

## School District No. 59 (Peace River South)

# WHAT WE HEARD

## 2026-27 Budget Consultation Report

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Prepared for the Board of Education and the public

**May 20, 2026**

*This report summarizes feedback received through the 2026-27 budget consultation process. The Board of Education will consider this information, along with financial, operational, and strategic planning information, in preparing and approving the 2026-27 budget in June 2026.*

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## Executive Summary

School District No. 59 (Peace River South) engaged families, staff, school principals, and union organizations in budget conversations to support development of the 2026-27 preliminary budget. The consultation process was intended to hear community and staff perspectives on emerging issues, learning success, priorities for starting, changing, reducing, and continuing services, and additional information respondents wanted the district and Board of Education to understand.

The responses show a consistent desire to protect direct supports for students and staff while recognizing that the district is planning in a challenging financial environment. Key themes include financial and enrolment pressures, staffing shortages, student needs and mental health, safety and behaviour, literacy and numeracy, practical life and career skills, communication, and the need to keep student-facing supports central in budget planning.

This report does not provide recommendations. It summarizes what was heard through the engagement process. The Board of Education will consider the feedback summarized in this report, together with budget information, enrolment projections, strategic priorities, legal requirements, collective agreement obligations, and operational needs, in preparing and approving the 2026-27 budget in June 2026.

## At a Glance

Area	Summary
<b>Purpose</b>	To gather feedback to inform the 2026-27 budget planning process.
<b>Participants</b>	Families, staff, school principals, and union organizations were invited to provide input.
<b>Responses</b>	Forty-seven responses were collected and met the guidelines for respectful input.
<b>Major themes</b>	Student supports, staffing, literacy and numeracy, safety, behaviour, communication, financial pressures, and protection of student-facing services.
<b>Use of information</b>	The Board will consider the feedback as part of budget deliberations and approval in June 2026.

## Purpose and Context

Through the district strategic planning and budget process, School District No. 59 annually consults with interested individuals and groups to understand where financial resources, staffing, and programming may be aligned to support student and staff success.

For the 2026-27 preliminary budget, the district used an online budget conversation survey and consultation with school leaders. The purpose was to gather perspectives that could inform budget planning, action planning connected to strategic priorities, and future conversations.

The district communicated that responses would be collected anonymously and that a What We Heard report would be provided to the Board of Education and made publicly available.

## Consultation Process

On April 8, 2026, a communication with the budget feedback tool was shared with staff and families. Staff received a reminder on April 13, and the feedback tool closed on April 15, 2026.

An opportunity for budget input was also sent to union organizations on April 8, with feedback requested by April 29, 2026. A consultation process was completed with school leaders on April 16, 2026. As of the trustee update dated May 5, 2026, no response had been received from union organizations.

The survey information was summarized into themes and abridged response information. Duplicate responses were removed, individual responses were randomized and abridged, and responses that met the guidelines for respectful input were included.

## Budget Planning Context

The consultation occurred while the district was preparing the 2026-27 preliminary budget. The budget planning context included enrolment projections, provincial funding assumptions, inflationary pressures, staffing and benefit costs, collective bargaining uncertainty, Classroom Enhancement Fund planning, inclusive education supports, facilities and technology pressures, and the need to identify and mitigate funding gaps where possible.

The budget presentation described several major planning considerations, including no change to base funding rates, projected enrolment decline, rising costs for software, supplies and services, insurance and utilities, compensation and benefits uncertainty, and the need to align services and staffing with available resources.

The feedback summarized in this report should be understood within this broader financial and operational planning environment.

## Who Participated

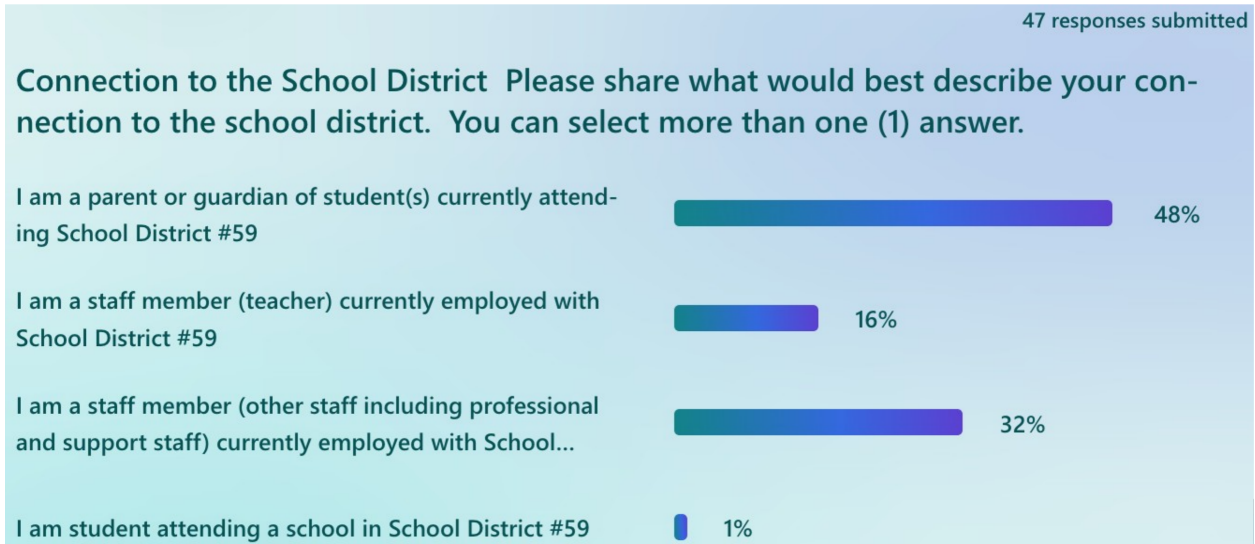
The consultation gathered feedback from families, staff, school principals, and other interested parties. Forty-seven responses were collected and met the guidelines for respectful input. The trustee update noted that approximately half of the responses were from parents or guardians and approximately half were from staff, with approximately half associated with Dawson Creek.

