

Paul M. Seversky
Douglas A. Exley
Samuel A. Shevat

May 7, 2014

PROPOSAL:

**FEASIBILITY STUDY REGARDING POTENTIAL
SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION
THROUGH CONSOLIDATION**

For the following school districts:

*Elmira Heights
Central School District*

*Horseheads
Central School District*

*"Custom tools and research to aid a school district in defining a vision and
decision options for serving students in the future."*

May 7, 2014

Mary Beth Fiore
 Superintendent of Schools
 Elmira Heights CSD
 2083 College Avenue
 Elmira Heights, New York 14903

Ralph Marino
 Superintendent of Schools
 Horseheads CSD
 One Raider Lane
 Horseheads, New York 14845

Dear Colleagues and Boards of Education:

Enclosed is a response to the Request for Quotations for a School District Reorganization (Consolidation) Feasibility Study.

The scope of the study posed by the Elmira Heights and Horseheads School Districts is similar to that defined by senior leadership, Boards of Education, and communities across the state.

Such studies are not engaged because of poor stewardship of public resources—it is a matter of the economy.

The dilemma facing communities and their respective Boards of Education across the State include:

1. State aid to support local school districts may stay flat for the foreseeable future;
And,
2. The capacity for local taxpayers of a school district to shoulder more revenue responsibility through property taxes may or may not be possible;
And,
3. School district communities, the State of New York, and the Federal perspective are expecting higher measured student achievement for all students;
And,
4. School district communities, the State of New York, and the Federal perspective are requiring the delivery of an educational program to all students that will enable them to be productive citizens in the workforce, and to be competitive in the global economy, as well as have the basic skills to pursue post-high school specialized education opportunities.

As similar as the study scope might be, studies to help school districts address reorganization are each distinctly unique. Eight such studies have been commissioned and prepared by us. *No two studies or findings are the same*---no two school district communities are the same even though many value the same goals, hopes, and expectations for their children. A major new law has recently been enacted that allows districts in a reorganization to spread out tax rates over up to 10 years to help ensure that all taxpayers may have a property tax reduction in the consolidated district even though both school districts separately, before reorganization, may have very different tax-on-true-value rates. We look forward to explore how this major new flexibility may advantage your school districts in a possible reorganization.

Thank you for the opportunity to consider SES to help your districts explore an option for the future.

Sincerely,

Paul M. Seversky, Douglas A. Exley, Samuel A. Shevat
 On behalf of the SES Study Team, LLC
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GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE TWO SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDY:

The goal of the Project is to complete a thorough and comprehensive Feasibility Study that will inform the public and guide future planning for the School Districts. Achievement of this goal will be supported by accomplishment of the following objectives:

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY POSED BY BOTH DISTRICTS:

1. Identify possible operational efficiencies that would be realized by combining the two school districts.
2. Determine the impact on educational opportunities for students that would result from combining the two school districts.
3. Provide an estimate of the potential cost savings and the impact on local property tax rates, both short-term and long-term, that would be realized by combining the two school districts.

In addition, the nature of the extensive range of data about the schools researched by the SES Study Team to accomplish the feasibility study can be used by the districts with validity for other purposes at their discretion. The data provide a wide-based perspective to enable the districts to explore, for example, formal or informal sharing and cooperative arrangements that may be authorized by current law.

INTRODUCTION:

The Research Study Team (SES Study Team), in an impartial manner, provides expertise, direction and facilitation through a guided process to help community volunteers and school leaders from each school district and community come together to analyze local data to answer questions that arise during the collaborative effort to achieve the purpose set by the two school districts.

Elements of the study process include:

1. *Inclusion of, and sensitivity to, all points of view from the communities involved;*
2. *A focus on answering a set of questions by school district and community stakeholders;*
3. *An approach that begins with the collection of data, a review of major findings, sharing of perceptions, recommendations based upon challenges and opportunities, and finally modeling of potential options as a result of reorganization;*
4. *The role of school district instructional, instructional support, and administrative staff in providing comprehensive data for the study to use to answer its questions;*
5. *Public transparency of the work and data developed and compiled by the Joint Community Advisory Committee and the Study Team;*
6. *The creation of a study report that becomes the prime useable tool by members of the communities as they decide how best to educate their children in the future.*

It is the Research Study Team's firm belief that a process based upon a strong commitment to community involvement will provide the best study results for the two school districts. The following are recommended elements for a successful and useable school district reorganization study: data that 'hold up a mirror' to reflect the two separate school districts, transparent review of the information, and the identification of possible 'what if' action options that focus on 'what's best for the students' of both districts.

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STUDY METHODOLOGY:

In summary, the approach to accomplish the feasibility study begins with the collection of data; a review of major findings; sharing of perceptions and recommendations based upon opportunities and challenges inferred from the data; and finally the modeling of possible options as a result of a potential reorganization of the two school districts into one.

Planning for the Future Workshop with Both Boards and Superintendents

As 'guest outsiders', the SES Study Team provides a two to three hour work session for both Boards and superintendents of the districts. All such meetings of a board are public meetings. There are **three outcomes** for such a planning workshop. **One outcome** of the planning for the future work session is a tool that documents an outline of the priorities, values, questions, and objectives of the Boards and superintendents that they believe the Reorganization Feasibility Study should address. The tool is valuable as a baseline resource for the work of the Joint Community Advisory Committee comprised of appointed volunteers from both districts working in collaboration with the SES Study Team. **A second outcome** of the planning session is to inform the public about the purpose of the study and the process of the study. **A third outcome** is for the Boards to indicate if the feasibility study is to focus on a reorganization of both districts to form a new district or on a reorganization of the districts by the annexation of one district to another. Often, Boards of Education invite the District Superintendent(s) of the BOCES to attend as guest(s). It allows the District Superintendent(s), to first hand learn about the collaborative focus of the Boards regarding the feasibility study.

A sample agenda for the public workshop session is below.

