

Tacoma School District  
Board of Directors  
President Kurt Miller

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#### Proposal for School Consolidation:

I understand that the Tacoma School District is in a financial quandary with raising costs and lower school enrollments. I support and recognize the benefits of small class sizes and the importance of neighborhood schools. Retaining small neighborhood schools creates greater opportunity for parent and community involvement in both the classroom and activities necessary to support the school. Encouraging this interaction we are more likely to see our children graduate as individuals who are involved, contributing members in their communities.

As a means to maintain the small neighborhood schools I propose the leasing of unused space to community service programs private and public, that match the goals of the Tacoma Public School District and serve the needs of the whole family. This could eliminate the painful process of school closures in our Tacoma Neighborhoods, as leasing of unused space would alleviate some of the costs for maintaining the school.

If the decision is made to close schools I would like to make a proposal that would also help to alleviate costs.

I request the ability to lease the Hoyt School from the district for the physical location of my school. I believe it would best serve the community to move my school into this four – classroom building. With the prospect of closing two schools in the fall of 2007 it is a poor choice for the district to continue operating in this four – classroom building.

For the past 31 years I have operated a Montessori preschool, kindergarten and child care center providing quality service to over a thousand Tacoma

families, primarily families from the North End neighborhoods. My programs have provided positive healthy learning experiences for children and supported their families by meeting the educational and developmental needs of their children. My programs are blessed with a mixed gender staff and with Montessori training. I am able to maintain the teaching and child care staff for years and do not experience the high staff turnover of many. My staff average eight to ten years employment and I am able to bring in specialists for art, music and math.

The use of the Hoyt Building by my school would only impact the kindergarten classes and one first grade class. As approximately 30% of the children attending Washington-Hoyt come from outside the service zone, kindergarten and the one first grade could easily be absorbed in the Washington building if the enrollment was concentrated on children in the zone. This change would not impact any neighborhood children. Also the change would eliminate the need for the children to manage the daily two-block walk to the Washington building just to eat lunch.

Families would be provided ample time, a whole school year, to realize the changes in their neighborhood school and learn of the new early learning support they would have at Hoyt.

This proposal provides savings for Tacoma Public Schools on staff salaries; facilities maintenance costs; utilities and janitorial services. The District would also gain income from lease of the property. With the lease option, it allows the Tacoma Public Schools to maintain the facility for any potential future use.

Mrs. Nell Hoyt, founder of the Preschool PTA in 1914, was instrumental in helping to secure education for young children. Leasing the Hoyt School to Arcadia Montessori would continue its use as an early learning environment and provide a quality early childhood experience for children from age 3 to ages 6 or 7. The use of Hoyt by Arcadia would allow us to continue to be a feeder school for the North End elementary schools at no cost yet a financial benefit to the district.

After 31 years of business in the North End of Tacoma Arcadia has a solid reputation and a valid connection with the north end families. Arcadia provides scholarships and a high quality early learning environment and

educational foundation for a diverse cultural, religious, economic, & ethnic population.

Under the current budget restrictions and need for future elementary school closures, I believe the proposal of leasing the Hoyt building to Arcadia is the best option for the community and the north end families.

I look forward to the opportunity to further discuss this proposal and the possibility of a shared vision for Hoyt.

Thank You,  
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