



INFORMATION REPORT

DATE: Dec. 15, 2022

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Mark Liguori, Superintendent

SUBJECT: Three-Year Engagement Strategy – Project 3: EIPS Logos Christian Program Review

ORIGINATOR: Brent Dragon, Planner, Facility Services

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REFERENCE: Administrative Procedure 305: School attendance areas and requests to attend non-designated schools
Administrative Procedure 540: Planning for school facilities

EIPS PRIORITY: Enhance high-quality learning and working environments
Enhance public education through effective engagement

EIPS GOAL: Quality infrastructure for all
Parent and caregiver engagement

EIPS OUTCOME: Learning and working environments are supported by effective planning, management and investment in Division infrastructure
Student learning is supported and enhanced by providing meaningful opportunities for parents and caregivers to be involved in their child’s education

ISSUE:

That the Board of Trustees receives for information an update on the Three-Year Engagement Plan’s Project 3: EIPS Logos Christian Program Review—specifically, the What We Heard Reports, frequently asked questions and an engagement summary from all public consultation efforts.

BACKGROUND:

In May 2022, Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) developed a Three-Year Engagement Strategy. Essentially, it’s a public engagement plan that identifies projects where the Division can improve operations to best serve students.

Project 1: Three-Year Strathcona County Engagement

Project 2: Enrolment Pressures at In Fort Saskatchewan

Project 3: EIPS Logos Christian Program Review

Project 4: Vegreville Value Scoping Session

The strategy also details plans and timelines for the various engagement efforts. Collectively, the Three-Year Engagement Strategy ensures EIPS continues providing high-quality education to all students.



For Project 3, the Division's exploring changes to the EIPS Logos Christian Program to ensure it continues providing a high-quality educational experience to students. Over the last few years, enrolment in Logos has declined significantly, making it challenging to offer fulsome Logos programming. Currently, the elementary program is offered at Brentwood Elementary and Westboro Elementary. The junior high Logos program is offered at Sherwood Heights Junior High. To determine the best possible solution for addressing the enrolment decline, EIPS consulted the Logos school community, using a two-phased engagement approach, between June and October of 2022.

Phase 1:

EIPS hosted two public engagement sessions and one online survey. The first meeting was co-ordinated internally and took place on June 13. At the meeting, EIPS provided background information, explained the challenges and facilitated a question-and-answer period about ways to address the issue. After that meeting, the Division contracted Y Station to continue the conversation, and the consultation. The second public meeting was held on June 27. Y Station again introduced the issues, discussed EIPS' concerns and facilitated breakout spaces to explore possible solutions. Following the meeting, Y Station surveyed Logos families to gather even more input from those who couldn't attend the meeting.

Goal: To present the issues to the community, collect feedback and explore possible solutions.

Response: 60 attendees at Public Meeting 1; 75 attendees at Public Meeting 2; and 89 survey responses.

Phase 2:

Y Station facilitated one public consultation and collected feedback submissions from the Logos school community. At the public meeting, EIPS reviewed what was heard during Phase 1 of the engagements, provided additional program information, discussed the path forward and shared plans to postpone a final decision about Logos programming until after the 2023-24 returning student registration. Following the meeting, Y Station encouraged families to submit any additional input.

Goal: To share with the Logos community what was heard during Phase 1 of the public engagement, gather feedback, and inform the Logos community of the extended decision deadline.

Response: 46 attendees at Public Meeting 3; two email feedback submissions.

CURRENT SITUATION OR KEY POINT:

Initially, EIPS planned to bring forward a recommendation for Project 3: Logos Christian Program Review in November 2022. However, the feedback from Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the public engagement effort clearly indicated the Logos community wants more time before EIPS makes a decision. Both the Elk Island Logos Christian Society and Logos families wanted the extra time to promote the elementary program before the upcoming returning student registration process.

As a result, EIPS feels it's important to postpone making a recommendation to the Board about the Division's Logos programming until after the returning student registration process takes place in February 2023. The extra time allows the Board to see the actual registration numbers for Logos in 2023-24, and gives Logos the time they asked for to promote the program leading up to the returning student registration process.

So, instead of a recommendation, EIPS is providing an information report to the Board detailing all the feedback collected through both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the EIPS Logos Christian Program Review. As shared during Public Meeting 3, if, enrolment in the Logos elementary program increase significantly after the 2023-24 returning student registration process, EIPS will recommend the Board keep the elementary program unchanged at both Brentwood Elementary and Westboro Elementary. If enrolment stays relatively flat, EIPS will recommend the Board consolidate the elementary program at Brentwood Elementary, starting in the 2023-24 school year. For



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junior high, because it's tied to the elementary program, EIPS plans to recommend it remain in place as long as student numbers are sustainable. In the meantime, EIPS is working with the Elk Island Logos Society to develop and implement a detailed enrolment growth strategy to help ensure the program's long-term viability, including benchmarking and growth targets.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Public Consultations: Report Summary – Logos Christian Program Review
2. What We Heard Report: Logos Christian Program Phase 1
3. What We Heard Report: Logos Christian Program Phase 2
4. Frequently Asked Questions: Logos Christian Program

Public Consultations: Report Summary

PROJECT 3 | LOGOS CHRISTIAN PROGRAM REVIEW

LAST UPDATED: Dec. 1, 2022



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BACKGROUND

As part of the Division's reporting requirements to Alberta Education, Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) reviews programs, enrolment transitions and boundaries regularly. When areas of concern are identified, the Division works to determine how best to resolve the issue. In the case of the EIPS Logos Christian Program, it's experienced a significant decline in enrolment over the last 10 years. The decline makes it difficult to offer fulsome Logos programming to students. Before making any decision about how best to address the enrolment decline, EIPS collected feedback from the Logos school community to determine the best possible solution.

Phase 1 of the engagement effort started in June 2022. The Division held two public consultations with the Logos community to discuss the issue and potential solutions. Y Station, the contracted public consultation company, also shared an online survey to collect even more input and ensure those who couldn't attend the sessions were able to provide feedback.

Using the feedback collected, EIPS developed a frequently-asked-questions document, and Y Station created a What We Heard Report. Both documents were sent to the Logos community to launch Phase 2 of the public engagement, which the community read before the third public consultation on Oct. 6, 2022. At that meeting, Y Station presented the What We Heard Report, additional program information and the proposed path forward. Participants who couldn't attend were encouraged to submit feedback by emailing Y Station—collected until Oct. 17, 2022.

ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

PHASE NO. 1: SPRING 2022

OPEN HOUSE: JUNE 13, 2022; 7 P.M. TO 8 P.M.

In-person attendance: 60

Following the Logo Society annual general meeting, EIPS hosted a town-hall-style conversation with participants at Sherwood Heights Junior High. Resources were provided to participants outlining current enrolment patterns and the utilization status of Brentwood Elementary, Westboro Elementary and Sherwood Heights Junior High. Superintendent Mark Liguori also provided a brief overview of the challenges low enrolment presents to the Division and facilitated a question-and-answer period. The Division then provided the themes and feedback collected during this session to Y Station for inclusion in the What We Heard Report for Phase 1 of the public engagement.

OPEN HOUSE: JUNE 27, 2022; 6:30 P.M. TO 8:30 P.M.

In-person attendance: 75

To enhance stakeholder feedback, EIPS contracted Y Station to conduct an initial presentation to all participants. The conversation started and finished at the Salisbury Composite High theatre. Following the initial presentation, participants were separated into breakout groups of about 20 people. In total, three breakout spaces were used. Each room had an experienced facilitator, a notetaker and a member of EIPS' executive leadership team. Several key themes emerged:

- participants felt because they weren't aware of the problem, time was needed to promote the Logos and increase enrolments;
- the Logos program reflects the values of the participants and that families appreciate the program being within the community school; and
- concerns any program changes will separate students from peers and siblings.

SURVEY: JUNE 27, 2022 TO JULY 12, 2022

Responses: 89

Y Station developed a survey that mirrored the in-person session on June 27. The responses to the survey were similar to the themes of the open house. Two major themes emerged:

- the need to increase public awareness about the Logos program; and
- more time is needed before the Board makes a decision about Logos programming.

Other survey highlights:

- 82 per cent of survey respondents indicated they were parents or caregivers.
- 76 per cent of survey respondents indicated their child(ren) is currently enrolled in the Logos program.
- 34 per cent of survey respondents indicated their child will stay at their current school if the Logos elementary program consolidates at one school.

PHASE 2: FALL 2022

OPEN HOUSE: OCT. 6, 2022; 5:30 P.M. TO 7:30 P.M.

In-person attendance: 46

Y Station facilitated a conversation in the Salisbury Composite High theatre. At the session Y Station reviewed the What We Heard Report, provided additional program information and outlined the path forward. Y Station presented the path forward as developed by EIPS. Initially, EIPS had planned to make a decision about the elementary Logos program in November 2022. At the October public

meeting, participants were informed EIPS wants to delay a decision until after the returning student registration process—in February 2023.

After the returning student registration process, if enrolment increases significantly, program changes will take place. If enrolment stays relatively flat, EIPS will recommend the Board consolidate the elementary program at Brentwood Elementary, starting in 2023-24. For junior high, because it's tied to the elementary program, it will remain in place as long as student numbers remain sustainable—EIPS will continue to review the program location and its sustainability.

EIPS also shared plans to work with the Elk Island Logos Society to develop and implement a detailed enrolment growth strategy to help ensure the program's long-term viability, including benchmarking and growth targets. Approximately 59 per cent of attendees were in support of the approach EIPS had put forward.

EMAIL FEEDBACK OCT. 6, 2022 TO OCT. 17, 2022

Responses: 2

Y Station received two email feedback submissions. The comments are included within the What We Heard Report for Phase 2—they echo the comments collected at the open house.

What We Heard Logos Christian Program

Enrolment Concerns

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August 15, 2022
Produced for EIPS



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Executive Summary

The Logos Christian program has operated within Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) for more than 25 years. Currently, programming is offered at Brentwood Elementary, Westboro Elementary and Sherwood Heights Junior High. Over the past several years, enrolment has been declining at both the elementary and junior high levels. As a result, it's no longer possible to offer fulsome Logos programming at both elementary schools where it's currently offered. The situation also presents significant programming challenges at the junior high level.

On June 13, 2022, following the Logos Society Annual General Meeting, EIPS hosted a conversation with Superintendent Mark Liguori for Logos program stakeholders to discuss the issue and provide feedback about the next steps. Approximately 60 people attended. Attendees of this session were informed a recommendation will go forward to the Board of Trustees in the fall of 2022, and a final decision about how the program moves forward will be made in November 2022, in time for returning student registration in February 2023. Through the course of this discussion, EIPS noted that attendees wanted more opportunities to provide feedback and input.