A Customized Workshop for the
Elmira Heights and
Horseheads Central School Districts
Boards of Education and Superintendents
xxxxx, xx 2014
7:00 PM
Site chosen by both districts

Workshop facilitators, the SES Study Team:
Dr. Paul M. Seversky
Mr. Douglas Exley
Mr. Sam Shevat

AGENDA

1. Welcome by the President of the Elmira Heights Board of Education
Welcome by the President of the Horseheads Board of Education
2. Information about school district reorganization: merger through consolidation creating a new district or consolidation through the annexation of one school to another?
3. The guiding study question as per the study objectives defined by both districts:

***WOULD INSTRUCTIONAL OPPORTUNITY BE ENHANCED FOR ALL
STUDENTS AT A SIMILAR OR REDUCED COST TO TAXPAYERS
BY COMBINING THE TWO DISTRICTS?***

4. ***What are the key data, topics, or questions that our communities need to address about a possible reorganization of the Elmira Heights and Horseheads School Districts into one new school district?***

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- Outcomes:*
1. A rank-ordered tool that the two districts can use to focus their continued discussions, analysis, and actions together.
 2. A blueprint for the work of the Joint Community Advisory Committee from both districts as the community members work with the SES Study Team to accomplish the Reorganization Study.
5. Particulars about the Study Process:
- ✓ Joint Community Advisory Committee
 - ✓ Draft Timeline
 - ✓ Transparency and Public Communications throughout the study
6. Closing Thoughts by:
- President of the Board of Education, Horseheads School District
 - President of the Board of Education, Elmira Heights School District
 - Superintendent of Horseheads School District
 - Superintendent of Elmira Heights School District

Steering Committee of the Boards

The Study Team suggests that both Boards appoint a steering committee made up of at least two board of education members and both superintendents to meet with the Study Team at 4:30 PM on Community Advisory Meeting days to review data, provide insights, and ask questions as the study progresses. The role of the SES Study Team is to collect data about each of the school districts, organize the data without bias; and to identify possible *opportunities and challenges* if the two school districts and their communities chose to reorganize into one school district. The Study Team believes that it cannot accomplish its best work “in a vacuum.” The steering committee will help the Study Team, as three guest outsiders, with insights about the data that only local district residents can provide. In addition, the Steering Committee is often the best setting for the Study Team to advise the School Boards and Superintendents about public communications as the study proceeds. On at least three of the CAC meeting dates, the joint Boards of Education may wish to meet with SES in lieu of the steering committee.

Joint Community Advisory Committee: ‘Local people, local knowledge’ to help achieve a comprehensive reorganization feasibility study.

The purpose of creating a Joint Community Advisory Committee for the study is to provide representation for all residents, taxpayers and stakeholders of each respective district in the study process. Major goals of the Committee are to enhance the flow of information to and from district staff and residents during the study process, and ensure that the most accurate and up-to-date information is analyzed, easily available, and widely communicated to school district stakeholders.

The SES Study Team is widely known for the integration of a Joint Community Advisory Committee who actively discuss, analyze data and help guide the writing of the study. It is not a model that ‘talks at community volunteers’. The SES model respects and taps the knowledge and perspective of local community members to help develop the findings of the study—it is the community’s school district, the community’s children, and the community’s money.

Charge to the Committee by both Boards of Education:

- ✓ To listen to presentations and discussions and provide perspectives and feedback about the data and their analysis during the study process.
- ✓ To advise the consultants on issues related to the study.

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- ✓ To help keep district residents informed with accurate information about the study.
- ✓ To promote 3-way communication among school district officials and personnel, the citizens of the districts, and the SES Study Team consultants.

Composition of the Joint Community Advisory Committee:

The Joint Community Advisory Committee is comprised of about **15 people from each** of the two districts representing a cross-section of individuals and organizations within the Districts. We recommend at *least* 15 up to 20 committee members from each district. Both school districts should appoint the same number of members. Also, if a student is considered to be appointed a member, we suggest that both school districts, then, appoint one student each.

It is suggested that volunteers include *at least one* member from *each school district community* who can, with acknowledged credibility by the community, represent the point of view including, but not limited to, the following categories: pre-school children parents, elementary and secondary pupil parents, ‘empty-nesters’, seniors who are retired, business persons/chamber of commerce representatives, faculty who are resident taxpayers in each district, support staff who are resident taxpayers in each district, student government leaders, municipality (various) elected leaders, under 30 years of age unmarried citizens, clergy, music-athletic booster organization parents, realtors, banker/insurance representatives, and others who each respective community respects and often seeks out their opinions on important issues/topics facing the community. If at any time during the study process, it becomes necessary to replace a member, that new member should come from the same constituent group as that being replaced.

We advise that, except for the resident faculty representative and the resident support staff representative, all other Community Advisory Committee members chosen by the respective Boards of Education have no current direct employee relationship with either district. In addition, we also advise that all Community Advisory Committee members chosen have no immediate household members who have a current direct employee relationship with either district.

Suggested Process for Selection of Advisory Committee Members:

- Each district seeks citizens who wish **to be considered** as members of the Committee. Since a cross-section of each community is desired, it may not be possible to select everyone who requests to be considered. This is done simultaneously with a common school district newsletter (website) letter, and through a commonly-prepared media news release. In addition, each Board of Education actively invites various specific citizens to consider volunteering to be a member of the Advisory Committee. This is done with a letter sent by each Board President on behalf of the Board to various community members.
- Each Board of Education uses a common set of criteria to select community volunteers to represent the respective district. Each Board of Education appoints the volunteers to serve on this ad hoc Committee. Service on the Committee ends when the final report is delivered to the Boards and the communities by the SES Study Team. Often Boards of Education of a feasibility study will invite the CAC members as key communicators to join an effort with the Boards to inform and communicate with both communities after the findings of the study are presented by SES.
- The Study Team has a set of tools (sample letters and processes used by other Boards) it will share with the Boards to help in their process/selection of community volunteers.

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Collection of Baseline Data:

As soon as practicable after engagement of the Study Team, the Team will begin to **collect baseline data** such as, *but not limited to*:

- a. History and backgrounds of the two districts
- b. Governance of the two districts currently.
- c. Enrollment projection calculations, use of facilities and student housing plans
- d. A customized census demographic characteristic profile of each district
- e. Comparative financial and business data
- f. Pupil capacity of the current buildings
- g. Class section sizes K-6 compared to each local school district class size goals
- h. Compile and chart current high school offerings provided by each member district of the study
- i. Compile and chart current elementary school instructional program elements
- j. Compile and chart current co-curricular and athletic offerings
- k. Compile and chart current practice in serving special needs students
- l. Compile and chart current instructional support offerings K-12
- m. Compile and chart how each district now provides transportation, food service, business, and operations and maintenance services
- n. Compile and chart the student assessment accountability results of each district of the study
- o. Compile and chart elements of the teacher contracts now in place in each of the two study member districts – review current and projected staffing levels
- p. Compile and chart the results of the 5-year Capital Assets Plans of the two districts
- q. Compile and chart elements of collective bargaining agreements.
- r. Compile and chart estimated finance/tax applications, including debt service and reorganization incentive aid

The Study Team works with each Superintendent and his/her staff to gather the identified data or information. Various staff members from each school district are invited by the Study Team on a scheduled basis to meetings of the Joint Community Advisory Committee to present the data/information and to engage discussion with the community members.

