Questions (Week of March 4):

1. Won’t consolidation lead to transportation issues? Moving to another school can be an inconvenience to parents, students, and teachers.
2. With the consolidation of schools, more classrooms will be created in pre-existing schools. This means there will be a loss of space that is now utilised by students to walk. Will there be enough room to enhance students’ learning as opposed to harming it? Will working conditions be ideal for all students?
3. What will happen to students in special programs, such as accelerated programs, or programs that focus on strengthening one certain skill. Where will they go when they are forced out of these programs and how will they find similar programs?
4. Are the schools a safe environment for the students and teachers, especially for a new income of people?
5. Will the students feel attended to with absolutely full classrooms? Will the teachers be able to teach efficiently in completely full classrooms?

2 Points For and 2 Points Against Consolidation/Closure
(Week of March 11)

FOR CONSOLIDATION

Education Quality:
-the resulting school will be able to offer more courses and hire more diverse faculty with teaching expertise in specialized areas.
-specialized courses that appeal to only a handful of students will likely generate interest from more students, allowing the school to offer them. This would include advanced classes in mathematics and science, and other areas of study such as drama or non-traditional foreign languages such as Russian or Japanese.
-school consolidations may improve the quality of the teaching staff in general. A merged staff that has opportunities to share expertise and experience can positively influence the quality of instruction offered to all students.

Extra Curriculars:
-A third benefit of consolidation is the ability to offer an expanded extracurricular program.
-Because of limited student enrollment, smaller school districts cannot offer the variety of extracurricular activities that larger school districts can provide. There are not enough students to go around. A corollary that pertains to extracurricular activities and staffing is the ability to find qualified coaches and activity advisers. The pool of interested and qualified personnel is limited in this area. Many smaller school districts have difficulty attracting personnel who are willing to serve as coaches or advisers for sports and other student activities.
AGAINST CONSOLIDATION

Loss of Identity:
- Local communities identify themselves with their school.
- While saving money is a pro, the loss of the school becomes a con.
- For community residents, the closing of the school they attended in the name of consolidation registers as a negative. They fear their children will be lost in the large consolidated school, and they feel they won't be able to identify with the new school.

Transportation:
- The move will affect students and teachers, interrupting commutes, moving students away from their friends and putting them in an unfamiliar environment, which can impact mental health and in-school performance.

Personal Viewpoint (March 13)

After having researched the benefits and drawbacks of consolidating schools within our district, I have been able to formulate my own opinion regarding the issue. I believe that schools should not be consolidated for a great number of reasons.

- The move will affect students and teachers while interrupting their commutes. Many students and staff members will be forced to abandon their former ways of getting to school, and adopting new methods of transportation can cost them a great deal of money and time.

- By consolidating schools, the mental health of students is put at risk. Students will not be guaranteed to be placed in the same environment as their friends and teachers. The relationships that students build play a major role in overall performance in school, and consolidating schools will take a negative toll on these relationships, and a large fraction of students will lose motivation to keep performing well academically.

- There will be an excessive amount of students trying to join various extra-curricular activities that have limited spots. Not every student will get the same preference or attention that they would've gotten at their old school, and this will be merely because of the unbalanced ratio of an excessive amount of students and an inadequate amount of spots. Sport, art, music, and many more programs will not be able to accommodate all students fairly.

- A school with more students will have smaller classrooms. Students will no longer have as much personal space as they had before, and this can negatively affect the way they work and can frequently test their patience, as well. These are issues that should not exist in a learning environment.
These were just a few points that have aided me in formulating my own opinion, and after learning about these factors, it is easy to determine that the consolidation of schools is not a beneficial idea.