

2026/27 School Year Preliminary Annual Budget

Public Board Meeting
May 19, 2026

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Goals of Public Schooling and Strategic Plan



The Educated Citizen



Live a Good Life
Make a Good Living

Goals of Public Schooling

Intellectual
Development



Human and
Social Development



Career
Development



Environmental
Stewardship

Student
Centred
Education

Innovative
Instruction

Mental
Health and
Well-Being

Welcoming
and Inclusive
Culture

Truth,
Healing and
Reconciliation

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2026/27 Preliminary Budget



Enabling Progress Through Stability, Focus, Progress

- Budget Stability
 - Maintaining steady learning environments and predictable staff conditions despite financial uncertainty is key.
- Focused Resource Allocation
 - Aligning resources with priorities that support student learning, well-being, and equity requires careful choices.
- Sustained Progress
 - Progress involves improving quality and sustaining gains in literacy, mental health, inclusion, and environmental care.

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2026/27 Budget - Guiding Beliefs



- **Stability**
 - **Focus**
 - **Progress**
- Prioritize the foundational needs of schools
 - Focus on initiatives that are data informed and align with mandate and aspirational goals
 - Ensuring healthy systems and structures that maximize operational efficiency and quality
 - Consider long-term stability and risk management

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2026/27 Budget – What Stability Looks Like in Practice



- **Continuity in Education**
 - Stability ensures classrooms remain staffed and supports continue for a consistent student experience.
- **Staff Morale and Collaboration**
 - Stability fosters morale, teamwork, and effective practices among school staff.
- **Organizational Planning**
 - Careful planning and shared responsibility reduce risks from frequent organizational changes.
 - Communicate that stability is deliberate action, building confidence among stakeholders.

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RECAP: Annual Planning Cycle

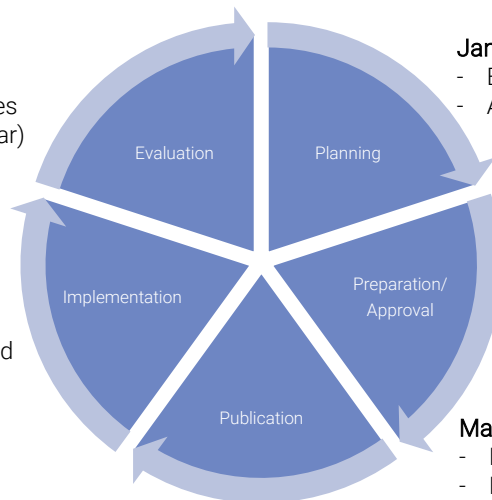


November to December

- Updates based on actual enrolments and other changes
- Budget timelines (for next year) approved

July to October

- Budget directions implemented
- Year-end audit
- Financial statements
- Actual enrolments reported
- Review student outcomes
- Nominal Roll (FN), 1701 (SD)
- Joint verification process



January to February

- Enrolment projections
- Amended budget approved

February to April

- Budget consultation
- Ministry funding announced
- Budget directions approved

May to June

- Budget approved
- Multi-year fiscal plan updated
- Submission to Ministry

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RECAP: Board Approved 2026/27 Budget Directions



- Departmental stability to provide continuity of service and support to schools, maintain progress;
- Maximizing use of special purpose grants in alignment with Ministry and school district directions;
- Where staffing is determined by collective agreement, any additional staff above ratio be carefully considered and only if enrollment projections and Ministry funding allow for such additions;
- Organizational efficiencies be maximized;
- Reviewing the impact of new services like Youth Engagement Workers;
- Roles where additional allowances are provided are reviewed and adjusted in alignment with expectations; and,
- Increased focus on the use of remedy monies to enhance support for students.

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RECAP: Board Approved Executive Recommendations



- Maintain current staffing levels for LST, ELL, and educational assistants in alignment with collective agreements and enrollment, with adjustments made within budget parameters and in response to student need;
- Strengthen classroom practice through enhanced differentiation, leadership from Learning Services Teachers, targeted professional learning for educational assistants, and a well-defined continuum of support;
- Ongoing staff wellness initiatives will continue to support attendance, workforce stability, and effective service delivery;
- Maintain targeted and intensive supports, including Choices programs and Mountainside Secondary as a hub for students requiring alternative learning environments; and,
- Additional investments will be reviewed following the September enrolment (1701 count) and confirmation of all Ministry funding to ensure alignment with student needs and district priorities.