Work of the Joint Community Advisory Committee and the SES Study Team:

The Study Team helps the Joint Community Advisory Committee to *hold up a mirror to the data to identify findings of opportunities and challenges* for the two school districts regarding school district reorganization. The SES Study Team has the ultimate responsibility of researching and writing the findings of the feasibility study. However, The Study Team believes that it cannot accomplish its best work “in a vacuum.” The Joint Community Advisory Committee helps the Study Team, as three guest outsiders, with insights about the data that only local district residents can provide.

The Community Advisory Committee meets periodically as mutually scheduled. Depending upon school district vacation schedules, the meetings are generally monthly. It is suggested that the place of each Committee meeting be at a central site to the two school districts or the Committee may decide it wishes to meet at each school district on an alternating basis to accomplish various elements of its fact-finding.

Typically, meetings are held on a Monday through Thursday beginning promptly at 6:00 PM and ending promptly by 9:00 PM or other similar times as identified mutually with the Committee members. The number

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of meetings is contingent upon mutual work with the Committee. It is suspected that at least five to seven meetings will be needed. The Joint Community Committee works as a committee of the whole and **all members** have access to all researched information by the Study Team. Three sub-committees whose members are identified by each respective Board of Education are formed to help small group review, analysis, and discussion of the data of the study at the Joint Community Committee meetings. A goal is to ensure that each respective district is equally represented on each subcommittee.

- ✓ **THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE:** This group of members “looks at the data of the study” with a focus on the possible opportunities and challenges of reorganization on the K-12 instructional program for students.
- ✓ **THE SUPPORT SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE:** This group of members “looks at the data of the study” with a focus on the possible opportunities and challenges of a reorganization on such support services as pupil transportation; food service/cafeteria program; building operations and maintenance functions; school business functions and other related topics.
- ✓ **THE FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE:** This group of members “looks at the data of the study” with a focus on the possible opportunities and challenges of a reorganization on financial sustainability and the estimated influence on property taxes.

It is recommended that Board of Education members of each school district attend as many of the Joint Community Advisory Committee meetings as may be possible. Board members do not participate in the work and discussion of the Committee members. They observe and listen to the discussion of their fellow community members.

Public Transparency of Data, Study Resource Documents, and Work of the Joint Community Committee

Within usually one to two days after a meeting of the Joint Community Advisory Committee, the agenda for the CAC meeting and **all** data resource tools used by the Committee are provided to both districts to post on their respective web sites for the public. The ongoing posting of comprehensive CAC meeting agendas and all data documents used by them are the ‘minutes’ of each meeting. In this way in an ongoing fashion, the communities have the basis of the final published study as the data are researched, organized, reviewed, and discussed by the appointed Joint Community Advisory Committee with the Study Team. The on-going transparency of all data and the process helps ensure that the final study document is an accurate reflection of the data ‘without surprises’.

Sample Timeline for the Study:

Please note that the draft timeline is in keeping with the State Education Department timeline it requires before the districts may present the study to the public for public discussion and consideration. Even though the draft timeline forecasts a set of Community Advisory Committee meetings, it is important to note that the work of the Committee is facilitated to ‘move along’. *However*, there is a balanced effort to ensure that the work of the Committee is not truncated in its discussion and analysis of opportunities and challenges that a reorganization might present. Therefore, the set of meetings may be up to one fewer or one more. Dates of meetings are subject to change because of school holidays, school programs (ex. concerts), or other variables. The study process is a dynamic human enterprise with many stakeholders included.

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Study Step/Date:	Districts' Corresponding Task Number:	Action/Study Items for Discussion/Analysis by the CAC	Data Collection:
	Task 2: June 23	✓ Selection of the Consultant for the Study by the Boards of Education	
Step 1: <i>June 24</i>	Task 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Study Team works with both Superintendents to set a date for the public Planning for the Future Workshop for both Boards and Superintendents as soon as is practicable for both Boards (<i>Suggest early July or last week of June</i>)* ✓ The Study Team provides a tool to help the Boards begin the process to identify a Joint Community Advisory Committee as soon as the grant is awarded 	
<p>*If the direction of the Boards is that the reorganization feasibility study should be based on consolidation through annexation, SES will work with the Boards and the Superintendents on a process and timeline to identify and develop locally developed assurances and guidelines over the course of the study that, once satisfied, both Boards accept by Board motions. If the feasibility study is based on reorganization of the two districts through consolidation creating a new district, Commissioner's Regulations and Education Law do not allow implementation of formal assurances or guidelines about consolidation even if adopted by both Boards.</p>			
Step 2: <i>Can be the same day as the Planning for the Future Workshop with both Boards of Education and the Superintendents</i>	(Task 4- The Department of State usually assigns an LEA staff member for each study. Suggest that SES and the districts seek to arrange the attendance of the LEA at this workshop.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Study Team meets with the Superintendent and other key staff during the districts' workday to review the methodology for the study and the calendar for data collection. 	<p>A Baseline Data Collection tool is prepared and reviewed with both Superintendents. The calendar as to what are the various sets of data are sent to the Study Team is crafted.</p> <p>Data Set A discussed with the District Administrative Teams.</p> <p>8:30 AM meeting the next morning with the Superintendents to debrief the evening before.</p>
Step 3: <i>By mid-August, each Board appoints at least 15 members to the Community Advisory Committee; communication is sent by the districts to the appointees about the first CAC meeting date and time.</i>	Task 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Boards of Education appoint Joint Community Advisory Committee Members ✓ First Joint Community Advisory Committee date is scheduled. 	
Step 4: <i>Second week of September or the very beginning of the third.</i>	Task 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4:30 steering committee meeting • First meeting of the Joint CAC ◊ Welcome by Board Presidents (and or others) and the superintendents ◊ The study process 	<p>Data Set B discussed with the District Administrative Teams.</p> <p>8:30 AM meeting the next morning with the Superintendents to debrief the evening before.</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Q and A tool about School District Reorganization ◇ Geographic Data* ◇ Enrollment Projections for both districts.* 	
<p>*SES will seek insights from the steering committee about the RFP's reference to: "Expectation to meet with each Town Assessor to gather both primary and secondary data to assess pending charges and any potential impacts. Expectation to meet with 15 largest employers to identify: Employment projections, Employment historical averages, Anticipated expansion or future PILOT programs, Longevity expectation."</p>			
Study Step/Date:	Districts' Corresponding Task Number:	Action/Study Items for Discussion/Analysis by the CAC	Data Collection:
<i>Step 5: In October</i>	Task 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4:30 steering committee meeting • Second meeting of the Joint CAC (Superintendents, Principals are guest resources.) ◇ School Building Pupil Capacities ◇ School Building Condition data ◇ 2013-2014 Grade Level Section Sizes ◇ Demographic Data about both School Districts ◇ Student Assessment Data 	Data Set C discussed with the District Administrative Teams. Meet with building principals of both districts during the workday to review the purpose of the program profiles and the role of the principals and district-chosen teachers as resources for the second and third meetings of the CAC. 8:30 AM meeting the next morning with the Superintendents to debrief the evening before.
<i>Step 5 Within the first three weeks of November.</i>	Task 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4:30 steering committee meeting • Third meeting of the Joint CAC (Superintendents, Principals, Athletic Directors, Teachers are guest resources.) ◇ Profiles of the current elementary and secondary programs including co-curricular and athletics ◇ <i>What are specific ideas and examples about program/learning opportunities that are possible for the pupils of the two districts if resources were available through reorganization?"</i> ◇ Potential Building Use Configurations 	Data Set D discussed with the District Administrative Teams. 8:30 AM meetings the next mornings with the Superintendents to debrief the evenings before.
<i>Step 6 Within the first three weeks of January.</i>	Task 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4:30 steering committee meeting • Fourth meeting of the Joint CAC (Superintendents, Business Officials are guest resources.) ◇ Potential Building Use Configurations ◇ Current Labor Contracts with a Q & A ◇ Fiscal Conditions Profile of both Districts—Prepared and presented by Mr. Pat Powers, CPA, Senior Partner of D'Archangelo and Co. ◇ Governance 	Data Set E discussed with the District Administrative Teams. During the midday of the CAC meeting day, a working meeting with the steering committee and the business officials to review the possible tax rate options now possible for reorganized districts because of newly enacted legislation.

