

SD59 2025-2026 Budget Consultation Survey Report

Kim Morris, Secretary-Treasurer

Board Agenda: April 2, 2025

As part of its 2025-2026 budget consultation and engagement strategy, The Board conducted a survey from February 19 to March 4, 2025. The survey had 191 respondents.

Invitations to participate in the survey were sent to:

- All Staff
- Principals and Vice-Principals for distribution to their staffs, students and parents, and for inclusion in their newsletters and on their websites
- Management staff and supervisors
- Unions
- Early Learning partners
- Indigenous partners
- Municipal partners, including regional district
- DPAC
- Northern Lights College

Results of the survey are presented below. Question 1 information was themed by ChatGPT. Question 2 and 3 information are directly pulled from the survey. Respondent data was extracted directly from the survey.

Comments about specific schools, staff and students have been edited to remove specifics. These parameters were set out in the introduction to the survey that each respondent would have seen before responding.

The Board will utilize this information in its budget deliberations to help identify priorities and ranking of general investment and balancing concepts.

The 2025-2026 budget is expected to receive third reading on April 30, 2025. For more information, please visit [Financial Information | School District 59](#).

Question 1: Priority: As the District plans the 2025/2026 Annual Budget for the next school year, considering the educational programs and services that are currently provided at your school or work location, what is most important and why?

Top 10 Themes

1. Technology and Digital Learning

- Need for updated devices, laptops, and tablets.
- Reliable internet and better IT support.
- STEM education, coding, and digital literacy programs.
- Addressing the impact of the cellphone ban by ensuring tech availability.

2. Teacher Recruitment and Retention

- Shortage of qualified teachers, especially in rural areas.
- Need for incentives to attract and retain teachers.
- Concerns about staff filling teaching positions.
- Retention strategies like paid leave, better salaries, and work-life balance.

3. Student Support Services

- Increased funding for counselors and mental health professionals.
- More support for neurodivergent students (ADHD, autism, learning disabilities).
- Specialized interventions for behavioral and emotional regulation.
- More funding for educational assistants.

4. Equity and Inclusion

- Ensuring all students, regardless of background, receive equal opportunities.
- Support for Indigenous students.
- More inclusive education strategies and resources.

5. Class Sizes and Staffing

- Smaller class sizes for more personalized learning.
- Hiring more teachers and educational assistants to support large classes.
- Reducing burnout among educators.

6. Extracurricular Activities

- Continued funding for sports, arts, and music programs.
- Access to field trips and other enrichment opportunities.
- More after-school programs for academic and physical development.

7. Professional Development

- More training for teachers, especially in new teaching strategies.
- Ensuring staff is up to date with best practices.
- Collaboration time for teachers to improve instruction.

8. School Facilities and Infrastructure

- Maintenance of aging buildings.
- Need for new school buildings in specific locations.
- Improved parking and drop-off areas.

9. Early Childhood and Literacy Programs

- Strengthening literacy and numeracy skills at an early age.
- Support for bilingual programs (e.g., French immersion).
- More resources for foundational education.

10. Career Preparation and Trades Programs

- Expanding dual credit programs for high school students.
- More trade and vocational education opportunities.
- Stronger partnerships with post-secondary institutions.
- Career readiness programs, including life skills training.

