

**Sachem Facilities Study Committee
Report to the Board of Education
January 22, 2013**

Introduction

The Sachem Facilities Study Committee (SFSC) was created by the Board of Education to study the effective use of present school facilities in light of declining enrollment and budgetary concerns. We thank the Board members for involving us as stakeholders in this important work and commend them for taking this step. Recognizing the crucial nature of our task we approached it with seriousness, openness and great energy. The Sachem Central Administration was very helpful in providing information and data and was very responsive to all our requests.

The Sachem Board of Education clarified the initial goal of the SFSC to include options dealing with the elementary and middle level only. The Board also asked the SFSC to consider District-owned properties that were not presently utilized for schools.

SFSC Members

Scott Anderson
Jeremy Bigler
Janet Coleman
Michael Conrad
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Kevin Guilfoyle
Anthony Horber
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Brian Reilly
Vincent Reynolds
Barbara Roden
Richard Sayres
Laura Slattery
Dorothy Stallone
Richard Stilwagen
Allen Wone
Michael Keany, Facillitator

Schedule of Meetings

October 10, 2013 - Guidelines, Charge, Overview
October 17, 2013 - Presentation by Demographer, Wayne Verderber
October 24, 2013 - Presentation by Realtor, District Facilities Staff
October 31, 2013 - Working Meeting
November 7, 2013 - Working Meeting
November 14, 2013 - Working Meeting
November 21, 2013 - Working Meeting
December 12, 2013 - Working Meeting
January 9, 2014 - Working Meeting
January 22, 2014 - Report to the Board of Education

Guiding Principles

1. We seek to do what is best for all of the children of Sachem.
2. We plan for the future of our schools and for the future in which our young people will live and work.
3. We are conscious of the need to plan with an eye toward flexibility to adapt to possible unforeseen future factors impacting enrollment.
4. We explore options that are consistent with our District's values.
5. We seek to explore changes with the awareness of the emotion and upsetment we know comes about with change.
6. We recognize the need to seek alternative uses of buildings that may no longer be used as schools.
7. We value diversity, keeping it in mind in any options we study.
8. We recognize that our goal is to investigate all plausible options while seeking to maintain the quality of our educational offerings in a fiscally sound manner. We understand our role to be study and investigation, not recommendation. We see our role as a resource to the Board of Education.
9. We recognize the strengths and limitations of demographic planning and enrollment predictions. Specifically we understand that five year predictions can be made with reasonable accuracy but more longterm predictions are prone to greater error.
10. Recognizing the decrease of enrollment at the elementary and middle levels, we are guided by the need to look at these populations as a whole rather than the present population of any given school.

Resources Used

The SFSC was provided with present enrollment statistics, building floor plans and District maps including present attendance zones for all school facilities. The SFSC used the resources provided by Applied Data Services, a demographic firm hired by the District. Wayne Verderber, President of ADS, presented his demographic projections and explained his methodology. The SFSC questioned him at length about the projections, their meaning and their reliability.

The SFSC had the on-Committee expertise of Kevin Guilfoyle, a local realtor who advised us on real estate issues.

District maintenance administrators assured us that all building under the scope of the study should be treated equally in terms of maintenance needs.

Methodology

The full SFSC analyzed all of the data and decided on some preliminary steps in our work.

The full SFSC decided on eight initial options worthy of further study. As the work progressed, suboptions were developed. The eight options were:

Options involving only the elementary level

1. Status Quo - Close no schools. Redistrict all attendance zones to save on transportation costs. Option 1a: Possible revenue production from District properties.
2. Close one elementary school and redistrict.
3. Close two elementary schools and redistrict.
4. Close three elementary schools and redistrict.

Options involving the elementary level and the middle level

5. Close 2 middle schools. Move 6th grade to elementary schools. Redistrict.
Option 5a: Move UPK to middle school.

6. Close 4 elementary schools. Move 5th grade to middle school. Redistrict.

7. (a) Close one elementary and one middle school. No grade level restructuring. (b) Close two elementary schools and one middle school. Redistrict.

8. Close 2 elementary and subsequently, at some point in the future, close 2 middle schools. Move 6th grade to elementary schools. Redistrict.

The full Study Team divided itself, by selected area of interest, into two large subgroups to investigate:

1. Status Quo and Options Involving Only the Elementary Level
2. Options Involving Both the Elementary Level and the Middle Level.

Each subgroup then divided again into smaller teams, again based on interest, with each team to study two of the four options within the larger group. A portion of each SFSC meeting was always devoted to a sharing and review across all groups to ensure transparency and consistency. Each team used a standard template to investigate each option, listing projected cost savings, pros and cons, and consequences if the option was eventually adopted by the Board of Education.

The following information was provided by Applied Data Services, the demographic firm hired by the District to study enrollment trends and projections.

Historic Enrollments by Grade Level

Grade	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Kindergarten	1,081	1,037	966	1,035	957	932
First	1,062	1,084	1,061	988	1,031	956
Second	1,096	1,058	1,082	1,065	995	1,014
Third	1,175	1,084	1,063	1,076	1,069	970
Fourth	1,175	1,154	1,079	1,068	1,078	1,060
Fifth	1,178	1,180	1,162	1,094	1,066	1,075
SubTotal	6,767	6,597	6,413	6,326	6,196	6,007
Sixth	1,084	1,163	1,186	1,169	1,097	1,081
Seventh	1,192	1,105	1,160	1,191	1,183	1,109
Eighth	1,143	1,187	1,113	1,271	1,197	1,202
SubTotal	3,419	3,455	3,459	3,631	3,477	3,392
Ninth	1,235	1,146	1,206	1,132	1,187	1,200
Tenth	1,228	1,218	1,156	1,211	1,133	1,182
Eleventh	1,112	1,188	1,197	1,142	1,190	1,135
Twelfth	1,245	1,130	1,222	1,240	1,183	1,217
SubTotal	4,820	4,682	4,781	4,725	4,693	4,734
Total	15,006	14,734	14,653	14,682	14,366	14,133

Historic Enrollments by School

School	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Cayuga Elementary	659	644	607	588	555	531
Chippewa Elementary	578	532	513	500	478	474
Gatelot Elementary	604	583	561	558	566	577
Grundy Elementary	524	489	477	496	495	484
Hiawatha Elementary	510	529	531	518	491	471
Lynwood Avenue	522	512	486	505	469	479
Merrimac Elementary	482	479	471	494	495	450
Nokomis Elementary	525	512	497	499	491	501
Tamarac Elementary	665	670	641	592	605	567
Tecumseh Elementary	527	510	508	484	442	420
Waverly Elementary	629	596	580	566	573	559
Wenonah Elementary	542	541	541	526	536	494
Samoset Middle School	870	886	883	992	922	915
Seneca Middle School	807	819	801	811	781	781
Sequoia Middle School	935	943	974	977	900	875
Sagamore Middle School	807	807	801	851	874	821
Sachem East High School	2,556	2,429	2,406	2,370	2,360	2,390
Sachem North High School	2,264	2,253	2,375	2,355	2,333	2,344
Total	15,006	14,734	14,653	14,682	14,366	14,133

Projected Enrollments by Grade Level

Grade	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Kindergarten	932	912	890	816	896	889
First	956	944	922	902	828	908
Second	1,014	956	944	922	902	828
Third	970	1,004	950	936	916	896
Fourth	1,060	970	1,004	949	936	916
Fifth	1,075	1,060	970	1,004	949	936
SubTotal	6,007	5,846	5,680	5,529	5,427	5,373
Sixth	1,081	1,075	1,060	970	1,004	949
Seventh	1,109	1,091	1,087	1,072	982	1,016
Eighth	1,202	1,136	1,117	1,112	1,095	1,005
SubTotal	3,392	3,302	3,264	3,154	3,081	2,970
Ninth	1,200	1,194	1,130	1,111	1,105	1,087
Tenth	1,182	1,199	1,194	1,130	1,111	1,105
Eleventh	1,135	1,164	1,180	1,175	1,113	1,093
Twelfth	1,217	1,167	1,196	1,213	1,208	1,144
SubTotal	4,734	4,724	4,700	4,629	4,537	4,429
Total	14,133	13,872	13,644	13,312	13,045	12,771

Projected Enrollments by School

School	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Cayuga Elementary	531	523	529	518	527	529
Chippewa Elementary	474	460	449	436	438	453
Gatelot Elementary	577	543	533	517	509	506
Grundy Elementary	484	483	489	492	491	500
Hiawatha Elementary	471	459	423	378	353	359
Lynwood Aven	479	464	459	445	440	439
Merrimac Elementary	450	447	428	432	417	417
Nokomis Elementary	501	497	469	466	455	439
Tamarac Elementary	567	554	531	510	512	483
Tecumseh Elementary	420	403	413	398	391	405
Waverly Elementary	559	542	515	499	476	459
Wenonah Elementary	494	469	442	439	418	383
Samoset Middle School	915	933	879	834	782	788
Seneca Middle School	781	747	772	767	785	727
Sequoia Middle School	875	825	867	810	811	787
Sagamore Middle School	821	797	746	743	703	668
Sachem East High School	2,390	2,438	2,366	2,332	2,260	2,173
Sachem North High School	2,344	2,286	2,334	2,297	2,277	2,256
Total	14,133	13,870	13,644	13,313	13,045	12,771

IMPORTANT OPERATING ASSUMPTIONS COMMON TO ALL OPTIONS

THERE IS NO GOOD OPTION

The SFSC recognizes that the dual problems of declining enrollment and fiscal restraints provide the community with a choice of undesirable options. The SFSC is well aware of and sensitive to the emotion that comes with change.

TIERED OPTIONS

The options presented represent a spectrum of increasingly aggressive approaches to the dual problems of finance and declining enrollment. With each successive option you will note that estimated savings increase but the impact to the District becomes more severe.

CALCULATION OF POTENTIAL SAVINGS

Savings resulting from the closing of a building as estimated by Sachem District administration. These are net savings taking into account savings from staffing reductions, utilities but taking into account maintenance and possible increases in transportation costs and the one time cost of moving.

Elementary = \$437,679

Middle School = \$676,590

SALE OR LEASE OF DISTRICT PROPERTIES

The present real estate market for the sale or lease of school buildings on Long Island is not strong. The sale of District-owned properties might take a significant period of time. Sale of properties would produce a “one-shot” infusion of revenue but might produce tax revenue in future years.

REDISTRICTING

You will note that all options except Option 1 - Status Quo, call for the redistricting of the District to reduce transportation costs while minimizing travel mileage as much as possible. The SFSC sought to maintain feeder patterns to middle schools and high schools as much as possible depending upon the nature of the option. Redistricting is also necessary to provide balanced school enrollments for many years to come.

POSSIBLE IMPACT OF PROPOSED MAJOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

The SFSC expressed concern about two major housing developments in the Sachem district and their ability to add numbers of students in the future. The SFSC felt that any such addition would be several years in the future. While the initial estimates of the number of students each development would yield are questionable, the impact on various options was included as much as possible.

CONDITION OF BUILDINGS

The administration has informed us that condition of all buildings are good and therefore the SFSC did not consider individual build conditions during their analyses.

