

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE TO THE BOARD

May 19, 2026, Public Board Meeting



Middle Years Development Instrument: Chilliwack Results 2025–26

The [Middle Years Development Instrument \(MDI\)](#) is a student self-report survey developed by the Human Early Learning Partnership at the University of British Columbia. It asks students in the middle years about their experiences of *well-being, relationships, health, school belonging, and life outside of school*. The MDI is not an individual assessment of students. Rather, it provides a [population-level picture of how children and youth are experiencing their lives](#), allowing districts and communities to better understand strengths, emerging needs, and areas that may warrant closer attention.

- [School District Summary Reports](#)

The MDI examines five broad areas:

1. Social and Emotional Development
2. Physical Health and Well-Being
3. Connectedness to Adults and Peers
4. Use of Out-of-School Time
5. School Experiences

It also reports two summary measures:

- The **Well-Being Index**, which provides an overall picture of whether students are thriving, experiencing medium well-being, or showing lower well-being: a holistic snapshot of mental and physical health built from five measures: *Optimism, Happiness, Self-Esteem, Absence of Sadness, and General Health*.
 - High well-being (Thriving): high on at least 4 of 5 measures and no low scores.
 - Low well-being: low on at least 1 of the 5 measures.
- The **Assets Index**, which looks at the positive relationships, experiences, and habits that help support healthy development. Based on four key assets: *Adult Relationships, Peer Relationships, Nutrition & Sleep, and Out-of-School Activities*.

For the 2025–26 school year, Chilliwack had strong participation in the MDI:

- **Grade 5:** 978 students participated, representing **85%** of the Grade 5 population.
- **Grade 8:** 900 students participated, representing **78%** of the Grade 8 population.

Grade 5 Results: 2025–26 Summary

The Grade 5 results show a generally stable picture of student well-being, with some encouraging areas of improvement and a few indicators that warrant continued attention.

Overall Well-Being

In 2025–26:

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- 37% of Grade 5 students were identified as *thriving*
- 26% were in the *medium well-being* range
- 37% were in the *low well-being* range

This suggests that just over one-third of Grade 5 students are thriving across the core well-being measures, while a similar proportion report at least one area of lower well-being.

Developmental Assets

The strongest asset areas for Grade 5 students were:

- *Out-of-school activities*: 88%
- *Peer relationships*: 78%
- *Adult relationships*: 78%

The area that remains most concerning is:

- *Nutrition and sleep*: 60%

While nutrition and sleep improved from the previous year, it continues to be the lowest of the four asset categories.

Notable 2025–26 Grade 5 Findings

Several results point to strengths in how younger middle-years students are experiencing school and relationships:

- 73% reported high self-esteem.
- 72% reported strong relationships with adults at school.
- 82% reported strong relationships with adults at home.
- 65% reported a high sense of school belonging.
- 59% reported a positive school climate.

There are also some areas that merit attention:

- 41% scored high on absence of worries, meaning worries remain present for a significant number of students.
- 50% scored high on absence of sadness, a modest decline from the previous year.
- 25% reported being physically active every day, down from 31% the previous year.
- 26% reported having no important adult at school, compared with 24% the year before.

The newly reported mental health item is also worth noting:

- 79% of Grade 5 students described their mental health as *excellent or good*.
- 21% described it as *fair or poor*.

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The Grade 5 results are largely stable year over year. There are positive signs in *optimism, sleep, nutrition, sleep assets, and school belonging*. At the same time, there are modest declines in *happiness, absence of sadness, absence of worries, adult relationship assets, and daily physical activity*. Taken together, the results suggest that many Grade 5 students continue to experience strong relationships and a positive connection to school, while emotional well-being and healthy daily habits remain important areas for sustained focus.

Grade 8 Results: 2025–26 Summary

The Grade 8 results present a more complex picture. There are encouraging improvements in several areas connected to school experience, relationships with adults, optimism, and decision-making. At the same time, the overall well-being profile continues to show that a significant proportion of Grade 8 students are experiencing lower well-being.

Overall Well-Being

In 2025–26:

- **29%** of Grade 8 students were identified as **thriving**
- **23%** were in the **medium well-being** range
- **48%** were in the **low well-being** range

This means that nearly half of Grade 8 respondents reported at least one low-range score across the core well-being indicators of optimism, happiness, self-esteem, absence of sadness, and general health.

Developmental Assets

The strongest Grade 8 asset areas were:

- *Out-of-school activities*: 80%
- *Peer relationships*: 74%
- *Adult relationships*: 68%

The lowest asset area remained:

- *Nutrition and sleep*: 49%

The Grade 8 nutrition and sleep asset continues to stand out as an area of concern, with fewer than half of students reporting strength in this domain.

Notable 2025–26 Grade 8 Findings

Several areas improved or remained solid:

- **58%** reported strong relationships with adults at school, up from 54% the previous year.
- **73%** reported strong friendship intimacy, up from 70%.
- **60%** scored high in responsible decision-making.

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- **62%** reported high academic self-concept.
- **41%** reported high school belonging, up from 36%.
- **28%** reported a positive school climate, up from 22%.

However, several indicators reinforce that Grade 8 remains a key developmental pressure point:

- **48%** were in the low-well-being category.
- Only **39%** scored high on absence of worries.
- **47%** reported having *no important adult at school*.
- Only **49%** reported strength in nutrition and sleep assets.

The new mental health and food security indicators in the 2025–26 Grade 8 report are particularly important:

- **60%** of Grade 8 students described their mental health as *excellent or good*.
- **40%** described it as *fair or poor*.
- **19%** said they did *not receive professional help when they needed it* for a mental health or emotional challenge.
- **6%** reported going to bed hungry at least sometimes in the past year because there was not enough food at home.

The Grade 8 results show meaningful improvement in several areas that matter deeply for student experience, particularly *school climate, school belonging, relationships with adults at school, optimism, friendship intimacy, and responsible decision-making*.

These are encouraging signs and suggest that efforts to strengthen belonging and supportive relationships continue to matter. At the same time, the overall well-being data remains sobering. The proportion of students in the low-well-being category increased slightly, peer relationship assets declined, and worries remain elevated. The Grade 8 mental health and help-seeking results reinforce the importance of continuing to strengthen school-based and community-connected supports for adolescents.