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What we *MUST* do vs. What we *CAN* Decide



MUST (non-negotiable)	CAN (Board-informed decisions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Class size & composition• Collective Agreements• Balanced budget by June 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritization within available resources• Areas of emphasis• Phasing and pacing

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Staffing and School Supports



- Manage decreased enrollment through staffing surplus versus general lay-offs.
- Continue additional investment in counseling services above ratio and above the provincial average.
- Maintain NVTAs and CUPE non-ratioed staffing levels.
- Offer wellness support and resources, coupled with universal / targeted and intensive attendance management strategies.
- Recognition that higher employee absenteeism is associated with lower student achievement.

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2026/27 Budget Directions



- **Budget Alignment with Priorities**
 - The 2026/27 budget supports strategic priorities for student learning and well-being despite financial constraints.
- **Stability in Staffing**
 - Stable staffing creates consistent classroom experiences and strong relationships essential for student success.
- **Investment in Student Support**
 - Continued investment in literacy, numeracy, mental health, inclusion, and targeted supports fosters equity and engagement.
- **Sustaining Effective Programs**
 - Maintaining programs strengthens student belonging and engagement.



2026/27 Budget Directions



- **Support for Indigenous Learners**
 - Partnerships with local Nations and Indigenous Education Council guide culturally responsive programming and learner support.
- **Inclusive Education Practices**
 - Commitment to disability awareness and supports for diverse learners continues despite financial challenges.
- **Environmental Stewardship**
 - Outdoor learning, climate action initiatives, and energy management sustain environmental responsibility.
- **Values Integrated in Operations**
 - Core values of inclusion, reconciliation, and sustainability shape budgeting and decision-making processes.



RECAP: How we are Funded & Resulting Tensions

Operating

Special Purpose

Capital

- About 90% of our operating revenue comes from provincial grants which is almost wholly dedicated to school district staffing costs.
- For 2026-27, per student funding is not increasing from 2025-26.
- Special Purpose Funding limits our ability to act.

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Preliminary Budget

	Operating Fund	Special Purpose Funds	Capital Fund	Total
Revenues	216,241,957	33,312,440	12,081,208	261,635,605
Expenses	(217,278,212)	(32,225,400)	(17,732,376)	(267,235,988)
Transfers between funds	(436,410)	(1,087,040)	1,523,450	-
Surplus (Deficit)	(1,472,665)	-	(4,127,718)	(5,600,383)
Use of Accumulated Operating Surplus	1,472,665	-	-	1,472,665
Budgeted Surplus (Deficit)	-	-	(4,127,718)	(4,127,718)

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Operating Fund



	2025/26 Amended	2026/27 Preliminary	Variance	% Variance
Revenues	208,691,442	216,241,957	7,550,515	3.6%
Salaries & Benefits	(188,452,878)	(197,188,709)	8,735,831	4.6%
Services & Supplies	(19,687,545)	(20,089,503)	401,958	2.0%
Surplus (Deficit)	551,019	(1,036,255)	(1,587,274)	
Capital Assets Purchased	(715,000)	(30,000)	(685,000)	
Transfer to Local Capital	(116,650)	(406,410)	289,760	
Total Operating Surplus (Deficit)	(280,631)	(1,472,665)	(1,192,034)	424.8%

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Revenue Assumptions



- Operating grant based on the March 2026 announcement and does not include any increase in per pupil funding
- Additional funding for labour settlement estimated at \$8.8 million, based on the increase in salary and benefit costs International enrolment target of 605 FTE with a \$1000 increase in annual fees
- Facility rental rates increased by 3 to 5%

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Salaries & Benefits Assumptions



- NVTAs and CUPE staff salary increases based on second year of agreement (3% plus 3%)
- Pay scales for PVP and Exempt staff remain the same as 2025-26 pay scales
- Head count increases due to opening of Cloverley Elementary
- Substitute costs budgeted to be lower than 2024-25 results based on continued efforts in absence management

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Services & Supplies Assumptions

