

Skaneateles Central School District

*School Facilities Study
January 2020*



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page No.</u>
1. Executive Summary.....	3
2. Acknowledgements.....	6
3. Background and Purpose	7
4. Study Methodology	10
5. Student Enrollments and Population Trends in the Area.....	11
6. Educational Program.....	22
7. Building and Grade Organization.....	34
8. Staffing.....	42
9. Transportation.....	45
10. Finance	48
11. Research and Literature on School Organization	54
12. Options for Maintaining or Reconfiguring the Building/Grade Organization	56
13. Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations.....	60
Appendix.....	69



CHAPTER 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Skaneateles Central School District, like many upstate school districts, has recently experienced declining student enrollment. Realizing that business as usual is not an option for the future, the district chose to engage in a study to ascertain the best use of its facilities for the future. A consulting firm (Castallo & Silky LLC of Syracuse) was engaged to work with the district's Strategic Planning Committee to answer the following questions:

- 1-How can we enhance educational opportunities for our students given demographic trends we are experiencing?***
- 2-What is the potential for enhancing 21st century educational experience for our students through each of the following: service-sharing, use of technology, grade-building realignment, and other possible means?***
- 3-Is it possible to consolidate existing space in the school buildings so that any excess capacity can be repurposed? If so, how might re-purposed space be utilized?***

A significant amount of data relative to each of the above questions was gathered and analyzed. In the end, the following findings, conclusion, and recommendations are made about the school grade organization and facilities in Skaneateles.

Key Findings

Finding 1: The district's student K-12 enrollment has been declining for many years going from 1,804 in 1994-96 to just 1,295 this current year.

Finding 2: The K-12 enrollment will likely level off or perhaps increase slightly in future years. We project the next two years to be about the same enrollment as the current year and the long-term projection would have the district with 1,342 K-12 students in 2026-27, although this is quite speculative.

Finding 3: Roughly 30 non-resident students attend Skaneateles schools annually and this number has been stable for the past five years.

Finding 4: Approximately 10-20 Skaneateles students are home schooled annually with the current year having the most (19) over the past five-year span.

Finding 5: Since 2015-16 roughly 30-40 resident students each year attend school elsewhere.

Finding 6: The population of Cayuga and Onondaga Counties has been declining in recent years and the U.S Census Bureau projects a continued decline in population for both; the median age of county residents has been increasing in Cayuga and Onondaga; and, the age 25-44 cohort in both has experienced a decline in residents recently but this seems to be leveling off in the last few years.

Finding 7: The Planning Agency for the Village and Town of Skaneateles has recognized that the area has seen a decline in population and notes that housing costs make it difficult for young families to afford to move to the area.

Finding 8: The district has been able to maintain very reasonable class sizes in the elementary schools.



Finding 9: The enrollment in the elementary schools in Skaneateles is expected to increase over the next seven years.

Finding 10: Middle school students are given the opportunity to accelerate in math, earth science, and world languages in gaining high school credit.

Finding 11: Skaneateles offers world languages beginning in grade 6 and then offers Latin, Spanish, and French for its middle school students.

Finding 12: Enrollments in physical education classes are unusually low; in fact, they are significantly lower than the enrollments in the core academic classes.

Finding 13: In addition to the core academic program, Skaneateles offers a number of Honors level and college credit courses for its students.

Finding 14: A significant number of elective courses are available for the students in Skaneateles.

Finding 15: Students have the opportunity to take three foreign languages; Spanish, French, and Latin.

Finding 16: Students have access to challenging, high level engineering course offerings under the banner of Project Lead the Way.

Finding 17: Students have access to a wide variety of courses in the arts.

Finding 18: While the students have access to a number of elective courses, enrollments in many of these classes are quite low.

Finding 19: Given the large number of electives available, there are many students who are choosing to take study halls when they could be pursuing electives.

Finding 20: There is a significant amount of available space in Skaneateles's elementary school buildings.

Finding 21: Like the two elementary schools, there is available space in the middle school.

Finding 22: Given the total financial scope of upcoming facilities decisions, the utility savings that accrue to the district are fairly insignificant.

Finding 23: Skaneateles has 248 full time equivalent staff members. These staff have salaries that total \$14,126,841.

Finding 24: Fringe benefit costs for Skaneateles represent 38.5% of all salary costs. Fringe benefits add approximately \$5,438,834 to the cost of salaries. As a result, Skaneateles spends approximately \$19,565,675 on employee salaries and benefit costs.

Finding 25: Skaneateles provides transportation for students on ten (10) in-district bus routes using a double-trip (two-tier) system and five (5) routes that transport students to educational programs located outside of the district boundaries.

Finding 26: Bus routes are generally not at full capacity on either the elementary or secondary daily runs.

Finding 27: Skaneateles is in excellent fiscal health.

Finding 28: Restricted fund balance (reserve funds) has increased over the past five years.

Finding 29: Effective capital project management has resulted in exemplary learning spaces and level debt service obligations.

Conclusion

With these findings in mind, the following conclusions—or answers to the key questions that focused this study—have been reached.



As consultants we have concluded that there are several possible ways that the Skaneateles School District could enhance the educational opportunities for students including possibly sharing staff positions with other school districts, as well as better use of video conferencing, offering on-line courses, virtual field trips, student exchange programs, and distance learning.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that the district’s Strategic Planning Committee develop and monitor a long term facilities plan for the district. This will include the recommendations included in this report, the scope of work to be performed from the 2015 and next Building Condition Survey, the long term the design of appropriate school facilities, and the financing of these initiatives

2. It is recommended that the Board of Education consider the following options as both “feasible” and “desirable” as it looks to the future.
 - a. Status Quo
Since we have determined that it is not feasible to close an elementary school at this time, we recommend the district keep the schools and grades organized as at present.

 - b. Retain the same structure but open up space for other uses by other community based agencies

 - c. Use underutilized space in the schools in creative ways.

 - d. Expand (and maintain current) secondary course offerings for students



CHAPTER 2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A study with this purpose and magnitude would not be possible without the support, cooperation, and encouragement of many individuals. We would first like to express our appreciation to the members of the District Long-Range Planning Committee appointed by the Skaneateles Board of Education. The members of the committee included:

Karen Dunphy	Kim Ward
Ed McGraw	Hilary Fenner
Andy Peterson	Mary Delmonico
Courtney Alexander	Rhonda Richards
Jane Ross	Pete Nicholson
Lori Ruhlman	Geralyn Huba
Manny Arroyo	Dan Evans
Kerry Brogan	

These committee members offered advice to us as we crafted this final report. Without their assistance this study would not be as responsive to the information needs of the Board of Education and residents of the Skaneateles Central School District.

Superintendent Dr. Lynda Quick, her most helpful Assistant Superintendent for Business Operations Christine DeMass and her staff, Joe Butler, and Assistant Director of Facilities Elaine MacLachlan were also generous with their time as we often requested information. Without their willingness to accommodate our requests, the timeliness of this study would not have been achieved.

Finally, we wish to thank the members of the Skaneateles Board of Education. As all responsible school leadership teams, they took the risk of examining the use of their district facilities knowing full well that simply asking questions about how to better use district buildings might raise some very uncomfortable issues. Despite this, they supported the study and actively followed the progress of the study, while always ensuring that all members of the community would be heard on this most important issue. This was no easy task, but they accepted the challenge and allowed the study process to run its course!





CHAPTER 3 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

This first chapter provides background as to the need for the study. It offers a context within which to place the consideration of various grade/facility options and associated costs and benefits. This context offers perspective for the decisions the Skaneateles Central School District Board of Education has before it over the next few years.

Background

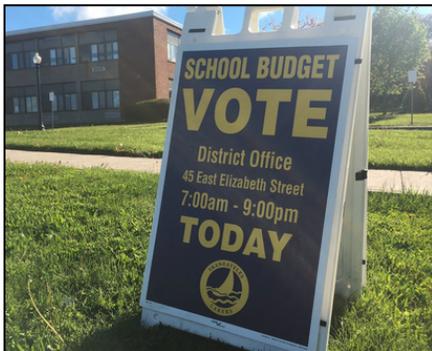
The Skaneateles Central School District is located primarily in western Onondaga County with a portion extending into eastern Cayuga County. The district covers approximately 77 square miles serving primarily the townships of Skaneateles, Spafford, Marcellus, Sennett, Owasco, and Niles. The district’s facilities include Waterman Primary School (grades K-2), State Street Intermediate School (grades 3-5), Skaneateles Middle School (grades 6-8), and Skaneateles High School (grades 9-12). A map of the district follows.





The Skaneateles School District community has consistently shown its support for the education of resident students as noted in the historical budget-voting pattern in the following table. Residents have passed school budgets on the first vote eleven straight years as shown in Table 3.1. In addition, the Skaneateles school community has consistently supported capital project votes on recent occasions (2006, 2007, 2010, 2013, 2017, 2018) as well as annual bus purchase propositions since 2010.

Table 3.1 District Budget Vote History			
Year	Yes Votes	No Votes	Total Votes
2019	423	116	539
2018	644	196	840
2017	631	157	788
2016	954	298	1,252
2015	610	153	763
2014	1,005	256	1,261
2013	769	345	1,114
2012	897	259	1,156
2011	1,105	447	1,552
2010	1,045	569	1,614
2009	710	521	1,231



The Skaneateles community has consistently supported district spending plans

Nevertheless, finding the balance between the provision of a good education and the ability of a local community to provide the financial resources is an on-going challenge for any board of education and administration. Given the current economic condition of our country and our state and the continuing pressures to educate all children to higher levels, as well as the financial conditions of many schools, this challenge has become even more daunting over the past few years. It is the Board’s appreciation and understanding of the fundamental significance of this challenge that served as the stimulus for this study.

As with all good boards of education, the Skaneateles School District Board of Education chose to examine possible ways to organize grades and buildings in the district in light of the challenges mentioned above.

The main focus of this study was framed by the following “critical questions” the Board of Education and administration asked that the consultants address:



1-How can we enhance educational opportunities for our students given demographic trends we are experiencing?

2-What is the potential for enhancing 21st century educational experience for our students through each of the following: service-sharing, use of technology, grade-building realignment, and other possible means?

3-Is it possible to consolidate existing space in the school buildings so that any excess capacity can be repurposed? If so, how might re-purposed space be utilized?

The timeline called for initiation of this study in early August 2019 with the final report due to the Board of Education in February 2020.

The Board of Education selected Castallo & Silky LLC, an educational consulting firm from Syracuse, New York to conduct this study. Mr. Alan Pole, Ms. Deborah Ayers and Dr. William Silky led this study for the firm. Castallo & Silky LLC has extensive experience in working with school districts in New York State that have considered a variety of reorganizational options.

To answer the “critical study questions,” a study design, which is presented in the next chapter, was developed with the express purpose of being transparent and complete. In order to emphasize the openness of this process, the consultants committed to the following guidelines for the study:

1. The study will be conducted in an open and fair manner;
2. All data will be presented to the Board of Education; and
3. Recommendations will:
 - a. benefit student learning,
 - b. be sensitive to the unique cultural context of Johnstown,
 - c. not be influenced by special interest groups,
 - d. be educationally sound,
 - e. be fiscally responsible and realistic, and
 - f. provide a five to seven year perspective.

The study concludes with this final report to the Board of Education. While the district Strategic Planning Committee had input into the development of this study, the recommendations contained in this document represent those of the consultants and are presented as a vehicle for engaging the Board, the staff, and the community in discussion regarding the best organization of the district, its programs, and its facilities.



While the Strategic Planning Committee had input into the development of this study, the recommendations represent those of the consultants.



CHAPTER 4 STUDY METHODOLOGY

The methodology for this study was based upon what is commonly known as “responsive evaluation.” In essence, this methodology requires the design of data collection methods *in response to* a critical study question. In this specific study, the Board of Education posed the following questions that drove this investigation.

1-How can we enhance educational opportunities for our students given demographic trends we are experiencing?

2-What is the potential for enhancing 21st century educational experience for our students through each of the following: service-sharing, use of technology, grade-building realignment, and other possible means?

3-Is it possible to consolidate existing space in the school buildings so that any excess capacity can be re-purposed? If so, how might re-purposed space be utilized?

The following is a summary of the major activities undertaken as part of the study design. The consultants gathered considerable data from the district and other agencies. These data were summarized and analyzed as they were received. The data gathering was focused by the questions that drove the study. In addition, the consultants conducted interviews with key district staff to gather perspectives on the various issues under study and to understand completely the meaning of the data that was gathered. A Board-appointed Strategic Planning Committee met with the consultant team on three occasions to (a) help craft the study’s critical study questions, (b) to receive some preliminary data and a presentation on the study process, and (c) to review and critique the draft final report.

The final report was presented to the Board of Education in a public session on January 7, 2020.





CHAPTER 5 STUDENT ENROLLMENTS AND POPULATION TRENDS IN THE AREA

This section of the report provides a picture of the current status of the Skaneateles Central School District's student enrollment as well as an overview of the population trends in the geographic area.

Student Enrollment History and Projections

Accurate enrollment projections are essential data for district long-range planning. Virtually all aspects of a district's operation (educational program, staffing, facilities, transportation, finances, etc.) are dependent on the number of students enrolled. For this reason, updated enrollment projections are crucial for this study and serve as the launching pad for our analysis.

The procedure for projecting student enrollments is referred to as the Cohort Survival Methodology. This methodology is highly reliable and is the most frequently used projective technique for making **short-term (one to two years)** school district enrollment projections however it can also indicate long-term trends such as whether the district is likely to see an increase, decrease or stabilization of enrollment. To calculate enrollment projections, the following data and procedures are used:

- Six-year history of district enrollment by grade level
- Calculation of survival ratios by grade level
- Kindergarten enrollment projections based on resident live births

A survival ratio is obtained by dividing a given grade's enrollment into the enrollment of the following grade a year later. For example, the number of students in grade 3 in any year is divided by the number of students in grade 2 of the previous year. The ratios indicate the proportion of the cohort "surviving" to the following year. Cohort refers to the enrollment in a grade for a given year.

Using grade-to-grade survival ratios, an average of these ratios for each cohort progression is obtained. This average is referred to as an average projection survival ratio. This ratio is then multiplied by each current grade enrollment to obtain the projected enrollment for the next successive year. The multiplicative process is continued for each successive year.

Survival ratios usually have values close to one, but may be less than or greater than one. Where the survival ratio is less than one, fewer students "survived" to the next grade. Where the survival ratio is greater than one, more students "survived" to the next grade. Grade-to-grade survival ratios reflect the net effects of deaths, dropouts, the number of students who are home schooled, promotion/retention policies, transfers to and from nonpublic schools, and migration patterns in and out of the school district.

Since estimating births introduces a possible source of error into the model, it is advisable to limit enrollment projections to a period for which existing data on live residential births can be used. This means that enrollment projections are possible for five years into the future for the elementary grades, which is usually sufficient for most planning purposes. Beyond that point, the number of births must be estimated and the projective reliability is greatly reduced.



Enrollment projections for grades 7 and 8 and for grades 9-12 can be projected for ten years into the future.

The methodology considered for this study was to extrapolate to kindergarten enrollment cohorts from live birth data (a birth to second grade projection was also initially completed and determined to likely be less accurate). Live birth data for the Skaneateles Central Schools from 2004 to 2017 is shown in the following table:

Calendar Year	Number
2004	80
2005	69
2006	74
2007	63
2008	64
2009	64
2010	49
2011	48
2012	66
2013	41
2014	52
2015	51
2016	67
2017	64

NOTE: As of 8/1/19 the 2017 live births are preliminary and subject to change.



Live births are then compared with the kindergarten enrollment five years into the future....babies born in 2014 will be in kindergarten in 2019-20, babies born in 2015 will be in kindergarten in 2020-21, and babies

born in 2016 will be in kindergarten in 2021-22. An average ratio of live births to kindergarten enrollment five years later is then calculated. This ratio is then used to project future kindergarten enrollments from actual and estimated live births. Now that we can predict future kindergarten enrollments we are able to complete the full table of future school enrollment as shown in the following table. It should be noted that Pre-K enrollments are not factored into the enrollment projections because Pre-K, being a voluntary program, the relationship between Pre-K enrollments and enrollments at other grade levels is questionable at best.

Live Births Are Used to Project Kindergarten Enrollment Five Years Hence



Table 5.2 Skaneateles K-12 Enrollment History and Projections-2014-15 to 2026-27													
Grade	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Year/Births	2010/49	2011/48	2012/66	2013/41	2014/52	2015/51	2016/67	2017/64	2018/55	2019/55	2020/55	2021/55	2022/55
K	75	88	71	89	73	72	79	104	100	86	86	86	86
1	85	76	95	76	88	74	80	88	116	110	95	95	95
2	90	83	83	96	75	84	75	81	89	117	112	96	96
3	92	94	89	87	102	86	81	80	87	96	126	120	103
4	105	96	104	94	88	104	90	84	84	91	100	131	126
5	97	105	98	104	92	90	104	90	85	85	91	101	132
6	124	103	109	105	111	93	94	110	95	89	89	96	106
7	102	122	98	112	104	114	93	94	109	95	89	88	95
8	119	104	119	101	112	103	114	93	94	110	95	89	89
9	124	123	106	130	107	114	108	119	97	99	114	99	93
10	131	130	124	106	134	114	117	111	123	100	102	118	102
11	138	128	130	122	105	137	113	117	110	122	100	101	117
12	121	136	125	132	123	110	138	114	118	111	123	100	102
K-12 Total	1403	1388	1351	1354	1314	1295	1286	1285	1307	1311	1322	1320	1342
K-2 Total	250	247	249	261	236	230	234	273	305	313	293	277	277
3-5 Total	294	295	291	285	282	280	275	254	256	272	317	352	361
6-8 Total	345	329	326	318	327	310	301	297	298	294	273	273	290
9-12 Total	514	517	485	490	469	475	476	461	448	432	439	418	414

Notes: (1) Ungraded special needs students are not included in these totals; (2) 2022-23 to 2025-26 births are the average of the five previous years. Consequently, from 2023-24 to 2025-26 the early grade estimates are quite speculative; (3) additionally, the 2017 live births are unaudited as of this writing, and (4) these projections were also compared to and confirmed by enrollment projections made at the Cornell University Program for Applied Demographics.