The survey also invited respondents to identify their relationship to the school district and the community or school area with which they were most closely associated. This information was used to support understanding of the feedback and was not used to identify individual respondents.

The following charts summarize respondent connection to the school district and community or school association. Respondents were able to select more than one answer, so percentages may not total 100%.

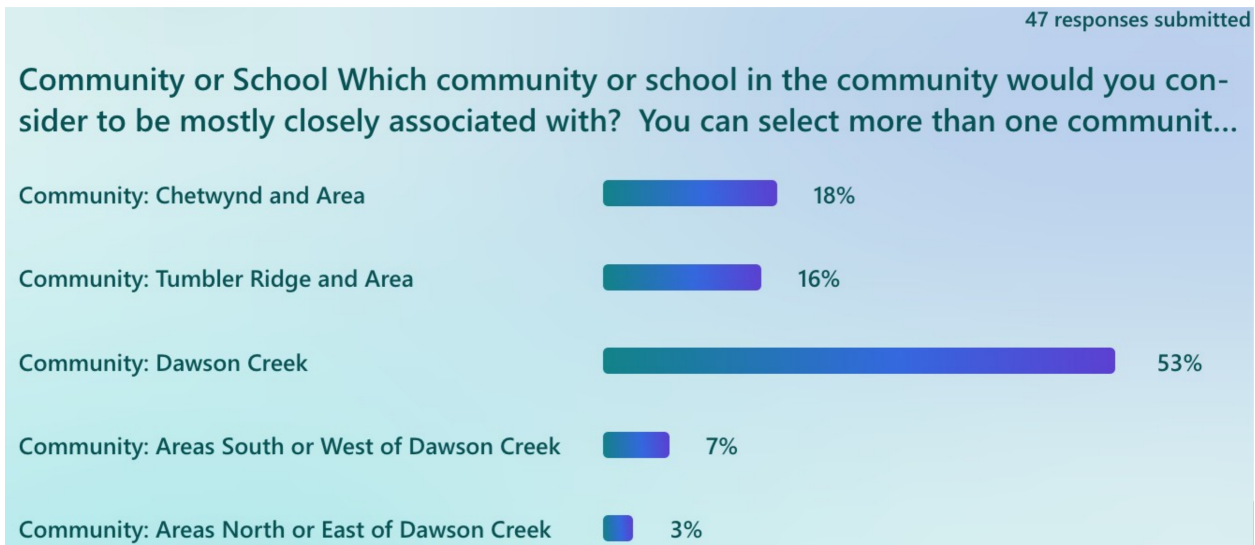
## Connection to the school district

### Consultation



## Community or school association

### Consultation



## What We Heard: Overall Themes

**Protect student-facing supports:** Across questions, respondents consistently emphasized the importance of protecting supports that directly affect students and classrooms, including teachers, education assistants, learning support, counselling, food programs, and supports for students with complex or diverse needs.

**Focus on literacy, numeracy, and foundational skills:** Many responses described success in terms of stronger literacy, numeracy, basic life skills, practical skills, and clearer expectations for learning and behaviour.

**Address staffing, retention, and training:** Respondents identified shortages and retention challenges for teachers, education assistants, specialists, counsellors, bus drivers, and other staff. They also raised the need for training and support for new staff, teachers on letters of permission, and education assistants.

**Strengthen safety, behaviour, and mental health supports:** Safety, bullying, discipline, student behaviour, anxiety, mental wellness, and access to counselling or other mental health services were recurring concerns.

**Improve communication and transparency:** Respondents asked for clearer communication, better coordination, greater involvement of students, staff, families, and communities, and more understandable reporting of student progress.

**Use reductions carefully and protect classrooms:** Where reductions were discussed, many respondents preferred reviewing administration, meetings, travel, reporting, duplication, underused roles, or other non-classroom costs before reducing direct school-based supports.

## What We Heard by Question

The following section shares the Summary and Key Themes from the consultation report by survey question. Detailed abridged responses by question are included in Appendix B.

### Question 1: What is on the immediate horizon that could impact education in our communities?

**Response count:** 43

**Summary:** Overall, respondents see the immediate horizon as challenging. The survey points to a combination of financial pressure, declining enrolment, staffing shortages, rising student needs, facility strain, and uncertainty created by AI and broader social change. A recurring concern is that cuts to supports or failure to address behaviour, safety, and communication will further weaken student learning and family confidence in public education.

**Key themes:**

- Funding, enrolment, and cost pressures are a dominant concern, especially declining enrolment, provincial budget pressure, inflation, and rising operating costs.
- Staffing shortages and retention issues are repeatedly identified, especially teachers, education assistants, specialists, and bus drivers.
- Families and staff are worried about student safety, behaviour, bullying, discipline, and mental health supports.

