Mexico Academy & Central School District

Mexico, New York

A Study to Examine the Utilization of the District's Schools

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CHAPTER 1
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Mexico Central School District, like many upstate school districts, has recently experienced declining student enrollment and significant, and somewhat unique, financial challenges. Realizing that business as usual is not an option for the future, the district chose to engage in a study to ascertain the best use of its facilities for the future. A consulting firm was engaged to work with a district advisory committee to answer the following question:

How can we educationally and fiscally reconfigure our grades and/or facilities to provide a sound instructional program now and in the future?

Six meetings were held with the consultants and the advisory committee to consider a variety of options for answering the study question. Key findings from the study were as follows:

Finding 1: Mexico residents have consistently shown support for the school district by passing school budgets each of the past ten years.
Finding 2: Live births in the school district have been declining for the past several years leading to smaller kindergarten cohorts of students.
Finding 3: K-12 enrollment in the district has declined from 2,132 in 2011-12 to 2,042 in 2016-17.
Finding 4: K-12 enrollment is projected to continue to decline another 4.2% by 2023-24 and most of this decline will be felt at the high school.
Finding 5: The district's enrollment dip and projection is not surprising given the fact that Oswego County population has been declining since 2004 and will likely continue to drop until 2040 according to the U. S. Census.
Finding 6: The median age of Oswego County residents has been rising and the childbearing age cohort-25-44 has been declining as other indicators of future district enrollment predictions.
Finding 7: There are a growing number of youngsters that are being home-schooled in Mexico going from 23 in 2011-12 to 61 this year.
Finding 8: Mexico is also experiencing an increase in the number of resident students attending school elsewhere (31 in 2015-16).
Finding 9: All three elementary schools house half-day Pre-K classes.
Finding 10: The district maintains very reasonable class sizes at the elementary level in each of the three schools as compared to other Oswego County and New York State school districts.
Finding 11: At the elementary level, the district provides students with special area subjects (Art, Music, Library, and Physical Education) to complement the core academic curriculum and the special area schedules are the same regardless of which elementary school a student attends.
Finding 12: An examination of the middle school schedule shows that a comprehensive program is offered to students at this level.
Finding 13: For a school of its size, Mexico High School offers a very comprehensive program with AP courses, various electives, Project Lead the Way, three foreign languages, and a Junior ROTC program.
Finding 14: Mexico students also have the opportunity to take classes at the Citi BOCES and in fact over 40% of the junior and seniors in 2016-17 did so.

Finding 15: The district offers special education programs to approximately 330 special needs students this year or 16% of the district's overall enrollment; most students receive their services in-district.
Finding 16: The district's current grade configuration is Pre-K-4 in three elementary schools, grades 5-8 in the middle school, and grades 9-12 at the high school.
Finding 17: In examining the available space in the elementary schools, it is apparent that New Haven is the most crowded elementary building while both Mexico and Palermo have excess capacity.
Finding 18: The middle school has a number (20) of large classrooms that are used for purposes other than core academic classes. While some changes will have to be made, there is room to add another grade level in the middle school.
Finding 19: Two methods (whole classroom and period-by-period analysis) were used to assess the capacity of Mexico High School. Using both methods, it is clear that the high school has excess capacity and could accommodate more students than presently (and in the near future) are being educated in the building.
Finding 20: According to the Building Condition Survey completed in 2015, all of the district's schools need capital improvements. In total, approximately $43,000,000 worth of work has been identified.
Finding 21: Like all school districts, staff salary and benefits comprise most of the district's annual expenditures. However, in recent years, due to a decline in state aid, the district has had to reduce some program offerings including several BOCES special education programs; at the same time, however, the district has made program additions since 2010-11 including a Middle School Exploratory Occupations Program, AVID, and expansion of AP courses.
Finding 22: If the three elementary schools were consolidated into one, approximately $1,000,000 in staff savings could be realized.
Finding 23: Given the history of retirements in the district and the ages of the current staff, there is a strong possibility that any staff reductions could be accomplished through attrition.
Finding 24: Mexico's daily transportation program is a typical double trip bussing system with the secondary students being picked up first in the morning and the elementary children taken to school on a second run. The reverse happens at the afternoon dismissal.
Finding 25: Mexico has approximately 85-100 grade 5-12 students that walk to school each day in the Village of Mexico.
Finding 26: The district provides a late bus run for students that participate in sports and other activities.
Finding 27: The June 30, 2016 General Fund balance sheet showed Mexico had a number of reserves for specific purposes such as unemployment, retirement, tax certiorari, liability, employee benefits, and a capital reserve. Most importantly, the district had established and funded a Nuclear Facility Tax Stabilization Reserve at $21,787,373. The latter is extremely important in light of the uncertain future of the nuclear plant in the Town of Scriba.
Finding 28: The district's restricted fund balance has been growing for the last five years showing sound fiscal planning.
Finding 29: Mexico, like all districts, has outstanding capital debt, some of which will be retired after 2017-18, a second after 2020-21, and a third following the 2022-23 school year. The timing of debt retirement makes it feasible for the district to assume new capital debt without seriously impacting the local taxpayer.

Finding 30: Both the April 2016 State Comptroller's general fund audit and the most recent independent audit conducted by Insero & Company commend the district for sound fiscal planning yet also point out serious financial challenges ahead as they relate to a new PILOT agreement on the nuclear plant.

Conclusion

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

The consultants have concluded that there two options that are both "feasible" (they could be accomplished) and "desirable" (they offer a positive path forward for the district)—Option 1: Keep the grades and buildings organized as at present and just make capital improvements to the schools; Option 2: Realign the grades and buildings by closing both New Haven and Palermo Elementary Schools; putting an addition onto the Mexico Elementary School so that it can house grades PreK-2, transition Mexico Middle School into a grade 3-7 Intermediate School, and moving the 8th grade to the High School. Each of these options offers potential educational and financial advantages for the district.

In the end, the following recommendations are made about the school facilities in Mexico.

1. It is recommended that the Mexico Board of Education review the two feasible and desirable options noted above and, in doing so, assess the advantages and disadvantages of each as noted by the consultants and members of the Advisory Committee. Additionally, the Board should evaluate whether the short-term or long-term plan for the grades and buildings is most appropriate given current district and community considerations, particularly in relation to the overall fiscal status of the area.
2. If the Board supports the second option presented, and particularly in light of what appears to be an enrollment increase at New Haven in 2017-18, the Board may wish to begin phasing in this option. Specifically, for the 2018-19 year, the Board may choose to move the eighth grade to the High School thus opening up classroom space at the Middle School to allow the 4th grades to be relocated there. This may mean all the fourth grade sections in the district or perhaps just the New Haven sections of the grade level.
3. Lastly, regardless of which option the Board endorses, we strongly recommend that a Facilities Advisory Committee (perhaps with members from the Advisory Committee that work on this study) be appointed to assist with detailed planning of the next capital construction phase the district will enter.

Mexico Academy & Central School

CHAPTER 2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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

Sadie Blauvelt	Bob Briggs	Lisa Buske
Kelly Cullen	Heather Donath	Donna Herrmann
Sue Hewitt	Andrew MacDonald	Charlee Marthia
Tammie Nipper	Mark Norton	Jessica Parker
Peggy Scorzelli	Susan Teifke	Kevin Upcraft

These committee members gave generously of their time to help ask the right questions and to provide direction in finding answers. Without their assistance this study would not be nearly as complete and responsive to the information needs of the Board of Education and residents of the Mexico Academy & Central School District.

Superintendent Sean Bruno, his most helpful secretary LeAnn Skotniski, and his staff were also generous with their time as we often requested information. Without their willingness to accommodate our requests, the timeliness of this study would not have been achieved.

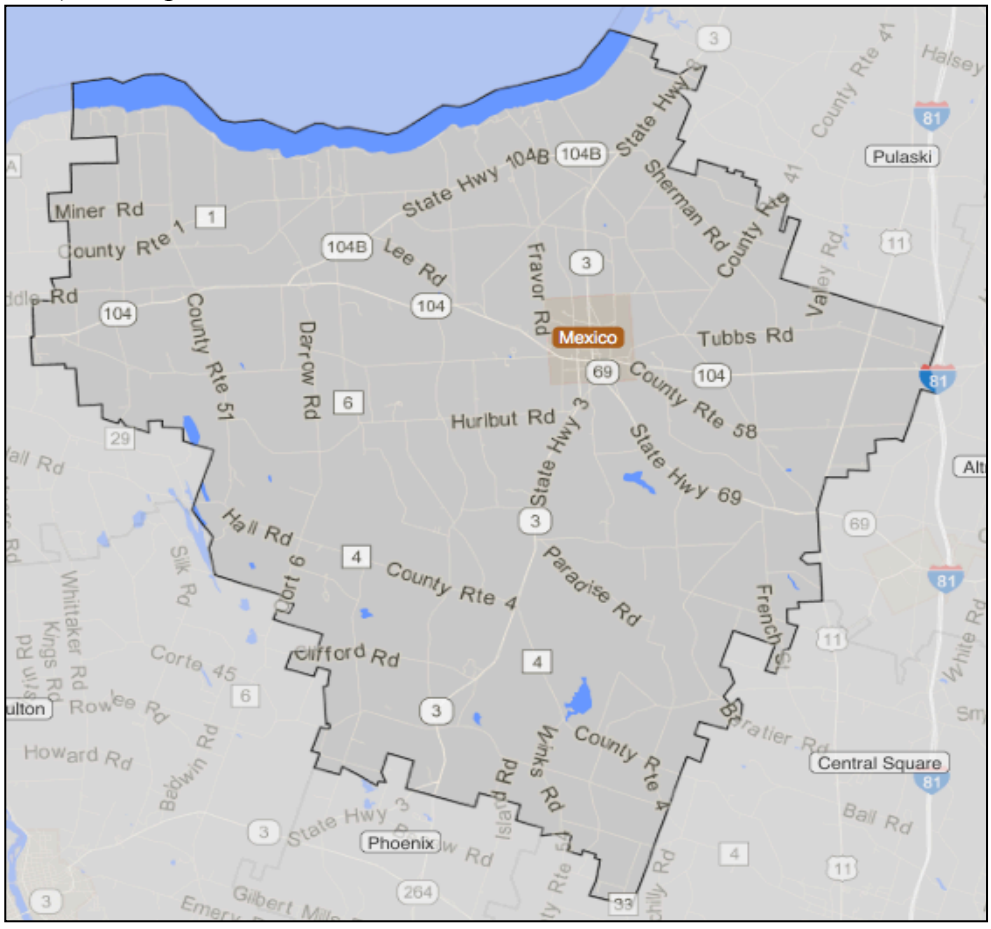
Finally, we wish to thank the members of the Mexico Board of Education. As all responsible school leadership teams, they took the risk of examining the use of district facilities knowing full well that simply asking questions about how to better use district buildings might raise some very uncomfortable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

CHAPTER 3
BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

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

Background

The Mexico Academy & Central School District is located in Oswego County and covers 126 square miles serving primarily the townships of Hastings, Mexico, New Haven, Palermo, Parish, Richland, Scriba, Volney, and the Village of Mexico. The district's facilities include the Palermo Elementary School (Pre-K-4), New Haven Elementary School (Pre-K-4), Mexico Elementary School (Pre-K-4), Mexico Middle School (grades 5-8), and Mexico High School (grades 9-12). A map of the district follows.



The Mexico school community has consistently shown its support for the education of resident students as noted in the historical voting pattern in the following table. Residents have passed school budgets each year for the past ten years as shown in Table 3.1. In addition, district

residents have also passed five capital projects since 2006 (2006, 2007, 2008, 2012, 2013) as well as a number of bus propositions since 2007.

Table 3.1
District Budget Vote History

Year	Yes Votes	No Votes	Total Votes
2016	670	212	882
2015	578	264	842
2014	422	205	627
2013	546	293	839
2012	517	248	765
2011	546	318	864
2010	730	344	1074
2009	591	180	771
2008	519	282	801
2007	625	299	924

The Mexico school community has consistently shown its support for education

Nevertheless, finding the balance between the provision of a good education and the ability of a local community to provide the financial resources is an on-going challenge for any board of education and administration. Given the current economic condition of our country and our state and the continuing pressures to educate all children to higher levels, this challenge has become even more daunting over the past few years; this is especially true in Mexico's case with uncertainty surrounding the continued financial support from the local nuclear power plant. It is the Board's appreciation and understanding of the fundamental significance of this challenge that served as the stimulus for this study.

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

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

How can we educationally and fiscally reconfigure our grades and/or our facilities to provide a sound instructional program now and in the future?

The timeline called for initiation of this study in mid-August 2016 with the final report due to the Board of Education in July 2017.

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

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

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

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

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CHAPTER 4
STUDY METHODOLOGY

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

How can we educationally and fiscally reconfigure our grades and/or our facilities to provide a sound instructional program now and in the future?

The following is a summary of the major activities undertaken as part of the study design. The consultants gathered considerable data from the district and other agencies. These data were summarized and analyzed as they were received. The data gathering was focused by the question that drove the study. In addition, the consultants conducted interviews with key district staff to gather perspectives on the various issues under study and to understand completely the meaning of the data that was gathered. A Board appointed advisory committee met with the consultant team on six occasions to review data that had been gathered, share thoughts and opinions, and to critique tentative recommendations before the study was concluded. Finally, a draft of this report was shared with the advisory committee to seek final thoughts from the group.

The final report was presented to the Board of Education in a public session on July 27, 2017.

CHAPTER 5
STUDENT ENROLLMENTS AND POPULATION TRENDS IN THE AREA

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

Student Enrollment History and Projections

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

The procedure for projecting student enrollments is referred to as the Cohort Survival Methodology. This methodology is highly reliable and is the most frequently used projective technique for making short-term school district enrollment projections. To calculate enrollment projections, the following data and procedures are used:

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

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

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

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

Since estimating births introduces a possible source of error into the model, it is advisable to limit enrollment projections to a period for which existing data on live residential births can be used. This means that enrollment projections are possible for five years into the future for the elementary grades, which is usually sufficient for most planning purposes. Beyond that point, the number of births must be estimated and the projective reliability is greatly reduced. Enrollment projections for grades 7 and 8 and for grades 9-12 can be projected for ten years into the future.