As is apparent from the above table, K-12 enrollment has declined over the past six years (1,403 in 2014-15 to 1,295 in 2019-20; -108 students/-7.7%). This decline is projected to level off in the next few years and K-12 enrollment is expected to increase somewhat through 2026-27. Elementary (K-2 and 3-5) schools will see increases while the secondary buildings will continue to experience smaller total enrollments.



The longer-term enrollment trend for the district shows a continual decline beginning in 2003-04 as seen in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Skaneateles K-12 Total Enrollment 1995-96 to 2019-20													
Year	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
K-12 Total	1,804	1,836	1,867	1,880	1,883	1,885	1,884	1,875	1,848	1,784	1,739	1,742	1,719
Year	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	
K-12 Total	1,707	1,664	1,622	1,554	1,500	1,460	1,414	1,394	1,357	1,362	1,318	1,295	

NOTE: These totals include ungraded special education students that are not included in Tables 5.2 and 5.3.

According to Board of Education Policy number 7132, the district does allow some non-resident students to attend its schools tuition free under certain circumstances noted below (other than these conditions, the district does not permit non-resident students to attend even on a tuition paying basis):

- 1-Students from families that have evidence to buy or build a house in the district;
- 2-Students whose family moved from the district during the school year can finish the semester and seniors whose family moves during the year may finish high school;
- 3-The children of non-contract employees that are non-residents provided there is available space to accommodate their enrollment; and,
- 4-Middle or High School children of staff members that retire from the district may attend until graduation.

Table 5.4 summarizes the last five years of data showing the number of non-resident students that attended school in Skaneateles.

Table 5.4 Five-Year History of Non-Resident Students Attending School in Skaneateles	
<i>School Year</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>
2015-16	28
2016-17	28
2017-18	31
2018-19	31
2019-20	33

Board of Education policy (#7132) does not permit non-resident students to attend the district. However, the policy does permit children of non-resident, non-contract employees (primarily teachers), space permitting, to attend and are not assessed a fee. Additionally, families that are not yet residents but can provide proof of new home ownership can also send their school children to Skaneateles schools. Lastly, the policy

does permit students whose families move during a school year to complete the year in Skaneateles and children of non-resident staff members that retire from the district and have children enrolled in the Middle or High School may keep them enrolled through graduation.

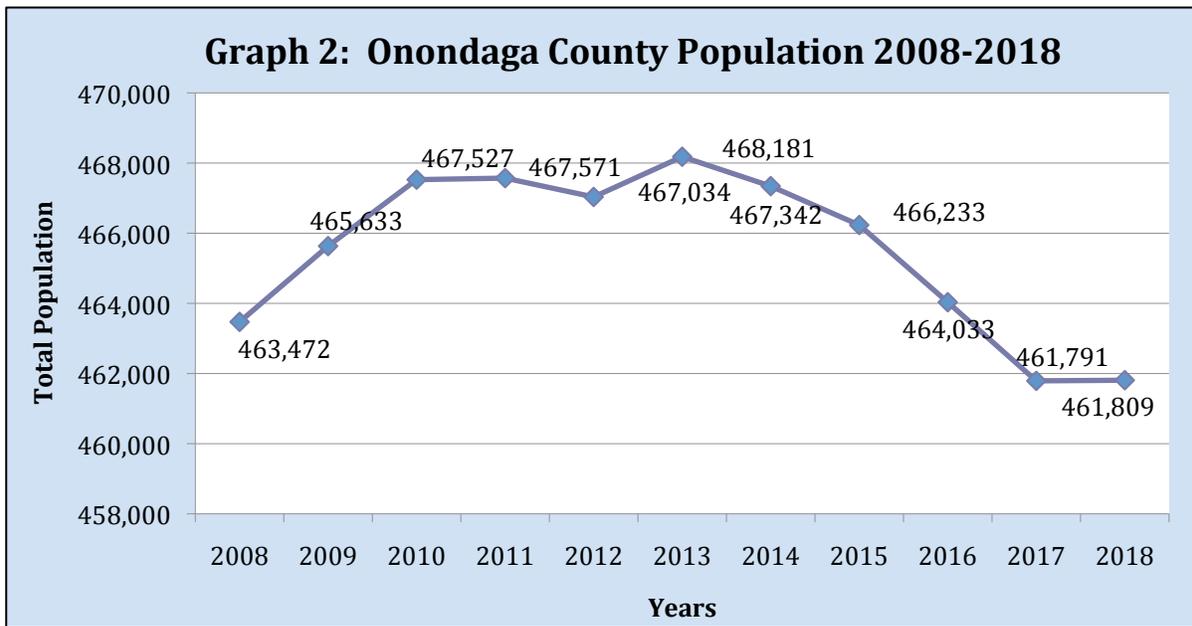
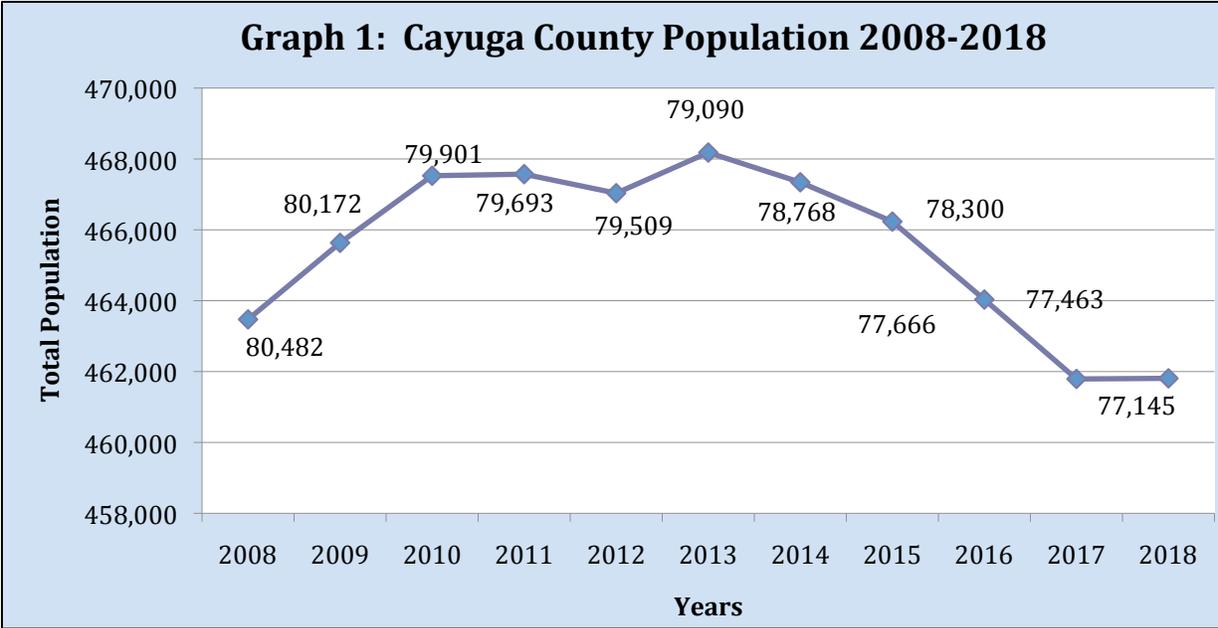


The overall district enrollment decline cannot be attributed to other factors such as increase of students being taught at home or non-resident students no longer attending the district. Table 5.6 provides a recent history of both home-schooled students and students that have been non-resident students attending Skaneateles. The number of home-

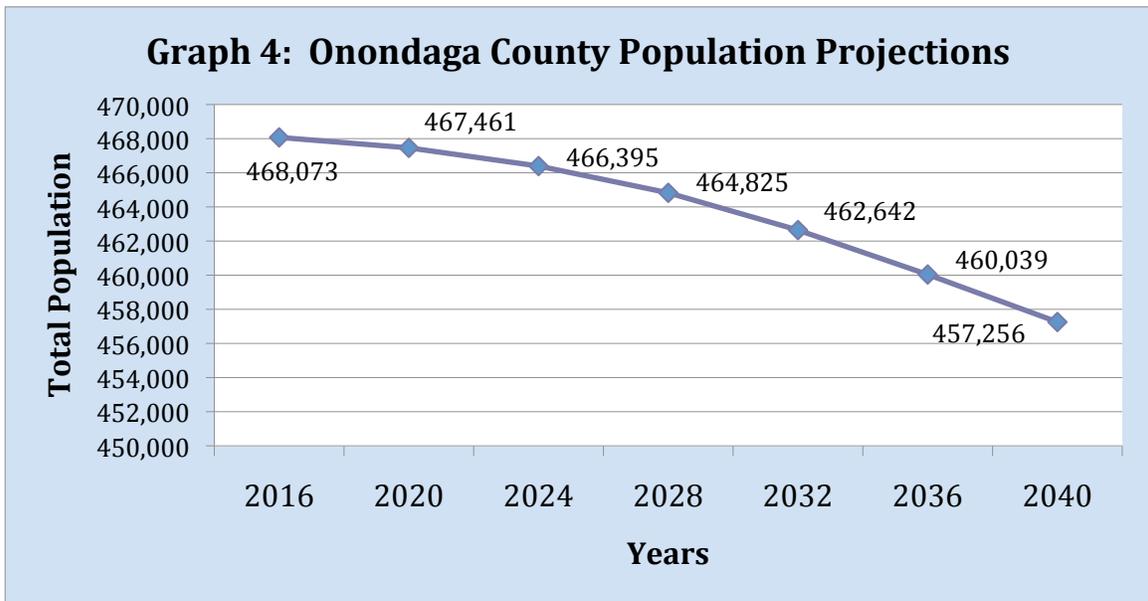
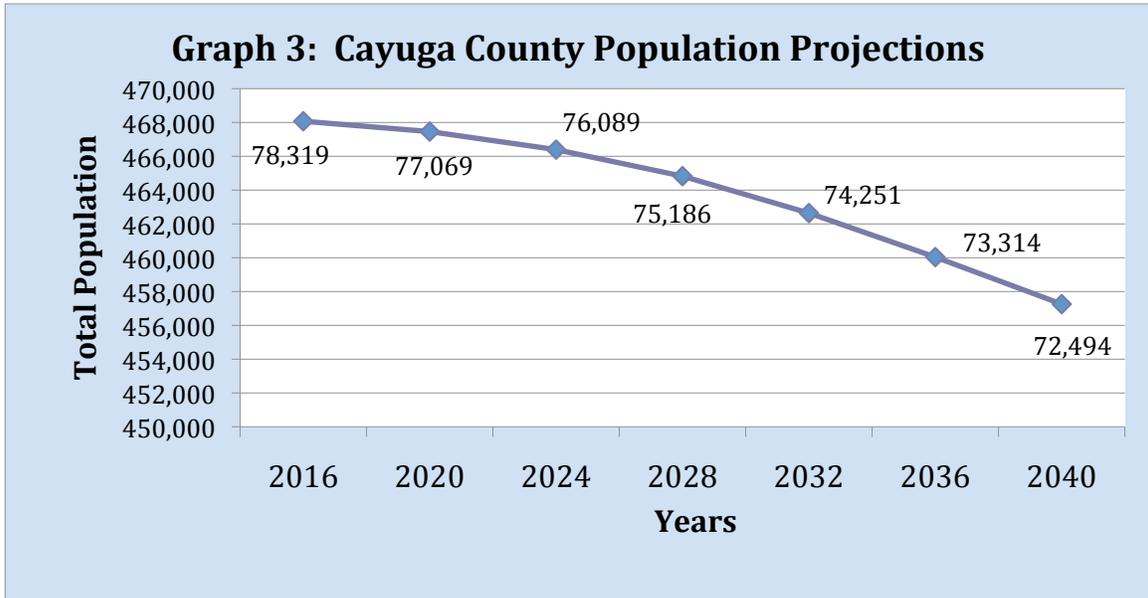
schooled students remained fairly constant from 2015-16 to 2018-19 at approximately 10-12 per year. In 2019-20 due to a new state law regarding pupil vaccination the number increased to 19; whether this will be sustained in future years is open to question. Over the past five years approximately 30 to 40 resident Skaneateles students per year attended elsewhere.

Table 5.5 Five-Year History of Resident Home-Schooled and Resident Students Attending Elsewhere		
<i>School Year</i>	<i>Home-Schooled Students</i>	<i>Resident Students Attending Elsewhere</i>
2015-16	10	29
2016-17	9	35
2017-18	13	41
2018-19	12	30
2019-20	19	36

The recent decline in school district enrollment is not surprising given the overall Cayuga County and Onondaga County population trends. Note that Skaneateles School District lies in Onondaga County but is on the edge of Cayuga County hence both counties are shown below. As the graphs that follow show, the total population in both Cayuga and Onondaga County has declined since 2013.

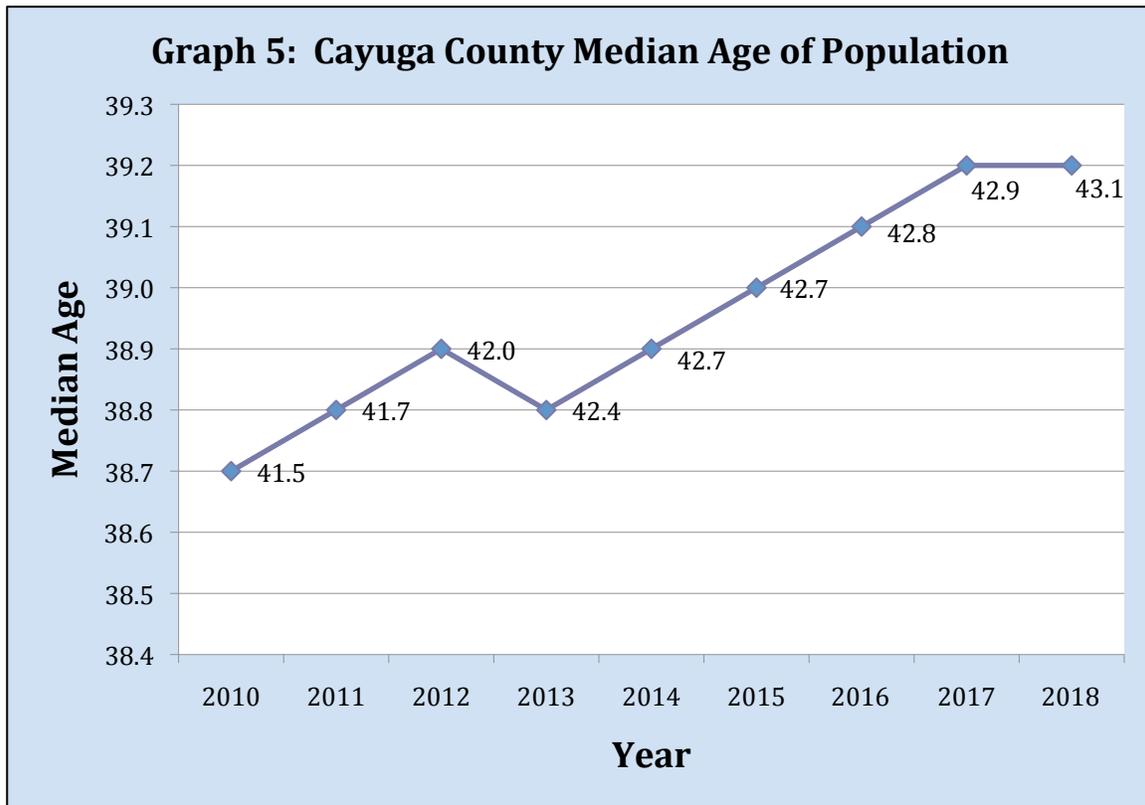


Looking to the future, both Cayuga County and Onondaga County total population is projected to continue to decline out to 2040. See Graph 3 that follows for these census projections.

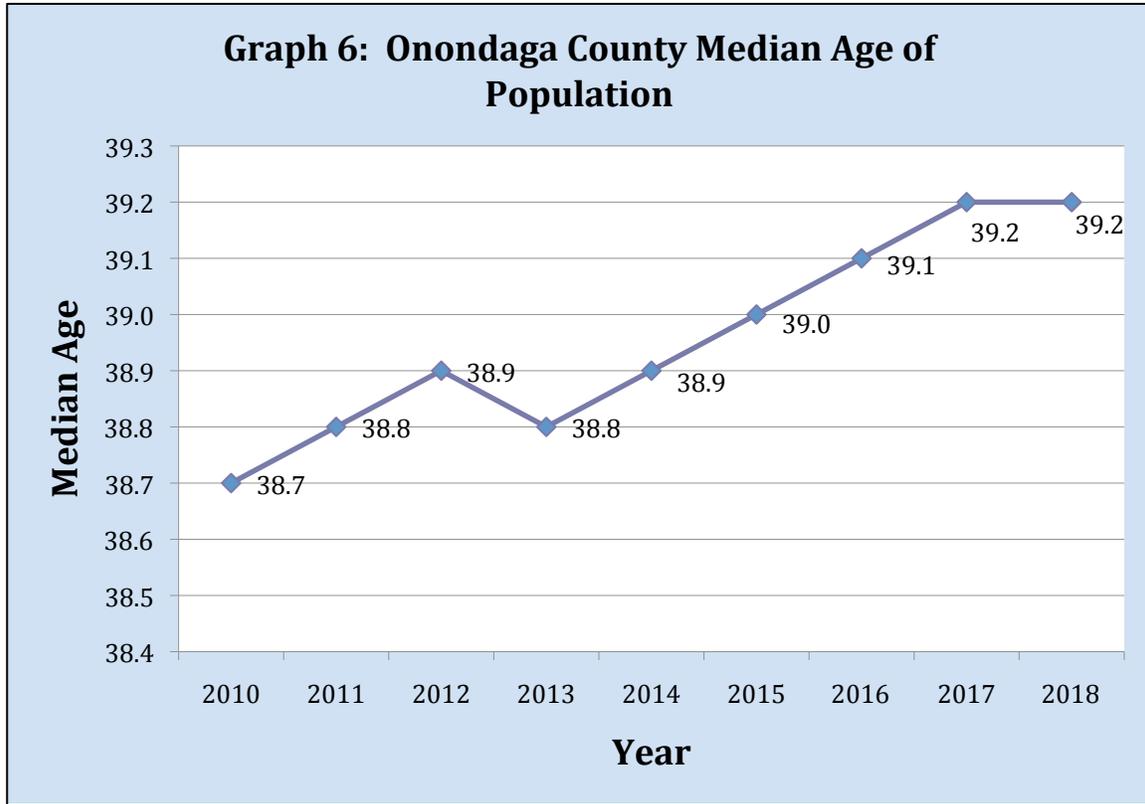


It is important to also examine the median age of Cayuga and Onondaga County residents since these provide some insight into future school enrollments. Populations that are aging generally mean that there is likely an out-migration of younger residents, hence fewer families that likely will have children entering the school system. In upstate New York, it is very common to find most communities that are experiencing this type of out migration and hence aging local populations.