### Question 2: What does education and learning successes look like in five (5) years?

**Response count:** 44

**Summary:** Across responses, learning success in five years is defined less by abstract measures and more by visible student readiness. Respondents want students to be strong in literacy and numeracy, able to behave responsibly, prepared for work or post-secondary pathways, and supported by stable adults and safe schools. Technology and AI are seen as part of the future, but most responses place them behind strong fundamentals, clear reporting, and dependable supports.

**Key themes:**

- Success in five years is most often described as stronger literacy, numeracy, and basic life skills.
- Respondents want students better prepared for adulthood through behaviour expectations, work habits, practical skills, and career or trades pathways.
- Many responses connect success to better supports: more teachers, EAs, counsellors, specialists, and clearer, more stable staffing.

**Question 3: Are there initiatives, services, or practices we need to START doing (new or differently)?****Response count:** 44

**Summary:** Responses to what the district should start doing focus on building capacity and strengthening the student experience. The strongest calls are for more staff support and training, more direct help for students, better communication, and practical programming that meets a wider range of learner needs. Many respondents also want a reset toward basics, clearer accountability, and more trust in professional judgment.

**Key themes:**

- Respondents want stronger support and training for teachers, principals, EAs, and other frontline staff.
- Many comments call for a renewed focus on basics, clearer expectations, discipline, and more understandable reporting of student progress.
- Additional student supports are a major theme, including counselling, food programs, early intervention, small-group help, and alternative learning options.

**Question 4: Any opportunities to CHANGE what we are doing that will enhance learning, enhance services, minimize costs, or be more efficient?****Response count:** 39

**Summary:** Suggestions for change combine instructional, organizational, and operational ideas. Many respondents want the district to change course toward stronger core academics, clearer grading, improved discipline, and more targeted supports for complex needs. Others focus on operational improvements such as communication, facilities coordination, technology decision-making, newsletters, and making better use of staff time and school facilities.

**Key themes:**

- Many responses recommend changing practice to refocus on basics: literacy, numeracy, grammar, discipline, and clearer grading.
- Respondents also point to structural changes such as different grade configurations, class caps, alternative settings, and more appropriate support for diverse learners.
- Stronger staffing supports are a major theme, including teacher retention, more classroom support, EA training, counselling, and early intervention.

**Question 5: Are there services, initiatives or activities we should STOP or REDUCE doing, if needed?****Response count:** 37

**Summary:** This question produced the least consensus. Many respondents either do not support reducing services or do not feel informed enough to suggest what should stop. Where suggestions are offered, they tend to protect student-facing supports and instead reduce administration, meetings, travel, reporting, food at

meetings, or other peripheral costs. A number of comments also use this question to challenge grading practices, over-assessment, and weak discipline rather than to identify budget cuts.

**Key themes:**

- A large share of responses either oppose reductions altogether or say they are unsure what should be stopped.
- Where reductions are suggested, respondents most often target administration, meetings, reporting, travel, and other non-classroom or non-student-facing costs.
- Several comments specifically question current grading practices, assessment requirements, and some district-level initiatives or processes.

## Question 6: If we need to REDUCE areas of staff, services, or programming, how can this be done to minimize impacts to student learning or school district services?

**Response count:** 39

**Summary:** Responses strongly prioritize protecting classroom-level learning and services. Many participants state directly that cuts to staff, services, or programming will inevitably hurt students. When reductions are discussed, respondents most often suggest reviewing district administration, duplication, non-enrolling roles, or low-impact efficiencies first, while keeping teachers, EAs, and student supports in schools.

**Key themes:**

- The strongest message is that reducing school-based staff, services, or programming will harm students, and many respondents explicitly oppose such cuts.
- Where reductions are considered, respondents generally prefer district-level, central office, administrative, or other non-enrolling positions to be reviewed first.
- Many comments call for efficiency reviews to identify duplication, underused roles, shared services, or enrolment-based adjustments before cutting classroom supports.

## Question 7: In considering your information towards starting, changing or reducing any initiatives or services, what must CONTINUE?

**Response count:** 37

**Summary:** What must continue is clear: respondents want the district to protect direct supports for students and staff, maintain strong teaching and foundational learning, and preserve programs that build safety, belonging, and opportunity. This includes not only literacy and numeracy, but also counselling, food programs, inclusive supports, arts, trades, community participation, and professional learning.

**Key themes:**

- Core supports for students and teachers must continue, especially classroom staffing, EAs, learning support, counselling, and food programs.
- Literacy, numeracy, and strong classroom teaching remain central priorities in what should be protected.
- Respondents also want safety, relationships, communication, and stability for students to continue.

## Question 8: Is there anything else we need to know or understand?

**Response count:** 29

**Summary:** Final comments largely reinforce patterns already seen across the survey. Respondents again emphasize behaviour, staffing, early support, clearer academic expectations, mental health, and the need for stable, adequately resourced schools. Several comments also caution against relying on narrow metrics like graduation rates and urge the district to protect arts, supplies, and future-ready programming.

**Key themes:**

- Additional comments reinforce concerns about behaviour, discipline, and the need for clear expectations in schools.
- Many respondents return to concerns about supports: trained teachers and EAs, early intervention, mental health, and stable staffing.
- Several comments argue for clearer measures of success, stronger academics, and better preparation for life beyond school.

