

EIPS Frequently Asked Questions

JUNIOR HIGH ATTENDANCE AREA | LAKELAND VILLAGE,
SUMMERWOOD AND SUMMERWOOD NORTH

LAST UPDATED: October 2022



FAQS: JUNIOR HIGH ATTENDANCE AREA

INTRODUCTION

Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) is exploring a possible change to the junior high attendance boundaries in Sherwood Park. Specifically, it's considering moving the junior high feeder school for students living within Lakeland Village, Summerwood and Summerwood North to Clover Bar Junior High for grades 7 to 9. Currently, students are designated to Sherwood Heights Junior High. Changing the boundaries would help maintain school communities and program continuity.

In June, EIPS contracted Western Management Consultants (WMC) to conduct public consultations, including a meeting and online survey with the school communities. The meeting took the form of an in-person, drop-in session. Attendees discussed the possible boundary change, asked questions and provided feedback. WMC also conducted an online survey to collect additional input. WMC then analyzed all the data collected and compiled a [What We Heard Report](#).

The following are the frequently asked questions (FAQ) from the engagement efforts in June.

General

Q: Why is EIPS exploring a possible change to the junior high attendance boundaries?

A: As part of the Division's annual reporting requirements to Alberta Education, the Division reviews programs, enrolment transitions and boundaries annually. When areas of concern are identified, the Division works to determine how best to resolve the issue. Changing the feeder school for students living within Lakeland Village, Summerwood and Summerwood North to Clover Bar Junior High offers program continuity and ensures more school communities are maintained when students move on to junior high.

Q: What does "grandfathering" mean?

A: Grandfathering is a term used when current students attending a school are allowed to continue attending that same school after an attendance boundary change. Grandfathering decisions are made by the EIPS Board of Trustees, and not guaranteed. When a student is grandfathered, the school then becomes a non-designated school. As such, if the student requires Division transportation services, they register with Student Transportation as an ineligible student—transportation fees apply.

Q: What is the sibling clause?

A: The sibling clause is outlined in [AP 305: School Attendance Areas and Requests to Attend Non-designated Schools](#) (see, "Section 13"). It applies when siblings of students currently attending a non-designated school, including a school with a closed boundary. Those siblings are permitted to register at the same school if the new sibling attends the school at the same time as the currently registered sibling.

Registration at a non-designated school—including students registering under the sibling clause—takes place during the returning student registration process in February. Typically, the sibling clause applies even after an attendance boundary change, but not guaranteed. If the sibling clause isn't applicable, it's outlined in the decision made by the Board.

Attendance Area

Q: If the junior high attendance boundaries change, can affected junior high students, currently attending Sherwood Heights Junior High, be grandfathered there?

A: At this point, it's too premature to answer this question. Typically, the Board makes decisions about grandfathering when it reviews the final recommendation from administration, which hasn't happened yet. If there is a change in the boundaries, EIPS will contact all families to inform them about the details, including information about grandfathering, timelines, registration process and student transportation implications.

Q: My older child attends Sherwood Heights Junior High. If the junior high boundaries change to Clover Bar Junior High, can my younger child also attend Sherwood Heights?

A: Yes, if the older child currently attends the school and will attend the school at the same time as the younger child. In this scenario, the sibling clause applies—simply register to attend the school during the returning student registration process in February. The only way this wouldn't apply is if the Board decides to limit the application of the sibling clause.

Q: Does EIPS use census data to establish school attendance areas?

A: EIPS does review federal or municipal census data. But, it doesn't rely on it to determine attendance areas or develop enrolment projections. Instead, EIPS uses Baragar Systems, a planning software used by school divisions nationwide. Using Baragar software, EIPS can accurately develop enrolment projections and comprehensively analyze all demographic data within a school boundary—such as Provincial Birth Registry, Canada Child Benefit database, EIPS' student information system. Annually, EIPS reviews each school's enrolment projections for long-term planning.

Q: How are the current school boundaries enforced?

A: EIPS uses boundaries strategically to ensure high-quality learning environments in all its schools. The Division has established attendance areas and [boundary maps](#) for each of its schools. These determine a child's designated school. Each school also has a set optimal enrolment limit, which is a pre-determined maximum number of students a school can register before it closes its boundaries—reviewed annually by analyzing enrolment. For the 2023-24 school year, Clover Bar Junior High's optimal enrolment limit is 605 students.

Q: What is the registration process for affected families? Can families apply to other schools?