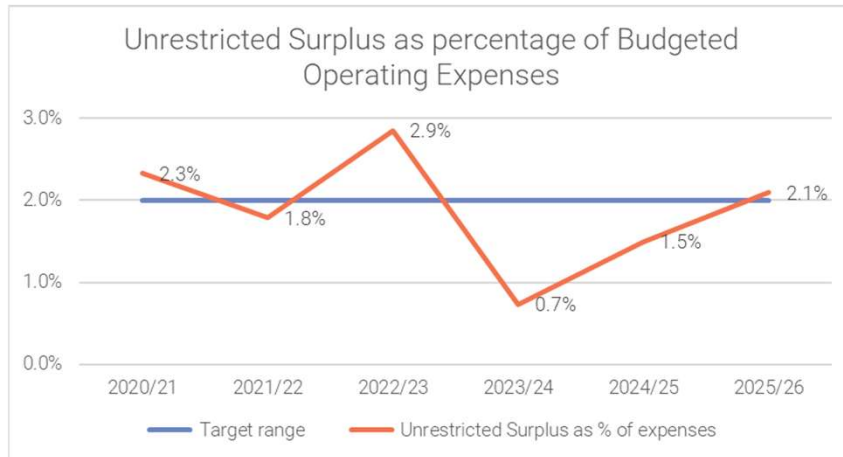


- Most budgets remain at the same as for 2025/26
- Significant increases relate to:
 - New operating costs related to Cloverley Elementary
 - Increases in commissions to international agents due to increase in tuition fees
 - Known utility rate increases

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Unrestricted Operating Surplus



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Special Purpose Funds



	2025/26 Amended	2026/27 Preliminary	Variance	% Variance
MECC Grants	32,712,110	29,069,170	(3,642,940)	(11.1%)
Other funding	4,520,861	4,243,270	(277,591)	(6.1%)
Total Revenues	37,232,971	33,312,440	(3,920,531)	(10.5%)
Salaries	22,270,447	20,398,371	(1,872,076)	(8.4%)
Employee Benefits	5,950,637	5,743,483	(207,154)	(3.5%)
Services and Supplies	8,294,306	6,083,546	(2,210,760)	(26.7%)
Capital Assets Purchased	717,581	1,087,040	369,459	51.5%
Total Expenses	37,232,971	33,312,440	(3,920,531)	(10.5%)
Surplus (Deficit)	-	-		

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Capital Fund



	2025/26 Amended	2026/27 Preliminary	Variance	% Variance
Deferred Capital Revenue	10,914,577	12,045,526	1,130,949	10.4%
Investment Income	13,897	35,682	21,785	156.8%
Total Revenues	10,928,474	12,081,208	1,152,734	10.5%
Amortization	16,551,072	17,681,511	1,130,439	6.8%
Capital Leases	16,850	50,865	34,015	201.9%
Total Expenses	16,567,922	17,732,376	1,164,454	7.0%
Capital (Deficit)	(5,639,448)	(5,651,168)	(11,720)	(0.1%)
Assets purchased from other funds	1,549,231	1,523,450	(25,781)	(1.7%)
Total Capital (Deficit)	(4,090,217)	(4,127,718)	(37,501)	(0.1%)

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Key Takeaways



- **Financial Management and Prioritization**
 - The 2026/27 preliminary budget shows disciplined financial management with clear priorities aligned to strategic goals.
- **Addressing Financial Constraints**
 - Strategies have been implemented to reduce the deficit as much as possible while protecting core educational services.
 - Staff will monitor enrollment trends and refine cost estimates to ensure budget accuracy.
- **Ongoing Process Leading to 2026/27 Amended Budget**
 - Budget decisions are ongoing and depend on updated enrolment and funding data.
- **Community Engagement**
 - Community members play a vital role in stewardship and engagement throughout the annual budget process.

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Closing Summary



- **Deficit Reduction Achieved**
 - The operating deficit in the preliminary budget development was reduced from \$5.9 million to \$1.5 million through multiple strategic adjustments.
- **Coordinated Financial Actions**
 - Achieving budget stability requires coordinated actions across revenue, expenditure, and timing decisions.
- **Ongoing Monitoring and Refinement**
 - Continued monitoring, refinements, and contingency use are planned to address the remaining deficit as we move into finalizing enrollment in September and amended budget preparation later in 2026/27.
- **Prudent Financial Stewardship**
 - The near-balanced position exemplifies prudent financial management in a constrained environment.

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Thank you

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RECAP: Budget 2025/2026



Significant process last year in anticipation of tighter budgets included a significant review of educational services situated outside of a school

- DP curriculum
- DVP arts education
- DVP inclusive education
- A reduction in each department at the ESC
- Reductions in staffing at Cheakamus
- Reassigned the SEL team
- Enhancing the course selection process
- Utilized special purpose grants