## Closing

The 2026-27 budget consultation process provided families, staff, principals, and other interested parties with an opportunity to identify priorities, concerns, and areas for continued attention. The feedback points to strong support for protecting student learning, classroom supports, mental health and safety, literacy and numeracy, and stable staffing while recognizing pressures related to enrolment, funding, inflation, facilities, and operational needs.

No recommendations are included in this report. The Board of Education will consider all consultation feedback, financial information, strategic priorities, and operational requirements as part of preparing and approving the 2026-27 budget in June 2026.

## Appendix A: Survey Questions

The open-ended questions used in the feedback tool were:

1. What is on the immediate horizon that could impact education in our communities?
2. What does education and learning successes look like in five (5) years?
3. Are there initiatives, services, or practices we need to START doing (new or differently)?
4. Any opportunities to CHANGE what we are doing that will enhance learning, enhance services, minimize costs, or be more efficient?
5. Are there services, initiatives or activities we should STOP or REDUCE doing, if needed?
6. If we need to REDUCE areas of staff, services, or programming, how can this be done to minimize impacts to student learning or school district services?
7. In considering your information towards starting, changing or reducing any initiatives or services, what must CONTINUE?
8. Is there anything else we need to know or understand?

## Appendix B: Survey Information - Summary/Abridged Responses by Question

The following appendix contains the abridged response information by question from the trustee consultation report. It is included as the detailed evidence base for the What We Heard summary. Responses have been summarized and abridged, and duplicate responses were removed in the source material.

### Question 1

What is on the immediate horizon that could impact education in our communities?

**Response count: 43**

#### Summary

Overall, respondents see the immediate horizon as challenging. The survey points to a combination of financial pressure, declining enrolment, staffing shortages, rising student needs, facility strain, and uncertainty created by AI and broader social change. A recurring concern is that cuts to supports or failure to address behaviour, safety, and communication will further weaken student learning and family confidence in public education.

#### Key themes

- Funding, enrolment, and cost pressures are a dominant concern, especially declining enrolment, provincial budget pressure, inflation, and rising operating costs.
- Staffing shortages and retention issues are repeatedly identified, especially teachers, education assistants, specialists, and bus drivers.
- Families and staff are worried about student safety, behaviour, bullying, discipline, and mental health supports.

#### Individual responses (abridged)

- Staffing shortages and retention
- There is a shortage of counselling and mental health services.
- Facilities, space, and capital pressures
- Not losing programming that benefits students
- Budget cuts to education, reducing services
- Poor EA attendance and a lack of EA substitutes are affecting schools.
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- More students needing a level 2 EA and not enough level 2 EA's
- Reduced education assistant support is affecting schools.
- Staffing shortages and retention
- Student safety, behaviour, and discipline
- Shortage of qualified staff across departments
- Greater community involvement in education
- A new hospital will open, which will hopefully bring professionals to our community
- The impact of non-enrolling positions should be reviewed, especially where roles are filled by less experienced staff.
- Student safety, behaviour, and discipline
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Support for students with complex needs
- AI and misinformation
- Staffing shortages and retention
- Complex learning needs and class configurations are increasing.
- Consistent staffing is needed.
- Inflation and rising operating costs
- Lack of a permanent school in Tumbler Ridge and limited elective offerings
- Need more classroom technology
- False information, isolation of some groups socially, racism- especially in the Dawson area
- Money
- Down enrollment for our elementary school with budget cuts affecting the children's activities

- Student mental wellness needs are increasing, and schools need more capacity to respond.
- Risk of families leaving the public system
- Professionals leaving the community
- Staffing levels
- AI and technology impacts
- Changes in local employment are affecting what students need from education.
- Shortage of bus drivers and teachers
- Staffing shortages and retention
- EA reductions
- Staff retention remains important.
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Improved literacy and numeracy remain important priorities.
- Space
- Facilities, space, and capital pressures
- Budget cuts
- Student anxiety and reduced perseverance
- Newer teachers need additional support and professional learning.
- Facilities, space, and capital pressures
- Remote schools face staffing challenges, and road conditions make travel harder.
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Inflation and rising operating costs
- School safety
- Greater supply costs are expected next year as fewer students bring their own materials.
- Support for students with complex needs
- Students are being pushed through to graduation as quickly as possible, rather than trying to inspire students to learn and continue their learning
- Not investing in education
- Reduced peer interaction among students
- Declining enrolment and related budget pressure
- AI and misinformation
- Support for students with complex needs
- Important professional development should include experienced teachers, not only newer teachers.
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Inflation and rising operating costs
- Provincial budget pressure and reduced services
- Student engagement and disengagement
- Loss of funding ?
- More training is needed for staff, teachers, and education assistants.
- Shifts in local employment may also affect enrolment.
- We want these professionals to enrol their children in our schools
- Provincial budget pressure and reduced services
- Our schools are emphasizing far too much on outside topics when it comes to children's learning (beliefs, politics) Children need to focus on the basic fundamental learning
- Facilities, space, and capital pressures
- Declining enrolment and related budget pressure
- Consistent student attendance remains a concern.
- Economic instability
- Getting school back to normal, not just kids stuck in one class all day
- AI and misinformation
- More funding is needed to support students with diverse abilities.
- Facilities, space, and capital pressures
- Price rises that could impact funds available for teaching supplies
- Staffing challenges continue, including difficulty finding TTOCs.
- Student safety, behaviour, and discipline
- Reduced supplemental funding for students with significant needs is affecting safe and inclusive learning environments.