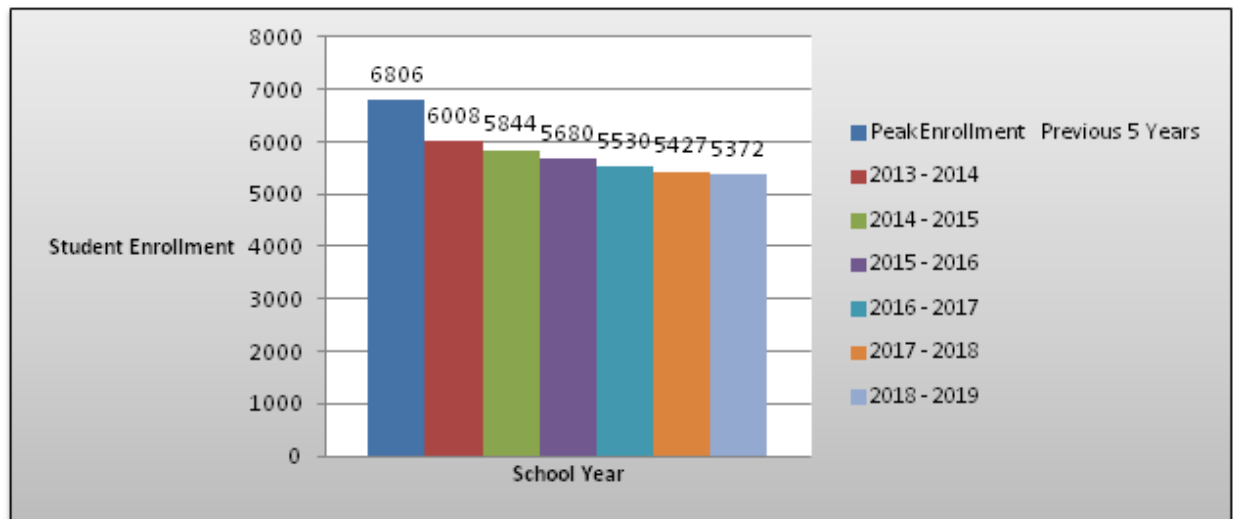
CALCULATION OF BUILDING CAPACITY

Please note that different options were studied with the use of different methods to calculate building capacity. Each set of such assumptions will be clearly stated. Some options and their assumptions allowed for greater flexibility than others.

Analysis of Options

Option 1

- Description -_Option 1 - Status Quo - Close no schools.
 - Redistrict all attendance zones to save on transportation costs.
 - Option 1A – Outline possible revenue producing opportunities from District properties.



Reasons for keeping the status quo:

- No impact to students – remain in current school buildings
- District retains ownership of assets
- Continue to monitor demographics, economy, state requirements (i.e. common core)
- Allow further recovery of real estate market

Reasons for not keeping the status quo:

- Potential budget shortfall for 2014 – 2015 school year
 - Lack of community support for increase in budget

Savings:

- Based on input from the Administration there will be no transportation savings associated with a redistricting without closing a school.

Implications:

- Administration and Board of Education will need to find alternative savings from existing budget
- If there is a budget shortfall the students of Sachem will experience a negative impact in the form of:
 - less resources in schools(educators, guidance counselors, specialty teachers etc.)
 - loss of clubs and programs
- Funding for “full day” Kindergarten becomes an issue again
 - Perception from community is that the Administration & BOE is holding the Kindergarten program as a “bargaining chip” to pass budget
- Declining population on Long Island will only push the issue down the road
 - Study indicated a continued decline over the next 5 years through 2019
- Continued budget issues will have an adverse effect on community growth
 - People tend to purchase homes within a “good” school district
- Sachem Administration and Board of Education will risk losing credibility with community due to not dealing with financial issues of district

Additional item to note:

- Analysis had been done to determine that the families within the Summerfield community should be consulted regarding the 54 students who attend Lynwood. The students can be moved to Waverly Ave, however this will introduce change that could negatively impact those families. Recommendation is to begin a phased in approach for new students to go to Waverly

Option 1a

Outline possible revenue producing opportunities from District properties.

“Non school building” District properties in scope:

- Waverly Fields
- Transportation Facility – includes:
 - Maintenance Garage with parking for 30 buses
- Maintenance Building and Yard
 - Parking for Maintenance vehicles
- Property behind Grundy Ave. School

The FSC does not have enough information to determine the viability of the sale of any property. It is our recommendation that the Administration and Board of Education commission a study that includes but is not limited to:

- Determining the feasibility of any property sale,
- Gaining property appraisals
- Engaging local town governments to determine zone changes as appropriate
- Exploring all possible revenue producing options for properties

Reasons for the sale of properties:

The sale of and/or alternative use of these properties could provide the District with financial flexibility in the budget.

- One-shot revenue injection
- Ongoing tax revenue from new development
- Ongoing revenue associated with alternative use of property

Reasons against the sale of properties:

- District loses assets
- Does not address long term budget issues associated with declining enrollment
- Community loses open space
 - Waverly Soccer Fields
 - Negative community reaction to selling fields
 - Disruption of students' athletic programs

Implications:

- Unknown property value – Appraisals need to be conducted
- Sale of property could take several years
 - Data presented to the FSC suggested it would take 5+years after a sale to reap tax revenue benefits
- Loss of open space within the Sachem community will:
 - Force conflicts with various athletic groups for use of school fields
 - Create negative impact of surrounding communities – less desirable place to live
- Lack of transparency with community over future use of Waverly Fields will foster an atmosphere of distrust of the Administration and BOE
- Current lease agreement to SYSL may have served the District well however it does not align with District needs of today
 - Re-evaluate current leases and negotiate to fair market value
 - Ensure Administration and BOE maintain objectivity regarding Waverly Fields

Recommendation

- Board of Education form a committee to explore all revenue producing options beyond Soccer
 - Inclusive of community members

- All District wide/community athletic groups including Soccer, Baseball Lacrosse and others.
- Determine feasibility of leasing fields to a “for profit” organizations at market rates
 - Sports Facility Management organization
 - Sachem maintains a vested interest in revenue (concessions, events, etc.)
 - Community Events that are fee based

Option 2 and Option 3

Option #2: Close One Elementary School and Redistrict and

Option #3: Close Two Elementary Schools and Redistrict

INTRODUCTION

The SFSC began by studying the total elementary population from 2008/09 to 2018/19 (as provided by the administration and demographer). The table below summarizes the data, sorted by percentage decline.

School	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	10-year Decline	% Decline
Hiawatha Elementary	510	529	531	518	491	471	459	423	378	353	359	151	30%
Wenonah Elementary	542	541	541	526	536	494	469	442	439	418	383	159	29%
Tamarac Elementary	665	670	641	592	605	567	554	531	510	512	483	182	27%
Waverly Elementary	629	596	580	566	573	559	542	515	499	476	459	170	27%
Tecumseh Elementary	527	510	508	484	442	420	403	413	398	391	405	122	23%
Chippewa Elementary	578	532	513	500	478	474	460	449	436	438	453	125	22%
Cayuga Elementary	659	644	607	588	555	531	523	529	518	527	529	130	20%
Nokomis Elementary	525	512	497	499	491	501	497	469	466	455	439	86	16%
Gatelot Elementary	604	583	561	558	566	577	543	533	517	509	506	98	16%
Lynwood Avenue Elementary	522	512	486	505	469	479	464	459	445	440	439	83	16%
Merrimac Elementary	482	479	471	494	495	450	447	428	432	417	417	65	13%
Grundy Elementary	524	489	477	496	495	484	483	489	492	491	500	24	5%
Total	6767	6597	6413	6326	6196	6007	5844	5680	5530	5427	5372	1395	21%

The significant and obvious decline over this 10-year period led us to believe that closing one or two elementary schools might be accomplished while striving to maintain the overall educational experience of the students and staff. As a result, the SFSC decided to take a conservative approach during the evaluation, resulting in the following assumptions:

- Limit closing schools that share property with another school
 - Questionable whether it suits the district to have a vacant building (or commercial lease) adjacent to a high school or middle school

- Emergency evacuations would now require bussing rather than walking across the property
- Ensure students and staff will retain the full functionality of their existing educational experience
 - Maintain existing rooms for music, art, computers, special education, etc.
- Prohibit disruption of high school feeder pattern

PRELIMINARY STUDY

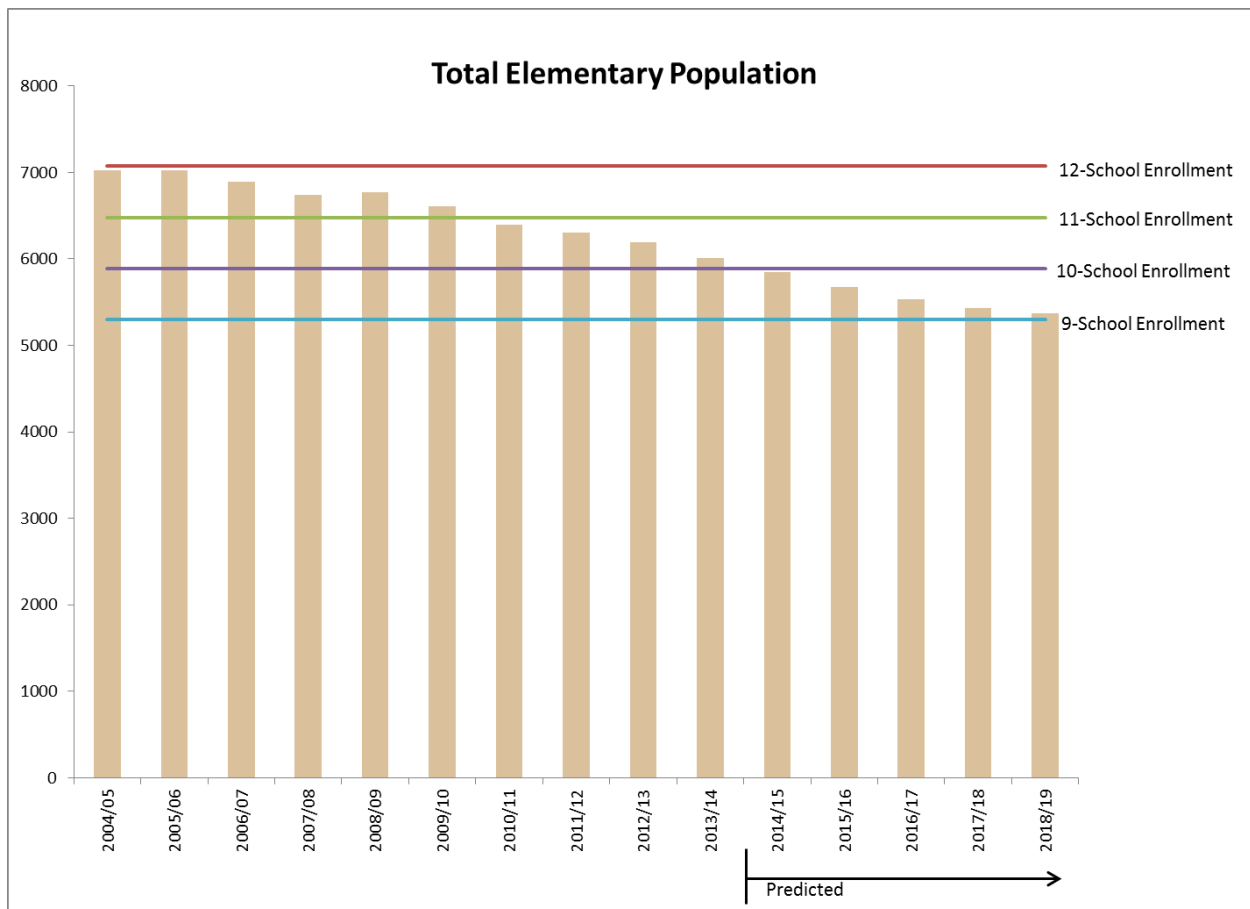
In an attempt to calculate building capacity, the SFSC studied the elementary school floor plans that were provided by the Administration. All currently occupied and empty grade-level instructional classrooms were reviewed, along with special rooms such as math, resource/hearing, speech, computer lab, PT, resource, orchestra, band, art, etc.

The SFSC discovered that it was particularly difficult to calculate the building capacities because of the large number of variables and educational/organizational trade-offs required. We concluded that most of these decisions are best left to the administration and Board of Education.

However, just to obtain a **rough order of magnitude** understanding of capacity and utilization, the SFSC reviewed past enrollment history (post reconfiguration in 2004/05) provided by the administration. The table below summarizes the maximum number of students enrolled from 2004/05 to 2013/14, sorted from highest to lowest.

School	Max Enrollment	Year of Max
Tamarac	702	04-05
Cayuga	665	08-09
Nokomis	615	04-05
Gatelot	604	08-09
Chippewa	602	04-05
Wenonah	581	04-05
Hiawatha	572	04-05
Waverly	560	05-06
Merrimac	557	04-05
Grundy	550	05-06
Tecumseh	539	05-06
Lynwood	522	08-09

The historical capacity estimates were then aggregated for the whole district and superimposed on a graph of enrollment history:



The top horizontal line marked “12-School Enrollment” represents the aggregate capacity for all elementary schools in the district, based on the **historical** method previously described. The horizontal line marked “11-School Enrollment” represents an estimate of capacity should one school be closed. The horizontal line marked “10-School Enrollment” represents an estimate of capacity should two schools be closed. The horizontal line marked “9-School Enrollment” represents an estimate of capacity should three schools be closed.