The following graphs present the trend in Cayuga and Onondaga County resident median age. Spanning 2010 to 2018 we can see that the median age of Cayuga County residents rose from 41.5 to 43.1 while those in Onondaga County rose from 38.7 to 39.2. It is clear that the population in both counties is aging like most Upstate New York communities.

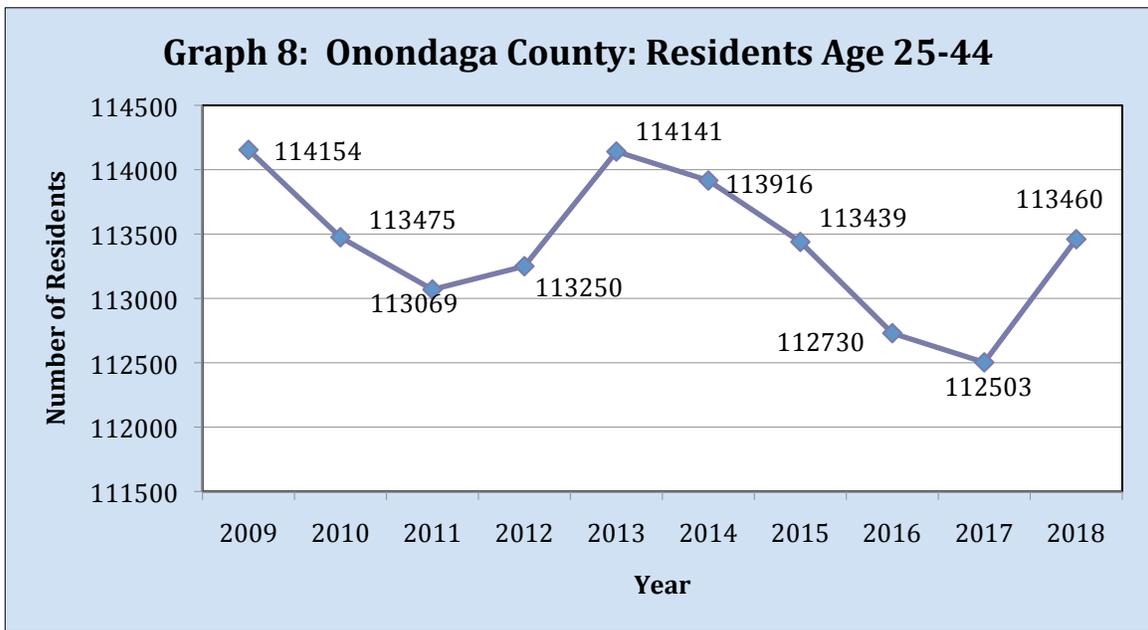
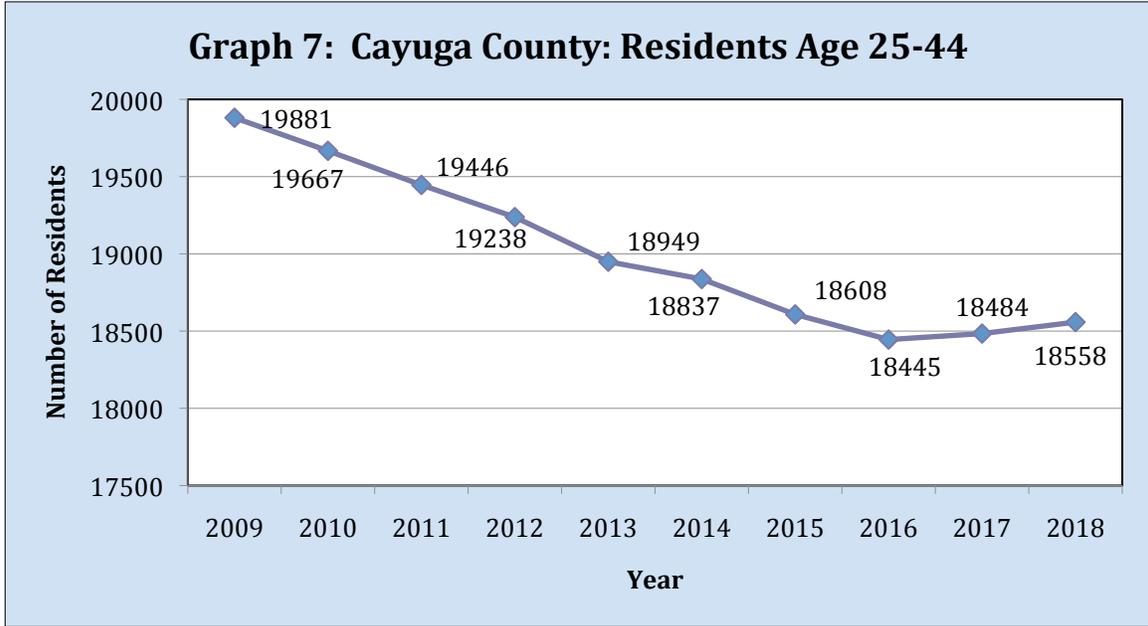


It is clear that the Cayuga & Onondaga County populations, like most upstate New York communities, are aging.



Lastly, it is also important to examine the cohort of adults in the typical childbearing age group. Adults in this age group are 25-44 years of age. This is the cohort of adults who are most likely to have children, a factor that would influence the number of children being educated in the school district. As the graphs below illustrate, the number of Cayuga County residents in this critical age range have declined somewhat over the past 10 years but appears to be leveling off. In Onondaga County this age cohort has also decline but saw a large increase in 2018. This overall trend may have some bearing on the Skaneateles Central School District’s future enrollment.

The number of Cayuga County and Onondaga County residents in the 25-44 age range has been generally declining for the past ten years but this decline may be leveling off. As members of this age group are typically of childbearing age, this trend may have some bearing on future school enrollments in Skaneateles schools.



The Skaneateles Village and Town have been developing a Comprehensive Plan. The latest available draft is from January 22, 2018. Noteworthy in the plan, and pertinent to this study are the following quotes:



Addressing prior comprehensive plans to the current draft, the plan states, “...prior comprehensive plans were based upon the premise that Skaneateles was likely to see significant population growth in the near future and needed to provide ways to manage that growth. In fact, the past 20 years have shown a declining population in the community, with changes in demographics that have resulted in fewer school-age children and an increase in the average age of residents. In addition, the number of local jobs has been declining as employers have closed or reduced the size of their workforces. A community that was poised for significant growth has instead witnessed a gradual decline in population.” (p. 2)

The plan goes on to say that: “A declining and aging population can become a problem for a community, as there are functions that require scale and active engagement from its residents in order to offer quality and cost-effective services and robust community activities.” (p. 5)

Discussing housing availability in the Town and Village, the plan states: “Due to the attractiveness of the area, demand has driven housing and land costs higher than in other upstate New York communities. This has resulted in limited availability of smaller, affordable homes for young families, senior citizens and others. The lack of young affordable housing for young families has contributed to the relative aging of the Skaneateles population.” (p. 5)

In relation to the northern part of the Town, the plan states, “Skaneateles Falls and Mottville have been the community’s center for investment in industrial production and jobs for more than 150 years. But without modern infrastructure and a fresh, pro-active and pro-business approach, it will be difficult for the community to compete for significant new jobs in the years ahead.” (p. 5)

It is clear that the Town of Skaneateles Planning Agency has concluded, as we have, that the community and the schools will likely see a declining and aging population, plus expensive housing that is out of the reach for young families, thus perhaps resulting in fewer school age students enrolling in the school district.

In summary, given the recent school district enrollment trends, and in light of the demographic variables studied, we do not believe adjustments in the future enrollment projections provided in Table 5.2 are appropriate. We also encourage the district to engage in annual enrollment projecting with an eye to current demographic trends at the county and municipality levels.

**We encourage the district to engage in
annual enrollment projecting with an
eye to current demographic trends.**



**CHAPTER 6
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

The most important function that any school district provides is to give its students a quality educational experience. In today’s world, school districts are charged with providing an educational program that will ensure that its students are college and career ready. Being ready for college means that a high school graduate has the knowledge and skills necessary to qualify for and succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing college courses without the need for remedial coursework. Being ready for a career means that a high school graduate has the knowledge and skills needed to qualify for and succeed in the postsecondary job training and/or education necessary for their chosen career (i.e., community college, technical/vocational program, apprenticeship or other significant job training). The Skaneateles Central School District provides a comprehensive program for its students in pursuit of this goal.

Skaneateles has two elementary schools organized in a grade center concept—each serving all district students in specific grades. The middle school houses grades 6-8 and Skaneateles High School educates students in grades 9-12. This is not an unusual grade level pattern for school districts in New York State, even though researchers agree that there is no “one best way” to organize grades.

The elementary schools have multiple self-contained classrooms at every grade level as evidenced by the following table.

Table 6.1 2019-20 Class Sizes In The Elementary School			
Grade	Waterman Primary	State Street Intermediate	Average
K	19, 18, 18, 17		18.0
1	18, 18, 19, 19		18.5
2	17, 17, 17, 15, 18		16.8
3		21, 20, 22, 22	21.3
4		22, 22, 18, 20, 21	20.6
5		23, 22, 23, 22	22.5
TOTAL STUDENTS	230	278	
TOTAL SECTIONS	13	13	
Average common branch class size in NYS=22 (2016-17)			

An examination of table 6.1 shows that the district has been able to maintain very reasonable class sizes in the elementary schools. Primarily because the district uses a grade center plan, it makes it much easier to ensure all grade levels have similar size section enrollments. The district does not offer a universal Pre-K program. Pre-K and nursery school programs are run by community based, not for profit, organizations.

An examination of class sizes in the elementary schools is important in a facilities study. If class sizes are reasonable or small, it is generally accepted that reorganization of the elementary grades is at least a topic for consideration. On the other hand, if class sizes are very large in the elementary grades, it might be difficult to reorganize grades to achieve any



efficiency. In Skaneateles, we find very reasonable class sizes that would at least allow discussion on whether or not elementary school grades could be reorganized.

In consideration of its facilities needs, school districts must project student enrollments for the future and plan for the impact of those future enrollments on its facilities. In expanding on the previous table 6.1, table 6.2 that follows looks at the future enrollments in the district’s elementary schools.

Table 6.2 Future Elementary School Enrollments								
Grade	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
K	72	79	104	100	86	86	86	86
1	74	80	88	116	110	95	95	95
2	84	75	81	89	117	112	96	96
3	86	81	80	87	96	126	120	103
4	104	90	84	84	91	100	131	126
5	90	104	90	85	85	91	101	132
TOTAL	510	509	527	561	585	610	629	638

NOTE: Beginning in 2023-24 the kindergarten enrollments are estimates the live birth rates to project future enrollments are not yet known.

As can be seen in table 6.2 above, the enrollment in the elementary schools in Skaneateles is expected to increase over the next seven years. Again, it must be restated that the farther out enrollment projections are made, the less accurate they are likely to be. Nevertheless, while the exact numbers will certainly change, the projected trend is a steady increase in elementary school enrollment. This means that, if it is the desire of the district to maintain class sizes in the high teens for the primary grades and in the low 20s for the intermediate grades, additional sections of common branch classrooms will have to be added for the future in both of the elementary schools. Projecting out five years into the future yields the following table 6.3.

Table 6.3 Impact on Number of Elementary Sections with Future Enrollment Projections								
Grade	2019-20 Enrollment	# of Sections	Average Class Size		2024-25 Enrollment	# of Sections	Average Class Size	# of Additional Sections
K	72	4	18.0		86	5	17.2	1
1	74	4	18.5		95	5	19.0	1
2	84	5	16.8		112	6	18.7	1
3	85	4	21.3		126	6	21.0	2
4	103	5	20.6		100	5	20.0	0
5	90	4	22.5		91	4	22.8	0
TOTAL # OF ADDITIONAL SECTIONS								5

Assuming accurate enrollment projections and the district’s desire to maintain class sizes where they are currently, table 6.3 shows us that one kindergarten section, one first grade section, and one second grade section would have to be added at Waterman in the future. Also,



based on the same assumptions, two third grade sections would have to be added at State Street. As the district contemplates long term facilities planning, these projected enrollment increases will have to be considered as part of that planning.

The district also provides a typical program-except for World Language Special-for its elementary school students as evidenced by the following table of special area subjects (all schedules are on a five day a week basis). Due to the fact the elementary schools are organized as grade centers there is considerable comparability in the amount of time for special area subjects at each grade level. Instrumental music and chorus are also offered at State Street and the special area schedule is currently under review.



Table 6.4
Elementary Schools Special Area Schedules 2019-20

Grade Level	Art	Music	PE	Library	WLS*	STEM	Computer
K	1X35 min/wk	1X35 min/wk	5X30 min./wk	1X35 min/wk	1X35 min/wk	1X35 min/wk	1X30 min/wk
1	1X40 min/wk	1X40 min/wk	5X30 min./wk	1X40 min/wk	1X40 min/wk	1X40 min/wk	1X25 min/wk
2	1X40 min/wk	1X40 min/wk	5X30 min./wk	1X40 min/wk	1X40 min/wk	1X40 min/wk	1X25 min/wk
3	1X40 min/wk	1X40 min/wk	5X30 min/wk	1X40 min/wk	NA	1X40 min/wk	NA
4	1X40 min/wk	1X40 min/wk	3X40 min/wk	1X40 min/wk	NA	1X40 min/wk	NA
5	1X40 min/wk	1X40 min/wk	3X40	1X40 min/wk	NA	1X40 min/wk	NA

*WLS is World Language Special

The next point of analysis examines the performance of Skaneateles’ elementary students on New York State’s English-Language Arts and Mathematics assessments that are offered in grades 3-8. Student performance on these state assessments is graded on a Level 1 to Level 4 continuum. The following are the performance descriptors for these assessments.

Level 1-Not Meeting Learning Standards-Student performance does not demonstrate an understanding of the content expected in the subject and grade level.



Level 2-Partially Meeting Learning Standards-Student performance demonstrates a partial understanding of the content expected in the subject and grade level.

Level 3-Meeting Learning Standards-Student performance demonstrates an understanding of the content expected in the subject and grade level.

Level 4-Meeting Learning Standards with Distinction-Student performance demonstrates a thorough understanding of the content expected in the subject and grade level.

Because students scoring at Levels 3 and 4 are most on target to successfully complete their educational program, the following tables show the percentages of students scoring at those levels for the past three years. Caution should be noted however; these are only one limited measure of student performance in the critical areas of instruction. That said, it does provide some insight into how Skaneateles students are achieving.

Table 6.5 % of Students Scoring at Levels 3 & 4 (Proficient) 3-8 NYS Assessments in English-Language Arts						
	2017		2018		2019	
Grade	# Tested	% at 3 & 4* (NYS-40%) (Onon-31%)	# Tested	% at 3 & 4* (NYS-45%) (Onon-35%)	# Tested	% at 3 & 4* (NYS-45%) (Onon-36%)
3	81	57	84	63	98	61
4	99	63	81	68	86	56
5	86	55	95	61	81	56
6	106	66	95	69	107	68
7	94	70	109	72	98	60
8	106	66	96	84	110	89
*NYS=New York State Aggregate %; Onon=Onondaga County Aggregate %						

Table 6.6 % of Students Scoring at Levels 3 & 4 (Proficient) 3-8 NYS Assessments in Math						
	2017		2018		2019	
Grade	# Tested	% at 3 & 4* (NYS-40%) (Onon-35%)	# Tested	% at 3 & 4* (NYS-45%) (Onon-38%)	# Tested	% at 3 & 4* (NYS-47%) (Onon-39%)
3	83	70	84	70	98	72
4	100	68	80	76	87	62
5	87	62	101	69	80	75
6	105	82	94	74	110	80
7	93	69	108	83	99	62
8	60	22	55	64	56	86
*NYS=New York State Aggregate %; Onon=Onondaga County Aggregate %						



It is clear from the two tables above that the students in Skaneateles perform very well when compared with their counterparts in New York State and in Onondaga County when examining the percentage of students who score at levels 3 and 4 on the New York State assessments.

