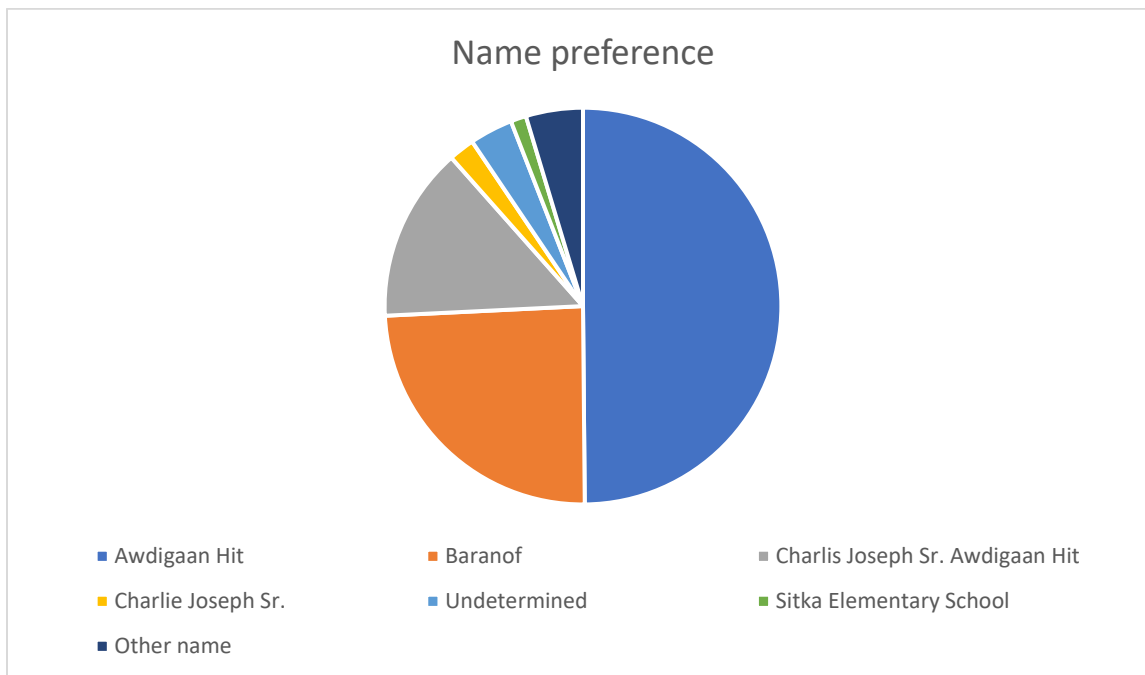


## Public Testimony on the Baranof School Renaming

Seetlein yoo xat duwasaak. Ch'aak' naax xat sitee. Teikweidee aya xat. Kiks.adi yadix xat sitee. My English name is Melonie Boord, an Eagle/Bear from my mother Pauline Duncan's matrilineal line; and grandchild of Emma Duncan, child of Albert Duncan, of Kiksadi Aaní, Sheet'ka.

On February 2, 2022, a survey was put out to the public for their input on the renaming of the Baranof School. I have forwarded the raw survey results to you separately in addition to this report. There were **710** responses in the **3** weeks it was open; people could take the survey once per device; ip addresses and any identifying information were not shown. Most of the responses were from those 18 yrs. of age or older (706); a majority currently live in Sitka (611); those who did not attend Baranof at 374 and those who did at 304; and those who had a child that attended or currently attending at 359; and those who did not have a child that attended or currently attending at 317.

The name preference question showed the following results: **50%** Awdigaan Hít (**354**), **24%** keep Baranof (**173**), **14%** Charlie Joseph Sr. Awdigaan Hít (**101**), **4%** Undetermined (**25**), **2%** Charlie Joseph Sr. (**15**), **1%** Sitka Elementary School (**9**), **5%** Other name suggestions of 2 or less per name suggestion (**33**).



Thank you to the two organizations who took the time to give their recommendations to the board. As you can see there was a great response to this survey. For an adult population in Sitka of 6,763, a good survey sample size would be 364 with a 95% confidence level with 5% margin of error. 611 of the responses to this survey were from those living in Sitka, which seems to indicate a good sample size. It was the first time for most tribal citizens, shareholders,

or community members to provide their input and have a “vote”. It’s clear the preference is for Awdigaan Hit. While it was disheartening to see so many that want to keep the name Baranof, it’s confirmation of the work still needed to teach the accurate history of Sheet’ka and the role Baranof and his men played in the historical trauma of the Tlingit people. There were a few disrespectful responses in the survey, which was expected.

Thank you to those who advocated and put the ball in motion to get the name changed and thank you to the board for passing of the motion, change is necessary. However, the motion was specific to say the name chosen will be the name of a cultural educator. While this was worded with good intentions, it limited the renaming options and there are just too many cultural educators to choose from who are worthy of having a public-school building named after them.

Some of those cultural educators could be the following: Ellen Hope Hayes, the first female Native superintendent of the Sitka National Historical Park; Margaret Mcvey, librarian at Baranof school; Maria Guthrie, artist/instructor; Esther Littlefield, artist/teacher; Archie Demmert, teacher at Baranof; Terri Rofkar, renown weaver/instructor; A.P. Johnson, teacher at Mt.Edgecumbe High School; Marie Laws, weaver/tribal judge; Pauline Duncan, retired teacher from Baranof school; Pete Esquiro, carver and tribal judge; Margie Esquiro, retired teacher from the SSD; Nina Bernhardt, teacher of self-esteem curriculum in the schools; tribal educators Jessie Johnny, Naomi Kanosh, Herman Kitka Sr., Anita Wright, Albert Duncan Sr., Ethel Makinen, Charlie Joseph Sr., Wilma Bacon, John and Roby Littlefield, Emma Duncan Thomas, Anne Johnson, Irene Jimmy, Maryann Navitsky, Rena Baty, Elouise Kanosh, Al Perkins. These names mentioned are just a few of many cultural educators and I apologize to have left any out, that was not my intention. Each of you could add to this list or have your own very different list that may not include any of these names.

Are any of these cultural educators above the others? How can you quantify what one person did for their culture compared to the others? Can you truly pick just one person? Surely, I cannot. If you choose just one person as part of the new name, you are excluding all the other cultural educators and their families. Please open- up the renaming options to more than just cultural educators. Please support a new school name that is inclusive, uses the Tlingit language, relatable across cultures, and meaningful to children. Let’s show respect and appreciation to all our Tlingit elders who played a role in the continuation of our culture in Sitka.

Sincerely,

Melonie Boord