As such, EIPS determined a second open house on June 27 and a survey would provide the Logos program stakeholders additional opportunities to share their concerns and suggestions. Both the second open house and survey were conducted by Y Station. As part of this engagement, there will be a fall session where Logos program stakeholders will be presented with the results of the first engagement and can gain insights on the direction or recommendation that will go forward to the Board in November. This report presents the results of both the June open house engagements and the corresponding survey.

The June 27 session began at 6:30 p.m. in the Salisbury Composite High theatre. Approximately 75 people attended resulting in three facilitated breakout sessions. The survey opened that evening, closed on July 12 and 89 people responded.

The key questions the engagement sought to answer were:

1. What are the reasons or values behind your decision to send your children to the Logos program?
2. What are your initial concerns? For your children? For your family? For the school? For the community?
3. What will be important for EIPS to think about as it explores different processes or options in relation to enrolment pressures on elementary students?
4. What do you think are potential solutions to this issue?
5. What might you do if the elementary sites are combined?

During the open houses several key themes emerged throughout all the conversations:

- The Logos program reflects attendees' values and they like being in their community in a public school, not separated out.
- Concerned that they were just learning of the issue when it seemed that EIPS is already considering a solution.
- Concerned that students will be made to move schools and be separated from peers and siblings.
- Covid-19 has played a role in creating this issue.
- More information is needed about the issue.
- More time is needed to advertise the program and increase enrolment.
- Changes are needed in the registration process to make the program more accessible.
- Some attendees did note that they would leave the division if an elementary site were closed.

While survey respondents had similar concerns, priorities and solutions, two core themes emerged throughout all the open-ended survey responses:

- Concerned that Logos program may be discontinued or cut due to enrolment challenges.
- Concerned that my child or children may have to change schools and be separated from their friends or siblings.

Three additional central themes were identified throughout the survey responses: the impact of Covid-19, costs and class sizes. Similar to the open house attendees, survey respondents noted they valued a Christian education and being part of the public system in the community.

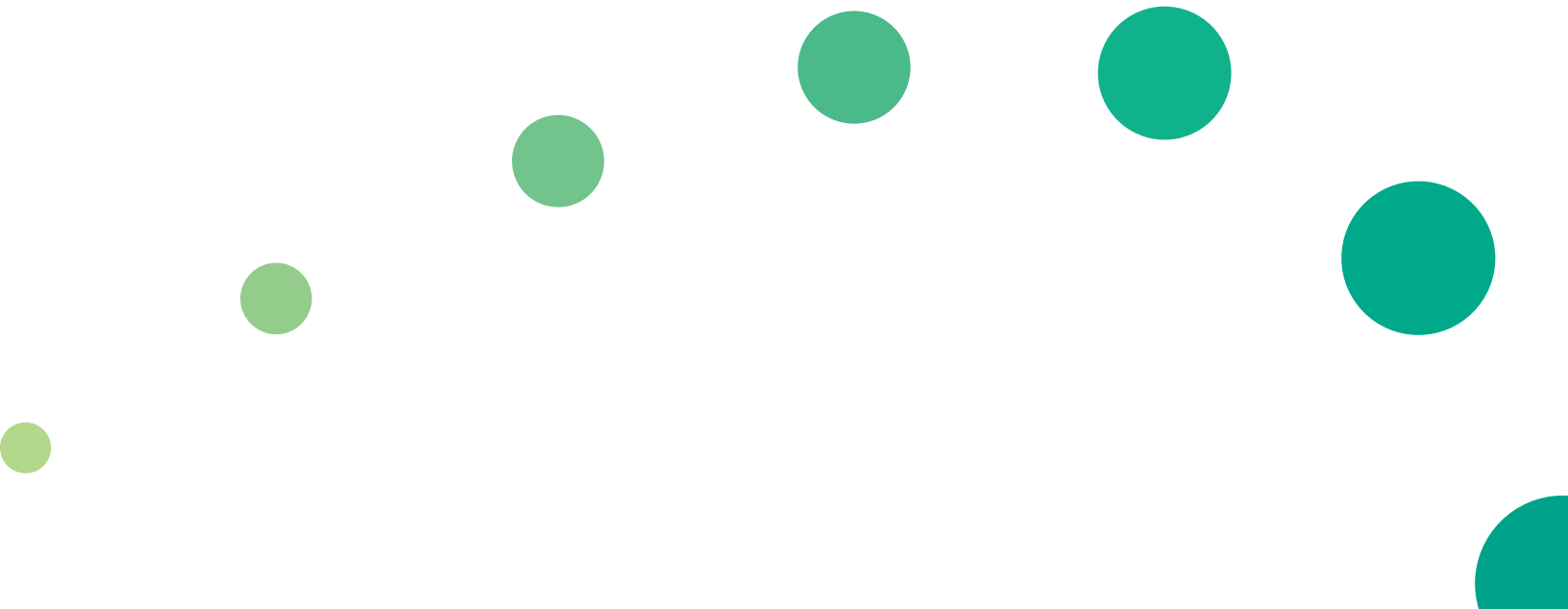
For each of the key questions, high count themes were identified that differed from the core and central themes:

- Concerns the program will be discontinued or cut.
- Concerns that children will be moved from their school and split from their friends or siblings.
- Parents or caregivers want EIPS to prioritize keeping the program, increasing enrolment and keeping students at their current schools.
- Parents or caregivers want quality education and what is best for students to be at the forefront for EIPS when making any decisions about the program.

Differing from the open house attendees, some survey respondents indicated support for consolidating the program at one site and several respondents indicated that religion should not be in public schools.

A pulse question asking 'what you would do if the program was consolidated to one site' was asked in the survey. Respondents were split between keeping their children at their current school, neutral or moving their children to the site with the Logos program.

Profile questions were also asked:

- 82 per cent were parents or caregivers (n=89).
 - 57 per cent had two children in their household (n=79).
 - 76 per cent had children currently registered in the Logos program (n=79).
 - 57 per cent had children at Westboro Elementary (n=60).
 - 71 per cent are planning to register their children in the Logos program for the 2023-24 school year (n=79).
 - 63 per cent indicated they were planning to register their children at Westboro Elementary (n=56).
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Methodology

The purpose of this engagement was to inform the Logos program stakeholders (parents, caregivers, teachers and staff, retired staff and program alumni) of the enrolment issue and to gather their feedback on a proposed solution. To achieve this purpose, two key public engagement methods were deployed to gather insights from Logos program stakeholders: facilitated open house conversations and an online survey. Both methods have a proven track record for providing diverse input opportunities and gathering nuanced feedback.

The success of these methods relies on a solid engagement communication plan. To ensure all Logos program stakeholders had an opportunity to participate in the engagement, electronic communication was used to inform school families about the open houses. The survey was announced in the final open house and was shared with the broader Logos program community via SchoolMessenger notice.

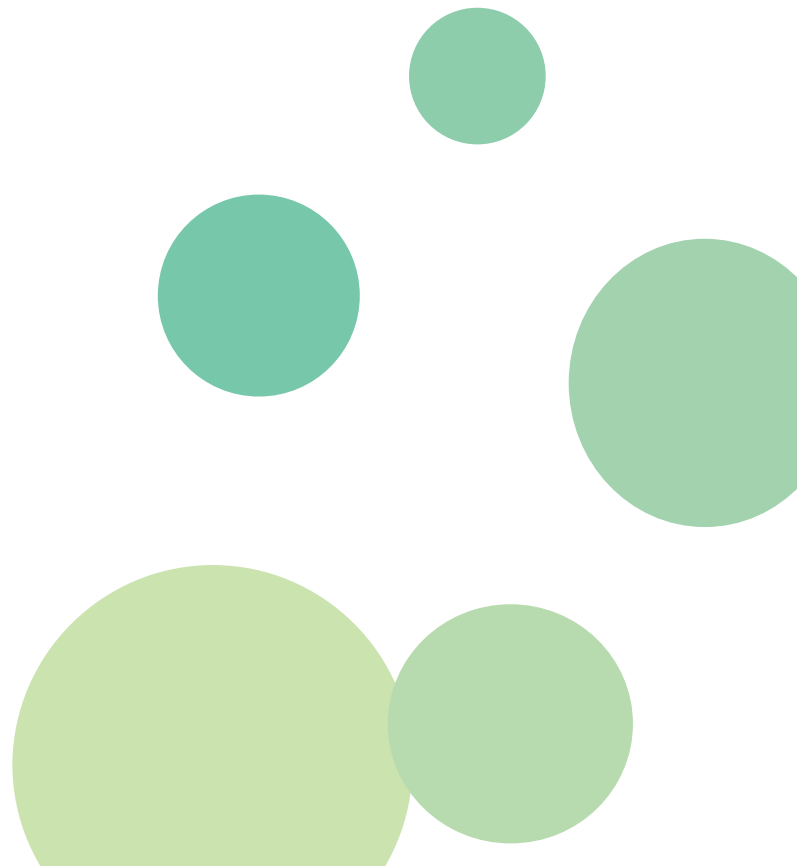
The June 27 session began at 6:30 p.m. in the Salisbury Composite High theatre. Approximately 75 people attended resulting in three facilitated breakout sessions. Refreshments were also provided.

During the open houses, an overview of the issue was provided by EIPS leadership, and the facilitated session sought to answer these questions:

1. What are the reasons or values behind your decision to enroll your child(ren) in the Logos program?
2. What are your initial thoughts or concerns regarding the enrolment challenges? For your child(ren)? For your family? For your school? For your community?
3. What should the EIPS prioritize when making the decision to address the enrolment challenges?
4. Do you have any potential ideas or solutions to address this challenge on behalf of EIPS?
5. If you could give EIPS one piece of advice with regards to enrolment challenges, what would that be?
6. Now we would like to get a quick pulse on what would be your response if the elementary Logos program was combined in one school site. Would you move your child(ren) to the school where the Logos program is still offered? Keep your child(ren) at their current school? Or do something else?
7. Any additional comments?

The survey preamble gave participants an overview of the issue that paralleled what was presented in the open house, then asked some closed answer profile questions, followed by the open-ended questions from the open house and questions about what respondents might do if the program was combined in one site. The survey opened on the evening of June 27, closed on July 12 and 89 people responded.