- Remedy is not working effectively, creating extra planning and workload for principals and vice-principals.
- Having more LOP's than teachers
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Risk of families leaving the public system
- Improved communication

## Question 2

What does education and learning successes look like in five (5) years?

**Response count: 44**

### Summary

Across responses, learning success in five years is defined less by abstract measures and more by visible student readiness. Respondents want students to be strong in literacy and numeracy, able to behave responsibly, prepared for work or post-secondary pathways, and supported by stable adults and safe schools. Technology and AI are seen as part of the future, but most responses place them behind strong fundamentals, clear reporting, and dependable supports.

### Key themes

- Success in five years is most often described as stronger literacy, numeracy, and basic life skills.
- Respondents want students better prepared for adulthood through behaviour expectations, work habits, practical skills, and career or trades pathways.
- Many responses connect success to better supports: more teachers, EAs, counsellors, specialists, and clearer, more stable staffing.

### Individual responses (abridged)

- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Increased graduation rates remain an important goal.
- Emphasis on core subjects
- High degree of emotional and social needs
- Focus/enhancement on Indigenous learning and truth and reconciliation
- Staffing shortages and retention
- More support for kids that need it, and the ones that are needing support but are not able to get it
- Students feel safe at school and they are excited to learn
- Concern that more families may choose homeschooling
- Career, trades, and pathway programming
- Students should gain core knowledge, feel connected to their community, and experience success that builds motivation and engagement.
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Preserve enrichment and specialty programs
- I don't know how you make students take school more seriously
- Risk of families leaving the public system
- Concerns about poor outcomes due to lack of supports
- Scary
- Improved student attendance would be a sign of success.
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Literacy comprehension and numeracy should both improve.
- Clear expectations and consequences for student behaviours
- Teaching needs to go back to the books, the amount that they rely on
- Facilities, space, and capital pressures
- Some long-term teachers on permission to teach should become certified.
- Hopefully have separate grounds for Trss
- More hands on and experiential learning
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Better FSA results, stronger grade-to-grade transitions, and higher graduation rates would indicate success.
- Moving towards a way of learning that supports more types of students and away from the classic sit and listen methods

- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Kids who are supported on every level not just grades
- More security and safety measures will no doubt be put
- Getting schedules back to normal and having a consistent learning environment
- Students should show stronger literacy, numeracy, and executive functioning skills.
- It will impact different age groups, differently for sure
- Clearer grading and reporting
- Improved ability to interact with others and to find meaningful employment according to regional
- Better preparation for real-world life skills
- Higher graduation rates for all students including diverse needs and indigenous students
- Career, trades, and pathway programming
- Numeracy skills should progress consistently across grades, supported by recommended programs and aligned best practices.
- Student safety, behaviour, and discipline
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Staffing shortages and retention
- AI and misinformation
- There should be more options to support diverse academic, social-emotional, and behavioural needs.
- Greater accountability and stronger life skills
- More students graduating
- Teachers being fully supported in their classroom with multiple grade level splits with students not being left behind in learning
- Clear expectations and consequences
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Indigenous students are thriving and feeling connected to their cultures and school community
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Facilities, space, and capital pressures
- Kids who are being met at their level and not just shuffled along
- Literacy achievement should improve significantly.
- Success will depend on using technology as a support rather than as the primary
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- AI and misinformation
- Happy, well adjusted kids
- Technology updates and upgrades
- Teacher retention and professional development should improve.
- More remote learning
- Free education to become a certified teacher
- Math growth should improve.
- Numeracy achievement should improve significantly.
- I don't want to see my child having to rely on a device to learn
- Digital literacy and equitable technology access
- Clearer grading and reporting
- Good question
- Keeping children on task, with academics only
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- With increasingly rapid and shifting technological advancements, education must adjust its teaching
- Research-based practices should guide instruction.
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Students disengagement and not knowing how to interact due to technology

### Question 3

Are there initiatives, services, or practices we need to START doing (new or differently)?

**Response count: 44**

#### Summary

Responses to what the district should start doing focus on building capacity and strengthening the student

experience. The strongest calls are for more staff support and training, more direct help for students, better communication, and practical programming that meets a wider range of learner needs. Many respondents also want a reset toward basics, clearer accountability, and more trust in professional judgment.

### Key themes

- Respondents want stronger support and training for teachers, principals, EAs, and other frontline staff.
- Many comments call for a renewed focus on basics, clearer expectations, discipline, and more understandable reporting of student progress.
- Additional student supports are a major theme, including counselling, food programs, early intervention, small-group help, and alternative learning options.