The next area for analysis involves the program that is available to the middle school students in Skaneateles. Middle school students have a very busy schedule because one of the purposes of education at this level is to give students the opportunity to explore a variety of courses. In addition, school districts in New York State are required to allow acceleration into high school level courses in math and at least one other academic area for their eighth grade students. Skaneateles offers this acceleration in math, earth science, and world languages. Table 6.7 that follows shows the courses that are available to students in the Skaneateles Middle School.

Table 6.7 Middle School Course Offerings-2019-20	
Course	# of Sections & Section Sizes
ENGLISH	
ELA 6	18, 18, 18, 17, 17, 1
ELA 7	18, 17, 20, 16, 18, 21
ELA 8	16, 18, 16, 15, 16, 21
ELA/Math	17, 16, 18, 20, 16
Special Class ELA	1
Literacy Lab-A/B Days	5, 2, 5, 4
SOCIAL STUDIES	
Social Studies 6	18, 17, 18, 17, 19
Social Studies 7	19, 24, 25, 21, 21
Social Studies 8	14, 17, 18, 19, 18, 18
MATHEMATICS	
Math 6	18, 17, 16, 18, 18
Math 7	21, 23, 23, 19, 23
Math 8	17, 17, 16, 19
Algebra 1 XL	16, 18
Special Class Math	2
Math Lab-A/B Days	0, 5, 3, 5, 5, 3
SCIENCE	
Science 6	18, 17, 17, 19, 18
Science 7	18, 18, 18, 20, 18, 18
Science 8	20, 21, 24,
Earth Science XL*	18, 19
WORLD LANGUAGES	
World Languages 6	11, 10, 11, 11, 10, 12, 10, 10
Latin 7	15
French 7	14, 12
Spanish 7	22, 24, 22



Spanish 1	18, 12, 18, 20
French 1	17
Latin 1	14
TECHNOLOGY	
Tech 6-1/2 year	10, 10, 13, 13, 11, 10, 11, 11
Tech 7-1/2 year	15, 13, 13, 13, 14, 14, 14, 14
Engineering Technology	15, 15, 13, 12, 12, 12, 13, 13
Engineering Design	13, 12, 16, 14, 15, 11, 10, 13
MUSIC	
Music 6-1/2 year	11, 12, 12, 11, 11, 11, 10, 13
Music 7-1/2 year	14, 14, 13, 13, 14, 16, 13, 13
Music 8-1/2 year	12, 13, 13, 11, 14, 13, 12, 14
Band 6-A/B	29
Band 7-A/B	52
Orchestra 6	16
Orchestra 7/8	24
Chorus 6	37
Chorus 7/8	61
ART	
Art 6-1/2 year	13, 12, 10, 11, 11, 11, 11, 10
Art 7-1/2 year	14, 14, 14, 14, 14, 14, 13, 13
Art 8-1/2 year	13, 11, 12, 13, 12, 14, 14, 13
PHYSICAL EDUCATION, HOME & CAREER SKILLS, & HEALTH	
Boys Physical Education 6-A/B Days	10, 10, 12, 10
Girls Physical Education 6-A/B Days	11, 12, 12, 12
Boys Physical Education 7-A/B Days	16, 16, 15, 15
Girls Physical Education 7-A/B Days	12, 12, 12, 12
Boys Physical Education 8-A/B Days	14, 13, 15, 14
Girls Physical Education 8-A/B Days	10, 12, 12, 12
Family & Consumer Science 6-1/2 year	12, 12, 11, 11, 10, 11, 11, 11
Family & Consumer Science 7-1/2 year	12, 14, 14, 14, 13, 12, 15, 16
Family & Consumer Science 8-1/2 year	12, 15, 13, 15, 11, 13, 14, 11
Speech	1
Health 7	13, 13, 14, 14, 15, 14, 14, 13
Health 8	15, 13, 13, 14, 11, 13, 12, 13
OTHER	
Resource	2, 3, 4, 1, 4, 1, 1, 1, 2, 2, 1, 1, 5, 6, 4, 4, 4
Study Hall-A/B Days	19, 19, 19, 19, 19, 18, 19, 18, 12, 18, 18, 18, 18, 18, 17, 18, 17, 16, 18, 16, 18, 16, 18, 16, 18, 18, 13, 18, 13, 18, 13, 18, 13, 16, 15, 16, 15, 16, 15, 16, 15, 12, 15, 13, 15, 12, 15, 12, 15, 12, 19, 12, 19, 12, 19, 12, 19, 7, 8, 10, 8, 10, 9, 12, 9, 12, 16, 14, 14, 14, 14, 15, 15, 15, 15, 14
NOTES	



-The data source for this table was the 2019-20 master schedule.
 - Course with science lab has an equal number of students in lab and is denoted with an *.

Based on the data provided in table 6.7 above, a number of interesting observations can be made:

- Class sizes in the core academic areas are reasonable and appropriate;
- Middle school students are given the opportunity to accelerate in math, earth science, and world languages in gaining high school credit;
- Skaneateles offers world languages beginning in grade 6 and then offers Latin, Spanish, and French for its middle school students;
- Enrollments in physical education classes are unusually low; in fact, they are significantly lower than the enrollments in the core academic classes.

The purpose of a high school course of studies is to provide students with the courses necessary to achieve a high school diploma and to provide a variety of electives in order to enrich the high school experience for these students. A complete overview of the high school program with class enrollments is provided in table 6.8 that follows.

Table 6.8 Grades 9-12 Course Offerings-2019-20	
Course	# of Sections & Section Sizes
ENGLISH	
English 9	22, 21, 23, 21, 25
English 10	20, 26, 19
English 10 Honors	11, 16, 14
English 11	16, 19, 23, 15
English 12-1/2 year	8, 7
Creative Writing-1/2 year	10, 4
AP Composition & Language	23, 20, 18
Public Speaking-1/2 year	11, 11
College Composition & Literature	21, 17, 21
AP Composition & Literature	7
Reading-A/B Day	2, 1, 4, 2, 1
SOCIAL STUDIES	
Global History 9	23, 15, 19, 21, 18, 16
Global History 10	20, 15, 14, 20
US History & Government	17, 15, 20, 16, 25
AP US History	22, 15
Participation in Government-1/2 year	16, 22
Economics-1/2 year	15, 23
AP World History	23, 16
AP European History	15, 9
SUNY Economics	14, 23, 16



SUNY Participation in Government	15, 23, 15
Sociology-1/2 year	15, 17, 11
Psychology-1/2 year	24, 23, 15

MATHEMATICS	
Algebra 1	16, 14, 25
Math 9	3
Math 10	8
Algebra 2	17, 12, 25
Algebra 2 Honors	23, 23
Geometry	23, 13, 15
Geometry Honors	19, 13, 20
Pre-Calculus	22, 12
Math 11	10
Calculus	10
Pre-Calculus Honors	20, 18, 16
AP Calculus	21
Statistical Methods & Modeling	16, 15
AP Statistics	24
Math Lab-A/B Day	4, 4, 3, 5, 2, 3
Special Class Math	2
SCIENCE (*-Courses with labs)	
Earth Science*	24, 25, 23
Biology*	20, 22, 21
Biology Honors*	11, 19, 14
AP Biology*	18, 14
Chemistry *	13, 12
Chemistry Honors*	18, 22, 21, 25
Physics *	13
Principles of Physics	7
AP Physics*	16, 10
Ecology	19, 26
AP Environmental Science*	24
FOREIGN LANGUAGES	
Spanish A	22, 10
Spanish 2	17, 21, 13, 21
Spanish 3	23, 25, 17, 16
College Spanish 4	13, 15, 15
AP Spanish	12
French2	23
French 3	21
College French 4	9
College French 5	9
Latin 2	6



Latin 3	13
Latin 4	3
AP Latin	4
BUSINESS	
Career & Financial Management-1/2 year	13
Entrepreneurship-1/2 year	9
Business Law	12
Marketing-1/2 year	16
College Business	5, 13
College Math of Business/Finance-1/2 year	8
Sports Management-1/2 year	24, 7
TECHNOLOGY	
Design & Drawing for Production	10
PLTW Design & Drawing for Production	18, 16, 17
Principles of Applied Technology	26
PLTW Computer Integrated Manufacturing	9, 10
PLTW Principles of Engineering	4
PLTW Digital Electronics	5
Engineering Design & Development	2
MUSIC	
Band	26, 20
Mixed Chorus	21, 17
Orchestra	17, 16
Chorus	11, 5
Music Technology 1-1/2 year	15
Music Technology 2-1/2 year	11
ART	
Studio Art	6, 5, 17, 12
Graphic Design 1-1/2 year	9
Graphic Design 2-1/2 year	2
Studio in Drawing & Painting 1	2, 5, 2
Studio in Drawing & Painting 2	6, 2
Studio Photography	10, 6
Studio Photography 2-1/2 year	4
Studio in Ceramics-1/2 year	10, 2
PHYSICAL EDUCATION, FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE, & HEALTH	
Physical Education-A/B Days	27, 11, 26, 25, 12, 9, 24, 25, 20, 16, 27, 24, 15, 28, 22, 22, 19, 11, 17, 14, 17, 13, 14, 18
Food Prep	7
International Foods & Culture 1-1/2 year	20, 17
International Foods & Culture 2-1/2 year	13, 16
Health-1/2 year	12, 21, 20, 21, 9, 12
OTHER	
Learning Center	5, 7, 4, 6, 3, 2



Driver Education-BOCES Summer Program	7, 1
BOCES AM	9
BOCES PM	14
Resource Room	4, 2, 2, 4, 3, 1, 3, 4, 2
Study Hall-A/B Days	12, 12, 12, 12, 10, 18, 14, 22, 28, 28, 30, 30, 22, 15, 23, 16, 10, 11, 5, 8, 15, 10, 13, 8, 18, 16, 18, 20, 16, 18, 18, 19, 17, 16, 24, 24, 13, 13, 14, 14, 16, 13, 17, 12, 16, 11, 17, 13, 15, 13, 15, 14, 14, 14, 8, 12, 16, 20, 7, 9, 15, 16, 14, 19, 18, 23, 15, 19, 17, 21, 14, 19, 17, 22, 15, 19, 18, 22, 12, 12, 12, 12, 14, 12, 11, 9, 7, 7, 11, 11, 12, 21, 10, 19, 12, 19, 10, 17, 21, 16, 22, 17, 21, 16, 19, 14, 21, 17, 22, 18, 16, 13, 15, 12, 16, 15, 16, 15, 16, 13, 17, 14, 8, 6, 12, 10, 7, 4, 11, 8, 10, 10
NOTES	
<p>-The data source for this table was the 2019-20 master schedule. -Courses with science labs have an equal number of students in labs and are denoted with an *. -Not included in this table are the academic and career education courses offered at the Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES.</p>	

For a district of approximately 1,300 students, Skaneateles is able to offer a very comprehensive secondary program for its students. Based on the data provided in table 6.8, a number of interesting observations can be made:

- In addition to the core academic program, Skaneateles offers a number of Honors level and college credit courses for its students;
- A significant number of elective courses are available for the students in Skaneateles;
- Students have the opportunity to take three foreign languages-Spanish, French, and Latin;
- Students have access to challenging, high level engineering course offerings under the banner of Project Lead the Way;
- Students have access to a wide variety of courses in the arts;
- While the students have access to a number of elective courses, enrollments in many of these classes are quite low; and,
- Given the large number of electives available, there are many students who are choosing to take study halls when they could be pursuing electives.

In short, Skaneateles offers a very diverse and comprehensive secondary program for its students. Enrollments in many of the elective classes are quite low and should be monitored by the district.

In addition to the program offered at the high school, Skaneateles students have the opportunity to take career and technical education classes at the Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES.



Most often, seniors attend BOCES classes in the morning and juniors attend in the afternoon. In 2019-20, nine Skaneateles students attend BOCES classes in the morning (8.2% of the district’s juniors) and fourteen students attend BOCES CTE classes in the afternoon (10.2% of the district’s seniors).

Athletics and extra-curricular activities are an important part of a well-rounded educational experience and are important to consider in facilities studies. Skaneateles offers a variety of sports at the varsity, junior varsity, and modified levels as noted in table 6.8. The need for gyms, fields, and other practice facilities will be discussed in the facilities chapter.

**Table 6.8
Athletic Participation for 2018-19**

Sport	Varsity	Junior Varsity	Modified
Baseball	15	18	32
Basketball, Boys	12	15	33
Basketball, Girls	10	14	24
X-Country, Boys	11		5
X-Country, Girls	6		6
Football	35		32
Golf, Boys	12		
Golf, Girls	18		
Ice Hockey, Boys	34		
Ice Hockey, Girls	9		
Lacrosse, Boys	27	17	31
Lacrosse, Girls	19	17	18
Soccer, Boys	21	27	45
Soccer, Girls	20	22	43
Softball	11	9	15
Swimming/Diving, Girls	21		
Tennis, Boys	22		
Tennis, Girls	19		
Track, Boys	27		11
Track, Girls	37		21
Track-Indoor, Boys	13		
Track-Indoor, Boys	26		
Volleyball, Girls	13	14	28





In addition to the educational program provided for regular education students, in 2019-20 the district has 111 special education students. Table 6.9 shows the percentage of special education students the district has educated in each of the past five years and whether they were placed in district programs or elsewhere.

Table 6.9 Summary of Special Education Students 2015-16 to 2019-20					
Placement	Percent of Special Needs Students by School Year & Percent of Time in Special Education				
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
In-District	96	99	107	109	111
Out-of-District	4	4	2	5	4
Total	100	103	109	114	115

NOTE: The percentage of student identified as special needs average approximately 7%-9% of the overall district enrollment; this is considerably less that the state average of 15%.
SOURCE: SED

Skaneateles, like all school districts is committed to placing students in the “least restrictive environment”. While every school in the district has special education programming, a few special needs youngsters are placed in other separate settings for their education. However, in a few instances out-of-district placement is determined by the Committee on Special Education to be the most appropriate educational setting. In 2019-20 the district had just 4 special needs students in out-of-district placements in BOCES programs somewhere other than in Skaneateles school buildings. The district averages approximately 7%-9% over the total student population in need of special education services; this is considerably less than the state averages overall.



Learning Knows No Bounds



**CHAPTER 7
BUILDING AND GRADE ORGANIZATION**

Since this study focuses on an analysis of the district’s facilities, the current utilization of district buildings is studied. It is first important to examine how the schools are being used this academic year, and to gauge how enrollments may impact them in the future. Table 7.1 provides an overview of the district’s schools.

Table 7.1 Overview of Skaneateles School Buildings			
Schools	Waterman	State Street	Middle School / High School
Address	55 East Street Skaneateles, NY	77 State Street Skaneateles, NY	49 E. Elizabeth Street Skaneateles, NY
Year of Original Building	1967	1953	1952
Sq. Ft. in Current Building	58,190	70,500	354,715
Number of Floors	1	2	2
Grades Housed	K-2	3-5	6-12
Students Served in 2019-20	230	278	785
Overall Building Rating	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Architect	Bernier, Carr & Associates in 2015		
*NOTE: All information was taken from the NYS Building Conditions Survey completed in 2015 except the enrollments that were drawn from the 2019-20 academic year.			



As can be seen in table 7.1, Waterman is the newest building having been built in 1967 while both State Street and the middle/high school were built in the early fifties. All four buildings have had significant renovations since they were originally constructed. Table 7.1 also illustrates the Princeton Plan or grade center concept that is utilized by Skaneateles for its elementary program. Rather than organizing its elementary schools by neighborhood like many school districts, Skaneateles organizes its programs by grades. As a result, Waterman houses all of the district’s K-2 classes while State Street houses grades 3-5. Given this structure, table 7.2 below shows that enrollment of the district’s elementary schools for the 2019-20 school year.



Table 7.2 2019-20 Class Sizes In The Elementary School			
Grade	Waterman Primary	State Street Intermediate	Average
K	19, 18, 18, 17		18.0
1	18, 18, 19, 19		18.5
2	17, 17, 17, 15, 18		16.8
3		21, 20, 22, 22	21.3
4		22, 22, 18, 20, 21	20.6
5		23, 22, 23, 22	22.5
TOTAL	230	278	

In addition to the grade alignment by building, it is important to determine how each of the district’s current buildings is currently being utilized. Tables 7.3 and 7.4 that follow show the 2019-20 school year utilization of the district’s two elementary schools.

Table 7.3 Waterman Primary School Classroom Usage 2019-20 (Includes Gym, Cafeteria, Auditorium, & Library)				
School Building	No. of Full-Size Rooms	Grade Level Classrooms (13)	Other Usage of Full-Size Rooms (11)	Usage of Small Rooms, Not Full-Size, Other Than Administration
Waterman	24	K-4 Grade 1-4 Grade 2-5	Reading AIS/RTI-1 Math AIS/RTI-1 OT/PT-1 World Language-1 Resource Room-1 STEM-1 Computer Lab-1 Art-2 Music-1 Community/Conf. Room-1	Copy Room-1 Book Room-1 Faculty Room-1 Conference Room-1 Curriculum Office-2 Speech-2 Resource-1 Psychologist-1 Quiet Room-1

The elementary schools are organized on the grade center concept



Table 7.4 State Street School Classroom Usage 2019-20 (Includes Gym, Cafetorium, & Library)				
School Building	No. of Full-Size Rooms	Grade Level Classrooms (13)	Other Usage of Full-Size Rooms (20)	Usage of Small Rooms, Not Full-Size, Other Than Administration
State Street	33	Grade 3-4 Grade 4-5 Grade 5-4	Reading AIS/RTI-1 Math AIS/RTI-1 OT/PT-1 Resource Room/Offices-2 Copy Room-1 Speech/Psych/Counseling-1 Conference Room-1 STEM-1 Office-Dir. of Learning-1 Odyssey of the Mind-1 Science Storage-1 Computer Lab-1 Large Group Instruction-1 Art-1 Music-3 Empty-2	Staff Lounge-1 Music Storage-1

In looking at tables 7.3 and 7.4, the following table 7.5 shows how many more full size classrooms each elementary school has in addition to those spaces devoted to grade level K-5 education.