Two additional feedback mechanisms were available, a call-in phone line included on the survey and an open form for questions and comments on the EIPS webpage. Both mechanisms were used once. The call-in line was used to access survey completion support.



Open House Results

Over 100 people attended the two open houses. The June 27 session had slightly more people in attendance (75) than the June 13 session (estimate of 60). After the introduction and some initial attendee questions and comments were addressed, the main conversation on June 27 was facilitated in three breakout sessions. Similar themes across all sessions and groups emerged, except in two sessions concerns were raised about diversity and inclusion, and in one there was some clearer advocacy for not moving the Logos program to the Brentwood site but instead moving it to Westboro.

In all three sessions, the final question regarding what they would do now if the elementary program was combined was either not asked or only briefly touched upon; attendees felt they did not have enough information to answer the question or felt that it was premature to ask the question since decisions were not yet finalized about what was happening at the different program sites.

Two of the break-out sessions more loosely followed the guide, taking direction instead from the attendees' concerns and priorities, so not all questions were directly asked, but answers to all the questions were provided in how their responses covered the other questions.

Reasons and values for choosing the Logos program

We began the conversations by discussing the reasoning and values of attendees for selecting the Logos program, which grounded the remaining discussion in those initial values. Four central themes emerged during this part of the conversation:

- The program reflects their values, some mentioned 'our family values' or noted a shared Christian value system.
- Care for and value of the communities they are in was also raised.
- Many attendees noted having trust and a deep connection to the program (some attended it as youths) and to the staff.
- Several attendees liked that the Logos program is not a bubble separated out from the regular world but instead a Christian program in the community.

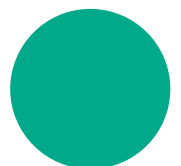
"We put them in Logos because we wanted them to not be in a "bubble", and instead learn to be in the world but not of it. To be a light in their community, while still receiving their school curriculum taught from a Christian worldview."

Other reasons mentioned by a smaller number of attendees included:

- Having an accessible and affordable Christian education.
- Their children are supported to be Christian, and it is a safe environment for them to express their Christianity.
- There is value in continuing the elementary program at both Brentwood and Westboro as the combination of both Logos and each school's unique culture are important.

A tension emerged regarding the value of inclusion, one attendee felt that the Logos program's inclusion should extend to children with diverse gender identities, while others felt the regular program was too inclusive and had concerns about their children being exposed to diverse gender identities.

"It is important to have our children attend their neighbourhood school with students and teachers who have a similar faith. To show them that faith happens outside of the church and Sunday morning. For our children to have the freedom to share and practice their faith through prayer, songs and discussion with their peers and teachers. This would be discouraged normally at a public school."



Concerns

Attendees expressed a range of concerns from how EIPS is handling the issue to the impacts of possible change on children, families and staff. By far the concern most consistently raised was about being caught unaware of a problem when EIPS is already considering a solution. Many attendees noted:

- That there has not been enough communication about the issue.
- Concerns with the timing of the communication coming from EIPS.
- Several noted feeling that EIPS is not supporting the Logos program, that a decision has already been made.
- It was even suggested that perhaps EIPS is helping to create the low enrolment problem.
- Some attendees did note that the current Logos program stakeholders have not done enough to support the program and increase enrolment.

“I was disappointed to hear that the Logos program had such low numbers and it wasn’t brought up when numbers first started to go down in the schools. I would love to see the Logos program given a chance to improve its numbers for a few years. Now that we know we have an issue.”

Several attendees noted it felt as though only one narrow solution has been proposed and it was further suggested that this solution of combining the elementary Logos program to one site would in fact actually create a barrier to increasing enrolment into the program. A few attendees raised concerns about the junior high program, and one wondered if the move to consolidate the elementary program in one location will save the junior high or cause more problems.

Concerns were expressed about the impact that this change will have on all the people connected to the program.

- Concerns for students ranged from the challenges surrounding transitions and the children’s need for continuity, especially given all the changes caused by Covid-19.
- The impact of and amount of work created by transitions on families.
- Questions were asked regarding concerns for staff of the Logos program: will all the staff be moved over, or will they lose some staff?

“Basing any decisions regarding the Logos program off of current enrolment numbers isn’t fair, as the Covid pandemic has played a role, the significance of which cannot yet be determined.”

“Concerned for staff morale as these issues do certainly weigh on them.”

Priorities, advice and solutions

Similar themes emerged across the discussion about priorities, advice and solutions. Resoundingly attendees want more information and time before any changes are made to be able to advertise the program and increase enrolment. It was stated that EIPS should account for the impact of COVID and give the program time to recover from the impacts of the pandemic. Additionally, EIPS should consider changing registration practices for the program, for example changing the registration deadlines or easing restrictions on switching into the program or having people register for the program, not the site.

“I would like EIPS to give the Logos Society, parents, and teachers AT LEAST one more year to try to recruit people for the program! The pandemic shut down the Logos Society’s ability to be in schools in person, to “recruit” in churches, and to do anything in a public way. We need more time to increase our membership!”

Additional priorities raised by attendees include:

- Small class sizes, some families would rather see split Logos classes continue at both schools than see the program consolidated at a single school resulting in larger class sizes.
- Mental health and wellness.
- Quality of education.

“The smaller class sizes were appealing (obviously I was unaware at the time that the smaller class sizes are actually a detriment to the program overall).”

Advice that went beyond what is noted above ranged from sharing specific information, to learning more about what parents want, to advice which may have been directed more at other community members than at the EIPS:

- Think of the program as a whole not different programs because of the different sites.
- Be more inclusive and accepting of change.
- Share information on real-time registration numbers.
- Need information about Strathcona Christian Academy (SCA) compared to the Logos program.
- Find out more about what parents want or are willing to accept especially when it comes to split grade or grade composition by site.
- Any changes to the junior high program should wait until the impacts of consolidation at the elementary level are known.

There were a number of solutions proposed that stretched beyond more time and information or changing registration processes:

- The division needs to help support the Logos program more with advertising and changing placement on the webpage.
- We should attract children from the regular program or just pull them into the Logos program.
- Close Brentwood, it's smaller and would impact fewer families.
- Have a phased approach to closing Westboro which would minimize the number of transitions and disruptions.
- For the upcoming year, only Kindergarten students could all be together at a single school, and then the division could assess the numbers again next year.
- If after a few years enrolment continues to decline, perhaps current K-6 students should be allowed to finish Logos at their current schools, and new Logos students would be directed to a single consolidated school.
- Is there interest and feasibility in having a K-9 site?
- Can charging fees for the program make a difference?
- Discount busing or make it known to push for more routes.
- Create a Logos school similar to the SCA.

"If you proceed with moving the LOGOS program to one school, please allow those already in the program to finish out their elementary career in the school they are at in the LOGOS program and move all new registrations to the school the program is getting moved to."

Interestingly, some attendees suggested they would leave the division if the Logos program changed site configuration and noted that this would cause even further declining enrolment.

"During Covid I looked into homeschooling and talked to other homeschooling parents. I would be willing to revisit that. I would also consider Elk Island Catholic Schools."

"A Christian education is number one for us. If this isn't available, we would look at homeschooling options."

Survey Results

Overall, the survey feedback reflects the comments and concerns noted in the open houses. The survey was open from June 27 to July 12. The survey included a brief description of the challenge facing the Logos program and then asked very similar questions to those asked during the June 27 open house session. Respondents who were not parent or caregivers were skipped over in questions that asked about the number of children in the household, registration questions and questions specific to parent or caregiver choice or concerns. In total, 89 people responded with the majority of respondents (82 per cent) indicating they were parents or caregivers.

While the questions were designed to gather nuanced details about respondents' reactions and solutions, repeated themes emerged across all the open-ended questions. The count number of mentions is noted in brackets and at times is higher than the number of respondents due to how their comments reflected a theme regardless of the topic of the question. These themes are both areas of high concern and are key priority areas. Two core themes emerged:

- Need to increase public awareness and advertising of Logos program (including the use of social media) (135)
- Should wait/give it more time before assessing the situation/addressing enrolment challenges (69)

“Provide additional time for the Logos community AND EIPS to strongly campaign and advertise the Logos program in order to increase enrolment. The biggest challenge right now is that the Logos program is not well-known outside of the Logos community and the schools in which it exists.”

“I feel like there is no advertising for this program and a complete lack of reaching out to families to increase enrolment. No one has heard of the Logos program outside of the families currently enrolled. The enrolment challenges were also not addressed to the families in Logos currently so there was no knowledge that it was a problem.”

“Increase advertising for the Logo’s program. Advertising in churches and with students who aren’t accepted into the Christian school in Sherwood Park. Increase fundraising to offset costs. Consider a small increase in fees to continue the Logos program, to potentially offset smaller class sizes. Look into potential government funding that celebrates faith or diversity.”

Three additional central themes emerged across all the questions:

- The Covid-19 pandemic has caused or contributed to program enrolment challenges (27)
- Costs/fees were mentioned in a variety of ways from the appreciation of having no program fees to fears of increased costs related to transportation, childcare or the implementation of fees to increase the viability of the program (25)
- Class size was mentioned by a smaller number of respondents throughout, with concerns about class sizes getting too large and the need to prioritize smaller class sizes (10)

“Again, I want more information. Why are numbers low? What does this say about EIPS marketing and advertising effectiveness for the program itself? The Logos program is an incredible program. My concern now is the fact that the program is in danger of being drastically reduced in a knee-jerk reaction to reduced enrolment post-pandemic and that sends a message to the community that specialized programs aren’t valued by EIPS.”

“Potential cost of busing if the LOGO’s program were to move to Brentwood. Stress and concern of our children about potential changes. Childcare issues that will arise if the program will move.”

“Having classroom sizes that are far too large due to the Logos program not being available anymore.”

“Smaller class size and the group relationship that builds between the kids.”

In addition to the core and central themes identified across the open-ended responses, several high-count themes emerged across the sub-sections of values, concerns, and priorities, solutions and advice. Between 61 per cent and 90 per cent of respondents provided answers to the open-ended questions, with the exception of the final open-ended question, where only 41 per cent of respondents provided additional comments.

Values

Parents or caregivers were asked for their reasons or values behind their decision to enrol their child(ren) in the Logos program. Four high-count themes centred around Christianity and valuing that the program is part of a public system:

- Is important for my child to receive a Christian based education (49)
- Likes that the program is part of the public school system or in a public-school setting (25)
- The program teaches good Christian values and morals (21)
- Is important for my child(ren) to be with other Christian students (15)

“Christian rules and values.

Prayer in school. Fellowship with other Christians.”

