



# Intergenerational S C H O O L S

TO: Families of LIS students  
FROM: Brooke King, Lynn Carpenter  
RE: Important information on LIS  
DATE: June 12, 2024

We are writing to share an important update on a decision the LIS and TIS Boards made at tonight's meeting on the future of LIS that will improve the educational experience for your children.

After careful consideration of best available options, the Boards have voted unanimously to merge LIS into TIS. The merger, supported and approved by both the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW) and the sponsors of both schools, will be in place by the start of the 2024-2025 school year. Beginning this fall, we will offer free transportation to all our LIS children to TIS, as well as any TIS student living in that immediate area. Most of our newly-hired, highly-qualified and licensed teachers scheduled to teach at LIS this fall will transfer to TIS to maintain student-teacher ratios, while some other staff may transfer to NW.

Our sense of urgency to take this action was not about money – IGS is very strong financially – but about access to good quality education for all our children. Our decision was rooted in our mission and focused on our ongoing commitment the past 24 years to create an exceptional educational experience that supports the wellbeing of our children. This is at the core of who we are and the mission that drives us – to connect, create, and guide a multigenerational community of lifelong learners and spirited citizens as we strive for academic excellence.

As we continuously evaluate our schools and programs, if we identify areas where we're not meeting that mission, we must take decisive actions and make necessary adjustments to better serve our students. That is the situation we find ourselves in now.

As you know, ongoing teacher shortages and staffing challenges following the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted education for students everywhere, and our Intergenerational Schools were no exception. Fortunately, with strong leadership, TIS and Near West are rebounding, with encouraging growth in reading scores and overall academic performance this year while maintaining enrollment and a strong culture. Regrettably, that has not been true at LIS the past two years. Despite our best efforts, ongoing leadership and staffing challenges have left LIS struggling to regain its footing.

At the beginning of the 2023-24 school year, we had hope that we were starting a true turnaround for LIS. First-year principal Curtis Walker, a dynamic and experienced leader, worked to improve the quality of instruction and significantly improved the culture. Unfortunately, LIS did not make the progress we had hoped for in the first year of a multi-year turnaround plan:

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[www.intergenerationschools.org](http://www.intergenerationschools.org)

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- Recently released preliminary student test scores on state tests and nationally-normed assessments are down
- Our strong principal, Curtis Walker, was recruited to serve as a principal in the Cleveland Heights-University Heights School District
- Key staff positions at LIS are vacant, including administration, homeroom teachers and support staff, making the challenge to turnaround LIS even greater and putting students at risk of falling further behind
- Our sponsor may decide not to renew us after next year
- Enrollment remains low

Given these realities, the Boards tonight considered two options for the future of LIS:

- Conducting a search for the next leader to keep the school open to finish what will likely be the last year of our sponsorship contract, resulting in a third year of cultural upheaval and instruction that doesn't meet our mission or our expectations for your children
- Merge LIS with TIS now and offering transportation to LIS children

After considering the options, the Boards voted to merge LIS into TIS. This gives us an opportunity to strengthen the educational experience for our LIS and TIS students alike by maintaining student-teacher ratios, enhancing the multigeneration educational experience, and realigning our focus and resources to better support all our children and families.

With strong leadership and many returning teachers steeped in the culture and IG educational model that is producing encouraging results, TIS is positioned well to navigate the merger, support children and mentor staff coming over from LIS.

We will work closely with TIS principal Aziz Ahmad on assignments and logistics for onboarding the incoming teachers, as well as the transferring LIS students. Mr. Ahmad is already planning for some fun summer events at the school for all families to get to know each other and the new staff.

While we know you have lots of questions, we wanted to notify you of the Boards' decision right away. We will communicate all important updates as soon as we have more details and clarity around next steps. Attached is a FAQ based on what we know now. We've also established a Parents Hotline. Please contact Seamus O'Hara, Director of Intergenerational Programming, on the Parents Hotline at 216-678-6714.

Thank you for your attention and support. We are committed to making this transition as smooth and easy as possible for you and your child. While we are disappointed by the results at LIS, we are encouraged about the future. We believe this decision is in the best interest of our students, keeps us true to our mission, and helps us move forward as a united community providing the exceptional, multi-generational education experience all our children deserve.