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			8:30 AM meeting the next morning with the Superintendents to debrief the evening before. After the de-briefing meeting, a working meeting with both transportation supervisors and school business officials during the workday.
Study Step/Date:	Districts' Corresponding Task Number:	Action/Study Items for Discussion/Analysis by the CAC	Data Collection:
Step 7 <i>In February; no later than the first week of March</i>	Task 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4:30 steering committee meeting • Fifth meeting of the Joint CAC (Superintendents, Business Officials, Transportation Supervisors as guest resources) <p>'What If' a reorganization of the two districts was approved by the communities?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◊ 'What If' Building Use ◊ 'What If' Program/Staffing ◊ 'What If' Transportation ◊ 'What If' Financials' 	8:30 AM meeting the next morning with the Superintendents to debrief the evening before.
Step 8 <i>No later than June 15, 2015</i>	Task 6	The draft study is forwarded to the State Education Department (SED) for review and approval. The same working draft of the study is reviewed with both Boards at a joint "SES Study Team Steering Committee Meeting" or at a special Board Workshop Meeting. After SED reviews and approves a draft study, the Feasibility Study then becomes a public document.	
Step 8 <i>Estimated to be no later than August 15, 2015</i> <i>Public presentation meetings accomplished no later than September 30 as mutually scheduled with both school districts.</i>	Task 7 Task 8	<p>Once the study is approved by the SED, it is available as a public document. The study is posted on the web site of each school district. Copies of the study are printed in preparation of the two community presentations of the findings by SES.</p> <p>Both Boards and SES mutually identify a week in September for the two community public meetings for presentation of the study findings by SES. An evening community meeting is held in each partner district. SES requests that both Boards allow and support the presentation of the study findings by SES to a volunteer meeting of each district's instructional and support staff in the afternoon after school on the same days of the evening community meetings. We recommend that such presentation meetings are a respectful opportunity provided by the Boards as employers. Suggest that a Monday-Wednesday or Thursday; or a Tuesday-Thursday in the same week is probably the best schedule. A Wednesday of one week and the Monday of the following week is a viable meetings pattern, also.</p>	
<p>The service of the SES Study Team in preparing the school district reorganization feasibility study is now complete. From this point forward, the State Education Department is the prime source and 'consultant' for further steps, if any, by both Boards of Education.</p>			

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Tasks 8, 9, 10, 11	<p>Follow-up information/educational/discussion activities implemented by the Boards for their publics is a local initiative and responsibility <i>As a part of the Feasibility Study Preparation</i>, the SES Study Team will provide feedback by phone and email to the superintendents about such items as: district-developed pamphlets, website information, roundtables, and/or how to invite and organize the previous CAC members into a key communicator group that helps the Boards work with the communities in the time leading up to the decision of the Boards to go to an advisory vote. The public information period before the advisory vote is usually four to six weeks. The actual length is determined by the districts with the SED.</p> <p>Typically, Department of State LEA grant closeout is an ordinary process. SES will help the LEA with information as might be required.</p> <p>It is not in the best interest of the districts for the ‘guest outsider’ consultants to be perceived by the public in a role “to sell or advocate” for a school reorganization advisory vote or referendum vote. If the Boards wish, as an option beyond the study preparation, the SES Study Team will attend up to three mutually scheduled information meetings during the information time period between when the findings are presented by SES to each community and the scheduled advisory vote, <i>if the Boards decide to proceed with such a ‘straw’ vote.</i> Such information meetings are planned, organized, and developed by the Boards and their Superintendents. SES will help, if the districts wish, plan for the meetings. The role of SES at the meetings, if scheduled, is to be a resource to clarify information presented in the study.</p>
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Professional Services Fee –Preparation of the Feasibility Study as Outlined in the RFP Response

The professional services include all the methodology steps outlined in this Response to the Request for Quotations to answer/address the objectives posed by both Boards of Education.

The goal of the Project is to complete a thorough and comprehensive Feasibility Study which will inform the public and guide future planning for the School Districts. Achievement of this goal will be supported by accomplishment of the following objectives:

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY POSED BY BOTH DISTRICTS:

- 1. Identify possible operational efficiencies that would be realized by combining the two school districts.*
- 2. Determine the impact on educational opportunities for students that would result from combining the two school districts.*
- 3. Provide an estimate of the potential cost savings and the impact on local property tax rates, both short-term and long-term, that would be realized by combining the two school districts.*

The feasibility study is written and presented as per the specifications of the State Education Department to enable the Boards to go to an advisory (straw) vote about reorganization if they choose to do so. Paul Seversky, Doug Exley, and Sam Shevat make up the research team who together achieve each study step including working with the Joint Community Advisory Committee at each work meeting. The professional services also include those of Patrick Powers, CPA and Senior Partner of D’Arcangelo & Co., certified public accountants and consultants. Mr. Powers prepares the review of the financial conditions of both districts for the study as per SED guidelines. Mr. Powers also meets with the CAC along with the SES Study Team to present a report about the financial conditions.

The proposed fee of the SES Study Team, LLC to prepare the Feasibility Study is \$53,000 inclusive of all expenses except printing.

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The State Department Grant awarded, including state funds and required local share, is \$55,000. The printing of data sets for use by the Joint Community Advisory Committee and copies of the completed study in numbers as defined by the districts is arranged through a BOCES printing service cross-contract shared by the districts through the Madison-Oneida BOCES. The Study Team takes all responsibility for providing documents to the Print Service for printing and for transport to the districts for use by the Joint Community Advisory Committee at their work meetings.