The beige bars represent actual enrollment based on information provided by the Administration, and future projected enrollment based on information provided by the demographer.

Finally, the table below provides a more detailed enrollment breakdown over the next five years, to gain an understanding of the demographic landscape for the future (sorted by percentage decline).

School	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Decline	% Decline
Grundy Elementary	484	483	489	492	491	500	-16	-3.3%
Cayuga Elementary	531	523	529	518	527	529	2	0.4%
Tecumseh Elementary	420	403	413	398	391	405	15	3.6%
Chippewa Elementary	474	460	449	436	438	453	21	4.4%
Merrimac Elementary	450	447	428	432	417	417	33	7.3%
Lynwood Aven	479	464	459	445	440	439	40	8.4%
Gatelot Elementary	577	543	533	517	509	506	71	12.3%
Nokomis Elementary	501	497	469	466	455	439	62	12.4%
Tamarac Elementary	567	554	531	510	512	483	84	14.8%
Waverly Elementary	559	542	515	499	476	459	100	17.9%
Wenonah Elementary	494	469	442	439	418	383	111	22.5%
Hiawatha Elementary	471	459	423	378	353	359	112	23.8%
Total	6007	5844	5680	5530	5427	5372	635	10.6%

The information presented above collectively demonstrates that closing 1-2 schools should be possible while minimizing educational impact, and closing 3 schools might have more impact on students.

DETAILED STUDY:

In order to localize the impact to the community, the SFSC first attempted to evaluate Options #2 and #3 without changing middle school and high school district lines. In this case, children from a closing elementary school would be redistricted to the other two schools in the same middle school feeder pattern. This would leave the remainder of the district largely unaffected.

Unfortunately, after an in-depth study of each school, the SFSC concluded that it would be sub-optimal to close a school and maintain the exact middle and elementary school feeder lines. We found that this would result in a lopsided district, whereby the schools adjacent to a closed building would have a disproportionately high number of students, while other schools would continue to experience marked decline. **Therefore, the SFSC concluded that a broader redistricting is optimal when closing any school, while maintaining the existing high school lines.**

To gain a better understanding of how a closed building might impact neighboring schools, the SFSC decided to evaluate the number of classrooms in each school. The floor plans and information provided by administration were used in this study. The table below summarizes our findings (**these figures are all approximate**):

Feeder	Elementary School	Number of Full Size Classrooms	Number of Full Size Classrooms for Other than Grade Level Instruction 2013/14	Use for Non Grade Level Instruction Rooms
Samoset	Wenonah	36	9	Art, bookroom, speech/collab, rem math, OT/PT, Reading, speech/ESL, music, band/orchestra
	Cayuga	34	10	Math, resource/hearing, speech, computer Lab, PT, Resource, orchestra, band, reading 2, teachers, art
	Gatelot	36	9	Rem. math, reading, speech, band(behind stage), speech, resource, art, music, ESL
Seneca	Hiawatha	40	12	Speech, art, music, band, storage/bookroom, science, ESL, OT/PT, orchestra, speech, computer lab, reading
	Nokomis	36	9	Storage, custodial storage, psych, rem. math, OT/PT, Computer lab, resource, reading, speech
	Grundy	39	14	Book room, resource, science, CSE/storage, band, orchestra, supplies, storage, reading/ESL, music, computer lab, speech, reading, reading/hearing
Sequoia	Merrimac	33	10	Band, inter. bookroom, music, orchestra, computer, lab, lighthouse room, reading, resource, science, speech
	Tamarac	37	11	Science, math AIS, orchestra, computer, band, music, art, resource math, reading, counseling, science labs
	Waverly	36	9	Art, music, resource, reading 2 teachers, speech 2, teachers, computer room, small group instruction, Orchestra, OT/PT
Sagamore	Chippewa	35	10	OT/PT, speech 2.5 teachers, resource, reading 2, teachers, music, art, orchestra, band, computer, vision/hearing
	Lynwood	28	4	Orchestra, storage, computer, resource
	Tecumseh	37	14	Speech, OT/PT, reading, art, resource, remedial math, storage, band, music, storage, ESL, computer lab, tech aide/bookroom, orchestra
	Total	427	121	
	Average	35.6	10.1	

This table shows the number of classrooms available in each school, along with the number of rooms currently used for grade-level instruction and non-grade level instruction. Note that empty classrooms and UPK classrooms are excluded from the table. As a school's enrollment increases (from a neighboring closed building), presumably some of the non-grade level rooms would be converted back into grade-level instruction.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS:

Option # 2 - Close One Elementary School and Redistrict

Regardless of the chosen school, this option provides approximately \$437,000 in recurring annual savings.

After a detailed study of the data, the SFSC determined that either Lynwood or Tecumseh elementary schools are the optimal findings. **Meaning that if the Board of Education decides to close one and only one school, either Lynwood or Tecumseh would be the optimal choice.**

The pros and cons for each school are summarized below. It's important to note the reasons why we did not consider certain schools as well.

Lynwood:

In this case, students would be distributed to neighboring Tecumseh, Waverly, and Chippewa as part of a broader redistricting.

Reasons to support closing Lynwood:

- Adjacent to commercial property which may increase the likelihood of an eventual sale/lease
- Has a very small number of classrooms (the smallest school in terms of classrooms in the district)
- Hidden from main roadways

Reasons against closing Lynwood:

- Location in neighborhood makes it difficult to protect and secure

Tecumseh:

In this case, students would be distributed to neighboring Lynwood, Waverly and Chippewa as part of a broader redistricting.

Reasons to support closing Tecumseh:

- The school can only accept students from the southwest because of geographical location at edge of district
- Adjacent to commercial property which may increase the likelihood of an eventual sale/lease

Reasons against closing Tecumseh:

- Adjacent to Sachem East High School
- Physically large school, can hold a relatively large number of students
- Is located on a main road in an accessible location

Chippewa:

Chippewa appears sub-optimal because of its extremely close proximity to Sagamore Middle School, including shared fields. This also significantly reduces commercial value. Therefore Chippewa was not considered.

Waverly:

Waverly appears sub-optimal because of its relatively large size and central proximity. It's location on a main road also provides easy access for emergency vehicles. Therefore Waverly was not considered.

Merrimac and Tamarac:

Merrimac and Tamarac appear sub-optimal because they are the only two elementary schools on the Sachem East side that are south of the LIE. Transportation safety is paramount in this situation. Striving to maintain high school lines would not allow these students to enroll in Grundy. And closing one of these would cause overcrowding in the other. Also, the Islip Pines project would most likely have children attend these schools. Therefore these schools were not considered.

Option # 3 - Close Two Elementary Schools and Redistrict

This option is an extension of Option #2, whereby an additional elementary school is closed. Since the first school as described in Option #2 resides on the east side of the district, the SFSC studied the two feeder patterns on the north side for the second school, to maintain balance across the district.

Regardless of the schools chosen, this option provides approximately \$874,000 in recurring annual savings (since two schools are closing).

After a detailed study of the data, the SFSC determined that either Wenonah, Cayuga, Nokomis or Hiawatha elementary schools are the optimal findings.

Meaning that if the Board of Education decides to close two schools, either Lynwood or Tecumseh would be the optimal choice on the East, and either Wenonah, Cayuga, Nokomis or Hiawatha would be the optimal choice on the North.

The SFSC concluded that an in-depth study is required by the administration and board, including transportation and detailed demographic studies, in order to select the most optimal school. It's important to note the reasons why we did not consider certain schools as well.

Nokomis and Hiawatha:

Nokomis and Hiawatha have similar trade-offs and therefore are presented together.

Reasons to support closing Nokomis or Hiawatha:

- Central location could be good candidate for UPK (to keep the building in use)
- Would be easier to secure and monitor
- Enrollment projects for the next five years show continued dramatic decline in these particular schools (-23.8% for Hiawatha – the highest in the district, -12.4% for Nokomis)

Reasons against closing Nokomis:

- Close to the main road and across from the public library, would be an eyesore if it remains unoccupied

Reasons against closing Hiawatha:

- Hiawatha is the closest candidate for the Ronkonkoma Hub students expected to arrive in 3-5 years
 - Projections are speculative at this point, indicating approximately 100 new elementary students, as shown by the preliminary analysis below (provided by the hub's real estate developer)
- Highly visible school on a main road
- Largest school (in terms of size / number of classrooms) in the district

Ronkonkoma Hub Projections

Projected Public School Age Children Generation - Rent

		<u>Max.Density</u>
One Bedroom Units:	50%	725
Two Bedroom Units:	50%	725
Total Dwelling Unit Count:		1,450
Public School Age Children Generation for One Bedroom Units		
Age Cohort:	PSAC Multiplier: ¹	Projected PSAC:
Kindergarten through 2nd Grade:	0.02	14.50
3rd through 6th Grades:	0.02	14.50
7th through 9th Grades:	0.01	7.25
10th through 12th Grades:	0.01	7.25
Total Projected PSAC for 1 Bedroom Units:		44
Public School Age Children Generation for Two Bedroom Units		
Age Cohort:	PSAC Multiplier: ¹	Projected PSAC:
Kindergarten through 2nd Grade:	0.05	36.25
3rd through 6th Grades:	0.05	36.25
7th through 9th Grades:	0.04	29.00
10th through 12th Grades:	0.03	21.75
Total Projected PSAC for 2 Bedroom Units:		123
Total PSAC Generation for all dwelling units:		167

¹Source: Rutgers University Center for Urban Policy Research. *Residential Demographic Multipliers: Estimates of the Occupants of New Housing*, New York, June 2006, 5+ Units - Rent, 1 BR and 2 BR

²Source: New York State Education Department. New York State Property Tax Report Card, 2012 - 2013 (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/mgtserv/propertytax/>). Accessed 11.19.12, Reflects 2012 - 2013 Budget for the Sachem

Cayuga:

Reasons to support closing Cayuga:

- Smallest number of classrooms of all schools on the north side
- Property is set back from the main road, would be less of an eye-sore if it remains un-occupied
- Would be easier to secure and monitor (fenced and small opening to the main road)

Reasons against closing Cayuga:

- Enrollment projections for the Cayuga area are predicted to remain steady over the next five years (only two student decline) – should avoid closing a school in an area with little decline
- Cayuga building location is not very marketable for sale or lease

Wenonah:

Reasons to support closing Wenonah:

- Can only accept students in the north-west because of its close proximity to the district's border
- Enrollment projections for the Wenonah area are predicted to be dramatic (-22.5%)
- Would be easier to secure and monitor
- Location may increase the likelihood of an eventual sale/lease

Reasons against closing Wenonah:

- Shares property with facilities buildings

Grundy:

Grundy appears sub-optimal because it is the only elementary school in this feeder pattern that resides south of the Long Island Expressway. Grundy also is

predicted to have a 3.3% *increase* over the next five years. Therefore Grundy was not considered.

