

**report to
Board of Trustees**

**Recommendation to Commence Public Input to Consider
Closure of the All Boys Program**

Date	September 24, 2024
Meeting Type	Regular Meeting, Public Agenda
To	Board of Trustees
From	Joanne Pitman Chief Superintendent of Schools
Purpose	Decision
Originator(s)	Dany Breton, Superintendent, Facilities and Environmental Services Michael W. Nelson, Superintendent, School Improvement Jennifer Turner, Superintendent, School Improvement
Governance Policy Reference	Governance Policies GC-3E(2): Closure of Schools Procedure Operational Expectations OE-2: Learning Environment/Treatment of Students OE-3: Instructional Program OE-4: Treatment of Employees OE-5: Financial Planning OE-7: Communicating With and Support for the Board OE-8: Communicating and Engaging with the Public OE-9: Facilities
Resource Person(s)	David Dyck, Education Director, Area 7 and Well-Being Lisa Nachtigal, Education Director, Area 4 and Alternative Programs Aubrey Fletcher, Education Director, Area 1 and Teaching and Learning with Technology Chris Radu, Education Director, Inclusive Education Catherine Ford, Director, Planning Tanya Scanga, Director, Corporate Financial Services Erik Sprong, Principal, All Boys Program Karen Drummond, Manager, Community Engagement Brenda Gibson, Manager, Transportation Services Deb Hamilton, Community Engagement Advisor



1 | Recommendation

It is recommended:

- THAT the Board of Trustees is satisfied that there is cause to commence the public input process for the proposed closure of the All Boys Program at Sir James Lougheed School in accordance with *GC-3E(2) Closure of Schools Procedure*.

2 | Issue

The All Boys Program is a stand-alone K-6 alternative program within Sir James Lougheed School offering single-gendered programming for boys.

The All Boys Program's mandate is to actively engage students in a single-gender environment to boost self-confidence and foster supportive relationships through coaching and mentorship. However, over time, the program's focus has shifted to address the increasingly complex learning and behavior profiles of its students, a need that is already being met by community schools and various CBE special education services. This shift resulted in the intended outcomes of the alternative program not being met.

Additionally, the program has seen low and declining enrolment and, as such, was first identified in the CBE *Three-Year System Student Accommodation Plan* (SSAP) in the 2018-19 school year. All Boys Program families received an update letter in January 2022 informing them that the school was continuing to be included in the SSAP due to declining student enrolment.

A program evaluation, completed in 2023, found that this program was not effectively meeting intended alternative program outcomes and that there was a need to make changes to ensure funds and services are utilized in an equitable way for all CBE students. This is further discussed *Background*.

Under the Board's *GC-3E(2) Closure of Schools Procedure*, the closure of a program requires a formal closure process.

3 | Background

The All Boys Program has been an alternative program at the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) since 2012. Enrolment in the program peaked at 177 students in 2016 and has been declining ever since. For the 2023-24 school year, 51 students were enrolled in September. The number declined to 48 as of May 2024. Enrolment as of August 29, 2024 was 30 students. The enrolment is lower than expected as several students moved out of the city, relocated to private schools or other schools in CBE. Some of these families chose to relocate to other CBE schools due to the late, unexpected cessation of the before-and-after school care provider.

The All Boys Program was first identified on the SSAP during the 2018-19 school year and has remained on the SSAP since that time. In the 2022-23 school year, the CBE conducted a program evaluation of the All Boys Program that considered the program's effectiveness, efficiency and economy.

The evaluation looked at the program's intended outcomes, student results data, school development plans, facility costs and per student funding data. The CBE also conducted surveys to understand the thoughts and perspectives of staff, students and parents. Four staff, 17 parents and 54 students shared their perspectives via the surveys conducted during the program evaluation. Survey results indicated strong support for the program while also highlighting challenges related to increased student complexity within a small cohort of students.

The intended outcome of the program is identified as providing active engagement in a single-gender program to increase self-confidence and develop caring relationships through coaching and mentorship. The findings of the program evaluation indicate that the program is not operating in alignment with the Government of Alberta [Alternative Programs Handbook](#), the *Education Act* or the stated program objectives of the CBE *Program Integrity Framework for All Boys Program* (see Attachment I). The focus has shifted from the intended outcome to ensuring the social-emotional well-being of students is maintained, with the All Boys Program having up to 61 per cent of students with special education coding as compared to the CBE average of 19.4 per cent. Students with similar special education codes are supported in schools across our system. Teachers in CBE schools provide hands-on learning activities through a social-emotional lens and support students in identifying strategies for regulation and emotional well-being. As such, students' learning needs attending the All Boys Program may be met equally well in other CBE school settings.

