

The summary below has been compiled by ChatGPT and/or Microsoft Copilot. Updated 8.29.25 (The last submission received before the first recommendation given on 9/2/25)
All comments have been filtered out using the school name listed in the response for “Which school do you represent or have students at?” Total feedback is at 1040+ responses.

Cottonwood Elementary

Strong Community Support and Academic Excellence: Cottonwood Elementary is widely recognized for its exceptional academic performance, outstanding staff, and nurturing environment. Families actively choose to live within its boundaries—or commute from outside districts—because of the school’s reputation. It is consistently cited as one of the top-performing schools in Utah and a cornerstone of community pride.

Neighborhood and Geographic Considerations: As a walkable neighborhood school, especially for families in central and south Holladay, Cottonwood holds unique geographic value. Its location at the southern edge of Granite School District means closure would create a significant service gap. Parents have voiced serious concerns about increased commute times, traffic congestion at other schools, and the erosion of neighborhood cohesion.

Families highlight the benefits of walkability for children’s health, independence, and social well-being. Many students walk to school daily, often supported by nearby grandparents—creating a trusted, intergenerational safety net. Removing this walkable option would disrupt family routines and diminish the character of the neighborhood.

Potential Impact of Closure: The community warns that closing Cottonwood would drive families toward private, charter, or out-of-district schools, ultimately risking enrollment and funding losses for Granite. Some would consider homeschooling or relocating altogether. Parents also fear that dismantling Cottonwood’s tight-knit school culture would weaken social bonds and civic involvement. Many chose their homes specifically because of Cottonwood and expressed that its closure would be emotionally devastating.

Equity and Fairness: Families previously reassigned from schools like Millcreek described those moves as destabilizing. A second reassignment would feel inequitable and disruptive. There is ongoing concern that the quality, walkability, and safety of reassigned schools may not match what Cottonwood currently offers.

Alternative Proposals: Community members proposed relocating specialized programs—such as the Accelerated Learning Center (ALC) or French Immersion—to Cottonwood, reopening closed schools, redrawing boundaries, or prioritizing closure of schools with lower in-boundary attendance and limited walkability. They also urged greater investment in class size reduction and teacher support district-wide.

Emotional and Generational Ties: Generational ties to Cottonwood run deep. Many alumni are now enrolling their own children and fondly recall meaningful learning experiences and lifelong friendships.

Teacher and Staff Retention: Families credit Cottonwood’s exceptional teaching staff as a key driver of student success. There’s growing concern that rumors of closure and district uncertainty will lead to staff departures, undercutting the very excellence the district aims to preserve.

Walkability and Community Strength: The school’s unique location provides safe crossings and accessible routes that are irreplaceable. Oakwood Elementary is already overcapacity, and no nearby schools can adequately absorb Cottonwood’s student body. Cottonwood’s southern position and available capacity make it ideally suited to continue serving this area. Community engagement is strong—evidenced by robust fundraising, volunteerism, and support for educators and students alike.

Boundary and Program Suggestions: Some parents voiced support for reassessing programs at other schools, such as Morningside, that draw significant out-of-boundary enrollment. They believe this could help protect the sustainability of schools like Cottonwood, which serve a thriving in-boundary population.

Summary: The consensus is clear: Cottonwood Elementary is a high-performing, community-rooted, walkable school that families trust and treasure. Closing it would fracture neighborhoods, displace students, and erode confidence in the district’s long-term planning. The community is calling not for resistance, but for creativity—solutions that preserve what’s working, reinvest in what’s needed, and reflect the lived experiences of those most affected.

Crestview Elementary

Support for Neighborhood Schools: Community members strongly advocate for keeping schools open in walkable, child-dense neighborhoods. Walking to school fosters independence, supports mental and physical health, and strengthens community ties. Research linking walkability to reduced childhood obesity and increased activity was cited. Parents worry that bussing students to distant schools would disrupt social networks and children’s sense of belonging.

Crestview Elementary: A Cornerstone of Community: Crestview Elementary is repeatedly highlighted as a vital part of the community. Families describe moving to the neighborhood specifically for the school’s walkability, strong academics, and welcoming culture. Newer residents, including one family who relocated from Chicago, shared how quickly they were embraced by the Crestview community. This parent noted the school’s deep volunteer involvement and described Crestview as “the cornerstone” of their family’s daily life. Parents and children alike express a strong emotional attachment to the school. Crestview is a neighborhood and community gathering place. To see this school closed would be devastating to this area. My children are young but if Crestview closed I would send them to Canyon Rim—no questions asked.

Concerns About School Closures: Many oppose closing any neighborhood schools, warning that closures would drive away young families, increase class sizes, and harm community cohesion. There's concern that closing Crestview or similar schools could trigger an enrollment shift to nearby districts like Canyons. Others caution that eliminating neighborhood schools may contribute to broader dissatisfaction with the public system, pushing families toward charter or private options.

Suggestions for Strengthening Schools:

Crestview: Keep the school open and invest in its already strong foundation of parent support and community spirit.

Morningside: Consider designating it as a hub for specialized programs (e.g., ALC, French Dual Immersion), allowing neighborhood students to attend closer schools like Crestview or Driggs.

Cottonwood: Consider adding a Spanish Immersion program to attract more families. If closure is unavoidable, explore relocating the ALC program to the building.

District-wide: Rather than closing schools, focus on reducing class sizes—suggested maximum: 27.5 students per class. Large class sizes are seen as a primary deterrent to staying in public schools.

Driggs Elementary

Community Importance & Neighborhood Anchor: Howard R. Driggs Elementary continues to serve as the educational, social, and civic heart of Holladay. Families are drawn to the neighborhood for its walkability, academic reputation, and strong sense of belonging. Recent demographic shifts—including an influx of young families—highlight growing demand for access to Driggs. Many residents live within walking distance and emphasize its role as a multigenerational hub and center for community activities. The school's location enables safe, independent commutes and fosters lifelong habits of connection and responsibility. Adjacent church parking further supports safe access during school events. Driggs remains a defining part of Holladay's identity and a cornerstone for families investing in public education across generations. Driggs Elementary has high enrollment, thriving PTA and parent input, and is located on two busy streets which makes it quite accessible to all patrons—those that walk, are bussed, and are driven. The school should remain open for the foreseeable future.