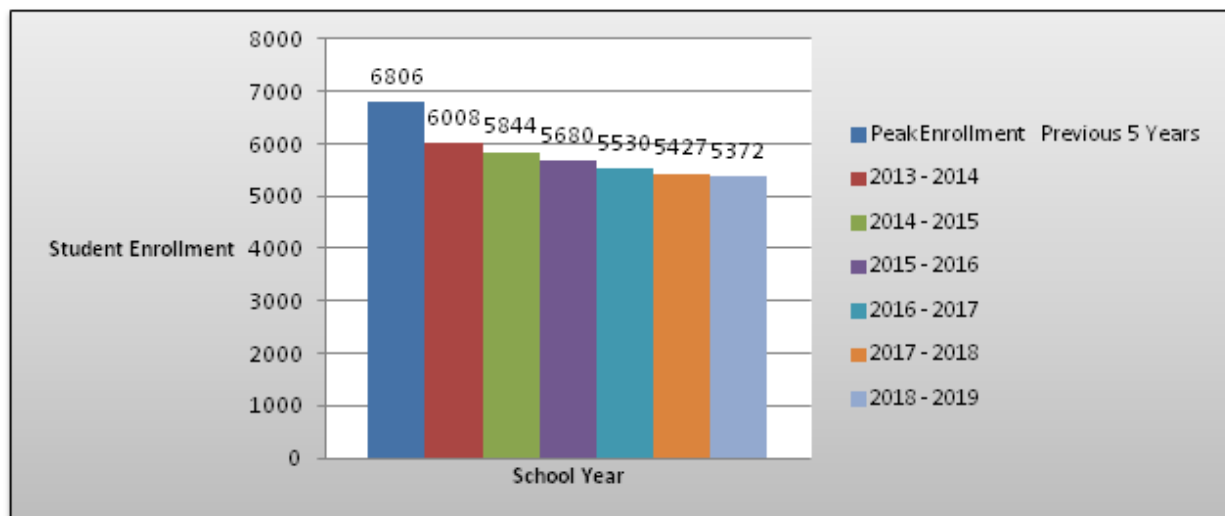
Gatelot:

Gatelot appears sub-optimal because of its close proximity to Samoset. This also significantly reduces commercial value. Therefore Gatelot was not considered.

Option 4

- Description - Close 3 Elementary Schools
 - Redistrict all attendance zones to save on transportation costs.

Below are the enrollment projections for the 12 Sachem Elementary Schools through the 2018 – 2019 school year vs. the previous 5 year period peak.



Town	Elementary School	5 Year								Peak Enrollment		
		2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	Change	% Change	Previous 5 Years	2014 - 2015 Enrollment	Delta
Lake Grove	Wenonah	494	469	442	439	418	383	-111	-22.47%	542	469	73
Lake Grove	Cayuga	531	523	529	518	527	529	-2	-0.38%	659	523	136
Lake Ronkonkoma	Gatelot	577	543	533	517	509	506	-71	-12.31%	604	543	61
										1805	1535	270
Lake Ronkonkoma	Hiawatha	471	459	423	378	353	359	-112	-23.78%	531	459	72
Holbrook	Nokomis	501	497	469	466	455	439	-62	-12.38%	525	497	28
Holbrook	Grundy	484	483	489	492	491	500	16	3.31%	524	483	41
										1580	1439	141
Holbrook	Merrimac	451	447	428	432	417	417	-34	-7.54%	495	447	48
Holtsville	Tamarac	567	554	531	510	512	483	-84	-14.81%	670	554	116
Holtsville	Waverly	559	542	515	499	476	459	-100	-17.89%	629	542	87
										1794	1543	251
Holtsville	Chippewa	474	460	449	436	438	453	-21	-4.43%	578	460	118
Farmingville	Lynwood	479	464	459	445	440	439	-40	-8.35%	522	464	58
Farmingville	Tecumseh	420	403	413	398	391	405	-15	-3.57%	527	403	124
										1627	1327	300
		6008	5844	5680	5530	5427	5372	-636		6806	5844	962

Analysis Conducted

With the current building utilization provided to the FSC by the Administration our analysis focused on the rooms that could be re-claimed within each building for classroom use for Kindergarten through 5th grade.

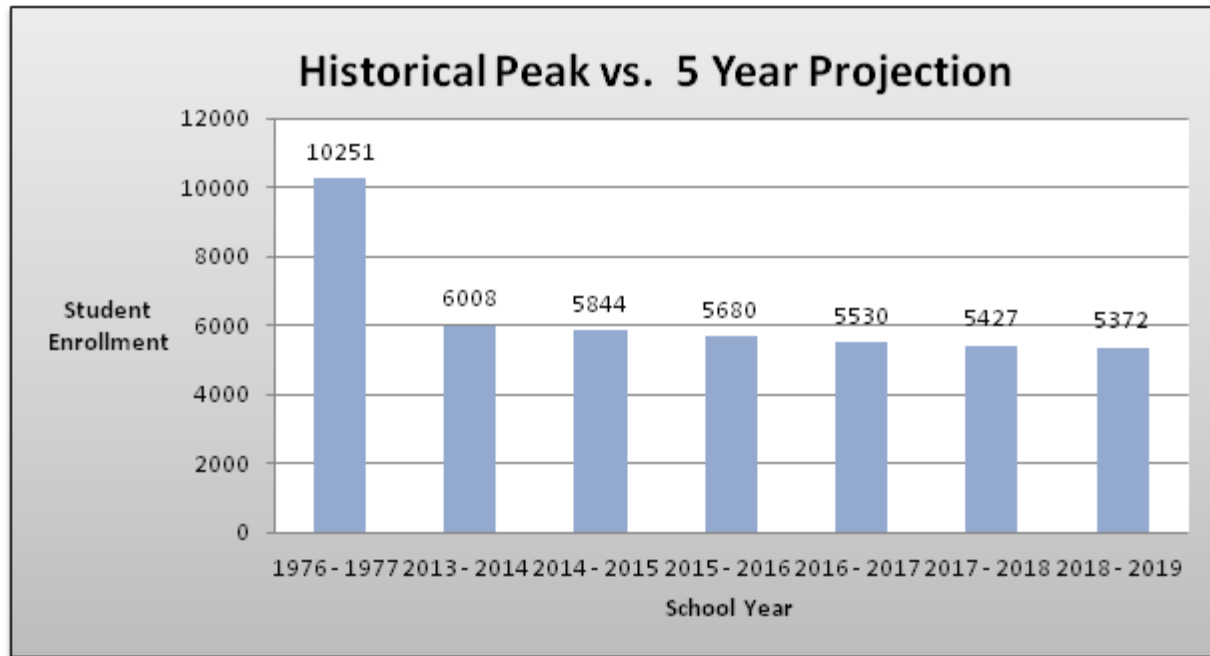
Several trends emerged within the 12 buildings such as:

- Multiple empty rooms
- Rooms utilized for storage
 - Art supplies, Custodial storage, Book storage
- Dedicated full size classrooms for ESL, Remedial Reading and Math
- Use of full size classrooms for Band & Orchestra
- Each building is using unoccupied rooms for various other functions besides classroom instruction.

The analysis of this SFSC demonstrates that with more efficient room utilization of 9 Elementary School buildings the district would be in a position to consider the closing of 3 Elementary School Buildings such that no 2 schools would be in the same feeder pattern. In addition the Sachem teacher student ratio would be maintained.

Below is a representation of the Elementary School historical peak enrollment (1976-1977) vs. the 5 year projections from 2014 - 2019 school years. **(Note: 1976-77 was before the Individuals with Disabilities Act which mandated services for classified special education students. These mandated services must be included in administrative planning.)**

The graph is offered to show building capacity. In the 1976-1977 School year the enrollment numbers are for grades 1-6, whereas the future projections are for grades K-5.



In this analysis we looked at each of the current feeder systems and determined the potential room capacity of each school as well as the Student Teacher ratio.

Elementary School	Current Rooms occupied for classes K-5	Identified rooms for K-5	Total Classrooms	Students - 2014 - 2015	Identified # of students to move in	Total	Average per Classroom	Target Options for Closing	Consolidated Classrooms	# of students	Ave Student per class	Added Bus Routes to accomodate Walkers
Cayuga	23	9	32	523	278	801	25	Cayuga and Gatelot can absorb Wenonah only	Cayuga + Gatelot Classrooms 64	1535	24	2
Gatelot	26	6	32	543	208	751	23					2
Wenonah	21	5	26	469	172	641	25					3
									2 School Classrooms 66	1439	22	2
Hiawatha	22	11	33	459	336	795	24	Either School in this Feeder can be an option				2
Nokomis	21	12	33	497	356	853	26					2
Grundy	22	11	33	483	302	785	24					3
									Tamarac + Either Merrimac or Waverly			
Merrimac	22	8	30	447	263	710	24	Merrimac & Waverly are the options to close w/in this feeder	65	1543	24	2
Tamarac	25	10	35	554	311	865	25					1
Waverly	23	7	30	542	220	762	25					1
									2 School Avg Classroom 60	1327	22	2
Chippewa	21	10	31	460	313	773	25	Either School in this Feeder can be an option				2
Lynwood	20	8	28	464	240	704	25					1
Tecumseh	20	11	31	403	347	750	24					
	266	108		5844					255	5844	23	

Feeder # 1 - Cayuga, Gatelot, Wenonah

- Student Enrollment = 1535
- Available Classrooms Across 3 Schools = 90
- Available Classrooms Across 2 Schools = 64
- Projected Student/Teacher Ratio – 24:1

Cayuga and Gatelot has the capacity to absorb the Wenonah capacity.

Feeder # 2 - Hiawatha, Nokomis, Grundy

- Student Enrollment = 1439
- Available Classrooms Across 3 Schools = 99
- Available Classrooms Across 2 Schools = 66
- Projected Student/Teacher Ratio – 22:1

Any of the 3 Schools in this Feeder can be considered for closure. From a geographical perspective the Hiawatha and Nokomis buildings should be considered for closure.

Feeder # 3 - Merrimac, Tamarac, Waverly

- Student Enrollment = 1543
- Available Classrooms Across 3 Schools = 95
- Available Classrooms Across 2 Schools = 65
- Projected Student/Teacher Ratio – 24:1

In Feeder # 3 Merrimac and Waverly appear to be candidates for closure however with the potential for additional students due to the development of Islip Pines and the potential re-districting of the Summerfield Community this Feeder should remain status quo.

Feeder # 4 - Chippewa, Lynwood, Tecumseh

- Student Enrollment = 1327
- Available Classrooms Across 3 Schools = 90
- Available Classrooms Across 2 Schools = 60
- Projected Student/Teacher Ratio – 22:1

Any of the 3 Schools in this Feeder can be considered for closure. From a geographical perspective the Lynwood and Tecumseh buildings should be considered for closure.

Reasons to support the closing of schools:

- Positive impact to the 2014 – 2015 budget
- Cost benefit of elementary school closing:

- \$437,679 per school * 3 Schools = \$1,313,037 annual savings
 - Community budget support for fiscal responsibility
- *Figures provided by Sachem Administration

Reasons to not close schools:

- Student routines and relationships will be disrupted
- Negative reaction from community, specifically families with school age children
 - Challenges/Petitions from community
 - Community reaction to the closing of schools and not selling property
- Buildings would have more students than previous 5 years
 - Teacher Student ratios would be maintained
- Empty buildings within residential communities
 - Potential decrease in home values
 - Potential for vandalism
- Sale of school building could take several years
 - Current NYS law mandates a 2 year waiting period before any sale
- District loss of assets
- Loss of community use of buildings
 - Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts
 - SYAG
 - Others....
- Loss of polling stations for elections

Savings:

\$437,679 per school * 3 Schools = \$1,313,037 annual savings

*Figures provided by Sachem Administration

Implications:

- More focused scheduling process to ensure all classes have time for specials, lunch etc.
- Unknown future population growth
 - Projections are for 5 years
 - Revitalization of downtown areas and new multi dwelling communities could increase students population
- Redistrict attendance zones
- More focused scheduling to ensure all classes have time for specials, lunch etc.

- Sachem Administration and Board of Education will lose credibility with community:
 - If buildings are closed and property is not sold.
 - Salaries for Administration and teachers are not reviewed and/or evaluated for savings.

