What We Heard
J.H. Picard School Future Programming and English Academic Program

Executive Summary

Between September and October 2026, Edmonton Catholic Schools gathered feedback from students, parents/guardians, staff, and community members regarding future programming opportunities at J.H. Picard School, including the English Academic Program planned for September 2027. Feedback was collected through four questionnaires and represents more than 3,300 responses across interested groups.

Overall, respondents expressed strong interest in rigorous academic programming, post-secondary and career preparation, health sciences, STEM-related learning, computing science, leadership development, and expanded extracurricular opportunities. Transportation, student supports, athletics, and maintaining a positive school culture emerged as important considerations in future planning.

About the Engagement

Feedback was collected through:

Questionnaire	Participants
English Academic Program Student Questionnaire	2,704
English Academic Program Parent/Guardian Questionnaire	278
École J.H. Picard Student Questionnaire	282
École J.H. Picard Parent/Guardian Questionnaire	70

Total participation exceeded **3,300 responses**.

Academic Excellence and Postsecondary Preparation

What We Heard

Students and Parents/guardians consistently identified strong academics and preparation for future success as key priorities.
Participants expressed interest in:

- University preparation
- Advanced Placement (AP) opportunities
- Rigorous academic expectations
- Leadership development
- Research opportunities
- Dual-credit opportunities
- Career exploration

Parents/guardians frequently referenced academic rigor, university readiness, and future career success as important outcomes for students. Students similarly identified AP opportunities, academic pathways, and future-focused learning as areas of interest.

Quantitative Findings

Among students considering the English Academic Program:

- 56.1% indicated university as their preferred post-secondary pathway.
- 48.2% indicated AP courses were important or very important.
- University preparation was the most frequently selected program appeal factor

---

Career Pathways and Specialized Learning

What We Heard

Respondents expressed strong interest in programs connected to future careers and emerging industries.

Quantitative Findings

The strongest career interests among student respondents were:

Career Area	Responses
Health Sciences/Medicine	816
Business	716
Engineering	690
Law	570
Technology/Computer Science	539

The most desired learning opportunities were:

Learning Opportunity	Responses

Business & Entrepreneurship	1,121
Computing Science & Technology	908
Leadership Development	902
Health Sciences Pathway	865
AP Courses	733

Student Experience and Well-Being

What We Heard

Participants consistently emphasized the importance of:

- Student well-being
- Positive school culture
- Sense of belonging
- Supportive teachers and staff
- Inclusive learning environments
- Mental health supports

Students frequently referenced friendships, school atmosphere, clubs, and community as important factors in their school experience. Parents/guardians similarly highlighted the need for supportive environments where students can thrive academically and personally.

Athletics and Extracurricular Opportunities

What We Heard

Athletics emerged as one of the strongest themes across all engagement activities. Students and Parents/guardians consistently indicated that extracurricular opportunities influence school choice and contribute significantly to student engagement and belonging. Top extracurricular interests included:

Activity	Responses
Sports Teams	1,716
Band or Music Groups	869

Volunteer Opportunities	763
Student Leadership	740
Academic Clubs	613

Option Courses and Learning Experiences

What We Heard

Participants expressed interest in maintaining a broad range of option courses that balance academics, creativity, wellness, technology, and career exploration.

Most frequently requested option areas included:

- Foods
- Computing Science
- Sports Medicine
- Art
- Communications Technology
- Health Careers
- Instrumental Music
- Outdoor Education
- Leadership

Participants also suggested future exploration of:

- Woodworking
- Construction
- Trades-related programming
- Cosmetology
- Photography
- Aviation
- Additional language opportunities
- Engineering-focused courses

Transportation

What We Heard

Transportation emerged as one of the most significant practical considerations affecting future enrolment decisions.

Respondents consistently discussed:

- Transportation availability
- Bus service
- Commute times
- Accessibility from neighbourhoods across south Edmonton

Quantitative Findings

When asked whether transportation would influence attendance decisions:

Response	Percentage
Significantly	35.5%
Somewhat	39.9%

Overall, **75.4%** of student respondents indicated transportation would influence their decision to attend the English Academic Program.