Intergenerational and Long-Term Investment: Enrollment continues to trend upward, with around 450 students currently attending and no projected decline through 2029. Recent staffing increases reflect incoming cohorts, with kindergarten class sizes exceeding 35 students. The school can house up to 700 students and includes five early childhood rooms, ready to accommodate additional growth without major capital investment. Families consistently bypass private and charter alternatives to attend Driggs, citing its educational continuum with Olympus Jr. and Skyline High. Many who once attended the school as children now plan to enroll their own, underscoring its lasting impact. Over the last ten years, members of the Driggs community have had the unique opportunity to engage as parents, hourly employees, and teachers. This multifaceted perspective reveals a tremendous collaboration between dedicated faculty and staff and caring parents who give generously of their time and resources to benefit all students at Driggs—and often others across the district.

Enrollment Trends and District Retention: Driggs stands out for its strong in-boundary enrollment and community-driven stability. Families warn that closing high-performing schools like Driggs risks pushing students out of the public system entirely—into charters, private schools, or homeschooling—undermining district cohesion. Past boundary decisions, such as the closure of Holladay Elementary, are cited as missteps that fractured community trust. Julie Jackson has stated that three schools should close to reach “ideal” enrollment. However, Driggs is already within 50 students of the target 500 and is projected to remain stable or grow through 2029. A quick analysis of the 10 schools considered in this study shows that with two closures, average enrollment per school is 498. Closing three schools would push that number over 550, packing students into rooms previously used for art, music, or other programming. Spring Lane and Millcreek Elementaries closed just two years ago, and the schools that absorbed those student bodies have barely had time to assess the impact. Now those same schools are involved in this study. The district should allow time for those effects to play out before implementing further closures—or consider closing one to two schools now and identifying others for future evaluation if certain conditions are not met. Eliminating 30% of schools in one area is an overly aggressive approach that presents more risks than benefits.

Academic Excellence & Enrichment Programs: Driggs ranks #3 in Granite District, with academic proficiency far exceeding state averages: 78% in math and 75% in reading. Nearly 90% of students meet early literacy benchmarks. These results reflect exceptional instruction, consistent collaboration, and a school-wide culture of rigor and support. In addition to academics, Driggs offers a broad array of enrichment opportunities—including fire choir, chess club, running club, art nights, and garden projects. These programs strengthen student engagement and personal development, supported by robust parent and volunteer involvement—even from those without children currently enrolled. Steady enrollment, strong academic performance, and comprehensive before- and after-school programs make Driggs a vibrant part of the local community. Driggs meets every criterion outlined in the study for preservation. Enrollment is strong, academic performance ranks in the top 1% statewide, and the building—updated in 2019—has capacity for 650–700 students. With 78% in-boundary attendance and the majority of students walking to school, Driggs also maintains an engaged PTA and diverse programming, including STEM, chess, garden, book, fire choir, safety patrol, student ambassadors, and gold medal mile.

Walkability, Traffic & Safety: Nearly 80% of Driggs students walk or bike to school. Sidewalk improvements along 27th East and the school’s multi-access layout make it one of the safest, most efficient campuses in the district. The adjacent church partnership facilitates smooth parking, drop-off, event hosting, and emergency planning—amenities not easily replicated elsewhere. The generosity of the LDS church in allowing Driggs to utilize its parking lot has created a safe and efficient way for students to arrive at school and provides overflow parking during school-wide functions. Many families use their close proximity to the school by walking, biking, or scooting. The church partnership also provides emergency evacuation space and a pickup/dropoff zone off the street. Driggs is a cornerstone of the community, and its closure would create a ripple effect throughout the neighborhood. Closing a thriving school would feel punitive to a community that has invested deeply in its success. Many working families rely on the walkability of Driggs; if closed, some would be forced to drive children to school and may opt for private alternatives closer to their workplaces.

Facilities Investment and Capital Efficiency: Driggs underwent a \$6 million district-funded renovation in 2019, with seismic upgrades, ADA accessibility, modern tech integration, and expanded classroom capacity. The campus now serves up to 700 students and offers ample room for future growth. Families assert that the Facility Condition Index does not accurately

reflect these investments, leading to potentially flawed assessments. Given its structural soundness and recent upgrades, closing Driggs would be fiscally irresponsible and counter to planning logic. Taxpayers deserve responsible stewardship of funds already invested in the campus.

Community Disruption & Citywide Impact: Closing Driggs would break apart a highly functional network of families, neighborhoods, and civic partnerships. It would disrupt walkability, increase travel burdens, and erode parent participation and student engagement. Families warn of long-term consequences, including overcrowded classrooms, weakened peer connections, and greater stress across age groups. The district is urged to learn from prior closures that fractured communities and diminished public trust.

Equity and Representation: Driggs welcomes families from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and maintains one of the most inclusive cultures in the district. Parents advocate for relocating specialized programs (e.g., gifted, dual language) to underutilized campuses instead of closing thriving schools. Preserving Driggs affirms public education values, equitable access, and responsible stewardship. The district continues to face significant challenges related to declining enrollment. In light of this, the current approach to school boundaries and transportation policies should be reevaluated. Specifically, the district should consider implementing open boundaries and a more flexible busing system not solely based on geographic location. The current structure contributes to growing disparities between schools on the east and west sides of the district. East-side schools face critically low enrollment levels that threaten long-term viability, while many west-side schools struggle with overcrowding and limited resources. This imbalance also exacerbates issues related to equity and diversity. The current boundary system no longer serves communities effectively. Without meaningful, systemic changes, these challenges will persist—and likely intensify. The board is urged to prioritize sustainable, district-wide solutions that ensure every student has access to quality education, regardless of address.

Community Recommendations

- Keep Driggs open to preserve enrollment stability, academic strength, and return on investment
- Update the Facility Condition Index to reflect 2019 renovations
- Reassign students from under-enrolled schools to Driggs where appropriate
- Limit closures to two schools initially and reassess after impact evaluation
- Prioritize walkability, proximity, and enrollment trends in boundary decisions
- If closure occurs, reassign neighborhoods near Holladay Blvd–Highland Drive to Crestview
- Avoid repeating past closures that fractured communities and reduced district retention

Preserving Driggs is not just an educational decision—it’s a commitment to neighborhood vitality, community trust, and the core values of public education.