Option 5

Close two Middle Schools/move 6th grades to elementary/Redistrict

*1 middle school in each feeder pattern

- SAVINGS:

- 1.3 million savings*

*Possible costs not considered within savings: Bathroom Renovations for UPK to move to Vacant Building; Maintaining the buildings and grounds for closed buildings; Staff development training moving teachers back to elementary

- Reasons to support closing:

- Save approximately 1.3 million (see note above regarding possible costs)

- Reasons to not close buildings:

- Buildings would be crowded: 2014/2015 7TH/8TH grade population will be 2,227. Each middle school would have a student population of approximately 1,114 which is higher than they ever held in the last 10 years (approx. 130 over peak, approx. 220 over what they currently hold)
- Middle School does not see a significant decline in enrollment until the year 2018/2019. *projections based on demographer

Grade	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Seventh	1109	1091	1087	1072	982	1016
Eighth	1202	1136	1117	1112	1095	1005
Subtotal	2311	2227	2204	2184	2077	2021
Delta (change) YOY		84	23	20	107	56

- 2 vacant buildings within community
- Specialized education lost for 6th grade: (will no longer have a teacher that specializes in subject area)
- 6th grade teachers work in conjunction with a 6-8 department chair in their subject area to make sure the 6th graders are prepared for what comes next and to make sure that are appropriately placing students into the correct academic program for the following year
- Less opportunity for 6th grade: No drama , no higher level performing groups and no Arrowettes
- Will require additional lunch periods, 5 lunch periods will be needed in the remaining schools. Lunch could start as early as 9:40am
- Special education home school issues could arise due to larger number of students within elementary buildings. If we lose space and flexibility within the elementary, should a building come up short on space the self-contained special- ed classes could get shifted to other buildings as space allows? Recently Sachem has done an excellent job of providing stability for this population.
- Significant Loss/change for 6th grade students which will include the following:
 - 6th grade Staff have been teaching One Specialized area for over 10 years. Staff will need significant staff development in order to effectively teach all subject areas again, particularly with the Common Core. Staff development cost money and time they we may not have before September 2014
 - Pull outs for support services are handled very differently in the elementary school and middle school. In Middle School 6th grade students are rarely pulled out during instructional time (usually only for lessons). Band, Orchestra, chorus, AIS, resource, and reading are all part of a student's schedule. Pull outs are a

bigger problem in elementary and students often miss instructional time to receive these extra services

- Extra help in the elementary school is usually offered once a week and there is no transportation provided. Middle School students have multiple opportunities for extra help during the week. They can stay for a difference subject several times a week with bus transportation.

IMPLICATIONS:

- UPK would have to move out of elementary buildings and a decision would have to be made as to where to put them. This would be a BOE decision and not within our scope
- Redistricting is necessary to accommodate the 6th grade moving back to elementary (see attached schedule for clarification)
- If an empty building is being used for UPK we may not realize all the intended savings. Building would fully have to be maintained throughout the year.
- Moving UPK to a vacant building then custodial staff salary will be charged to the grant and then only 230 students will be able to receive UPK as opposed to 252 students currently.
- Significant changes for 6th grade which will include the following:
 - 6th graders are currently treated as secondary students when it comes to grading and grade reporting. All 6th grade teachers maintain a grade book on the parent portal as parents can monitor a student's progress at all times: Elementary teachers do not currently do this.
 - Elementary school is on trimester report cards, 6th grade gets quarterly report cards and mid quarter progress reports
 - 6th graders receive numerical grades on report card, elementary letter grades

- 6th grade curriculum is currently written and aligned with quarterly exams, midterms and finals. Would need to restructure curriculum/exams to adapt to trimester testing and grade reporting
- Potential loss of opportunity for students in sports, drama, music, (with the elimination of 2 middle schools buildings you are eliminating 2 sports teams for every sport, 2 plays for each building eliminated)
- If Samoset is closed the cost savings would be reduced due to district office and BOCES remaining

Notes: With the exception of smaller east end school districts, there are only two school districts in Suffolk County that currently house 6th grade in elementary school; New York State currently writes and aligns the curriculum for k-5 and 6-8;

QUESTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED:

- Tech and Art classrooms are currently filled to capacity. This number will increase.
- What happens over the summer when the master schedule is completed and we realize the students do not fit in specialized classrooms and the schedule doesn't work?
- The emotional factor to be considered with the closing of schools and reconfiguration
- How will Sachem's full year 6th grade Science and Social Studies curriculum be incorporated into the elementary day? 6th graders receive 42 minutes of social studies every day and 42 minutes of science every day. These subjects are not currently covered every day in elementary school. There is only a half hour block for content subjects each day (social studies or science)

- Concern over the potential new students the proposed 2 new developments may bring into the community. Numbers have been suggested between 150 to 300 students
- Transportation issues

6TH Grade back to Elementary:

2014/15 School Year Numbers: K-6

Cayuga:	638
Chippewa:	558
Gatelot:	684
Grundy:	567
Hiawatha:	553
Lynwood:	579
Merrimac:	525
Nokomis:	575
Tamarac:	667
Tecumseh:	497
Waverly:	656
Wenonah:	583

- You must redistrict to even out numbers between the elementary schools to allow for growth and flexibility within each building (for example Special Education students having a “home” school for elementary years) If you do not redistrict there will be a swing of almost 200 students between our most populated schools and the least populated schools. There will be a significant impact at the more crowded schools
- If buildings are too tight the district may not have the ability to add an extra section in a particular grade level as is often the case come late August. You cannot add an extra class if there are not extra rooms.

Option 6

Close Four Elementary Schools*/move 5th grade to Middle School/Redistrict

*two in each feeder pattern

- SAVINGS:
- 1.9 million savings
- Reasons to support closing of schools:
- Save approximately 1.9 million
- Increased opportunity for 5th graders
- Specialized teachers for 5th graders/expansion of extra help
- UPK can stay as is
- Reasons to not close schools:
- Middle School Buildings would be crowded: 2014/2015 5th/6th/7TH/8TH grade population will be approximately 1,117 in each middle school which is higher than they ever held in the last 10 years (same problems would exist as in Option No. 5)
- 4 vacant buildings within the community

IMPLICATIONS:

- Longer Day and transportation for 5th graders
- 5th grade students may not be developmentally ready for Middle School
- After care issues would arise for 5th grade students

Notes: Another option would be to put 5/6 graders in one Middle School Building and 7/8 in the other Middle School Building. This would resolve the issue of concerns over moving 5th into a building with 7/8th graders but would still leave the problem of over crowded Middle School and all the issues that exist in Option 5.

QUESTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED:

- The emotional factor to be considered with the closing of schools and reconfiguration
- Concern over the potential new students the proposed 4 (as stated at the 12/11/2013 BOE meeting) new developments may bring into the community.
- Transportation issues

Option 7a Option 7b Option 8

Preface

This SFSC team (“team”) wishes to reiterate that any of the options presented herein will have impact to some of the Sachem Central School District (“District”) residents and community members, and certainly can be considered controversial. While we have endeavored to present options that allow the District to deliver quality educational services and programs to the District in a financially-responsible manner – through the consolidation and reduction of facilities – we understand any course of action taken will likely result in negative community response. As such, we would recommend to the District that any course of action be communicated with sufficient notice, depth, clarity and frequency so as to minimize the spread of misinformation and rumor.

Our intent in structuring the presented options is minimize negative impact and enable the District reap the intended benefits without undue risk or implementation challenges. We would encourage the reader to review not only the options, but also the

Evaluation Process section so as to familiarize themselves with the traceability and logic behind the development of those options.

Team Charter

Given the decline in District Student enrollment, compounded by recent fiscal pressure from the State and outside elements beyond the District's control, the Sachem Board of Education ("Board") has taken on the project of re-evaluation of the District facilities. In specific, the Board wishes to understand options to consolidate or reduce District real estate and facilities to a level appropriate for the forecasted immediate future (Academic years 14/15 through 18/19).

This team was requested to address two summary options, following:

Option 7: **Close one Elementary School and one Middle School**

Option 7a: **Close two Elementary Schools and one Middle School**

It should be noted, with regard to Option 7, that the team feels there exists the opportunity to further maximize cost reductions by expanding the Option 7 charter to include two Elementary schools. This ancillary option is referred to as Option 7a, and explored under the Options section.

(Original) Option 8: **Close two Elementary Schools and two Middle Schools**

It should be further noted, with regard to Option 8, that the team has found the original Option 8 to be disadvantageous to the District. As an overall SFSC, we have modified the original Option 8 charter to read as follows:

(Revised) Option 8: **Close two Elementary Schools and, when appropriate, two Middle Schools**

Within this report, you will find detail concerning these two options as well as an alternative approach for Option 7, as noted.

Evaluation Process and Data

As a general disclaimer – please understand that all data presented was obtained at the request of the SFSC through the District and its representatives. Additionally, please note that these numbers should be treated as ‘informed estimates’.

The Team started with student enrollment projections starting in 2014/15 through the 2018/19 school year. These forecasts were determined using one of the three most popular forecasting models – the cohort survival model. This model generated errors ranging from 1.7% to 2.9%, with an average of 1.9%, well within acceptable limits. The analysis and findings were presented to the SFSC by Applied Data Services. Data is shown in Figure 1.0, above.

The results of this analysis and forecasting can be seen in the following figures, first by Grade Level (Figure 1.1) and then by School (Figure 1.2). Note: the team has added both reduction numbers and percentages to these tables, as shown.

Grade	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Net reduction (from 13/14)	10-Year reduction	%reduction from 13/14	10-Year reduction %
Kindergarten	1,081	1,037	966	1,035	957	932	912	890	816	896	889	43	192	4.61%	17.76%
First	1,062	1,084	1,061	988	1,031	956	944	922	902	828	908	48	154	5.02%	14.50%
Second	1,096	1,058	1,082	1,065	995	1,014	956	944	922	902	828	186	268	18.34%	24.45%
Third	1,175	1,084	1,063	1,076	1,069	970	1,004	950	936	916	896	74	279	7.63%	23.74%
Fourth	1,175	1,154	1,079	1,068	1,078	1,060	970	1,004	949	936	916	144	259	13.58%	22.04%
Fifth	1,178	1,180	1,162	1,094	1,066	1,075	1,060	970	1,004	949	936	139	242	12.93%	20.54%
SubTotal	6,767	6,597	6,413	6,326	6,196	6,007	5,846	5,680	5,529	5,427	5,373	634	1394	10.55%	20.60%
Sixth	1,084	1,163	1,186	1,169	1,097	1,081	1,075	1,060	970	1,004	949	132	135	12.21%	12.45%
Seventh	1,192	1,105	1,160	1,191	1,183	1,109	1,091	1,087	1,072	982	1,016	93	176	8.39%	14.77%
Eighth	1,143	1,187	1,113	1,271	1,197	1,202	1,136	1,117	1,112	1,095	1,005	197	138	16.39%	12.07%
SubTotal	3,419	3,455	3,459	3,631	3,477	3,392	3,302	3,264	3,154	3,081	2,970	422	449	12.44%	13.13%
Totals	10,186	10,052	9,872	9,957	9,673	9,399	9,148	8,944	8,683	8,508	8,343	1056	1843	11.24%	18.09%

Figure 1.1: Population Analysis and Forecast by Grade Level

School	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Net reduction (from 13/14)	10-Year reduction	%reduction from 13/14	10-Year reduction %
Cayuga Elementary	659	644	607	588	555	531	523	529	518	527	529	2	130	0.38%	19.73%
Chippawa Elementary	578	532	513	500	478	474	460	449	436	438	453	21	125	4.43%	21.63%
Gatlot Elementary	604	583	561	558	566	577	543	533	517	509	506	71	98	12.31%	16.23%
Grundy Elementary	524	489	477	496	495	484	483	489	492	491	500	-16	24	-3.31%	4.58%
Hawatha Elementary	510	529	531	518	491	471	459	423	378	353	359	112	151	23.78%	29.61%
Lynwood Avenue Elementary	522	512	486	505	469	479	464	459	445	440	439	40	83	8.35%	15.90%
Merriam Elementary	482	479	471	494	495	450	447	428	432	417	417	33	65	7.33%	13.49%
Nokomis Elementary	525	512	497	499	491	501	497	469	466	455	439	62	86	12.38%	16.38%
Tamarac Elementary	665	670	641	592	605	567	554	531	510	512	483	84	182	14.81%	27.37%
Tecumseh Elementary	527	510	508	484	442	420	403	413	398	391	405	15	122	3.57%	23.15%
Waverly Elementary	629	596	580	566	573	559	542	515	499	476	459	100	170	17.89%	27.03%
Wenonah Elementary	542	541	541	526	536	494	469	442	439	418	383	111	159	22.47%	29.34%
Samoset Middle School	870	886	883	992	922	915	933	879	834	782	788	127	82	13.88%	9.43%
Seneca Middle School	807	819	801	811	781	781	747	772	767	785	727	54	80	6.91%	9.91%
Saguoya Middle School	935	943	974	977	900	875	825	867	810	811	787	88	148	10.06%	15.83%
Sagamore Middle School	807	807	801	851	874	821	797	746	743	703	668	153	139	18.64%	17.22%
Total	10,186	10,052	9,872	9,957	9,673	9,399	9,146	8,944	8,684	8,508	8,342	1057	1844	11.25%	18.10%

Figure 1.2: Population Analysis and Forecast by School

What the team was able to draw from this data was a clear linear decline in student enrollment, both historically over the past five years and similarly forecasted over the next five (refer to figure 1.3: Enrollment Trends). While this information should not come as a surprise, the analysis assisted us in identifying trending between facilities in the District and the effect on overall feeder patterns, ultimately to both North and East High School facilities.