“It’s a program that fulfills my desire as a parent to have free Christian education within the public school system.”

“We value the chance to have our children spend extra time in Christian environments where they feel safe to live, experience and express their faith. We do not want to have the current PC issues forced on them. But another value the program brings is the ability to have the children experience the Christian learning environment while still around the public side. This gives them a chance to be positive influences in the lives of those around them and experience the interactions with those children.”

“We love that our kids are not removed from kids that have different values/beliefs. They do not go to school in a Christian “bubble”. Our Christian faith impacts all decisions we make.”



Several sub-themes emerged as well:

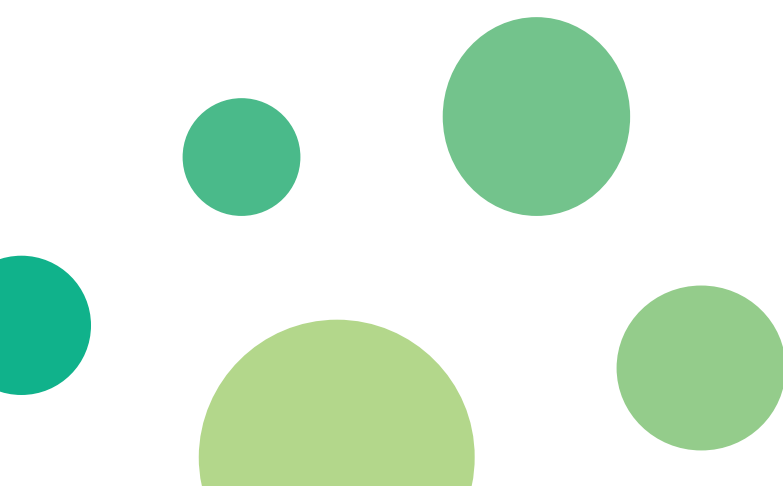
- The program gives students the opportunity to practice and talk about their beliefs/faith (8)
- The program has a good reputation/heard good things about the program (3)
- Is a safe and secure learning environment (1)
- Program is easily accessible/ease of program enrolment (1)
- The program gives my child a sense of belonging (1)
- The program is inclusive of all Christian denominations (1)

“I like the freedom they have to talk about their beliefs.”

“We chose to take our child outside of our zone because of the incredible reputation the teachers have at Westboro in the Christian community.”

“I’d heard the program was good and also heard that the teachers in the program are passionate and excellent.”

“Logos kids tend to have more involved parents. To avoid sexualizing my child at a young age. I think Rainbow clubs are not appropriate for kids in elementary. So my child can have a teacher who can help him/her grow both spiritually and academically.”



Initial reaction and concerns

Respondents were asked to provide comments on their initial thoughts to the issue and then concerns in terms of children, family, school and community. The top two central themes across these five questions were concerns that the Logos Program will be closed or that children will be made to move school separating them from friends and/or siblings:

- Concerned that Logos program may be discontinued or cut due to enrolment challenges (123)
- Concerned that my child(ren) may have to switch/change schools/be separated from friends/siblings (97)

"I am concerned that the Logos program will be cut and no longer available."

"I am concerned that our family values aren't being taken into consideration. Low enrolment in the Logos program with deadlines that aren't easily achieved to raise enrolment make my family feel like this program is not valued highly in the public school system."

"Classroom/ classmate changes, teachers changes, school location changes. My child has an amazing group of friends that have all been in the Logos program together since Kindergarten. It would be devastating to see that taken away from them if the program was moved and families have to make different school/ program choices for their kids."

Five additional high-count themes emerged around Christian education, choice, government funding and classroom composition emerged:

- Concerned their child will no longer have a Christian based education or will have to attend public school (22)
- The program needs to remain an available option/choice for community residents (20)
- Was unaware of enrolment challenges/was not initially informed of challenges (18)
- Lack of/limited government funding/resources/budget cuts related issues (19)
- Concerned about split/multi-grade classes/child being in split classrooms (12)

“A sense of loss, losing the foundation of Christian education on a day-to-day basis. Also, there is more “burden” on the parents to make sure their children are being taught Christian values since it may no longer be shared with the teachers & fellow students. Also concerned that she may need to change schools, and what is the right school?”

“It saddens me that they may have to go back into public school. I love how the Logos program has positively impacted my daughter’s life. I may homeschool if they choose to end Logos.”

“If Logos is taken out of either school, that would make the regular program/school less viable, as it would make a bit dent in enrolment and therefore funding.”

“We were caught unaware that this was an area of concern and are working already to rectify the situation, but will require time.”

“Split classes are a concern for achieving the best possible academic and age-appropriate environment for my children.”



Initial Thoughts

One sub-theme emerged and there were several single comments for initial thoughts or opinions regarding the enrolment challenges in the Logos program:

- Provide more information/details on enrolment challenges/plans to address challenges (3)
- Program enrolment should increase with population growth/as the local community grows (1)
- Poor teachers/teaching staff are causing/contributing to enrolment challenges (1)
- Program is vital/important/of value to my family/the community (1)
- Need to increase/improve level of communication (1)
- Program is viewed as low value/priority to the public school system (1)
- Society is shifting/moving away from religion/religious practices/need inclusivity (1)

Concerns for children and family

The questions about concerns for children and family were asked only of those who identified as a parent or caregiver. Three sub-themes emerged, and two single comments were provided:

- Not in Logos program/transferring to SCA (7)
- Impact on funding for other programs/the school as a whole (5)
- Teaching quality related concerns/poor teaching staff (2)
- Program is viewed as low value/priority to the public school system (2)
- Impact on the junior high program (1)

“My biggest concern is the thought of moving schools. I don’t think that there are many families who can just up and change their children’s entire school lives, friends, physical building/location. There will be a ton of transportation issues and for most families I think they will just have to choose what they can realistically do. I see us all just scattering to homeschool, EICS, SCA (if that can even be an option since they don’t except many and are full). I think some will stay in their designated area, some will switch, some will go elsewhere.”

Concerns for the School

Concerns for the school regarding the enrolment challenges in the Logos program had five sub-themes and one single comment:

- Low staff morale/challenges having an impact on staff morale (4)
- Impact on regular program/overall school enrolment (4)
- Will have a negative impact on school relationships (3)
- Concerned about school staffing cutbacks/job losses (2)
- Impact on funding for other programs/the school as a whole (2)
- Impact on the junior high program (1)

“Losing incredible teachers that I feel are invaluable.”

Concerns for the Community

Sub-themes for concerns regarding the community and the enrolment challenges in the Logos program ranged from concerns about faith to the lack of information provided by EIPS and one single comment:

- Loss of faith community (7)
- Decreased sense of community/community spirit (6)
- Concerned about increasing intolerance/division within the community (3)
- Lack of detailed information/need to provide more information about enrolment challenges (3)
- Program is viewed as low value/priority to the public school system (2)
- Loss of community outreach programs/events (1)

“The Logos program has the most community outreach programs out of all the school. The community likes to be involved (food drives etc.). It would miss this.”

Priorities, advice and solutions

Respondents were asked to provide the EIPS with their decision-making priorities, one piece of advice and any possible solutions to the issue. Throughout these questions six high-count themes emerged:

- Prioritize keeping the program available/not discontinuing the program (37)
- Prioritize increasing program enrolment numbers/do more to increase enrolment (24)
- Prioritize keeping current students enrolled in the program at designated school/ implement changes for new students (21)
- Consolidate programs together/designate programs at one school site location (14)
- Ensure students are receiving quality education/attention/support/keep the best interest of students in mind/do what is best for students (16)
- More engagement with local churches/religious organizations (11)

“EIPS should prioritize the opinions and input of students, parents, staff, and school community members directly impacted by the decision.

It has been made abundantly clear that more time should be given to the Logos community to increase enrolment and do what they can to save the program.”

“At the end of the day, I want quality education for my children. The Logos program is a plus. It would be sad to see it discontinued.”

“EIPS should prioritize the people enrolled in Logos that want to make a difference. Reasonable deadlines to achieve these goals of higher enrolments and without restrictions, e.g.) Students currently enrolled in EIPS can’t transfer into Logos from a regular program. Prioritize actually giving Logos a chance to succeed.”

“With lower elementary numbers, it would seem best to combine the program and consolidate it to either Westboro or Brentwood for the 2023/2024 year. Junior high enrolment at Sherwood Heights would have to be monitored for a few years after consolidation to see what transpires and what is feasible for future years.”

Priorities

Respondents provided a range of priorities for EIPS to use when making the decision to address the enrolment challenge. In addition to the high-count themes, ten sub-themes and four single comments were identified:

- Improve transparency/be more transparent with communication (5)
- Prioritize students'/family's mental health/need stability (4)
- More collaboration/partnerships with community/other educational programs/organizations (4)
- Keep program at Westboro (4)
- Ensure program staff are practicing the Christian faith/committed to Christian worldview/teachings (3)
- Keep the program where it has the highest enrolment/best chance of staying sustainable (3)
- Listen to the feedback/inputs/suggestions from parents (3)
- Hire more teachers/teaching staff (2)
- Continue to provide a learning environment that respects diversity/inclusion (2)
- Ensure that program staff are practicing the Logos values, not just Christian faith (2)
- More flexibility with the registration process (2)
- Ensure that decisions made in relation to enrolment challenges are logical/make sense (1)
- Improve/change teaching staff hiring process (1)
- More support for children with special needs/disabilities (1)
- Need to do more to preserve the history/legacy of Logos program (1)

“Be very transparent in how the decisions are being made and ensure that students can still remain together that have consistently been with each other over the last many years.”

“As the smaller program, Brentwood students could come to Westboro, or start fresh with both programs at a new school and hire the teaching positions anew. Westboro parents do NOT want to lose their teachers from the program. It feels very divisive right now, that Brentwood is the winner and Westboro is the loser, when Westboro has a larger enrolment and is known in the community as an excellent Logos program.”

Solutions

A range of potential solutions was provided by respondents from allowing students from other schools to attend to engaging/involving parents more. Six sub-themes emerged, and four single comments were identified:

- Allow students from other schools/outside the school zone to enrol in the program (6)
- Develop split/multi-grade program classes (5)
- Increase engagement/hold open house events (5)
- Keep the program at Brentwood or keep it at Westboro (3)
- More collaboration/partnerships with other educational programs/organizations (2)
- More engagement/involvement with parents (2)
- Focus more on teaching Christian values/teaching from a Christian based perspective (1)
- More fundraising events/programs (1)
- More mail/print-related advertising (ex. Flyers, pamphlets) (1)
- Listen to the feedback/input/suggestions from parents (1)

“We need more time to get kids enrolled -we need more advertisement to make the program known. Get SCA to advertise Logos for the families that can’t get into their school, have advertisements outside of Westboro, Brentwood and Sherwood heights for the Logos program, get churches in the community involved - allow all kids in the district to switch to Logos for the time being.”