Eastwood Elementary

Cornerstone of Community Identity: Eastwood Elementary serves as a neighborhood anchor—families move to the area specifically to walk or bike to school. Initiatives like the “bike

bus” foster student independence, health, and social connection. The school draws from over 20 zip codes, creating a richly diverse and inclusive student body. In an area lacking accessible parks or recreational space, Eastwood doubles as essential green space and a gathering place for the community. The unique community surrounding Eastwood cannot be replicated. Families walk to school, meet neighbors, and build lasting relationships rooted in shared educational values and neighborhood connection. The school is deeply loved and central to daily life.

Families emphasize that Eastwood’s grounds are used year-round by the community, serving as a vital social hub and green space. Without it, many fear the loss of community cohesion and safe, walkable play areas for children. The school’s traditions—such as Art Night and Dance Fest—are cherished across generations and deeply woven into the neighborhood’s identity.

New residents in neighborhoods like Olympus Cove North cite Eastwood’s walkability and community atmosphere as major reasons for moving to the area. With limited walkable spaces and increasing commercial development, Eastwood remains one of the few accessible, family-friendly public spaces that fosters connection and safety.

Academic Excellence & Whole-Child Development: Eastwood consistently ranks as a top performer in math, reading, and science, with a Gold STEM designation. Enrichment offerings such as STEM Night, Art Night, and the buddy system emphasize the development of the whole child, blending academic rigor with social-emotional growth and a strong culture of kindness. Signature traditions like the decades-old Dance Fest deeply connect learning with creativity and community involvement.

Parents value Eastwood’s small class sizes and individualized attention, especially for neurodivergent children. The school’s academic strength and nurturing environment are seen as critical to student success and well-being. Families also highlight the importance of maintaining small classrooms to support diverse learning styles and build strong teacher-student relationships.

Strategic Location & Public Investment: As the only elementary school within a 2-mile radius, Eastwood serves geographically isolated areas like Emigration Canyon. Its location near major freeways makes it an ideal drop-off point for commuting families. Recent infrastructure investments by Millcreek City, UDOT, and federal partners signal a long-term commitment to the site. The school was previously bonded for a rebuild—delayed due to Skyline High School costs—and the community expects this investment to be honored.

Families question the logic of renovating Eastwood’s front office and entrance only to propose closure shortly after. Many see this as a waste of public funds and a sign of inconsistent planning. The current principal is praised for making meaningful improvements, and parents are disheartened by the disruption closure would cause.

Strong Family Commitment & Small-School Strengths: Despite its small size, Eastwood fosters a nurturing and inclusive environment that families remain loyal to—even when offered placement elsewhere. Young families continue to move into the neighborhood, and the birth-to-age-three population isn’t reflected in current projections. Families describe Eastwood as a safe space where every child is known, supported, and empowered to grow. Many families have chosen to buy homes within the Eastwood boundary specifically because of the school’s stellar educational opportunities. Children thrive here—students express deep love for their school, and families feel a strong sense of belonging and pride in the community.

Some families commute from outside the neighborhood specifically for Eastwood's high performance and accessibility. Others, while not zoned for Eastwood, choose it for its strong academic outcomes and hope any future changes will prioritize improved student support, teacher ratios, and access to enrichment programs. Residents of Emigration Canyon express concern over increased commute times and reduced family time if Eastwood closes.

Families also share deeply personal stories of their long-standing involvement with Eastwood—as parents, volunteers, and staff. The school's culture of kindness, academic excellence, and parent engagement is seen as irreplaceable. Many describe Eastwood as a place where students are truly known and supported, and where families have built lasting relationships and traditions.

Concerns About Proposed Closure

Closing Eastwood would:

- Disrupt a thriving, high-performing school community
- Reduce accessibility for students in Emigration Canyon and beyond
- Erase unique programs and culture that can't simply be transplanted
- Waste taxpayer investment and erode public trust
- Drive families toward private or charter options, threatening future enrollment
- Permanently eliminate essential green space in a walkable but park-limited area

The community has also voiced strong frustration with the process—citing rushed timelines, inconsistent communication, misinformation, and a growing sense of disenfranchisement. Some parents call for district leadership changes and greater professional oversight.

Families are already making contingency plans, including transferring to schools in other districts such as Highland Park Elementary in Salt Lake City, due to the inconvenience and lack of viable alternatives within Granite School District. Others say they will move to charter schools if Eastwood closes.

Creative and Constructive Alternatives:

- Relocate programs such as Magnet or DLI from Morningside to Eastwood to better utilize space and increase enrollment
- Temporarily house Eastwood students at Oakridge while Eastwood is rebuilt to meet earthquake safety standards
- Explore grade-split models (e.g., K–2 and 3–5) to maintain neighborhood access while adjusting capacity
- Offer tuition-based full-day preschool to retain families, similar to Beacon Heights
- Let demographic changes take effect, allowing time for young families and future cohorts to reach enrollment age
- Split programs like French Immersion and Advanced Learning from Morningside and house them in different schools to serve more communities equitably and expand program access

Preserve District Unity: There is concern that closing multiple Area 5 schools will accelerate interest in splitting from the Granite School District. Families want to stay within the district but feel forced to consider alternatives if neighborhood schools are eliminated. Many urge innovative planning and preservation of successful small-school models over widespread consolidation.