Table 7.5 Summary of Full Size Classrooms by Building Not Used As Homerooms			
School	# of Students	# of Common Branch Sections	# of Full Size Classrooms
Waterman Primary	230	13	24
State Street Intermediate	275	13	33

By any means of analysis, it is apparent that there is a significant amount of available space in Skaneateles’s elementary school buildings. That is not to say that there is a great deal of empty space. Human nature being what it is, program expands to fill the space that is available. While there is nothing inherently wrong with this, a district should have an honest assessment of its space utilization as it considers other facility options for the future. It is highly unusual for elementary school buildings to have FULL SIZE classrooms devoted to the following purposes:



- Each school has two full size classrooms devoted to AIS/RTI instruction. It is unusual that this many full size classrooms would be devoted to these activities since most of these activities involve small groups of students. In most cases, the rooms have been divided and staff offices occupy much of the space;
- Waterman has one room and State Street has two rooms devoted to resource rooms instruction and staff offices, another small group instruction function;
- Both schools have full size rooms for OT/PT services;
- Waterman and State Street both have a conference room that occupies a full size classroom;
- In addition to a large group instruction room, State Street has a full size classroom devoted to science storage and another full size classroom used as an office for the Director of Learning;
- State Street has a full size classroom for a copy room and another full size classroom for Odyssey of the Mind; and,
- State Street has two empty full size classrooms.

It should be noted that there is nothing wrong or unusual with the way that classrooms are used in the elementary schools in Skaneateles. Again, it is human nature that people expand their activities to fill the space available and that appears to be what has happened in these two buildings. Having said that, it is equally clear that if the district has interest in exploring other services that might be moved into either or both of the elementary buildings and as the district plans for student enrollment growth in the elementary grades that might require additional common branch classrooms, it appears that there would be room to do so.

Table 7.6 below shows how the space is used in the middle school.

Table 7.6 Skaneateles Middle School Classroom Usage 2019-20 Includes Gym, Cafeteria (Shared with High School), Auditorium, & Media Center)				
School Building	No. of Full-Size Rooms	Core Academic Classrooms (18)	Other Usage of Full-Size Rooms (13)	Usage of Small Rooms, Not Full-Size, Other Than Administration
Middle School	31	Grade 6-5 Grade 7-5 Grade 8-6 World Language-2	Art-1 Family/Consumer Science-1 Office-Tech Director-1 BOCES Special Ed-1 Resource Room-3 Adaptive PE-1 Health/Study Halls-1 Storage-1 Empty-3	Faculty Lounge-1 Teaching Asst Office-3 Teacher Aide Office-1 Ed Foundation-1 OT/PT-1 Testing Center-1 Storage-4 8 th Gr Team Room-1 6 th Gr Team Room-1 Art Storage-1 Conference Room-1

In analyzing space utilization in the middle school, we find that, like the two elementary schools, there is available space in this building. In addition to having three empty classrooms, the middle school has full size classrooms being used for the Tech Director’s office, three



resource rooms, and storage. While it is true that some of these classrooms have remained empty in anticipation of capital project work being done in this building, it is also the case that the 2019-20 middle school program is being accommodated within the rooms listed in the table above.

Table 7.7 that shows how rooms are being used in Skaneateles High School.

Table 7.7 Skaneateles High School Classroom Usage 2019-20 Includes Gym, Cafeteria (Shared with Middle School), Auditorium, & Media Center)				
School Building	No. of Full-Size Rooms	Core Academic Classrooms (30)	Other Usage of Full-Size Rooms (24)	Usage of Small Rooms, Not Full-Size, Other Than Administration
High School	54	English-5 Social Studies-6 Math-6 Science-7 Foreign Language-6	Health-1 Music-8 Art-2 Technology-5 Study Hall-1 Conference Room-1 BOCES Special Ed-3 Curriculum Office-1 Quiet Room-1 Technology Storage-1	Resource Room-3 Reading Room-1



As can be seen from table 7.7 above, there are 54 full size classrooms, 30 of which are being used for core academic classrooms. There are 24 other classrooms that are being used for related instructional services in addition to a study hall, a conference room, three BOCES special education classrooms, a curriculum office, a quiet room, and technology storage. While there does not appear to be the extra space that was

identified in the district’s other three schools, there does appear to be available space for future district consideration.

In addition to examining the district’s school buildings, inquiry was made into the adequacy of the district’s athletic facilities. Every school district can always use additional practice space for teams at various times throughout the year; Skaneateles is no exception. Having said that, the athletic facilities for a district of this size are excellent. Artificial surface playing fields, outdoor practice facilities, and gyms are all top notch. In addition, the district uses



space from the local YMCA for its swimming and hockey programs. The Y has a beautiful pool and two hockey rinks that are used by the school’s teams.

The Building Condition Survey



In addition to space utilization, another important aspect for determining future facility use is the overall physical condition of the buildings themselves. Until recently, the New York State Education Department has required all school districts to conduct a Building Condition Survey (BCS) every five

years in the years ending in 0 and 5. New regulations call for these surveys to be completed every five years but on a rotating schedule. The surveys for all school districts were required to be updated in 2015. The next BCS in Skaneateles is scheduled for 2020. The table 7.8 that follows summarizes the most significant improvements and related estimated costs for each of the schools in Skaneateles.

**Table 7.8
Summary of Costs from 2015 Building Condition Survey**

School	Site Work	Building Envelope	Interior Spaces	Electrical	Plumbing	HVAC	Access	Fire Safety Systems	Program	Total
Waterman	270,128	1,293,680	208,020	350,000	265,000	1,215,000	120,000		225,000	3,946,828
State Street	220,400	125,020	42,300	92,000		40,700		127,500	20,800	668,720
Middle School	132,500	3,222,500	1,231,200	380,000	126,000	990,000			3,523,400	9,605,600
High School	484,000	930,000	900,000	390,000	233,500	496,250			1,407,500	4,841,250
Trans Center	90,000	106,000	209,400	54,200	170,000	25,000		150,000		804,600
<i>Total Construction</i>	<i>1,197,028</i>	<i>5,677,200</i>	<i>2,590,920</i>	<i>1,266,200</i>	<i>794,500</i>	<i>2,766,950</i>	<i>120,000</i>	<i>277,500</i>	<i>5,176,700</i>	<i>19,866,998</i>

Until recently, the State Education Department required all school districts to conduct a Building Condition Survey (BCS) every five years. Now the BCS is done every five years on a rotating year basis.

As can be seen from table 7.8 above, the Building Condition Survey has identified approximately \$20,000,000 worth of work for the district to consider. Not all of the items in the



Building Condition Survey are urgent. On the other hand, there are items associated with each of the buildings that require attention in the near future and other items that are nearing the end of their useful life. It is just a matter of time before some of these matters become more urgent and major sources of significant expense. In this planning, it is also important to remember that New York State will reimburse Skaneateles at the rate of 62.9% of all approved building expenses in the form of building aid.

Since the release of the 2015 Building Condition Survey, the district has undertaken approximately \$12.85 million of capital improvement projects. The listing that follows is a summary of these project activities.

District Wide: Abatement, Network equipment (i.e. including telephone system), Multiple security upgrades (i.e. new emergency lighting, interior and exterior strobe lights, cameras and upgraded fire alarm), Secured vestibules, Point up chimneys, New auditorium curtains and stage fixed, Exterior doors and windows replaced, New domestic hot water heaters

Waterman: Basement shored up and waterproof treatment, Store front replaced

High School/Middle School: New floors, windows and ceilings, Zoom room and recording studio modified, New HVAC units, New high efficiency boilers, New public assistance Systems, New High School south roof

In any study of a district’s facilities, it is important to identify the issues noted in the Building Condition Survey. However, it is important to note that the items identified in the BCS are not an integral matter for this study. Whether or not this study was undertaken, the district would have had to plan for addressing the needs identified in the BCS. The capital work associated with items in the BCS as well as the financing that is necessary to accomplish this work are items that the district must consider and plan for, whether or not it decides to make any changes to its facilities as a result of this study.

As the district considers options for organizing its schools, understanding the current utility costs for each building is important. Table 7.9 shows the 2018-19 utility costs for each of the district’s four school buildings.

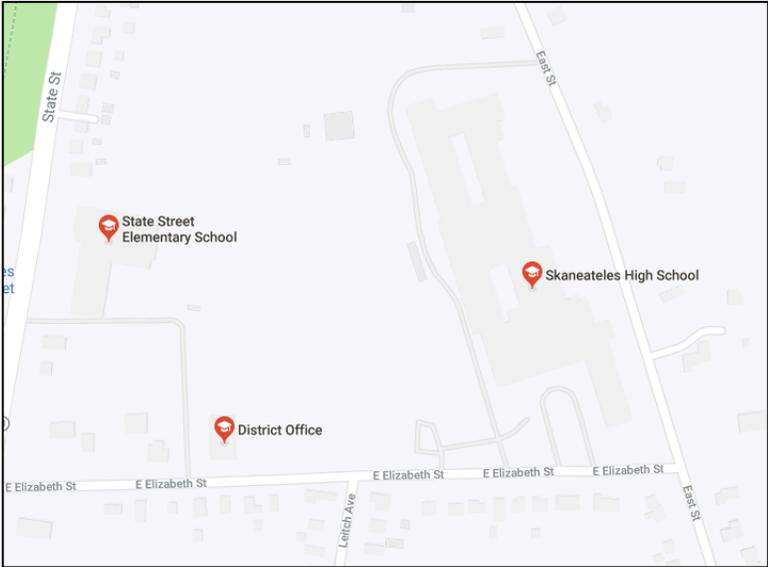
Table 7.9 Utility Costs for Four School Buildings-2018-19 School Year					
	Waterman	State Street	Middle School	High School	TOTAL
Electric	23,585	16,673	64,387	36,607	141,252
Water	6,661	3,934	7,213	6,713	24,521
Natural Gas	18,600	15,935	19,404	36,013	89,952
Total	48,846	36,542	91,004	79,333	255,725
Savings @ 40%	19,538	14,617			

If the district considers the possible closure of one of the elementary schools, it is important to calculate the utility cost savings that might accrue to the district. It is assumed that the district will maintain ownership of the closed school, will not be renting the facility, will be



maintaining the building with lawn mowing, snow plowing, etc., and will be responsible for the cost of the utilities for the closed building so that the building remains in good repair. As a rule, it is estimated that savings of 40% will accrue to the district when comparing an open building versus a closed building. Given the total financial scope of these facilities decisions, the utility savings that accrue to the district are fairly insignificant.

The district has done considerable work since the 2015 Building Conditions Survey was completed.





**CHAPTER 8
STAFFING**

Education is a people intensive business. School districts routinely spend 65-70% of their operating budgets on salaries and fringe benefits for the people who work in their schools. As school districts examine how to best utilize their facilities, consideration of the staffing needs of the school district is important. This chapter of the report examines staffing patterns in Skaneateles.

The high school, middle school, and the two elementary schools all are led by a building principal; the high school also has an assistant principal. All of these positions report directly to the superintendent. The K-12 STEM curriculum coordinator and the K-12 humanities coordinator both report to all of the building principals. The directors for technology, athletics, and special education report to both the principals and the superintendent.

Also reporting to the superintendent is the Assistant Superintendent for Business Operations. This individual supervises the capital projects administrator, the treasurer, the payroll clerk, the accounts payable clerk, the personnel specialist, the school lunch director, the director of facilities, the director of transportation, and the registrar.

Finally, the Assistant to the Superintendent is also the communications coordinator and the district clerk and reports directly to the superintendent.

With respect to instructional staff, Skaneateles currently has 123.5 teachers, 14 teaching assistants, and 24 teacher aides. As mentioned above, from a building administrative perspective, Skaneateles has four building principals as well as an assistant principal at the high school. The data associated with all staff members can be seen in table 8.1 that follows.

**Table 8.1
Building Staff Overview by Position Shown in Full Time Equivalents**

Title	Waterman	State Street	Middle School	High School	TOTAL
Principal	1	1	1	1	4
Assistant Principal				1	1
Typist 1/2	1	1		2	4
Administrative Assistant			1		1
Teacher	24.5	24.5	31.75	42.75	123.5
Teacher Aide	10	5	6	7	28
Teaching Assistant	2	1	2.5	4.5	10
Speech Pathologist	2	1	1		4
Librarian	1	1	1	1	4
Nurse	1	1	1	1	4
Athletic Trainer			0.5	0.5	1
Athletic Program Coordinator			0.5	0.5	1
Psychologist	1		1.5	0.5	3
Counselor	1	1	1	3	6
Social Worker			1		1
TOTAL	44	35	42.5	59.5	195.5



In analyzing the building staff identified in table 8.1, it is very apparent that most of the building staff are teachers, teacher aides, and teaching assistants. Of the 195.5 building level positions identified in the table, 161.5 are in these three titles.

In addition to the building level staff, Skaneateles also employs people who are identified as “Enrollment Distribution” staff. These are people who work across buildings and are included in the following titles.

- School Resource Officer
- English as a Second Language Teacher
- Adaptive Physical Education Teacher
- Occupational Therapist
- Typist 2
- Physical Therapist
- Instructional Support Specialist
- Network Administrator
- Director of Innovation
- Director of Learning
- Director of Athletics

Finally the district has staff members considered as District-Wide employees. These staff are shown in the following table.

Table 8.2 District Wide Staff	
Position Title	Number of Staff in Title
Account Clerk	1
Accounts Payable Clerk	1
Assistant Director of Facilities	1
Assistant Superintendent for Business	1
Audio Visual Aide	1
Custodial Worker 1	16
Custodial Worker 2	1
Custodian-2 nd Shift	1
Custodial Supervisor	1
Groundskeeper	2
Humanities Coordinator	1
Labor Crew Leader	1
Mail Courier	1
Maintenance Mechanic	3
Payroll Clerk	1
Personnel Specialist	1
STEM Coordinator	1
Superintendent	1
Superintendent’s Secretary	1
Treasurer	1
Typist 1	1
Typist 2	1
School Bus Attendant	5
TOTAL	45



In compiling the staffing data presented previously in this chapter, we find that Skaneateles has 251.5 full time equivalent staff members. These staff have salaries that total \$15,343,000. However, in addition to salaries paid to employees, there are obligations that accrue to the school district for the cost of fringe benefits. In addition to health insurance costs, the district has costs for employee retirement plans, workers compensation, social security, and other related benefit costs. The percentage cost of fringe benefits varies greatly for each employee group. In general, employees with lower salaries will have fringe benefit costs that are a large percentage while higher paid employees may have fringe benefit costs that are higher but represent a lower percentage of costs for the district. For purposes of this study, it was estimated that fringe benefit costs for Skaneateles represent 38.5% of all salary costs. This means that fringe benefits add approximately \$5,907,055 to the cost of salaries. As a result, Skaneateles spends approximately \$21,250,055 on employee salaries and benefit costs. This represents approximately 60% of the total school budget of \$35,288,466.





CHAPTER 9 TRANSPORTATION

Like most upstate school districts, the Skaneateles Central School District transports many children to school on a daily basis. The Skaneateles transportation department is operated by under a contract with First Student, Inc. Transportation department staff, with the exception of the bus monitor, are employed by First Student however all buses are owned by the Skaneateles school district. The district also provides fuel and tires for the buses. All parts and maintenance work are the responsibility of First Student.



Skaneateles' transportation fleet consists of nineteen (19) 71/72-passenger buses, one (1) 63-passenger wheelchair bus with 3 wheelchair stations, one (1) 59-passenger wheelchair bus with 2 wheelchair stations, one (1) 56-passenger bus with 3 wheelchair stations, one (1) 30-passenger bus, one (1) 7-passenger suburban, and one (1) 6-passenger Dodge Caravan. The cost for a new 72-passenger bus is approximately \$115,000. A new 60-passenger bus equipped with a wheelchair lift would cost approximately \$120,000. The district is currently operating on a five-year bus replacement schedule.

The district employs a double trip (or two-tier) daily routing plan to get in-district students to and from school. This means that the elementary students in grades K-5 ride to and from school on one bus run while the students in grades 6-12 ride a separate second run to the Middle School and High School campus. The early bus run picks up the secondary students then a second bus run transports the elementary children. There are 10 in-district runs daily that transport students to and from Waterman Primary School, State Street Intermediate School, Skaneateles Middle School and Skaneateles High School. The bus runs, from the time of the first student pick up until the final drop off point, are generally between 45 and 55 minutes. This is within the State Education Department's general guideline that no student should be on a bus longer than one hour when feasible.

Skaneateles Middle School students are dropped off at 7:30 a.m. in the morning and picked up at approximately 2:20 p.m. The High School students are dropped off by 7:35 a.m. and picked up at approximately 2:20 p.m. Waterman Primary School students are dropped off at approximately 8:55 a.m. and picked up in the afternoon at 3:25 p.m. Students attending State Street Intermediate School are dropped off in the morning at 8:45 a.m. and picked up at the school at 3:20 p.m.

There are some students in the Skaneateles district that walk to school. The current policy states that students in grades 1-5 living within 0.1 mile of their school building of attendance are expected to walk to school. There are some elementary students that live in excess of 0.1 from their school that are assigned to a bus route but choose to walk. Students in grades 6-12 living within 1.1 miles of their school building of attendance are expected to walk to



school and are, therefore, not assigned to a bus route. Skaneateles has a long-standing policy that states all kindergarten students will be provided with transportation to school regardless of the distance from their home to the school building of attendance.

In addition to the ten in-district bus routes, Skaneateles also provides transportation to students whose respective education program is located outside of the district. These locations include Solvay Elementary School, Cayuga Community College, Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES, Tyburn Academy (Auburn), and St. Joseph's School (Auburn). These program locations are served by five bus routes. Skaneateles does not operate any 'late' or 'activity' bus runs after the end of the school day.

