

# Office of the Secretary-Treasurer

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*Katrina Stride – Secretary-Treasurer*

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**TO:** The Board of Education  
**FROM:** Katrina Stride, Secretary-Treasurer  
**DATE:** January 27, 2025  
**RE:** **Initial 2025-2026 Budget Feedback Survey Results**

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## Background

On Tuesday, November 26, 2024, the Initial 2025-2026 Budget Feedback Survey was launched on the District website and social media sites (Facebook, Instagram and X).

On Thursday, November 28, 2024, email invitations were sent to the following recipients:

- Four Houses: Esquimalt Nation, Songhees Nation, Métis Nation of Greater Victoria, and Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory (UPHIA)
- Education Partners; CUPE 382, CUPE 947, GVTA, and VCPAC
- Victoria Principals and Vice Principals' Association
- Exempt Staff
- School Administrators to share with school community (staff, parents, students)

The survey was open to anyone who wanted to participate until 4pm on Friday, December 13, 2024. There were 393 responses received.

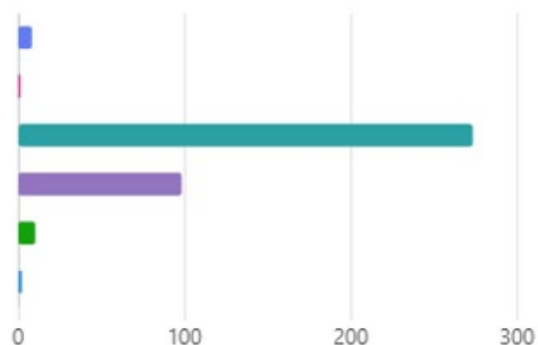
## Survey Results

- 1. Which option below best describes your connection to the Greater Victoria School District?**
  - a. Community Member
  - b. Representative of one of the Four Houses: Esquimalt Nation, Songhees Nation, Métis Nation of Greater Victoria, or Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory
  - c. Parent/Guardian/Caregiver
  - d. Staff Member
  - e. Student
  - f. Other

*The Greater Victoria School District wishes to recognize and acknowledge the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, on whose traditional territories, we live, we learn, and we do our work.*

**Responses:**

● Community Member	8
● Representative of one of the Four Houses: Esquimalt Nation, Songhees Nation, Méti...	1
● Parent/Guardian/Caregiver	273
● Staff Member	98
● Student	10
● Other	2



Other responses include the following:

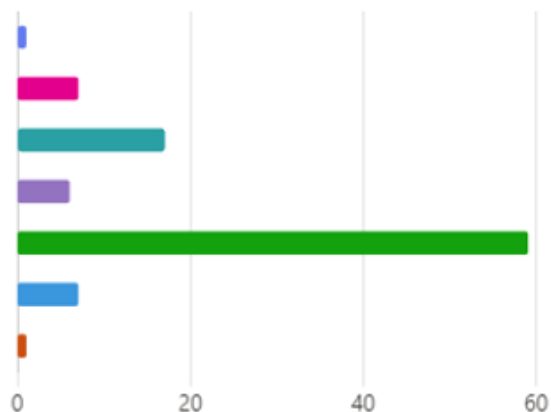
- Parent and staff member
- Grandparent

**2. For those respondents who selected Staff Member: To which Employee Group do you belong?**

- Contract Employee
- CUPE 382
- CUPE 947
- Exempt
- Greater Victoria Teachers' Association
- Victoria Principals' and Vice Principals' Association
- Other

**Responses:**

● Contract Employee	1
● CUPE 382	7
● CUPE 947	17
● Exempt	6
● Greater Victoria Teachers' Association	59
● Victoria Principals' and Vice Principals Association	7
● Other	1



Other responses include the following:

- CUPE 382 and CUPE 947

3. What input do you have regarding the focus areas of the Enhancing Student Learning Report, which include Literacy, Numeracy, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Career Development, and Early Years? More information on the Greater Victoria School District's Enhancing Student Learning Report, which includes the Strategic Plan and Multi-Year Financial Plan, is available on our website here: [https://www.sd61.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/91/2024/10/FINAL\\_GVSD61\\_ESLR\\_SEPT23\\_2024.pdf](https://www.sd61.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/91/2024/10/FINAL_GVSD61_ESLR_SEPT23_2024.pdf)

