



Special Policy and Program Committee Meeting

Monday, June 9, 2025

5:30 p.m.

MS Teams

AGENDA

A - 1 **Opening Call to Order**

- (a) Roll Call
- (b) Declaration of Conflict of Interest
- (c) Welcome/Land Acknowledgement

The Grand Erie District School Board recognizes Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, as the longstanding peoples of this territory. We honour, recognize, and respect these communities as well as all First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples who reside within the Grand Erie District School Board. We are all stewards of these lands and waters where we now gather, learn and play, and commit to working together in the spirit of Reconciliation.

B - 1 **Approval of the Agenda**

"THAT the Special Policy and Program Committee agenda be approved."

C - 1 **Consent Agenda**

* **Recommended Motion:**

"THAT the Policy and Program Committee accept the June 9, 2025 Consent Agenda and the recommendations contained therein."

- (a) Approve the minutes of:
 - (i) Policy and Program Committee meeting dated April 14, 2025

D - 1 **Business Arising from Minutes and/or Previous Meetings**

E - 1 **New Business - Program**

- * (a) Halton Industry Education Council (HIEC) Career Coaches Update (L. Munro) (I)
- * (b) Secondary Program Review Assessment and Evaluation (K. Graham, L. Munro, R. Vankerrebroeck) (I)
- * (c) French Immersion Entry Points Report (L. Munro)

Recommended Motion:

"THAT the Board change the entry point for French Immersion programming to Grade 1 and that Kindergarten programming in English be offered in all French Immersion schools for those families intending on enrolling in the French Immersion program in Grade 1, effective September 2026, be forwarded to the June 23, 2025 Regular Board meeting for approval."

F-1 **New Business - Policy**

G - 1 **Adjournment**

"THAT the Special Policy and Program Committee meeting be adjourned."

H - 1 **Next Meeting Date: October 20, 2025**

Learn

Lead

Inspire



Policy and Program Committee

Monday, April 14, 2025

6:30 p.m.

Norfolk Room, Education Centre

MINUTES

Present: Chair: S. Gibson, Trustees: T. Waldschmidt, J. Bradford, T. Sault, C.A. Sloat, C. VanEvery-Albert, L. Whiton

Administration: Director: J. Roberto, Superintendents: P. Ashe, K. Graham, L. Munro, L. Thompson, J. Tozer, R. Vankerbroeck, J. White, R. Wyszynski, Senior Manager: R. Strang, Senior Executive Assistant: C. Dero, Recording Secretary: K. Ireland-Aitken

Guest: Manager of System Research: C. Bedard

Regrets: Trustee: B. Doyle

**A - 1 Opening
(a) Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order by Chair S. Gibson at 6:30 p.m. and roll call was confirmed.

(b) Declaration of Conflict of Interest - Nil

(c) Welcome /Land Acknowledgment Statement
Committee Chair S. Gibson read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

B - 1 Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: L. Whiton

Seconded by: J. Bradford

THAT the Policy and Program Committee agenda be approved.

Carried

C - 1 Consent Agenda

Moved by: T. Waldschmidt

Seconded by: L. Whiton

THAT the Policy and Program Committee accept the April 14, 2025 Consent Agenda and the recommendations contained therein.

Approve the minutes of:

(i) Policy and Program Committee meeting dated March 3, 2025

Carried

D - 1 Business Arising from Minutes/Previous Meetings - Nil

E - 1 New Business - Program

(a) Implications of Friday the 13th, 2025-26 Report

Moved by: L. Whiton

Seconded by: T. Waldschmidt

THAT Option One – Lakewood Elementary School Remains Open to Student/Transportation Runs in Port Dover for February 13, 2026 and March 13, 2026 be forwarded to the April 28, 2025 Regular Board meeting for approval.

Carried



Policy and Program Committee

Monday, April 14, 2025

6:30 p.m.

Norfolk Room, Education Centre

MINUTES

(b) **Indigenous Education Programs**

Presented as published.

In response to a question, it was noted that the publication provides an overview of programs implemented across the district, aligning with the Multi-Year Strategic Plan.

(c) **Vaping Detectors Update**

Presented as printed.

(d) **Hall Monitor (Initiative) Report**

Presented as printed.