The program evaluation also indicated the program's efficiency and economy are limited, with the program experiencing declining enrolment, high attrition rates, increasing student complexity and, as a result, disproportionately high costs per student.

A program evaluation summary was shared with staff and families in February 2024 (see Attachment I).

4 | Analysis

Program Evaluation

The 2023 All Boys Program evaluation considered its economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

Despite a strong and committed administration and staff and support from passionate families, educational outcomes for the All Boys Program are not being significantly impacted as a result of single-gendered teaching and the program is not effectively meeting its intended outcomes. Contributing factors include declining enrolment, with registration having decreased by 50 per cent over five years and

increasing complexity of student learning/behaviour profiles relative to total student population.

Moreover, the program is unable to maximize efficiency, with low and declining enrolment making it challenging to use space and resources efficiently. The utilization rate of the school is 32 per cent; this during a time where most CBE schools are experiencing record enrolment and space for students is in high demand. The current utilization rate is also well below the 85 per cent required to receive maximum operational and maintenance dollars from the Government of Alberta. Class sizes are significantly smaller than the CBE average, which has resulted in the school being unable to staff appropriately within the Resource Allocation Method (RAM) funding. In addition, significant system funding has been necessary to have the required teachers. All these factors make it challenging to use this facility and associated funding for maximum impact across the CBE.

Additionally, the program is not economically sustainable, with the cost per student in the All Boys Program 60 per cent higher than the cost per student in other elementary school programs. In the context of the broader budget available to support student needs across the CBE and a budget that has been challenged further during these years of record enrolment, the allocation over five years of an extra \$460,000+ to the All Boys Program has impacted the supports and services available for students enrolled in other schools. Continued funding of this program in its current form is not sustainable nor equitable for CBE students.

After close consideration of the findings of this evaluation in relation to other CBE programming and student learning opportunities, CBE Administration is proposing the closure of the All Boys Program. The closure is proposed to be implemented at the end of the 2024-25 school year (June 2025). Students' learning needs will be reviewed in alignment with our current placement processes to determine the best educational placement (regular program or another program), commencing in September 2025.

There are multiple reasons for the closure to be recommended, including the following:

- The program is not operating in alignment with the Government of Alberta *Alternative Programs Handbook* or the stated intent and alternative program outcomes within the *Program Integrity Framework*.
- Student learning needs can be effectively met in other CBE school settings.
- Enrolment is low and declining. Operations at current enrolment levels are not sustainable.
- The cost per All Boys Program student is inequitably high.
- Utilization rates are insufficient to receive maximum operational and maintenance dollars as per the current provincial funding model's requirement and the space may be better utilized to support other educational programming opportunities as the system utilization rate continues to rise.

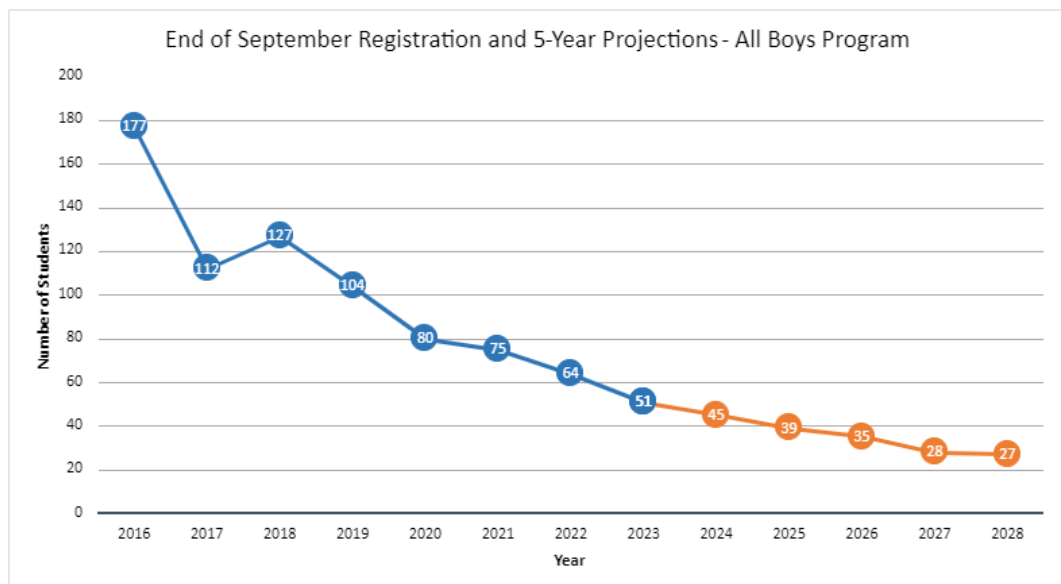
In addition, other considerations suggested by parents such as moving, repurposing or renaming the program are not feasible for the following reasons:

- Moving the All Boys Program to operate alongside another program still poses the problem of small class sizes and is not sustainable during a time when we are experiencing increased space limitations throughout the system. Also, this would result in continued inequity among programs.
- Moving the program would not resolve the primary challenge that the All Boys Program is currently operating out of alignment with the intended focus of the program and is not meeting the program's learning outcomes.
- Creating a single-gender specialized education program is not consistent with the CBE's continuum of specialized supports and services and would continue to allocate disproportionate resources to a specific group where their needs can be met in an inclusive setting.
- Intended learning outcomes of an alternative program cannot be significantly changed. Rather, repurposing an alternative program requires adherence to processes and guidelines set by the Alberta Government and would require closing the current program and applying to create a new program, in accordance with the outlined guidelines.

Student Enrolment, Space, and Utilization

Enrolment in the All Boys Program peaked at 177 students in 2016 and has been declining ever since to the 51 students enrolled in the program at the end of September 2023, putting the utilization rate of the school at 32 per cent.

Future enrolment projections based on the current rate of attrition would see the number of students decline to 27 students by 2028, leaving the school substantially under-utilized at a time when the CBE needs space to accommodate unprecedented growth in the student population.



The All Boys Program was first identified on the SSAP during the 2018-19 school year due to low enrolment and has been included on the report every year since that time. Low enrolment impacts the richness and variety of program offerings and operating efficiencies, and all schools with enrolment less than 70 per cent are reviewed annually for inclusion on the SSAP. Schools operating below the 85 per cent utilization threshold do not receive full funding for operations and maintenance of the school facility.

Proximity, Access and Transportation

If the proposed closure is approved, students in the All Boys Program would have the opportunity to attend their designated regular-program school or another CBE program starting in the 2025-26 school year. For 90 per cent of students in the All Boys Program, this would provide the opportunity to attend a school closer to home, in some cases significantly closer. The rest of the students live close to the Sir James Lougheed School building itself and if it were opened for regular program use, their travel distance would remain the same.

As of May 14, 2024, there were 48 students attending the All Boys program. There are 31 regular-program schools to which current students in the All Boys Program are designated. Regular-program designation areas for current All Boys Program students were mapped to determine impacts upon receiving schools (see Appendix II). Given the small number of students who would be attending each school, the impact on enrolment in their designated schools is expected to be low. In addition, there is space available in the majority of the designated schools to accommodate students currently enrolled in the All Boys Program. Six of the designated schools, to which six current All Boys students would be designated, are currently being overflowed to other nearby schools that are nonetheless closer to their residence than the current All Boys Program.

Student Supports in Regular-Program Schools

Based on 2022-23 CBE special education data, the system-wide percentage of students with special education coding is 19.4 per cent. Given this reference point, the All Boys Program can be considered to have significantly higher rates of students requiring special education coding. The rate of student complexity over the past five years has ranged from 51 to 61 per cent and in the last three years has been within two percentage points of the 61 per cent high.

Coding	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Mild/Moderate	39	30	25	22	18
Severe	26	28	24	24	20
Population %	51%	56%	61%	61%	59%

The All Boys Program is not intended to be a program focused on serving the needs of students with exceptional needs.

In Alberta, educating students with diverse learning needs in inclusive settings is the first placement option considered by school authorities (Alberta Education, 2020). We support a significant majority of our students with identified special education needs in inclusive community school settings, and there are many supports available through Area learning teams and other system resources.