### Individual responses (abridged)

- Training when new technology (ie smart boards)
- More funds to support our vulnerable students
- Better preparation for real-world life skills
- Tech for everyone
- Following the model of personal digital devices being minimized is a great start
- Start including current students, future students, and staff in their opinions and discussions about the future of schooling
- Better education for EA's they work with the most vulnerable population
- Provide clearer program recommendations to support best practices and consistency across classrooms.
- Focus on all students, to improve overall education at all levels and grades
- Someone could be in a school 2-3 times a week, instead of just once
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- More focus on world cultures and world politics
- Mandatory Physical Education classes for Grades 11 and 12
- AI and misinformation
- Preserve enrichment and specialty programs
- Review whether district helping positions are improving student achievement and how they can be used more effectively.
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Ideally these would be year long classes
- Clearer grading and reporting
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Career, trades, and pathway programming
- Consider blended models that combine asynchronous and classroom learning.
- Fewer or more efficient meetings
- Greater community involvement and feedback
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Tutoring or after school help
- Preserve enrichment and specialty programs
- Staffing shortages and retention
- AI and misinformation
- Student safety, behaviour, and discipline
- I see many high school students with spares
- Student safety, behaviour, and discipline
- Extra help and special programming to help kids with different needs, better school lunch programs, bring back letter grades
- Staying with the basics for learning
- Improved communication
- Funding for better lunch programs and funding to hire more EA's
- We need to see you are around and care
- We are very limited in our communitiy
- Board office staff out in schools
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Preserve enrichment and specialty programs

- We need to ensure students learn the skills that are built
- For those students with a full schedule, an extra curricular physical activity could count
- Improved communication
- Greater community involvement and feedback
- (Traditional learning)
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Casual teachers need to do more hands on teaching
- Very difficult in this community to get any help after hours
- Strengthen consistency in instruction from year to year, including common language in areas such as numeracy.
- More positive news
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- More training
- Media
- Clarify what initiatives are currently in place.
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Preserve enrichment and specialty programs
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- AI and misinformation
- More hands on learning would be beneficial rather than relying on devices
- Professional learning and mentorship
- Could do more classes and stuff for older highschool students pertaining to how to do taxes and money management,
- Continue inclusive practices and review how distributed learning is serving students.
- More guidance for grade 10-12 to help them discover their future paths in life and strengths etc
- More place based learning
- House district learning staff in Chet and TR - less travel and more efficient
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Allow schools to retain and carry over surplus funding where appropriate.
- Indigenous learning and truth and reconciliation
- Reduce administrative and operating costs
- More support for classroom teachers, less paperwork, less time demands

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## Question 4

Any opportunities to CHANGE what we are doing that will enhance learning, enhance services, minimize costs, or be more efficient?

**Response count: 39**

### Summary

Suggestions for change combine instructional, organizational, and operational ideas. Many respondents want the district to change course toward stronger core academics, clearer grading, improved discipline, and more targeted supports for complex needs. Others focus on operational improvements such as communication, facilities coordination, technology decision-making, newsletters, and making better use of staff time and school facilities.

### Key themes

- Many responses recommend changing practice to refocus on basics: literacy, numeracy, grammar, discipline, and clearer grading.
- Respondents also point to structural changes such as different grade configurations, class caps, alternative settings, and more appropriate support for diverse learners.
- Stronger staffing supports are a major theme, including teacher retention, more classroom support, EA training, counselling, and early intervention.

### Individual responses (abridged)

- Their attitude is they dont have to do the work
- If you pay more you get more
- Expanded online and flexible learning

- Staffing shortages and retention
- More hands-on learning and student-led learning
- More training for EAs - most of our EAs are thrown into classrooms and it is a sink or swim situation, which can be detrimental to student learning and safety
- Train teachers better in marking
- More pictures attached to service requests in Asset Planer, really helps bring out the correct items to fix the problem
- Teacher retention packages to stop the revolving door and stability for students
- Longer recess in Elementary grades
- Revisit PLC structures and encourage participation from both primary and intermediate teachers.
- Use remedy funding to increase support staff time so programs are delivered effectively.
- Getting back to the basics with expected outcomes I believe will enhance education of our children
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Reduce in-person meetings by using virtual options where possible.
- Preserve enrichment and specialty programs
- Increase support for intermediate literacy.
- Expanded online and flexible learning
- Find a better way to deal with bathroom vandalism and Vaping
- Consider aligning PLC structures with Visible Learning and UDL to improve teacher buy-in and reduce initiative overload.
- Not all students are the same
- Improved communication
- Change how technology is managed and governed
- The grade 8's and 9's are not doing well in the high school
- Some students may need an alternate program where they can go to the bathroom
- Retaining more support staff by not rotating them so they can build relationships with students
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Change how in-service learning is delivered
- Preserve enrichment and specialty programs
- Instead of building a school to support the current number of students attending the high school, build a school that can support current and future students
- Support for students with complex needs
- Staffing shortages and retention
- Make a middle school with the 7, 8 and 9
- Facilities, space, and capital pressures
- This will improve efficiency in teaching
- Fewer or more efficient meetings
- Involve educators in technology and application approval decisions, not just IT
- Consider centralized supply ordering to improve efficiency.
- Fewer or more efficient meetings
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- No specific recommendation provided
- Move away from one-time, sit-and-get sessions toward ongoing, job-embedded learning - coaching, collaborative inquiry
- Food and nutrition supports
- Retain surplus funds rather than spending them unnecessarily.
- Focus on staff retention and promote district learning resources more effectively so teachers feel less overwhelmed.
- Student safety, behaviour, and discipline
- Equip each classroom in every school with education assistants to help in every classroom
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Improved communication
- More efficient purchasing and procurement
- Making sure to value all students' learning time and environment
- Interventions for students past grade 3
- Not all students fit into a traditional school setting

- A more collaborative vetting process could unlock better tools while maintaining appropriate safeguards
- Restore letter grades
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Student safety, behaviour, and discipline
- More adult support time in classrooms, more support for students in small groups,
- Take grade 8 and 9 out of the high school

## Question 5

Are there services, initiatives or activities we should STOP or REDUCE doing, if needed?