It was noted that the program will continue to be monitored, as further analysis, along with identification of predictors and barriers, is required to assess its effectiveness.

(e) **Specialized Services Transition Navigator Report**

Presented as printed.

In response to a question, the Specialized Services Transition Navigator can support students seeking a variety of pathways including the College-Within-A-School program in partnership with Conestoga College.

(f) **Remote Learning Report**

Presented as printed.

(g) **Special Olympics Report**

Presented as printed.

(h) **Innovation Hub Update**

Presented as printed.

(i) **Toronto Holocaust Museum Update**

Presented as printed.

(j) **MEHRIT Centre Micro-Credential Update**

Presented as printed.

(k) **Mental Health Action Plan Final Report 2023-24**

Presented as published.

(l) **Mental Health Action Plan Annual Update 2024-25**

Presented as published.

(m) **Equity Action Plan Annual Update 2024-25**

Presented as published.

(n) **Police Resource Outreach Supporting Education Program Update**

Presented as printed.

(o) **Secondary Program Review Update – Magnet Offerings**

Presented as printed.



Policy and Program Committee

Monday, April 14, 2025

6:30 p.m.

Norfolk Room, Education Centre

MINUTES

(p) **Grand Erie Math Achievement Action Plan**

Presented as printed.

(q) **Student Achievement Plan 2024-25**

Presented as published.

F - 1 **New Business – Policy**

(a) **Distribution of Materials in Schools Policy (SO-04)**

Moved by: J. Bradford

Seconded by: T. Waldschmidt

THAT the Distribution of Materials Policy (SO-04) be forwarded to the April 28, 2025 Regular Board meeting for approval.

Carried

(b) **Field Trips and Excursions Policy (SO-15)**

Moved by: L. Whiton

Seconded by: T. Waldschmidt

THAT the Field Trips and Excursions Policy (SO-15) be forwarded to the April 28, 2025 Regular Board meeting for approval.

Carried

(c) **Honouring Indigenous Knowledges, Histories and Perspectives Policy (PR-02)**

Moved by: C. VanEvery-Albert

Seconded by: T. Waldschmidt

THAT the Honouring Indigenous Knowledges, Histories and Perspectives Policy (PR-02) be forwarded to the April 28, 2025 Regular Board meeting for approval.

Carried

(d) **Artificial Intelligence Policy (IT-06)**

Moved by: J. Bradford

Seconded by: L. Whiton

THAT the Artificial Intelligence Policy (IT-06) be forwarded to the April 28, 2025 Regular Board meeting for approval.

Carried

(e) **Artificial Intelligence Procedure (IT-006)**

Presented as printed.

G - 1 **Adjournment**

Moved by: L. Whiton

Seconded by: T. Sault

THAT the Policy and Program Committee meeting be adjourned at 8:26p.m.

Carried

H - 1 **Next Meeting Date:** TBD



Grand Erie District School Board

TO: JoAnna Roberto, Ph. D., Director of Education & Secretary of the Board
FROM: Lisa Munro, Superintendent of Curriculum & Student Achievement
RE: **Halton Industry Education Council (HIEC) Career Coaches Update**
DATE: June 9, 2025

Background

The June 2024 and March 2025 Policy and Program Committee Curriculum Update reports provided details on the Halton Industry Education Council (HIEC) Career Coaching services that would be made available to students through direct conferencing with career coaches who have experience in high-demand jobs based on local labour market conditions to complement to the work of guidance teacher-counsellors and the existing Career Studies course.

The HIEC Career Coaching initiative aims to enhance students' understanding of career paths and equip them with valuable information to make informed decisions about their futures. By engaging with professionals who work in high-demand sectors, students gain direct insights into career opportunities and the evolving landscape of local industries. The interactive nature of these sessions encourages students to ask questions and explore career possibilities beyond traditional academic guidance, making the program a dynamic and enriching component of their education.

Session Overview

The HIEC Career Coaching sessions were made available to Grade 9 and 10 students across all Grand Erie secondary schools between April and June 2025. Each session was designed to be both impactful and inspiring, supporting each school's unique needs and availability of coaches for the arranged dates. Some sessions used a career fair format where students could move throughout and engage with the coach of their choice. Other sessions were facilitated in a small group format of 10 students or less to support authentic conversations. Educators supported students to engage in meaningful conversations with coaches. In addition, a Labour Market Insight report was provided digitally on the projector to students to see an overall picture of the region's top sectors and major employers.