Conclusion: Preserve, Don't Eliminate: Eastwood is academically strong, environmentally vital, and culturally rich. The community overwhelmingly supports keeping the school open and urges the district to:

- Protect Eastwood's identity and public value
- Engage in transparent, inclusive planning
- Implement bold, creative alternatives
- Preserve green space should closure proceed

Morningside

Thriving, In-Demand School with Signature Academic Programs: Morningside stands out as one of Utah's top-performing elementary schools, drawing families from across the Salt Lake Valley due to its exceptional programming and student-centered culture. With flagship initiatives like French Dual Language Immersion (DLI) and the Advanced Learning Center (ALC), the school balances academic rigor with inclusivity. It also offers enriching opportunities in STEM, the arts, and real-world learning through events like Biz Town. The synergy between DLI, ALC, and traditional learners encourages unity, mutual respect, and school-wide cohesion. Families view Morningside as uniquely delivering both public school accessibility and specialized academic depth—a combination rarely found elsewhere. Recent feedback reinforced the deep commitment to both the DLI and ALC tracks. Many families noted that these signature programs were key factors in their decision to attend Morningside, calling them essential to the school's character and success. While recognizing the building may benefit from updates, parents emphasized that the school's academic strength, magnet programming, and positive learning culture far outweigh facility concerns. Grandparents and caregivers also noted how integrated the programs are across students, reflecting a harmonious and thriving learning environment.

Deep Community Roots and Generational Commitment: Morningside is deeply embedded in its walkable, safe neighborhood. Families often relocate specifically to access its programming, with many alumni now enrolling their own children and playing an active role in the school's daily life. Historically adaptive, Morningside has embraced change—expanding programs and serving diverse populations while maintaining a consistent culture of excellence. The surrounding community is highly committed, with multiple generations expressing strong investment in preserving this educational cornerstone. The school continues to serve as a point of pride for families who see it not just as a place of learning, but a space of belonging and continuity. Many families have moved into the neighborhood in recent years specifically to attend Morningside, purchasing homes within walking distance to the school. Enrollment is expected to grow, with new students entering each year. Smaller class sizes are viewed as a major benefit to student learning and well-being.

Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity: Morningside fosters a welcoming and inclusive environment where students from varied academic, linguistic, and personal backgrounds thrive together. Cross-program friendships flourish, and students benefit from a climate of empathy, collaboration, and social-emotional support. Some concerns have been raised about class size differences and the need to maintain equity across both DLI and traditional English tracks.

Families continue to advocate for balanced attention and resources across all cohorts to sustain the school's inclusive mission.

Stable and Growing Enrollment: Morningside has maintained strong, stable enrollment, with sustained interest in both French DLI and ALC programs. Families emphasized that the school's remaining capacity should not be viewed as underutilization but as readiness for future growth—especially given demographic renewal in surrounding neighborhoods and anticipated shifts caused by nearby closures. A consistent stream of families continues to move into the area, many with children preparing to enter the school-aged pipeline. These patterns point to long-term viability and increasing relevance in district planning. Families with children entering in 2026, 2027, and beyond have already committed to the neighborhood and school, reinforcing the need for long-term preservation.

Critical Role in Family Logistics: Morningside's central location, walkability, and after-school infrastructure make it a logistical cornerstone for many households. Its programs are carefully woven into family routines, and for those previously impacted by boundary changes, the potential loss of continuity is especially concerning. Disruption to this structure—especially relocation away from areas south of 4500 South—would affect academic progress, emotional well-being, and daily household stability. Families living within walking distance rely on the school's accessibility and integration into everyday life.

Concerns Regarding Closure and Process Transparency: There is deep concern that Morningside may be penalized by flawed or inconsistent planning processes. Families cited frustrations over previous closures, the lack of transparency in evaluation criteria, and decisions that have undermined stability over time. One such example includes the sale of a former neighborhood school to a charter operator, leaving Morningside to absorb broader burdens without added support. Parents also raised concerns about boundary misalignments that pull students into different junior high and high school tracks—leading to attrition toward the Olympus network and destabilizing Churchill Junior High's enrollment. There is strong advocacy for honoring past district assurances that DLI remains a school-based program, not one subject to district-wide relocation. Families want to ensure Morningside remains in the Skyline pathway and call for long-term boundary strategies that strengthen—not dilute—network continuity.

Parent-Driven Solutions and Recommendations

- Preserve and invest in Morningside's successful DLI and ALC programs
- Expand access to gifted services through cluster classrooms for intermediate learners
- Consider converting Morningside into a full magnet school with open enrollment
- Explore creative scheduling solutions (e.g., half-day immersion or teacher-sharing models) to optimize space and maintain program quality
- Revisit boundaries to improve neighborhood access and ensure equity across program types
- Continue leveraging community volunteers to enrich extracurriculars, logistics, and school spirit

- Explore relocating neighborhood programming to nearby schools with space (e.g., Driggs) to allow for further programmatic growth

Comparative and Strategic Analysis: Families emphasized that Morningside’s current enrollment, academic success, and community anchoring surpass several peer schools also under review—especially those with lower performance indicators or weaker facility utilization. They urged the district to prioritize long-term viability, program excellence, and community outcomes over raw square footage or cost-based calculations.

Conclusion: Protect What Works Morningside represents a rare blend of academic excellence, inclusion, and community strength. It offers a learning experience that integrates public accessibility with elevated instruction, all rooted in a culture of empathy and neighborhood pride. Families are calling on the district to protect what works, honor prior commitments, and invest in schools that are thriving. To close or dismantle Morningside would be to fragment a success story already delivering on the promise of equitable, high-quality public education.

Oakridge Elementary:

Oakridge Elementary, in close connection with Churchill Junior High, forms a cornerstone of Olympus Cove’s identity. Families are drawn to the neighborhood specifically for its walkable, community-centered schools. Many residents have deliberately chosen to live near Oakridge so their children can walk to school—developing independence, daily routines, and neighborhood friendships in a safe environment. Closure would disrupt not only current students but also deter future families seeking these unique advantages.

Residents emphasized that their commitment to this feeder pattern—Oakridge, Churchill, and Skyline High—was foundational in choosing where to live, even before having children. Skyline’s excellence, including programs like IB, has long inspired community trust in the academic pipeline. Oakridge, as the starting point of that journey, delivers lasting impact and is viewed as a vital neighborhood asset.

Key Considerations

Environmental Benefits: Oakridge’s elevated location offers cleaner air during winter inversions, quieter surroundings, and natural beauty that contributes to student wellness. These environmental advantages support both student health and learning outcomes, reinforcing the campus’s strategic value.

Dedicated Staff: The school is home to a devoted and respected teaching team. Families described a strong partnership between educators and parents that supports student success and emotional well-being. Closing the school could undermine staff morale and cause teacher displacement or attrition—at a time when educator retention is already a districtwide challenge.