Advice

Similar to priorities and solutions, respondents had a range of advice to provide to EIPS. Six sub-themes emerged ranging from listen to what we have shared to pray on the issue and four single comments were noted:

- Listen to the feedback/input/suggestions from parents/continue to engage with parents (8)
- Program is vital/important/of value to my family/the community (5)
- Need to keep best interests of student in mind/do what is best for student (5)
- Increase/improve level of communication (3)
- Keep program at Westboro (2)
- Pray about the issue/keep issue in prayers (2)
- More focus on teaching Christian values/teaching from a Christian based perspective (1)
- Obtain feedback/input from students (1)
- The program needs to remain an available option/choice to the community residents (1)
- Keep program at both school sites (1)

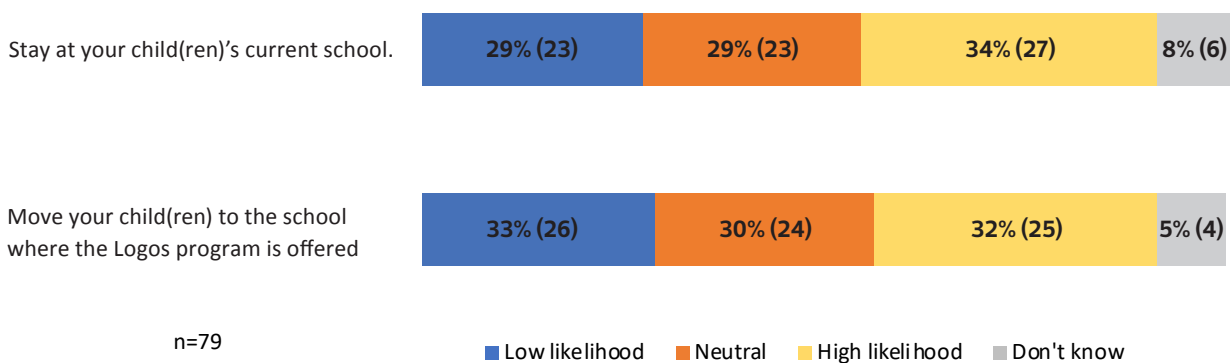
“Be open minded and allow for problem solving. Don’t just do what you decided is fiscally best behind closed doors. Listen to your people. Now that they’re aware of what’s happening. It’s how good things come about.”



Pulse on parent or caregiver decision

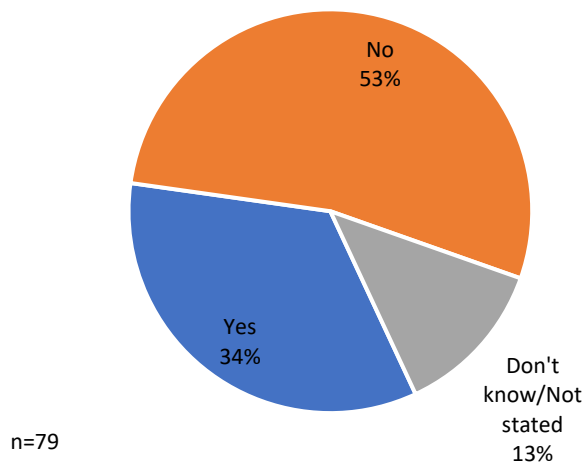
Parent or caregiver respondents were asked questions to gauge what their decisions and actions would be regarding the elementary program being combined into one site. Just over one-third of respondents (34 per cent) would have their children stay at their current school while one-third would move their children to the school the program was combined at.

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is 'not at all likely' and 5 is 'very likely', if the elementary Logos program is combined into one school site how likely are you to:



Next parents/caregivers were asked if there was another arrangement they would consider if the elementary program was combined and just over one-third said yes.

Is there another arrangement you would consider if the elementary Logos program is combined into one school?



Those respondents that indicated yes were asked to comment on what those arrangements would be. A range of responses were provided from not knowing to transferring to another Christian program:

- Don't know (8)
- Enrol in SCA (7)
- Another Christian based program/private program (4)
- Homeschooling my children (2)
- Make Sherwood Heights a K-9 /program be a K-9 (2)
- If school is not designated school – transfer from Logos to the regular program at stay current school (2)
- Enrol at a Catholic School (1)
- Depends on which school the Logos program is moved to (1)
- Split grades between the two schools (1)
- Open to any arrangement (1)

Final Comments

Lastly, respondents were asked to provide any additional comments. In addition to the core and central themes two sub-themes emerged and three single comments were provided:

- Program is vital/important/of value to my family/the community (9)
- Appreciate the opportunity to provide input/feedback (8)
- Make a decision in a timely manner/within a reasonable amount of time (1)
- More collaboration/partnership with other educational programs/organizations (1)
- Increase engagement with/provide more support to Elk Island Logos Society (1)

“I will try my best and do my part to advocate for this program! I believe it has a place in our schools, I feel like it’s much easier to find solutions and fix any problems than it is to lose the program and then fight for it to come back. That is why I want to work on solutions with EIPS. I understand their side too.”

Additional Finding

Six people responded they were not concerned about a possible Logos program site change but instead indicated a concern with religion inside a public school system:

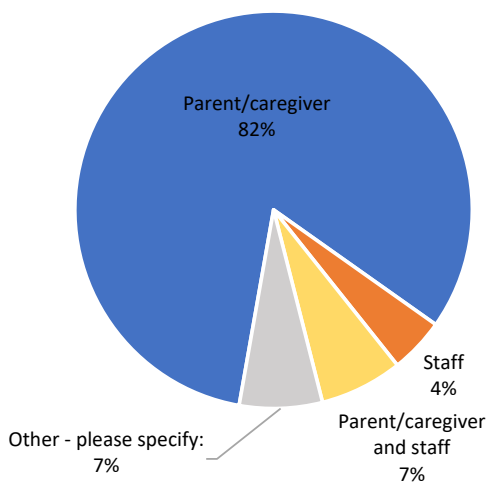
- Religious programming is not inclusive and should not be supported by the EIPS.
- Concerns about the Logos program spreading resources thinly and that the resources could be better used elsewhere, in special needs supports.
- One respondent noted choosing to not send their child to their community school because the Logos program was in the building.
- Religion is for practicing at home/If you want religion in schools attend the Catholic system or another full Christian programming.
- Logos should not have a class size advantage over other programs/should be equal for all programs.

“I think EIPS should consider that public means inclusive of all. Reallocation of funding and supports, teachers and creativity to support the whole student body would be a brilliant move.”

Respondent Profile and Enrolment Plans

Survey respondents were asked several questions about their role, children in the household and enrolment plans.

What is your role? n=89

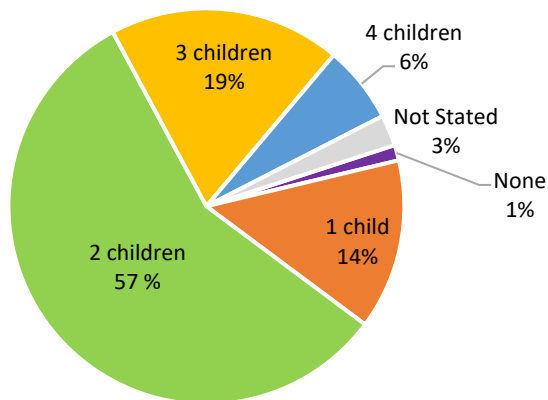


n=89

The majority of respondents are parents/caregivers (84 per cent), seven per cent were both a parent/caregiver and staff, four per cent were only staff and the remaining seven per cent selected other.

Other please specify included: Trustee (1), Grandparent (3), Community member (1), and former parent (1).

How many children do you have in your household?

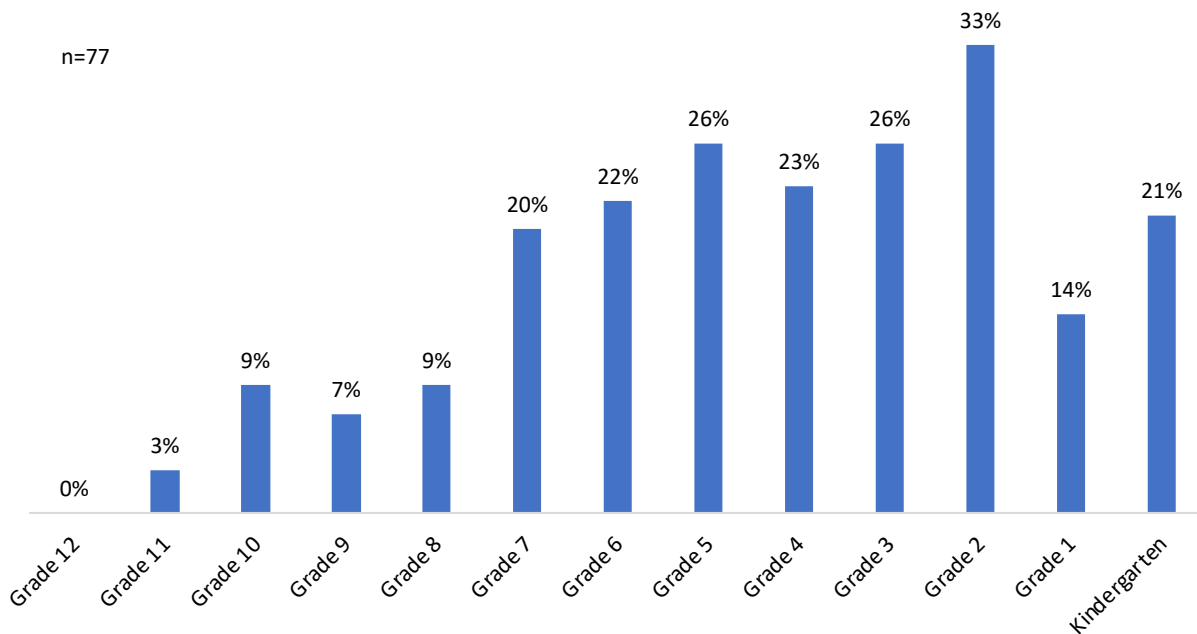


n=79

Respondents that indicated they were a parent/caregiver were asked questions about their children.