### **Main Themes Summarized from Written Responses:**

#### **Literacy and Numeracy**

- Focused education and targeted supports for reading, writing, and math
- Speech and language development to address speech sound disorders and language delays
- Use more clear and objective early screening tools and evaluation reporting mechanisms to determine achievement levels

#### **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

- Increased mental health resources is needed, particularly counselling
- Many mentions of “social health” and “emotional support/intelligence” and “psychosocial education” to help with concerns such as anxiety and depression
- Advocacy for balancing physical activity and face-to-face learning
- Supporting student-led mental health initiatives
- Teaching how to access healthcare
- Concerns about social media and screen time
- Importance of music, sports, art, drama to supporting mental health
- Importance of meal programs and food security

#### **Career Development**

- Support for introducing experiential career options/development in earlier years
- Incorporating life skills into lessons, such as budgeting/taxes, team building, emotional intelligence, critical thinking, planning/organizing, problem solving, healthy living, etc.
- Education of available opportunities (trades training, volunteer, post-secondary options etc.)

#### **Early Years**

- More support for StrongStart, Kindergarten readiness events, and opportunities for families to connect before children enter the school system
- More staffing/recruiting for Early Childhood Educators

#### **Other**

- Concern for classroom and school safety
- Request for more support for behaviour management
- Intervention programs for children needing support
- More qualified staff, particularly Educational Assistants (EAs)
- More professional development for teachers focused on literacy and numeracy, diverse needs training, and French Immersion.
- Concern for class sizes being too large

#### 4. Which areas of the budget do you believe need more investment?

##### **Main Themes Summarized and Alphabetized from Written Responses:**

##### **Extracurricular and Exploratory**

- Extracurriculars like music, arts, and drama that improve overall student engagement and support mental health and wellbeing
- Investment in physical education and sports (particularly for equipment upgrades and access)

##### **Facilities and Maintenance**

- Better maintenance and upgrades to school infrastructure, including the repair and maintenance of buildings, green spaces, and playgrounds
- Upgrades (particularly for older schools) to improve accessibility

##### **Human Resources**

- Hiring and retaining more staff, specifically classroom teachers, early childhood educators, educational assistants, and support staff to assist students with diverse needs
- Hiring more counsellors per school to be more available to students, helping support overall student mental health and wellbeing
- Hiring more custodians for longer hours during the school day
- Hiring more facilities workers to support with building repair and maintenance

##### **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

- More mental health resources, such as counselling services, wellness programs, and emotional support for students

##### **Safety and Security**

- Concern for classroom and school safety
- Student behavioural support

##### **Teachers and Classrooms**

- Larger classroom budgets for teachers so they don't have to use their own funds
- Smaller class sizes and additional teacher support to improve learning environments and help teachers manage diverse student needs more effectively
- Investment in professional development for teachers, particularly in areas like Indigenous Education, literacy, numeracy, inclusive education, and specialized teaching methods

##### **Technology**

- More investment and access to technology (Chromebooks) to support modern learning

**5. Please provide any additional comments you would like to share as part of the initial feedback for the 2025-2026 Budget Development Process.**

**Main Themes Summarized and Alphabetized from Written Responses:**

**Funding Allocation and Transparency**

- More transparent budget process
- Funding better allocated to support direct classroom needs rather than administrative overhead
- Funding core academic programs, such as literacy, numeracy, and science first, then balancing with extracurricular offerings that support mental health such as art, music, drama, and sports
- Advocacy for increased provincial funding to meet the growing demands in schools
- Equitable allocation of resources
- Involving parents and the wider community in the budget process

**Mental Health and Wellbeing**

- More mental health resources, counselling, and specialized support staff, such as EAs and Learning Support Teachers (LSTs), to address growing challenges in student wellbeing, particularly concerning behavioural and emotional issues

**Safety and Security**

- Concern for classroom and school safety
- Student behavioural support

**Teachers and Classrooms**

- Advocacy for reallocating funds from administrative positions to directly support students, such as hiring more EAs, counsellors, and inclusive education staff
- Concerns with overcrowding and a call for smaller class sizes
- Measures to address teacher burnout
- Better support for students with diverse needs, including more resources and trained staff
- Reinstitution of behaviour support programs and support for students with IEPs
- Increase professional development for teachers, particularly around mental health issues and the use of technology in the classroom