Every CBE school has staff that provide hands-on learning activities through a social-emotional lens supporting students in identifying strategies for regulation, and emotional well-being. In some cases, additional supports are provided. This continuum of supports may include:

- alternative seating (e.g., ability to work in different spaces, using a standing desk to support need for movement)
- visual schedules (schedule for the day posted in highly visible space)
- timers (show how much time a student has to work on tasks)
- social stories (visual tool to illustrate desired behaviours)
- sensory tools and spaces (e.g., supports for students that require sensory input such as squishy ball or theraputty, and sensory rooms)
- checklists to support executive functioning skills (e.g., organization, staying focused, multiple step instructions, task initiation, planning, time management, self-regulation, etc.)
- specific and targeted Individual Program Plan (IPP) goals and conditions for success
- structured and built-in movement opportunities
- noise-cancelling headphones
- flexible schedules
- student-specific task bins
- preferred and non-preferred tasks to build stamina and efficacy
- support from speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists where needed

In addition to the continuum of supports listed, all schools have access to Area learning team supports including strategists, behaviour support workers, family school liaisons and psychologists. Schools can also request supports for service from the Inclusive Education, Indigenous Education, Well-Being, Diversity and Inclusion, Sexual Identity and Gender Identity (SOGI), and English as an Additional Language teams in support of student success.

In addition to the breadth and depth of resources, supports and services for students, schools with larger student populations can also provide a wider range of extracurricular opportunities, enabling students to explore what interests them more deeply.

Hearing from Affected Communities

In early February 2024, staff, students and families of the All Boys Program were informed about the CBE's plans to submit a report to the Board of Trustees recommending the commencement of the public input process for the proposed closure of the All Boys Program.

Communication included the following: a [project webpage](#) launched February 7 with links to the project plan, program evaluation summary, FAQs, and other information (see Attachment III: Project Communication); parent emails sent February 7, 15, 21, and March 5 and 21; and in-class conversations with students on February 8.

Students, families and staff were invited to learn more and share their thoughts through the following opportunities:

- February 7 All Boys Program staff meeting;

- February 27 in-person parent information session: approximately 30 parents attended;
- Staff online survey open March 5-22: seven staff completed;
- Online discussion forum available for families March 5-April 5 to share comments and questions: 15 parents participated, posting a total of 21 comments and questions;
- March 20 discussion at virtual school council meeting: 10 parents attended; and
- One-on-one conversations with Area 7 education director in late March to April.

Perspectives gathered from the above opportunities were largely consistent amongst parents and staff. There were two key points that emerged: concern about students receiving the supports they need in a regular-program environment and advocacy for the program as a space for neurodiverse learners. Advocacy for maintaining the program was not tied to the original intended focus and learning outcomes of the All Boys Program.

The full comments from the discussion forum for parents and the staff survey are available in Attachment V. These comments are consistent with the perspectives shared at the February 27 parent session, March 20 school council meeting and the February 7 staff meeting. While families were invited to participate in one-on-one conversations with the Area 7 Education Director, no one availed themselves of the opportunity.

The perspectives that were shared will be considered in transition planning and communication with families in the event that closure of the program is approved.

Transition Planning

If the proposed closure is approved, CBE and school leaders will work closely with All Boys Program students and families to develop an appropriate transition plan for each student.

CBE students are transitioned between schools through a thoughtful process that involves staff, students, and families. The successes of each student are celebrated, and the accommodations current schools have in place that support student success are shared with receiving schools to best support each student as an individual. Parent and student voice are an important part of the transition process, and students and families can often visit a school in advance and meet some of the staff members they could be interacting with before attending a new location.

Transition plans may address student learning, supports and/or safety. They are created collaboratively between the school and family. Transition plans may include the following:

- opportunities for parent and student voice during the transition process;
- transition conferences with parents/guardians;
- if a student has an IPP, parents will meet with the existing and receiving school;
- collaboration and sharing between All Boys Program staff and receiving staff;

- IPP articulation meetings between schools to ensure successful transitions and integrity in the IPP process;
- clearly communicated transportation plans;
- invitation to school council meetings at receiving schools to ensure parent connection and community;
- clear communication about timelines; and
- opportunity for All Boys Program students to leave a legacy project at Sir James Lougheed School.

The Future of the Sir James Lougheed School Building

The CBE has experienced record-breaking enrolment for the last two years, adding over 13,000 students between September 2021 and September 2023. Additionally, the CBE's enrolment is forecasted to increase by over 22,000 by 2033. As of the end of September 2023, the system utilization rate for kindergarten to Grade 4 was 86 per cent and 93 per cent for Grades 5-9. Ergo, although a specific accommodation plan for the school would be developed following a potential Board decision to close the All Boys Program, the school building is expected to continue to be used for elementary-level school programming.