In further evaluating facilities – especially in light of existing feeder patterns – the team looked at the physical capacity (full size classrooms) starting at each elementary facility, as well as the utilization of those classrooms (instruction or other).

The floor plans and information provided by the District were used in this study. This information can be found in Figure 1.4.

Feeder	Elementary School	Number of Full Size Classrooms	Number of Full Size Classrooms for Other than Grade Level Instruction 2013/14	Use for Non Grade Level Instruction Rooms
Samoset	Wenonah	36	9	Art, bookroom, speech/collab, rem math, OT/PT, Reading, speech/ESL, music, band/orchestra
	Cayuga	34	10	Math, resource/hearing, speech, computer Lab, PT, Resource, orchestra, band, reading (2x teachers), art
	Gatlot	36	9	Rem. math, reading, speech, band(behind stage), speech, resource, art, music, ESL
Seneca	Hiawatha	40	12	Speech, art, music, band, storage/bookroom, science, ESL, OT/PT, orchestra, speech, computer lab, reading
	Nokomis	36	9	Storage, custodial storage, psych, rem. math, OT/PT, Computer lab, resource, reading, speech
	Grundy	39	14	Book room, resource, science, CSE/storage, band, orchestra, supplies, storage, reading/ESL, music, computer lab, speech, reading, reading/hearing
Sequoia	Merrimac	33	10	Band, inter. bookroom, music, orchestra, computer, lab, lighthouse room, reading, resource, science, speech
	Tamarac	37	11	Science, math AIS, orchestra, computer, band, music, art, resource math, reading, counseling, science labs
	Waverly	36	9	Art, music, resource, reading (2x teachers), speech (2x teachers), computer room, small group instruction, Orchestra, OT/PT
Sagamore	Chippewa	35	10	OT/PT, speech (2.5x teachers), resource, reading (2x teachers), music, art, orchestra, band, computer, vision/hearing
	Lynwood	28	4	Orchestra, storage, computer, resource
	Tecumseh	37	14	Speech, OT/PT, reading, art, resource, remedial math, storage, band, music, storage, ESL, computer lab, tech aide/bookroom, orchestra
Total		427	121	
Average		35.6	10.2	

Figure 1.4: Elementary Full-Sized Classroom Capacities

Finally, for the purposes of general feasibility analysis of any consolidation effort, we evaluated the number of required sections for each grade level. This was again conducted at the elementary level initially, and based on the 2014/15 enrollment forecast.

Today, the District houses the K–5 population in 273 full-sized classrooms (see Figure 1.4) for instructional purposes (including Special Education; not including special use rooms or empty / storage). Additionally, there are another 121 shared or special-use rooms.

The Board target number is the maximum set for student population by grade; for Middle School analysis we used the average of (30) with the understanding that honors programs typically exceed that number.

As shown in Figure 1.5, the District – under optimal conditions – would require 246 full-sized classrooms necessary to support instruction for the 2014/15 K–5 student population without increasing the class size cap. However, while this spreadsheet evaluates capacities based on pure math, we realize that 100% scheduling efficiency

with the master scheduling process is not realistic. For planning purposes, the team has used the projection of 80% scheduling efficiency.

Finally, with regards to full-size classroom analysis at the Middle School level, the use of shared facilities and a shifting class schedule (e.g. each full size room serves multiple sections and in some cases grades) makes the determination more difficult. Instead, we have looked at the overall population density requirements as well as specific requirements for unique facilities (e.g. Regent's labs and similar, as well as special education).

Options

As informed by the data provided, clearly the District student population is decreasing. We see variable levels of decrease by Elementary School, which is then reflected in projected enrollment numbers at the Middle Schools based on current feeder patterns (see insert, to the right).

As expected, we also see the trending at the Elementary level leading the trending at the Middle (and High) School levels, given the six year span from K-5 (refer to Figure 1.3, previously).

Finally, we look back to previous years in the District when student populations were higher overall (see insert, following). These figures were provided to us by the District, and we have utilized these to determine rough feasibility for equivalent student populations. We have taken into account that several things have occurred since some of those peak population periods:

- District facilities reconfiguration. Facilities within the District were modified to address changing instructional and special educational requirements, which may have – in some cases – reduced overall capacity.
- The requirements of special education. With special needs classes ranging from 8:1:1 to 15:1:1 in the District, this removes the ability to fully utilize each and every full-size classroom to the maximum affect.
- Required Facilities. This becomes more prevalent at the Middle School level – specifically facilities such as Regent's Science Labs, Technology Labs and similar shared, specialized spaces. Given the space and time restrictions of these labs, we must be cognizant not to overcrowd any student population. The risk presented is additional students beyond a reasonable capacity would significantly reduce percentage by grade level of students able to participate in the programs that utilize those spaces.

Based on this analysis, the team is presenting an approach for both Options listed in the Team Charter section, as well as an alternative Option 7A and general recommendations.

General Recommendations

The team suggests the Board consider the following:

1. Redistricting. All of the options presented assume Redistricting to be an included step in the process. While we suggest a District-wide redistricting process, we would urge the Board to consider leaving the North-East line in place, so as to minimize impact at the High School level. Further, we have taken this into account when considering feeder patterns for our presented options.
2. Appropriate Planning. While Option 7 (and 7a) can be accomplished as presented with minimal impact to the District, Option 8 presents some risk when the second phase is implemented (closing of the two Middle Schools). The team recommends the Board fully consider its options and – insofar as possible – use the allotted time between phase 1 and phase 2 to execute appropriate modeling from a scheduling and utilization perspective to ensure phase 2 can be implemented without negative impact to the students.
3. Frequent Communication. Any change – whether positive or negative in its final impact – can be perceived by non-participating parties as scary. This team understands that the Board has done this successfully in the past, and would urge frequent communication with the District and its constituents their plan, positive impact to the District overall and benefits expected from such an undertaking.
4. Team-building and Integration Planning. When consolidating facilities, the team would urge the Board to consider pre-emptive opportunities for students, parents and appropriate PTAs to integrate and get to know one another prior to the change. While the team understands this is not always possible, we would urge the Board to consider events, or similar situations where the receiving schools have an opportunity to meet the incoming students, particularly at the Elementary level. This is also significant for the affected PTA groups.

Option 7: Close one Elementary and one Middle School and redistrict entire District

Savings: (Est. cost savings provided by District Administration)

- 1 Elementary School – \$ 437,679
- 1 Middle School – \$ 676,590
- Total cost savings is – \$ 1,114,269

Structure:

Close 1 Elementary and 1 Middle School.

- Middle School: Close Seneca
 - Sagamore and Seneca have the least capacity
 - Sagamore cohabitates a campus with Chippewa
 - Seneca may have a higher leasing prospectus
- Elementary School: Close Lynwood
 - Lowest full-size instructional classroom capacity (28 vs. 33+ in other facilities)
 - Geographic location (away from main roads)

Redistrict all zones to balance feeder patterns. Refer to Figure 1.6, below:

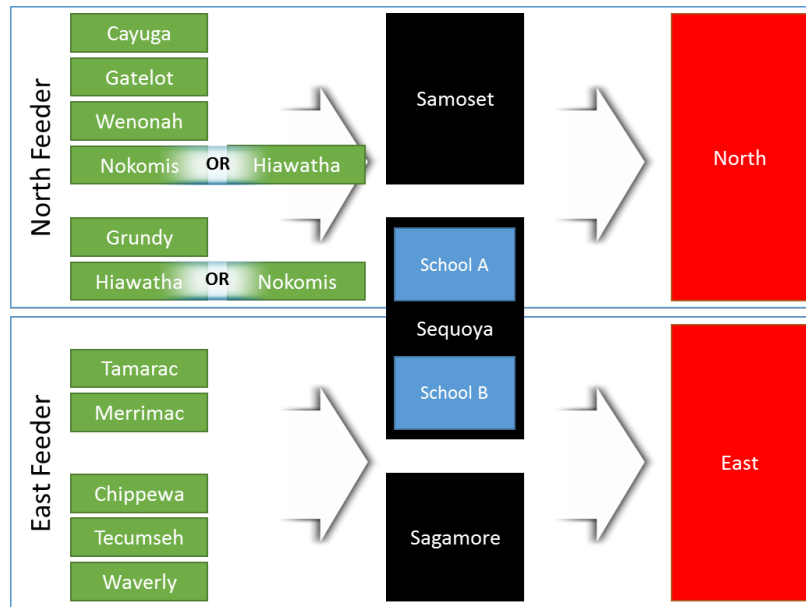


Figure 1.6: Revised Feeder Pattern for Option 7

The previous figure introduces a concept that has been implemented previously in Sachem South (prior to reconfiguration) which is a school within a school. Essentially, students from the two feeder schools that would ultimately feed into North would be kept together and not integrated – insofar as is reasonably possible outside of shared facilities – with students from the other two elementary schools that would ultimately feed to East.

The team introduces this concept as a recommended approach for this Option to ease the impact of splitting a Middle School, a scenario which has been difficult to accept by community members. The team recommends the Board strongly consider this approach should this option be pursued. Sequoya was selected as the ideal candidate for this approach given the replicative facilities on both of its floors; a feature conducive to a school within a school model.

Option Analysis:

Reasons to support closings:

- This option does not change Sachem's current educational structure of K-5 and 6-8.
- We are easily able to accommodate the necessary full-sized classrooms in other buildings.
 - There are 10 UPK rooms and 16 empty classrooms district wide.
- By closing Lynwood, we are able to return 54 Summerfield students to Waverly and distribute the remaining Lynwood students to Tecumseh and Chippewa.
- Redistricting the entire district would bring the number of students in these two buildings down in line with the rest of the district.

Reasons not to support option:

- Splitting one Middle School is, by far, the most difficult part of this option.
This would require the remaining middle schools to support an average student population of 1,101 (split over the three grade levels).
 - This could impact availability of shared resources and disrupt current schedules (e.g. requiring the addition of another lunch period and other shared resource periods).
 - This could impact availability of programs to students, such as honors programs, groups and clubs, and sports.
 - By reducing the number of Middle Schools from four to three, Sachem as a whole would may not be able to offer as many opportunities to as many students as previously.
- Splitting a Middle School may have significant impact to affected students and their families.

Implications:

- Clearly, we expect community debate and discussion over which schools should be selected to close. The team understands that no option will result in entire community acceptance.
- The team cautions the Board that students and parents may experience anxiety over redistricting. Additionally, there will likely be crowding at the remaining middle schools until the decrease in population reaches middle school (possibly 3–5 years).
- The team would suggest modeling master scheduling prior to implementation of this option. Can master schedule be adapted to accommodate the ~400 students that currently take regents science? Currently ~ 100 students take regents science per school, this would increase to ~133 (6, 7 and 8 would work with 1,100 students as 1/3 of the population would not need specific facilities, as opposed to 7 and 8 with 1,100 since they would all require specific facilities)
 - This could impact students' academic opportunities in high school
 - This concern would also impact additional core facilities: tech rooms, art, music, cafeteria
 - Additional lunch period may be needed, additional lunch could be as early as 3rd period (9:50) or as late as 8th period (1:45).
- The team wants to point out that we do not understand the impact an empty building would have on the community in a very public area (Main Street).
- The team wishes to point out that if an empty building is used for UPK, the District may not realize all of the intended savings.
- The team recommends attempting to keep teachers with students with any transition.
- The team understands there will be three new developments within the District that will introduce an unknown number of children into the educational population. While we have factored in general projections (supplied to the SFSC) into our estimation for validation, the team wishes to stress that these estimates are by no means guaranteed, and subject to change. The team would suggest the District consider this impact, and factor such into planned redistricting so as to limit overcrowding of any one building or a significant increase in transportation costs.