**Response count: 37**

### Summary

This question produced the least consensus. Many respondents either do not support reducing services or do not feel informed enough to suggest what should stop. Where suggestions are offered, they tend to protect student-facing supports and instead reduce administration, meetings, travel, reporting, food at meetings, or other peripheral costs. A number of comments also use this question to challenge grading practices, over-assessment, and weak discipline rather than to identify budget cuts.

### Key themes

- A large share of responses either oppose reductions altogether or say they are unsure what should be stopped.
- Where reductions are suggested, respondents most often target administration, meetings, reporting, travel, and other non-classroom or non-student-facing costs.
- Several comments specifically question current grading practices, assessment requirements, and some district-level initiatives or processes.

### Individual responses (abridged)

- We have great initiatives in our district
- Stop asking teachers to do more with less
- Shorten after-school PLC sessions.
- Allow flexibility in whether a TOC is called when coverage is less necessary.
- No change or reduction suggested
- Streamline paperwork tied to field trips, IEPs, AIPs, and learning plans.
- Get rid of F&P in favour of something more research-based and less time-consuming (costly) to administer
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Group based on skills and skill level
- Clearer grading and reporting
- Begin planning for electric vehicle charging options for the fleet.
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Reduce the frequency and length of admin and CM meetings to lower travel, meal, and TTOC costs.
- No user groups on pro d days, or during school breaks
- Preserve enrichment and specialty programs
- Increase suspension and consequences for actions for students
- Less assessments like snap
- Reduce the frequency of some assessments, such as EDI or MDI.
- Do not let the students loiter in hallways or vape in the washrooms
- Reduce administrative and operating costs
- Less travel to other communities - hire someone in those areas
- We should stop putting on ICBIEPs for students to have general movement breaks
- Facilities, space, and capital pressures
- Dont stop anything
- If they need a movement break, they can move in the classroom
- Stop the new proficiency scale grading system
- You need to stop reducing the funds that support student needs
- Need actual teachers, not sponsored by a teacher educator in class rooms
- Stop putting putting the kids in one subject everyday
- Reduce Pro-D that occurs during the workday to lower TOC, food, and travel costs.

- Fewer or more efficient meetings
- Transition them to the new platform
- Career, trades, and pathway programming
- Reduce class sizes
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- No: services are good
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Yes you can farm out but you get what you pay for
- Preserve enrichment and specialty programs
- Fewer or more efficient meetings
- Alternate full-day admin meetings with shorter after-school Zoom meetings and monthly update memos.
- Smaller buses? They seem to be carrying very few students
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Reduce elite courses or clubs, everyone equal
- I wonder if there are positions outside of the schools that might be not being utilized?
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- No change or reduction suggested

## Question 6

If we need to REDUCE areas of staff, services, or programming, how can this be done to minimize impacts to student learning or school district services?

**Response count: 39**

### Summary

Responses strongly prioritize protecting classroom-level learning and services. Many participants state directly that cuts to staff, services, or programming will inevitably hurt students. When reductions are discussed, respondents most often suggest reviewing district administration, duplication, non-enrolling roles, or low-impact efficiencies first, while keeping teachers, EAs, and student supports in schools.

### Key themes

- The strongest message is that reducing school-based staff, services, or programming will harm students, and many respondents explicitly oppose such cuts.
- Where reductions are considered, respondents generally prefer district-level, central office, administrative, or other non-enrolling positions to be reviewed first.
- Many comments call for efficiency reviews to identify duplication, underused roles, shared services, or enrolment-based adjustments before cutting classroom supports.

### Individual responses (abridged)

- Seems to get very little from the district, removing staff
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Consider each school separately
- Use virtual field trips or bring in single presenters instead of higher-cost activities.
- I STRONGLY oppose reduction of staff, services or programming
- If the culture within our schools can be improved, there can be less staffing
- We need more, not less
- Programs should go back to the way it use to
- Less after school stuff
- It is reaching a point of school being a daycare rather than a place
- Administrative overhead or non-essential central office positions
- This is a terrible option
- Other areas should always be reviewing efficiencies and determining where cost savings could be attained
- More DL
- Reducing top to bottom isn't the answer
- Facilities, space, and capital pressures
- It is not possible to reduce areas of staff, services or programming without impacting student learning and district services