5 | Financial Impact

A detailed financial analysis was done as part of the program evaluation that took place in 2022-23. When this evaluation was done, it showed the combined Operations & Maintenance (O&M) and deferred maintenance cost per student in the All Boys Program is ~\$59,000, as compared to the elementary school average of ~\$13,000. The O&M cost per student without deferred maintenance is \$2,700, as compared to the elementary school average of ~\$850.

Between 2018-2023, the All Boys Program received over \$45,500 in additional Area funding and \$422,092 from the Criteria Based Response Fund (CBRF) to support extra staffing.

Overall, the cost per student in the All Boys Program is 60 per cent above the cost per student in other elementary school programs. In addition, the two buses serving students of the All Boys Program operated at a combined loss of over \$68,250 in the 2023-24 school year.

The high cost of operating the All Boys Program is not sustainable into the future, nor does it support equity for all CBE students across our system.

Should the proposed closure be approved, the school building is expected to be retained for elementary-level school programming. This means the ongoing maintenance costs for the building (approx. \$165,000/year) would continue. However, the cost per student would be expected to be close to the CBE average as higher student numbers can eliminate the dependency upon the CBRF for supplemental funding. This would allow operations to be more efficient while concurrently reducing enrolment pressures being experienced by other CBE schools.

Given the distribution of students in the All Boys Program across the city and the small number of students that would be added to each of the 30 identified schools, there is no significant financial impact anticipated for those schools.

In considering all of the additional costs currently required to operate the All Boys Program, closure of the program would allow for a more equitable distribution of CBE funds and resources in support of student success.

6 | Implementation Consequences

If the proposed closure is approved, implementation would help the CBE to equitably and effectively support strong learning outcomes for all students across our system.

CBE and school leaders would work closely with All Boys Program students and families to develop an appropriate transition plan for each student. There would be ample time for discussions and collaboration amongst leaders, staff, students and families.

The All Boys Program administration and staff would gather feedback from parents on additional areas on which they would like the school to focus during their child's transition that have not been mentioned under section 'transition planning'. These plans would include a learning profile for each student identifying strengths and areas for growth. A meeting with the receiving school would take place prior the end of June 2025 to share the transition plan with both the parent/guardian and student.

7 | Conclusion

It is important to ensure alternative programs are operating in alignment with the Government of Alberta *Alternative Programs Handbook*, and the CBE's *Program Integrity Framework for All Boys Program*, which outline the stated intent and learning outcomes for the program. In evaluating the All Boys Program, a major finding was that the program has evolved from the intended single-gender focused education to providing boys with structured social-emotional supports, based on the needs of the boys enrolled in the program. This shift has resulted in the originally intended learning outcomes of the All Boys Program not being met. Additionally, the program evaluation found low and declining enrolment, inequitably high costs per student and unsustainable funding requirements.

Program evaluation findings indicate students' learning needs may be met equally well in other CBE school settings, with teachers able to provide hands-on learning activities and support students in identifying strategies for regulation and emotional well-being. Students may also find increased extracurricular opportunities and more student supports and services in schools with larger school populations.

While it is the CBE's firm belief that All Boys Program students' needs can be met equally well in other CBE school settings, it is important to pay close attention to the concerns and experiences expressed by the families of current All Boys Program students. As such, thoughtful and individualized transition plans are essential to this process.



JOANNE PITMAN
CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment I: Program Integrity Framework for All-Boys Program

Attachment II: All Boys Program - Summary of the 2023 Program Evaluation

Attachment III: All Boys Program Student Locations and Designated Schools

GLOSSARY – Developed by the Board of Trustees

Board: Board of Trustees

Governance Culture: The Board defined in policy the individual and collective behaviour required to establish a culture of good governance. These policies establish standards for how the Board performs its work, including policies that define the Board's job, its purpose and its accountability.

Board/Chief Superintendent Relationship: The Board defined in policy the degree of authority delegated to the Chief Superintendent, and set out how the Chief Superintendent's performance, and ultimately the organization's performance, will be evaluated.

Results: These policies define the outcome the organization is expected to achieve for each student it serves. The Results policies are the performance targets for the Chief Superintendent and the organization, and form the basis for judging the success of the organization and the Chief Superintendent on reasonable progress towards achieving the Results.

