

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE TO THE BOARD

January 27, 2026, Meeting of The Board in Public



Independent School Enrollment Analysis

'Year'	'K'		'1'		'2'		'3'		'4'		'5'		'6'
2013	183		174		169		161		172		179		158
Retention		106.00%		101.70%		101.20%		111.20%		104.10%		101.70%	
2014	176		194		177		171		179		179		182
Retention		101.70%		99.50%		102.30%		104.10%		105.60%		100.60%	
2015	194		179		193		181		178		189		180
Retention		92.30%		91.60%		97.40%		100.00%		91.60%		96.80%	
2016	212		179		164		188		181		163		183
Retention		101.90%		109.50%		107.90%		104.80%		111.00%		108.60%	
2017	218		216		196		177		197		201		177
Retention		98.20%		112.50%		106.10%		116.90%		108.60%		112.40%	
2018	231		214		243		208		207		214		226
Retention		97.00%		111.70%		100.40%		102.90%		98.10%		104.70%	
2019	188		224		239		244		214		203		224
Retention		120.20%		107.10%		104.20%		102.50%		103.30%		109.90%	
2020	233		226		240		249		250		221		223
Retention		105.20%		100.40%		105.40%		94.40%		104.80%		96.40%	
2021	238		245		227		253		235		262		213
Retention		97.50%		96.70%		99.10%		94.90%		100.90%		100.80%	
2022	226		232		237		225		240		237		264
Retention		110.20%		110.30%		107.20%		105.30%		107.90%		102.10%	
2023	231		249		256		254		237		259		242
Retention		106.10%		102.40%		97.30%		102.80%		100.40%		102.30%	
2024	233		245		255		249		261		238		265

1. Overview:

The private school report summarizes the number of Chilliwack-resident students who attend private schools anywhere in B.C. These students live within SD33 boundaries but choose independent schools. Importantly, the numbers exclude international students and exclude students living outside the district who attend local independent schools.

2. Key Findings (2024–25):

2.1 Total Private School Enrollment

- Total private school enrolment (K–12): 2,854 students in 2024
- This represents a continued, long-term upward trajectory from earlier years.

2.2 Kindergarten Snapshot (Indicator of Future Cohort Trends)

- 233 Kindergarten students entered private schools in 2024.
- This is slightly above the prior year (+2 students).

2.3 Proportion of Chilliwack Students Choosing Private Schools (Kindergarten Only)

- In 2024:

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- 1,030 Kindergarten students attended public schools
- 233 attended private schools
- 81.6% of K students remained in the public system
- *This represents a very small increase of 0.1 percentage points from 2023.*

Interpretation:

- Kindergarten participation in public schools has remained remarkably stable between 81–84% for more than a decade. There is no significant shift toward or away from private schools at the entry point.

'Year'	'6'	'7'	'8'	'9'	'10'	'11'	'12'
2013	158	175	136	175	132	138	159
Retention	101.30%	104.60%	106.60%	95.40%	99.20%	128.30%	
2014	182	160	183	145	167	131	177
Retention	95.60%	95.00%	96.70%	104.10%	97.00%	115.30%	
2015	180	174	152	177	151	162	151
Retention	102.20%	98.30%	105.30%	92.10%	88.70%	107.40%	
2016	183	184	171	160	163	134	174
Retention	106.00%	106.00%	100.60%	94.40%	95.70%	106.00%	
2017	177	194	195	172	151	156	142
Retention	112.40%	108.20%	99.50%	107.00%	96.70%	113.50%	
2018	226	199	210	194	184	146	177
Retention	96.00%	104.00%	98.10%	92.80%	87.00%	98.60%	
2019	224	217	207	206	180	160	144
Retention	95.10%	103.70%	93.70%	94.70%	97.80%	106.90%	
2020	223	213	225	194	195	176	171
Retention	107.60%	102.30%	93.30%	97.90%	95.40%	106.30%	
2021	213	240	218	210	190	186	187
Retention	101.40%	98.80%	90.80%	90.00%	88.90%	102.20%	
2022	264	216	237	198	189	169	190
Retention	99.20%	99.10%	92.40%	103.50%	96.30%	107.70%	
2023	242	262	214	219	205	182	182
Retention	106.60%	101.90%	96.30%	96.80%	92.70%	114.30%	
2024	265	258	267	206	212	190	208

