

Consolidation proposal by Terri Atkinson, phone 756-6928

**Proposal:           Close Hoyt building and move K-1 program, with the intent of phasing out Washington over the next three years**

**Rationale:**

In looking at school closures, W-H has not been viewed with the same scrutiny as the other buildings. This may be a result of the strong parent support, affluent student body, or high test scores. Regardless, this school needs to be viewed in a more realistic light when considered for consolidation or closure. Some of these concerns include the fact that W-H is not ADA compliant. Furthermore, it does not represent a typical north end student demographically (compared to ALL other north end schools). W-H maintains the lowest free and reduced lunch status, as well as a significantly reduced number of minority students.

Some of the data initially viewed by the consolidation committee was not accurate. This includes the table submitted by the department of research and development currently located on the TPS website titled "Schools Under Consideration for Consolidation". According to other information on the same website, W-H has 7 out of 8 of these criteria. Currently, only 3 of these areas are marked correctly.

The reasons for seriously considering this school for relocation or closure are numerous. However, political pressures and an affluent, impassioned parent base has complicated this matter. The facts remain, W-H did not follow district protocol in kindergarten registration for the upcoming school year, significantly hurting surrounding elementary schools enrollment. W-H is not diverse, nor representative of the inner-city, nor north end students. W-H is an aging building with severe and numerous safety issues, including busing and students walking between two campuses. Most importantly, W-H is not ADA compliant and in violation of state regulations. This is a disservice to students, parents, employees, and community members.

**Action Needed:** Move kinder and grade 1 with teachers to adjacent school (Jefferson), approximately 135 students

**Reasoning:**

- ⚡ Students will be in an environment that is more culturally balanced
  - W-H Minority Population 14.4%
  - District Minority Population 51.5%
- ⚡ Students will be in an environment that is more socio-economically balanced
  - W-H free and reduced lunch 8.9%
  - District free and reduced lunch 53.7%

- ‡ Hoyt is not ADA compliant
- ‡ Washington is not ADA compliant
- ‡ 3 Adjacent schools ADA compliant within 2 mile radius and space
- ‡ Adjacent schools have space
- ‡ Jefferson 204 + 135 = 339, capacity 350 without new wing
- ‡ Serious health/safety concerns regarding a two-building campus (students walking on city streets)
- ‡ Eliminates cost of **two** buildings
- ‡ Incorrect data on consolidation table- School meets 7 out of 8 of the criteria discussed, not 3 out of 8 as shown
- ‡ No safe area to pick up or drop off students
- ‡ Bussing is unsafe
- ‡ High cost to renovate
- ‡ Slow growth area
- ‡ Low building condition assessment (46.0)
- ‡ School sites are prime real estate
- ‡ Keeps students and teachers for Hoyt building in-tact (k-1)
- ‡ Limited transportation expenses, parents transport
- ‡ High potential for buildings to be reused by the community
- ‡ Solves problem of separated population and staff by having two buildings
- ‡ Low crime area, if mothballed buildings less likely to be vandalized
- ‡ Would boost enrollment of all north end schools over time
- ‡ 2004/05 gas and electric expenses \$26,650

Consolidation proposal by Shelley Smith, phone 756-2010

**Proposal: Move Grant Elementary (365 students) to Jason Lee as a K-8**

**Rationale:**

With the potential of losing their school building, Grant Elementary is looking for an alternative site to house their expressive arts program. They would like to move the entire student body. In communicating with Grant parents, it was stated that a minimum of 275-300 students would need to be relocated. The available student space for three elementary buildings within 2 miles is listed below.

School	Capacity	Enrollment 6/06	Available Space	Distance
Franklin	550	280	270	1.8 miles
Jefferson	350 as is 450 w/new wing	204	146 246	2.0 miles
Lowell	500	407	93	0.6 miles
Grant	450	365	95	0.0

In looking at the above school options, Franklin has the most room available. Franklin was attended by well-known artist Dale Chihuly. As a result, when it was built, the design included an art focus, both in structure (sculptured stairwells, hexagonal shapes, etc.) and art pieces. Some of the more exclusive include six large blown glass pieces on display in the library that were donated by Chihuly himself. If Grant were to move to Franklin, Jefferson and Downing would be able to absorb some of the special education population (51 students). However, Grant is opposed to this location because it is on the south side of 6<sup>th</sup> Ave by 5 blocks, and thereby considered to be the wrong side of town. Therefore, without flexibility on Grant's behalf, the Franklin site is not a good option.