Operational Expectations: These policies define both the non-negotiable expectations and the clear boundaries within which the Chief Superintendent and staff must operate. The Chief Superintendent is required to comply with the Board's stated values about operational conditions and actions as set out in these policies.

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Program Integrity Framework for All- Boys Program



May
2012

learning | **as unique** | as every student



Advisory Committee:

Carol Murray
Garry Jones
Diane Nowlan

System Principal, Area IV
Principal
Specialist, Learning Services

Stakeholder Feedback:

Teachers
Parents

All teachers

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2012

Program Integrity Framework All-Boys Program

Statement of Principle

Calgary Board of Education students have equitable access to a program that develops the academic, social, physical and emotional needs of boys.

Key Characteristics

- Alberta Programs of Study through an instructional approach that best meets the learning needs of boys¹
- development of leadership through “Just for Boys” and “The Leader in Me” programs
- books and curricular materials that excite boys and are integrated into all aspects of curriculum
- opportunities for boys to express themselves through the fine arts
- encourages full participation in appropriate personalized activities including wellness, physical fitness and athletic activity
- opportunities for mentorship networks with successful men
- builds on boys’ strengths to create an optimistic culture and an encouraging learning environment where boys achieve their personal best
- school uniform

Key Outcomes

- active engagement in a learning environment that focusses on the academic, physical, emotional and social needs of boys
- enhanced self confidence
- development of caring relationships through coaching and mentorship

Learner Profile

The All-Boys Program is especially suited for boys who:

¹ Younger, M., & Warrington, M. et.al., (2005). *Raising boys’ achievement* (Research Report: Key Stage 3 National Strategy key messages), Cambridge, UK: Department for Education. Available: <http://www.education.gov.uk/search/results?q=Raising+Boys'+achievement&page=2>

- benefit from a single gender approach to instruction
- are interested in curriculum that highlights what it means to be male in today's society

Entry Points

- open entry depending on space

Application Process

- Calgary Board of Education Student Registration Form (<http://www.cbe.ab.ca/Parents/register/default.asp>)
- Application Form for parent (see school website)
- Copy of the most recent report card if outside CBE
- An Individual Program Plan (IPP) if applicable

Costs to parents

- Calgary Board of Education Fees (<http://www.cbe.ab.ca/Parents/fees.asp>)
- Uniform fees (approximately \$400.00)

Transportation: <http://www.cbe.ab.ca/transportation/alternative.asp>

- bussing is provided from all quadrants of the city

For internal use

Administrator Skill-Set

- interest in single-gender education
- ability to articulate about and advocate for single-gender education
- mentor and role model to males

Teacher Skill-Set

- desire to work with male learners
- understanding of the learning needs of boys
- commitment to participate in and implement gender specific professional development

Professional Development

- focus on innovation and research regarding male single-gender education

Indicators for Program Monitoring

(Provided as a guide for program monitoring)

- academic improvement for all students
- increased enrolment
- sustained registration over the elementary years

System Requirements

- system support for cohesion across alternative programs
- longitudinal research of student success in an all-boys learning environment

References

Cleveland, K. (2011). *Teaching boys who struggle in school: strategies that turn underachievers into successful learners*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Sax, L., (2005). *Why Gender Matters*. Broadway Books: New York.

Spielhagen, F.R. (2011). "It all depends.."; Middle School Teachers Evaluate Single-Sex Classes. *RMLE Online*. Westerville: 2011. Vol. 34, Iss. 7; p. 1.

Younger, M., & Warrington, M. et.al., (2005). *Raising boys' achievement* (Research Report: Key Stage 3 National Strategy key messages), Cambridge, UK: Department for Education. Available: <http://www.education.gov.uk/search/results?q=Raising+Boys'+achievement&page=2>

All Boys Program - Summary of the 2023 Program Evaluation

Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation

The CBE continually monitors and assesses schools and programs to ensure we are operating efficiently and economically while prioritizing student learning. Ongoing monitoring includes:

Three-Year System Student Accommodation Plan

Every year the CBE identifies schools that have a utilization rate of less than 70 per cent or greater than 95 per cent. This data serves as an indicator to school communities that changes may need to happen in the future.

Program Evaluations

At the CBE, periodic program evaluations are conducted to ensure each program is meeting its intended student learning outcomes effectively, efficiently and economically and that a program is demonstrating success in the areas of achievement, equity and well-being identified in our Education Plan.