3. Long-Term Trend Analysis (K–12):

3.1 Growth of Private School Enrolment Over Time

- Private school enrolment has steadily grown from 1,952 students in 2013 to 2,854 in 2024.
- Average annual growth: ~80 students/year
- Overall increase (2013–2024): +902 students (+46%)
- This steady increase aligns with:
 - Population growth in Chilliwack
 - Expansion of independent school capacity
 - Some families prefer specific religious or programmatic models
 - Perceived smaller class sizes or alternative pedagogies

3.2 Retention Patterns

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The report provides retention rates showing how many students remain in the private system year-over-year.

Key patterns:

- Grades K–7 show strong multi-year retention (~102–106%), meaning private schools often gain students as cohorts move up.
- Grades 8–12 show retention dips (93–97%), indicating:
 - Some students return to public schools for secondary programs
 - Capacity limits in independent high schools
 - Interest in programs only available in SD33 (e.g., trades, hockey, extracurricular options)

Interpretation:

- The private system grows through elementary and then moderates in high school, suggesting the public system's secondary offerings remain attractive.

4. Kindergarten Public vs. Private Comparison (2013–2024):

4.1 Stability of Public-School Market Share

Across 12 years, the % of K students attending public school has stayed within a narrow band (**80–84%**).

This indicates:

- High long-term stability in parent choice
- No evidence of sudden shifts toward independent schools
- Public schools remain the dominant choice for local families

4.2 Year-over-Year Highlights (2023 → 2024)

- Public K increased by 18 students
- Private K increased by 2 students
- Net effect: Public share increased slightly (+0.1 percentage points)

Interpretation:

The market is stable. These changes fall within normal demographic variation.

5. Cohort Observations:

5.1 Entry Year Growth

Private Kindergarten has ranged from 176 (2014) to 233 (2024) — a 13-year high.

This can reflect:

- A larger district population
- Increased private school capacity
- Growing communities with diverse educational preferences

5.2 Secondary Enrolment Trends

The enrolment decline from Grade 7 → 8 → 12 within private schools indicates:

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- Some families choose to return to public schools for secondary
- Some independent schools do not offer full high-school programming
- Public secondary programs remain a strong retention point for SD33

6. What This Means for SD33

6.1 Public System Remains Strong

With 81.6% of Kindergarten families choosing public education, the District maintains a strong and stable base.

6.2 Private School Enrolment Growth Does Not Appear to Be Pulling Students Away From SD33

The increase in private enrolment aligns with overall population growth, not with declining public interest.

6.3 Strategic Planning Implications

1. Secondary Programs Remain a Strength

Lower retention in private secondary grades suggests SD33's programs (trades, athletics, electives, inclusive supports) are valued.

2. Community Growth Will Increase Both Public and Private Demand

Private schools serve as an additional indicator of total student population pressure.

3. Important for Long-Term Facility Planning

Private school growth does not reduce the facility burden on SD33, because:

- Private schools do not build at the same rate
- Not all families will choose private schooling
- Private schools may reach capacity sooner

4. Public Trust Remains High

The stability in public school market share signals ongoing parent confidence in SD33.

7. Summary

Key Messages:

- **81.6% of Kindergarten families chose SD33 public schools in 2024**, consistent with a decade-long trend of 80–84%.
- **Private school enrolment is increasing, but this is consistent with overall population growth**—not a shift away from public education.
- **Secondary grades show students returning to the public system**, highlighting SD33's strong secondary program offerings.
- **No evidence of significant movement of families away from SD33**; public school market share is stable and slightly improving.
- **Private school data should be viewed as a demographic indicator**, not a threat to enrolment stability.

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Strategic Plan Staff Meeting Feedback September to November 2025

There are five key tenets for change Management.