The methodology considered for this study was to extrapolate to kindergarten enrollment cohorts from live birth data. Live birth data for Mexico from 2004-2015 is shown in the following table:

Table 5.1 Number of Live Births, 2004 -2015	
Calendar Year	Number
2004	153
2005	149
2006	148
2007	111
2008	132
2009	144
2010	139
2011	128
2012	132
2013	133
2014	128
2015 (unaudited)	134

Live births are then compared with the kindergarten enrollment five years into the future….babies born in 2012 will be in kindergarten in 2017-18, babies born in 2013 will be in kindergarten in 2018-19, and babies born in 2014 will be in kindergarten in 2019-20. An average ratio of live births to kindergarten enrollment five years later is then calculated. This ratio is then used to project future kindergarten enrollments from actual and estimated live births. Now that we can predict future kindergarten enrollments we are able to complete the full table of future school enrollment as shown in the following table. It should be noted that Pre-K enrollments are not factored into the enrollment projections because, Pre-K being a voluntary program, the relationship between Pre-K enrollments and enrollments at other grade levels is questionable at best.

Table 5.2
Mexico K-12 Enrollment History and Projections-2011-12 to 2023-24

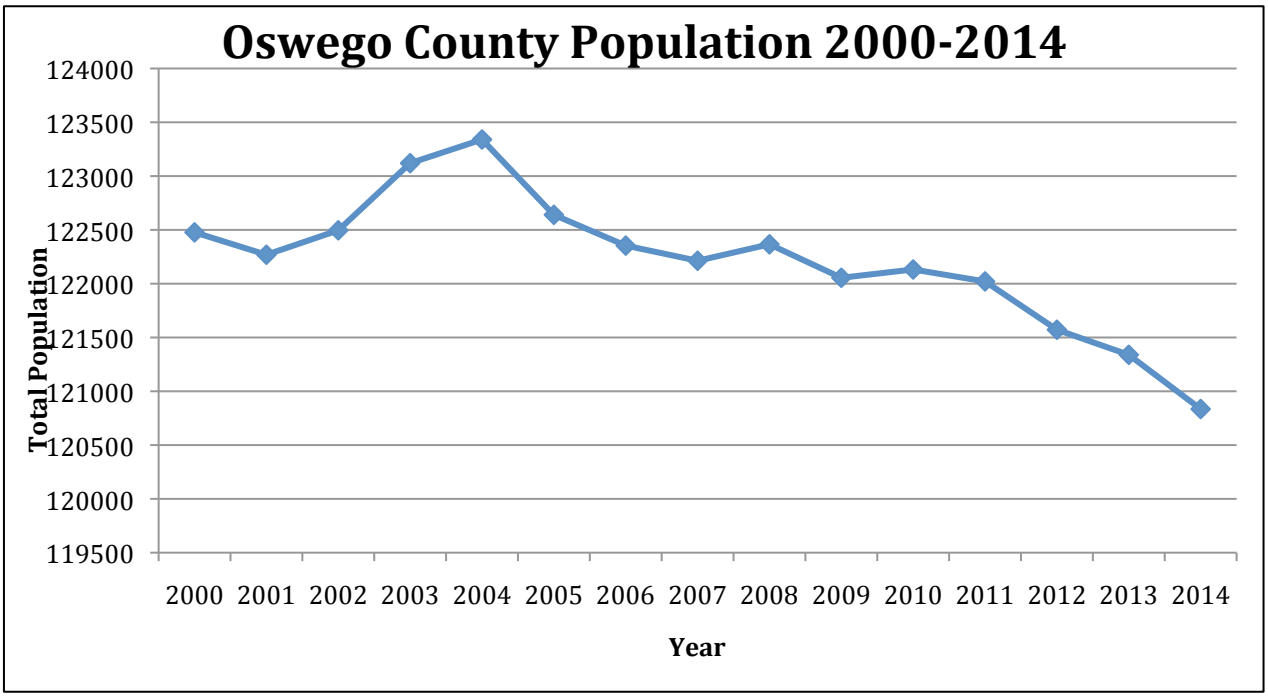
Grade	2011 -12	2012 -13	2013 -14	2014 -15	2015 -16	2016 -17	*2017 -18*	*2018 -19*	*2019 -20*	*2020 -21*	*2021 -22*	*2022 -23*	*2023 -24*
Birth Data	111	132	144	139	128	132	133	128	134	131	131	131	131
K	142	131	148	147	152	152	148	149	143	150	147	147	147
1	161	150	133	140	149	146	152	148	149	143	150	147	147
2	145	161	155	129	132	141	143	148	145	146	140	147	143
3	147	138	152	148	131	138	139	140	146	142	143	138	144
4	138	152	141	154	157	135	142	143	145	151	146	148	142
5	152	141	150	139	154	156	135	142	143	144	150	146	147
6	168	150	145	158	144	154	159	137	145	146	148	153	149
7	176	169	159	144	163	150	158	163	141	149	149	151	157
8	193	181	164	158	151	169	152	161	166	143	151	152	154
9	154	193	185	163	148	155	168	152	160	165	143	151	151
10	175	159	191	179	172	154	158	171	154	163	168	145	153
11	197	171	152	190	190	166	153	156	170	153	161	167	144
12	184	206	170	164	203	226	179	164	168	182	164	173	179
K-12 Total	2132	2102	2045	2013	2046	2042	1986	1974	1975	1977	1960	1965	1957
K-4 Total	733	732	729	718	721	712	724	728	728	732	726	727	723
5-8 Total	689	641	618	599	612	629	604	603	595	582	598	602	607
9-12 Total	710	729	698	696	713	701	658	643	652	663	636	636	627

Notes: 2018-19 to 2023-24 births are the average of the five previous years. Consequently, from 2018-19 to 2023-24 the early grade estimates are quite speculative.

As is apparent from the above table, K-12 enrollment has declined over the past six years (2,132 in 2011-12 to 2,042 in 2016-17; -90 students/-4.2%). This decline is projected to continue through 2023-24 (-85 students/-4.2%). This future decline will be most impactful at the high school level while the elementary level will be essentially constant.

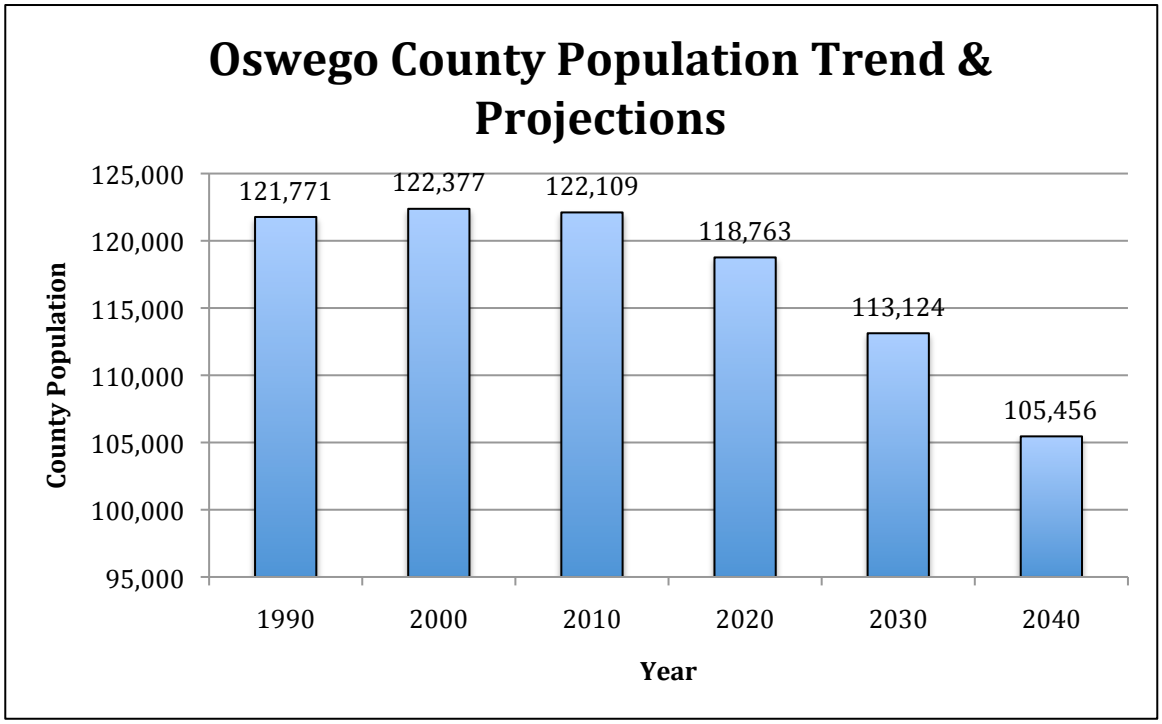
The recent decline in school district enrollment is not surprising given the overall Oswego County population trends. As the graph that follows shows, the total county population gradually decreased from 2004 to 2014. (A further breakdown of the population trends by municipalities all or partially in the Mexico School District is located in Appendix A).

Graph 1: Oswego County Population Trend 2000-2014



Looking to the future, Oswego County total population is projected to continue to decline out to 2040. See Graph 2 that follows for these census projections.

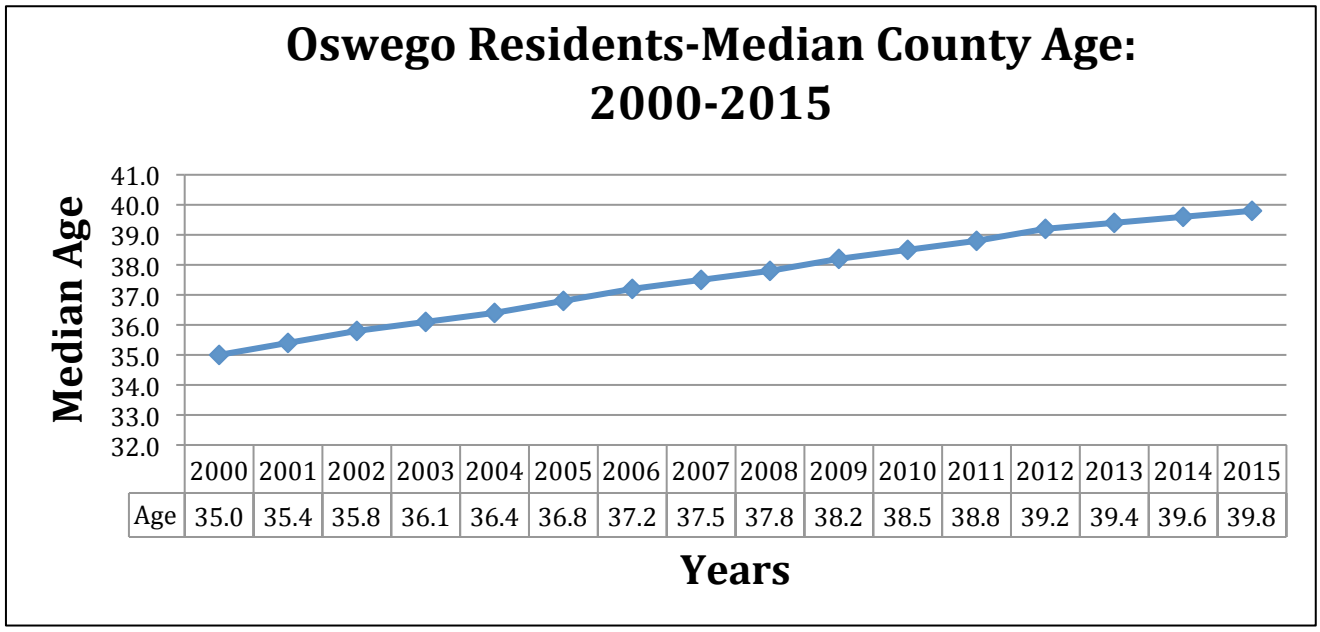
Graph 2: Oswego County Total Population Trend and Projection to 2040



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

Graph 3 that follows presents the trend in Oswego County's resident median age. Spanning 2000 to 2015, we can see that the median age of county residents rose from 35.0 to 39.8—a four year and eight month increase. Clearly the county population is aging like most Upstate New York communities.

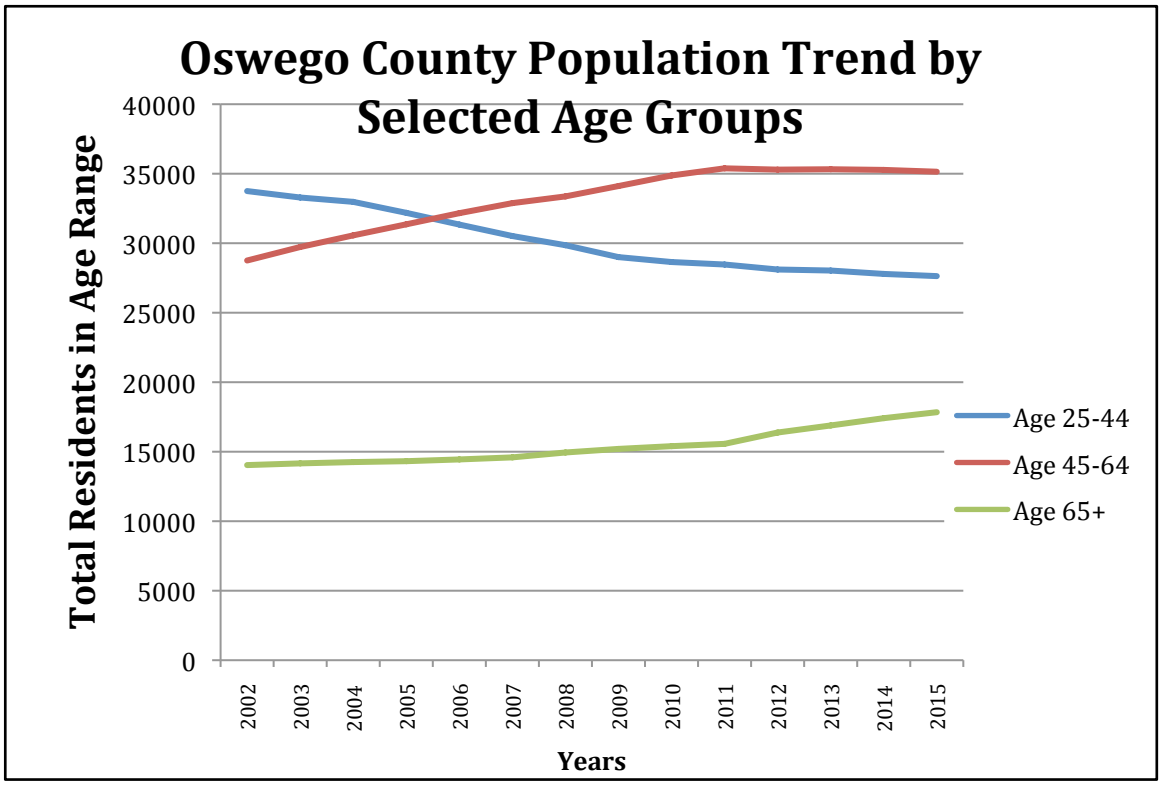
Graph 3: Median Age of Oswego County Residents 2000-2015



Lastly, it is also important to examine the cohort of adults in various age ranges. Adults in the childbearing age are typically 25-44 years of age. This is the cohort of adults who are most likely to have children, a factor that would influence the number of children being educated in the school district. As the graph below illustrates, the number of Oswego County residents in this critical age range has declined somewhat over the past 13 years while at the same time county residents in the 45-64 and 65+ age ranges have been increasing somewhat. This indicates a trend that may have some bearing on the Mexico Central School District's future enrollment.

