



*Tracy Lynn Atkinson
Municipality of West Grey
The Town of Hanover*

Turning Over A New Leaf

Where does the time go? We have somehow made it through another 'return to school', and are now enjoying a colourful fall as we prepare for the onset of a Grey-Bruce winter in the not-too-distant future. Since this time of year typically signals commencement in many of our schools, I want to congratulate and wish the very best to all of our Bluewater District School Board graduates as they leave our system to pursue the next exciting chapter of their lives. I would also like to welcome those entering our board to learn or work for the first time.

As we continue to adjust to our pandemic reality, I am reassured by our gradual return to sports, clubs, and other activities, and a renewed sense of normalcy in our schools. This would not be possible without the support, cooperation, and hard work of EVERYONE: students, staff, parents/guardians, families, partners, and the list goes on. From those who have developed and continue to refine our COVID-19 protocols to those who follow them, it takes a valiant community effort to keep our schools and work sites healthy, safe, and open. THANK YOU and I wish you every success in 2021-22!

Accessible Menstrual Hygiene Products

We are encouraged by the recent news of a provincial partnership that will enable the distribution of free menstrual products to school boards across Ontario.

Bluewater District School Board trustees, students, staff, and stakeholders have been advocating for this type of initiative for a long time. This past June, trustees wrote to Minister of Education Stephen Lecce to request full provincial funding for these products. In September, our board began offering products in designated washrooms to eliminate barriers for all students regardless of gender, sexuality, and socioeconomic background.

[Letter to Minister Lecce - June 23, 2021](#)

[Media release - June 24, 2021](#)

Contact Me

As always, please feel free to contact me with your questions or concerns:

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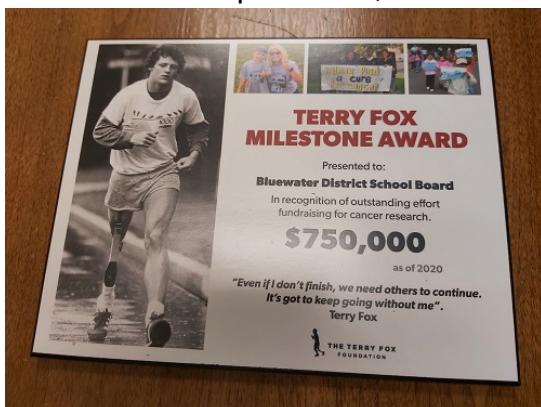
GBCS Official Opening

Trustees, staff, and students recently joined local dignitaries, community partners, build team members, and media for the [official opening](#) of the new Georgian Bay Community School in Meaford. The itinerary for the day featured a school tour, speeches, music, a ribbon cutting ceremony, and a plaque unveiling for the invited guests. Funded through approximately 29.6 million dollars from the Ministry of Education, the new JK-12 replacement facility opened in September.



BWDSB Recognized by Terry Fox Foundation

Despite COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, schools in Bluewater District School Board collectively raised just over \$34,315 this past year for the Terry Fox Foundation in support of cancer research. This past year's dollar amount signals a fundraising milestone of \$750,000 for our schools through annual Terry Fox School Run events since the event began. The Terry Fox Foundation has awarded Bluewater District School Board with a milestone plaque in honour of this latest accomplishment, which would not be possible without the amazing generosity and hard work of our students, staff, and families.



Survey on Online Learning

School and COVID-19

An Online Community Survey

Visit:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/COVID19andSchoolOntario



ONTARIO PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS' ASSOCIATION
Leading Education's Advocates

With the recent return to school, the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) wants to hear from you!

An anonymous online survey has been launched to help inform public education advocacy to the provincial government throughout the 2021-22 school year and beyond. We are asking you, on behalf of OPSBA, to share some of your thoughts about learning online during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the post-pandemic school and learning environment.

[Click here to access the survey](#), which should take about 10 minutes to complete. The deadline to participate is **November 30, 2021**.