The process of scheduling bus routes to safely deliver students to and from home and school is complex and multi-faceted. The bus routing process is currently done manually by the dispatcher with over 30 years of experience in the district and an extensive knowledge of the district's roads and student population. Skaneateles does have access to Traversa, a module of the Versatrans bus routing software, but it is not currently being utilized in the bus routing process.

As noted in Chapter 7, several of the district's buildings have un- or under-utilized space. Should the district decide to explore options to optimize available space and enhance programs for the students and community, the impact on student transportation must be considered. The relocation of a grade level(s) in grades K-4 would have virtually no impact on transportation because these students are transported on the same bus runs and the school building locations are in very close proximity to one another. However, should district reconfiguration to make grade 5 part of the Middle School be discussed, a detailed analysis of the impact on bus routing would be required because grade 5 students would be added to the Middle School/High School trip.

Most of the ten in-district bus routes are not operating at full capacity. Bus routing creates many dilemmas, not the least of which is that each student eligible for transportation must be assigned to a bus route whether or not (s)he chooses to ride the bus. As in most districts, a number of students assigned to bus routes in Skaneateles do not ride the bus. The number of students on secondary bus routes who actually ride the bus compared to the capacity of the bus ranges from 18% to 79% across the district's ten routes. If the number of secondary students who routinely ride the bus is compared to the number of students assigned to the bus route, it ranges from 20% to 95%. The greatest number of fifth graders assigned to any one route in 2019-20 (regardless of whether they ride the bus or not) is twelve (12) students. Based on the current data, it would appear that the grade five students could be accommodated on the current secondary bus routes with little modification when compared with the number of students actually riding the buses. Consideration must still be given to the number of students *assigned* to each bus route to ensure that no route is scheduled in excess of the bus capacity. Table 9.1 below provides a summative look at the potential impact of adding grade 5 students to the secondary routes. When looking at the potential *actual* riders, there are no routes that exceed the bus capacity. However, there are three routes that potentially could exceed the bus capacity when considering the total number of students *assigned* to the route. Bus routes are analyzed and adjusted as needed annually as new students enter the district and graduating seniors and



some other students leave the district. The table below is for illustrative purposes and is valid only for the 2019-20 ridership data.

Table 9.1 Bus Route Ridership					
Route #	Bus Capacity	Assigned Riders	Actual Riders	Potential Assigned Riders including Grade 5	Potential Actual Riders including Grade 5
1	71	70	44	82	56
2	71	49	40	54	45
3	63	46	31	58	43
4	71	61	49	71	59
5	71	68	50	77	61
6	59	34	26	46	38
7	71	67	26	78	37
8	71	64	56	69	61
9	71	60	31	67	38
10	71	39	35	46	42

The daily transportation system that the district provides is a very complex operation with a number of buses stopping and picking up at multiple school locations.



**CHAPTER 10
FINANCE**

Effective management of finances is an important requirement for any school district. It is particularly important in a challenging national and state economy like we have seen over the past decade.

One important measure of a Board of Education’s ability to find the balance between the quality of education that the community wants for its children with the community’s ability to support this education is the annual school district budget vote. The following table summarizes the results from school district budget votes from 2010 to 2019. As can be seen in the table, the budget passed convincingly each year from 2010 to 2019.

Table 10.1 District Budget Vote History			
Year	Yes Votes	No Votes	Total Votes
2019	423	116	539
2018	644	196	840
2017	631	157	788
2016	954	298	1252
2015	610	153	763
2014	1005	256	1261
2013	769	345	1114
2012	897	259	1156
2011	1105	447	1552
2010	1045	569	1614

In addition to passing school budgets each year, the Skaneateles community has also supported capital project and bus purchase votes on numerous occasions in recent years.

In addition, the Skaneateles school community has consistently supported capital project votes on recent occasions (2006, 2007, 2010, 2013, 2017, and 2018) as well as annual bus purchase propositions since 2010.

A second window into the district’s current fiscal situation is the examination of the current general fund balance sheet. At the end of each fiscal year (June 30th), all school districts have to file a year-end financial report. The following table 10.2 shows Skaneateles’ general fund balance sheet from this report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019.



Table 10.2	
District Balance Sheets as of June 30, 2019	
ASSETS	
Cash – Unrestricted/Restricted	\$11,184,477
Accounts/Taxes receivable	\$851,823
Due from other funds	\$223,339
Total Assets	\$12,259,639
LIABILITIES	
Accounts payable	\$176,551
Accrued liabilities	\$36,807
Due to other funds	\$1,997
Due to Employees’ Retirement System	\$119,763
Due to Teachers’ Retirement System	\$1,298,583
Unearned revenue	\$13,311
Total Liabilities/Deferred Revenues	\$1,647,012
FUND BALANCE	
Restricted Fund Balance	
Reserve for Employees’ Retirement Contributions	\$2,108,276
Reserve for Teachers’ Retirement Contributions	\$229,780
Repair Reserve	\$5,000
Reserve for Tax Certiorari	\$495,403
Reserve for Employee Benefit & Accrued Liability	\$596,680
Reserve for Capital Projects	\$5,375,000
Total Restricted Fund Balance	\$8,810,139
Assigned Fund Balance	
Appropriated for Taxes	\$150,000
Encumbrances	\$240,949
Total Assigned Fund Balance	\$390,949
Unassigned Fund Balance	
Unassigned Fund Balance	\$1,411,539
Total Unassigned Fund Balance	\$1,411,539
Total Fund Balance	\$10,612,627
Total Liabilities & Fund Balance	\$12,259,639



To assess the district’s overall fiscal position, it is important to focus on several items in the above general fund balance sheet. Specifically, the number and amount of reserve accounts in the restricted fund balance is an indicator of long-range fiscal planning. As can be seen, on June 30, 2019, the district had \$2,108,276 in reserve for Employees’ Retirement Contributions; \$229,780 in a reserve for Teachers’ Retirement Contribution; \$5,000 in a Repair Reserve; \$495,403 in a Tax Certiorari Reserve (property assessment challenges); \$596,680 set aside for Employee Benefits and Accrued Liabilities; and, \$5,375,000 in a Capital Projects Reserve. The following table summarizes the most recent five-year history of the district’s restricted fund balance for each reserve category.

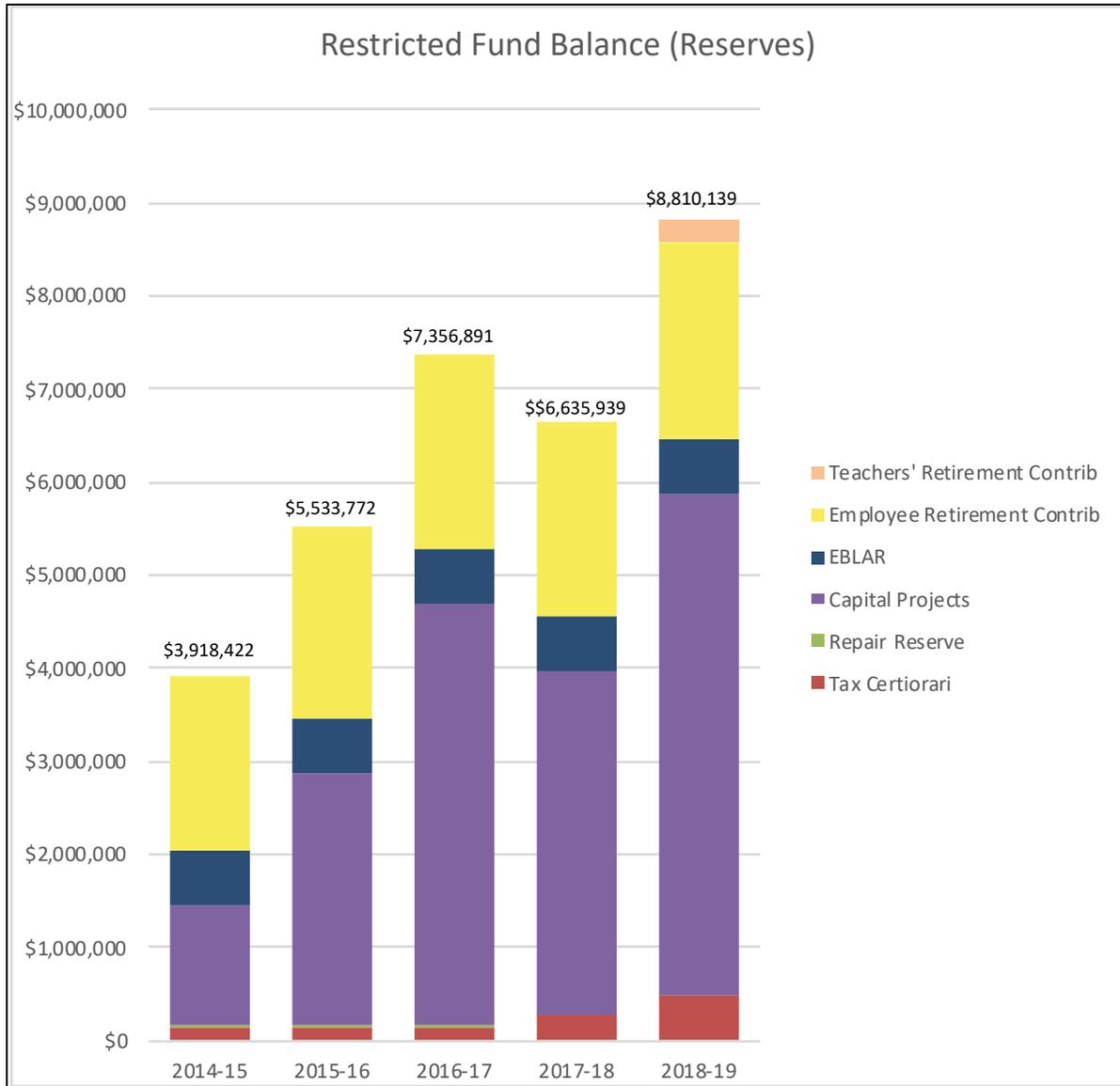


Table 10.3					
Restricted Fund Balance: A Five Year Summary					
<u>Category</u>	<u>6/30/15</u>	<u>6/30/16</u>	<u>6/30/17</u>	<u>6/30/18</u>	<u>6/30/19</u>
Employees' Retirement Contribution	\$1,873,000	\$2,068,350	\$2,068,594	\$2,068,594	\$2,108,276
Teachers' Retirement Contribution					\$229,780
Repair Reserve	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Tax Certiorari	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$271,312	\$495,403
Employee Benefits & Accrued Liability	\$585,422	\$585,422	\$585,422	\$585,422	\$596,680
Capital	\$1,305,000	\$2,725,000	\$4,547,875	\$3,705,611	\$5,375,000
Total	\$3,918,422	\$5,533,772	\$7,356,891	\$6,635,939	\$8,810,139

The graph below provides a visual illustration of the restricted fund balance (reserves) of the district. The Teachers' Retirement Contribution Reserve did not exist prior to April 1, 2019. Therefore, this reserve was created and funded in 2018-19 so there is no funding of this reserve in the first four years of this five-year summary. The total restricted fund balance has generally increased in each of the five years with the exception of 2017-18. In this year, the total restricted fund balance decreased by \$720,952; an amount directly tied to a decrease in the Capital Reserve. Over the five-year analysis period, the total restricted fund balance has increased from \$3,918,422 to \$8,810,139; a total increase of \$4,891,717.

This data is clear evidence of a district in excellent fiscal health as a result of strong fiscal management by district leaders and the Board of Education.

A number of variables illustrate that Skaneateles is a district in excellent fiscal health as a result of strong fiscal management by district leaders and the Board of Education!



Another indicator of fiscal health is the amount of unassigned fund balance a district maintains. The unassigned fund balance is often thought of as the ‘emergency’ fund for the district in the event of unforeseen expenditures that are critical to the operation of the district or may be required by law. State law restricts a school district from carrying more than 4% of the subsequent year’s budget in its unassigned fund balance. At the end of the 2018-19 fiscal year, Skaneateles had \$1,411,539 set aside or 4.0% of 2019-20 general fund budget (\$35,288,466).

Lastly, we examine the amount of money a school district uses to hold down the tax rate each year; that is, money the district has on hand at the end of the previous year that it applies to the revenue side of the ledger for the coming year. From the 2018-19 general fund budget, Skaneateles applied \$150,000 to help mitigate an increase in the 2019-20 tax rate. This is the



same amount that had been appropriated in 2017-18. In each of the three years preceding 2017-18, the district appropriated \$90,000 for assigned fund balance. This is a nominal amount when considering a district budget in excess of \$35,000,000 providing further evidence that the district is fiscally strong because it has not significantly increased its dependence on assigned fund balance.

A five-year history as illustrated in Table 10.4 that follows shows the use of assigned fund balance has fluctuated slightly which is primarily attributable to changes in the amount of expenses encumbered from prior year funds. Unassigned fund balance has been relatively stable and generally in compliance with statutory limits.

Table 10.4 Five Year History of Assigned and Unassigned Fund Balance			
Fiscal Year Ending 6/30	Assigned Fund Balance*		Unassigned Fund Balance
	Appropriated for Taxes	Encumbrances	
2019	\$150,000	\$240,949	\$1,411,539
2018	\$150,000	\$132,219	\$1,360,389
2017	\$90,000	\$224,197	\$1,298,270
2016	\$90,000	\$473,276	\$1,558,489
2015	\$90,000	\$47,260	\$1,235,623

*Assigned Fund Balance is the amount of fund balance the district used to hold down the tax rate the following year by lowering the needed levy plus expenses encumbered from prior year funds.

Another important financial variable is the current amount of principal and interest the district carries on former capital borrowing. The following table summarizes the current capital debt obligations of the district. In addition, the table also estimates the amount of state aid the district will receive on these payments as well as the net local share taxpayers must contribute. Skaneateles has done an excellent job of managing the timing of the district’s capital projects and using the capital reserve fund effectively to minimize the financial burden on the taxpayers while creating exceptional learning spaces for students and responsibly maintaining the investment district residents have made in their facilities. It is important to consult with financial advisors experienced in school district debt service and building aid when planning future obligations to avoid any adverse financial impact on the district.

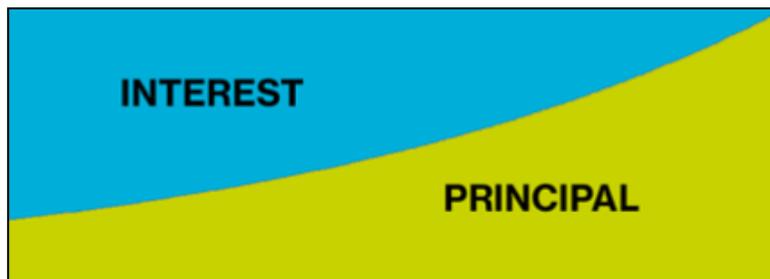




Table 10.5
Summary of Principal & Interest on Capital Debt-Net Local Share

Year	Total Principal	Total Interest	Total Debt Service	Estimated Building Aid	Estimated Net Local Share
2019-20	\$4,333,000	\$574,178	\$4,907,178	\$2,903,939	\$2,003,239
2020-21	\$2,741,000	\$517,636	\$3,258,636	\$1,256,245	\$2,002,391
2021-22	\$2,355,000	\$1,741,646	\$4,096,646	\$2,097,851	\$1,998,795
2022-23	\$3,470,216	\$1,449,247	\$4,919,463	\$2,924,254	\$1,995,209
2023-24	\$3,565,000	\$1,333,850	\$4,898,850	\$2,903,093	\$1,995,757
2024-25	\$2,885,000	\$1,210,425	\$4,095,425	\$2,523,407	\$1,572,018
2025-26	\$2,900,000	\$1,114,350	\$4,014,350	\$2,521,944	\$1,492,406
2026-27	\$2,750,000	\$1,020,550	\$3,770,550	\$2,353,519	\$1,417,031
2027-28	\$2,845,000	\$933,019	\$3,778,019	\$2,353,519	\$1,424,500
2028-29	\$2,920,000	\$841,469	\$3,761,469	\$2,353,519	\$1,407,950
2029-30	\$3,020,000	\$746,194	\$3,766,194	\$2,353,519	\$1,412,675
2030-31	\$3,125,000	\$647,519	\$3,772,519	\$2,292,548	\$1,479,971
2031-32	\$3,010,000	\$545,294	\$3,555,294	\$2,220,221	\$1,335,073
2032-33	\$3,110,000	\$445,507	\$3,555,507	\$2,183,753	\$1,371,754
2033-34	\$2,645,000	\$342,300	\$2,987,300	\$1,884,540	\$1,102,760
2034-35	\$2,735,000	\$253,225	\$2,988,225	\$1,838,190	\$1,150,035
2035-36	\$2,780,000	\$161,000	\$2,941,000	\$1,754,507	\$1,186,493
2036-37	\$2,020,000	\$67,200	\$2,087,200	\$908,703	\$1,178,497
Totals	\$53,209,216	\$13,944,609	\$67,153,825	\$39,627,271	\$27,526,554





CHAPTER 11 RESEARCH AND LITERATURE ON GRADE REORGANIZATION

Before facility and/or grade reorganization options are considered, a brief overview of the relevant research and literature that were fundamental to the study is presented. Grade configuration study is common for school districts around the country; thus substantial research and literature exist. Key research findings were presented to the advisory committee. (A more detailed summary of the research is available upon request from the consultants).

First, it is important to note that most school districts that embark on grade configuration study do so because of too much or too little capacity in their schools. In other words, space rather than educational considerations drives the decision. This is partially true in Skaneateles as well. It approached the study of grade configurations with one primary purpose in mind—how the district can arrange the K-12 schools to achieve more positive educational outcomes for students while balancing the community’s ability to financially support any new grade/facility arrangement. Skaneateles’ Board of Education and Superintendent are to be commended for addressing facilities and grade configuration for the right reasons.