A: Families affected by any changes complete the 2023-24 Returning Student Registration Form at the same time as all EIPS students, in February 2023. Families can request registration at a different school—subject to available space. An ineligible [student transportation fee](#) applies for students accessing Student Transportation services who attend a non-designated school.

Programming

Q: What kind of programming does Clover Bar Junior High offer?

A: Clover Bar Junior High offers a variety of required and optional courses, excellent sports and fine arts programs, many extracurricular opportunities, and Division System Programs such as Focus, PLACE and Sport for Life. Courses include:

- Core courses: English, mathematics, social studies, science, physical education, health
- System programs: FOCUS, PLACE, Sport for Life
- Career and Technology Studies: food studies, fashions, construction, computer science, robotics, cosmetology, fitness, STEM, outdoor education, enterprise and innovation
- Options: arts, guitar, learning strategies

Q: How do the proposed attendance area changes affect students enrolled in a Focus, Impact, PLACE or SEAS system program?

A: The proposed changes apply to students in the regular program only. As such, students enrolled in an Impact, PLACE or SEAS program are unaffected. Students in the Impact program go to Sherwood Heights Junior High. Students in the SEAS program go to F.R. Haythorne Junior High. Meanwhile, students in the Focus and PLACE program go to Clover Bar Junior High. That said, the Division recently developed an EIPS Three-Year Engagement Strategy. The strategy includes public consultations about the Division's System Program. For more information visit eips.ca. The public meetings will start in Fall 2022.

Q: Does EIPS also plan to change the senior high attendance boundaries?

A: Recently, the Division developed an EIPS Three-Year Engagement Strategy. The strategy includes public consultations about the Division's senior high attendance boundaries—in both urban and rural Strathcona County. For more information visit eips.ca. The consultation will start in late 2023.

Facilities

Q: Is EIPS concerned about possible overcrowding at Clover Bar Junior High?

A: No. The proposed boundary change only increases the designated population by approximately 35 students per grade. Clover Bar can comfortably accommodate that many additional students.

Q: If EIPS moved the French Immersion program to a different junior high, would that free up room at Sherwood Heights Junior High?

A: EIPS proposed the attendance change to maintain the school communities and offer program continuity. It's not about freeing space at Sherwood Heights Junior High. That said, the Division recently developed an EIPS Three-Year Engagement Strategy. The strategy includes public consultations about the Division's junior high and senior high French immersion program—in urban and rural Strathcona County. For more information visit eips.ca. The first meeting takes place at Heritage Hills Elementary on October 26.

Q: Can EIPS build a new junior high school in northeast Sherwood Park?

A: No. Currently, there is no viable junior high school site in northeast Sherwood Park. Even if there was a suitable school site, obtaining approval and funding from the province takes years. Instead, EIPS is developing strategies to maximize the use of its existing schools within Sherwood Park.

Busing

Q: How will busing work for students requiring transportation services?

A: EIPS provides an enhanced transportation service for both eligible and ineligible riders. So, anyone who wants to access Student Transportation can do so. Registration takes place during the returning student registration process in February. Families simply indicate on the online form busing is required for their child. Before the end of the school year, the family will receive their child's busing information, including any associated fees.

Q: How are families charged for busing?

A: EIPS offers enhanced transportation services for students, using the below fee structure.

- *Eligible Fee:* Riders who attend their designated school and live more than 2.39 kilometres from that school. For 2022-23, the eligible fee is \$121 per year.
- *Ineligible Fee:* Students who attend a non-designated school or live less than 2.4 kilometres from their designated school. For 2022-23, the ineligible fee is \$346 per year.

Next Steps

Q: When will EIPS make a final decision about the junior high attendance boundaries?

A: A final decision about the junior high attendance boundary is expected before the end of November. Before making a decision, the Board will review all the information and feedback gathered throughout the public consultations. EIPS is committed to keeping the community informed about the process and will provide additional information as it becomes available.

Q: If my child is redesignated to Clover Bar Junior High, can I request my child attend another junior high other than Clover Bar Junior High?

A: Yes. If you want to register your child at another junior high, you can do so during the returning student registration process in February 2023—acceptance is based on available space. Keep in mind, if you decide to attend a non-designated school, applicable transportation fees apply.

Q: How will EIPS support the transition for students?

A: At this point, it's premature to speak to a transition plan. A decision hasn't been—and won't be made until the Board reviews the community input for all public engagement efforts. That said, anytime changes are made to attendance boundaries, EIPS puts a transition plan in place. The plan involves consultations with students, school council groups, school administration, staff and EIPS senior administration. The goal: To ensure a smooth transition to the new school.