The number of Oswego County residents in the 25-44 age range has been declining somewhat for the past thirteen years. As members of this age group are typically of childbearing age, this trend may have some bearing on future school enrollments in Mexico.

Graph 4: Oswego County Population by Age Cohort-2002-2015



Another variable that occasionally can result in school enrollment fluctuation is the number of students that are home schooled by parents. In some regions of New York State these numbers are significant and growing. Consequently it is important to examine the trend locally in these numbers. The table that follows shows the number of students that have been/are home schooled in Mexico from 2011-12 to 2015-16. It is quite clear that, while these numbers are relatively small, they have increased in the past few years but appear to be leveling off. Consequently, we see no need in making adjustments to the enrollment projections previously shown as a result of the number of home-schooled students.

Table 5.3 Number of Resident Students Home Schooled 2011-12 to 2015-16	
School Year	Number
2011-12	23
2012-13	37
2013-14	59
2014-15	64
2015-16	61

The district has seen a growing number of students that are home schooled

Occasionally districts have sizeable numbers of non-resident students that attend district schools either on a tuition basis established by Board policy or due to contractual agreements with various district bargaining units. Mexico currently has a Board policy that permits some non-resident students to attend district schools if certain conditions are met such as "there is sufficient space to accommodate….", "no increase in size of faculty or staff will be necessary", and "admittance will not result in the establishment of a new section." When a non-resident student attends the district, the family is subject to the following conditions:
(1) "parents/guardians must work out transfer conditions with the home school district or provide their own transportation," (2) "All rules and regulations in effect for District residents will be applicable to non-District students;" and (3) "Tuition may be charged to families of non-resident students in accordance with the formulas approved by the State Education Department." The Board policy also permits non-resident students to attend district schools on a tuition free basis if "students of any grade who move from the Mexico Central School District during the school year may be given permission to finish the semester in which the move occurs" or "Students who move from the District after completion of the first semester of the year preceding their anticipated graduation year may remain in the Mexico Central School District until graduation." In a few instances these non-resident students attending district schools can be quite large in number and, if the Board policy changes, can significantly impact student enrollments. However, in 2015-16, there were just 10 students that were non-residents spread across all grade levels. Therefore it is apparent that even if Board policy changes, this would have little impact on enrollments in the district.

One other possible variable that occasionally causes enrollment projections to be adjusted includes resident students that attend school elsewhere. Table 5.4 summarizes the number of these resident students for the past five years. As can be seen, there appears to be a slight increase in the number of students that attend school elsewhere; however enrollment projections have not adjusted based on these data since the overall count is quite small.

Table 5.4 Resident Students Attending School Elsewhere-2011-12 to 2015-16					
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Community Christian-Oswego	7	5	10	9	12
Pulaski Christian Academy				1	5
CBA				4	5
Trinity Catholic	9	9	9	7	8
St. Rose of Lima	1	1	1	1	
Southwest Christian	1	1	1		
Dexterville SDA Christian			1		
Hillside Children's Center				1	1
Total	18	16	22	23	31

In summary, given the recent school district enrollment trends, and in light of the demographic variables studied, we do not believe adjustments in the future enrollment projections provided in table 5.2 are appropriate. However, the district is cautioned to engage in annual enrollment projecting with an eye to current demographic trends in the county and school district.

CHAPTER 6
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

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

Mexico has three elementary schools each housing grades Pre-K-4, the middle school houses grades 5-8, and the high school houses grades 9-12. This is a very common grade level pattern for school districts in New York State. Even though researchers agree that there is no "one best way" to organize grades, there has been an emergence of the middle school movement over the past 30 years. Mexico has adopted this middle school model and remains committed to maintaining its middle school for the foreseeable future.

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

Table 6.1
Class Sizes-2016-17

Grade	Number of Sections and Class Size of Each Section			*Average Class Sizes*		
	Mexico	New Haven	Palermo	*MEX*	*NH*	*PAL*
Pre-K (1/2 day)	20, 20	20, 18	17, 14	*20*	*19*	*15.5*
K	19, 18, 19	18, 18, 17	21, 21	*18.7*	*17.7*	*21*
1	17, 18, 19	19, 17, 19	17, 16	*18*	*18.3*	*16.5*
2	14, 16, 16, 16	23, 24	16, 15	*15.5*	*23.5*	*15.5*
3	16, 16, 16	16, 16, 16	18, 17	*16*	*16*	*17.5*
4	18, 18, 18	21, 23	16, 16	*18*	*22*	*16*
Total # of Sections-K-4	16	13	8			
Total # of Students-K-4	274	247	173			
Average Class Size	17.1	19	21.6			

An examination of table 6.1 shows that the district has been able to maintain very reasonable class sizes in the elementary school. This can be substantiated by comparing these average class sizes with average class sizes for six other school districts in Oswego County as evidenced by table 6.2 that follows.

Table 6.2 Average K-4 Class Sizes for Mexico Compared with APW, Fulton, Hannibal, Phoenix, Pulaski, and Sandy Creek and New York State			
Grade	Average Class Size in Mexico for 2016-17	Average Class Size in 6 Other Oswego County Districts for 2016-17	Average Class Size in New York State for 2009-10
K	18.9	19	20.7
1	17.8	20	21.8
2	17.5	20	20.8
3	16.4	21	21.5
4	18.6	21	22.2
Mexico Teacher Contract Language on Class Size While recognizing that final determination of class size is vested in the sole discretion of the Board, the Association and District mutually subscribe to the principle that unduly large classes and unduly heavy class loads are educationally undesirable and should be avoided to the extent consistent with the economic means of the District and the health and safety of the students and staff.			

An examination of class sizes in the elementary school is important in a facilities study. If class sizes are reasonable or small, it is generally accepted that reorganization of the elementary grades is at least a topic for consideration. On the other hand, if class sizes are very large in the elementary grades, it might be difficult to reorganize grades to achieve any efficiency. In Mexico, we find very reasonable class sizes and permissive language in the teacher contract that would at least allow discussion on whether or not elementary school grades could be reorganized.

There is one other area that should be examined in a school district like Mexico that has multiple elementary schools. Having multiple elementary schools in any school district is generally seen as being a positive thing….every "neighborhood" has its own school and the youngest children in the school district have the shortest bus rides to get to school and back home again every day. However, the issue of equity should also be addressed in any school district that has multiple elementary schools. In Mexico, the equity issue can be seen in the size of classes at the various grade levels. For example, the average 2nd grade classroom in New Haven has 22.5 students while the average second grade classrooms in Mexico and Palermo have 15.5 students. Similarly, the average 4th grade classroom in New Haven has 22 students while the average 4th grade classroom in Palermo has 16 students. Some will question the fairness/equity of these differences.

Another factor that informs the elementary school instructional program is to present a summary of student academic performance. At the elementary school level in New York State, the best way to accomplish this is by examining student performance on the English/Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics state tests administered in grade 3-8. Before presenting recent results for Mexico, it is important to understand the rating system currently used in New York. The following summary describes the four-level system in place.

Performance Level Descriptors

Grades 3-8 Assessment System

Level 1-Not Meeting Learning Standards

Student performance does not demonstrate an understanding of the content expected in the subject and grade level.

Level 2-Partially Meeting Learning Standards

Student performance demonstrates a partial understanding of the content expected in the subject and grade level.

Level 3-Meeting Learning Standards

Student performance demonstrates an understanding of the content expected in the subject and grade level.

Level 4-Meeting Learning Standards with Distinction

Student performance demonstrates a thorough understanding of the content expected in the subject and grade level.

Table 6.3 that follows looks at the 2016 summary of students scoring in ELA and math in grades 3-4.

Table 6.3
2016 ELA and Math (% Scoring at Levels 3 and 4)

Grade/Test	Elementary School		
	Mexico	New Haven	Palermo
3rd Grade ELA	32%	15%	56%
3rd Grade Math	49%	30%	38%
4th Grade ELA	32%	19%	14%
4th Grade Math	43%	32%	27%

NOTE: While we can compare across elementary schools, it is important to note that the small number of students tested in each grade at all schools makes these comparisons very speculative. And, it is important to note that due to changes in the tests themselves, it is not a fair to compare 2016 results to previous years.
SOURCE: The State Education Department.

The district also provides a comprehensive program for its elementary school students as evidenced by the following tables of special area subjects by school (all schedules are on a five day cycle-A, B, C, D, and E). Notice the comparability across the three elementary schools.

Table 6.4 Mexico Elementary Schedule 2016-17				
Grade Level	Art	Music	PE	Library
K	1 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle	2 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle
1	1 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle	2 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle
2	1 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle	2 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle
3	1 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle	2 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle
4	1 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle	2 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle
NOTES: Third and fourth grade also have chorus for ½ hour per cycle. Fourth grade band students get ½ hour per cycle also.				

Table 6.5 New Haven Elementary Schedule 2016-17				
Grade Level	Art	Music	PE	Library
K	1 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle	2 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle
1	1 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle	2 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle
2	1 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle	2 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle
3	1 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle	2 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle
4	1 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle	2 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle
NOTES: Third and fourth grade also have chorus for 25 minutes per cycle. Fourth grade band students get 25 minutes per cycle also.				

Table 6.6 Palermo Elementary Schedule 2016-17				
Grade Level	Art	Music	PE	Library
K	1 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle	2 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle
1	1 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle	2 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle
2	1 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle	2 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle
3	1 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle	2 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle
4	1 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle	2 X 45 min/cycle	1 X 45 min/cycle
NOTES: Third and fourth grade also have chorus for ½ hour per cycle. Fourth grade band students get 25 minutes per cycle and instrumental lessons two days per cycle for 30 minutes each.				

In summary for the elementary grades, Mexico has a very comprehensive elementary program that is identical across the district's three elementary schools.

The next area for analysis involves the program that is available to the middle school students in Mexico. Middle school students have a very busy schedule because one of the purposes of middle school is to give students the opportunity to explore a variety of courses. In addition, middle schools in New York State are required to allow acceleration into high school level courses in math and at least one other academic area. In Mexico students have the opportunity to accelerate in math and science. A complete overview of the middle school program and the number of students in each section in Mexico is provided in table 6.7 that follows.

Table 6.7 Middle School Course Offerings-2016-17	
English	
ELA 5	21, 20, 20, 22, 20, 22
ELA 6	21,20, 21, 22, 19, 19, 19, 23, 23,23
English 7	16, 22, 17, 20, 18, 16, 12, 17,10
English 8	22, 17, 20, 20, 19, 23, 20, 18, 22, 7, 5
ELA 5-8	5, 5, 5, 1, 5
RTI ELA7	7,7
RTI ELA8	3,3
AVID 7	12, 24
AVID 8	22
Digital Literacy	20, 25, 19, 20, 22, 22, 22
Reading 5-6	5

Math	
Math 5	20, 20, 21, 20, 22, 22, 22
Math 6	20, 21, 21, 19, 22, 23, 23
Math 7	17, 22, 23, 17, 15, 15, 16
Math 7A	18
Math 7B	6
Math 8	22, 23, 22, 22, 22, 14
Algebra 1	15, 21
Math 8A	9
RTI Math 7	2,6
RTI Math 8	1,3
Math 5-6S	1, 1
Math 5-8	5, 5, 5, 3, 3
Science	
Science 5	20, 20, 21, 20, 22, 22, 22
Science 6	21, 22, 21, 20, 22, 23, 23
Science 7	20, 19, 16, 23, 22, 19, 17, 13
Science 8	23, 21, 22, 22, 21, 25, 18, 25
Living Environment	19
Science 5-8	5, 3
Science 5-6S	3
Social Studies	
SS 5	20, 21, 20, 22, 21, 22, 22
SS 6	23,20, 21, 22, 20, 23, 23
SS 7	16, 19, 13, 20, 23, 16, 21, 21
SS 8	24, 22, 19, 20, 22, 23, 19, 22
SS 5-8	4, 3
SS/SC 5-8	2, 3
SS 5-6S	2, 1
Health	
Health 7	7, 10, 15, 16, 13, 23, 11, 12, 9, 20, 14
Technology	
Tech 7	9, 8, 11, 17, 15, 25, 13, 17, 7, 14
Tech 8	19, 15, 18, 11, 20, 18, 15, 18, 20
Exploratory OCC	13
Family & Consumer Science	
FCS Skills 6	22, 21, 21, 22, 19, 24, 23
FCS Skills 7	17, 19,5, 16, 18, 20, 11, 13
FCS Skills 8	21, 22, 12, 20, 21, 19, 17, 22

ART	
Art 5	20, 25, 20, 20, 22, 22, 22
Art 6	23, 20, 22, 22, 19, 23, 23
Art 7	19, 18, 6, 18, 19, 17, 10, 16
Art 8	18, 22, 12, 18, 17, 21, 13, 21
Studio Art	20, 25
Music	
Music 5	20, 21, 24, 20, 22, 22, 22
Music 6	24, 20, 21, 22, 19, 23, 23
Music 7	9, 11, 10, 9
Music 8	9, 12, 17, 15
Inst. Music 5A	30
Inst. Music 5B	42
Inst. Music 6A	39
Inst. Music 6B	36
Inst. Music 7	44
Inst. Music 7A	24
Inst. Music 8	36, 19
Chorus	
Chorus 5A	32
Chorus 5B	42
Chorus 6A	27
Chorus 6B	36
Chorus 7	29
Chorus 7A	24
Chorus 8	36
Chorus 8-B	19
Physical Education	
Phys. Ed 5	28, 24, 26, 26, 21, 27
Phys. Ed 6	27, 24, 27, 24, 23, 28
Phys. Ed 7	20, 16, 18, 24, 24, 19, 10, 19
Phys. Ed 8	12, 23, 22, 20, 17, 18, 12, 7, 23, 11, 7
Adaptive PE	3
Foreign Language	
French 7	23, 21
French 1	21, 14
Spanish 7	16, 18, 23, 15
Spanish 1	12, 15, 16, 16
German 7	24, 24
German 1	21, 25

Table 6.7 above shows a very comprehensive program that is available to the middle school students in Mexico. All of the elective courses that are required of middle school students are in place; acceleration in math and science is available to the students in order to gain high school credits while in middle school; and the opportunity to gain the first year of credit in a foreign language are all available in the Mexico Middle School.

At the high school level, the program offered to the students is equally impressive. While larger high schools clearly have the ability to offer more courses than do smaller high schools, Mexico, for its size, offers a very comprehensive program for its students as evidenced by the following table.