The All Boys Program, a stand-alone K-6 program within Sir James Lougheed School, offers single-gender programming for boys. It has been an alternative program at the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) since 2012 with an intended outcome of providing active involvement in a single-gender program to increase self-confidence and develop caring relationships through coaching and mentorship. Meeting the program outcomes has been challenging due to declining enrolment, increasing student complexity and financial implications.

The All Boys Program and the CBE Three-Year System Student Accommodation Plan

Enrolment in the program peaked at just over 175 students in 2016 and has been declining ever since. When a school's utilization rate goes below 70 per cent, it is identified on the CBE's [Three-Year System Student Accommodation Plan](#) (SSAP). This means the CBE will closely monitor the school and may need to take action if utilization rates remain low. The All Boys School was first identified on the SSAP during the 2018-19 school year. All Boys families received an update letter in January 2022 informing them that the school was continuing to be included in the SSAP due to declining student enrolment.

Program Evaluation

In the 2022-23 school year, the CBE conducted a program evaluation of the All Boys Program that considered the program's:

Effectiveness

Is the program meeting its intended learning outcomes for students?

Efficiency

Is the program using space and resources efficiently?

Economy

Are learning outcomes being achieved economically and in line with CBE averages?

The evaluation looked at the program's intended outcomes, student results data, school development plans, facility costs and per student funding data. The CBE also conducted surveys to understand the thoughts and perspectives of staff and parents. Survey results indicated strong support for the program while also highlighting challenges related to increased student complexity within a small cohort of students.

The findings of the All Boys Program Evaluation clearly indicate support from a strong and passionate group of staff and families. As detailed on page three, findings also show that the program is not effectively meeting the intended outcome of providing active engagement in a single-gender program to enhance self-confidence and caring relationships through coaching and mentorship alongside male role models.

The CBE Approach to Monitoring and Evaluation

The CBE takes a thorough and thoughtful approach to monitoring schools and programs. This approach is:

- Rooted in CBE values:
 - Students come first.
 - Learning is our central purpose.
 - Public education serves the common good.
- Based on data and evidence.
- Mindful of the thoughts and perspectives of staff, students and families.

While students, staff and parents note the importance of the program for the male students it serves, decreasing enrolment alongside increasing complexities has resulted in a shifting focus to ensure the social-emotional well-being of students is maintained. This shift is not outside the scope of any community school in our system. Teachers in community schools provide hands-on learning activities through a social-emotional lens supporting students in identifying strategies for regulation, and emotional well-being. As such, students' learning needs may be met equally well in a community school setting.

Measures of the program's efficiency and economy are detailed on pages four and five. They show a program with declining enrolment, relatively high attrition rates, increasing student complexity and, as a result, disproportionately high costs per student.

Recommendation Based on Program Evaluation Findings

When considering economy, efficiency and effectiveness together for the All Boys Program, there is a need to make changes to ensure funds and services are utilized in an equitable way for all CBE students. After close consideration of the findings of this evaluation in relation to other CBE programming and student learning opportunities, CBE has decided to move forward with a recommendation to the Board of Trustees to commence the public input process on the proposed closure of the All Boys Program.

This recommendation is being put forward out of a desire to provide the best possible learning opportunities for students of the All Boys Program. Low student enrolment in the All Boys Program is limiting the learning and extra-

curricular opportunities available to students in comparison to what is available at other CBE schools with higher enrolment. With higher enrolment comes a wider range of resources, supports and services for students. These additional supports would be beneficial to students in the All Boys Program.

As we prepare the recommendation to commence the public input process for the proposed closure, we will have important conversations with staff and families from February to May of this year. We will answer your questions, share program options available to your student(s), and learn from you what is important to consider in individualized transition plans should the program close. The perspectives shared by the school community will be considered in developing the recommendation report, which will be submitted to the CBE Board of Trustees in fall 2024.

If the Board approves the commencement of the public input process on the proposed closure, they will provide time for public input before a final decision is made. The decision about whether or not to close the All Boys Program will be made by the Board of Trustees in alignment with [GC-3E\(2\): Closure of Schools Procedure](#). It is expected the decision would be made by December 2024.