Option 7A: Close two Elementary and one Middle School and redistrict entire District

Savings: (Est. cost savings provided by District Administration)

- 2 Elementary Schools – \$ 875,358
- 1 Middle School – \$ 676,590
- Total cost savings is – \$ 1,551,948

Structure:

Close 2 Elementary and 1 Middle Schools.

- Middle School: Close Seneca
 - Sagamore and Seneca have the least capacity
 - Sagamore cohabitates a campus with Chippewa
 - Seneca may have a higher leasing prospectus
- First Elementary School: Close Lynwood
 - Lowest full-size instructional classroom capacity (28 vs. 33+ in other facilities)
 - Geographic location (away from main roads)
- Second Elementary School: Close Nokomis
 - Note: the team considered Cayuga, but abandoned the idea considering Cayuga's population only drops by two students over the next five years (refer to Figure 1.2)
 - Nokomis has one of the lowest populations in its geographic region
 - Given its location, Nokomis would enjoy increased potential utilization – either through building-wide UPK or overflow use from community resources, such as the library

Redistrict all zones to balance feeder patterns. Refer to Figure 1.7, following:

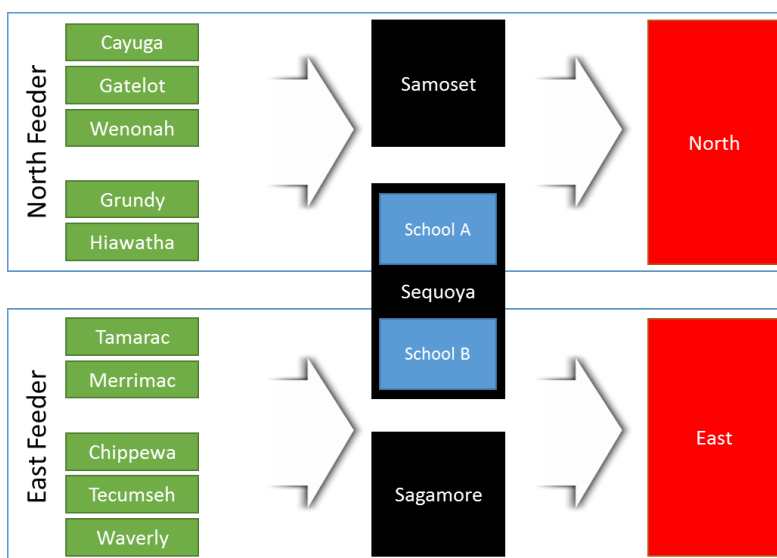


Figure 1.7: Revised Feeder Pattern for Option 7A

Please note: the team recommends continuing the school within a school approach presented for Option 7. This would, again, minimize negative social and peering impact in splitting a Middle School.

Option Analysis:

Reasons to support option:

- This option does not change Sachem's current educational structure of K–5 and 6–8.
- We are able to accommodate the necessary full-sized classrooms in other buildings.
- By closing Lynwood, we are able to return 54 Summerfield students to Waverly and distribute the remaining Lynwood students to Tecumseh and Chippewa.
- There is an opportunity to close one additional (beyond Lynwood) Elementary School in the North feeder system, to balance the feeder patterns (assisting to equate High School and Middle School population disparity).
- By closing an additional Elementary School (as opposed to Option 7), the District realizes additional savings.

Reasons not to support option:

- Splitting one Middle School is, by far, the most difficult part of this option.
This would require the remaining middle schools to support an average student population of 1,101 (split over the three grade levels).
 - This could impact availability of shared resources and disrupt current schedules (e.g. requiring the addition of another lunch period and other shared resource periods).
 - This could impact availability of programs to students, such as honors programs, groups and clubs, and sports.
 - By reducing the number of Middle Schools from four to three, Sachem as a whole would may not be able to offer as many opportunities to as many students as previously.
- Splitting a Middle School may have significant impact to affected students and their families.

Implications:

- Clearly, we expect community debate and discussion over which schools should be selected to close. The team understands that no option will result in entire community acceptance.
- The team cautions the Board that students and parents may experience anxiety over redistricting. Additionally, there will likely be crowding at the remaining middle schools until the decrease in population reaches middle school (possibly 3–5 years).
- The team would suggest modeling master scheduling prior to implementation of this option. Can master schedule be adapted to accommodate the ~400 students that currently take regents science? Currently ~ 100 students take regents science per school, this would increase to ~133 (6, 7 and 8 would work with 1,100 students as 1/3 of the population would not need specific facilities, as opposed to 7 and 8 with 1,100 since they would all require specific facilities)
 - This could impact students' academic opportunities in high school
 - This concern would also impact additional core facilities: tech rooms, art, music, cafeteria
 - Additional lunch period may be needed, additional lunch could be as early as 3rd period (9:50) or as late as 8th period (1:45).
- The team wants to point out that we do not understand the impact an empty building would have on the community in a very public area (Main Street), as well as another empty building in another high-traffic zone (Nokomis).
- The team wishes to point out that if an empty building is used for UPK, the District may not realize all of the intended savings.
- The team recommends attempting to keep teachers with students with any transition.
- The team understands there will be three new developments within the District that will introduce an unknown number of children into the educational population. While we have factored in general projections (supplied to the SFSC)

into our estimation for validation, the team wishes to stress that these estimates are by no means guaranteed, and subject to change. The team would suggest the District consider this impact, and factor such into planned redistricting so as to limit overcrowding of any one building or a significant increase in transportation costs.

Option 8: Close two Elementary and two Middle Schools, move 6th grade to Elementary and redistrict entire District

Savings: (Est. cost savings provided by District Administration)

- 2 Elementary Schools – \$ 875,358
- 2 Middle Schools – \$ 1,353,180
- Total cost savings is – \$ 2,228,538

Structure:

Close 2 Elementary and 2 Middle Schools.

- First Middle School: Close Seneca
 - Seneca has one of the two lowest enrollments and facilities capacity
 - Seneca may have a higher leasing prospectus
- Second Middle School: Close Sagamore
 - Sagamore has one of the two lowest enrollments and facilities capacity
 - While Sagamore shares a campus, the remaining two Middle Schools have additional capacity and facilities
 - Sequoia has outstanding bonds
- First Elementary School: Close Lynwood
 - Lowest full-size instructional classroom capacity (28 vs. 33+ in other facilities)
 - Geographic location (away from main roads)
- Second Elementary School: Close Nokomis
 - Note: the team considered Cayuga, but abandoned the idea considering Cayuga's population only drops by two students over the next five years (refer to Figure 1.2)
 - Nokomis has one of the lowest populations in its geographic region

- Given its location, Nokomis would enjoy increased potential utilization – either through building-wide UPK or overflow use from community resources, such as the library

Redistrict all zones to balance feeder patterns. Refer to Figure 1.8, following:

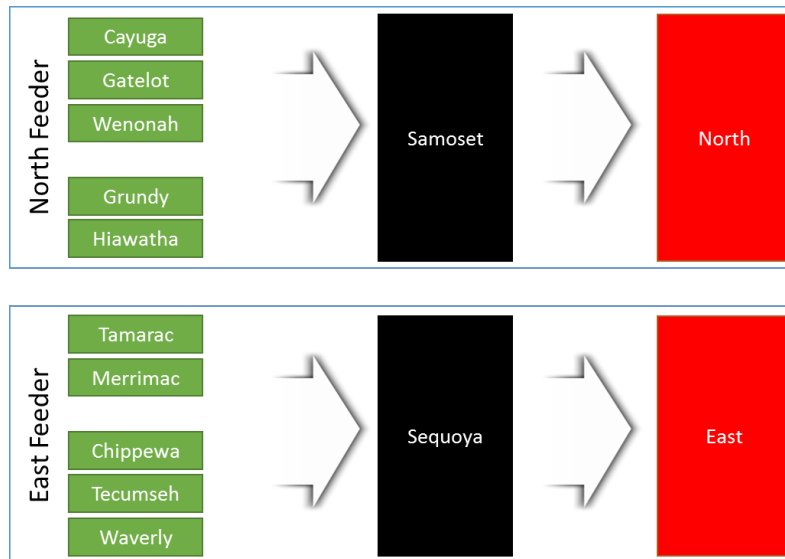


Figure 1.8: Feeder Pattern for Option 8

Option Analysis:

As the Board is aware, the team first evaluated the feasibility of closing all four facilities simultaneously, presumptively during the 2014 / 15 school year. We found this approach to be disadvantageous, based on our analysis found below, and presented an option to the SFSC to delay closing of the two Middle Schools. The SFSC voted on the adoption of this alternative approach and unanimously approved. For context, we will present our initial findings which led to our alternative strategy, as well as the final strategy for Option 8.

Please also note that one of the core components of Option 8 is the move of 6th grade to the Elementary facilities. While this could be extremely complex to implement for the 2014/15 school year, the team suggests delaying the close of the Middle School facilities would provide adequate ramp time to properly plan the move and mitigate risk and complexity with such a transition.

Option 8: Background Analysis

We first started with determining the number of full-size classrooms required should we close two Elementary and two Middle School facilities. If we use the 2014/15 projections, we see the following:

Grade	2014/ 15	BOE Target Students per Section	Required Sections	100% Section Efficiency*	0% Section Efficiency*	80% Section Efficiency*
Kindergarten	912	25	37	37	45	43
First	944	27	35	35	42	41
Second	956	27	36	36	43	42
Third	1,004	28	36	36	43	42
Fourth	970	29	34	34	41	39
Fifth	1,060	30	36	36	43	42
Special Education	266 **		32	32	32	32
Sixth	1,075	30	36	36	36	36
Sixth-grade Special Education			7	7	7	7
Total	6,921		289	289	333	323

* Note: Section efficiency refers to the District's ability to fully-fill a section with the maximum number of students, as directed by Board guidelines.

** Special Education numbers are 2013/14 counts, as CSE meetings have not yet occurred to set 2014/15 counts.

As these numbers indicate, we would need a total of 323 full-sized classrooms for instructional delivery across the ten remaining Elementary Schools, for an average of 32.1 (or 33) full-sized rooms per building, with our assumed 80% section efficiency.

Looking at facility capacity (a restatement from Figure 1.4, previously), we see the following (inset). You will note that Lynwood falls below the required number of full-sized classrooms; a substantiating factor for the decision to include that facility as one of the two eligible facilities to close. A key point to make is that the full-size classroom requirements do not include current non-instructional rooms shown in Figure 1.4.

Further evaluation of the Middle School component (the consolidation of 7th and 8th grade into the remaining two facilities: Sequoya and Samoset), we find additional complexities. One of the key aspects of the consolidation is curriculum-mandated facilities that would be stressed by the addition of 7th and 8th grade students from two Middle Schools (still roughly 1,100 users but now only between 7th and 8th grade).

Let us first evaluate the number of students in question. We find the following:

School	2014/15 Population	Impact from Consolidation	Total Population post Consolidation
Samoset Middle School	933	220 – 333	1153–1266
Seneca Middle School	747		
Sequoia Middle School	825	220 – 333	1045–1158
Sagamore Middle School	797		

Risks

The team is concerned that the magnitude of increase to the two largest Middle Schools would exceed even what those facilities can accommodate. The numbers shown exceed those facilities’ maximum historic capacity by roughly 130 (peak defined as the maximum population since 2008). One of the most significant areas of concern is curriculum-mandated facilities as mentioned above. To better quantify the risk, the team looked at the number of students today that are enrolled in both Earth and Living Sciences.

School	Earth Science	Living Environment	Total
Samoset Middle School	58	52	110
Seneca Middle School	66	58	124
Sequoia Middle School	61	59	120
Sagamore Middle School	52	56	108
	Average		115.5

The specific risk lies with Regents, as inclusion in the Regents program in 8th grade is a prerequisite for the AP track in High School. With an average of seven labs available at the Middle School level, the addition of 200 – 333 students into both Samoset and Sequoia could dramatically reduce the percentage of 8th graders able to access that program. The team does not feel this aligns with the core charter of the SFSC “Develop a variety of possible actions that will enable Sachem to provide quality education in a fiscally responsible manner.”