Table 6.8
Grades 9-12 Course Offerings-2016-17

Course	# of Sections & Section Sizes
ENGLISH	
English 9	18, 17, 24, 14, 25, 16, 16, 18, 3, 6
English 9 Honors	18
English 10	24, 19, 22, 14, 20, 21, 6, 1
English 10 Honors	14, 17, 17
English 11	23, 20, 17, 17, 22, 16, 25, 4, 11, 9, 5
English 12	22, 20, 14, 21, 26, 21, 17
Freshman Academy (1 day/week)	6, 4, 9, 16, 8, 15, 5, 7, 6, 4
AVID 9	9
AVID 10	7
AVID 11	4
AVID 12	3
English AIS-Fall	3, 3, 5, 6, 6, 6
English AIS-Spring	1, 1, 3, 3, 4, 5
Literacy Skills	5, 6, 5, 5
SAT Prep 1	12
SAT Prep 2	6
Foundations for College and Life Success	20, 18
AP Literature & Composition	17, 17
TV Broadcast Production 2	1
SOCIAL STUDIES	
Global History 9	22, 24, 24, 25, 25, 13, 11, 8
Global History 9 Honors	11
Global History 10	22, 13, 15, 20, 17, 16, 14, 17, 5
Global Lab	3
Social Studies AIS-Fall	8, 2, 3, 6, 2, 4, 4, 5, 4
Social Studies AIS-Spring	3, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 1, 4
US History & Government	25, 24, 23, 25, 16, 18, 21, 3, 11, 5
Participation in Government (1/2 year)	23, 24, 10, 22, 18, 18, 24, 25
Economics (1/2 year)	25, 17, 20, 23, 25, 16, 24, 23
AP US History	7
AP European History	20

Issues in Film	13, 13
Psychology	18
MATHEMATICS	
Algebra 1	16, 19, 18, 13, 26
Algebra 1A	5, 4, 19, 15
Algebra 1B	14, 16
Geometry	13, 24, 18, 12, 23, 16
Fundamentals of Geometry	7, 9, 11
Algebra 2	19, 14, 18, 21
Math AIS-Fall	1, 2, 2, 2
Math AIS-Spring	1, 2, 1, 1
Consumer Math	20, 12, 16, 15
Math Skills	7
Computer Science-PLTW	3
Pre-Calculus	20, 13, 24
AP Calculus	13, 10
Statistics	13, 9, 9
Principles of Engineering-PLTW	5
Applied Technology	11
SCIENCE (*-Courses with labs)	
Earth Science*	12, 23, 8
Biology (Living Environment)*	21, 21, 24, 24, 24, 24, 24, 23, 18, 21, 13, 12
AP Biology*	8, 17
Chemistry*	8, 17, 14, 24
Physics*	6, 6, 5
Environmental Science	16, 14, 9
Science AIS-Fall	1, 4, 2, 6, 4
Science AIS-Spring	2, 1
AP Physics*	12
AP Physics 2*	1
Physics of Movies	16
Astronomy	12, 11, 21, 21
Biomedical Sciences-PLTW*	7, 11
Science Skills	7
Advanced Sports Medicine	1
FOREIGN LANGUAGE	
Spanish 1	17, 23
Spanish 2	23, 24
Spanish 3	20, 24
Spanish 4	21
Spanish 5	10, 11
German 1	8
German 2	23, 6
German 3	5, 16

German 4	16
German 5	9
French 2	8, 20
French 3	13, 9
French 4	12
French 5	7
FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE	
Introduction to Foods	18, 17, 19, 17, 18
Gourmet Foods	18, 18, 17
Commercial Foods	9
Interior Decorating	7
Child Development	15
Individual Living	24
TECHNOLOGY	
Manufacturing Systems	7
Web & Graphic Design	8
Digital Photography	18, 19
Electricity/Electronics	18
Transportation Systems	6
Fine Woodworking	12, 17, 16, 5
Basic Welding	13, 6, 9, 18
Introduction to Engineering Design-PLTW	7, 16, 17
Computer Integrated Manufacturing-PLTW	11
MUSIC	
Select Choir	16
Women's Choir	19
Introduction to Music Fabrication	4
Vocal Ensemble	1
Concert Band	5
Vocal Jazz Ensemble	24
Instrumental Jazz Ensemble	25
Symphonic Band	40
Honors Wind Ensemble	12
Individual Honors Wind Ensemble	1
ART	
Studio in Art	26, 25, 24, 25
Drawing/Painting	19, 23, 15
Design 1	15
Design 2	13
Advanced Painting	21, 5
Sculpture	17, 13
Advanced Sculpture	2, 2
Advanced Art 1	12
Advanced Art 2	12

PHYSICAL EDUCATION, HEALTH, & ROTC	
Physical Education	12, 13, 10, 27, 29, 25, 18, 17, 15, 17, 21, 23, 10, 12, 10, 19, 18, 16, 27, 12, 27, 18, 17, 15, 14, 28, 27, 28, 27, 24, 24, 22, 20, 18, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 18, 17, 28, 19, 12, 16, 19, 13, 18, 17, 14, 13, 14, 16, 16, 16, 20, 23, 22, 9
Adaptive Physical Education	4, 3, 2, 2, 1, 1
Health	20, 18, 15, 18, 22, 14, 11, 13, 8, 6, 13
Sports Medicine	13, 4
Nutrition & Fitness	19
Jr. ROTC	8, 14, 11, 9
Leadership	10, 5, 11, 5
OTHER	
Study Hall	177 sections
The data source for this table was the 2016-17 section load report. Courses with science labs have an equal number of students in labs and are denoted with an *. Not included in this table are resource rooms and the academic and career education courses offered at the BOCES.	

In examining the table of high school courses above, we notice that the district has been able to maintain a very comprehensive list of offerings for its students. In the core academic subjects, honors courses, advanced placement courses, electives including a high level engineering program called Project Lead the Way are all part of the course of study. In addition, the district offers three foreign languages, French, Spanish, and German for its students, an opportunity that is very unusual for a high school of this size. Finally, the district offers a Junior ROTC program for its students, an offering that is very unusual in New York State high schools. Perhaps the only area where there is an absence of courses is in business, an area that was abolished by the district in 2014-15. However, students have the opportunity to take a CTE business program at BOCES as well as a BOCES New Vision program in business.

In addition to the program offered at the high school, Mexico students have the opportunity to take classes at the Oswego County BOCES. 44% of the district's juniors and 40% of the seniors take advantage of the career and technical education courses as evidenced by the following table.

Table 6.9
Percentage of Students Attending Career & Technical Education Classes-2016-17

	Juniors	Seniors
Number of Students in Class	166	226
Number of Students Attending BOCES	73	90
% of Students Attending BOCES	44%	40%

In general, students attend career and technical education for a half day at BOCES. Given the number of students that attend BOCES classes, there are approximately 80 students that are

absent from the high school each half day because of attending BOCES classes. The following BOCES classes are available to high school students in Oswego County.

Advanced Metal Manufacturing
Auto Body Repair
Auto Technology (I & II)
Computer Systems and Networking
Construction Technology
Cosmetology
Career & Technical Education Business
Culinary Arts
Digital Media Technology
Early Childhood Technology
Nursing Assistant
Outdoor Power Equipment Technology
Public Safety and Justice
Welding Technology
New Vision Programs in Allied Health, Business, Law & Government, and Specialized Careers

In addition to the educational program that is provided for regular education students, the district has approximately 333 special education students. Table 6.10 that follows shows the number of special education students who receive services in the district and the number of students who are out of district placements.

Table 6.10
Summary of Special Education Student Placement 2012-13 to 2016-17

Placement	Number of Students by School Year				
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17*
In-District	353	341	309	299	316
Out-of-District	27	25	23	20	17
Total	380	366	332	319	333

*Note: Totals as of 9/28/16
SOURCE: District records

Sixteen percent (16%) of the total student district enrollment received special education services this year. The State suggests 12% is typical and nationally in 2014, 8.7% of students were in special education according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

CHAPTER 7
BUILDING ORGANIZATION

Since this study focuses on a possible grade and/or building reconfiguration, the current utilization of district buildings is studied. It is first important to examine how the schools are being used this academic year, and to gauge how enrollments may impact them in the future. Table 7.1 provides an overview of the district's schools.

Table 7.1
Overview of Mexico School Buildings

Schools	Mexico Elementary	New Haven Elementary	Palermo Elementary	Middle School	High School
Address	26 Academy St. Mexico, NY	4320 State Rt. 104 New Haven, NY	1638 County Rt. 45 Fulton, NY	16 Fravor Rd. Mexico, NY	3338 Main St. Mexico, NY
Year of Original Building	1956	1953	1957	1964	1936
Dates of Additions	1987, 2001	1953, 1987	1971, 1987	1978, 1987, 2001, 2013	1987, 2012
Sq. Ft. in Current Building	74,131	38,190	41,420	162,736	220,342
Number of Floors	1	1	1	3	3
Grades Housed	Pre-K-4	Pre-K-4	Pre-K-4	5-8	9-12
Students Served	328	246	178	629	701
Architect	SWBR				

NOTES: All information was taken from the NYS Building Condition Survey completed in 2010 except the enrollments that were drawn from the 2016-17 academic year.

In addition to an overview of each of the district's buildings, it is also important to determine how each of the buildings is being utilized. Table 7.2 that follows shows the grade alignment by building

Table 7.2
2016-17 Grade Configuration by Building

Building	Grade Levels
Mexico Elementary School	Pre-K-4
New Haven Elementary School	Pre-K-4
Palermo Elementary	Pre-K-4
Mexico Middle School	5-8
Mexico High School	9-12

Given the capacity of the buildings involved in this study, the consultants then determined the current use of the regular classrooms with respect to class sizes and numbers of

sections at each grade level. This analysis produced the following table for the elementary school grades.

Table 7.3 Class Sizes-2016-17 for Each Elementary School			
Grade	Number of Sections and Class Size of Each Section		
	Mexico	New Haven	Palermo
Pre-K	20, 20	20, 18	17, 14
K	19, 18, 19	18, 18, 17	21, 21
1	17, 18, 19	19, 17, 19	17, 16
2	14, 16, 16, 16	23, 24	16, 15
3	16, 16, 16	16, 16, 16	18, 17
4	18, 18, 18	21, 23	16, 16

As different grade level configurations are considered, it is important to understand the thinking behind grade level organization. It is clear that most school districts consider reorganization due to changes in available space and that virtually any grade configuration can be found somewhere. The most common grade configuration pattern in New York State is K-5, 6-8, 9-12 while the second most common is the current arrangement in Mexico. Over the past 30 years there has been a shift from the K-6, 7-9, 10-12 grade pattern to a K-5, 6-8, 9-12 arrangement due to the emergence of the middle school movement. However, given all the options that exist, researchers agree there is no "one best way" to arrange the grades. "What" a district does with the grade configuration, not "which" grade configuration is used, is what best determines student success.

In addition to the grade alignment by building, it is important to determine how each of the district's current buildings is currently being utilized. Tables 7.4, 7.5, and 7.6 that follow show the current year utilization of the three elementary schools.

Table 7.4 Mexico Elementary Schools Classroom Usage 2016-17 (Includes Gym, Cafeteria, & Library)				
School Building	No. of Full-Size Rooms	Grade Level Classrooms (17)	Other Usage of Full-Size Rooms (10)	Usage of Small Rooms, Not Full-Size, Other Than Administration
Mexico Elementary	27	Pre-K-1* Kindergarten-3 1st Grade-3 2nd Grade-4 3rd Grade-3 4th Grade-3 *2-1/2 day sections	Special Ed-4 District Pupil Services-1 Band-1 Art-1 Computer Lab-1 RTI-1 BOCES Class-1	Speech-1 OT/PT-1 Computer Room-1 Psychologist-1 Counselor-1 Staff Room-1 Storage-1

Table 7.5 New Haven Elementary Schools Classroom Usage 2016-17 (Includes Gym, Cafeteria, & Library)				
School Building	No. of Full-Size Rooms	Grade Level Classrooms (14)	Other Usage of Full-Size Rooms (4)	Usage of Small Rooms, Not Full-Size, Other Than Administration
New Haven Elementary	18	Pre-K-1* Kindergarten-3 1st Grade-3 2nd Grade-2 3rd Grade-3 4th Grade-2 *2-½ day sections	Art/OT/PT-1 Computer Lab/Conf Room-1 Faculty Room-1 Music-1	Special Ed-2 RTI-3 RTI/Speech-1

Table 7.6 Palermo Elementary School Classroom Usage for 2016-17 (Includes Gym, Cafeteria, & Library)				
School Building	No. of Full-Size Rooms	Grade Level Classrooms (11)	Other Usage of Full-Size Rooms (7)	Usage of Small Rooms, Not Full-Size, Other Than Administration
Palermo Elementary	18	Pre-K-1* K-2 1st Grade-2 2nd Grade-2 3rd Grade-2 4th Grade-2 *2-1/2 day sections	Faculty Room-1 Art-1 Music-1 Special Ed-2 AIS-1 Multi-Purpose/Empty-1	Computer Lab-1 OT/PT-1 Speech-1 Social Worker-1 AIS-1

In looking at tables 7.4 through 7.6, the following can be observed:

- ✓ Mexico Elementary has 27 full size classrooms, 17 of which are for core academic areas; it also houses a BOCES class and the district PPS office
- ✓ New Haven Elementary has 18 full size classrooms, 14 of which are for core academic areas
- ✓ Palermo Elementary has 18 full size classrooms, 11 of which are for core academic areas; it also has an empty classroom that is used as a multi-purpose room

In looking more closely at these data, we notice that 14 of the 18 classrooms in New Haven are used for core academic instruction. Compared with the other two elementary schools, this leaves relatively few other classrooms in which other related activities can take place. As a result, New Haven is clearly the most crowded elementary school in the district, both as seen from these data and as observed in touring the three elementary school buildings.

Table 7.7 that follows shows how the space in the Middle School is currently being used.

Table 7.7
Mexico Middle School Classroom Usage 2016-17
(Includes Auditorium, Band Room, Chorus Room, Gym, Library, & Cafeteria)

School Building	No. of Full-Size Rooms	Grade Level Classrooms (30)	Other Usage of Full-Size Rooms (20)	Usage of Small Rooms, Not Full-Size, Other Than Administration
Middle School	50	5th Grade-7 6th Grade-7 7th Grade-6 8th Grade-6 German-1 Spanish-1 French-1 Language-1	Special Ed-5 Health-1 Technology-2 Computer Lab-2 Home & Career Skills-1 Resource-1 Health Clinic-1 Art-2 Wrestling Room-1 Fitness Room-1 Staff Development-1 Faculty Room-1 Multi Purpose/Empty-1	OT/PT-1 Speech-1 Social Worker-1 ISS-1 Testing Room-1 District Offices

As can be seen from table 7.7, there are 50 full size classrooms, 8 of which are being used for core academic classrooms. There are 20 other classrooms that are being used for related instructional services, five special education classrooms, a wrestling room, a fitness room, a staff development room, and a faculty room. In addition, approximately 6-8 classrooms were lost in the middle school when the district offices were moved to this building.