Facility Assessment: Although Oakridge’s Facility Condition Index (FCI) is low, community members questioned whether the score accurately reflects its current functionality and long-term potential. Recent upgrades, including an improved accessible entrance, highlight ongoing investment. Transparency around facility metrics remains a key concern, especially with older data being presented in some open house sessions.

Historical & Cultural Value: Oakridge is one of the district’s oldest institutions and holds deep community value. Its legacy includes academic excellence, civic participation, and multigenerational enrollment. Parents emphasized that closure would not just be a logistical decision, but a cultural and emotional disruption—undermining neighborhood pride and historical continuity.

Concerns About Closure: Beyond the loss of a physical campus, closing Oakridge would deal a blow to neighborhood walkability and livability. Families worry about increased traffic, added transportation burden, and deteriorating air quality as more parents are forced to drive to schools farther from home.

There is also concern about inconsistent communication: some families reported not receiving important updates or boundary notices. Misinformation and speculation—particularly around potential redevelopment of the site into private or religious facilities—have added to community unease. Residents want assurances that taxpayer-funded properties will remain in public service, not be sold or privatized.

Families expressed frustration with open house responses that deflected concerns to external issues such as legislative funding or voter-approved bonds. Many felt that promises from Granite’s 2017 bond appeal—\$238 million for 31 schools over 10 years—have not materialized, with only two high schools appearing to receive the bulk of funding. Some questioned whether those allocations reflect broader district priorities, and what advocacy strategies are being pursued to secure more equitable financial support.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that private school enrollment has increased due to limited before- and after-school care and the lack of specialized academic programming. Meanwhile, Oakridge’s Montessori program remains a strong draw for families both inside and outside district boundaries—evidence that the campus can thrive when supported.

Parents also raised serious concerns about district messaging, especially dismissive comments implying that local birth rates are responsible for declining school enrollment. Such remarks, regardless of intent, felt disrespectful and demoralizing—particularly in a community known for its deep investment in public education.

Alternatives and Recommendations

- **Expand educational offerings** such as STEM, Dual Language Immersion, or Gifted & Talented programming to retain in-boundary families and boost enrollment.
- **Adjust school boundaries** to relieve overcrowding elsewhere and preserve high-functioning neighborhood schools like Oakridge.

- **Enhance before- and after-school care options** to improve accessibility and meet the needs of working families.
- If closure becomes inevitable, **work with the community to repurpose the site** for public good—such as parks, green space, early learning centers, or educator housing.
- Avoid commercial redevelopment or privatization of public land, especially in high-value, child-centered locations.

Additional Insights from Real Estate and Public Sector Expertise: Experts note that Oakridge’s topography and infrastructure make it poorly suited for major commercial or residential redevelopment. Rather than seek profit-based reuse, it would be more beneficial to retain the site as a public asset. National models point to educator housing, early education centers, and green space as viable long-term uses for school properties that remain aligned with community values.

Parents also urged the district to more clearly communicate timelines, enrollment data, and trade-offs between programming centralization and neighborhood access. Greater transparency and humility in public meetings could repair trust and foster collaborative solutions.

Summary Statement: Oakridge Elementary is more than just a building—it’s a safe, historic, and environmentally beneficial school that anchors the Olympus Cove neighborhood. With a dedicated staff, recent accessibility upgrades, strong walkability, and high community support, it remains a shining example of what neighborhood public education can be.

Rather than disrupt what’s working, families and residents encourage the district to invest in Oakridge’s long-term future and explore creative alternatives to closure. Preserving Oakridge means protecting equity, honoring past commitments, and strengthening community-centered planning for years to come.

Oakwood Elementary

Strong Support for Oakwood and Cottonwood These schools are consistently cited among the top-performing and most beloved in the district. Families speak with deep pride about their strong academic cultures, dedicated staff, and close community bonds. Closure of either school is viewed as a major loss with significant ripple effects—especially for families who have already endured previous closures and boundary changes.

Feedback emphasizes that disruption, especially for young learners, is destabilizing. For students required to change schools multiple times during formative years, it introduces repeated challenges to academic progress, social development, and emotional security.

Concerns About Stability and Student Well-being Parents express that moving schools can be particularly traumatic for children with special needs, such as those on the autism spectrum or with sensory sensitivities. The disruption of familiar routines and trusted environments presents serious obstacles to student well-being. Families also stress the emotional toll caused

by the uncertainty of school placement, longer commute times, and the risk of overcrowded receiving schools. What they want most is for children to build roots in a dependable, supportive setting.

Impact on Community Schools like Oakwood are seen as more than educational institutions—they're essential civic anchors. The potential closure is feared to weaken neighborhood connections and strain existing schools already at or near capacity. Parents worry about the long-term health of the local area if trusted, community-centered schools are eliminated.

Concerns About Leadership and Decision-Making There is increasing skepticism about the district's responsiveness to community needs. Parents question the rationale behind proposed closures—particularly the removal of well-regarded schools and successful programs. One notable concern is the district's approach to program planning: several families shared that the addition of the Chinese immersion program to Oakwood has had a **negative impact on school cohesion**. This is cited as an example of well-intended but poorly integrated program expansion.

Urgency to Maintain Local Schools The consistent message: don't close schools that are working. Families are urging the district to explore solutions that avoid dismantling high-performing and culturally significant campuses. Oakwood, Cottonwood, and other similar schools are viewed as essential to both educational quality and neighborhood stability. Parents ask for greater transparency, better long-range planning, and a commitment to strengthening—not sacrificing—what's thriving.

Penn Elementary

Overcrowding and Resource Strain: The student body at Penn is described as too large, with class sizes high enough that students may feel overlooked. Families report that the influx of students from nearby closures has placed unsustainable pressure on resources, staff, and school culture. The community fears continued absorption of displaced students could compromise support for both existing and incoming populations.

There's growing concern about the assumption that larger schools are inherently more effective. Many parents urge district leaders to reconsider consolidation altogether, especially when financial savings aren't guaranteed and communities report satisfaction with current settings. "Bigger is not better," they insist—and consolidation should be justified not by scale, but by genuine educational benefit.