In all Career Coaching events, the representation of the high demand jobs in the respective region was dependant on coach availability on the arranged dates. Grand Erie has seen coaches representing the following careers: Plumbing, Electrician, Chief Executive Officer, Vice President, Mayor, Labour Market Analyst, Urban Planner, Police, Machinist, Welding, Millwright, Haldimand Tourism Staff, Stelco, Human Resources, Senior Case Manager, Hair Stylists, Videographer, Entrepreneurs, Certified Financial Advisor, Research Coordinator, Fire Education Officer, Norfolk County Staff, and Retail Manager.



Next Steps

HIEC is currently developing communications and resources with consistent language that will support the full roll out to school boards. Grand Erie will prepare for HIEC Coaching sessions throughout the 2025 – 2026 school year.

Grand Erie Multi-Year Plan

This report supports Grand Erie's Multi-Year Strategic Plan with a focus on building a culture of learning specifically in the areas of Graduation Pathways.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Munro
Superintendent of Curriculum & Student Achievement



Grand Erie District School Board

TO: JoAnna Roberto, Ph. D., Director of Education & Secretary of the Board

FROM: Kevin Graham, Superintendent of Education
Lisa Munro, Superintendent of Curriculum & Student Achievement
Regan Vankerrebroeck, Superintendent of Education

RE: **Secondary Program Review - Assessment and Evaluation**

DATE: June 9, 2025

Background

Grand Erie is currently undertaking a Secondary Program Review of secondary schools, including alternative education. Part of the review now includes an examination of Student Learning and Support Days (SLSDs) and final assessment practices for Grade 9 and 10 courses.

Since the 2021-22 school year, students in Grades 9 and 10 have not participated in formal examinations as part of their final evaluation, they have had culminating activities which align with [Growing Success](#).

Additional Information

Student input has been gathered regarding SLSDs. In addition, input from staff and parents(s)/caregiver(s) will be collected via an online survey regarding SLSDs. Input via an online survey will also be gathered from students, staff, and parent(s)/caregiver(s) regarding the possible inclusion of examinations and preferred practices to support preparation for examinations in Grade 9 and/or 10 courses.

Next Steps

The survey results will be gathered, and the data will be used to inform recommendations around the timing and format of SLSDs and the possible inclusion of examinations during designated days in Grade 9 and/or 10 courses, as part of the Secondary Program Review.

Grand Erie Multi-Year Plan

This report supports the learning indicator of Learn Lead Inspire and the following statement: we will build a culture of learning to nurture curiosity and opportunity for each learner.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Graham, Superintendent of Education
Lisa Munro, Superintendent of Curriculum & Student Achievement
Regan Vankerrebroeck, Superintendent of Education



Grand Erie District School Board

TO: JoAnna Roberto, Ph. D., Director of Education & Secretary of the Board
FROM: Lisa Munro, Superintendent of Curriculum & Student Achievement
RE: **French Immersion Entry Points Report**
DATE: June 9, 2025

Recommended Motion: Moved by _____ Seconded by _____
THAT the Board change the entry point for French Immersion programming to Grade 1 and that Kindergarten programming in English be offered in all French Immersion schools for those families intending on enrolling in the French Immersion program in Grade 1, effective September 2026, be forwarded to the June 23, 2025 Regular Board meeting for approval.

Background

The Grand Erie District School Board (Grand Erie) offers French Immersion (FI) programs in six elementary schools from Grades JK-8. The board's program has both single-track and dual-track schools offering FI. The board offers programs in each municipality with two single-track sites in Brantford (École Confédération and École Dufferin), one dual-track site in Brant County (Burford Elementary School), one dual-track site in Haldimand County (River Heights School), and two dual-track sites in Norfolk County (Lakewood Elementary School and Walsh Public School).

The French Immersion Special Ad Hoc Committee was established in 2020. It gathered feedback from various stakeholder groups through surveys and interviews in regard to program offerings. The feedback was used to guide recommendations. A summary of the consultation report and feedback were shared, along with phase one recommendations, at the February 2024 meeting.