In an effort to integrate the expressive arts program into Jefferson the student body was surveyed. Results are available upon request. The primary areas of concern include: 1) number of incoming students too large, 2) construction of new wing [cost, safety], and 3) Grant's desire to become a K-8 school.

Current enrollment of Grant and Jefferson populations as of June 06' are 569 (204 + 365). Available space at Jefferson is 146, overloading the school by 219 students. Even the construction of a new wing would not be sufficient to house the Grant student body. The construction of a new wing would increase the capacity by 100. However, Grant is firm on becoming a K-8. Jefferson's survey results show that while the current population may support the expressive art program, expanding into middle school is

not endorsed. Therefore, without flexibility on both the district (construction) and Grant's behalf, the Jefferson site is not a good option. As expressed to Grant parents, they would need to be willing to limit the number of incoming students and abandon the K-8 idea.

Lowell does not have space for Grant.

It should be noted that none of the above options support the current needs of Grant regarding stage, dance room and floor, sound and lighting systems, and so on. The cost of the dance floor alone is somewhere in the neighborhood of \$50,000 – 100,000. This, as well as proximity and the K-8 model, is one of the reasons Jason Lee Middle School would be a potential location for the expressive arts program and should be looked at more closely.

**Action Needed:** Develop a timeline for move

Redraw boundaries for Jason Lee students

2007/08 phase out 6<sup>th</sup> grade except for incoming Grant students

Offer 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders option of going to new home school or adopting art focus

**Reasoning:**

- ✚ K-8 program to feed into SOTA
- ✚ Minimal bussing costs
- ✚ Grant already uses Jason Lee for performances
- ✚ Jason Lee capacity is 750
- ✚ Projected Availability
  - Enrollment less anticipated 6<sup>th</sup> grade in 08 results in 379 available spaces,  
 $557-186=371$ ,  $750-371=379$
- ✚ Grant would remain in the same neighborhood
- ✚ Few students would be impacted
- ✚ Students would not have to cross 6<sup>th</sup> Ave
- ✚ Jason Lee building has a hot shop (glass blowing), theatre, lighting, sound systems, ...
- ✚ Famous artist attended Jason Lee
- ✚ Building is currently below capacity
- ✚ Building is in excellent condition
- ✚ Program more stable without relying on district support for bussing (which is in current budget cuts – see attached)
- ✚ Eliminates cost of staffing building
- ✚ 2004/05 gas and electric expenses \$26,674

Consolidation proposal by Kevin Smith, Phone 756-2010

**Proposal: Close Skyline Elementary and move entire student body**

**Rationale:**

Skyline is an aging building in a slow growth area. Additionally, it is located next to the PDC. Currently, residents in this area are openly frustrated with the school district and the parking problems created by having the PDC located in a residential community. This situation can only become more complicated with the integration of Willard this spring.

If Skyline was to close, the PDC could expand parking immediately with no added expense. Furthermore, Geiger Elementary is scheduled for remodel, this is the school that Skyline's general education would attend. The remodel could be done with this incoming student base in mind to increase available capacity. Furthermore, if the PDC needs to expand in the future, the Skyline building would be available.

**Action Needed:** Move general education to Geiger  
Move special education (including two ortho-SpEd classrooms) to Jefferson

**Reasoning:**

- ↓ Skyline is in a slow growth area
- ↓ 2004/05 gas and electric expenses \$82,993
- ↓ Adjacent schools have space
- ↓ Increase Geiger enrollment, capacity for 425
  - $230 + 237 = 467$
- ↓ Geiger scheduled for remodel
- ↓ Jefferson ADA approved
- ↓ Jefferson has new special education orthopedic wing
- ↓ Increase Jefferson enrollment, capacity 350 without new wing
  - $204 + 58 = 262$
- ↓ Small number of students impacted
- ↓ Sped students are already bussed – not a new expense
- ↓ These populations fit into both schools (Geiger & Jefferson)
- ↓ Jefferson principal and staff supports SpEd programs
- ↓ PDC (Professional Development Center) can expand into Skyline if needed
- ↓ Eliminates cost of staffing Skyline building
- ↓ Use Skyline parking for PDC use
- ↓ Improved community relations over parking issue

June 30, 2006

Kurt Miller  
President, Board of Directors  
Tacoma Public Schools  
P.O.Box 1357  
Tacoma, WA 98401-1357

Attention: Maureen Smith, board secretary

Dear Kurt Miller,

**SUBJECT: SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION CRITERIA**

Consider **COMMUNITY ASSETS** as consolidation criteria.

**GOAL:** Look at both the contribution of the school to the neighborhood or zone it serves as well as opportunities and assets available in the school's immediate community.