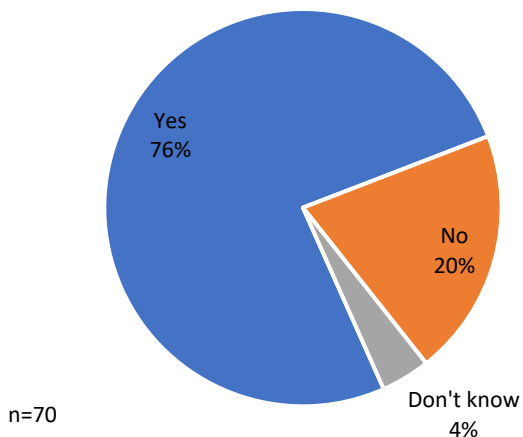
Over half of the respondents (57 per cent) have two children in their households while almost one-fourth (19 per cent) have three children in their household.

What grade is your child entering in the 2022-23 school year?



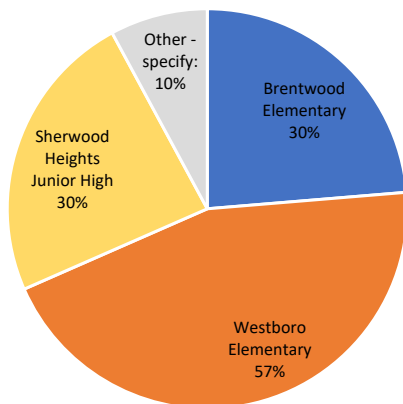
Parents or caregivers were next asked to indicate what grade their children were entering for the next school year. Just over one-fourth have a child registered for Kindergarten, 73 per cent have children registered for Grades 1, 2, and 3, 71 per cent have children registered for Grades 4, 5, and 6, 36 per cent have children registered for junior high, and 12 per cent have children registered for high school.

Are your child(ren) currently enrolled in the Logos program?



Just over three-quarters of parents or caregivers (76 per cent) indicated that their children are currently enrolled in the Logos program.

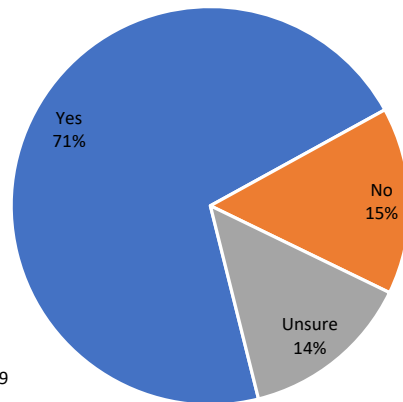
What school(s) are your child(ren) enrolled in for the 2022-23 school year? n=60



n=60

Parents or caregivers with children currently in the Logos program were then asked what school their child(ren) are enrolled in for the 2022-23 school year. Over half of the respondents (57 per cent) indicated Westboro Elementary. Ten per cent indicated other specifying Strathcona Christian Academy Secondary (3), Clover Bar Junior High (1), F.R. Haythorne Junior High (1) and New Horizons Charter School.

Are you planning to enrol your child(ren) in the Logos program in the 2023-24 school year?

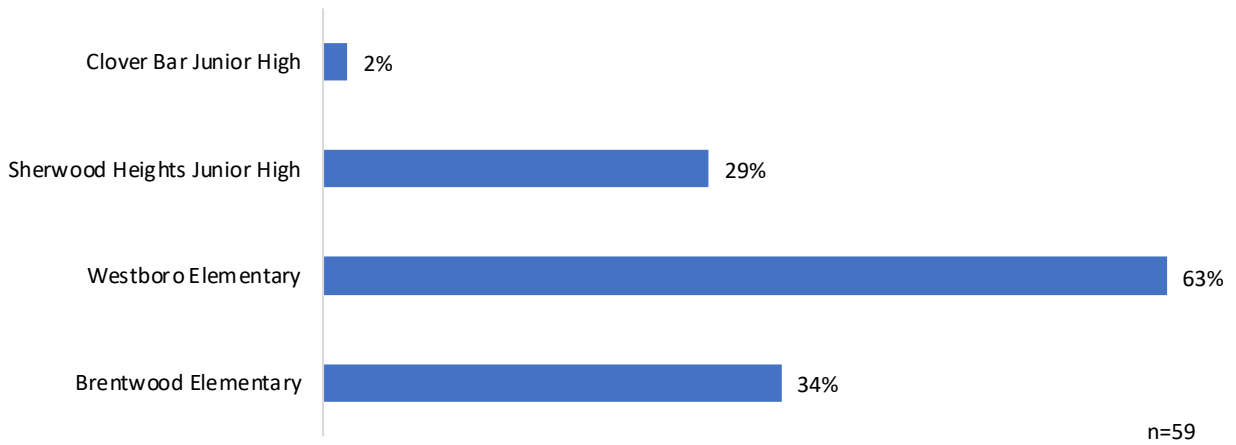


n=79

Next, all parents/caregivers were asked if they planned to enrol their children in the Logos program for the 2023-24 school year and just under three-quarters (71 per cent) indicated yes.

Lastly, respondents with children currently enrolled in the Logos program were asked what school they planned to register their children in for the 2023-24 school year. Almost two-thirds (63 per cent) indicated they would be registering their children for Westboro Elementary.

If the Logos program were to remain unchanged, what school(s) would you plan for your child(ren) to attend for the 2023-24 school year?



Frequently Asked Questions

During the open house, we tracked questions raised that were out of scope or that we did not have answers to. In the survey, respondents also asked questions in response to some of the survey questions. All of the questions are noted below. Sharing answers to these questions prior to the next engagement or as part of the communication during the next engagement will demonstrate to school community members that they were heard and prevent similar questions from being raised again.

Information requests:

- Can we see real-time registration numbers?
- How many students have left the Logos program for homeschooling?
- What are the numbers and reasons why a student is not accepted into SCA and are they redirected to the Logos program?
- What is the current average class size for EIPS?
- What is the magic number for a classroom to be considered a successful number of students?
 - Answer provided during the session: 27 students per classroom is the ideal number based on a per pupil allocation but 24-25 students will offset costs and sustain the program.
- Are there a lot of students at the two sites in the Logos program coming from outside of the school catchment boundaries?

Policy questions:

- Who gets the funding for a student when the student leaves? It's not clear when EIPS gets the funding if the child goes to SCA or Logos or regular school whether that impacts the stats they look at when making decisions about the program?
- If funding is based on the number of kids, is there not enough regular students at these schools that will offset the funding needed for the Logos program?
- Parents want to know what will happen if there is a significant rise in Logos enrolment in the years ahead—how will the Division accommodate those students if they are limited to a single school?
- Why is EIPS not working with SCA more and sharing information about the Logos program with parents/caregivers of children who don't get accepted into SCA?
- What are the differences between registering for the regular program vs the Logos program? Or a new registration vs re-registering?

Junior high site questions:

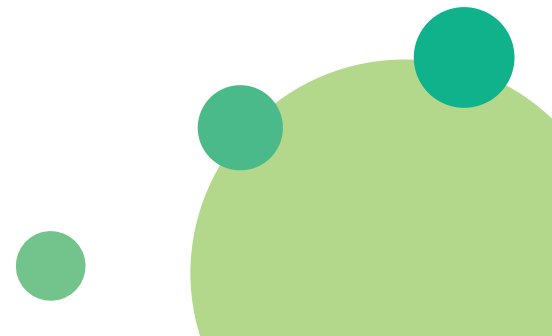
- Concerns about junior high and continuity, is that decision also to be made in September? Or will it be made later? Is the plan to get rid of the junior high program?
- What does the trickle-down impact of low enrolment in elementary mean for junior high or feeder schools?
- Does the new replacement school for Sherwood Heights have space for Logos or will it be shifted elsewhere too?

Staffing questions:

- What happens to the teachers/staff? Do Brentwood teachers get a leg up if it's moved to Brentwood?

Other:

- Can Westboro advocate for Westboro rather than for the whole program?
- When the new Sherwood Heights school is built, could the Logos program be housed there for Kindergarten through Grade 9? There may be greater student retention if it was at the same school throughout the duration of the program.
- Low registration in these two schools is not just a Logos problem, what is being done for the regular program?



Conclusion

Throughout all the engagement, no matter the method or session, Logos program stakeholders asked for more time to advertise and promote the program to increase enrolment. They asked for anywhere between one to two years to effect change before a decision about the program's future at the two elementary sites is made. A desire for more information, about the issue and enrolment in the division, was expressed. Many participants wanted EIPS to help the Logos program with advertising and connecting them with families that might be interested in the Logos program.

Three key differences emerged between the ideas expressed in the open house compared to the ideas expressed in the survey. The first is that some survey respondents indicated acceptance of combining the elementary program at one site to save the program. This opinion did not emerge during the open house. The second was the suggestion of removing a Christian program from public schools completely. The last difference was comments about the engagement. One respondent expressed concerns about how genuine the engagement was given the timing of the open house and survey in the school year, while others were appreciative of the opportunity to be heard and provide input.

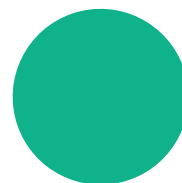
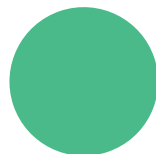
“Also when parents are asked to be engaged during the last month of school, and on the night before the last day of school, it does come across as fake engagement. Putting out another survey the last day of school, to close over summer break on July 12 - parents and staff are tapped out by now.”

“Give us an opportunity to make a change. Public engagement isn't fair if you are just informing us of the decision that doesn't seem that we can change.”

*“Thank you for hearing us and listening to us.
Giving us this space to help us help make the
program better and to keep the program going.”*

Many participants valued accessing a Christian education in a public-school setting for how it connected them to the community but also provided a safe space for their children to practice Christianity. Several participants noted that they also valued the smaller classes in the Logos program. Concerns about any possible changes centred on the impact it would have on their children and the impact of another transition with the possible separation from friends and siblings. Concerns were also expressed about the impact on teachers and the broader community.

Additional solutions were raised beyond the request for more time, including a gradual phasing out/in of the program so that students experience fewer transitions. Splitting the grades between the elementary schools so that full classes can be made was also suggested. Suggestions were made to make the registration process easier or make switching to the program simpler with looser deadlines. More participants expressed a preference for the Westboro site over the Brentwood site.