In January 2024, Watson & Associates Economists Ltd completed a review of French Immersion program delivery in Grand Erie. In addition to this review, L&C Planning Consultants included recommendations regarding French Immersion in the Grand Erie Long-Term Accommodation Plan (LTAP) 2023-2028 that was presented to the Board of Trustees in the fall of 2023. The following was completed:

- Removal of lotteries for families by adhering to current February timelines for FI Registration. Registrations after February timelines are addressed on a case-by-case basis.

This information below outlines the review of the benefits and challenges of Kindergarten entry into FI as part of the 2024-25 scope of work followed by next steps.

Research About Second Language Acquisition

French Immersion programming first began in the 1960s in English-speaking Quebec and began to expand rapidly in the 1970s across Canada. Much research has been conducted since then around specific areas related to entry points, second language acquisition and fluency as well as the benefits and challenges of second language immersion programming.

Below is a summary of some of the research reviewed:

- Student proficiency in French is strongly correlated to the amount of time spent learning and using the language (Halsall). This is supported by research by Cummins, Swain, Merrill and Genesee, among others.
- The research across Canada and around the world affirms that Early French Immersion (EFI; entry at Kindergarten or Grade 1) produces stronger second language acquisition results. In the body of research on early French Immersion, there is no discernable difference in second language acquisition whether the students begin in Kindergarten or Grade 1.
- A great deal of time and effort have gone into a variety of studies focused on the importance of language development (in particular, oral language development) in the student's first language prior to the acquisition of a second language. Development of an adequate oral competence in the mother tongue is necessary to successfully add a second language. While there are some exceptions such as children who live in bilingual households, usually oral competence in one language should be developed before starting to develop competence in a second language (Netten, p.28).
- The ELECT document, a foundational document for Early Childhood Educators (Excerpts from *ELECT: Early Learning for Every Child Today*, 2014), supports the importance of a solid foundation in and honouring of the student's first language in order to understand each individual student's strengths and needs. "In order to be able to determine a child's capacity to learn, the child needs adequate opportunities to learn in a language that she or he can understand." (*ELECT*, p.8)
- Studies of dual language programs in Canada and elsewhere suggest that students' literacy skills in a first language provide the schemata for literacy learning (e.g., phonological and phonemic awareness, thinking/processing skills, comprehension strategies) which will transfer from a first language to a second and, vice versa, from a second language to a first. Cummins' "interdependence hypothesis" not only explains why students who are literate in their first language are likely to be advantaged in the acquisition of a second, but it also holds implications for those responsible for planning and instruction in Ontario schools." (*Capacity Building Series: French Immersion in Ontario*, Ontario Ministry of Education, 2011, p.1)

The Kindergarten Program

The Curriculum

The Ontario Ministry of Education document, *The Kindergarten Program*, 2016, as well as the 2019 Addendum, outline the requirements for a Kindergarten program in the province of Ontario. The program is based on the four frames of (i) Belonging and Contributing, (ii) Self-Regulation and Well-Being, (iii) Demonstrating Literacy and Mathematics Behaviours, and (iv) Problem Solving and Innovating. The Kindergarten Program was designed to be a two-year program of interconnected curricular expectations for four- and five-year-olds.

Notably, the Ontario Ministry of Education curriculum document for French immersion encompasses Grades 1-8; there are no identified curriculum expectations for Kindergarten French language acquisition.

Documentation

A key feature of the two-year, full-day Kindergarten program is the extensive documentation done by the two educators in the classroom. It is important to document the learning of the students as it happens, noting what the students are doing, what misunderstandings they may have and what next steps are required in instruction. Essential to this documentation in a second language classroom is the understanding of what is typical development and achievement in Kindergarten, and what is typical development and achievement in a second language classroom. Understanding of French language development and second language acquisition is essential for all educators working in the program in order to provide accurate documentation and feedback.

The Kindergarten Classroom

The classroom environment is often referred to as The Third Teacher. The environment provides additional supports for student learning and the immersive experience. It is important in all Kindergarten programs; it is especially important in French Immersion classrooms where the students have an additional reliance on these supports to develop language skills and to make meaning.