- Alangamate low population schools with other schools with empty classrooms
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- This will lead to burnout!
- Keep the people in the schools
- Economies of Scale
- Deferring non-essential facility upgrades or equipment replacements
- Reduce in head office, and district offices not the schools
- The minute a kid goes to home schooling they become isolated
- Reduce hours of staff in schools with low student population
- Work with PACs to support opportunities where appropriate.
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- We need more trained teachers and EA's not less
- I personally think staffing services is extremely important
- Do job assessments to see if there are area's that are duplicated or underutilized with more duties added to optimize staff
- Staff that have to monitor the doors so they are not propped open
- You can not reduce staff or services without impacting the learning of students
- Explore creative scheduling options for students with diverse abilities.
- Reduce administration
- Preserve enrichment and specialty programs
- Work with the union to create job descriptions for non-enrolling teachers that emphasize meaningful student engagement and student success.
- Underutilized elective programs or clubs
- The basic fundamentals of teaching
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Allow teachers to job share
- Possibly at a district office level, not at a school level
- Look at ways to bring in more revenue so that the reductions aren't in the form of staff and programming that benefit our learners
- Put the same grades together rather than splitting two grades into two split classrooms
- Student learning must not be reduced any further
- Staffing shortages and retention
- We need to maintain staff levels that provide face to face support for students
- There is no way to reduce services without impacting student learning
- If staff or services are reduced it will create drop out rates
- Professional learning and mentorship
- Non enrolling staff
- Untrained EA's are more work for classroom teachers!
- EA support staff that is not trained is not helpful

## Question 7

In considering your information towards starting, changing or reducing any initiatives or services, what must CONTINUE?

**Response count: 37**

### Summary

What must continue is clear: respondents want the district to protect direct supports for students and staff, maintain strong teaching and foundational learning, and preserve programs that build safety, belonging, and opportunity. This includes not only literacy and numeracy, but also counselling, food programs, inclusive supports, arts, trades, community participation, and professional learning.

### Key themes

- Core supports for students and teachers must continue, especially classroom staffing, EAs, learning support, counselling, and food programs.
- Literacy, numeracy, and strong classroom teaching remain central priorities in what should be protected.
- Respondents also want safety, relationships, communication, and stability for students to continue.

## Individual responses (abridged)

- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Student safety, behaviour, and discipline
- Bring the problem to the masses and see the answers
- District helping staff need to stay
- Preserve enrichment and specialty programs
- The safety at the school we need to keep that in place
- Maintaining teachers
- Support for students with complex needs
- Strengthen support for principals
- Indigenous learning and truth and reconciliation
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Certified teachers , both vice and principal for high schools only
- Improved communication
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Maintain a focus on Indigenous students.
- We must continue to build relationships with students
- Success is not about the student using technology, but about them knowing why
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Continue emphasizing literacy and numeracy skill development.
- Staffing shortages and retention
- Preserve enrichment and specialty programs
- Core classroom staffing (keeping class sizes manageable)
- Support for students with complex needs
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Essential safety and security measures
- Preserve enrichment and specialty programs
- Indigenous learning and truth and reconciliation
- Access to resources - the resource center needs to stay!
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Better preparation for real-world life skills
- Facilities, space, and capital pressures
- Only principals for elementary schools
- Support for students and teachers
- Teacher Support
- Professional learning and mentorship
- Community support and participation
- Continue responding to the needs of undiagnosed students, especially in the primary years, through EA support.
- Opportunities for growth as a contributing member to society in whatever capacity is available
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Support new and LOP teachers
- Food and nutrition supports
- Fostering curiosity and the ability to question information
- High quality education for our students
- Hiring EA's to help teachers not burn out
- Reduce the stress by providing the correct supports for children that need the extra
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Improved communication
- Consistency for students
- Food and nutrition supports
- Preserve enrichment and specialty programs

## Question 8

Is there anything else we need to know or understand?

**Response count: 29****Summary**

Final comments largely reinforce patterns already seen across the survey. Respondents again emphasize behaviour, staffing, early support, clearer academic expectations, mental health, and the need for stable, adequately resourced schools. Several comments also caution against relying on narrow metrics like graduation rates and urge the district to protect arts, supplies, and future-ready programming.

**Key themes**

- Additional comments reinforce concerns about behaviour, discipline, and the need for clear expectations in schools.
- Many respondents return to concerns about supports: trained teachers and EAs, early intervention, mental health, and stable staffing.
- Several comments argue for clearer measures of success, stronger academics, and better preparation for life beyond school.

**Individual responses (abridged)**

- No change or reduction suggested
- Schools should not have to apply for community grants to purchase supplies for classes/courses
- Preserve enrichment and specialty programs
- Early investment prevents exponentially greater costs later
- Ideas for revenue generation (grants, partnerships)
- Long-term vision or specific community needs
- My child has not had a consistent teacher for a full school year
- Students don't get a second chance at Grade K, 1, 2, or 3
- Career, trades, and pathway programming
- Concerns about equity (how cuts affect different student populations)
- As a rural school with limited technology, we rely heavily on paper-and-pencil learning and on new ideas brought back from workshops.
- Career, trades, and pathway programming
- Trained EA's and teachers
- Facilities, space, and capital pressures
- Stronger focus on literacy, numeracy, and core skills
- Consistency
- Preserve enrichment and specialty programs
- Children need a variety of learning options and as we move into 2026 and 2027 I think its essential we explore and provide those experiences for the kids by providing a mixture of in class learning and other types of learning
- Know that these kinds of surveys should be provided to Students and staff, and that the school district should care more about the opinions of students and staff than parents who have no idea how the students feel
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Better preparation for real-world life skills
- You need to find problems in the local fellowship group, and it will open up better answers
- Need more than one option of teacher per grade as some are not a fit for some kids
- Mental health, accessibility, and inclusion
- Less management positions
- Student safety, behaviour, and discipline
- Preserve enrichment and specialty programs
- Clearer grading and reporting
- There is no consistency and it definitely shows in multiple ways
- Student safety, behaviour, and discipline