Key Takeaways

1. Strong Interest in Future-Focused Learning

Respondents support opportunities that prepare students for post-secondary education and future careers, particularly in Health Sciences, STEM, Computing Science, and Business.

2. Student Well-Being Matters

Participants emphasized the importance of supportive learning environments, strong relationships, school culture, and student well-being.

3. Athletics and Extracurricular Opportunities Are Highly Valued

Athletics and extracurricular activities play a significant role in students' experiences and influence school choice decisions.

4. Transportation Remains a Significant Consideration

Transportation was one of the most consistent themes across all engagement activities and will be an important consideration in future planning and communications.

5. There Is Strong Interest in the English Academic Program

Many respondents indicated support for expanded academic opportunities and future-focused programming at J.H. Picard School. Participants expressed particular interest in

academic rigor, leadership, AP opportunities, specialized pathways, and expanded learning choices.

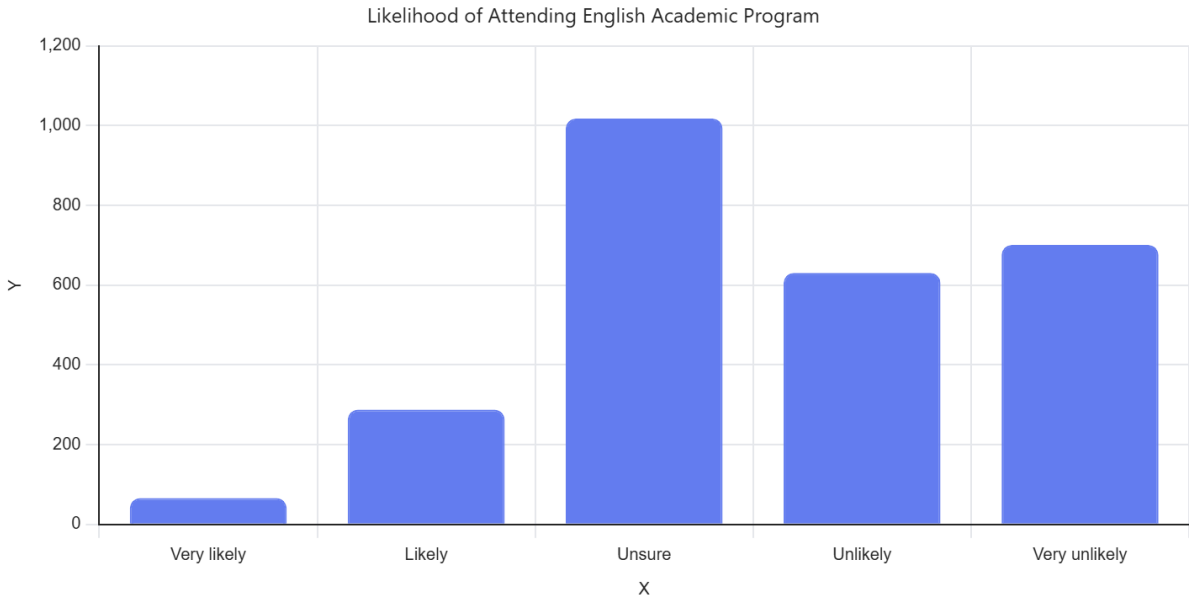
Looking Ahead

The feedback collected through this engagement process will help inform future planning for J.H. Picard School, including development of the English Academic Program, enhancement of learning opportunities, and future decisions related to programming, student supports, and school experience. Respondents provided thoughtful feedback that highlighted both opportunities and considerations for supporting student success now and into the future.