Several families also noted that they've already endured multiple school closures—first Spring Lane, then Mill Creek—and now face uncertainty about which school they're even zoned for. This repeated disruption has caused confusion, weakened connections, and heightened anxiety about future planning.

Impact of Program Shifts: The introduction and expansion of Dual Language Immersion (DLI) has broadened educational opportunities, with families describing it as a powerful asset. However, rapid program growth has raised concerns about fractured school cohesion, uneven classroom experiences, and diluted neighborhood identity.

Families who actively chose William Penn over their boundary school emphasized how valuable DLI has been for their children. There is strong support for expanding similar programs to more schools—so families can remain closer to home while still accessing enhanced instruction and social networks.

Concerns About Future Closure: There is significant apprehension about additional closures that would further crowd Penn and erode community trust. Following a full redistricting process, families are unified in their message: they don't want to go through that again.

Most strongly oppose the idea of closing three schools. While some may accept one closure, large-scale consolidation is viewed as unnecessary and destabilizing. Parents object to inflating school sizes beyond 550+ students and caution that forcing growth where satisfaction already exists could damage morale and academic engagement.

Call for Local Accountability and Representation: Families continue to call for tailored, school-specific oversight that reflects Penn's unique needs. They seek stronger district engagement around class size, programming, and climate—and want leadership to honor distinct school cultures instead of applying a one-size-fits-all approach.

Some advocate for increased autonomy and creative flexibility within each campus. They believe empowering schools to evolve based on local strengths will foster healthier environments and better counter competition from charter and private options.

Mixed Sentiment and Loyalty: Despite frustrations, families remain deeply loyal to Penn and its educators. Many feel that strong relationships, effective teaching, and a shared commitment to children have endured even as pressures rise.

Smaller neighboring schools like Eastwood also received praise for their tight-knit communities and meaningful student experiences, suggesting that success isn't tied to scale or specialized programming alone.

Recommendation: The community's unified request is to preserve Penn's current boundaries and prevent further redistribution. Families ask for stability, continued investment, and decisions grounded in lived experience.

Beyond Penn, there's strong advocacy for keeping neighborhood schools open across the area. Rather than consolidate, families urge the district to pursue adaptive, student-centered approaches—recognizing that success doesn't look the same everywhere and schools don't need to be identical to thrive.

Rosecrest Elementary

Community Connection & Local Commitment: Families across the district express deep appreciation for their neighborhood schools—not only as centers of education, but as sources of identity, shared purpose, and local pride. These schools nurture lasting relationships, stabilize neighborhoods, and play a vital role in sustaining public engagement. Parents emphasized that school decisions must preserve what’s already working in strong, community-supported sites.

In the case of Rosecrest, families deeply value its central place in the neighborhood. Students safely walk on quiet sidewalks and residential streets, making the school an accessible and integrated part of daily life. Rosecrest’s programs extend well beyond the school day, with after-school chorus, theater, STEM nights, and literature events drawing strong community participation and support. Teachers lead enrichment activities in the arts, social studies, and science—adding dimension and inspiration to the standard curriculum. These traditions contribute to the cultural fabric of Millcreek, reinforcing the school’s role as a living, breathing piece of neighborhood identity.

Residents also voiced concern about the impact to students living north of 3300 South, where access to alternative schools may be limited. The potential reassignment of these students raises questions about safety, travel burdens, and overall equity. Community members feel deeply connected to Rosecrest and view its closure as a direct threat to the cohesion and viability of their neighborhood.

Sustainable Enrollment & Academic Quality: Many respondents voiced concern that closing schools with healthy student populations—or those undergoing renewal—could jeopardize academic quality and equitable access to programs. Families stressed the need to protect schools that can maintain robust enrollment, which in turn supports optimal staffing, extracurricular opportunities, and specialized services.

Strategic consolidation—such as combining Rosecrest and Eastwood under thoughtful planning—was suggested as one possible solution, but only with clear, transparent communication and community collaboration.

Parents noted that Rosecrest is not only sustaining enrollment, but leveraging its strong community partnerships and modernized facilities to provide a high-quality, inclusive education. The building, recently remodeled, is in excellent condition and serves as a hub for creativity, performance, and scientific exploration.

Walking Culture & Safe School Access: Rosecrest was frequently cited as a model for safe and sustainable access. Its deeply rooted “walking culture” supports student well-being, fosters daily independence, and reduces the need for car travel—benefiting both safety and the environment. Parents emphasized that walkability isn’t a convenience; it’s a defining feature of the school’s success.

Closing walkable schools would lead to:

- Increased traffic congestion
- Higher carbon emissions
- Safety risks at busy intersections

A major concern centered on 3300 South, a heavily trafficked arterial road that many students would be forced to cross if reassigned. Community members cautioned that doing so would significantly increase the risk of dangerous situations during daily commutes.

A practical solution was proposed: assign the portion of Morningside's boundary north of 3300 S and east of 2700 E to Rosecrest—maintaining walkability and preserving community safety.

Concerns About Closures & Premature Planning: Respondents pushed back against considering closures of schools like Eastwood, especially when taxpayer-funded rebuilds are already planned or underway. Others warned that widespread closures could lead to overcrowding in remaining schools, further weakening access to quality education. Without careful phasing and transparent rollout, families fear unnecessary disruption, inequity, and diminished trust in district leadership.

Families also expressed a desire to reevaluate grade configurations—suggesting that 6th grade remain in elementary schools to help delay exposure to the more complex social environment of middle school. Parents emphasized that this shift could support emotional development, delay cell phone and social media pressures, and make the overall transition more manageable. These concerns are backed by national research and align with broader calls to protect childhood from early digital exposure.

Generational Change & Neighborhood Renewal: Many east-bench neighborhoods are undergoing generational turnover, with younger families moving in and new roots being planted. These subtle demographic shifts may not yet appear in projections—but they are visible on playgrounds, sidewalks, and real estate listings. Parents cautioned that closing walkable, centrally located schools during this renewal phase would be short-sighted and risk dismantling cohesive, rising communities just as they gain new momentum.