Your Future in MIND ●

Fall What We Heard Logos Christian Program

Enrolment Concerns

ystation

November 24, 2022
Produced for EIPS



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Summary

The Logos Christian program has operated within Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) for more than 25 years. Currently, Logos programming is offered at Brentwood Elementary, Westboro Elementary, and Sherwood Heights Junior High. Over the past several years, enrolment declined at both the elementary and junior high levels. As a result, it's no longer possible to offer Logos programming at both elementary schools. The declining enrolment also presents significant programming challenges at the junior high level. As such, EIPS wanted to inform Logos program stakeholders of the issue and discuss the path forward through a series of engagements.

EIPS hosted a conversation with Logos program stakeholders following the Logos Society Annual General Meeting on June 13, 2022, presenting information about the enrolment issue, and providing opportunities for feedback about the next steps. Through the course of this discussion, EIPS noted attendees wanted more opportunities to provide feedback and input. As such, EIPS determined a second open house on June 27 and a survey would provide the Logos program stakeholders with additional opportunities to share their concerns and suggestions. Both the second open house and survey were conducted by Y Station.

At the fall session, held on October 6, 2022, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Logos program stakeholders were presented with the results of the first engagement, additional data on the program enrolment, and the path forward that was determined by EIPS. This report presents stakeholders' reactions and any additional themes that emerged.

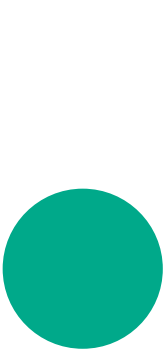
Attendees of the fall session were notified that information about the enrolment issue will go forward to the Board of Trustees in December 2022, and a final decision about how the program moves forward will be made after the returning student registration in February 2023. This decision timing provides the Logos program with the opportunity to grow its enrolment.

The October 6 session began at 5:30 p.m. in the Salisbury Composite High theatre. Approximately 46 people attended, based on the sign-in sheets. Also in attendance were five trustees, six EIPS staff and four Logos program staff, either teachers or society staff.

The engagement was for the sharing of information, including:

1. High-level results from the spring engagements.
2. Current enrolment numbers for the whole program and historical elementary enrolment numbers.
3. The Path Forward, outlining the timing of the decision and the level of support EIPS will provide to the Logos program, including the development of a growth plan.
4. Scenarios for if the Logos program enrolment increases and if the enrolment does not increase.

Attendees were asked for their reactions, questions, and general comments. The overall response was positive to delaying the decision regarding combining the Logos program elementary sites until after the 2023-24 returning student registration. Additional feedback themes include concerns about what a significant increase in enrolment means, program promotion activities, and questions about how consolidation at Brentwood Elementary could occur.



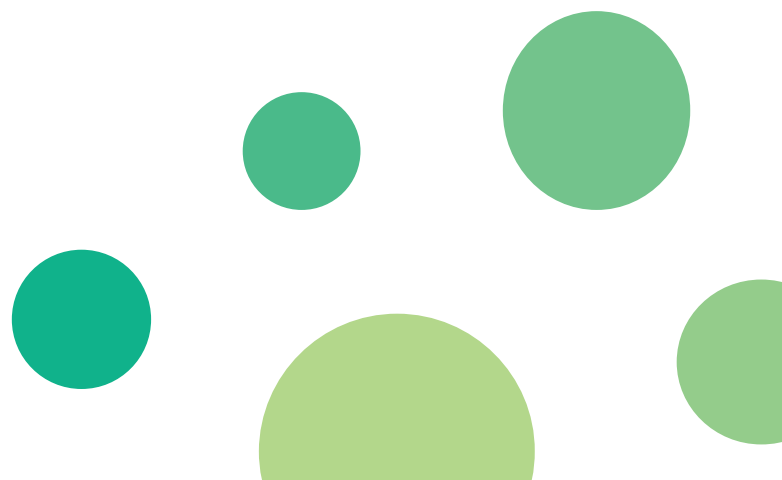
Methodology

The purpose of this engagement was to inform the Logos Program stakeholders (parents, caregivers, teachers and staff, retired staff, and program alumni) of the approach to delay the decision to combine the elementary Logos program to one site until after the 2023-24 returning student registration in February 2023. An additional purpose was to share historical enrolment data, enrolment target information, and the level of support EIPS will provide to the Logos program moving forward.

To achieve the purpose of information sharing, a single key public engagement technique was deployed, a facilitated open house. Logos program stakeholders could also email any further reactions or comments to the Senior Research Analyst at Y Station; two email comments were received through this channel. These comments have been included under the appropriate theme of the open house report.

The success of this method relies on solid engagement communication. To ensure all Logos program stakeholders had an opportunity to participate in the engagement, a letter was distributed via SchoolMessenger to inform them about the open house. The Senior Research Analyst's email address was provided at the close of the open house. Session information and the email feedback mechanism were also shared with Logos program stakeholders via the SchoolMessenger email.

The October 6 session began at 5:30 p.m. in the Salisbury Composite High theatre. Approximately 46 people attended, and refreshments and childcare were also provided. A slide presentation was used to give attendees a visual reference for the conversation. Attendees were asked for their reactions, questions, and general comments.



Reactions, Initial Thoughts, and Questions

Throughout the presentation, the Y Station facilitator checked in with attendees for feedback. After presenting the What We Heard summary slides, there was general agreement the slides reflected what was stated by participants in the June sessions and in the survey.

When the approach to delay making the decision until after the returning registration process closes was announced, the attendees applauded and seemed pleased with the approach. A few attendees noted feeling heard, one attendee thanked EIPS for listening, noting the Logos program is a program of choice in EIPS.

A few attendees noted it was a short timeline to achieve results in boosting enrolment, yet still recognized and appreciated the value of that time provided to bolster program attendance.

A couple of attendees made comments and suggestions about the Logos program registration process:

- Could the registration be opened sooner, in January, providing more information about registration sooner, since February can be a busy time for families?
- It was noted the messaging should be clear and consistent at both Logos elementary sites.
- When the schools receive inquiries there should be a process for handling them – could there be more transparency regarding how the Logos program learns about these requests?



Significant increase

Concerns were raised about defining what a “significant increase” and “sustainable level” meant in reference to the Logos program enrolment. EIPS responded that it was their intention to not provide a number “set in stone” with regards to enrolment, so that it could be defined in conversation with Logos program staff. The goal is to see significant growth in one year, which does not mean a jump to sustainable numbers in one year. Some attendees inquired about the details of the growth plan.

One attendee noted that not having a firm number was “scary” and felt like a moving target, but the Logos Program Society Director indicated he preferred not having a firm number and appreciated the opportunity to define what a significant increase was and what that means in the future.

Concerns were expressed about the potential for split grade classes as well in terms of:

- challenges for teachers; and
- quality of education in split classes.

Challenges in attracting students into later grades were also noted. Statements about provincial funding for education were also voiced.

Program promotion

Attendees wanted more information about how the program is or will be promoted, and when people get the opportunity to learn about the program. An attendee asked questions about hosting open houses in relation to timing and the registration process. One attendee expressed concern about how they would encourage people to register their children in a program when the program location and stability are not guaranteed.

It was noted in email feedback that there is a lack of Logos program promotion in the local churches. The respondent felt this was a 'no-brainer' place to promote the program and that the Logos program needs to present to these churches to see a potential increase in enrolment.

Potential Consolidation at Brentwood Elementary

Many attendees raised concerns and questions about consolidation at Brentwood Elementary:

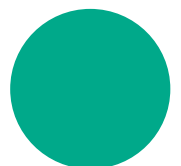
- Could there be a phased-in approach, so older students could finish at the school they started at?
- What about the other special needs programs at Westboro Elementary that Logos program students access?
- Brentwood Elementary doesn't have the accessible infrastructure that Westboro Elementary does.
- What happens to Westboro Elementary staff?
- What happens if I register for the Westboro Elementary Logo program initially, but it is amalgamated and I don't want to move to Brentwood, and all my other options are full?
- One email respondent was concerned that enrolment in Brentwood Elementary's Logos program would not be automatic.
- If the consolidation occurs, what will the class sizes be? Will there still be split classes or medium class sizes?

Conclusions

Overall attendees were pleased with EIPS' approach to delay the decision until after the 2023-24 returning student registration deadline. They noted it gave them time to promote the program and increase enrolment. At the conclusion of the open house, session attendees were asked to raise their hands to show support for EIPS' direction. A total of 27 hands went up, 59 per cent of attendees were in support of the approach.

As this process moves forward, it will be critical for Logos Program staff to have clear lines of communication with EIPS, perhaps even a designated person within EIPS to facilitate the flow of information. Logos society staff and volunteers need clear lines of responsibility regarding program promotion and communication. Setting and communicating a date for the decision to be announced after the 2023-24 returning student registration deadline would be reassuring for families.

EIPS could provide additional information, in plain language, to address the questions and concerns raised about program promotion, the parameters of what will be considered a 'significant increase' in enrolment, and the growth plan process. Questions about consolidation at Brentwood Elementary could be addressed if consolidation is the ultimate decision after the 2023-24 returning student registration process.



EIPS Frequently Asked Questions

LOGOS CHRISTIAN PROGRAM | ENROLMENT CONCERNS

LAST UPDATED: October 2022



FAQS: LOGOS CHRISTIAN PROGRAM ENROLMENT CONCERNS

INTRODUCTION

Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) is exploring changes to the Logos Christian Program to ensure it continues providing high-quality educational experiences to students. Over the last few years, enrolment in the EIPS Logos Christian Program has declined significantly, making it challenging to offer fulsome Logos programming. In June 2022, the Division held public consultations with the Logos community to discuss the issue and potential solutions. An online survey followed to collect even more input. Y Station, the contracted public consultation company, compiled the data from all engagements to produce a [What We Heard Report](#). The following are the frequently asked questions (FAQ) from the June engagement efforts.

General

Q: Why is EIPS consulting with the Logos Christian Program school community?

A: As part of the Division's reporting requirements to Alberta Education, EIPS reviews programs, enrolment transitions and boundaries regularly. When areas of concern are identified, the Division works to determine how best to resolve the issue. In the case of the Logos Christian Program, it's seen a significant [decline in enrolment over the last 10 years](#). The decline makes it difficult to offer fulsome Logos programming to students. Before a decision is made about how best to address the enrolment decline, EIPS is seeking feedback from the Logos school community to determine the best possible solution.

Q: How many students are registered in the EIPS Logos Christian Program?

A: As of Sept. 29, 2022, 322 students are registered in EIPS' Logos program—237 in elementary and 85 in junior high.

Q: What solutions are EIPS considering?