Schools topping the list for consolidation, Washington Hoyt and Downing both have excellent community services located adjacent.

Wheelock library and the pedestrian oriented Proctor commercial district provide exposure to literacy and lively learning experiences immediate to Washington. -Hoyt.

Gonyea Boys and Girls Club, Kandle Park and the new Nollmeyer Police Substation provide recreation, outreach and security to the students and families at Downing and neighborhood.

**SUGGESTION A.** Relocate Lowell, intact, to Jefferson instead of Grant. The Lowell community is located with <sup>no</sup> recreation or neighborhood center nearby. Instead, it is located near two private schools that may draw away students in the Lowell zone. There are comparable high percentages of students living out of zone attending Lowell, Washington Hoyt and Grant. Lowell's staff and principal have engaged students and support from their families. I believe that the school could be successfully 'transplanted to Jefferson'.

**SUGGESTION B.** Eventually relocate Grant Center for the Performing Arts to McCarver, as an extension of Tacoma School of the Arts. I feel that McCarver is a logical location due to its proximity to SOTA and the community of arts and cultural opportunities immediately downhill in the developing Warehouse and Museum districts. Locating Grant's program at the McCarver would provide mutual benefit and enhance learning opportunities for both schools. Locating the Grant program at Jefferson is remote from where art is happening in Tacoma. McCarver originally housed a 600 student intermediate school. Its total area is listed at 98,582 square feet – twice the size of Grant, and equivalent to Baker Middle School. It is an historic landmark worth preserving.

Sincerely,

Kris Anderson

June 30, 2006

Kurt Miller  
President, Board of Directors  
Tacoma Public Schools  
P.O.Box 1357  
Tacoma, WA 98401-1357

Attention: Maureen Smith, board secretary

Dear Kurt Miller,

**SUBJECT: SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION ALTERNATIVE**

Explore **OUTSOURCING FOOD SERVICES** to lower District operating costs.

**RATIONALE:** Tacoma Public Schools CFO Ron Hack cited the escalating costs of managing Food Services, particularly for providing benefits for its primarily part time work force, as a source of considerable revenue loss for the District. Declines in both district enrollment and in the number of students buying school meals continue to erode profitability.. Raising school meal prices next year, will make it less affordable for those families and likely further decrease participation.

**GOALS:**

1. Ensure that all options proposed to reduce operating expenses are addressed instead of closing our neighborhood schools. Find if the District would reduce losses by outsourcing or partnering with a corporate food service provider.
2. Allow school administration to focus on education leadership and the District's resources to improve instruction as detailed in the District Improvement Plan.
3. Improve student nutrition and participation in school meal program by taking advantage of corporate food service scale of operation, market research and program development.

Food service companies, particularly Aramark and Sodex'ho, have increased their market serving public school districts nationwide while levels of state and federal funding for schools have declined. These companies claim that they save school districts money by increased efficiency while improving sales and student nutrition. They would bring professional merchandising, more sophisticated management systems, expanded menus, cost-effective purchasing and ability to offer adjunct services like nutrition education and online payments. Please find promotional materials enclosed that speak to research on promoting student participation, healthy food choices as well as efficiencies and savings. Refer also to the website [www.sodexhoeducation.com](http://www.sodexhoeducation.com) for a list of 16 of client school districts in Washington State, among them our neighboring districts Clover Park and Peninsula. I'm sure that Tacoma would be an attractive market for either them.

Sincerely,

Kris Anderson

Enclosures (2)

**From:** Daniel Rosner <rosner@cascadepg.com>  
**To:** <msmith1@tacoma.k12.wa.us>  
**Date:** 7/1/2006 12:45:29 AM  
**Subject:** School consolidation alternative proposal

TO: Kurt Miller, School Board President

Alternative Consolidation Proposal:

1) Close Skyline elementary after 2006-2007 school year. Move Skyline special needs community to Downing. Build an elevator at Downing and make other minor accessibility changes to the current building to accommodate them until building is renovated with future capital levy funds. Move the non-special needs Skyline community to Geiger. This will significantly improve the census at both the underutilized Downing and Geiger west end schools.

2) Consolidate various non-CAB TPS administrative departments to the former Skyline elementary building. Close and stop paying rent on non-TPS owned facilities. Sell any obsolete administrative facilities owned by TPS to help pay costs associated with consolidation (e.g., to help pay for handicap accessibility improvements at Downing, etc.)

3) Close Grant elementary after 2006-2007 school year. Move Grant to Jefferson. Make Grant the official feeder school for SOTA. Offer current Jefferson community opportunity to join Grant or select any one of the neighboring schools. Partner with Pierce transit to improve public bus transportation between the new Grant and Downtown if necessary.