Examination of school districts around the country finds virtually any possible grade configuration. For example, a K-4, 5-8, 9-12 pattern is common in suburban school districts. Some districts like Skaneateles have adopted a grade center plan, with all K-2 students in one building and all 3-5 students in another. The K-8, 9-12 grade arrangement is still found in many small rural districts and is a recent trend in the urban areas. The oldest grade configuration is K-12, and is still seen in many small rural districts, even in New York State. The most common pattern of organizing grades in New York State today is K-5, 6-8, 9-12.

Over the past thirty years there has been a trend by districts to change from the K-6, 7-9, 10-12 configuration to K-5, 6-8, 9-12. The impetus for this large scale and pervasive shift has been due to what is commonly known as “the middle school movement.” The middle school movement is an effort to provide a transition phase of schooling—taking children from the cloistered setting of an elementary school to the less structured environment of a high school. Middle school age children have unique needs during this rapidly changing phase of life that may not be adequately addressed in either the typical elementary school or high school.

Unfortunately, school district planners cannot look to the research for the “one best way” to configure the grades. While there is evidence that one can locate support for any grade configuration, there is no conclusive research that indicates that one alignment is necessarily any better than another. A general conclusion that most researchers have reached is that it is “what” a district does with the grade configuration that ultimately determines success or failure, rather than “which” grade arrangement is endorsed. For example, many districts that changed their grade configuration to either a 5-8 or 6-8 middle school never adopted the philosophy and necessary practices to have a true middle school (for example, team teaching, advisor-advisee



programs). Consequently, these districts have been unsuccessful in achieving the positive outcomes advanced by middle school advocates.

Finally, the research indicates that school districts studying grade configuration typically must confront a set of common issues. Indeed, some of these surfaced as this study progressed. Specifically, the cost and length of travel for children to get to and from school; how long will students be on the school bus is always a concern that must be addressed if a reconfiguration is to occur. The favorable or unfavorable impact of parent involvement in a child's schooling is an element that arises in every instance. The manner in which students will be grouped for instruction (i.e., teaming at the middle school level) is a frequent issue.

Research has found that the number of transitions during a student's K-12 experience should be considered. Each time a student moves from one school to another the educational process is disrupted. Although the student recovers, it is important to minimize the number of transitions in a student's education.

Interaction between various age groups and the influence of older students on younger is usually a significant consideration for districts considering reconfiguration. How will fifth or sixth graders be impacted by proximity to eighth graders?

And finally, the relationship of a building's design for accommodating the instructional program of different grade configurations must be examined. This, too, was a focus of our study team.





CHAPTER 12
OPTIONS FOR MAINTAINING AND/OR RECONFIGURING THE
BUILDING/GRADE ORGANIZATION OF THE DISTRICT



When evaluating the current status of Skaneateles’ grade and facility organization, the consultants first attempted to identify “feasible” options—in other words, how *could* the grades/facilities be arranged. Following this, the next step was to identify the “desirable” options—among the feasible ways, what is/are the option(s) that make the most educational and fiscal sense. Following is a discussion of the “feasible” options with advantages and disadvantages of each followed by the consultants’ selection of the “desirable” options.

Purpose of the Study

- 1-How can we enhance educational opportunities for our students given demographic trends we are experiencing?
- 2-What is the potential for enhancing 21st century educational experience for our students through each of the following: service-sharing, use of technology, grade-building realignment, and other possible means?
- 3-Is it possible to consolidate existing space in the school buildings so that any excess capacity can be repurposed? If so, how might re-purposed space be utilized?

Possible Options

1. Status Quo

Remaining as is, that is, keeping the schools and grades organized as at present, is generally a recommended option for school facilities studies. If the current arrangement is working and meeting the needs of the district, why change it? People generally don’t embrace change and adopting the status quo for Skaneateles will probably cause little controversy and be generally embraced by the district and the community.

2. Close One of the Elementary Schools

In any school facilities study, the option of closing a school will always arise. If a school can be closed, financial benefits will always accrue to the district. This financial benefit often takes the form of staff savings, utility cost savings, and the option of possibly generating revenue through the sale of the building. In Skaneateles, the only reasonable option to explore would be the closing of one of the elementary schools. In examining this option, the tables that follow show the student enrollments in the two elementary schools.



Table 12.1 2019-20 Class Sizes In The Elementary School			
Grade	Waterman Primary	State Street Intermediate	Average
K	19, 18, 18, 17		18.0
1	18, 18, 19, 19		18.5
2	17, 17, 17, 15, 18		16.8
3		21, 20, 22, 22	21.3
4		22, 22, 18, 20, 21	20.6
5		23, 22, 23, 22	22.5
TOTAL STUDENTS	230	278	
TOTAL SECTIONS	13	13	
Average common branch class size in NYS=22 (2016-17)			

An examination of table 12.1 shows that the district has been able to maintain very reasonable class sizes in the elementary schools. In consideration of its facilities needs, school districts must project student enrollments for the future and plan for any resultant impact. Table 12.2 looks at the future enrollments in the district’s elementary schools.

Table 12.2 Future Elementary School Enrollments								
Grade	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
K	72	79	104	100	86	86	86	86
1	74	80	88	116	110	95	95	95
2	84	75	81	89	117	112	96	96
3	86	81	80	87	96	126	120	103
4	104	90	84	84	91	100	131	126
5	90	104	90	85	85	91	101	132
TOTAL	510	509	527	561	585	610	629	638
NOTE: Beginning in 2023-24 the kindergarten enrollments are estimates the live birth rates to project future enrollments are not yet known.								

As can be seen in table 12.2 above, the enrollment in the elementary schools in Skaneateles is expected to increase over the next seven years. This means that, if it is the desire of the district to maintain class sizes in the high teens for the primary grades and in the low 20’s for the intermediate grades, additional sections of common branch classrooms will have to be added for the future in both of the elementary schools. Projecting out five years into the future yields the following table 12.3.



Grade	2019-20 Enrollment	# of Sections	Average Class Size		2024-25 Enrollment	# of Sections	Average Class Size	# of Additional Sections
K	72	4	18.0		86	5	17.2	1
1	74	4	18.5		95	5	19.0	1
2	84	5	16.8		112	6	18.7	1
3	85	4	21.3		126	6	21.0	2
4	103	5	20.6		100	5	20.0	0
5	90	4	22.5		91	4	22.8	0
TOTAL # OF ADDITIONAL SECTIONS								5

Assuming accurate enrollment projections and the district’s desire to maintain class sizes where they are currently, table 12.3 shows us that one kindergarten section, one first grade section, and one second grade section would have to be added at Waterman in the future. Also, based on the same assumptions, two third grade sections would have to be added at State Street.

The chapter of this report that analyzed the district’s facilities noted that there is currently excess space in both of the elementary school buildings, capacity that could house additional classrooms should the projected enrollment increases occur. This analysis would lead one to ask if one of the elementary school buildings could be closed. Closing one of the buildings would require the movement of three grade levels to the other building. While there is currently excess capacity in both buildings, the excess is not sufficient to accommodate three grade levels or thirteen sections of classes. In addition, table 12.3 above shows that, within the next five years, there is a strong probability that five classrooms will have to be added to the two buildings. This definitely eliminates any consideration of closing one of the elementary buildings.

In examining the closure of one of the elementary school buildings, the option of moving fifth grade from State Street to the middle school was also analyzed. The fifth grade currently has 90 students in four sections. In addition to the space now available in the elementary schools, there is also space available in the middle school. Also, the middle school enrollment is projected to decline slightly over the next seven years. There is a very real possibility that the fifth grade could fit in the middle school to create a grades 5-8 middle school, a very common arrangement in New York State. However, the movement of the fifth grade accomplishes nothing in terms of freeing up enough space in the elementary school buildings in order to be able to close one of the schools, the move that would save the district considerable money. As a result, there does not seem to be compelling facilities or financial reasons for moving the fifth grade to the middle school at this time.

3. Repurpose existing capacity in one or more of the schools

It has clearly been demonstrated in this study that there is excess capacity in each of the district’s elementary schools and in the middle school. It is equally apparent that there is not



enough excess capacity to close a building, especially in light of expected enrollment increases at the elementary level over the next several years.

Rather than closing a building, the district may want to consider creating blocks of space in one or more of its buildings to offer to outside agencies or organizations for their use. Depending on the specific use for the shared space, this space might be located in either of the elementary school buildings or in the middle school. If the shared space is for offering services to young children, the shared space might best be located in Waterman. If the shared space is for providing opportunities for young teens, the program might better be located in the middle school. The district will have to identify potential community partners, ascertain interest on the part of the district and the community agency to share space, and then select the most appropriate location for sharing the program space.

Should the district identify a community partner with whom shared space would be appropriate, the district might then be in a position to reconfigure its grade levels to create the most appropriate space for the program. If Waterman is the most appropriate location for the program, this might include moving the second grade to State Street. If State Street is the most appropriate location for sharing space, it might involve moving the third grade to Waterman or the fifth grade to the middle school. Similar accommodations might have to be made for locating a program at the middle school. While the relocation of a grade level will undoubtedly require planning and coordination, the consideration of any of these grade level location changes should not present significant issues from an educational standpoint.

As the district weighs its options for effective utilization of available school building space, it is important to consider the impact on future capital projects. The state aid for capital construction is determined, in part, by the amount of space utilized for the district's instructional programs for students. Should the amount of building space occupied by the district's programs be reduced in any building, it is possible that the percentage of future capital project construction costs upon which state building aid is generated may be also be reduced. It is imperative that the district review any potential use of a building by a community partner with its bond counsel and fiscal advisors before making any final contractual agreements with a community partner.



CHAPTER 13

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In a study such as this, consideration must be given to several school related factors. These include student enrollment history and projections, instructional programs, staffing, student transportation, facilities, finances, and the emotions associated with the possibility of realigning school buildings. While hard data, such as numbers, facilities, and grade configurations contribute significant facts to study findings, it is important to recognize that emotions contribute as well. The fabric of schools and communities is directly related to the emotional connection people have with them. These emotions are as much “fact” as are hard data. Accordingly, our recommendations are made with mindful consideration of all the facts associated with the study process.

Key Findings

The following are key study findings.

Finding 1: The district’s student K-12 enrollment has been declining for many years going from 1,804 in 1994-96 to just 1,295 this current year.

Finding 2: The K-12 enrollment will likely level off or perhaps increase slightly in future years. We project the next two years to be about the same enrollment as the current year and the long-term projection would have the district with 1,342 K-12 students in 2026-27, although this is quite speculative.

Finding 3: Roughly 30 non-resident students attend Skaneateles schools annually and this number has been stable for the past five years.

Finding 4: Approximately 10-20 Skaneateles students are home schooled annually with the current year having the most (19) over the past five-year span.

Finding 5: Since 2015-16 roughly 30-40 resident students each year attend school elsewhere.

Finding 6: The population of Cayuga and Onondaga Counties has been declining in recent years and the U.S Census Bureau projects a continued decline in population for both; the median age of county residents has been increasing in Cayuga and Onondaga; and, the age 25-44 cohort in both has experienced a decline in residents recently but this seems to be leveling off in the last few years.

Finding 7: The Planning Agency for the Village and Town of Skaneateles has recognized that the area has seen a decline in population and notes that housing costs make it difficult for young families to afford to move to the area.

Finding 8: The district has been able to maintain very reasonable class sizes in the elementary schools.

Finding 9: The enrollment in the elementary schools in Skaneateles is expected to increase over the next seven years.

Finding 10: Middle school students are given the opportunity to accelerate in math, earth science, and world languages in gaining high school credit.

Finding 11: Skaneateles offers world languages beginning in grade 6 and then offers Latin, Spanish, and French for its middle school students.



Finding 12: Enrollments in physical education classes are unusually low; in fact, they are significantly lower than the enrollments in the core academic classes.

Finding 13: In addition to the core academic program, Skaneateles offers a number of Honors level and college credit courses for its students.

Finding 14: A significant number of elective courses are available for the students in Skaneateles.

Finding 15: Students have the opportunity to take three foreign languages; Spanish, French, and Latin.

Finding 16: Students have access to challenging, high level engineering course offerings under the banner of Project Lead the Way.

Finding 17: Students have access to a wide variety of courses in the arts.

Finding 18: While the students have access to a number of elective courses, enrollments in many of these classes are quite low.

Finding 19: Given the large number of electives available, there are many students who are choosing to take study halls when they could be pursuing electives.

Finding 20: There is a significant amount of available space in Skaneateles's elementary school buildings.

Finding 21: Like the two elementary schools, there is available space in the middle school.

Finding 22: Given the total financial scope of upcoming facilities decisions, the utility savings that accrue to the district are fairly insignificant.

Finding 23: Skaneateles has 248 full time equivalent staff members. These staff have salaries that total \$14,126,841.

Finding 24: Fringe benefit costs for Skaneateles represent 38.5% of all salary costs. Fringe benefits add approximately \$5,438,834 to the cost of salaries. As a result, Skaneateles spends approximately \$19,565,675 on employee salaries and benefit costs.

Finding 25: Skaneateles provides transportation for students on ten (10) in-district bus routes using a double-trip (two-tier) system and five (5) routes that transport students to educational programs located outside of the district boundaries.

Finding 26: Bus routes are generally not at full capacity on either the elementary or secondary daily runs.

Finding 27: Skaneateles is in excellent fiscal health.

Finding 28: Restricted fund balance (reserve funds) has increased over the past five years.

Finding 29: Effective capital project management has resulted in exemplary learning spaces and level debt service obligations.

Conclusions

With these findings in mind, the following conclusions—or answers to the key questions that focused this study—have been reached.

1-How can we enhance educational opportunities for our students given demographic trends we are experiencing?

2-What is the potential for enhancing 21st century educational experience for our students through each of the following: service-sharing, use of technology, grade-building realignment, and other possible means?



It is our opinion that these two critical study questions can be answered singularly. Therefore we offer the following.

There are several possible ways that the Skaneateles School District could enhance the educational opportunities for students. Each of these means are outlined below with a discussion of the ways in which educational enhancement could occur.

Sharing Services

As school districts all over New York State look to optimize student programming with limited resources, sharing of services is an option that is often chosen. Given the priority to maintain student programs, districts often look to share learning opportunities to maintain and perhaps enhance opportunities for students. **It is important to note, this is not a shared service study and much greater in-depth analysis would be required before any of the following or other strategies are seriously considered by Skaneateles.**

The purpose of this section is to examine some opportunities for program enhancement that may exist in Skaneateles, with the recognition that services may save money but may also impact the way that services are delivered.

The Skaneateles School District could engage in a variety of shared services designed to provide cost-effective services for the district and students. A variety of additional services that may be considered by the district were identified. As in any decisions facing a school district, there are many considerations that the board and administration should examine prior to making decisions to move forward and adopt any of these solutions.

Sharing is difficult. Each partner in a sharing relationship gives up things in order to contribute to an effective sharing relationship. There may be a perceived loss of control with a shared service. The service might be delivered in a location that is away from the district. Scheduling and staffing issues often complicate the sharing arrangement. Oftentimes it is just easier to do something alone. However, these are not ordinary times. Maintaining and enhancing programs in the face of today's financial challenges demand a different model for doing business. We believe that the model must involve sharing services. Finally, our experience has been that students react very positively to meeting new students from other districts; it is the adults that often have a greater time adjusting to the changes.

Sharing also takes time. The tendency for a superintendent or a board of education may be to quickly approve the implementation of one or more of these programs. In order to develop any of the sharing arrangements identified, relationships must be developed between the people in the districts involved in the share. This will take much conversation and many shared experiences in order to develop trust between the staff. Our recommendation, however, is that the process for consideration and implementation be carefully designed so as to insure long-term success of shared programs. Essential components in the process are the involvement of stakeholders, clear communications between the districts, and the development of trust among those involved.



One of the first issues that will have to be addressed is whether or not the districts, in implementing some of these changes, will put people out of jobs. It is not unusual for districts not to involuntarily put people out of work but rather to handle staff reductions only through attrition. While this is a fairly common practice, it does delay the potential savings.

The sharing of personnel also has numerous implications for the districts' unions. Changes in working conditions, contracting bargaining unit work, and other changes that impact the staff will almost certainly find their way to the bargaining table. This may cause delays in implementing change as well.

One way to build an understanding of the sharing is to form a committee of administrators, teachers, and staff to use the information in this report to begin the discussion of possibilities, assess and prioritize needs, plan, develop shared programs, and evaluate whether or not the shared initiatives are successful.

Student and Teacher Exchange Program

A major component of the critical questions guiding this study in the instructional areas is to determine options maintaining and enhancing the quality of instructional programs available to Skaneateles students. Especially today, it is important to think about creative options that will continue to provide both a solid core instructional program as well as a wide variety of electives for students.

Sharing academic opportunities will, in some cases, involve the availability of courses and programs not available in individual school districts. The first manner of sharing academic programs that should be considered involves sharing students between high schools. Opportunities for creating a richer program of electives in the core areas as well as in technology, business, music, and art can come from sharing either students or sharing teachers. It is clearly understood that this option cannot be realized without a great deal of planning and problem solving. Issues of scheduling and transportation alone will present significant challenges to making this student exchange program work. However, given the current and future fiscal challenges, it is important to examine the possibilities.

Adding additional courses may be difficult financially for one district but the potential for creating a cost effective approach to sharing courses between districts would make it more of a possibility. In a student exchange, students would move to the other district's high school for part of the day, similar to the model that is used to have students in career and technical education classes spend part of their day at BOCES.

