

SCHOOL'S OUT

Mark Zuckerberg's Wife Shuts Down School for the Disadvantaged

Her foundation is pivoting to AI instead.



By **Victor Tangermann** / Published **Aug 3, 2026 1:23 PM EDT** / [Add Futurism](#) ⓘ



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A school for low-income students cofounded by Mark Zuckerberg's wife, Priscilla Chan, has officially shut its doors.

The tuition-free school in the heart of Silicon Valley, simply called The Primary School, was forced to close after Chan's philanthropy fund, the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, announced last year it was no longer going to fund it at the end of the 2025-2026 school year.

As the *Wall Street Journal* reports, the unfortunate development highlights how some of the most influential minds in the tech industry are shifting their priorities from supporting the tackling of

social issues and — as the story goes — toward scientific research instead.

Still, it's difficult to fathom considering Zuckerberg and his wife's obscene levels of wealth. Zuckerberg's net worth alone is just shy of \$200 billion, making him the sixth richest person in the world, according to *Bloomberg's* Billionaire Index. The Chan Zuckerberg Initiative had funneled more than \$125 million into The Primary School over a decade — barely a footnote in the power couple's balance sheet.

The families of those enrolled in the school were devastated by the news.

"It was a godsend school," the mother of a girl who won a lottery spot in the school's first class told the *WSJ*, describing the closure as "crushing."

The local Ravenswood City Elementary School District is now preparing to put up portable trailers to deal with the influx of over 500 children looking to stay in school ahead of the start of the next academic year, according to the newspaper.

As far as billionaire tech CEO-funded philanthropic efforts go, The Primary School sounded like a well-meaning attempt to help children escape the poverty trap and overcome associated traumas.

Staff sought out children with learning disabilities and behavioral issues. The majority of students didn't speak English at home.

But as the *WSJ* reports, running the school proved extremely difficult. The privately-funded institution struggled to find the right curriculum and policies, leading to frequent principal turnover.

Donors also balked at funding the school.

"Why would you give money to an entity being funded by one of the wealthiest people in the world?" the school's former board president Jean-Claude Brizard told the newspaper.

As of November, the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative has shut down support for almost everything but science, as *Science* reported last year, while aligning itself with the Trump administration's politics,

including the gutting of its diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility team.

Given Zuckerberg's Meta recent doubling down by committing over \$130 billion to AI spending, that philanthropic pivot to scientific research shouldn't come as much of a surprise. The couple has pledged the majority of their initiative's \$200 billion fund on biomedical research — and AI, of course.

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