

Dear Tillicum Community Members,

Tillicum is SAVED! NO MIDDLE SCHOOL CONSOLIDATIONS!

BSD Superintendent Dr. Aramaki has assured us that the BSD has no current plans for school consolidation, with the earliest discussion on the matter set for 2025—giving us time to fortify our financial standing as we move past the pandemic and into an era of economic recovery and stabilized inflation.

Dr. Aramaki himself said that our community's passion, especially the input from our students, was a game-changer at the Dec 14th board meeting. We will find another solution, together.

Behind the scenes, our dedicated PTA board members engaged in thoughtful dialogue with Dr. Aramaki and various school board members. Their mission? To champion the cause of Tillicum and showcase the myriad reasons our school is invaluable.

A huge, massive thank you to everyone who put their heart and soul into this. We didn't just save our beloved Tillicum – we made a difference for all the middle schools in the district!

Big thanks to Dusty, our awesome Principal, for standing with us every step. You rock!

And to our amazing students, wow! Nearly 300 postcards and 50 heartfelt letters to the board! Our students and parents were the dominant voice at the key board meetings. You all turned up and spoke out in such numbers, it was impossible to ignore. Hats off to the teachers who gave space and time for this letter-writing magic to happen.

Big cheers to Sean Patch and Tricia Miller, our Wednesday Student Advocacy meeting heroes. You guys were crucial to our success. Thank you to all the students that were part of the Student Advocacy group.

And to our Save Tillicum advocacy leaders and active members - Sean Patch, Natalie Danielson, Drew Danielson, Shen Ge, Olga Lopez, Chengzi Wang, Andrew Parkins, Stephanie Parkins, Sarah Moon, Diane Liu, Fanpei Kung, Wenyan Niu, Lidan Huang, Andrew Bernat, Penny Olson, Kaili Baker, Carmel Sasaki, and everyone I might have missed - I am sending you the biggest virtual high five and gratitude. Thank you!

Thank you, former Eastgate PTA board members and parents Megan Russell, Nik Rebhuhn, and Carol Pitzel Cruz. Your experience and learnings were very valuable. Thank you Eastgate!

Also, a shout out to the parents from Odle (Ru Sheng & Suhani. Agarwal), Tyee (Peggy Wang), Wilburton parents from P.A.C. (Ryan Roberts, Tim Chiang-lin), and PLE parents (Stuart Reynolds). Thank you for the data and joint efforts.

We've shown that Tillicum isn't just a school and not just a building; it's a thriving community. But our mission isn't fully complete. We still need to tackle the budget shortfall – win back kids from private and push WA state to fully fund education.

As the holidays roll in, let's celebrate this win with our families and cherish the community spirit that got us here. Happy holidays!

Paul Tsai
Tillicum PTA President