**Appendix D**

**Q and A’s**

Q: *Why do we need to accommodate gender diverse and trans students and staff?*

A: Ontario Human Rights Code provides for equal rights and opportunities and freedom from discrimination for all persons. People cannot be discriminated against or harassed because of their gender identity or expression. Grand Erie District School Board has developed guidelines to accommodate based on gender identity and gender expression. They have been designed to raise awareness and help protect against discrimination and harassment.

Q: *How does someone seek an accommodation?*

A: A student or staff member is encouraged to make an accommodation request in writing or speak directly to their Supervisor or School Administrator. Each request will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Each accommodation will involve collaboration between the school, the student or staff, as well as family and community (when appropriate) to jointly explore accommodation solutions. All requests are strictly confidential.

Q: *Are all requests accommodated in the same way?*

A: No, all requests are treated on a case-by-case basis. Board and school staff must consider each individual’s needs and concerns separately. An accommodation that works for one student or staff member cannot simply be assumed to work for another.

Q: *Does this mean that students will be able to use a washroom of their choice without accommodation approval?*

A: All staff and students have a right to safe washroom facilities and the right to enter a washroom that best corresponds to their gender identity, regardless of their assigned sex at birth. When an accommodation is requested, a student or staff member is encouraged to make an accommodation request in writing or speak directly to their Principal. The Grand Erie District School Board will work with the student or staff member to prepare for their accommodation. Where possible, schools will also provide an easily accessible all-gender single stall washroom for use by any student or staff member who desires increased privacy, regardless of the underlying reason. Many schools now have all-gender washrooms as well as gendered washrooms providing choice for students and staff.

Q: *What if my child is uncomfortable sharing a bathroom with a student who identifies as transgender?*

A: If a student is uncomfortable with using shared washroom facilities, for any of a variety of reasons, schools will make an accommodation, such as to provide an easily accessible all-gender single stall washroom. Parents are encouraged to request accommodation in writing or speak directly to the school Principal.

Q: *How are students accommodated for sports activities, physical education classes and change rooms if requested?*

A: School staff must ensure that students can exercise their right to participate in gender segregated sports and physical education class activities in accordance with each student’s gender identity. All students have the right to a safe changeroom that corresponds to their gender identity. Gender Diverse and Trans students have the right to an accommodation, if requested, that best meets the individual student’s particular needs. Such accommodations may include:

1. use of a private area within the public area (ie., a bathroom stall with a door; an area separated by a curtain; a P. E. instructor’s office in the changeroom)
2. a separate changing schedule in a private area (ie., utilizing the changeroom before or after the other students)
3. use of a nearby private area (ie., nearby washroom; nurse’s office)
4. access to the change room corresponding either to the student’s assigned sex at birth or current gender identity always considering what best serves a student’s needs.

Q: *How are students accommodated for housing accommodations on overnight school field trips?*

A: When planning an activity that requires overnight housing accommodations, it is important that educators approach an individual student privately regarding accommodations if they feel it is necessary. Educators may also inform the entire group that individuals may come to the teacher with concerns or accommodation requests ahead of time. In order to address student privacy concerns each situation will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. In such circumstances, staff shall make every reasonable effort to provide an accommodation that is acceptable to the student.