Optional: Professional Services Fee –Preparation of the Feasibility Study as Outlined in the RFP Response and Participation of SES at up to Three Public Information Meetings Leading Up to an Advisory Vote, if the Boards Decide to Proceed with such a Vote:

The proposed fee of the SES Study Team, LLC for preparing the Feasibility Study and the additional option of SES helping the districts at up to three public information meetings (beyond the two community presentation meetings already included in the Study Preparation): \$59,500 inclusive of all expenses except printing.

Sample Client References:

The SES Study Team	Client:	Contact:	Project:
Paul M. Seversky, Douglas A. Exley, and Samuel A. Shevat	Ilion, Herkimer, and Mohawk CSDs	LEA: Cosimo Tangorra, Supt. of the Ilion CSD, 315-894-9934	Three District Reorganization Feasibility Study The Ilion and Mohawk communities began their new future as one reorganized merged school district starting July 1, 2013.
	Frankfort-Schuyler, Ilion, Herkimer and Mohawk CSDs	LEA: Cosimo Tangorra, Supt. of the Ilion CSD, 315-894-9934	Four District Reorganization Feasibility Study
	Mayfield and Northville CSDs	LEA: Paul Williamson, Supt of Mayfield CSD, 518-661-8207	Two District Reorganization Feasibility Study Update of Reorganization Feasibility Study for a Second Public Vote
	Ichabod Crane and Schodack CSDs	LEA: Robert Horan, Supt. of Schodack CSD, 518-295-9510	Two District Reorganization Feasibility Study
	Stockbridge Valley and Madison CSDs	LEA: Pat Curtin, Interim Supt. of Stockbridge Valley, 315-794-1158	Two District Reorganization Feasibility Study.
	Hamilton and Morrisville-Eaton CSDs	LEA: Michael Drahos, Supt. of Morrisville-Eaton, 315-684-9300	Two District Reorganization Feasibility Study.
	Jefferson and Stamford CSDs	Carl Mumenthey, Supt. of Jefferson CSD, 607-652-7821	Sharing of Services Feasibility Study
	Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda UFSD	Mark Mondanaro, Supt. of Schools, 716-874-8400	The Ken-Ton Board engaged SES to study the question: "Are there options to the current practice that might provide more efficient ways or patterns to organize how the grades K-12 program is implemented/delivered over the next three years?"
	Owen D, Young	James Picolla, Supt. of Schools, 315-858-0729	Short-range and long-range planning by the Board of Education and hosting a community focus group to identify what might be included in a district long-range plan.
	Southampton UFSD and Tuckahoe Common	Chris Dyer, Supt. of Tuckahoe Common 631-283-3550 ext. 303	Two District Reorganization Feasibility Study (Annexation)
Paul M. Seversky	Client:	Contact:	Project:
	East Greenbush Central School District	Angela Nagle, Supt. of Schools; 518-477-2755 or Larry Edson, Assistant Supt.	Annual enrollment and demographic analyses. Currently, in the final stage of studying "Are there options that might provide more efficient ways or patterns to organize how the East Greenbush School District grade kindergarten through grade 5 program is implemented over the next three years?"
	Camden Central School District	Jeff Bryant, Supt. of Schools; 315-245-4075	The Camden Board engaged me to study the question: "Are there options that might provide more efficient ways or patterns to organize how the Camden School District grade kindergarten through grade 8 program is implemented over the next three years?"
	Central Square Central School District	Joseph Menard, Supt. of Schools; 315-668-4220	The Central Square Board engaged me to study the question: Are there options that might provide more efficient ways or patterns to organize how the Central Square School District grade kindergarten through grade 12 program is implemented over the next three years?"
Cairo-Durham Central School District	Mary Fasett, Supt. of Schools; 518-622-8534	The Cairo-Durham Board engaged me to study the question: Are there options that might provide more efficient ways or patterns to organize how the Cairo-Durham School District grade kindergarten through grade 12 program is implemented over the next three years?"	

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	Yorktown Central School District	Thomas Cole, Assistant Supt.; 914-243-8021	The Yorktown Board of Education engaged me to study the question: What might future enrollments look like? What might be opportunities or changes to the district's Princeton Plan of organization and delivery of instruction?
	Penfield Central School	John Carlevatti, Supt. of Schools; 585-249-5700	The Penfield Board engaged me to study the question: "Are there options that might provide more efficient ways or patterns to organize how the Penfield School District grade kindergarten through grade twelve program is implemented over the next five years?"
	Irvington Union Free School District	Kristopher Harrison, Supt. of Schools; 914-591-8501	The Irvington Board engaged me to study the question: "Are there options that might provide more efficient ways or patterns to organize how the Irvington School District grade kindergarten through grade 12 program is implemented over the next three years?"
	Schalmont Central School District	Valerie Kelsey, Supt. of Schools; 518-355-9203	The Schalmont Board engaged me to study the question: "Are there options that might provide more efficient ways or patterns to organize how the Schalmont School District grade kindergarten through grade twelve program is implemented over the next five years?"
	Frankfort Central School District	Robert Reina, Supt. of Schools; 315-894-5083	The Frankfort Board engaged me to study the question: "Are there options that might provide more efficient ways or patterns to organize how the Frankfort School District grade kindergarten through grade five program is implemented over the next five years?"
	North Syracuse CSD	Jerome Melvin, Supt. of Schools; (315-218-2151); retired	The North Syracuse Board engaged me first to help a community advisory committee "study potential future North Syracuse student enrollments and to make recommendations relative to long term facility utilization and the implementation of a full day kindergarten program"; and in phase 2 in a second year help the advisory committee "further refine the pros and cons of the four K-8 options" identified in phase 1 of the committee's work.
	Kingston City Schools	James Shaughnessy, President of the Board; 845-339-5262	Kingston has eleven K-5 school buildings. The Board engaged me to study and identify possible scenarios to implement the Pre-K through 5 program given the pupil capacity of the current buildings and what the enrollment projection calculations suggest for the future benchmarked to the district's current program values.
Doug A. Exley	Client:	Contact:	Project:
	Schenevus CSD	Tom Jory, President of the Board; 607-638-5881	In Phase I the Board was helped to develop a Board Vision, Core beliefs, Operating Principles and Goals/Strategies. Phase II consisted of helping a community/staff group of 25 members develop long range goals for the community and the school built upon the overall organization planning work accomplished by the Board. Phase II included identification of strengths and weaknesses of the community/district; analysis of internal and external factors impacting the school; development of a community/school vision statement, core beliefs, operating principles, and future goals and strategies. Phase III is in process.
Samuel A. Shevat	Client:	Contact:	Project:
	Coxsackie-Athens CSD	Earl Gregory, Supt. of Schools; 607-638-5881	Phase I consisted of helping the Board of Education and a community-based Building Advisory Committee to reach a consensus on a scope of work for a possible capital construction project. Phase II included helping develop and implement a public information plan and process with the Community Advisory committee to disseminate information to the public and the staff prior to the referendum.