Appendix- Charts

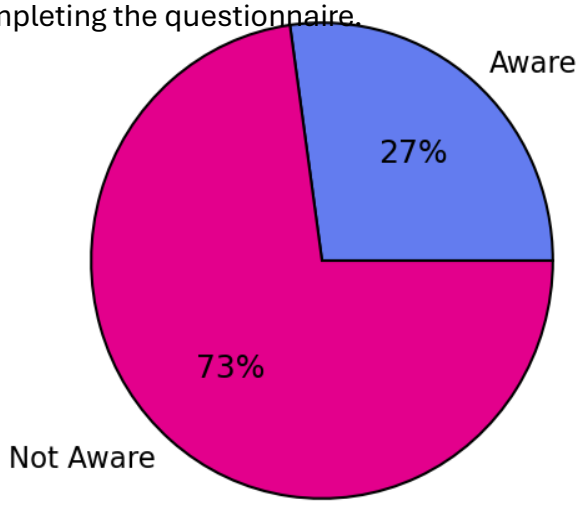
1. Likelihood of Attending the English Academic Program

This highlights the large "Unsure" audience and supports the finding that awareness and information-sharing remain key opportunities.



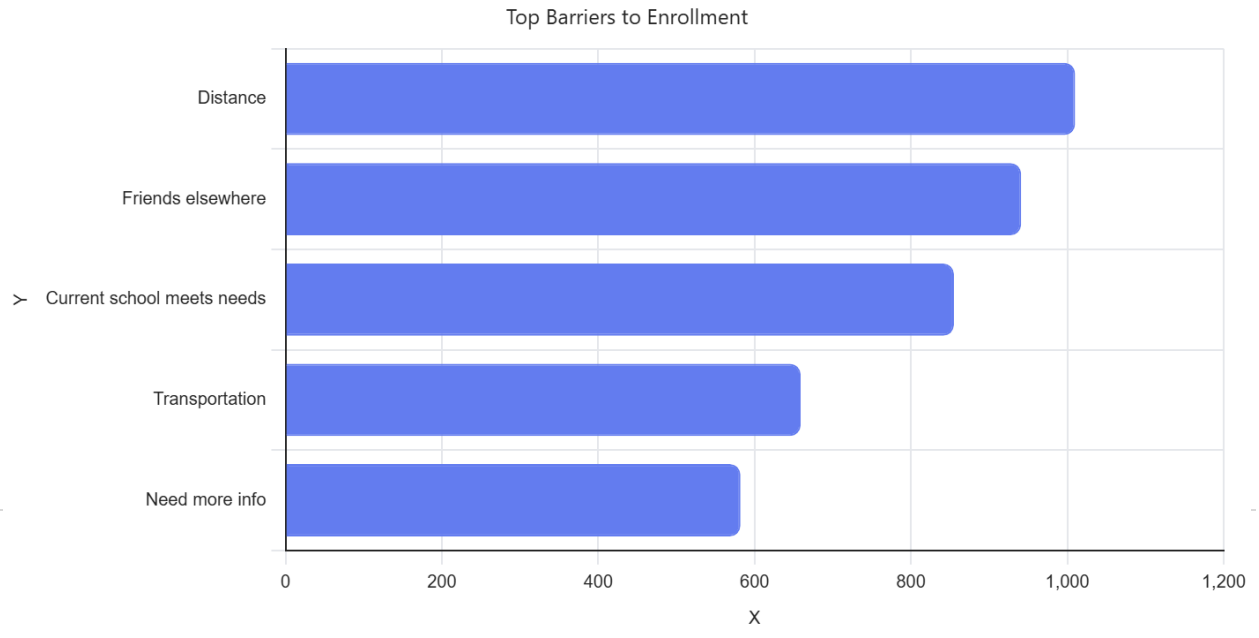
2. Awareness of the Program

This clearly demonstrates that nearly three-quarters of respondents were unaware of the program prior to completing the questionnaire.