Recommendations from the Community

- Prioritize preserving walkable schools like Rosecrest that demonstrate sustainability and strong community support
- Avoid closing schools with recent or planned capital investments like Eastwood
- Use boundary refinements—not closures—when possible to improve enrollment balance and safety
- Phase in any changes slowly and transparently, with meaningful family engagement at every step
- Recognize that projections alone may miss emerging neighborhood trends, especially in areas seeing a rise in younger families and owner-occupied homes
- Reconsider middle school grade structures, especially keeping 6th grade in elementary, to reduce transition stress and delay digital/social pressure

- Preserve access for students living north of 3300 South, and avoid reassignment that creates unsafe commutes or disrupts community ties

Conclusion: Community members are unified in their call for thoughtful, forward-thinking decisions that preserve school quality, promote safety, and reflect on-the-ground realities. The goal isn't just to manage enrollment—it's to strengthen neighborhoods and build trust.

Rosecrest exemplifies what's possible when strong academics, walkability, and community tradition come together. Keeping walkable, community-centered schools open is central to achieving a public education system that works for families—now and for generations to come.

Upland Terrace

Safe, Walkable Location: Upland Terrace sits within a uniquely walkable K–12 corridor that includes Wasatch Jr. and Skyline High, with no major roads to cross. Nearly 80% of in-boundary students attend Upland—one of the highest neighborhood enrollment rates among schools under consideration. Families consistently highlight its centrality to daily life in Millcreek. Sidewalk upgrades and compact neighborhood design reinforce safety and accessibility, enabling routines where siblings walk together and caregivers manage school logistics with confidence. This natural support network promotes independence, environmental stewardship, and public health, while minimizing transportation needs. Parents emphasize the importance of maintaining schools with high in-boundary enrollment, both to support community stability and reduce costly busing. Upland's closure would dismantle this cohesive model and introduce financial, logistical, and safety challenges for hundreds of families who currently walk to school.

Academic Continuity & District Investment: Upland is the only elementary school that feeds directly into both Wasatch Jr. and Skyline High. This academic alignment streamlines K–12 progression, supports shared standards, and eases multi-child scheduling for families. Its preservation affirms the value of prior district investment in nearby facilities like the rebuilt Skyline campus and ensures continued efficiency and cohesion.

Inclusive Special Education Program: Upland's integrated special education program is a cornerstone of its identity. It pairs inclusive instruction with social-emotional development and serves a diverse range of academic needs. The community supports and enriches this program through volunteerism, accessibility, and school culture. Families shared that relocating the program would be especially harmful to students who rely on consistency, trusted environments, and proximity between school levels. Upland's walkable access to preschool, elementary, and secondary supports not only academic inclusion but logistical feasibility for caregivers.

Strong Community & Family Involvement: Walkability makes daily involvement possible for a wide spectrum of families, including working parents and extended caregivers. Former students now work at the school, describing it as a full-circle experience. Many neighbors host beautification efforts, repaint playground maps, and maintain gardens—evidence of deep ownership and pride. Families deliberately choose this area for its educational strength and

accessibility. A closure would not only disrupt lives but also undermine the value of community investment. Property values are tied to walkable, high-quality schools; removing Upland may weaken tax bases and funding district-wide. Upland Terrace has strong support in our neighborhood. Many of us parents chose this neighborhood to raise our children because of its proximity to all three schools (Churchill, Wasatch, Skyline). Shutting down Upland would be devastating for us. I'm also concerned about the effect it would have on property values, which I suspect would significantly decrease or decelerate should the main selling point of the neighborhood be removed. I would much rather pay higher taxes until student population recovers than lose a hundred thousand dollars in equity.

Beloved, Functional Facility: While not newly built, Upland is structurally sound and thoughtfully designed. Its layout supports place-based learning through native plant gardens, responsive classrooms, and a lively campus that invites family participation. The city's recent sidewalk and safety investments further cement Upland's long-term viability and signal civic endorsement of its continued role. Upland Terrace is a fabulous school. Both my kids attended, and did well in their education later because of the things they learned and gained from Upland. The walkability for in-boundary students is great, and it's so close to Skyline and Wasatch Jr that older siblings can pick them up—saving working parents from figuring out rides. It's the only elementary that fully feeds into Wasatch and Skyline, and keeping a neighboring elementary supports the investments made by the district in those schools. There is a community garden that has been there nearly 25 years with native Utah plants and a legacy of learning in and about the native plants there. Kids from the high school regularly care for the garden, as do neighbors. Please keep Upland Terrace—it means a lot to our community.

Planning, Safety, and Long-Term Cost Considerations: Walkable schools like Upland reduce congestion, transportation costs, and environmental impact. Research from Safe Routes to School links walkability with improved attendance, academic outcomes, and community health. Residents urge the district to incorporate:

- Traffic and congestion modeling
- Safety comparisons across sites
- Transportation budgets and accessibility data
- Environmental assessments tied to increased driving

Failing to account for these factors risks turning short-term savings into long-term complications, especially in growing areas like Millcreek.

Concerns Over Closure & Specialized Programs: Families are wary of closing multiple schools in the same region, warning against aggressive disruption. They advocate a phased approach—closing two schools initially, with a third on hold for future evaluation. Parents caution against decisions driven by geographic preference or anecdotal sentiment, urging data-based analysis. Previous closures have resulted in overcrowded classrooms, fragmented programming, and diminished school culture. Newly implemented class size limits further complicate capacity projections and must be factored into consolidation decisions.

Support for Both Upland & Morningside: Preserving Upland and Morningside honors their distinct strengths. Upland offers inclusive programming and neighborhood continuity; Morningside provides advanced academic services. Keeping both ensures parent choice and equity across school communities.

Proposed Alternatives to Closure

- Reassign boundaries to optimize use of under-enrolled schools
- Reallocate students from lower-utilization campuses like Canyon Rim to Upland
- Invest in Upland as a walkable, community-based education model
- Consider adaptive reuse (e.g., preschool or district programming) if repurposing
- Prioritize closure of schools without feeder alignment or walkable access
- Avoid closures that accelerate public school attrition or erode trust

Unified Community Message: Upland Terrace represents a rare educational and community alignment—walkable, inclusive, and academically stable. Its location, high neighborhood enrollment, feeder alignment, and deeply rooted culture make it uniquely effective and widely cherished. Families strongly urge the district to preserve Upland and use its model to guide future decisions across the region.