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DR. PAUL M. SEVERSKY

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Canastota, New York 13032
Phone and fax: 315-697-9792
E-mail: Paul@Seversky.net

Educational Consultant Services since 1998 including:

Program Delivery Reorganization Studies that Analyze Expected Curriculum Outcomes and Best Use of the Resources Available

Facilitation of School District Community Committees to Analyze Current Issues and Data to Identify Options for Board of Education Implementation

Guidance in Defining and Planning for Educational Specifications to be achieved by Facility Projects

Enrollment Projection/Demographic Studies/Attendance Zone Reconfigurations

Facility Project Maximum Building Aid Formula Reviews

Qualification Based Architect Employment Searches

Qualification Based Construction Management Employment Searches

Negotiation of Architectural and Construction Management Services Contracts

Custom Workshops about Planning and Action Decision Options for Superintendents and Boards of Education

School District Reorganization Consolidation and Functional Sharing Studies with the SES Study Team, LLC (Ilion-Herkimer-Mohawk-Frankfort; Ichabod Crane-Schodack; Mayfield-Northville; Stockbridge Valley-Madison; Hamilton-Morrisville Eaton; Jefferson-Stamford)

Sample Clients Served:

Averill Park School District
Bainbridge-Guilford School District
Baldwinsville School District
Beacon City School District
Bearsch Compeau Knudson Architects
Beekmantown School District
Briarcliff Manor Union Free School District
Broome-Tioga BOCES
Buffalo City School District
Camden School District
Canastota School District
Cayuga BOCES
Chatham School District
Chenango BOCES
Cincinnatus School District
Cornwall School District
CS Architecture
East Greenbush School District
East Syracuse-Minoa School District
Eastchester Union Free School District
Elmira City School District
Frankfort-Schuyler School District
Garden City Union Free School District
Gilbertsville-Mt. Upton School District

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Goshen School District
Greenville School District
Greenwood Lake School District
Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery BOCES
Herkimer BOCES
Horseheads School District
Ichabod Crane School District
Kingston City School District
LaFayette School District
Marcellus School District
Monticello School District
North Rockland School District
North Syracuse School District
Oneida City School District
Otselic Valley School District
Owego-Apalachin School District
Pawling School District
Pelham Union Free School District
Penfield Central School District
Pine Plains School District
Red Hook School District
Remsen School District
Rome City School District
Rye City School District
Salamanca School District
Schalmont Central School District
Schodack School District
Solvay School District
Southern Cayuga School
Stieglitz Snyder Architecture
Sullivan BOCES
Teitsch-Kent-Fay Architects
Troy City School District
Turner Construction Company
Union Endicott School District
Uniondale Union Free School District
Valley School District
Waterford-Half Moon School District
Wayne School District
Westhill School District
Wynantskill School District

EDUCATION

Syracuse University
Graduate School
Syracuse, NY 13210

Ph. D.
Educational
Administration

CERTIFICATIONS

New York State District Administrator
New York State Administrator and Supervisor
New York State Permanent Teaching English 7-12
New York State Permanent Teaching Social Studies 7-12

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ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE FROM 1973 TO 2007

*Board of Cooperative Educational Services
Deputy District Superintendent*

Madison-Oneida BOCES

Superintendent

Warsaw Central School

Senior High School Principal

Mexico Academy & Central School

Associate Superintendent

DeRuyter Central School

New York State School Board Association

Demographer and School Program, Planning, and Facility Consultant for the *Advisory Solutions* Service of the Association since 2004

Special Projects Planner

Part-time Planner for the Madison-Oneida BOCES Planning COSER Service

SES Study Team, LLC

One of three principal researchers of the study team that delivers customized research to help school districts achieve planning goals and identify options for decision-making

www.SES-StudyTeam.org

Paul.Seversky@ses-studyteam.org

Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools

President of the Board of Trustees 2010 and 2011

Seven years as a commissioner for the
Middle States Commission on Secondary Schools

COLLEGE GRADUATE SCHOOL TEACHING 1983-2006

“School Facility Planning & Design”
“Public School Finance and Revenue Management”
“Public School Finance”
“Leadership Lab”
“School Business Management”
“School Business Management”
“Administration of School Personnel”
“Foundations of School Administration”
“History of Western Education”
School Business Administrator Internship Supervisor
“Philosophy of Education”
“School Finance”

State University College at Cortland
State University College at Brockport
State University College at Brockport
State University College at Brockport
State University College at Cortland
State University College at Oswego
Syracuse University
State University at Cortland
State University at Cortland
State University College at Brockport
State University College at Cortland
State University College at Cortland

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Douglas A. Exley
48 Spring Street
Gilbertsville, NY 13776
(607) 783-2017

Education

State University College@Cortland: Certificate of Advanced Studies in Administration. Major: Secondary Administration. January 1987-August 1989.

Colgate University: Masters Degree. Major: Secondary Education. Concentration: History. August 1978-February, 1979.

State University of New York@Oswego: Bachelor of Arts. Major: Political Science. Minor: English. September 1971-May 1975.

Employment

Consultant: Private Education Consulting Services and with NYSSBA Advisory Solutions focusing on long-range strategic planning and school consolidation studies. October 2008-Present.

Superintendent of Schools: Gilbertsville-Mount Upton Central School District. Responsible for oversight of newly formed district that transitioned into a unified school community. Developed long-range plan that helped move school system from a low-performing district to a high performing district regularly cited by SED for outstanding results. May 1994-August 2008.

Middle School Principal: Sherburne-Earlville Central School District. Responsible for development of new middle school program in merged school district. Provided leadership for the change from a traditional Jr. High School to a team-based middle school. Developed annual "Environmental Celebration" which became a model for exploration of environmental concerns between a school-based program and the NYSDEC. August 1990-May 1994.

Assistant Middle/High School Principal: Cooperstown Central School District. Responsible for assistance in High School programming and initiation of middle school project at the Junior High School. Instituted a team-based program that became the basis for the newly formed Cooperstown Middle School. June 1989-July 1990.

Middle School Teacher: Norwich City School District: Taught Middle School Social Studies at the 8th grade level. Served as a faculty representative on the change from a traditional Jr. High School to a middle school program. February 1979-May 1989.