All Boys Program Evaluation - Effectiveness

Effectiveness Summary

Despite a strong and committed administration and staff and passionate families, educational outcomes for the All Boys Program are not being significantly impacted as a result of single-gendered teaching. A contributing factor is the increasing complexity of student learning/behaviour profiles relative to total student population at All Boys Program. While the overall class sizes are small, the level of class complexity would suggest that over half of the students in each class would require an Individual Program Plan.

What We Looked At

- Intended and actual educational outcomes
- Report card results
- Provincial Achievement Test results (PATs)
- Professional learning opportunities
- School Development plans
- Staff, student and parent responses to a survey conducted in the 2022-23 school year.

What We Found

- For the past four years, the average report card result for students in the program for both English Language Arts and Mathematics was generally lower than the overall CBE average.
- In Grade 6 PAT results, students are achieving similar results at the acceptable level to their CBE and provincial peers. In both 2018-19 and 2021-22, no students from the All Boys Program achieved at the standard of excellence in the PATs with the exception of 2021-22 Mathematics.
- There is no evidence that single-gendered programming is directly impacting student achievement for the All Boys Program.
- Professional learning has focused on regulation and strategies to support challenging behaviours based on student complexities, rather than on topics related to single-gendered education.
- Parent survey responses indicate the program recognizes students' diverse ways of learning, student interests and abilities through hands-on learning, STEAM-focused tasks and collaborative projects, art residencies and opportunities for students to build confidence in learning and developing friendships.
- Teacher survey responses identified professional learning opportunities have not been specific to single-gendered learning and additional support is required for inclusive education, special education and the inclusion of male mentors/speakers. They also identified a need for more male staff and education assistant support for the All Boys Program.
- Analysis of the School Development Plans reveal a focus on literacy and mathematics instruction with some alignment to a single-gender approach.

All Boys Program Evaluation - Efficiency

Efficiency Summary

The low and declining enrolment in the All Boys Program makes it challenging to use space and resources efficiently. The utilization rate is well below the 85 per cent required to receive maximum operational and maintenance dollars from the Government of Alberta. While class sizes are significantly smaller than the CBE average, increased student complexity has required a higher investment, which has not made efficient use of funds for maximum impact across the CBE.

What We Looked At

- Student registration
- Attrition rates
- Class size
- Student complexity
- School utilization rates

What We Found

- Registration has decreased by 50 per cent over five years.
- The All Boys Program over the past four years has experienced varying rates of attrition ranging from 10.14 to 27.91 per cent with the highest rates in 2020-21 and 2022-23.
- There have been no kindergarten registrations since the 2020-21 school year.
- Class sizes have averaged 17 over the past four years, with a low of 15 students per class in the 2022-23 school year. This is well below the CBE target of 25 students per class.
- The All Boys Program has implemented a multi-grade configuration based on enrolment, complexity and staffing resources.
- The rate of student complexity in the program over the past five years has ranged from 51 to 61 per cent as compared to 19.4 per cent across the CBE.
- School utilization has decreased from 67 per cent in 2018-19 to 39 per cent in 2022-23. This is well below the current provincial funding model's requirement of an 85 per cent+ utilization rate to receive maximum operational and maintenance dollars.

All Boys Program Evaluation - Economy

Economy Summary

The average cost per student in the All Boys Program is substantially higher than the CBE average. In the context of the broader budget available to support student needs across the CBE, the allocation of significant extra funding to the All Boys Program has impacted the supports and services available for other students. Continued funding of this program in its current form is not sustainable and is not equitable for CBE students.

What We Looked At

- Facility costs
- School-based budget
- Other sources of funding redirected from the global budget (e.g., Criteria Based Response Fund (CBRF) and Area funding
- Transportation costs

What We Found

- The combined Operations & Maintenance (O&M) and deferred maintenance cost per student in the All Boys Program is ~\$59,000, as compared to the elementary school average of ~\$13,000. The O&M cost per student without deferred maintenance is \$2,700, as compared to the elementary school average of ~\$850.
- The annual operating cost for Sir James Loughheed School is ~\$165,000/year.
- Between 2018-2023, the All Boys Program received over \$45,500 in additional Area funding and \$422,092 from the Criteria Based Response Fund (CBRF) to support extra staffing.
- Overall, the cost per student in the All Boys Program is 60 per cent above the cost per student in other elementary school programs.
- In the 2022-23 school year, the two buses serving the students of the All Boys Program operated at a combined loss of over \$59,500.

Students Enrolled in All Boys Program