A: During Phase 1 of the public engagements, EIPS consulted Logos families about consolidating the elementary program at one school to address the [declining enrolment](#), starting in the 2023-24 school year. EIPS wanted to make a decision by November 2022. The feedback from families was clear. They wanted a bit more time before a decision is made. In that time, they'd work to promote Logos to try to make the elementary program sustainable enough to support two location sites—at Brentwood Elementary and Westboro Elementary.

After reviewing the feedback from the previous consultations, the Division wants to postpone a final decision about consolidating the Logos elementary program until after the returning student registration process takes place in February 2023.

- If, after the returning student registrations process, the Logos elementary program sees a significant increase in enrolment, EIPS will recommend the Board keep the elementary program unchanged at both Brentwood Elementary and Westboro Elementary.
- If, after the returning student registration process, enrolment in the Logos elementary program stays relatively flat, EIPS will recommend the Board consolidate the elementary program, starting in the 2023-24 school year.
- Because the junior high program is tied to the elementary program it will remain in place as long as student numbers remain sustainable. EIPS will continue to review the program location and its sustainability.

Since launching in 1998, the Logos program has experienced [significant enrolment growth](#) three times already—growing by 17 per cent (38 students) in 2003, 14 per cent (37 students) in 2004 and 18 per cent (49 students) in 2012. Postponing a decision to spring 2023, allows the Board to see actual registration numbers for Logos in 2023-24, and gives Logos the chance to promote the elementary program leading up to the returning student registration process.

In addition, EIPS will work with the Elk Island Logos Society to develop and implement a detailed enrolment growth strategy to help ensure the program's long-term viability, including benchmarking and growth targets.

Q: [What is the returning student registration process?](#)

A: Every February, EIPS conducts a [returning student registration process](#), where returning students register for the upcoming school year. The registration takes place online through the PowerSchool Parent Portal. Using the form, families indicate the school their child plans to attend in the upcoming school year and can apply to attend a non-designated school, if applicable. Once the registration process closes, schools then start planning and budgeting for the upcoming school year.

Q: [What if the elementary program only grows slightly, not significantly?](#)

A: To keep the elementary program at the two site locations requires a significant enrolment increase. As such, if the Logos elementary program doesn't see a significant increase in student numbers, EIPS will recommend the Board consolidate the program at Brentwood Elementary. Ultimately, it will become a Board decision—based on 2023-24 registration numbers collected during the returning student registration process and the feedback collected during the public consultations.

Q: [What happens if the elementary program consolidates but grows in a few years—can the Division accommodate an influx of new students at Brentwood Elementary?](#)

A: Yes. If the Board decides to consolidate the Logos elementary program, there is sufficient capacity to accommodate both regular program and Logos growth at Brentwood Elementary.

Registration in Logos

Q: [What's the average Logos class size?](#)

A: The average Logos class size is 24, excluding kindergarten. However, a lot of these classes are split grades—two at Westboro Elementary and four at Brentwood Elementary. So, on average, the Logos elementary program has 17 students per grade, which isn't sustainable. Especially when compared to the typical grade class size within EIPS, 27 students—class size can vary below or above the 27 depending on different school factors.

Q: [What are EIPS' enrolment projections for Logos over the next few years?](#)

A: Based on current enrolment trends, EIPS expects student numbers in the Logos program to stay the same or decline slightly.

Q: [In the last five years, how many students have left the Logos program? And, why?](#)

A: In the last five years, there's been a drop in the elementary enrolment of 45 students. So, for the program to remain at the two sites, there needs to be a significant enrolment increase during the 2023-24 Returning Student Registration Process. EIPS doesn't track why some students leave Logos. It could be because they moved, changed programming, parental choice, student transportation needs, or something else.

- Q:** How many students does the Logos program need in each grade to make it sustainable?
- A:** Ideally, each Logos grade will have 24-27 students. However, for now, EIPS is just looking to see significant growth in the elementary program and for the Elk Island Logos Society to develop and implement a viable growth plan.
- Q:** What will happen if enrolment in the Logos program increases to sustainable levels but declines the following year?
- A:** EIPS will continually monitor enrolment in the Logos program. If student numbers decline below sustainable levels, EIPS will recommend the Board consider consolidating the elementary program to Brentwood Elementary.
- Q:** Does Strathcona Christian Academy ever direct students to the Logos program?
- A:** Yes. Strathcona Christian Academy (SCA) Society, SCA Elementary and SCA Secondary routinely share information about EIPS' Logos Christian program with families. The two most common reasons for sharing Logos information are when space at SCA is unavailable and when a family asks about Christian programming within EIPS.
- Q:** How do students register for the Logos program?
- A:** Students register for the Logos program during the new or returning student registration process, as applicable. Both the [new student registration](#) and returning student registration open in February each year. Using the online registration forms, families simply request registration into the Logos program and then select a school.
- Q:** If Logos enrolment numbers remain low, at the elementary and junior high school level, what could that mean for the program?
- A:** If enrolment numbers stay where they are currently, EIPS will recommend the Board consolidate the elementary program to make it sustainable. However, if, after a consolidation, enrolment continues to drop, the Board will have to conduct further reviews and determine what's in the best interests of students enrolled in the Logos program.

Accommodating Students

- Q:** If the Board decides to consolidate the Logos elementary program at Brentwood Elementary, can affected students, currently attending Westboro Elementary, be grandfathered there?
- A:** It's still too premature to answer this question. Typically, the Board makes decisions about grandfathering when it reviews the final recommendation from administration, which won't happen until spring 2023. If there is a consolidation, EIPS will contact all families impacted to share further details, including information about grandfathering.
- Q:** My older child attends Westboro Elementary and will stay at the school for regular programming if the Logos program consolidates. Can my younger child also attend Westboro Elementary next year?
- A:** Yes, if the older child is grandfathered to 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 for regular programming during the returning student registration process. The only way this wouldn't apply is if the Board decides to limit grandfathering or the application of the sibling clause.

- Q: If the program consolidates and an elementary student doesn't want to go to Brentwood Elementary for Logos, can they attend a school other than their designated school?
- A: Yes. If the Board decides to consolidate the Logos elementary program at Brentwood Elementary and a student decides not to remain in the Logos program there, they can choose to attend their designated, current school or a non-designated school—provided space is available. In this scenario, if the Board consolidates the elementary program, EIPS would contact all families impacted to share further details, including information about reopening the registration process for 2023-24.
- Q: Can EIPS accommodate an influx of students if Logos experiences a rise in significant enrolment over the next few years?
- A: Yes. Both Brentwood Elementary and Westboro Elementary have available capacity to accommodate one class per grade of Logos programming. As well, if the program consolidates, Brentwood Elementary has room to expand the Logos program to accommodate two Logos classes per grade and regular program growth—Westboro Elementary can't accommodate that.

Student Funding

- Q: If a student leaves Logos, does the funding for that child follow them?
- A: Alberta Education doesn't provide the Division specific funding for Logos programming. Instead, schools are funded on a per-pupil basis. Funding from Alberta Education is based on September 30 enrolment numbers. If students change schools or school divisions after that date, funding doesn't move with them.
- Q: Can a school's funding for the regular program be used to offset the needed costs to offer Logos?
- A: Offsetting Logos costs with funding from the regular program is not a sustainable or equitable solution. EIPS is responsible for ensuring high-quality programming is provided to all students within the school. That includes decisions about class sizes, teachers and distribution of resources. It's imperative the Division, and its schools, are fiscally responsible and don't disadvantage other groups or programs to ensure all students receive a high-quality education.

Programming

- Q: Is EIPS also looking at the Logos junior high program?
- A: Because the junior high program is tied to the elementary program it will remain in place as long as student numbers remain sustainable. EIPS will continue to review the program location and its sustainability. If there aren't enough students to sustain the Logos junior high program, administration and the Board will need to conduct further reviews about the location and sustainability of the program.
- Q: Could the planned replacement school for Sherwood Heights Junior High and École Campbelltown accommodate the Logos program?
- A: When the province approves a new replacement school for École Campbelltown and Sherwood Heights Junior High in Sherwood Park, the student capacity for the new school is based on the combined enrolment projection for both schools. As such, additional capacity at the new replacement school isn't an option.

Q: If EIPS consolidates the elementary Logos program at Brentwood Elementary, what happens to the teachers and staff at Westboro Elementary?

A: EIPS staff are employees of the Division, not a particular school. If the elementary program consolidates, EIPS will encourage Westboro Elementary Logos teachers and staff to pursue opportunities throughout the Division that will help them grow and advance their careers—similar any other program changes throughout the Division. Human Resources would also work closely with each employee to identify openings that suit their skills, abilities and interests. Some teachers could choose to apply for positions at Brentwood while others could decide to work at another location.

Q: Low registration in these two schools is not just a Logos problem, what's being done for the regular program enrolment?

A: Strathcona County is expected to grow over the next 20 years. The county has approved the developments of Hillshire, Cambrian Crossing and Bremner. Each of these communities will generate students who require a location for educational programming until future schools are constructed within the local area. To ensure these students are accommodated, EIPS is currently reviewing all student spaces within the region to ensure it effectively uses existing infrastructure.

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 by requesting busing services during the new or 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 tentative 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 or alternative program 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 Logos programming?

A: The Board will make a decision after the 2023-24 returning student registration process, which happens in February. Before that time, the Board will review all relevant data and the feedback gathered throughout the public consultations. EIPS is committed to keeping the community informed about the process and will provide information as it becomes available.

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

A: If the Board decides to consolidate the Logos elementary program, EIPS will contact all impacted families with further details, including information about reopening the returning student registration process. For a brief time, affected students can register to attend the Logos program, their current school, their designated school or a non-designated EIPS school—subject to available space. If Student Transportation services are required, fees apply.

Q: Can EIPS work with Logos to promote the program?

A: Yes. EIPS promotes all Division Alternative Programs equally. The Logos Society is also welcome to highlight the program using other channels and networks—all promotional efforts must meet [EIPS' brand identity standard](#). Before posting or publishing any advertising materials, submit them for final approval to both [Elk Island Logos Society](#) and [EIPS Communication Services](#).

Q: How will EIPS support the transition for students?

A: At this point, it's still too premature to speak about a transition plan. A decision hasn't been, and won't be, made until the Board reviews student enrolment numbers for the next school year and the feedback from the public consultations. That said, if the Board decides to consolidate the elementary Logos program, EIPS would put a transition plan in place. The plan would involve consultations with students, school council groups, school administration, staff and EIPS senior administration. The goal: To ensure a smooth transition for all students.