Certifications

AASA: Strategic Planning, Internal Facilitator, 1993

Certificate of Completion: Kellogg Leadership Institute, SUNY Binghamton, 1993

School District Administrator: New York State, 1990

School Administrator/Supervisor: New York State, 1990

Social Studies 7-12, 1979

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Professional Activities

President, Board of Directors for Catskill Area School Study Council: 2002-2008
Member, Board of Directors for Catskill Area School Study Council: 1998-2008
Member, House of Delegates, NYSCOSS: 2006-2008
Member, NYSCOSS: 1994-Present
Member, Professional Education Council: SUC@Oneonta: 2000-Present
Member, Mentor Community: SUC@Oneonta: 2004-Present
Presenter@ONC BOCES School Boards Academy: "Preparing for and Prospering with your Superintendent", August, 2009
Presenter@Schenevus CSD: Strategic Planning Initiatives, August 2009
Presenter@SUC@Oneonta: "Preparing for a Successful Career in Education", April 2009
Panelist @SUC@Oneonta: The Role of the Superintendent in Today's Schools, September, 2008
Presenter@SUC@Oneonta: Education as a Career Path, September, 2003-2008
Presenter/Facilitator@DCMO BOCES Superintendent's Academy: Long-Range Planning, July, 2008
Presenter@DCMO BOCES Superintendent's Spring Workshop: K-12 Curriculum Planning, April 2007
Case Study for Dr. Sean Walmsley's book on school-wide literacy, Closing the Circle, Published 2008.
Case Study (One of Nine NYS Districts) selected for Syracuse University Study, in collaboration with the NYS Education Department published in 2001 titled, Leadership and School District Success: A Statewide Study of Rural School Districts

References

Dr. Mary R. Cannie, Executive Director for Instructional Support Services, San Diego, CA, Unified School District, 4100 Normal Street, Room 2008, San Diego, CA 92103. (619) 725-7224

Mr. Thomas Jennings, Superintendent, Schenevus Central School District, 159 Main Street, Schenevus, NY 12155. (607) 638-5881

Mr. Carl Mummenthey, Superintendent of Schools, Jefferson Central School District, 1332 State Rte 10, Jefferson, NY, 12093. (607)652-7806

Mr. Alan Pole, Retired DCMO BOCES District Superintendent. 4514 Whistler Circle, Manlius, NY 13104. (315)692-4615

Mr. Thomas Jory, President, Schenevus Central School District Board of Education, 159 Main Street, Schenevus, NY 12155. (607) 638-5881

Mr. Gerald Theis, Board of Education President, Gilbertsville-Mount Upton CSD. PO Box 184, Gilbertsville, NY 13776. (607)783-2513

Mr. Michael Barnes, Retired Board of Education President, Gilbertsville-Mount Upton CSD. 893 County Highway #1, Mount Upton, NY 13809. (607)563-2033

Mr. Robert P. Hage, Education Consultant, Representative for AP College Board, Retired Guidance Director, Cooperstown CSD. 18 Pioneer Street, Cooperstown, NY 13824. (607)547-5130

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102 Gale Drive
Cobleskill, NY 12043

PROFESSIONAL CAREER

Educational Consultant:

- a. **Senior Associate – Executive Director of Educational Relations** August 2009 - Present
CSArch Architecture/Engineering/Construction Management, Albany, New York
Member of Business Development and Marketing Team;
- b. **Assistant to Provost/Vice-President for Academic Affairs (part-time)** September 2007-May 2010
State University of New York at Cobleskill, Cobleskill, New York
Coordinate College in High School Program
- c. **SES Study Team - Study Consultant** April 2009 - Present
Member of three-person study team focusing on functional consolidation
- d. **Study Consultant** January 2008 – June 2010
Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA)
Coxsackie-Athens Central School – Served as facilitator of community-based Building Advisory Committee; facilitated pre-referendum phase
Guilderland Central School – conducted study of district-wide administrative structure

Superintendent of Schools: Cobleskill-Richmondville Central School 1987 – August 2007 (retired)
o 2200 students (grades K-12); 400 employees; 220 certified; \$33 million operating budget

High School Principal: Hugh C. Williams Senior High School of Canton Central School 1981 - 1987
✓ 550 students in grades 9-12 (1,600 K-12)

Assistant Principal: Dansville Senior High School of Dansville Central School 1979 - 1981
2. 575 students in grades 10-12 (1,800 K-12)

Administrative Intern: Central New York School Study Council of Syracuse University 1979

Graduate Assistant: Central New York School Study Council of Syracuse University 1978

Graduate Research Assistant: Area of Educational Administration at Syracuse University 1977 - 1978

Social Studies Teacher: Altmar - Parish - Williamstown Middle/High School in Parish, NY 1974 - 1977

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

NYS Rural Education Advisory Committee (REAC) Member August 2006 – Present

NYS Rural Schools Association Board of Directors January 2006 – Present

Represented RSA at NYS Senate Hearing in December, 2008

a. NYS Rural Schools Association Board of Directors Executive Committee August 2006 – Present

b. NYS Rural Schools Association Legislative Committee Chairperson August 2006 – Present

- Panelist: “Conference for New Superintendents” July 20, 2007, NYSCOSS
“Superintendent’s Role in School Board Relations”
December 13, 2001, Hudson-Mohawk Leadership Academy
“Anticipating, Avoiding and Addressing Superintendent/School Board Conflict”
October 4, 1999, NYSCOSS Fall Conference
“School District Consolidation: The Potential, the Problems, and the Pitfalls of Education’s
Newest Panacea”, February 3, 1992, NYSCOSS Mid-Winter Conference

DISTINCTIONS AND HONORS

7. William H Deming Recognition Award – NYS Rural Schools Association July 2010

8. School Administrator Leadership Award in Character Education
The Academy for Character Education at the Sage Colleges March 2007

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decision options for serving students in the future.”*

Our View: Valley Example of Merger Study Right Approach

By Staff reports

Observer-Dispatch

Posted Dec 04, 2011 @ 05:03 AM

Valley residents are still months away from knowing whether a merger of their schools is in their future, but one thing is certain: the process being used to make that decision should serve as a model for other districts considering consolidation.

The four districts weighing the merger option — Frankfort-Schuyler, Herkimer, Ilion and Mohawk — completed public informational meetings this past week, and begin the next step on Tuesday with the first of four community discussions at Ilion Junior-Senior High School. Similar discussions will follow at the three remaining schools, during which the public will be allowed to ask questions based on the information presented so far.

Following the public sessions, each district school board will have to decide whether to go forward with an informal vote or straw poll.

The process has been a very deliberate one, which began nearly a year ago when 64 members of a Community Advisory Committee — a cross section of residents of all four districts — began exploring details to determine whether a merger would be financially beneficial to taxpayers. They were assisted by Douglas Exley, Paul Seversky and Samuel Shevat, three retired school superintendents from the SES Study Team in Canastota. After 10 months of study, they issued a report that was approved last month by the state Education Department.