The Mexico Academy/High School is located in the center of the village of Mexico approximately 7/10ths of a mile from the middle school. Table 7.8 that follows shows how the space in the High School is currently being used.

Table 7.8 Mexico High School Classroom Usage 2016-17 (Includes Auditorium, Band Room, Chorus Room, Gym, Swimming Pool, Indoor Track, Pierce Library, Hungerford Library, & Cafeteria)				
School Building	No. Full-Size Rooms	Core Academic Classrooms (34)	Other Usage of Full-Size Rooms (28)	Usage of Smaller Rooms, Not Full-Size, Other Than Administration
High School	62	English-7 Social Studies-7 Math-7 Science-9 Foreign Language-4	Special Ed-5 Tiger Terrace-1 AIS Reading-1 Health-1 Computer Lab-1 GradPoint Class-1 Art-4 Technology-4 Home Ec-2 OT/PT-1 Jr. ROTC-1 Fitness Center-2 Wrestling Room-1 Tech Support-2 Teachers Room-1	Conference-2 Guidance-1 Food Service-1 Storage Mechanical Rooms Custodial Rooms Greenhouse-1 Testing Room-1 Computer Lab-1 In-School Suspension-1 Special Ed-1

Table 7.8 above shows that 34 of the 62 full size classrooms are used for core academic classrooms. The 28 full-size classrooms not employed for core academic subjects are used for related academic instruction, special education classrooms, a Jr. ROTC classroom, a fitness center, a wrestling room, and a teachers' room.

Another method for measuring the effective utilization of any secondary school is to look at the use of the major rooms on a period-by-period basis. This is a more detailed analysis than simply identifying the major use of the rooms in the building. For example, the previous tables show us that a room might be used for English but the tables do not tell us whether the room is used every period of the day or not. Table 7.9 that follows shows that analysis for the middle school, based on the nine period schedule for that building.

Table 7.9 Classroom Utilization at the Middle School (Also includes IAC/ISS, Computer Lab, Faculty Room, Gym, Cafeteria, Fitness Center, Art (2), Tech (2), Career & Life Skills, OT/PT, Speech, Chorus, Band, Weight Room, Auditorium, & Library)				
Room #	Area	# of Class Periods	# of Plan/Lunch/Study Hall Periods	% of Class Periods
6	English	6	3	67
7	Math	6	3	67
8	English	6	3	67
9	Math	6	3	67
10	Special Ed-12:1:4	8	1	89
11	Science/Social Studies	6	3	67
12	English	6	3	67
13	Math	6	3	67
14	Math	6	3	67
15	English	6	3	67
16	Professional Development	9	9	0
18	Science	5	4	56
19	Social Studies	6	3	67
20	English	5	4	56
21	English	6	3	67
22	Social Studies	6	3	67
23	Math	6	3	67
24	Math	6	3	67
25	Health	6	3	67
28	Lab	3	6	33
29	French	6	3	67
30	Science	5.5	3.5	61
31 *	Special Ed-15:1	3	6	33
32	Science	6	3	67
34	Math	6	3	67
35	Special Ed-8:1:1	8	1	89
37	Social Studies	5	4	56
38	English	6	3	67
40 *	Special Ed-15:1	3	6	33
51	Math/Science	6	3	67
52	English	6	3	67
53	Math	6	3	67
54	Science/Social Studies	6	3	67
55	English/Social Studies	6	3	67
56 **	Testing	9	9	0
57	Spanish/AVID	3	6	33
59 **	Testing	9	9	0
68	German/Music	6	3	67
70	Spanish	6	3	67
	AVERAGE USAGE			58.5 %
*Full size classrooms that are used for testing/extra help when special education students are mainstreamed **Smaller rooms that are reserved for testing/extra help for special education students				

The data from table 7.9 shows that the typical classroom in the middle school is used an average of 58.5% of the time. In looking closer at this table, it is evident that the typical

classroom is used for classes for 6 periods out of the nine period day and for planning and lunch the other three periods of the day. It is impossible to schedule any school building at 100% utilization. If school districts use their facilities to 80-85% capacity, they generally feel as if they are making good use of the buildings. However, a building that is scheduled at under 60% utilization is a building that has space that is not being utilized to its maximum. Having said that, this condition in Mexico is not unusual. As enrollments in public school districts in New York State have declined, there are numerous school districts that are very similar to Mexico. In the end, it is human nature to have people occupy the space that is available to them….and this is precisely what has happened in Mexico Middle School. Table 7.10 that follows shows how the enrollment in the middle school has declined in the past 16 years.

Table 7.10
Middle School Enrollment History

Year	5-8 Enrollment
2000-01	923
2005-06	792
2011-12	689
2016-17	629

Having studied the classroom utilization schedule for the middle school, a similar analysis is now shown for the high school. Table 7.11 that follows shows the classroom utilization analysis for the high school, based on the five-block/five-day schedule for that building. The data shown represents the percentage of each classroom usage based on 25 periods per week; 5 blocks per day and 5 days per week.

Table 7.11 Classroom Utilization at the High School (Also includes 6 Special Ed Rooms, 2 Tech Rooms, JROTC Room, ISS Room, Math Lab, Science Lab, Computer Lab, FCS Room, Testing Room, Health Room, 2 Art Rooms, Gym, Band Room, Chorus Room, Grad Point Room, English AIS Room, and a Greenhouse)				
HS Room #	Area	# of Class Periods	# of Planning Periods	% of Class Periods
101	Language	18	7	72
103	English	19	6	76
104	English	19	6	76
105	English	19	6	76
106	English	19	6	76
107	English	19	6	76
111	Spanish/SH	0	0	0
112	Language	19	6	76
114	Social Studies	19	6	76
120	English	19	6	76
122	Math	19	6	76
124	English	18	7	72
130	Language	19	6	76
144	Science	18	7	72
146	Science	19	6	76
202	Social Studies	19	6	76
203	Social Studies	18	7	72
204	Social Studies	19	6	76
205	Social Studies	18	7	72
206	Social Studies	19	6	76
207	Social Studies	18	7	72
214	Math	18	7	72
215	Math	18	7	72
218	Math	19	6	76
221	Math	19	6	76
222	Math	19	6	76
223	English	18	7	72
224	Science	21	4	84
226	Science	19	6	76
227	Science	21	4	84
228	Science	18	7	72
230	Math	19	6	76
234	Science	19	6	76
236	Science	19	6	76
			AVERAGE	73.1

The data from table 7.11 shows that the typical classroom in the high school is used an average of 73.1% of the time. In looking closer at this table, it is evident that the typical classroom is used for classes for 18-19 blocks out of the twenty-five block week and for planning the other blocks of the week. It is impossible to schedule any school building at 100% utilization. If school districts use their facilities to 80-85% capacity, they generally feel as if they are making good use of the buildings. However, a building that is scheduled at 73% utilization is a building that has space that is not being utilized to its maximum. Having said that, this condition in

Mexico is not unusual. As enrollments in public school districts in New York State have declined, there are numerous school districts that are very similar to Mexico. In the end, it is human nature to have people occupy the space that is available to them….and this is precisely what has happened in Mexico High School. Table 7.12 that follows shows how the enrollment in the high school has declined in the past 16 years.

Table 7.12
High School Enrollment History

Year	5-8 Enrollment
2000-01	844
2005-06	936
2011-12	710
2016-17	701

The manner in which classrooms are scheduled mirrors the workday of the teachers because Mexico High School has adopted the philosophy that, for the most part, each teacher has his/her own room. Excluding extra help that teachers provide students during 10th period, the nine scheduled periods are for teaching six classes, having two planning periods, and having a lunch period. This means that the vast majority of the classrooms are used for teaching about 2/3 of the school day.

As the district considers options for organizing its schools, understanding the current utility costs for each building is important. Table 7.13 that follows shows the 2016-17 utility costs for each of the district's five school buildings.

Table 7.13
2016-17 Utility Costs

Utility	Elem Schools			Middle School	High School
	Mexico	Palermo	New Haven		
Gas/Oil	See note	$18,641	$16,532	$42,821	$92,318
Electric	$37,059	$32,651	$24,745	$112,021	$157,494
Total	$37,059	$51,292	$41,277	$154,842	$249,812

NOTES: 1-Palermo used $18,641 for oil heat as of 12/31/16. 2-New Haven also uses oil to heat so approximately $5,500 can be added to the total above. 3-The cost of Mexico Elementary gas is included with the High School amount due to a shared meter.

In considering the possible closure of any of the district's schools, it is important to calculate the utility cost savings that might accrue to the district. It is assumed that the district will maintain ownership of the closed school, will not be renting the facility, and will be responsible for the cost of the utilities for the closed building. Assuming that the district maintains ownership of the closed building, it will be necessary to continue the utility costs so that the building remains in good repair. As a rule, it is estimated that savings of 40% will accrue to the district when comparing an open building versus a closed building. Given this assumption, the district could expect to save utility costs of $14,824 (40% of $37,059 however the percent of

gas/oil savings cannot be calculated since it is a shared meter with the High School) if Mexico Elementary were to close, $20,517 (40% of $51,292) if Palermo is closed, and $16,511 (40% of $41,277) if New Haven were to close.

In addition to space utilization, another important aspect for determining future facility use is the overall physical condition of the buildings themselves. The New York State Education Department requires all school districts to conduct a Building Condition Survey every five years. The surveys for all school districts were required to be updated in 2015. The following tables summarize the improvements and related estimated cost for each of Mexico's schools and the bus garage.

Table 7.14
2015 Building Condition Survey
Mexico Elementary (5 Year Plan: 2017-2021)
74,131 Square Feet

Item	Cost
Site Utilities	134,138
Other Site Features	624,442
Interior Spaces	955,994
Interior Spaces-Floor Finishes	163,279
Building Envelope	973,355
Plumbing-Excluding HVAC	319,459
HVAC Systems	1,324,964
Fire Safety Systems	370,848
Major Spaces-EDU	91,065
Support Spaces-EDU	36,426
Athletics-EDU	104,010
TOTAL	**5,097,979**

Table 7.15
2015 Building Condition Survey
Palermo Elementary (5 Year Plan: 2017-2021)
41,420 Square Feet

Item	Cost
Site Utilities	56,823
Other Site Features	60,125
Substructure	8,730
Interior Spaces	602,251
Interior Spaces-Floor Finishes	450,577
Building Envelope	422,479
Plumbing-Excluding HVAC	139,272
HVAC Systems	1,066,989
Fire Safety Systems	318,843
Major Spaces-EDU	143,070
Support Spaces-EDU	2,823,129
TOTAL	**6,092,288**

Table 7.16 2015 Building Condition Survey New Haven Elementary (5 Year Plan: 2017-2021) 38,190 Square Feet	
Item	Cost
Site Utilities	48,568
Other Site Features	130,796
Interior Spaces	1,226,990
Interior Spaces-Floor Finishes	233,280
Building Envelope	418,947
Plumbing-Excluding HVAC	214,418
HVAC Systems	1,531,514
Fire Safety Systems	309,846
Major Spaces-EDU	115,348
Support Spaces-EDU	2,323,143
TOTAL	**6,549,850**

Table 7.17 2015 Building Condition Survey Middle School (5 Year Plan: 2017-2021) 162,736 Square Feet	
Item	Cost
Site Utilities	286,664
Other Site Features	2,116,189
Substructure	73,757
Interior Spaces	1,099,738
Interior Spaces-Floor Finishes	157,376
Building Envelope	462,850
Plumbing-Excluding HVAC	190,933
HVAC Systems	1,967,275
Fire Safety Systems	506,726
Major Spaces-EDU	267,123
TOTAL	**7,128,630**

Table 7.18 2015 Building Condition Survey High School (5 Year Plan: 2017-2021) 220,342 Square Feet	
Item	Cost
Site Utilities	122,603
Other Site Features	2,493,752
Substructure	0
Interior Spaces	3,153,186
Interior Spaces-Floor Finishes	345,867
Building Envelope	1,369,687
Plumbing-Excluding HVAC	197,619
HVAC Systems	2,612,703
Fire Safety Systems	1,233,261
Educational Spaces-EDU	170,874
Support Spaces-EDU	1,181,256
Major Spaces-EDU	1,329,842
TOTAL	**14,210,651**

Table 7.19 2015 Building Condition Survey Bus Garage (5 Year Plan: 2017-2021) 18,165 Square Feet	
Item	Cost
Site Utilities	387,454
Other Site Features	2,767,728
Interior Spaces	226,432
Building Envelope	23,774
HVAC Systems	397,304
Fire Safety Systems	170,566
TOTAL	**3,973,257**

Table 7.20 that follows shows the amount of potential expenses identified by the building condition survey for each facility.

Table 7.20 Cost of Improvements from Building 2015 Condition Survey			
Building	BCS Costs	# of Square Feet	Cost/Square Foot
Mexico Elementary	5,097,979	74,131	68.77
Palermo Elementary	6,092,288	41,420	147.08
New Haven Elementary	6,549,850	38,190	171.51
Middle School	7,128,630	162,736	43.80
High School	14,210,651	220,342	64.49
Bus Garage	3,973,257	18,165	108.63
TOTAL	43,052,655	554,984	77.57

Not all of the items listed on the building condition survey are critical. On the other hand, there are numerous items associated with each of the buildings that require attention in the very near future and other items that are nearing the end of their useful life. It is just a matter of time before some of these matters become major worries and major sources of significant expense. Central to the question of this study is the determination of the amount of money that is going to continue to be spent to maintain school buildings that were built in the 1930's and 1950's.

Not all of the items listed on the building conditions survey are critical. On the other hand, there are numerous items associated with each of the buildings that require attention.

CHAPTER 8
STAFFING, TRANSPORTATION, & FINANCE

Education is a people intensive business. School districts routinely spend 70-75% of their operating budgets on salaries and fringe benefits for the people who work in their schools. As school districts examine how to "educationally and fiscally" reconfigure their grades and/or facilities, consideration of the staffing needs of the school district is important. This chapter of the report examines staffing patterns in Mexico as well as the staffing implications should changes in grade levels and/or facilities be considered.

With respect to instructional staff, Mexico currently has 184 teachers who have an average of 13 years of service in the district and 36 graduate hours beyond their Bachelors' degrees. Mexico also has teaching assistants and teacher aides. From a building administrative perspective, Mexico has building principals and assistant principals. The data associated with these instructional staff members can be seen in table 8.1 that follows.

