious career, visit: <https://bit.ly/2QOjyZY>.

Additional Items

Memorial: A memorial statement was read to honour Bill Johnston, a former Trustee and Chair of the Grand Erie District School Board. Bill passed away on May 25. Bill was first elected to represent Brant County in 2000. He served until poor health forced him to resign in 2012. In addition to the leadership positions he held in Grand Erie, Bill was Vice-President of the Central West Region for the Ontario Public School Board's Association. Bill was a quiet leader, but when he spoke, you listened. He could make you laugh, while also making you think. Trustees will always remember his friendship and giving spirit.

Approval of minutes: Trustees approved the minutes of the May 25, 2020 (Regular Board) and June 8, 2020 (Committee of the Whole) meetings.

Trustees also received the following reports:

- Director's Report
- Student Trustees' Report
- Committee of the Whole – June 8, 2020
- Energy Conservation Consumption Report
- Implications of 2020-21 Friday the 13th Events on Port Dover Students
- Summary of Accounts – May 2020
- Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee Minutes – May 21, 2020
- Safe and Inclusive Schools Committee Minutes (Draft) – May 14, 2020
- Student Transportation Services Brant Haldimand Norfolk Committee Minutes (Draft) – May 26, 2020
- Native Advisory Committee Minutes (Draft) – June 8, 2020

Multi-Year Plan Stories

In 2016, Grand Erie approved a new strategic direction to guide the work that the school board is doing. At the centre of this Multi-Year Plan is *Success for Every Student*. Grand Erie will achieve *Success for Every Student* through a focus on students and staff in a culture of high expectations. The six indicators that support the Multi-Year Plan are: Achievement, Community, Environment, Equity, Technology and Well-Being.

The following stories showcase some of the most recent stories related to the Multi-Year Plan.

Achievement

- Government of Ontario Announces Three Options for the Return to School in the Fall with Final Decision Expected in August
 - <https://bit.ly/3ddZhFb>
- Congratulations to Grand Erie's Class of 2020
 - <https://bit.ly/2YhYteg>
- It's Never Too Late to Graduate: Adult Continuing Education Registration Open
 - <https://bit.ly/2zF3eFa>

Environment

- Grand Erie Schools Lauded for EcoSchools Efforts
 - <https://bit.ly/2Z4ynuq>

Well-Being

- Grand Erie's Safe and Inclusive Schools Team Shifted to Online Space to Support Staff, Students During COVID-19 School Closures
 - <https://bit.ly/2AXMwKM>

SUCCESS for Every Student