4) Close McKinley after 2007-2008 school year if the projected enrollment increases from the Salishan development do not bear fruit. Merge the McKinley community with a neighboring school if necessary.

5) Identify other elementary schools not making adequate yearly progress using the objective Federal "No Child Left Behind" criteria. If necessary, begin closing these schools after 2007-2008 school year and move those children to more successful learning communities. Bus them there if you have to.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Rosner  
861-4222

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Daniel Rosner  
Cascade Programming Group, Inc.  
[www.cascadepg.com](http://www.cascadepg.com)

**From:** EILEEN MCCAFFERY-LENT  
**To:** msmith1@tacoma.k12.wa.us  
**Date:** 6/29/2006 3:56:41 PM  
**Subject:** consolidation proposal

Hello, Maureen. I hand-delivered a hard-copy of the Downing Steering Committee's proposal earlier this afternoon, but since you weren't in the office at the time, I thought I would also e-mail this copy to you, just to make sure.

Thank you. Eileen McCaffery-Lent  
3012 N. 33rd  
Tacoma, WA 98407  
752-0627

**Background:** In December 2005, the Tacoma School District stated that, in order to save the district money, they would begin looking into the possibility of closing some elementary schools. Simultaneous to the discussions about closure, the District asked the taxpayers to approve a bond issue to support several building projects, including the renovation of several elementary schools. The taxpayers did not pass the bond.

**Proposal:** It is hoped that the district will be able to find a creative solution to reduce the deficit without there being the need to close any of our schools. However, if the closure of schools is the only alternative, it seems only logical that, if the goal is to save the district money, a decision on school closure would focus on those buildings which have already been identified as being in need of significant and costly renovation. Trying to save money by keeping open buildings that need millions of dollars of capital investment makes no fiscal sense.

Therefore, we support the relocation of Grant Elementary to Jefferson, recognizing that the closure of any school will necessitate the displacement of a significant number of students, families, and staff. It is with this in mind that we propose Downing Elementary School as one of the sites ready and willing to welcome others.

**Rationale:** Downing, as a learning community, as a facility, and as a valued community neighbor, has many assets that make it an ideal school to welcome those who have been displaced. Attributes of Downing include the following:

- \* Quality education for our children, with caring teachers and staff
- \* A tradition of academic excellence. Between 1999 and 2005, Downing's combined math and reading score on the nationally normed ITBS test put the school as one of the top three elementary schools in the district for six of those seven years.
- \* K-1 Program

- \* Foreign Language programs for grades 1-5
- \* Champions before and after school care
- \* A safe area for our children to attend elementary school next door to a police substation. The substation has a community room that is available for all North End families and schools to use.
- \* Boys' & Girls' Club before and after school care & activities
- \* After school activities such as Chess Club and an after school Reading Club
- \* Headstart Program
- \* TLC for 3<sup>rd</sup>- 5<sup>th</sup> graders
- \* Special Ed preschool
- \* Opportunities for volunteering. Currently Downing has 200 registered volunteers, with over 50 volunteers actively supporting weekly classroom activities as well as PTA events such as the Walkathon, Fall Carnival, Holiday Gift Shop, Holiday Family Fun Night, Book Fair and Spring Jamboree
- \* No buses required to bring in the 50% of students who have chosen Downing over their home school.
- \* Excellent play field with safe and new playground equipment
- \* Access to the community garden adjacent to the school property
- \* Strong PTA support with over \$21,000 granted to Downing in the last two years. The money has been used to purchase technology and curriculum for each classroom, including Music, Library, and P.E.
- \* A newly remodeled library
- \* A state of the art computer lab
- \* In Touch With Art enrichment program
- \* Guitar Club

Additional reasons to designate Downing as one of the sites to receive displaced students include the following:

- \* Downing can facilitate additional enrollment without requiring new construction. Also, it has room to easily add to or expand the

existing structure should that become necessary, as Downing's property includes 10.8 acres. Certainly, the property is quite an asset to the District!

\* Downing has a true partnership with the Gonyea Boys' & Girls' Club. To begin, the Tacoma School District owns the property on which the club is located. All Downing students use the Club's gym weekly for PE activities, and it is used as a central location for Downing's annual Health Screening. A large number of Downing students are members of the Club. Downing holds special events annually at the Club, such as the Carnival and the Jamboree, which bring more publicity to the Club as students, parents, friends and staff attend these events

\* Downing has experience welcoming students from other neighborhoods. In fact, a large number of parents have chosen to enroll their children at Downing even though they live outside of the Downing boundaries.