Table 8.1
Staffing Overview

Category	# of Staff	Average Salary
Teachers	184	$59,228
Teaching Assistants	50	$36,005
Teacher Aides	25	$18,130
Principals	5	$97,546
Assistant Principals	2	$82,548
Operations & Maintenance	34	$42,023
Transportation	68	$23,192
Food Service	20	$30,139
Clerical	21	$38,418

In addition to salaries paid to employees, there are obligations that accrue to the school district for the cost of fringe benefits. Mexico provides life insurance, health insurance, and dental insurance to its employees. In addition, the district has costs for employee retirement plans, workers compensation, and social security. The percentage cost of fringe benefits varies greatly for each employee group. In general, employees with lower salaries will have fringe benefit costs that are a large percentage while higher paid employees may have fringe benefit costs that are higher but represent a lower percentage of costs for the district. For purposes of this study, it will be estimated that fringe benefit costs for the district represent 37% of all salary costs. Using 37% yields the following table 8.2 that shows staff costs with fringe benefits included.

Table 8.2 Cost of Staff with 37% Fringe Benefits			
Category	# of Staff	Average Salary	Cost with 37% Fringe
Teachers	184	$59,228	$81,142
Teaching Assistants	50	$36,005	$49,327
Teacher Aides	25	$18,130	$24,838
Principals	5	$97,546	$133,638
Assistant Principals	2	$82,548	$113,091
Operations & Maintenance	34	$42,023	$57,572
Transportation	68	$23,192	$31,773
Food Service	20	$30,139	$41,290
Clerical	21	$38,418	$52,633

Mexico, like nearly all other school districts in New York State, has experienced significant financial challenges over the past six years and has severe challenges ahead. At the same time, however, the district has continued to attempt to enhance its academic program for its students Table 8.3 that follows shows the changes in program that have occurred since 2010-11.

Table 8.3 Program Changes Made Since 2010-11		
Year	Program Enhancements	Program Reductions
2010-11	MS After School Program MS Exploratory Occupations Program	
2011-12	Tiger Terrace District Operated 6:1:1 Program	Eliminated BOCES 6:1:1 Program
2012-13	AVID Program at MS & HS Biology & Algebra Open to all 8th Graders Open Community Recreation District Operated 8:1:1 Program	Eliminated BOCES 8:1:1 Program
2013-14	Expansion of AP Courses District Operated MS 8:1:1 Program	Eliminated BOCES 8:1:1 Program
2014-15	Expansion of College Credit Courses at HS Start PLTW at MS & HS Start Leader in Me at Palermo	Abolished Business Program at HS
2015-16	OCC Partnership Program at HS Summer Skills Academy at ES's and MS Start Leader in Me at Mexico & New Haven District Operated 8:1:1 Program at HS	Eliminated BOCES 8:1:1 HS Program

One of the options that is being considered in this facilities study is the possible closure of two of the district's elementary schools (New Haven and Palermo). Should the district decide to close these elementary schools, significant costs in the area of staffing could be realized. Table 8.4 that follows shows possible staff savings if both of the elementary schools were to close.

Table 8.4 Possible Staff Savings by Closing New Haven and Palermo Elementary Schools			
Title	Average Salary Including Benefits	Number of Positions	Total Potential Savings
Principal	$133,638	2	$267,276
Senior Typist	$53,860	2	$107,720
Custodian in Charge	$80,411	2	$160,822
Custodial Worker	$66,122	1	$66,122
Cleaner	$55,156	1	$55,156
Cook	$36,772	2	$73,544
Food Service @ 4 hrs/day	$14,162	2	$28,324
Teacher @ 20/class	$81,142	2	$162,284
.4 PE Teacher	$81,142/$32,457	1	$32,457
.4 Art Teacher	$81,142/$32,457	1	$32,457
.4 Music Teacher	$81,142/$32,457	1	$32,457
Librarian	$81,142	2	$162,284
		TOTAL	$1,180,903
NOTE: This does not include 2 hourly cleaners or 4 full-time school monitors, some of whom would have to be replaced with hourly monitors depending on lunch and recess schedules.			

In the event that both New Haven and Palermo were to close and the elementary grades were to be consolidated into a single elementary school, the structure of the self-contained classrooms would change. Table 8.5 that follows shows how the structure of the self-contained classrooms would change.

Table 8.5 Class Sizes for Grade Center Plan Using 2016-17 Enrollments							
Current Arrangement						*Grade Center*	
Grade	Mexico	New Haven	Palermo	# of Sections	Avg. Class Size	Single Building	Avg. Class Size
K	19, 18, 19	18, 18, 17	21, 21	8	18.9	151/7	21.6
1	17, 18, 19	19, 17, 19	17, 16	8	17.8	142/7	20.3
2	14, 16, 16, 16	23, 24	16, 15	8	17.5	140/7	20.0
3	16, 16, 16	16, 16, 16	18, 17	8	16.4	131/7	18.7
4	18, 18, 18	21, 23	16, 16	7	18.6	130/6	21.7
Total/Average				39	17.8	34	20.5

Table 8.5 above makes it very clear that efficiencies can be achieved when moving from three elementary schools to a single building. In this example, class sizes would increase from an average of 17.8 students to an average of 20.5 students, the average class size for six other school districts in Oswego County. Given this single building grade center plan, however, there would be a reduction in the number of elementary sections of five, from 39 sections to 34 sections.

Given that the cost of an average teacher's salary and benefits is $81,142, the reduction of five sections presents the potential of saving $405,710. However, to estimate very conservatively, only two teacher reductions are planned in table 8.4 above for a savings of $162,284.

Staff savings raise a number of complicated issues. Generally speaking, districts are reluctant to involuntarily reduce staff. Rather, districts often prefer to realize staff reductions as a result of attrition. Should Mexico choose that option, the staff savings identified in Table 8.4 would still be realized but rather than having the savings be immediate, the savings would accrue over time as staff leaves the district and is not replaced. It is fair to assume however, that given the recent history of retirees the district has experienced, it would not take very long for the reduction of positions would be realized. Table 8.6 that follows shows this history.

Table 8.6
History of Retirees

Year	Total		Teachers	Teacher Aides & Teaching Assistants	Support Staff	Administrators
2012	8		1	0	7	0
2013	8		4	1	3	0
2014	9		4	2	3	0
2015	18		5	5	8	0
2016	18		10	2	5	1

Generally speaking, districts are reluctant to involuntarily reduce staff. Rather, districts often prefer to realize staff reductions as a result of attrition.

During its deliberations, the advisory committee discussed the concept of attrition. While the committee understood the history of retirements in the district as shown in table 8.5 above, they wanted to know if there was a probability that this trend would continue. As a result, the following table 8.7 was prepared to show the number of employees currently working in Mexico who were age 50 or older.

Table 8.7 Ages of Employees Closest to Retirement Age						
Age in 2017	# of ERS Employees*	# of Teachers	# of Teaching Assistants	# of Pupil Personnel Services	# of Administrators	Total
72	1					1
70	1					1
69	2					2
68					1	1
67	1					1
66		1	1			2
65	3					3
64	1	1				2
63	3	3				6
62	7	2				9
61	4			1		5
60	7	3	2		1	13
59	6	5		1		12
58	4	6		1	1	12
57		4	3		1	8
56	5	7	4	1	1	18
55	4	3	2	3		12
54	4	5	10			19
53	4	16	4	2		26
52	8	7	2			17
51	11	7	1		1	20
50	9	9	2		1	21
TOTAL	85	79	31	9	7	211
*ERS employees include bus drivers, custodians, teacher aides, food service helpers, RN's, monitors, administrative assistants, clerks, typists, account clerks, etc.						

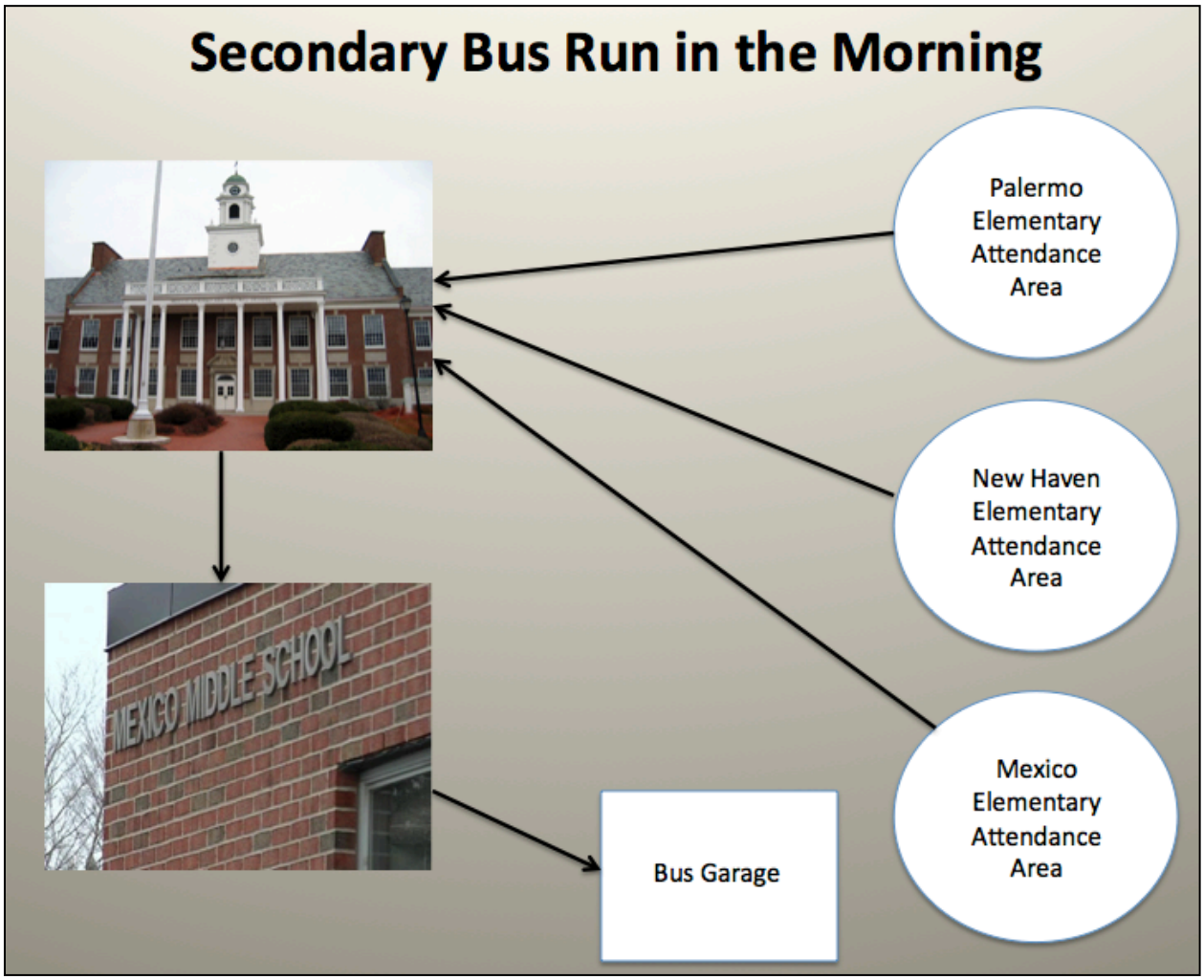
Based on table 8.7 above, it is clear that 211 current Mexico Central School District employees are 50 years of age or older. Furthermore, there are staff in all of the employee groups who are nearing retirement age. As a result, it is clear that there is a strong probability that regular retirements will continue in Mexico and that attrition is a reasonable way to achieve the staff changes that are identified with different facilities options.

Transportation

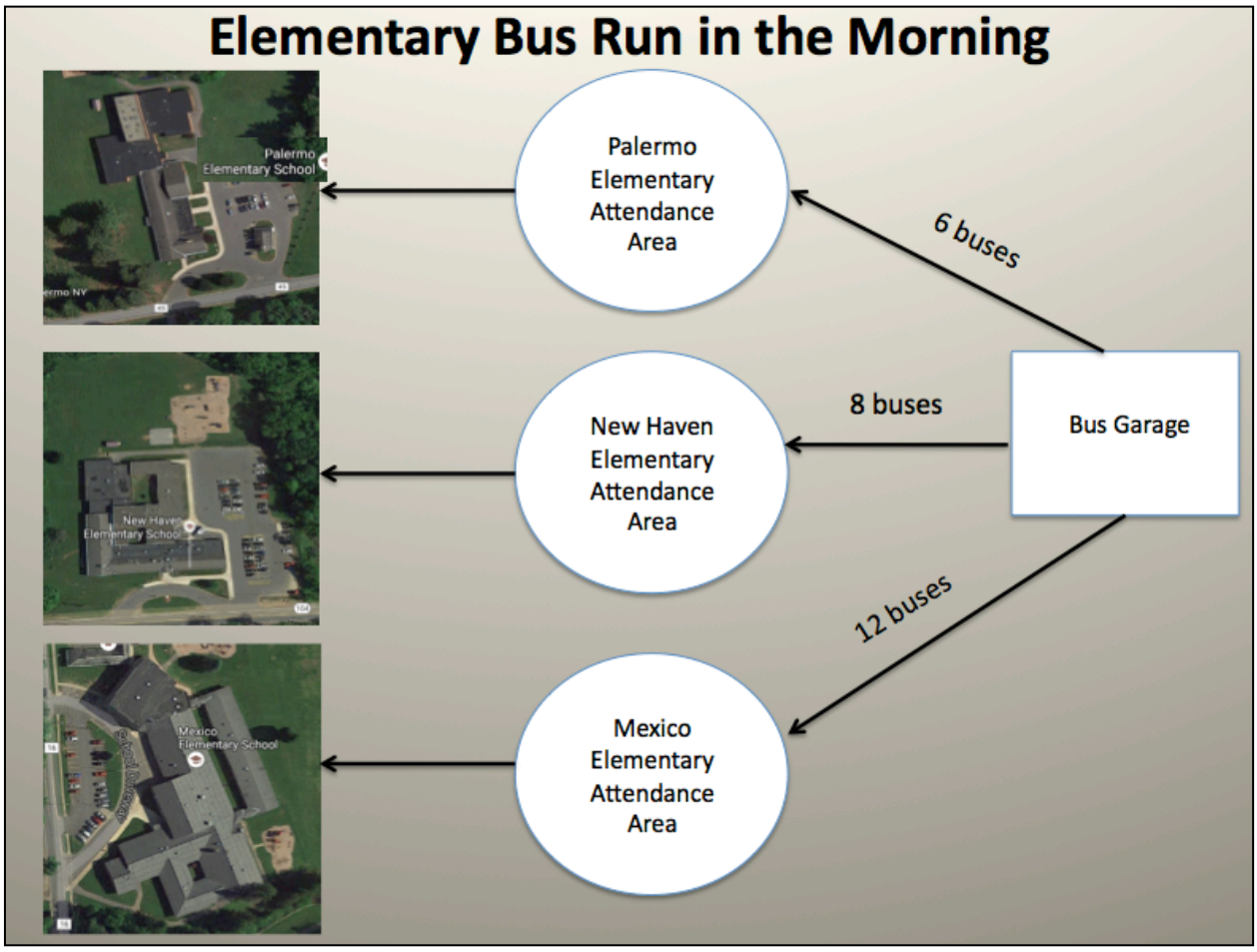
Like most upstate, rural districts, Mexico transports many children to school on a daily basis. Mexico's transportation fleet currently consists of 38, 66-passenger buses; 4, 24-passenger buses; 1, 22-passenger bus; 1, 18-passenger bus; 11, 14-passenger buses; and 3, 7 passenger vans. There are 14 operation and maintenance vehicles in the district as well. The district is on a ten-year bus replacement schedule.

