

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 Lougheed 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.