OPSBA's *Transitioning from the COVID-19 School Experience Discussion Paper* reflects the initial thinking of association membership from first-hand accounts of remote learning during the pandemic. A video summary can be found by [clicking here](#).

Important Links and Resources

Return to School

Access the daily COVID-19 screening link for students and staff, our three-part Q and A, and other health and safety information. [Click here.](#)

COVID-19 Updates

View the latest updates and advisories regarding the status of COVID-19 cases in our schools and worksites. [Click here.](#)

Mental Health and Well-Being

Resources to assist students and families from mental health partners, and a self-referral link for students/families to access mental health support are available here.

Click here to see our new section containing mental health and well-being resources for students.



Kindergarten Registration

For those whose children are entering kindergarten for the first time in September 2022, follow this easy [three-step process](#) to register or click on the image on the right.



Visit our website: www.bwdsb.on.ca

Find Bluewater District School Board on social media:



Download our free mobile app:



BWDSB Marks First National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

On September 30, 2021, Canada observed the first ever National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, which coincided with the annual tradition of Orange Shirt Day. In Bluewater District School Board, flags were lowered at schools and work sites, while students and staff wore orange and participated in Truth and Reconciliation activities throughout the week. From collaborative whole school art projects and traditional ceremonies, to drama presentations and guest speakers, students were involved in many creative and thought provoking initiatives. Staff also engaged in various learning opportunities, including a live virtual presentation with educator and writer Dr. Niigaan Sinclair on how we can influence and empower through education, and be an ally. This occasion was just one opportunity to broaden our learning and understanding of the long-lasting damages of the residential school system on Indigenous Peoples and communities, and to honour victims, survivors, and others who have been impacted. [View our web article.](#)



"Orange Shirt Car" designed by Grey Highlands Secondary School students and staff

Supporting Nutrition in our Schools

I am pleased to share some happy news about Tim Hortons Smile Cookie results! Tim Hortons stores in Dundalk, Durham, Markdale, Hanover, Walkerton, Lucknow, Kincardine, Port Elgin, and Southampton recently raised funds to support the Ontario Student Nutrition Program (OSNP) in our local schools. Drum roll..... An amazing \$73,000 was raised for nutrition programs close to these stores!

On Thursday, October 21, 2021, OSNP hosts its annual Great Big Crunch at participating schools! Students take a big bite of their apples at approximately 11:00 a.m. to support the promotion of good nutrition and healthy eating. Learn more here: <https://osnp.ca/programs/the-great-big-crunch>

OSNP SW'S Great Big Crunch is Thursday, October 21st, 2021



What is it?

OSNP SW's Great Big Crunch is a special day, class, assembly, lunch hour or 5 minutes dedicated to locally grown apples and ending with a synchronized "crunch" to celebrate! This fun initiative gets students, educators, parents and politicians to think about the impact food has on our children while making a whole lot of noise!

When, Where & Who?

You pick the time that is most convenient for you on Thursday, October 21st! Anyone can participate, from students, teachers and individuals in classrooms, gymnasiums, recreational facilities, to homes, workplaces and communities across Ontario and beyond! Don't forget to share details about your event on social media and tag @OSNPSouthwest.

Why participate?

When you crunch, you'll be teaching your students about the nutritious and delicious benefits of apples and local food, while taking part with other students from across Southwestern Ontario. Whether your class or school participates in a day's worth of activities, an afternoon or just one big crunch, we hope your students get excited about local food and healthy eating.

How to take the Great Big Crunch

- 🍏 Check out the activities and resources at <https://osnp.ca/programs/the-great-big-crunch/> and gather the required materials for your Great Big Crunch activities.
- 🍏 Like us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram and Twitter @OSNPSouthwest.
- 🍏 Share your crunch pictures and stories and use #GreatBigCrunch and #osnpsw to let us know you are crunching!

