

# Fall What We Heard Logos Christian Program

Enrolment Concerns

ystation

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## Table of Contents

<b>Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Methodology</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Reactions, Initial Thoughts, and Questions</b>	<b>6</b>
Significant increase	7
Program promotion	8
Potential Consolidation at Brentwood Elementary	8
<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>9</b>

## 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.



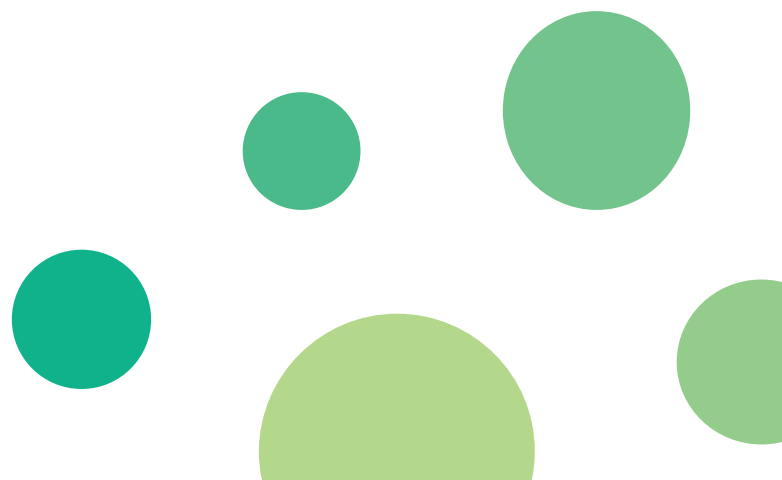
## Methodology

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.