Pedagogy

Fred Genesee has done extensive research on second language pedagogy. He focuses on the importance of “the use of monolingual language models” to be an essential feature of French Immersion programs. A monolingual language model requires the use of the second language (French) in all subjects except those specifically indicated to be taught in the primary language (English). He advocates that this is essential “to encourage the use of French among immersion students, whose tendency would otherwise be to use English.”

Many researchers have focused on the use of English in FSL classes resulting in a “plateau effect” where second language competence is slowed due to the use of English in these classes (e.g., Calman & Damiel, 1998; Culligan, 2015; Salvatori, 2007; Swain and Lapkin, 2000, Turnbull et al, 2011). They advocate for maximizing the use of the second language during class time in order to push students’ thinking in, and acquisition of, second language skills. (Netten, p.30)

In an English-speaking community, it is important that the classroom, if not the school as a whole, limit the amount of spoken English in dedicated French instructional time as the classroom operates exclusively as the immersion environment.

Early Identification of Learning Needs

In French immersion, it is difficult to separate problems of learning a second language from those of learning literacy skills when the two processes are intertwined.” (Netten, p.31)

Right to Read Report

In response to the Ontario Human Rights Commission’s (OHRC’s) *Right to Read Report, 2022*, the Ministry of Education created Policy and Program Memorandum 168 (2023) requiring Ontario’s publicly funded schools to complete annual reading screening of students in Year 2 of Kindergarten through Grade 2. Early reading screening may be used by educators to plan differentiated and responsive reading instruction that accounts for students’ strengths and skills and prevents, or quickly addresses, difficulties. Student participation in a two-year English Kindergarten program increases opportunities for English literacy development and the likelihood of the English mandatory screening tool accurately assessing students’ reading skills so that responsive instruction and/or interventions can be implemented.

The Acadience screener, one of the Ministry of Education’s three approved screeners, is the screener used in Grand Erie to assess foundational reading skills in Year 2 of Kindergarten through Grade 2. This screener is in English and assesses a student’s progression through the developmental acquisition of English language skills. The available French language screeners are designed for French as a first language speakers.

Community Feedback

In the spring of 2025, a survey was sent to the community to gather their feedback about elementary French Immersion. Based on the responses received the results indicated that a Grade 1 entry would not impact their decision to enrol their child/children in French Immersion.

Rationale for Grade One Entry Point for French Immersion

- Kindergarten was designed to be a two-year program. Ensuring that students optimize their English language skills prior to learning another language is advantageous to their overall educational experience.
- Student participation in a two-year English Kindergarten program increases opportunities for English literacy development and the likelihood of the Ministry-mandated English screening tool accurately assessing students' reading skills so that responsive instruction and/or interventions can be implemented.
- Students are required by the Ministry of Education to attend school (Grade 1) in the year that they turn six (6) years of age; Kindergarten is an optional program. By having a single French Immersion entry point in Grade 1, all Grand Erie students will have the option to enroll in French Immersion programming whether or not they attended Kindergarten.
- 63% of the publicly funded English boards in the province of Ontario offer only a Grade 1 entry point into French Immersion.
- The majority of survey respondents (65%) did not indicate that a sole Grade 1 entry point would impact their decision to enroll their child(ren) in French Immersion.
- A national shortage of staff (teachers and Early Childhood Educators) who are fluent in French has resulted in staffing challenges (permanent and occasional).
- French Kindergarten teachers would be available to support core and immersion French programming throughout the district. Designated Early Childhood Educators would continue to support students in English Kindergarten classes.

Rationale for English Kindergarten in French Immersion schools:

- The provision of English Kindergarten programming in the same location where students will eventually enroll in French Immersion decreases the number of school transitions for students.
- Families who do not wish for their child to continue to Grade 1 French Immersion will be required to register for English programming at their designated home school.

Next Steps

Communication about changes will occur with staff and the public through a variety of means. Schools will be provided with support, as required, to facilitate the transition. As single-track French Immersion schools have the advantage of creating a fully immersive second language experience for students and staff, where opportunities exist to create single-track schools, consideration should be given to this delivery model.

Grand Erie Multi-Year Plan

This report supports all indicators of Learn Lead Inspire and the following statement: we will, together, build a culture of Learning, Well-Being and Belonging to inspire each learner.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Munro
Superintendent of Curriculum & Student Achievement