

ONE Evergreen Fact Sheet and Recommendations

ONE Evergreen is a grassroots coalition of students, parents, alumni, community members, voters and residents who are working towards positive change within the Evergreen Community in White Center, WA.

In order for change to occur, we need to be honest about the successes and challenges of small schools on the Evergreen campus. We have compiled the following Fact Sheet and Recommendations to encourage honest conversation about what is and is not working for our students and families.

Learn more, and sign our petition: evergreensuccess.org

What we value	What you offer
Evergreen High School is an important part of our community's identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evergreen High School no longer exists, closed by the district in 2008 after 50 years (read more) • Three separate small high schools now operate on the Evergreen campus with different names, identities and boundaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Arts & Academics Academy (AAA) ○ Health Sciences & Human Services High School (HS3) ○ Technology Engineering Communications High School (TEC) • However, everyone still refers to Evergreen High School (read more) • This is confusing to students, parents, alumni, community members, taxpayers, voters, residents, and the media • Students struggle with a lack of identity and history (read more)
High-quality and equitable education options for our children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students in the Evergreen service area <u>must</u> attend a small school -- there is no option to attend a traditional high school • Students in the Highline and Mt. Rainier service areas can attend a traditional high school or any of the small schools in the district • Evergreen must request an in-district transfer to attend a traditional high school like Highline or Mt. Rainier, which are both over-enrolled • Evergreen students and parents who are unsatisfied with small schools must pay for private school or leave the district
The opportunity for a well-rounded comprehensive education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small schools only offer core classes and a handful of electives • Students are not allowed to register for courses in other small schools • Small schools lack electives compared to traditional high schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jazz, Symphonic & Marching Bands, choir, guitar, music ○ Creative writing, speech, debate ○ Fine arts, ceramics, photography, film ○ Physical fitness and health, weight training, yoga, dance ○ Advanced science, physics, robotics, astronomy ○ Economics, sociology, psychology, business, law, marketing ○ Technology, engineering, auto mechanics, wood tech, trades ○ Leadership, journalism, yearbook <p style="text-align: center;">(read more)</p>
High-quality and experienced teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger student-teacher relationships is the #1 reason for converting to and continuing the small schools model • But high teacher turnover makes strong relationships impossible • Evergreen's small schools have the highest teacher turnover in the district and the least experienced teachers (read more)

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Rigorous classes that prepare our children for college and career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students do not perceive classes to be rigorous enough to prepare them for college (read more) • Current students must leave their community and attend Running Start in order to do college-level work (read more) • Current students believe AP classes are being diluted down • Students at small schools are not passing AP exams (read more) • Evergreen High School historically had the highest AP passing rate in the district
Helping our children graduate prepared for college and career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are not proficient on state assessments, which students must pass in order to graduate (read more) • HS3 & TEC have the highest graduation rates in the district (read more) • AAA has the lowest graduation rate in the district (read more) • However, students are not enrolling in 2- or 4-year colleges (read more)
The opportunity to learn a foreign language of your choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 1 foreign language is offered per school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ AAA: Spanish ○ HS3: French ○ TEC: Spanish • For example, an HS3 student who is interested in Spanish cannot take it because Spanish is not offered in their small school • Students are not allowed to register for courses in other small schools
The opportunity to take art classes and explore other interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 1 art class is available to students in small schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A traditional high school offers 10-15 electives in Fine Arts • Students are not allowed to register for courses in other small schools
Thoughtful and equitable implementation of district policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2005, small schools were not implemented district-wide (read more) • Small schools were only implemented at Evergreen and Tye High Schools (read more) • Highline and Mt. Rainier High Schools abandoned small schools and converted back to traditional high schools (read more) • In 2008, Bill Gates publicly declared small schools a “disappointment,” and shifted Foundation strategy to teacher evaluation (more info) • Every high school in Washington State that accepted money from the Gates Foundation has converted back to a traditional high school, except Marysville School District (read more)
A racially, ethnically and socioeconomically diverse community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The former Evergreen High School always prided itself on its racial, ethnic and socioeconomic diversity • Today, small schools are racially segregated (read more)
The opportunity to form relationships with students from diverse backgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small schools has created division where none previously existed • Students cannot trespass into another school’s building on the same campus • There is little opportunity to form relationships with students outside of your small school unless you participate in sports • Students do not see themselves as part of a larger, united student body • The historic comraderie and unity of Evergreen High School has been replaced by division and competition between small schools
A variety of student clubs and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx. 30 clubs are offered in a traditional high school (read more) • However, only a handful of clubs are offered in small schools and club participation is restricted to certain schools