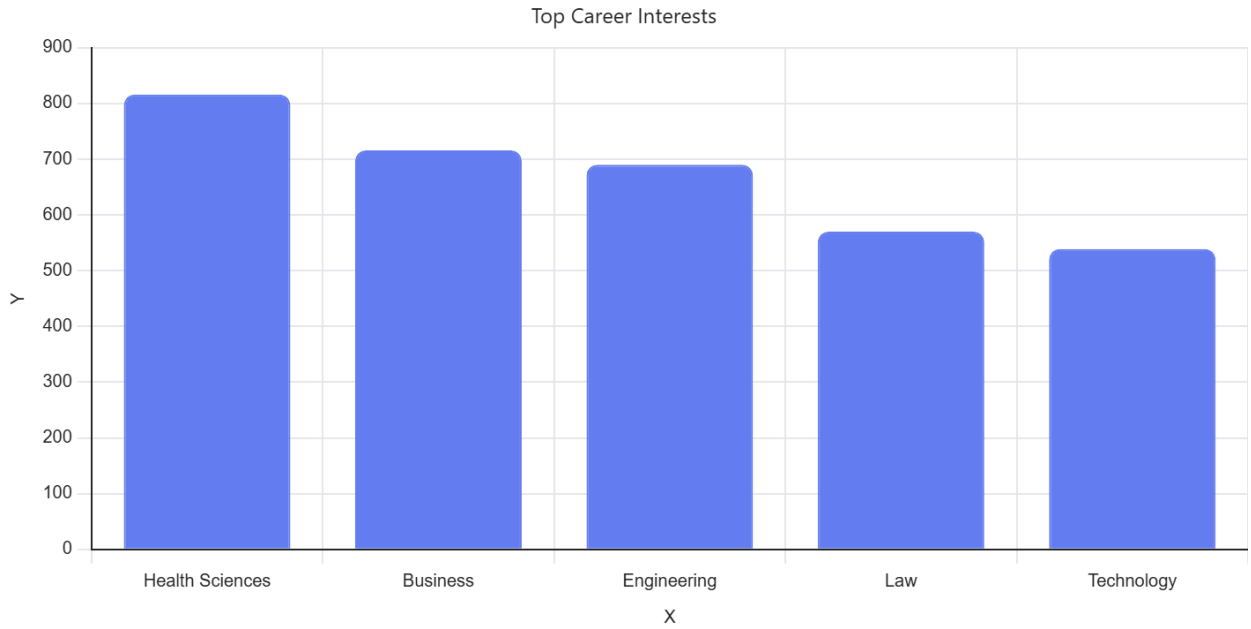
3. Top Barriers to Enrolment

This chart supports one of the strongest report findings: students are not primarily rejecting the program itself. Distance, transportation, established school pathways, and social connections are the primary barriers.