Other feedback

Churchill:

Support for Oakridge and Local Schools:

- The respondents moved to the Olympus Cove area specifically for its strong schools, particularly within the Skyline network, and they appreciate the proximity of both Oakridge Elementary and Churchill Jr. High. They express a desire for Oakridge to remain open, as it serves the local community and provides easy walking and biking access for families, contributing to the area's appeal.

Concerns About Access to Education:

- Some respondents are concerned about the potential closure of Oakridge Elementary, highlighting the importance of having an accessible school for residents in the Olympus Cove area. They emphasize the need for elementary schools close to their homes to maintain continuity in their children's education through Churchill Jr. High and Skyline High School.

Considerations for School Planning:

- Parents suggest that key factors should be taken into account when making decisions, such as student capacity, school building conditions, and the ability to accommodate additional traffic and parking. They also recommend adding bike lockers at schools in the Olympus and Skyline network to encourage biking, reduce traffic, and promote healthy habits for students.

Overall, the feedback emphasizes the importance of keeping Oakridge open to preserve access to quality education for families in the area and the need for sustainable, walkable school options.

Wasatch Jr:

This feedback expresses concern that the closure of schools like Morningside and Howard Driggs could negatively impact the quality of education in the area. It suggests that the decline in student population may be due to high housing costs, making it difficult for families with young children to afford living in the area. Both Morningside (with its ALC program) and Driggs are considered among the best elementary schools in the Granite district, attracting many out-of-boundary students. The feedback warns that closing these schools and moving students out of the area could harm the educational quality and ranking of Wasatch Junior High and Skyline High School, as many students from these elementary programs transition to these higher-level schools.

Miscellaneous feedback

(Mostly came from emailed feedback, where they did not specify what school they represented)

General Concerns

Accessibility to Schools: Families value proximity to schools with freeway access and manageable winter commutes—especially vital for working households. School closures or boundary shifts that increase travel time face strong opposition. Parents also advocate for better alignment of start times across schools to support families with multiple children.

Special Education & Inclusion: There are persistent concerns that students with special needs are being excluded from extracurriculars, sports, and key milestones like yearbooks. Families are urging the district to strengthen inclusive practices, ensuring equitable opportunities for all students across events and programs.

Impact of School Closures: Neighborhood schools are viewed as essential community pillars. Families worry that closures will erode identity, disrupt longstanding relationships, and diminish local support networks. Many fear the loss of these schools will also contribute to declining home values and weaken neighborhood cohesion.

Loss of Local Culture: Closures are seen as a direct threat to unique, generational school cultures. Parents describe these schools as “educational ecosystems” built through years of shared tradition, collaboration, and trust. They caution that dismantling these institutions could permanently fracture community excellence and belonging.

Concerns Over Recent Facility Investments: Parents are raising questions about the rationale behind closing recently upgraded schools, citing significant taxpayer investments. Shuttering modernized campuses while older, underfunded buildings remain open is viewed as fiscally counterintuitive and damaging to public trust.

Process Transparency and Timeline Frustration: In light of recent communications, families are expressing confusion and concern about shifting timelines for announcements and decisions. Some who have closely followed the process say they were led to expect a narrowing of scope by late June or July, but now see the formal recommendations won't be shared until the September 2nd Board meeting. This delay has triggered frustration and fueled skepticism about district transparency, especially as rumors and evolving timelines complicate community engagement. Families are requesting clarification about the reasons for this shift and hope for greater consistency moving forward.

Equity in Program Distribution and School Evaluation: Families whose children attend schools outside their boundary area report significant commute challenges. As the district considers closures, they urge inclusion of upper east side schools—particularly those with nearby alternatives—in the evaluation process. Keeping lower east side schools open ensures access to quality education for families in developing areas. Data indicates future growth is not concentrated in the east side, and decisions must reflect this reality. Parents advocate for relocating specialized programs such as French immersion and gifted education to the lower east side to support equitable development. They emphasize that enrichment opportunities should not be limited to upper east side schools. Targeting lower east side schools for closure while leaving others untouched is viewed as inequitable and counterproductive to long-term community growth.

School-Specific Feedback

- **Eastwood Elementary**
 - Strong community opposition to closure.
 - Praised for small class sizes, academic strength, and as a critical neighborhood school for East Millcreek.
 - Concerns that the area is already underserved due to past closures.
- **Oakridge Elementary**
 - Seen as a community cornerstone in Olympus Cove.
 - Alumni and parents speak to its long-standing impact and significance.
- **Crestview Elementary**
 - Vital to west-side families, especially Spanish-speaking and DLI participants.

- Closure could severely affect dual language access and leave limited alternatives due to enrollment limits elsewhere.
- **Skyline/Olympus High School Boundaries**
 - Frustration from residents south of 45th who are zoned for Skyline while neighbors attend Olympus.
 - Perceived inequity and disruption of community unity.
- **Cottonwood & Driggs Elementary**
 - Parents praise teacher collaboration and academic excellence.
 - Cottonwood cited as top 1% in the state; both schools have strong, unique school cultures worth preserving.

Proposed Alternatives & Broader Vision

- **District Split Proposal**
 - Some advocate splitting Granite District to better serve diverse and sprawling communities.
 - Aim: Create more responsive, localized governance.
- **Program Reallocation**
 - Suggest reassigning programs (e.g., language immersion) from closed schools to maintain continuity.
 - Concern that closures often mean programs and resources are “simply lost.”**
***Edited to add: Programs such as DLI at previously closed schools have been relocated, not shut down.*
- **Preserve High-Performing Neighborhood Schools**
 - Emphasis on keeping thriving schools (Cottonwood, Driggs, Eastwood, etc.) open.
Seen as essential to family decisions, community integrity, and future district stability.
- **Balance Needed**
 - Acknowledge declining enrollment, but urge a measured, strategic approach.
 - Implement **grade-split campuses** (e.g., K–2 and 3–5 in different buildings) to preserve neighborhood access and right-size classrooms.
 - Prioritize educational quality, teacher strength, and community culture—not just financial metrics.
 - Closures should be limited, well-justified, and avoid dismantling successful, full schools.