\* Twelve new houses are being built within walking distance of Downing. They and other local residents will have the convenience of walking to their home school.

**Conclusion:** No one wants his or her school to close. The decision to close schools should be one of last resort. However, if the goal of closing a building is to save the District (and therefore the taxpayers) a million dollars annually, keeping open buildings which need several millions of dollars of improvements in the foreseeable future would be pound wise but penny foolish.

While the decision to close the schools needs to be dispassionate, the response to the closure(s) needs to be compassionate. Downing is eager to be part of the solution, as we commit to genuinely welcoming those who have been displaced by honoring the deeply loved traditions of those institutions in the true sense of consolidation.

- The Downing Steering Committee for School Consolidation

**From:** MAUREEN SMITH  
**To:** ron morrison  
**Subject:** Re: consolidation of Tacoma Public Schools

6/29/06

Ms Maureen Smith,

Although I graduated from Tacoma Public Schools, I do not have any kids of my own. So my interest is really of a disinterested kind.

But, I do have experience working for both Tacoma and Clover Park public schools. It seems to me that your fiscally responsible efforts fly in the face of what is in the best interest of today's students in our public schools. Often today our students come from families with many troubles regardless of income levels.

Keeping the interests of the students first should be the priority of all public school systems.

One of those interests should be to maintain the opportunity for young students to have a one to one significant relationship with some carefully selected responsible staff member/members in the public schools that they attend.

In a time of many troubled students/ families that opportunity can be a life saver and a great academic savior in our communities/schools.

The one to one relationship between a student and a teacher or staff member(sometimes it is in fact a school bus driver) of mutual interest and respect and care can greatly affect the student's academic performance and his total life.

**BUT WHEN YOU CONSOLIDATE SCHOOLS, THAT CHANCE IS LESS PROBABLE AND LESS LIKELY, THUS THE STUDENT BECOMES NOT A INDIVIDUAL BUT ONE OF MANY STUDENTS IN A PARTICULAR GRADE. THE STUDENT'S SENSES THIS CHANGE AND HIS BEHAVIOR WILL REFLECT HOW HE PERCEIVES HE IS SEEN ( AS JUST ONE MORE SCHOOL CENSUS NUMBER).**

Therefore, I think that school spending should take school consolidation off the table except where it is still feasible to maintain a personalized educational school environment, where the numbers of staff and students are not so great as to depersonalize the educational process.

As you know, we have had drug related discipline problems at Stadium. I think the opportunity for drug related problems in the student attendance at any school will be greatly reduced if there is maintained a personalized education process, a process where every student has the opportunity to maintain on the school grounds a one to one relationship with a screened and carefully selected staff member. But, if consolidation allows schools to get too big, this is unlikely.

Ron Morrison

Tacoma Resident and tax payer

**Subject: School consolodation closure proposal****Date:** Thursday, June 29, 2006 10:57 AM**From:** patty irish <irishish@comcast.net>**To:** KURT MILLER <KMILLE1@tacoma.k12.wa.us>**Conversation:** School consolodation closure proposal

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to make a propasal regarding the school consolidation closure. From the beginning of the school consolodation process it was brought up that they would try to make the least impact on the smallest population of students and families. I believe it was also mentioned that even though a school was not on the closure list did not mean that the enrolled students had to remain in that building. This leaves Jefferson with the smallest enrollment. Keeping this in mind I propose that Washington Hoyts entire program be moved to Jefferson Elementary School. Facilitating a brand new building to its fullest capacity. I propose that Jefferson students should move into Downing Elementary. **If it is even true**, from what I hear, Washington-Hoyt may be over capacity at this time, but really should only have taken in the amount their school was able to enroll without needed extra costs of adding portables etc. The bond did not pass and will likely fail anytime in the near future due to low inrollent of unused new buildings. Due to the expenses it would cost to bring Washington-Hoyt up to date I recommend we give them a brand new building with their entire staff to follow. This of course will need boundary changes somewhere. We need the bond to pass again to gain funds for other schools who will need it in the future. We need to Listen to the community who spoke loud and clear during the last bond campaign. The Police Substation, Gonyea Boys and Girls Club and Metro Parks is an asset to our children not only at Downing, but the ENTIRE North End/West End. The 10 plus acres that Downing is settled on leaves open many options in the future for re-building, adding on if needed to if enrollent ever increases. Thank you for your time. Best of Luck to all of you during this time of making tough decisions. Patty Irish (Mason Middle school parent, Stadium High School Parent)