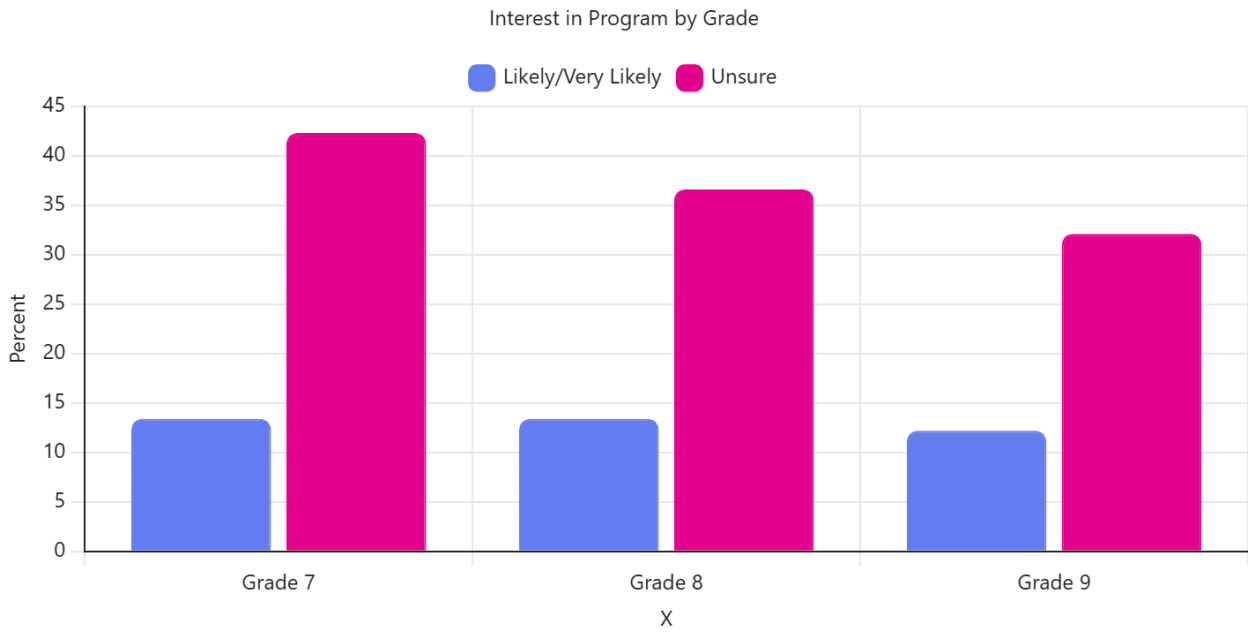


4. Top Career Interests

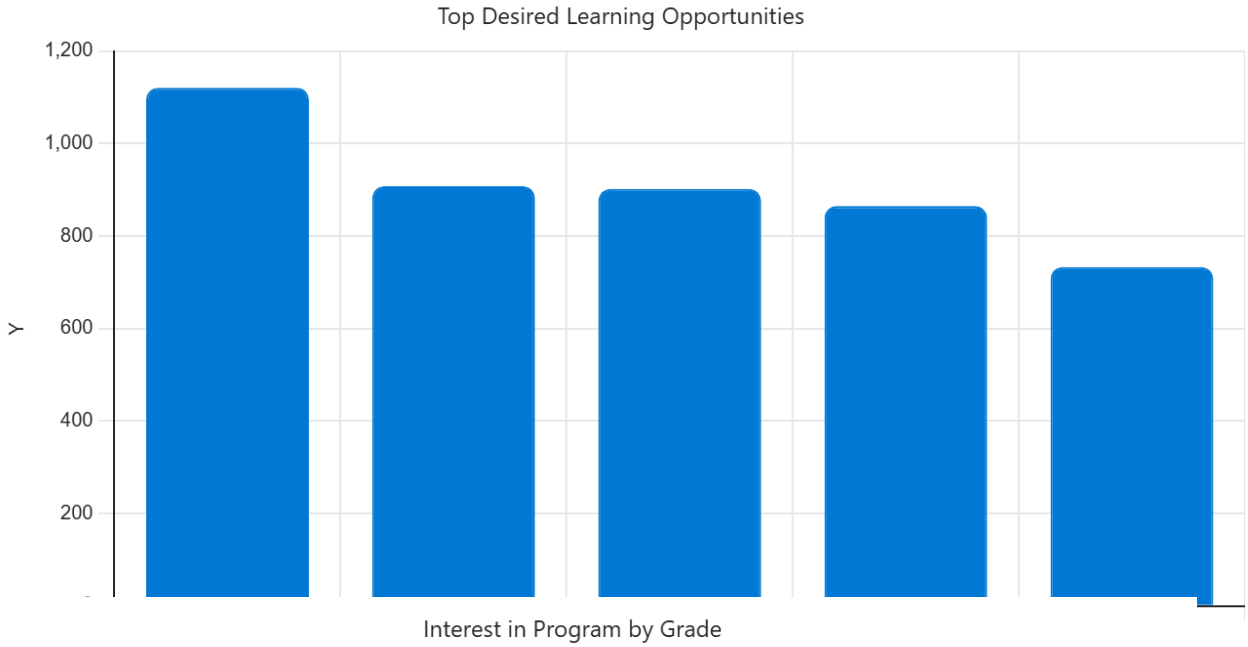
This chart demonstrates clear interest in future-focused programming and provides strong support for pathway development in Health Sciences, STEM, Technology, Business, and Engineering.



5. Interest in the Program by Grade



6. Top Desired Learning Opportunities



7. Grade-Level Comparison