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Student Enrolment



Student FTE Timeline

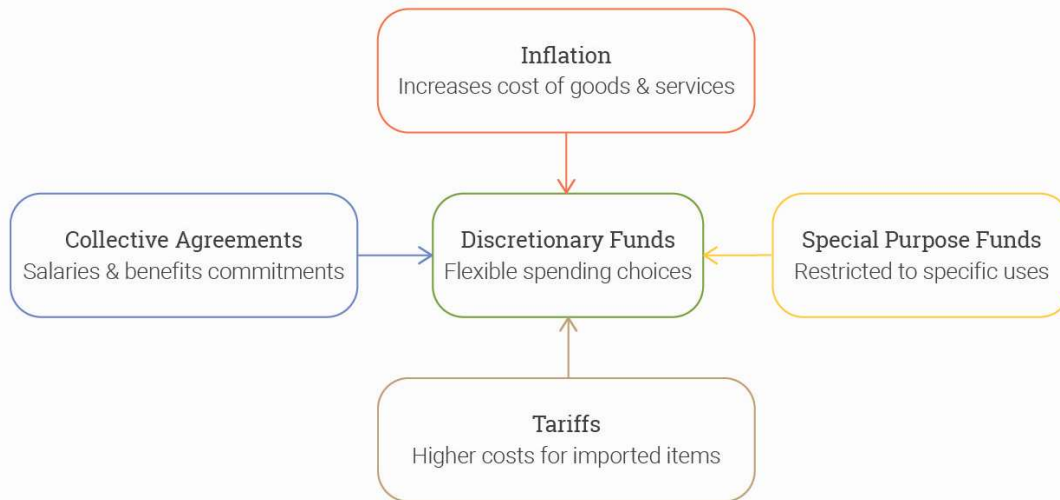
Student FTE Timeline

- Sep 2024 → 16,481
- Feb 2025 → 16,782
- Sep 2025 → 16,490
- Feb 2026 → 16,482
- Sep 2026 → 16,240

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CURRENT CONTEXT: Escalating Cost Influences



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2026-2027



- Conservative enrolment projections
- Generation of additional revenue
- Continued attention to: Class composition, Course selection
- Strategic use of special purpose funds
- Operational efficiencies: Leasing strategies, BYOD Initiatives
- Improvement in Attendance Management
- Deferral of one-time costs pending enrolment clarity
- Improved year-end forecast

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CURRENT CONTEXT: COST PRESSURES IN BC SCHOOL DISTRICTS*



- **Unfunded Inflationary Costs:** Funding rate adjustments do not cover all inflationary pressures, including rising costs for employee benefits, technology, facility maintenance, equipment, and services and supplies.
- **Budget Rigidity:** School districts have limited flexibility in their budgets to absorb unfunded inflationary costs without making budget reductions that negatively impact programs.
- **Enrolment Trends:** Historically, enrolment growth has helped offset inflationary pressures, but provincial enrolment is stabilizing and expected to decline, reducing this buffer.
- **Targeted Funding Limitations:** While targeted funding has grown significantly in recent years, it cannot be used to address core program cost pressures.

*from BCASBO Report, *RESPONSIVENESS OF PROVINCIAL FUNDING TO COST PRESSURES IN BC SCHOOL DISTRICTS* (February 2026)

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RECAP: Key Planning Dates



Date	Activity
February 3, 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Standing Committee Meeting inclusive of staff presentation and discussion of issues and opportunities related to the development of the 2026/27 Preliminary Budget.
February 3 – 23, 2026	Input on budget development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email comments, written submissions or survey
March 3, 2026	Public Standing Committee Meeting inclusive of highlights from input received through the budget consultation process and education partner presentations of top three priorities.
April 14, 2026	Public Board Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff presentation on recommended priorities and adjustments based on input
May 19, 2026	Public Board Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Bylaw for approval

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RECAP: Internal Process



	Internal Steps
October – November 2025	Fall individual budget holder meetings (align with Action Plan/Budget Priorities).
December 2025	Extended Executive and Directors – Focus on and ask for director feedback on their core beliefs.
February 10, 2026	Review estimated enrolment projections and overall budget process with the Executive Team.
February 17, 2026	Using enrolment estimates, roll forward the base budget, factoring in projected reductions in teaching staff and proportional adjustments to educational assistants; provide an initial estimate of the gap between projected operating costs and anticipated reduced Ministry funding (operating grant).
February 24 – March 3, 2026	Begin departmental budget presentations, compile survey feedback, and discussions on outstanding 2025-2026 operational savings.
March 3, 2026	Second Board Standing Committee on Budget.
March 10, 2026	Develop an estimated alignment between departmental operating budgets, stated priorities, and projected Ministry funding.
March 13, 2026	Deadline for the Special Needs School Committee (SNSC) recommendation to the Superintendent; Priority Placement Registration and Transfer Request window closed; target date for staffing allocations to school to be shared with Finance. discuss scenario planning what-ifs (i.e. loss of Cousteau rental, Cloverly operating costs, etc.)
March 31, 2026	Make required adjustments to support development of the preliminary budget.
April 7, 2026	Draft budget directors for Executive and Board leadership review.

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