The district employs a double trip daily routing plan to get in-district students to and from school. This means that the elementary students ride to and from school on one bus run while the

middle and high school students ride a separate second run. The early bus run picks up the secondary students then a second bus run transports the elementary children. There are 35 in-district runs daily that transport students to and from the three elementary schools, the Middle School, and the High School. The earliest pickup time for Middle and High School students is 6:15 a.m. The earliest bus pickup of elementary students is 7:50 a.m. Secondary bus runs stop first at the High School in the morning (approximately 7:15 a.m.) and then drop off the middle school students (approximately 7:25 a.m.) before returning to the garage. These bus runs are done in reverse order in the afternoon. The longest time any student would be on an in-district regular bus run is 45-60 minutes. The morning bus routing plan is shown in the following two graphics.

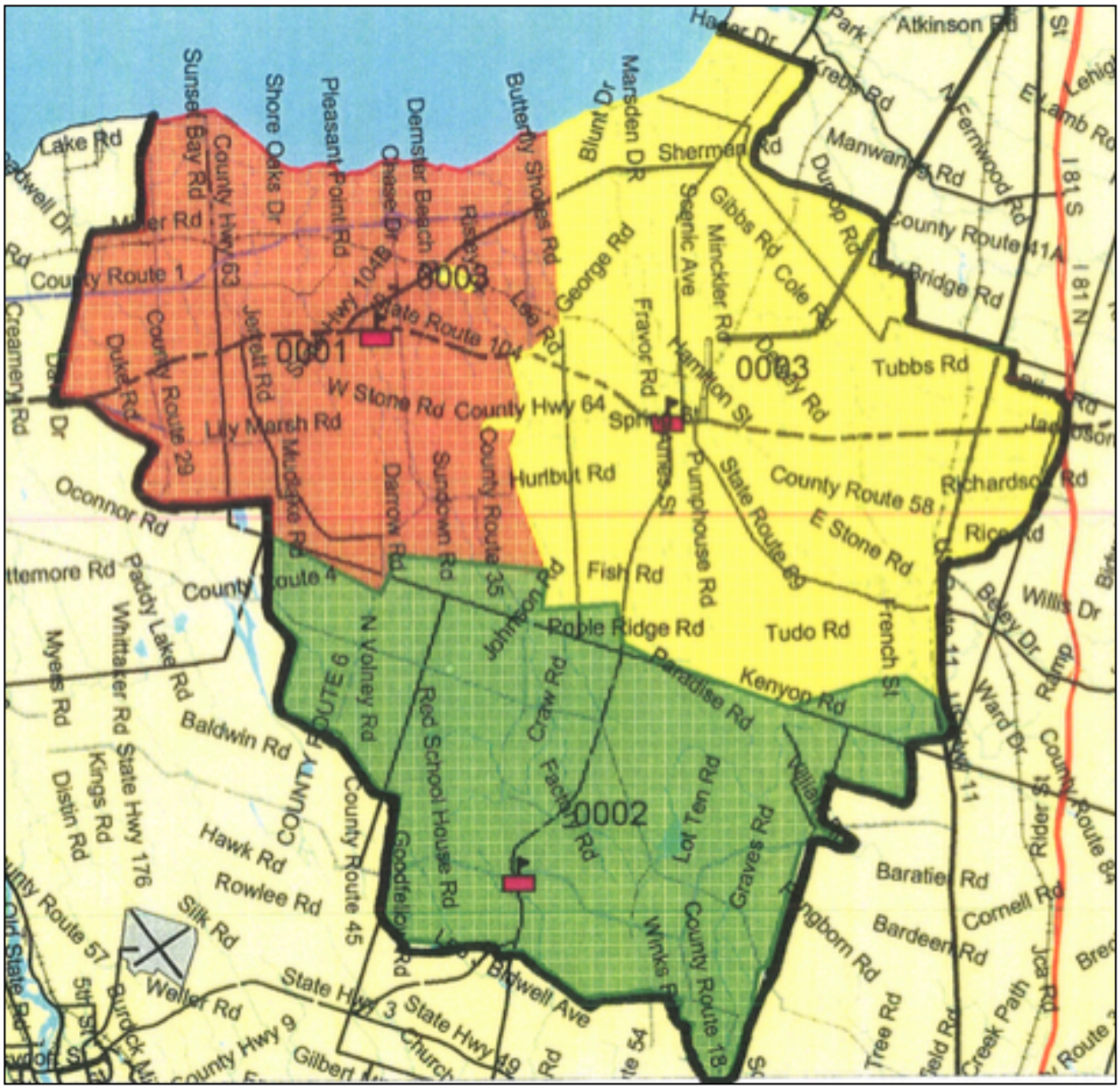


Mexico has a two-tiered bus system with the secondary students transported to school first in the morning. The earliest pick-up time for secondary students is 6:15 a.m.



All elementary students in the district ride the second bus run in the morning with the earliest pick-up time being around 7:50 a.m.

The elementary school attendance zones are illustrated in the following.



Mexico has approximately 85-100 students in grades 5-12 living in the village of Mexico who walk to school. The general policy is that any of these students living in a home with a sidewalk in front is expected to walk to school. All Pre-K through grade 4 are provided with bus transportation.

In addition to these regular in-district bus runs, each day Mexico sends buses to Solvay Union Free School District, Fulton City School District, Pulaski Central School District, Phoenix Central School District, Community Christian Trinity, Oswego City School District, APW Central School District, and the CiTi BOCES. The district currently does not contract out any of its transportation.

Mexico also provides 7-8 buses for late runs at 5:15/5:30 for students who participate in sports, enrichment (two or three times per year), plays, music, and tutoring. Summer school transportation is also provided.

The district currently uses a transportation software routing system (Transfinder) but is transitioning to a new software package (Traversa).

Finance

Effective management of finances is an important requirement of any school district. It is particularly important in a challenging national and state economy as evidenced over the past six or seven years. Specifically for Mexico, it has been and is critical in light of events surrounding the nuclear power plants in the region. Fortunately, prudent financial management of the Mexico Academy and Central School District has been a hallmark for many years.

As noted previously, one important measure of a Board of Education's ability to find the balance between the quality of education that the community wants for its children with the community's ability to support this education is the annual school district budget vote. The following table summarizes these results from school district budget votes from 2007 to 2016. As can be seen, the budget has passed in every year shown.

Table 8.8
District Budget Vote History

Year	Yes Votes	No Votes	Total Votes
2016	670	212	882
2015	578	264	842
2014	422	205	627
2013	546	293	839
2012	517	248	765
2011	546	318	864
2010	730	344	1074
2009	591	180	771
2008	519	282	801
2007	625	299	924

A second window into the district's current fiscal situation is through examining the current general fund balance sheet. At the end of each fiscal year (June 30th), all school districts have to file a year-end financial report. The following table shows Mexico's general fund balance sheet from this report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016.

Table 8.9 District Balance Sheets as of June 30, 2016	
ASSETS	
Cash – Unrestricted	$5,149,639
Cash-Restricted	$34,009,087
Accounts receivable	$0
Due from other funds	$903,203
Due from State and Federal	$1,608,711
Due from other governments	$156,186
Total Assets	**$41,826,826**
LIABILITIES	
Accounts Payable	$181,180
Accrued Liabilities	$235,715
Due to other funds	$52,193
Due to other governments	$269,765
Due to employees' retirement system	$205,928
Due to teachers' retirement system	$2,476,060
Compensated Absences	$141,642
Overpayments and collections in advance	$24
Unearned revenues	$4,890
Total Liabilities/Deferred Revenues	**$3,567,397**
FUND BALANCE	
Restricted Fund Balance	
Unemployment Reserve	$190,115
Reserve for Retirement Contributions	$1,636,370
Tax Certiorari Reserve	$4,979,740
Liability Reserve	$1,034,038
Employee Benefit & Accrued Liability Res.	$4,330,837
Capital Reserve	$50,614
Nuclear Facility Tax Stabilization Reserve	$21,787,373
Total Restricted Fund Balance	**$34,009,087**
Assigned Fund Balance	
Assigned Appropriated Fund Balance	$2,150,000
Assigned Unappropriated Fund Balance*	$47,724
Total Assigned Fund Balance	**$2,197,724**
Unassigned Fund Balance	
Unassigned Fund Balance	$2,052,618
Total Unassigned Fund Balance	**$2,052,618**
Total Fund Balance	**$38,259,429**
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	**$41,826,826**
*Includes encumbrances that are not reported in Committed and Restricted Fund Balance.	

To assess the district's overall fiscal position, it is important to focus on several items in the above general fund balance sheet. Specifically, the number and amount of reserve accounts in the restricted fund balance is an indicator of long-range fiscal planning. As can be seen, on June 30, 2016 the district had $190,115 in an unemployment reserve, $1,636,370 in a reserve for

retirement, $4,979,740 in a tax certiorari reserve (property assessment challenges), $1,034,038 in a reserve for liability, $4,330,837 set aside for employee benefits and accrued liabilities, a $50,614 capital reserve, and $21,787,373 set aside for tax stabilization related to the nuclear facilities related issues. The following table summarizes the most recent five-year history of the district's restricted fund balance for each reserve category.

Table 8.10
Restricted Fund Balance: A Five Year Summary

Category	6/30/12	6/30/13	6/30/14	6/30/15	6/30/16
Unemployment	$39,912	$39,993	$40,050	$40,085	$190,115
Retirement	$1,628,083	$1,631,373	$1,633,710	$1,635,138	$1,636,370
Tax Cert	$1,966,596	$1,970,571	$2,973,393	$4,975,993	$4,979,740
Liability	$0	$0	$1,000,486	$947,364	$1,034,038
Emp Benefits	$4,308,904	$4,317,613	$4,323,798	$4,327,578	$4,330,837
Capital	$50,358	$50,460	$50,532	$50,576	$50,614
Tax Stabiliza.	$16,684,368	$18,474,615	$18,734,412	$18,520,571	$21,697,373
Total	$24,678,221	$26,484,625	$28,756,381	$30,497,305	$33,919,087

A second indicator of fiscal health is the amount of unassigned fund balance a district maintains. State law restricts a school district to carrying no more than 4% of the subsequent year's budget in its unassigned fund balance. At the end of the last fiscal year, Mexico had $2,052,690 set aside or 3.99% of this year's general fund budget ($51,317,290). This is exactly at the state mandated 4% maximum amount that districts can maintain.

Third, we examine the amount of money a school district uses to hold down the tax rate each year; that is, money the district has on hand at the end of the previous year that it applies to the revenue side of the ledger for the coming year. From the 2015-16 general fund budget, Mexico applied $2,150,000 to hold the tax rate down. If it had not done so, the district would have had to raise this additional revenue from the local taxpayers to support the 2016-17 school year operation. The end result however is that the district will again have to have at least $2,150,000 in excess revenue next year to do the same procedure or the local residents will have to make up any difference that is short of this amount. It is important to note that this assigned fund balance has gone up from the previous year.

Table 8.11
Five Year History of Key Financial Variables

Fiscal Year Ending 6/30	Reserves	Appropriated Fund Balance*	Unassigned Fund Balance
2016	$33,919,087	$2,150,000	$2,052,690
2015	$30,497,305	$1,721,068	$2,141,436
2014	$28,756,381	$1,553,346	$2,070,459
2013	$26,484,625	$2,124,447	$2,036,231
2012	$24,678,221	$616,698	$1,884,000

*Appropriated Fund Balance is the amount of fund balance the district used to hold down the tax rate the following year by lowering the needed levy.
**The majority of the reserves have been in a Tax Stabilization Reserve the district established due to potential nuclear power plan pilot agreement loss.

Furthermore, a five-year history as illustrated in Table 8.10 shows a positive trend in these critical financial variables for the district. This shows sound fiscal long-range planning.

Another important financial variable, particularly in light of this study, is the current amount of principal and interest the district carries on former capital borrowing. Regardless of any future options the district endorses concerning grade arrangement and facilities, Mexico will have to engage in future borrowing to accomplish capital work. Therefore, the following table summarizes the current principal and interest on the district's books. As the table illustrates, the district has borrowed money for capital work (bonds issued in 2002, 2008, 2012, 2017), bus purchases, equipment leases, and its share of bonds for BOCES renovations. In addition, Mexico must repay bond anticipation notes (BANs) in the current year and in 2017-18. The district will not be debt free until 2031-32 assuming no additional borrowing. That said, it is important to note when future obligations will be paid off so the impact of any additional borrowing will be lessened by retiring debt. Specifically, the 2002 bonds that were recently refinanced will be completely paid off after 2017-18; the 2008 bonds will be paid off after 2022-23; the principal and interest the district owes for its equipment lease this district is supporting will be complete after 2023-24; DASNY bonds will be retired by 2027-28; BOCES bonds will be paid off by 2027-28; and, the 2017 borrowing will extend to 2030-31.