The 255-page report was the basis for public informational sessions held in the four school districts. It doesn't recommend for or against a merger, but does closely examine opportunities and challenges each district would face in the event one was to occur.

The work isn't done. The upcoming series of meetings will provide the public an opportunity to ask questions. Those questions might range from how a merger will affect taxes, sports teams or the overall academic experience.

Whether you have questions or not, it's important that people attend to hear the discussion. Only then will you be able to make an informed decision.

Other districts considering mergers, take note. Whether all, some or none of the four valley districts decide to proceed is yet to be determined. But one thing is certain: taxpayers in all four districts are being served responsibly by a process that has been very time-consuming, and advisory committee members are to be commended for their efforts. They have provided the resources, and it's up to the public to help them complete the process.

Upcoming meetings

Four meetings are planned between now and January to allow the public to ask questions about a proposed school merger in the valley. All meetings begin at 7 p.m.

- Dec. 6, Ilion Junior-Senior High School LGI.
- Dec. 7, Herkimer High School Auditorium.
- Dec. 20, Mohawk Jarvis Auditorium.
- Jan 3, Frankfort-Schuyler High School Auditorium.

How it works

Adopting the merger is a three-step process.

- Boards vote to move the process to an advisory referendum or "straw vote."
- The communities hold a straw vote. If this passes, the results are sent to the education commissioner who authorizes a statutory or final referendum.
- The communities hold a final referendum.

The vote on the final referendum is expected some time in the late winter. If three or four boards or communities approve a vote, they move on to the next step. Only those boards or communities that approve a vote move on. If only two boards or communities approve, the merger process ends. As determined by SED, the merger must include at least three of the four districts. If the final referendum passes, the merged districts would hold a special board of education election. That board would craft the budget that would go before the voters on May 15, 2012. The merged district would begin operations immediately upon approval of the final referendum. The Herkimer BOCES district superintendent would direct the new district until the new board is elected and the new administration is hired.

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Ken-Ton School Consolidation Plan Up for Review by the Community

Thursday April 25, 2013 | By:Sean O'Neil, Tonawanda Source | News

KENMORE/TONAWANDA Rumors have circulated for months. But now, a solid, digestible plan for school consolidation is in front of the Ken-Ton community.

While no decision is imminent, an 83-page report, featuring numerous scenarios of school closures and consolidations, is now in the hands of the Ken-Ton School district. The plan, put together by a consulting group hired by the district to study possible consolidation, comes just months before the closure of Jefferson Elementary School.

While not picking one plan over another, the report lays out a series of ways the district can close schools, move students from one school at another, and the costs of each plan. Emotions can be high when pitching the idea of a new school for a child. But the facts don't lie, according to the report.

"The data suggest that the decline in total district K-5 enrollment over the past six years has occurred in six out of the seven elementary (schools). The annual enrollment pattern over six years at Lindbergh is the only (school) with a positive trend slightly above zero," the report reads. "All three middle schools had similar negative patterns of decreasing enrollment. Both high schools had significant patterns of decreasing annual enrollments since 2007."

With more and more residents and their school-aged children fleeing the area, and with Albany cutting off the funding spigot since the recession of 2008, school consolidation has become a hot topic. Yet it's an emotional one for parents, school staff and administrators. But it's an issue that all sides agree must be addressed.

While the document released this week may be a bit daunting to rifle through, Ken-Ton Parent Teacher Student Association president Jill O'Malley is hopeful parents will see what the plan offers for their children in the near future.

"One thing I'm hopeful for is that the (school) board seems definitely receptive to public input," she said. "It's going to be a tough sell. I hope people get informed and let their voices be heard. It's a lot to digest, but there's a lot of time to think about it."

District Superintendent Mark Mondanaro took a cautious approach when discussing the proposed moves, none of which would be ready for approval for months.

"It's very comprehensive with much data to be considered. We'll go through the process of public hearings and then the Focus Group prioritization," he said. "Following that, we'll engage a more specific analysis for financial and educational program impact."

Three public hearings on the proposals were held last week, and three more will be held this week:

- Monday -- SES Consolidation Study Group presentation at Kenmore West High School at 4 p.m., intended for Ken-Ton employees. A similar program for the public will be held at the school at 7 p.m.
- Tuesday -- SES Consolidation Study Group public presentation at Hoover Middle School

"Custom tools and research to aid a school district in defining a vision and decision options for serving students in the future."



Dr. Paul M. Seversky

The SES Study Team focuses its work on customized studies that deal with identifying opportunities to provide quality educational programs more effectively and in a cost-effective manner. The major areas of the Team's services are: school reorganization through centralization/annexation analyses; identification and analysis of collaborative functional sharing opportunities between school districts; and program delivery reconfiguration opportunities within a school district.

The SES Study Team, in an impartial manner, provides research, direction and facilitation through a guided process. The study process emphasizes a data-driven analysis and community involvement to identify possible options to serve pupils in the future.

The common elements followed by the Team to achieve customized studies include:

- ❖ A focus on answering a set of questions by school district and community stakeholders;
- ❖ Inclusion of, and sensitivity to, all points of view from the communities involved;
- ❖ An approach that begins with the collection of data, a review of major findings, sharing of perceptions, recommendations based upon challenges and opportunities, and the modeling of potential options;
- ❖ The central role of school district instructional, instructional support, and administrative staff in providing comprehensive data for the study to use to answer the study question(s) posed by the client district(s);
- ❖ Public transparency of the work and data developed, compiled, and analyzed by the Study Team;
- ❖ The creation of a study report that becomes the prime useable tool by members of the communities as they decide how best to educate their children in the future.



Mr. Doug A. Exley



Mr. Sam A. Shevat

The Study Team members combined bring over 110 years of public education experience to work with and help school districts identify options in serving pupils and their communities. Each team member has served as a teacher, principal and superintendent of a K-12 school district. Doug and Sam each has served as a superintendent of a reorganized district through centralization. Paul has served as a superintendent of a district that explored reorganization and in a regional capacity as a Deputy District Superintendent of a BOCES. Sam has worked for a college to administer programs for public school pupils; Paul has taught graduate level courses in educational administration for 23 years; and Doug serves as a council member at a local university. The Study Team Members have provided consultant services to public school districts since 1998.

Contact the SES Study Team to discuss your school district's specific study project:

E-Mail addresses for the Study Team

Paul.Seversky at ses-studyteam dot org
 Doug.Exley at ses-studyteam dot org
 Sam.Shevat at ses-studyteam dot org

The mailing address for the Study Team

SES Study Team
 c/o 3487 Nelson Place East
 Canastota, New York 13032