Frequency of words/phrases mentioned in the responses

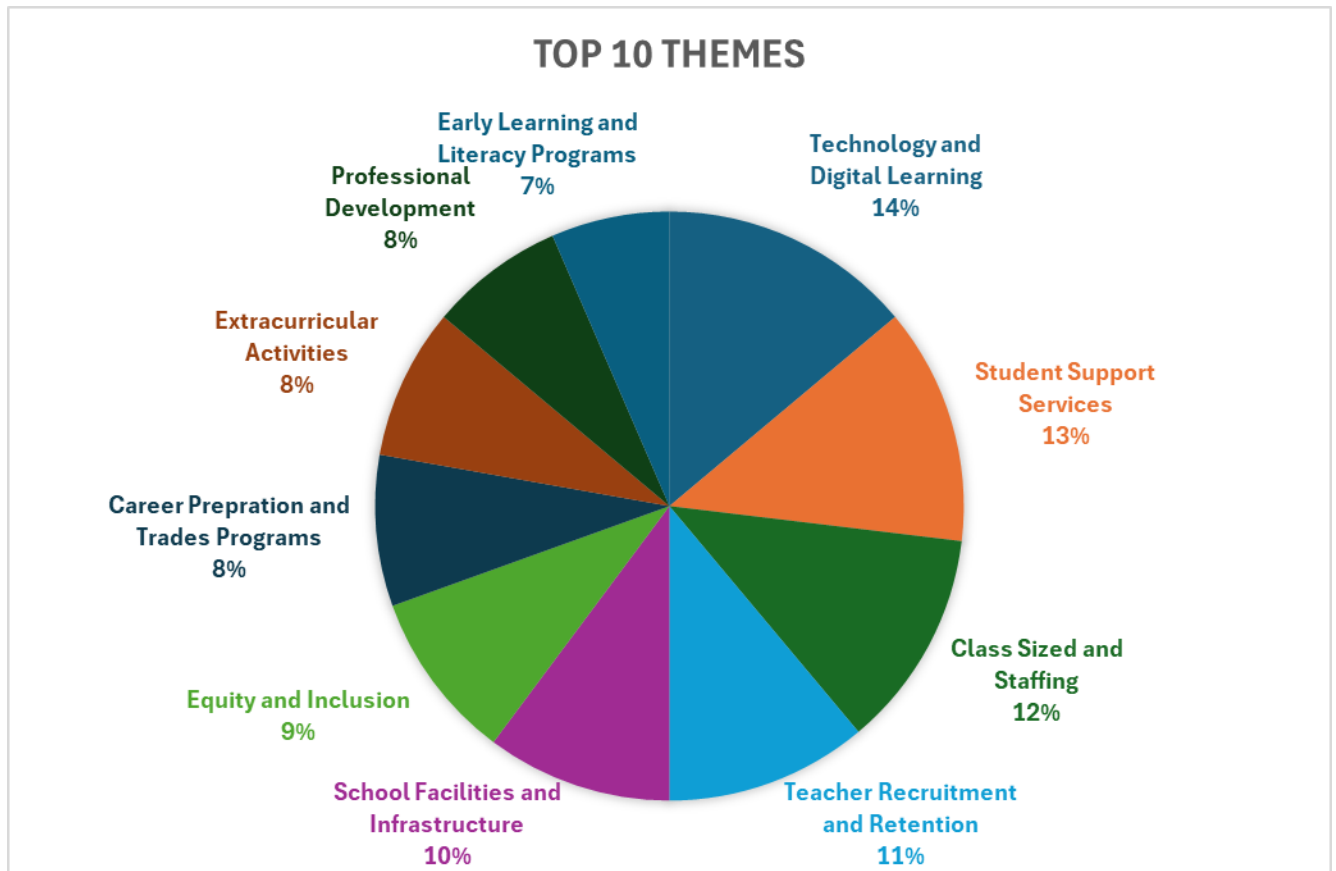


Table: Summary of Main Issues Under Each Theme

| Theme | Main Issues Identified |
|---|---|
| Technology and Digital Learning | Need for updated devices, reliable internet, better IT support, STEM education, addressing cellphone ban effects. |
| Teacher Recruitment and Retention | Shortage of qualified teachers, need for incentives, retention strategies. |
| Student Support Services | More counselors and mental health resources, support for neurodivergent students, behavioral and emotional interventions. |
| Equity and Inclusion | Ensuring all students receive equal opportunities, support for Indigenous students, inclusive education strategies. |
| Class Sizes and Staffing | Need for smaller class sizes, hiring more teachers and educational assistants, reducing educator burnout. |
| Extracurricular Activities | Funding for sports, arts, and music programs, more field trips, after-school programs. |
| Professional Development | More training for teachers, staying updated on best practices, collaboration time for improved instruction. |
| School Facilities and Infrastructure | Maintenance of aging buildings, need for new schools, safety improvements, better parking/drop-off areas. |
| Early Childhood and Literacy Programs | Strengthening literacy/numeracy skills, expanding early learning programs, bilingual program support. |
| Career Preparation and Trades Programs | Expanding dual credit options, more vocational/trades education, career readiness programs. |

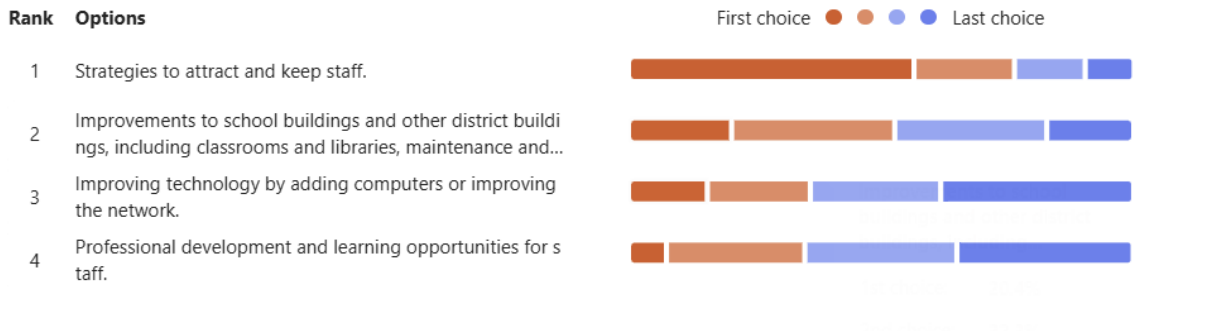
Five Least Emphasized Themes

1. **Arts and Culture Programs** – While some respondents mentioned the importance of arts, music, and cultural activities, these were less frequently highlighted compared to technology and core academic priorities.
2. **School Meal Programs** – Some responses emphasized the need for expanded meal programs, but this was not as widely discussed as other student support services.
3. **Student Transportation (Bus Services)** – A few mentions of the need for more school bus drivers and reliable routes, but it was not a dominant theme.
4. **Environmental Sustainability** – Topics like green initiatives, energy efficiency, and sustainable school practices were rarely mentioned.
5. **Parental and Community Engagement** – While some respondents discussed collaboration with the community and local businesses, this was not a primary focus compared to staffing and student resources.

Question 2:

2. Balancing Approaches - Investment: Listed below are the different approaches the district could take to add services to the organization. Please rank these approaches in the order you think the Board should consider them. You can change the ranking by moving the up or down arrow to the right of each option.

186 Responses



Question 3:

3. Balancing Approaches - Reductions: Listed below are the different approaches the district could take to balance its budget if need be. Please rank these approaches in the order you think the Board should consider them. You can change the ranking by moving the up or down arrow to the right of each option.

183 Responses