Another significant risk of this Option would be the move of 6th Grade to the Elementary facilities. There are numerous issues with a ‘quick’ move of this magnitude, including:

- The academic impact to 6th grade in moving to a single teacher vs. the benefit of specialized subject-based instruction (particularly with regard to State testing).
- The consistent reinforcement of all core subjects five days a week vs. cyclic instruction in an Elementary program.

- The retraining of current Middle School instructional personnel to include all subject areas, and the correlated development of integrated curriculum for a typical Elementary environment.
- The validity of the consolidation would directly depend on the District's ability to ensure all students were adequately provided with appropriate schedules in a very space-constrained environment. The team has no empirical knowledge to assume such accommodations can be made, and would recommend modeling the master scheduling exercise prior to any consolidation implementation.

The above risks would also be deemed by the team as disadvantageous.

Additional risks include the inclusion of additional lunch and shared facilities periods, which will likely result in lunch periods as early as 10:15 or as late as 1:15 (9:50 or 1:45 in a Middle School setting). Lastly, there would be significant impact in group and shared resource participation, such as sports (including Arrowettes) and groups / clubs (such as drama, select Orchestra / Band and similar) due to the decrease in Middle School facilities.

Mitigating Factors

These risks could be mitigated if the Board were to delay the closing of the Middle Schools. If we examine the decline in Middle School enrollment over the next few years, we see many of these concerns can be mitigated through natural attrition.

Grade	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Seventh	1109	1091	1087	1072	982	1016
Eighth	1202	1136	1117	1112	1095	1005
Subtotal	2311	2227	2204	2184	2077	2021
Delta enrollment (change) YOY		- 84	- 23	- 20	- 107	- 56

We see that by delaying the closing of the two Middle Schools, we are able to reduce the number of additional students to each of the receiving Middle Schools, as shown (for modeling purposes, we use an anticipated number of +220 additional students to each receiving Middle School).

Delaying closing until later years has the following sliding benefit (assuming 6th moves to elementary):

- 2016/17: Add'l 220 students per school drops to +156 per school
- 2017/18: Add'l 220 students per school drops to +103 per school
- 2018/19: Add'l 220 students per school drops to +75 per school

There has been extensive research into whether 6th grade can be delivered within an Elementary school setting. We summarize some of the high-level pros and cons in the revision, following, but would take the opportunity to direct the Board to a report that studies this issue. The team has included the abstract summary of that report's findings below, for reference.

“...we find that sixth grade students attending middle schools are much more likely to be cited for discipline problems than those attending elementary school. Furthermore, the higher infraction rates recorded by sixth graders who are placed in middle school persist at least through ninth grade. An analysis of end-of-grade test scores provides complimentary findings. Based on our results we suggest that there is a strong argument for separating sixth graders from older adolescents.” (“Should Sixth Grade be in Elementary or Middle School? An Analysis of Grade Configuration and Student Behavior”, SAN07-10, Feb 2007, Duke Univ., Univ. of California, Berkeley, et.al.)

There is not significant empirical data for 6th grade in an Elementary School setting within Suffolk County – only two schools deliver this model today.

There are approaches which can be taken to minimize the negative impact of 6th grade transitioning to Elementary:

- One such mitigation tactic would be the introduction of modified block scheduling, allowing 6th graders to still cycle through core curriculum classes but without the full day transition found in Middle School. Such an approach would also allow students a structured focus on specific core curriculum, which would help them excel on standardized testing.
- Another mitigation tactic would be the use of mandated staff instructional days to start transitioning 6th grade teachers into an Elementary setting. This could only be accomplished with sufficient ramp time before such a change were to take place.
- Finally, from a community standpoint, the additional ramp time would allow families to prepare their students and themselves for this transition. The District would have sufficient opportunity to mitigate concern and fear through communication and discussions with the community, and affected students (today, likely in 2nd grade) would have four years to prepare for that change.

Based on the aforementioned rationale and risks, the team – and SFSC – felt it appropriate to modify Option 8 to include a delayed Middle School closing.

Option 8: Revised Plan Analysis

Phase 1: Close two Elementary Schools

- Student capacity is based on 2014/15 student population.
- 6th grade remains in the middle schools.
- 2014/15 K-5 population is 5,846 across 10 buildings is approximately 585 students per building.
- The current K-5 student population (including special ed.) occupies 281 full size classrooms.
 - If we are able to consolidate schools and fill every room to the boards target number, then we would require roughly 246 classrooms, although this is not probable.

- The minimum number of classrooms per building would be 25 with a max of 28 classrooms per building should we not be able to optimize the consolidation.
- Classrooms that are used for various support services would need to be made available.
 - These services would need to be relocated or combined.
 - Some of these services are: OT/PT, speech, reading, math, AIS/remedial.
- We may be able to retain art, music and a computer lab in every building.

Options:

- Elementary would likely be Lynwood and one other geographically diverse facility.
 - Lynwood due to lowest number of full-size instructional rooms.
 - Option for second School: Cayuga due to low impact on community (school is set back from road) and fewer full-size instructional rooms.
 - Option: for second School: Nokomis due to lower population and potential for full building UPK.

Reason to support option:

- Allows the ability to achieve the elementary school savings.
- No changes to Sachem's current educational structure of K-5 and 6-8.
- Return 54 Summerfield students to Waverly and distribute the remaining Lynwood students to Tecumseh and Chippewa.
- Redistricting the entire district will help insure that Special Ed classes would not be bounced around from school to school depending on space available.

Reasons not to support option:

- Does not allow the ability to achieve the middle school savings immediately.
- Elementary schools will have less flexibility.
- Services that happen in full size classrooms will need to be relocated or condensed.
- UPK would need to be relocated to an empty building, and may not realize all of the intended savings.
- If buildings are over-constrained with academic room requirements, special education could possibly be moved from year to year.

Phase 2: Close two Middle Schools in the 2017/2018 Year

- First Middle School: Close Seneca
 - Seneca has one of the two lowest enrollments and facilities capacity
 - Seneca may have a higher leasing prospectus

- Second Middle School: Close Sagamore
 - Sagamore has one of the two lowest enrollments and facilities capacity
 - While Sagamore shares a campus, the remaining two Middle Schools have additional capacity and facilities
 - Sequoia has outstanding bonds

Recommendations: We are recommending, when considering the 6th grade move to Elementary, the District consider block scheduling for 6th grade students. We would request consideration for block scheduling for core curriculum competencies, with appropriate home section.

Reason to support option:

- There are community parents that feel that 6th grade belongs in the elementary school and would support such a restructuring.
- Deferring the closure of middle schools would lower the overall risk presented by immediate closing with regard to “optimal” master scheduling.
 - 27 students per section recommended for secondary classes; deferring closures allow for less students added to classes already over 27.
- Advanced notice of planned closings would allow for several areas of development:
 - With reduced elementary populations and a drop of 127 students in 6th grade (17/18), this would allow mimicking a middle school environment. For example, 6th grade students could have a homeroom, then cycle between three key curriculum rooms: ELA, Science and Math. Note: this would offset several of the cons following.
 - Consistent with the above, the SFSC would advise consideration of a modified block scheduling approach – to help students segue into Middle School as well as allow for structured focus on core subject areas.
 - With advanced notice, impact to district families could be foreseen and planned for (e.g. 6th grade staying in elementary) as a change in the 17/18 year would affect current 2nd graders today.
 - With advanced notice, the District will have time to properly train and prepare 6th grade staff to transition to elementary, and appropriately take on additional curriculum areas, especially pertaining to common core. By delaying the closing of middle schools, this training can be integrated into standard professional development
 - Families with special needs or ‘pull-out’ students would receive an additional year of more focused assistance prior to Middle School.
- Phased closing of 2 Elementary and 2 Middle School facilities provides the District with one of the highest overall savings potential; the phased approach provides for a very low negative impact to academic and student experience.
- After-care (child care) is available in Elementary but not Middle School – this would benefit 6th grade working parents (additionally – increased revenue source).
- Students would be more mature and socially ready for middle school.

Reasons not to support option:

- There are community parents that feel that 6th grade should remain at the Middle School and may not support a move to Elementary.
- Potential loss of opportunities for students in sports, drama, performing groups and Arrowettes as more kids are vying for the same number of spots.
- Concerns with moving 6th grade back to the elementary schools:
 - 6th grade teachers have become specialists in a subject area, and the 6th grade students have benefited from dedicated subject area teachers.
 - Every subject is taught every day in the current 6th grade setting.
 - 6th grade teachers returning to the elementary schools may be required to teach another grade level and will now have to teach subjects they haven't taught recently.
 - 6th grade teachers would require extensive training to be brought up to speed in all subject areas, especially with common core changes. While there is cost and time associated with such training, delaying the closing of middle schools would allow such to be integrated into standard professional development.
 - 6th graders develop organizational and time management skills, timed test taking, and how to deal with expectations of many different teachers prior to entering 7th grade.
 - This development assists the students in making an easier transition to the 7th grade honors and accelerated classes.
 - 6th grade teachers work closely with the department chair, and 7th and 8th grade teachers to best prepare students for what comes next.
 - Access to late buses enables the 6th grade students to have opportunities for after school extra help.
 - There are no guidance counselors in the elementary schools; Elementary Schools contain a social worker and psychologist who may be able to provide services if necessary.
 - Currently, 6th graders have opportunities to attend school functions and night time events without parents.
 - The following items may not be available if the 6th grade is moved to the elementary schools:
 - Utilization of the parent portal for progress reports and grade books online.
 - Receiving of mid semester progress reports, and report cards with number grades in every subject.
 - Elementary schools have letter grades in addition to +, -, S and N.
 - Teacher maintaining grade books online so parents can check grades and progress on a daily basis. Elementary school teachers do not maintain grade books on the parent portal.
 - Continuation of the curriculum to include: quarterly exams, midterms and finals.
 - Elementary Schools are on trimesters; Middle Schools are on quarters.

Implications:

- For most pros, there are associated cons, and vice versa. This underscores the need for planning – specifically to ensure 6th grade is properly setup for the maximum success; thus further justifying the delay in middle school closings.
- New York State Dept. of Education teaching certificate on classifies “Elementary” as K–6, not K–5.
- Curriculum is written and aligned currently for K–5 and 6–8.
- The SFSC recommends attempting to keep teachers with students with any transition.
- Major unknown: additional students from the three proposed building projects.

Recommended Factors/Issues to Be Considered by the Board of Education

- Declining enrollment projections; demographics – also, what are the reasons for decline, what is likelihood of a reversal?
- Look at declining enrollment on a district-wide basis.
- Optimal capacity of each school; building capacity of remaining schools must be large enough to maintain optimal student:teacher ratios now and for the foreseeable future.
- Capacity of a school to accommodate additional students – ability to expand (through portables or permanent additions); also, ability of core facilities (library, gym, cafeteria, auditorium, playground, etc.) to accommodate additional students.
- Operating cost of each school – energy costs, maintenance, etc.
- Transportation costs – what costs will be saved, what new costs will be incurred by closing a school?
- Student proximity to other schools. Consideration should be given to maintain neighborhoods and draw district lines in a sensitive manner.
- Ability to maximize revenues from school – what are options? Also need to consider legal and zoning restrictions on use of property.

- What are costs associated with vacant school building (upkeep, maintenance, security, insurance, etc.)
- One-time costs involved in closing a school.
- Considerations regarding diversity of each school.
- Traffic study - impact of any reorganization.

Summary

The Sachem Facilities Study Committee was diligent within the scope our charge as we understood it. We feel our report is fair and without prejudice or partiality. We always kept in mind what was the best interest of all of the children in the Sachem community. We tried to plan with an eye to the future. We feel our work has helped to educate the community about the need to be fiscally responsible while maintaining existing programs. We recognize that our work is a precursor to the difficult work that the Board needs to do as it moves forward in its decision-making. We stand ready, if the Board so desires, to be helpful to the Board in any appropriate way as the process moves forward. We recommend that this report, our presentation slides, and the demographers report be made available to residents on line as soon as possible after our formal presentation to the Board on January 22, 2014. Finally we commend the Board for its openness and its willingness to include community stakeholders in this important work.

Acknowledgements

The SFSC wishes to thank the Board of Education for providing this opportunity. We also wish to express our gratitude to the Sachem Central Administration for its openness and responsiveness to our requests.