A student exchange program would help to stabilize the enrollment in courses in one district and ensure that these courses would be available to students into the future. Likewise, students who have an interest in the electives offered in Skaneateles could take additional courses in business or technology. Given sufficient student interest in these areas at Skaneateles, the elective offerings could grow to add additional courses.



There will be issues associated with implementing this student exchange program. The time that students spend on the bus is the first hurdle to be addressed. The cost of that transportation and the logistics associated therewith will be the second challenge. Negotiating necessary changes with the teacher unions will also present challenges. Much like students who attend BOCES programs, it is anticipated that students should be scheduled for classes in the other high school for 2-3 periods per day. Could upper level students from one district take their upper level English, Social Studies, and science classes in Skaneateles while upper level students from Skaneateles might take their upper level English, social studies and other courses in another district? If this were to occur, clearly high school schedules would have to be adjusted to allow for the appropriate programming and the bus ride between schools. This is no small task...but if providing the richest program possible to the students of local districts is the top priority, consideration must be given to this idea.

School districts in other parts of the state offered similar student exchange programs. Following up on a study of regional high schools in Wayne County, the BOCES is now offering satellite academic programs at host districts to be shared by surrounding school districts. Sharing the course offerings allows a pooling of resources and creates a critical number of students to maintain or expand curriculum offerings for students.

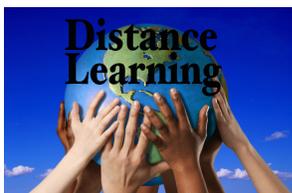
There would be a cost associated with this student exchange program. Other than agreement on the part of both the sending and host high schools, and a convenient scheduling arrangement for the students, there would ordinarily be transportation and program costs. However, there would also be efficiencies associated with this program if small sections could be reduced in each high school. Depending on the number of students and the number of programs affected, the costs/savings could vary widely. It appears that students in both high schools could potentially benefit from this exchange program. It is for this reason that, as part of the planning for this exchange program, an agreement should be reached that for the first three years, the student exchange program would be offered by both districts without charging any type of tuition. Further, each district would assume the cost of transporting its students to the other high school. All costs would be monitored for this three-year period. At the end of the three-year pilot period, further discussions would be held to develop appropriate financing for the student exchange program.

The other type of sharing is through the sharing of teachers. In many ways, it is easier to move one teacher than 15 students. For teachers whose course enrollments may be low, having the teacher offer classes in the other district for 2 or 3 periods a day may enable the expansion of electives available to students in both districts. Barriers to sharing a teacher may include contractual restrictions in one or both of the districts' teacher contracts, complexities related to the implementation of the APPR, and staff resistance. Another approach that has been used for many years across the state is to contract with BOCES for an itinerant teacher to provide instruction in one or both of the districts. The advantage to this approach is that it may be easily expanded to additional districts. The other advantage is that BOCES aid is provided for itinerant teachers. BOCES is allowed to offer itinerant teachers for advanced or remedial courses as well as for courses in foreign language, technology, business, home and careers, art and music.



Use of Technology

More and more school districts around New York State are employing technology to improve student learning and access to instruction. Instructional technology is evolving to be an effective tool for increasing opportunities for students. Whether districts use the relatively inexpensive approach of video conferencing for high school or college credit courses or for professional development for teachers or invest in the more robust distance learning classrooms and access to a diverse catalog of courses, there are a variety of options that districts around the state are using.



While technology may certainly be used in a large variety of ways as a tool to enhance instruction in classrooms, our focus in this section is on the critical question of how Skaneateles can maintain, improve, and enhance the educational experience for its students. Our focus, therefore, will be primarily in two areas: expanding course offerings at the high school and virtual field trips and collaborations with other schools/organizations.

Sharing high school and college classes using technology is growing in usage. E-learning, or electronic learning, is a term that is being used to describe student learning through a digital medium. E-learning can be divided into the following three types of course delivery:

a. ***On-line courses*** are designed to be taken on a self-paced schedule and can be accessed and completed by students anywhere and anytime (asynchronous distance learning). While this type of learning is not for everyone, it is utilized in many New York State high schools. Currently, there are a number of applications that might enhance student-learning opportunities. These include college courses, credit recovery, homebound students, electives, and low enrollment classes.

Opportunities for on-line courses exist throughout the state. For example, AccelerateU (<https://www.edutech.org/resources/accelerateu-online-learning>) is a form of online learning that is currently a service offered by the Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES. This program has been used by a number of school districts in New York State for a more than 18 years. Each online course is “instructor-led” meaning that every student is guided by a teacher. Each of the teachers is a certified teacher in New York State and every course offers high school credit. The teacher provides information, answers questions, grades projects, and informs the student’s home school district on the student’s weekly progress. Teachers communicate with students several times per week through messaging or email. The amount of material and level of difficulty is at least equal to that of a traditional high school class.

The courses that are available through AccelerateU for the 2019-20 school year include everything from accounting and advanced composition to AP Music Theory and Archeology (see the Appendix for a complete listing of courses).

There are numerous online courses that are currently available through the other BOCES throughout New York State as well as SUNY colleges (including Onondaga Community College



<https://www.sunyocc.edu/collegecreditnow>). Course content, access to courses, and costs for participation varies from one BOCES and institution to another. The districts are encouraged to explore the various options and determine which might best meet the needs of the students in Skaneateles.

In recommending consideration of on-line learning opportunities for students, it is clear that not everyone thinks that on-line learning is an ideal way of learning for all students. However, with the financial pressures that will demand that districts look more closely at the viability of offering low enrollment classes, these new options should be explored. In addition, on-line learning is a growing phenomenon in higher education. Most students in their college careers will be exposed to one or more E-learning courses and there is evidence that this experience will be incorporated into secondary education programs more and more.

b. **Distance learning** is designed to have students at various locations take the same course at the same time through the use of technology. Distance learning has been delivered for many years through specially designed labs in high schools. More recently, less expensive options have also been made available through the use of video conferencing equipped moveable carts that are rolled in and out of classrooms as needed.

For example, the North East Regional Information Center (https://neric.org/services/#instructionalandelearning_services) provides technology support to many districts and offers distance learning and on-line course programs for districts as does your own local BOCES (<https://www.cayboces.org/Page/70>) .

Distance learning uses interactive video systems that enable a teacher to simultaneously teach a course to students in multiple locations. According to the NERIC program guide, “ Full distance learning classrooms are equipped with dual displays that allow each connected classroom to view the instructor, content, and all participating students. Ceiling or desk microphones are installed to insure sound coverage from the podium and student areas. Program audio is amplified and delivered to the room via an array of ceiling speakers.”

During the 2019-20 school year, more than 130 course sections are being offered across the NERIC region of five BOCES. The course listing is large and diverse with remedial, advanced, and college courses offering electives that a single school district might not be able to offer. Some of the newer courses offered include Arabic, AP Calculus (BC), Computer Science –Java Programming, Modern Cosmology, and Pre-Vet Science as well as courses in American Sign Language, French, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, and Spanish.

The distance-learning approach that is used is a synchronous video model with a teacher in one district teaching to students in two or three other districts at the same time. Utilizing the distance learning system requires a dedicated distance-learning classroom that is equipped with technology that enables teachers to easily operate the equipment without interfering with teaching. The cost to build a dedicated distance-learning classroom ranges from approximately \$80,000 to \$100,000. The ongoing costs for participating in the program also must be considered. All of these costs are eligible for BOCES aid and the cost of building a distance learning classroom may also be part of expenditures through the Smart Schools Bond Act.



Finally, once distance learning is made available in a high school, there is no limit to the course opportunities, thereby significantly enhancing the learning opportunities for students. The addition of other distance learning opportunities in a district becomes even more cost effective. Since the BOCES program charge is only paid once per year and since the E-Learning system has the capability to serve several classrooms in a day, adding more courses is an attractive, cost effective option.

c. ***Videoconferencing and Virtual Field Trips.*** There is a form of distance learning that does not require the installation of a complete distance learning classroom but utilizes a mobile unit including a monitor, camera, microphone, and speaker. A complete unit may be purchased for between \$15,000 and \$20,000 through the BOCES or the Regional Information Center and allows users to communicate with another location that has similar technology. The communication is through the Internet. In the past, several BOCES in the state have also secured grant funding from the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Utilities Services (RUS) grants to fund this type of videoconferencing equipment for rural schools.

There are some school districts that use this type of system for high school courses with small student enrollments or for professional development for teachers and administrators. Other popular uses of this type of technology are to provide virtual field trips for elementary, middle, or high school students. A virtual field trip allows students to engage in conversation with scientists, authors, and others at a wide variety of institutions throughout the world. Some districts are using virtual field trips for elementary and middle school class project based learning.

The foundation of this study is maintaining and enhancing the quality of instructional programs available to the district students in a cost-effective manner. A projected decline in high school enrollment will require the district to consider various forms of sharing of resources, to include instructional programs. Economy of scale becomes especially important with as the enrollment base diminishes. The use of technology to provide additional opportunities to students assists in accomplishing the goals of the district in a cost effective manner.

3-Is it possible to consolidate existing space in the school buildings so that any excess capacity can be re-purposed? If so, how might re-purposed space be utilized?

As consultants we have concluded that there are three options for arranging the grades and schools to achieve the stated purposes outlined in Chapter 12.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that the district's Strategic Planning Committee develop and monitor a long term facilities plan for the district. This will include the recommendations included in this report, the scope of work to be performed from the 2015 and next Building Condition Survey, the long term the design of appropriate school facilities, and the financing of these initiatives



2. It is recommended that the Board of Education consider the following options as both “feasible” and “desirable” as it looks to the future.

a. Status Quo

Since we have determined that it is not feasible to close an elementary school at this time, we recommend the district keep the schools and grades organized as at present.

b. Retain the Same Structure But Open Up Space for Other Uses By Other Community Based Agencies

With enrollment projections and the district’s desire to maintain class sizes where they are currently, one kindergarten section, one first grade section, and one second grade section would have to be added at Waterman in the future. Also, based on the same assumptions, two third grade sections would have to be added at State Street.

There is currently excess space in both of the elementary school buildings, capacity that could house additional classrooms should the projected enrollment increases occur. Closing one of the buildings would require the movement of three grade levels to the other building. While there is currently excess capacity in both buildings, the excess is not sufficient to accommodate three grade levels or thirteen sections of classes. Also, within the next five years, there is a strong probability that five classrooms will have to be added to the two elementary school buildings. This definitely rules out the potential for closing one of the elementary buildings.

For example, the district may wish to possibly considering sharing space in one of its schools with the local public library as is done in other districts (see LeRoy and Manchester-Shortsville as examples) or perhaps allowing local Pre-K providers to lease space.

c. Use underutilized space in the schools in creative ways.

The district may wish to take existing space in one or both of the elementary schools and develop a Parent Resource Center that could house materials on parenting and school related communication. Perhaps this could be overseen by the local parent organization as is done in some other school districts. Or, the district may wish to move in the direction of becoming a Maker Space district and provide room for project-based, collaborative learning opportunities (See https://districtadministration.com/collaborative-learning-center-shows-effective-use-of-library-in-schools?oly_enc_id=7687J4287256A8R).

d. Expand (and maintain current) secondary course offerings for students

As enrollment continues to drop at the high school level, it will be important for the district to maintain and perhaps enhance course offerings for students when it may not be fiscally responsible to offer on-site courses with very low student participation. Therefore, we recommend the district explore alternative ways to deliver some course offerings to student through distance learning and on-line learning. Specifically, the district should look into courses offered in collaboration with Onondaga Community College, the local BOCES, AccelerateU, and OCM BOCES.



APPENDIX



2019-20 Courses Offered Through AccelerateU at WFL BOCES



AccelerateU
SUPPORTING K-12 EDUCATION IN NEW YORK STATE

AccelerateU Course List
2019-2020

Business

1 credit (2 semesters)

Consumer Math
Leadership Skills Development

.5 credit (1 semester)

Accounting
Advertising
Hospitality and Tourism 1
Hospitality and Tourism 2
Hospitality and Tourism 3
International Business
Marketing
Sports & Entertainment Marketing
Starting Your Own Business
Startups and Innovation

Career and Technical Education

.5 credit (1 semester)

Automotive Basics
Careers in Criminal Justice
College and Career Readiness
Cosmetology: Cutting Edge Styles
Cosmetology: Skin and Nail Care
Cosmetology: Hair Skills
Criminology
Culinary Arts Introduction
Culinary Arts: Baking and Pastry
Early Childhood Education
Manufacturing -Product Design
Restaurant Management
Small Engine Repair
Veterinary Science

Computer Science

1 credit (2 semesters)

AP Computer Science A
Foundations of Programming
Game Design
Game Design Basics

.5 credit (1 semester)

Blockchain Technologies
Engineering & Technology Concepts
Introduction to Engineering
Java Programming
JavaScript: Game Design
Java Script
Procedural Programming
Python Multiplayer Adventure
Robotics

English

1 credit (2 semesters)

AP English Language & Composition*
AP English Literature & Composition*
English 9
English 10
English 11
English 12

.5 credit (1 semester)

African American Literature
Contemporary Novels
Creative Writing
Debate
Greek & Roman Mythology
Journalism
Mythology and Folklore
Reading around the World
Science Fiction Literature
Short Stories
Technical Writing
The Lord of the Rings: Films and Literary Influences
Writing Poetry

Languages other than English

1 credit (2 semesters)

American Sign Language
French 1
French 2
French 3
AP French
Spanish 1
Spanish 2
Spanish 3
Spanish 4
AP Spanish

.5 credit (1 semester)

ELL Success

Mathematics

1 credit (2 semesters)

Algebra 1
Algebra 2
AP Calculus AB*
AP Calculus BC
AP Statistics
Calculus Honors
Consumer Math
Geometry
Pre-Algebra
Pre-Calculus

.5 credit (1 semester)

Probability and Statistics

Fine Arts

1 credit (2 semesters)

AP Art History*
Art History and Criticism
Dance Explorations
Digital Photography
Explorations in Dance
Music Theory
Studio Art

.5 credit (1 semester)

3D Modeling
Animation
Art Careers Exploration
Art in World Cultures
Audio Engineering
Calligraphy
Choreography & Choreographers
Cinematography
Dance around the World
Dance in America
Digital Media
Drawing Basics
Drawing
Explorations in Arts Careers
Explorations in Film and TV
Explorations in Media Arts
Exploring Personal and National Identity through Art
Explorations in Theatre
Film and Television
Interior Design
Introduction to Dance
Media Arts Exploration
Music Appreciation
Music Introduction
Painting Introduction
Photojournalism
Piano Introduction
Theatre Explorations
Theatre Cinema and Film Production
Today's American Art: Fundamentals

Non-Credit Bearing

ACT Prep
SAT Prep
Orientation Course

Please note: Any courses with a * indicate that there is a required book for purchase to complete the course. Contact AccelerateU with any questions.



SUPPORTING K-12 EDUCATION IN NEW YORK STATE

AccelerateU Course List

2019-2020

Health and Physical Education

1 credit (2 semesters)

Physical Education

.5 credit (1 semester)

Adaptive Physical Education (requires physician approval)

Aerobics

Bowling

Cycling

Drugs and Alcohol

Eating Disorders and Basic Nutrition

Essential Life Skills

Family Living

First Aid and Safety

Fitness for Living

Fitness for Sports and Recreation

Food and Nutrition

Golf

Health

Introduction to Coaching

Jogging

Life Preparation

Lifetime Weight Control

Medical Terminology

Medicine

Personal Training Career Prep

Personal Training

Preparing for Health Occupations

Preparing for Responsible Parenthood

Sports Medicine

Sports Officiating

Swimming

Walking Fitness

Weight Training

Middle School Offerings

1 credit (2 semesters)

Coding

Spanish-7th grade

Spanish-8th grade

ELA

Math

.5 credit (1 semester)

Scratch Programming

Science

1 credit (2 semesters)

Agriscience

Anatomy and Physiology

AP Biology*

AP Chemistry*

AP Environmental Science

AP Physics*

Chemistry

Earth Science

Earth-Space Science

Environmental Systems

Forensic Science

Integrated Physics and Chemistry

Living Environment

Marine Science

Physics

.5 credit (1 semester)

Astronomy

Biotechnology

Forestry and Natural Resources

Meteorology

Renewable Energy

Social Studies

1 credit (2 semesters)

Anthropology

AP US History*

AP World History*

Global History and Geography 9

Global History and Geography 10

Personal Psychology

Sociology

United States History

.5 credit (1 semester)

1960's America

African-American History

AP Macroeconomics

AP Microeconomics

AP Psychology*

AP US Government and Politics*

Economics

History of the Holocaust

Law

National Security

Participation in Government

Political Science

Principals of Human Service

Electives

1 credit (2 semesters)

Child Development

Digital Information Technology

Leadership Skills Development

Logic

.5 credit (1 semester)

Augmented and Virtual Reality

Artificial Intelligence Introduction

Bitcoin and the Future of Money

Critical Thinking and Study Skills

Current Events

Cybersecurity

Dave Ramsey's Foundations in

Personal Finance

Dentistry Careers

Drone Pilot Certification Prep Course

Esports and the History of Video

Games

Flying Cars and the Future of

Transportation

Introduction into Military Careers

Life Management Skills

Peer Counseling

Personal Freedom: Gain Control of

Your Life

Principals of Public Service

Project Self-Discovery

Public Speaking

Social Media Introduction

The Future of Space Travel

The Future of Education

The Future of Healthcare Careers

The Future of Home Construction

The World of STEAM

The Internet of Things Introduction

Wall Street and Financial Careers

Wearable & Implantable Technology

Credit Recovery

1 credit (1 semester)

Algebra 1

Algebra 2

Chemistry

Economics

English 9-12

Geometry

Living Environment

****Please note, we can make many**

courses credit recovery based.

Please inquire if you need

something not listed here**

Please note: Any courses with a * indicate that there is a required book for purchase to complete the course. Contact AccelerateU with any questions.