What we value	What you offer
<p>An award-winning band and music program that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves all interested students • Cultivates true musical talent • Promotes family and parental involvement • Participates in local, state, national and international festivals and competitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The award-winning Evergreen High School Band was systematically dismantled by small schools (read more) • Membership declined 90% from peak of 100+ to low of 8 (read more) • No opportunities for parental involvement and fundraising • Disinvited from local, state, national and international festivals and competitions (read more) • Band is now only available to AAA students--there are no music options for students in other small schools
<p>A thriving and accessible sports program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students cannot afford to participate in after-school sports • Those who do participate do not receive the necessary equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The swim team did not have swim suits, goggles or caps ○ The boys’ baseball team did not have bats ○ The girls’ basketball team did not have matching uniforms--wore different uniforms from past teams ○ The wrestling team had to share head gear • A historically active booster club no longer exists • No opportunities for parental involvement and fundraising • Students from different small schools are only allowed to come together for sports--they cannot interact with each other during the day • Students cannot form strong bonds with their teammates because they are separated by small schools (read more) • School spirit has declined because students have no reason to cheer for students they don’t know or for a larger school that no longer exists • Some students, in order to get their required PE credits for graduation, are forced to participate in sports they have no interest in. This puts our children at higher risk of injury or worse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A traditional high school offers 8-10 courses to satisfy the PE requirement
<p>One combined graduation ceremony</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three separate graduation ceremonies (one for each small school) • Students cannot graduate with friends and family in other small schools • Every year, students have petitioned the school board and superintendent for one combined graduation (read more)
<p>Alumni who are proud of and actively support their high school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no high school left to support--Evergreen High School no longer exists (read more) • Evergreen High School alumni feel alienated and unwelcome • The alma mater, fight song and “EHS” have been covered up in the gym • No reason for alumni to give back--through donations of time, money or professional opportunities (eg. job shadow, networking, mentoring, volunteering, internships, work-based learning, etc.)
<p>Business partnerships to prepare our children for 21st century careers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the world’s best companies call Seattle home, but our students cannot access those jobs • There are no formal partnerships that connect our children with career opportunities (eg. job shadow, networking, mentoring, volunteering, internships, work-based learning, etc.)

What we value	What you offer
<p>Taxpayers and voters who receive high-quality education options and facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want the same opportunities and attention as traditional high schools like Highline and Mt. Rainier • Mt. Rainier and Highline were allowed to convert back to traditional high schools • Mt. Rainier HS received a brand new school in 2007 and Highline HS was supposed to receive a brand new school in last two failed capital bonds • No plans for renovation of Evergreen and Tyee campuses
<p>A high school that we can be proud of and proud to send our children to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small schools are not perceived by the community to be better than traditional high schools • There is a perceived lack of rigor and opportunity for a well-rounded education in small schools • Students and families have “voted with their feet” and transferred to traditional high schools, which are currently over-enrolled (read more) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overall campus enrollment has declined 20% to under 1,000 students since the conversion to small schools (read more) ○ Traditional high schools like Highline and Mt. Rainier are over-enrolled, between 1,300 and 1,600 students each (read more) • Small schools experience social stratification--the most motivated students attend HS3, while the most struggling students attend AAA--a finding backed by national research (read more)

Policy Recommendations:

In response to the concerns we have outlined above, **ONE Evergreen** has developed the following policy options for the Highline School Board and Superintendent to consider:

Option #1 - Provide a traditional high school option for students in the Evergreen service area

- Reunite Evergreen High School through an authentic and collaborative planning effort involving students, their families and the community
- Develop a new vision for Evergreen High School that offers high-quality comprehensive education to prepare our children for college and careers in a 21st century economy
- Build a new, modern school facility that will provide Evergreen students with a high-quality learning environment and also serve as an important hub and source of pride for our diverse community

Option #2 - Adopt an open enrollment policy so students can choose to attend any district high school

- Students can attend any district high school regardless of the service area they live in
- Bus transportation will be provided for students to attend their selected high school
- If certain high schools become over-enrolled, a lottery process will be conducted

Learn more, and sign our petition: evergreensuccess.org

References

“Small Schools Analysis.” Excerpts of letters sent to the Highline school board and superintendent sharing the Evergreen community’s perspective on small schools, backed up by data and charts:

<http://evergreensuccess.org/small-schools/>

Community concerns

- Loss of school and community identity: <http://evergreensuccess.org/small-schools/#identity>
- Racial segregation on campus: <http://evergreensuccess.org/small-schools/#segregation>
- Inequitable implementation of district policy: <http://evergreensuccess.org/small-schools/#community>
- Limited opportunity to explore interests: <http://evergreensuccess.org/small-schools/#opportunity>
- Decline in school spirit, activities and clubs: <http://evergreensuccess.org/small-schools/#schoolspirit>
- Dismantling of the award-winning band program: <http://evergreensuccess.org/small-schools/#band>
- Highest teacher turnover in the district: <http://evergreensuccess.org/small-schools/#turnover>
- Culture of fear on campus: <http://evergreensuccess.org/small-schools/#fear>
- Decline in campus enrollment: <http://evergreensuccess.org/small-schools/#exodus>
- HS3 success at the expense of other schools: <http://evergreensuccess.org/small-schools/#winnerslosers>
- Community recommendations: <http://evergreensuccess.org/small-schools/#pathforward>

Data and charts

- State Testing Results: <http://evergreensuccess.org/small-schools/#statetesting>
- AP Passing Rates: <http://evergreensuccess.org/small-schools/#APpassing>
- Graduation Rates: <http://evergreensuccess.org/small-schools/#gradrates>
- College Enrollment Rates: <http://evergreensuccess.org/small-schools/#collegeenrollment>

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<http://www.highlinetimes.com/2005/10/25/news/highline-schools-receive-gates-foundation-grant>

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“Evergreen students say they want to graduate together.” *The Highline Times*. 11 October 2012.

<http://www.highlinetimes.com/2012/10/11/news/evergreen-students-say-they-want-graduate-together>

“Kenney Bui, Evergreen High School Football Player, Dies from Game Injury.” *NBC News*. 6 October 2015.

<http://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/kenney-bui-evergreen-high-school-football-player-dies-game-injury-n439106>