- **Tenet 1** – We change for a reason (why are we changing?).
- **Tenet 2** – Organizational change requires individual change (Who has to do their job differently?).
- **Tenet 3** – Organizational outcomes are the collective result of individual change (How much of our outcomes depend on adoption and usage?).
- **Tenet 4** – Change management is an enabling framework for managing the people side of change (What will we do to support adoption and usage?).
- **Tenet 5** – We apply change management to realize the benefits and desired outcomes of change (How will driving adoption and usage improve results?).

The Prosci model, also known as the ADKAR model, offers a new perspective on change. Each of the five **ADKAR** elements represents an outcome that an individual must achieve to successfully implement a change. The first two of these elements are **Awareness** and **Desire**.

A = AWARENESS

- **Change begins with understanding the why.**
 - What is the nature of the change.
 - Why is the change needed.
 - What is the risk of not changing.

D = DESIRE

- **Change Involves a personal decision.**
 - What's in it for me (WIIFM).
 - A personal choice.
 - A decision to engage and participate.

As part of building **AWARENESS** and **DESIRE** for the new strategic plan, senior staff presented key elements to department and school staff members from September to November 2025. These presentations were delivered to school staff, facilities staff, School Board staff, and Learning Services staff. During each presentation, staff members broke into small groups and had the opportunity to discuss and answer four key questions about the strategic plan.

- **Question 1** - What is your connection to our purpose and Tómiyeqw and how will these ideas guide your work?
- **Question 2** - What is your connection to the Strategic Priorities and how will these priorities guide your work?
- **Question 3** - What is your connection to the student success goals and how will the goals guide your work?
- **Question 4** - What is your connection to the core values and how will these values guide your work?

The three Assistant School Superintendents provided a brief summary of the themes that emerged from the data analysis.

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Chilliwack
School District



Meeting Structure & Key Messages



Sample Agenda

Thursday
November 6th



Part 1: Strategic Plan (45 minutes)

- Tómiyeqw
- Strategic Priorities
- Goals
- Core Values

Discussion #1
Discussion #2
Discussion #3
Discussion #4

Part 2: School Growth Plan (45 minutes)

Goals

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Well-Being
- Transitions

Steps:

1. Continuous Improvement Assessment
2. Reference (Actions)
3. Strat Plan Template

Strat Plan Checkpoints: Dec, Mar, June



Staff Survey Questions



What is your **connection** to and how will it **guide** your work:

- ✓ Purpose and Tómiyeqw
- ✓ Strategic Priorities
- ✓ Student Success Goals
- ✓ Core Values



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Connections to Tómiyeqw



- ✓ We like the vision of "7 generations" and how the ways that we teach our students will affect multiple generations. Something that stood out was also the idea of action versus in-action.
- ✓ The first generation of healing....8th year. This will be the first year that the Grad class will have had Orange Shirt day at school since Kindergarten.
- ✓ **It feels empowering to be part of the first healing generation of Indigenous people.**
- ✓ Our connection to purpose and to Tómiyeqw is through being mindful, respectful, and intentional in how to support students and families.
- ✓ Helps us to zoom out and reminder of us that it is ok to slow down. Doesn't have to be focused on content every single moment, gives us time to root us in the purpose of slow growth, build those important relationships.
- ✓ The students in our class are not just our students for this year. They are our students before and after too. It's important to know their story.
- ✓ Embracing Tomiyaqw reminds us that education is not just about academics; it's about nurturing a way of being that honours truth, fosters reconciliation, and builds a hopeful, inclusive future for generations to come.
- ✓ Teaching how your actions impact those around you and your environment and the ripple effect it causes.
- ✓ **We are now slowing down our thinking rather than a quick solution. We are also more reflective on where our students are and where we have been.**
- ✓ Our role as teachers has and does impact generations we teach, through our own experiences, self reflection, and our own personal growth.
- ✓ We all feel like helping future generations is a core reason for us becoming teachers, so this aligns quite well. We also found it quite cool that there is a single halq'emeylem word that encompasses this idea
- ✓ It asks us to have patience and a big picture outlook as we consider the needs of our students and consider how change and growth takes time but each small decision action can have a meaningful impact over the long term.

