



August 29, 2024

Dear Parents / Guardians,

Welcome back! I hope the amazing summer weather provided you with great opportunities to spend time with family and friends and you looking forward to the new school year. We are excited to welcome families back in September.

While many staff and students have been enjoying a wonderful summer break, our facilities staff members have been busy preparing our schools and facilities and looking after various summer projects for the new school year. Given the many capital and summer projects, this is no easy feat, and we thank our Facilities Staff sincerely for their dedication, commitment, and service to our families.

AD Rundle Middle School Expansion News:

I have exciting news about the AD Rundle Middle School (ADR) expansion to share. On Tuesday, August 20th, Honourable Dan Coulter, Minister of State for Infrastructure and Transit, announced at AD Rundle Middle School that the Province will provide \$18 million in funding for constructing twelve new classrooms using prefabricated construction. This expansion will add 300 more seats at AD Rundle Middle School, increasing the student capacity to 750 from the current 450. The new addition will be built to LEED Gold standards and is expected to be completed by early 2026.

Since 2018, the Ministry of Education and Child Care has invested over 200 million dollars in creating additional classroom spaces in the Chilliwack School District.

Strategic Plan Refresh and Boundary Review Process:

Two major initiatives are planned for the upcoming school year. The first is the refresh of the Board's Strategic Plan, and the second is a boundary consultation process that will also include creating a new boundary for the new East Side Elementary School scheduled to open in September 2026.

The Chilliwack Board of Education's Strategic Plan will expire at the end of the 2024-25 school year, and the work that staff across the District have championed to support the strategic plan goals over the last three years is celebrated on the District website. District staff will present a consultation plan to be reviewed and approved by the Board of Education at its September board meeting to garner feedback from students, parents/guardians, staff, First Nations, Rights Holders, and partners. The consultation process is scheduled from November 2024 to March/April 2025, with the revised strategic plan presented to the Board of Education for approval at its June 2025 meeting.

The District Boundary review consultation process will be presented to the Board of Education for review and approval at its October meeting. The consultation process is scheduled for the new calendar year, and staff will present final recommendations to the Board of Education towards the latter part of the 2024-25 school year.

Cell Phone and Digital Device Use in Schools:

As mentioned in my letter at the end of the school year, the Provincial Standards for Codes of Conduct Order was amended, effective July 1, 2024. [Administrative Procedure 318—Cell Phone and Digital Device Use](#) has been updated on the District website. This procedure will be referenced in our Schools' Code of Conduct, effective at the start of the new school year. Please take some time to review Administrative Procedures with your student(s) so we can collectively uphold our commitments in alignment with the Ministerial Order to minimize distractions from digital device use during the instructional day.

Bill 22 – 2024: Safe Access to Schools Act:

On May 16, 2024, the Safe Access to Schools Act was passed, giving government the ability to establish access zones around K-12 schools through regulation. Access zones were previously established around K-12 public and independent schools through a regulation which was ordered May 31, 2024, and repealed at the end of the school year (June 30, 2024). On August 27th, 2024, [Access Zones around K-12 public and independent schools were re-established](#) through the Safe Access to Schools Regulation to protect students, staff and families from disruptive and harmful protest activities at schools. These zones will be in effect on school days from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and during extracurricular school activities at all of B.C.'s K-12 public and independent schools, with limited exceptions.

Communication Home to School:

Parent/Guardian home-to-school communication is pivotal to supporting your students' success. All schools have a communication brochure on their school websites. The brochure communicates the process of resolving any concerns parents/guardians may have regarding their child's program or other concerns that may arise during the school year. When we work together as partners, we can collectively create a safe, inclusive learning environment where your student(s) can thrive.

We look forward to welcoming students back to school on September 3, and we hope you have a great school year. Please take care and enjoy the long weekend.

Sincerely,

Rohan Arul-pragasam
Superintendent of Schools