Table 8.12
Summary of Principal and Interest on Capital Debt

Year	Bus Purchases	2012 Refunding of 2002 Bonds	2008 Bonds	2007 Equip. Lease	2012 Serial Bonds (DASNY)	2013 BOCES Bonds	2017 Serial Bonds	2012 BANS
2016-17	$568,226	$763,000	$45,801	$462,807	$1,329,663	$332,450	$505,821	$19,562,535
2017-18	$560,876	$759900	$44,314	$458,629	$1,328,663	$331,825	$801,800	$15,300,000
2018-19	$474,613		$47,720	$459,034	$1,325,663	$331,075	$810,200	
2019-20	$357,801		$46,010	$458,813	$1,325,663	$335,200	$808,200	
2020-21	$213,178		$44,270	$462,967	1,328,413	$334,075	$810,200	
2021-22			$47,378	$461,287	$1,328,663	$336,575	$805,950	
2022-23			$30,683	$458,982	$1,326,413	$332,475	$810,700	
2023-24				$276,051	$1,326,663	$333,200	$808,950	
2024-25					1,329,163	$332,888	$810,950	
2025-26					1,098,663	$337,200	$806,450	
2026-27					$872,463	$335,200	$807,000	
2027-28						$332,800	$810,000	
2028-29							$806,250	
2029-30							$711,000	
2030-31							$708,750	
2031-32								

In summary, from our analysis we have concluded that the district is in sound fiscal condition, which does not, however, dismiss the very difficult fiscal challenges facing all school districts in New York State and Mexico in particular. This was also noted in the recent April 2016 audit conducted by the New York State Comptroller's office. The audit report stated that, "Generally, the Board and District officials have effectively managed the District's finances.

However, the new PILOT agreement and recent tax certiorari ruling may present financial challenges in the upcoming years if mitigating steps are not taken" (p. 4). The report goes on to say, "Using the terms of the new PILOT agreement, we projected the results of operations the District may expect if it does not continue to control expenditures. In addition, since the PILOT agreement payment decreases annually, the reserves will need to be used as a budgetary financing source. However, since fund balance is a finite resource, continued reliance on it will eventually be detrimental to the District's financial stability" (p. 5).

The district's independent audit conducted by Insero & Company in the summer of 2016 reached a similar conclusion as noted in its financial report to the Board of Education. Specifically, in the report section labeled "Factors Bearing on the School District's Future, the auditors stated, "Mexico Academy and Central School District ended the 2015-16 fiscal year in a strong financial position." However, it went on to state that "Staffing requirements and contractual commitments, and other costs associated with various unfunded New York State mandated programs….continue to put a strain on the budget" (p. 4i).

Clearly there are financial challenges ahead for the school district.

Clearly there are financial challenges ahead for the school district

CHAPTER 9
RESEARCH AND LITERATURE ON GRADE REORGANIZATION

Before the feasible options are presented, a brief overview of the relevant research and literature that were fundamental to the study is presented. Grade configuration study is common for school districts around the country; thus substantial research and literature exist. Key research findings were presented to the advisory committee

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

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

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

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

Finally, the research indicates that school districts studying grade configuration typically must confront a set of common issues. Indeed, some of these surfaced as this study progressed. Specifically, the cost and length of travel for children to get to and from school; how long will students be on the school bus is always a concern that must be addressed if a reconfiguration is to occur. The favorable or unfavorable impact of parent involvement in a child's schooling is an

element that arises in every instance. The manner in which students will be grouped for instruction (i.e., teaming at the middle school level) is a frequent issue.

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

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

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

CHAPTER 10
OPTIONS FOR MAINTAINING AND/OR RECONFIGURING THE BUILDING/GRADE ORGANIZATION OF THE DISTRICT

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

Feasible Grade/Facility Options

The consultants initially identified three feasible options along with advantages (pros) and disadvantages (cons) of each when compared to the other possible choices. These options were then the focus of discussion with members of the advisory committee. The advisory committee was asked to review the options, either agree or disagree with the options, and critique the pros and cons. The advisory committee was also asked to add additional advantages and disadvantages to each option. Finally, the advisory committee was also asked to add any additional options that they thought would be appropriate. The following tables show the result of these initial discussions. In addition, supplemental data to support many of the pros and cons has been included.

Option 1

Remaining as is, that is, keeping the schools and grades organized as at present, is always an option. Therefore, this was the first possible future option shared with the committee. As can be seen in the accompanying table, some of the major advantages the consultants and the committee noted included there would not be community backlash, each community would still have a local school for its elementary children to attend, and there would not be the possibility of staff layoffs. On the other hand, the committee identified several disadvantages to maintaining the existing arrangement. These included no fiscal savings would be realized, class sizes would not be equal across buildings, and the district would still have old buildings despite investing $47 million. The following table 10.1 shows a complete list of advantages and disadvantages associated with option 1.

Table 10.1 Option 1: Remaining As Is (Pre-K-4 in all three elementary schools, 5-8, 9-12)	
Pros	Cons
▪ There would not be a major community backlash as perhaps with other options. ▪ Each community would still have a local school for its elementary children to attend. ▪ The transportation program would not have to be altered. ▪ Keeps the same grade configuration. ▪ There would be no split of siblings as with other options. ▪ There would not be the possibility of staff lay-offs. ▪ Younger students would have a shorter bus ride as compared to other options.	▪ No fiscal savings would be realized. ▪ Would not offer an opportunity to improve the transportation program by having a centralized elementary campus. ▪ Class sizes would not be equal across buildings. ▪ We would still have old buildings despite investing $47 million ▪ Palermo is not on municipal water and is on septic. ▪ This option does not address space issue in New Haven. ▪ There would need to be building expense due to renovations. ▪ Building maintenance and upkeep is still an expense (would not be reduced as possible with other options).

It is important to note that if Option 1 is selected as the best course of action by the Board of Education there will still be significant financial cost for the upkeep and improvement of the current school buildings as noted by the 2015 Building Condition Survey. Although a complete breakdown of these costs has been presented earlier in this report, the following table summarizes these costs by priority ranking according to the district's architects.

Table 10.2 Cost to Improve Schools: BCS Priority Ranking						
Building	*Priority 1*	*Priority 2*	*Priority 3*	*Priority 4*	*Priority 5*	*Total*
Mexico Elem	$184,794	$1,980,875	$204,276		$2,728,034	$5,097,079
New Haven Elem	$276,007	$718,803	$2,297,777	$489,854	$2,767,409	$6,549,850
Palermo Elem	$307,991	$236,768	$690,244	$647,109	$4,210,176	$6,092,288
Middle School	$497,523	$1,523,814	$273,235	$467,867	$4,366,191	$7,128,630
High School	$2,843		$1,992,014	$90,456	$12,125,338	$14,210,651

The local share of any of these "approved costs" would be approximately 12.3% given the current district's current selected state building aid ratio.

Original Option 2

A second option initially presented by the consultants and discussed by the advisory committee members was to **develop a grade center plan by having Palermo become a Pre-K-1 school and New Haven serving grades 2-4** (this was slightly modified following committee

discussion to have all Pre-K sections located at Palermo rather than having some in both schools). While the following table contains the complete list of pros and cons that were generated, some of the major advantages were that all three elementary communities would still have a school, greater efficiency of staffing and saving money, and it would make it easier to balance class sizes

Table 10.3
Option 2: Develop a grade center plan by having Palermo Elementary House Grades Pre-K-1 and New Haven House Grades 2-4; The Other Schools Would Remain As Is

Pros	Cons
▪ All three elementary communities will still have a school locally. ▪ Greater efficiency of staffing and saving of money ▪ Easier to balance the class sizes between the two buildings. ▪ It would be easier to develop curriculum and do staff training; and staff could specialize. ▪ No duplication of special education services. ▪ Keep section sizes?	▪ Transportation would become more complex with perhaps a shuttle system between the two elementary schools. ▪ Some students would ride the bus longer; particularly elementary children. ▪ There would be one more transition in the K-12 sequence for New Haven and Palermo students. ▪ There would be a transition for PK students in New Haven when they enter kindergarten (not smooth). *Once this option was changed, this was no longer a con* ▪ Alters the grade configuration people are used to. ▪ Transportation issue with PreK students. ▪ Parent involvement will decrease. ▪ Possible split of families with children close in age (i.e., open houses). ▪ We would still have old buildings. ▪ Housing for specials, cafeteria. ▪ Staffing-care/cuts. ▪ Will it overwhelm students? ▪ Transportation: Number of buses/number of drivers needed ▪ Class sizes would increase (not an improvement); 25-26 are large sections ▪ Scheduling-housing specials. ▪ Doctor appointments/ER pick-ups a difference for parents.
NOTE: Initially both buildings were proposed to house Pre-K sections; this was later changed so that Palermo had all the Pre-K sections for both elementary schools.	

between the Palermo and New Haven. Some of the major disadvantages were that transportation would become more complex and costly, there would be an added transition for some students in their Pre-K-12 program, and a possible split of families with children close in age.

This initial presentation of option 2 was later dropped from consideration by the consultants as being "feasible" but not "desirable". Consequently, further discussion of this option will not be provided here. However the notes and PowerPoint slides from the February 2017 meeting of the Advisory Committee can offer more detail on this option.

Option 3

A third feasible option was discussed at length with the advisory committee. This third possibility proposed **closing New Haven and Palermo elementary schools and centralizing all the elementary grades at Mexico Elementary School with and addition**. ***This option was later modified and renumbered as a New Option 2.***

Table 10.4
Option 3: Close New Haven and Palermo Elementary Schools and Centralizing All the Elementary Grades at Mexico Elementary School With An Addition

Pros	Cons
▪ Much greater efficiency in staffing ▪ Financial savings ▪ Easier to balance elementary class sizes for all sections ▪ Easier to provide transportation (all to one school) and possible transportation savings ▪ Keeps the same grade configuration. ▪ Could sell both Palermo and New Haven elementary schools; perhaps create senior care facility in Palermo ▪ Possibly put two elementary schools back on the tax rolls. ▪ Would reduce maintenance cost and save money on grounds, clerical and administrative costs. ▪ All students and families and all elementary staff would be together. ▪ All grade levels would become a more cohesive unit through collaboration. ▪ Would permit better mixing of students with academic & personality similarities/differences.	▪ Community concern and backlash in Palermo and New Haven due to school closings. ▪ Question about what to do with closed elementary schools; are there alternate uses? ▪ Some students would have to ride the bus longer- particularly younger children. ▪ Too tight spaces; would have to figure out how to house and schedule special area classes, lunches, library, etc. (common area spaces). ▪ There would be disruption during the construction of addition; existing Mexico elementary staff and students would be displaced and then there would have to be post-construction reorganization. ▪ The lunch line would be too long. ▪ There would be an adjustment for students. ▪ Would there be enough space if in the future new sections of grades were added? ▪ It would be a large elementary school. ▪ Emergency evacuation would be complicated. ▪ There would be difficulty with parking spaces (for staff and family events) and traffic flow (bus loading). ▪ Green space would be lost.

New Option 2

At the Advisory Committee meeting in February, a meeting observer asked that a slightly different grade configuration but similar to Option 3 be discussed. The proposal was to look at **closing both New Haven Elementary and Palermo Elementary schools, housing grades Pre-K-2 at Mexico Elementary with an addition; the current Middle School would become an intermediate school with grades 3-7; and the 8th grade would move to the High School.** Following that meeting, we examined this proposed alternative to our original Option 3 and felt it had considerable merit.

Reviewing the advantages and disadvantages of this New Option 2, we find the following educational advantages for students if this option is endorsed as the direction the Board wishes to pursue.

- Better coordination (among teachers at the same grade level) and articulation (among teachers vertically across the grades) of curriculum
- Easier to conduct professional development for elementary teachers with them all in the same location and having the same ending time daily
- More balance of class sizes at the elementary grades
- More options for better matching students with teachers and for mixing of students in section cohorts
- Reduces a lot of travel time for any shared staff thus increasing instructional time for students
- Access to secondary facilities, such as the district pool, for elementary students
- Easy development of tutoring/mentoring of elementary students by high school students due to proximity of buildings
- With the 8th grade in the High School, this offers more opportunities for acceleration of coursework
- The option provides an easier transition to high school if the eighth graders are physically in the same building, thus perhaps reducing the 9th to 10th grade dropout problem.

In considering this option, it is necessary to determine whether or not there is sufficient room in the middle school to add a grade level. Currently the middle school houses four grade levels, grades 5, 6, 7, and 8. This option calls for the middle school to house five grade levels, grades 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 with the 8th grade being moved to the high school. Table 10.5 that follows shows the history of the middle school enrollment for the last fifteen years.

Table 10.5 Middle School Enrollment History	
Year	5-8 Enrollment
2000-01	923
2005-06	792
2011-12	689
2016-17	629

As can be seen from table 10.5 above, the enrollment in the middle school has decreased by 294 students (32%) in the last fifteen years. Tours of the middle school have revealed that there are a number of classrooms that are not being utilized; full size classrooms that are currently being used for a resource room, a staff development room, a faculty room, and a multi-purpose room could all be used differently. The district is also moving to full inclusion which would free up some special education classrooms. Some classrooms might have to be shared….but that seems like a workable alternative given the average usage of the middle school classrooms of 58.5% (see table 7.7). On the other hand, resource rooms will be added back into the schedule for 2017-18 which will take up some rooms. The district office also uses approximately five classrooms in the middle school which could potentially become classroom space if necessary. In short, tours of the school, analysis of the current room usage, and conversations with building leaders all lead to the conclusion that an additional grade level could be added to the Mexico Middle School.

Similar to the questions asked about space in the middle school, the same question must be asked about whether or not there is sufficient space in the high school to house another grade level. Currently the high school houses four grade levels, grades 9, 10, 11 and 12. This option calls for the high school to house five grade levels, grades 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12. Table 10.6 that follows shows the history of the high school enrollment for the last fifteen years.

Table 10.6 High School Enrollment History	
Year	*9-12 Enrollment*
2000-01	844
2005-06	936
2011-12	710
2016-17	701

As can be seen from table 10.6 above, the enrollment in the high school has decreased by 143 students (17%) in the last fifteen years. Tours of the high school have revealed that there are a number of classrooms that are not being utilized to their maximum potential; full size

classrooms that are currently being used for AIS reading, OT/PT, and a teachers' room could all be used differently. The number of foreign language classrooms could be reduced. Special education classrooms could be consolidated. Some classrooms might have to be shared….but that seems like a workable alternative given the average usage of the high school classrooms of 73.1% (see table 7.11). In short, tours of the school, analysis of the current room usage, and conversations with building leaders all lead to the conclusion that an additional grade level could be added to the Mexico High School.

In addition to the educational benefits listed above, there would also be a financial advantage that would accrue to the district through more efficient staffing.

As school districts all over New York State look to optimize student programming with limited resources, consolidation of services and staff reductions are options that are often chosen. Since sixty five to seventy percent of most school district budgets are devoted to paying staff salaries and fringe benefits, significant savings can only be realized by reducing staff. If staff reductions, either through lay offs or through attrition, are inevitable, districts generally want to make changes by reducing their instructional program only as a last resort. In consideration of the former and new Option 2, staff savings could be realized by reducing the number of elementary classroom sections at New Haven and Palermo while still maintaining reasonable class sizes. The following table illustrates this reduction.

Table 10.7
Possible Staff Savings by Closing New Haven and Palermo Elementary Schools

Title	Average Salary Including Benefits	Number of Positions	Total Potential Savings
Principal	$133,638	2	$267,276
Senior Typist	$53,860	2	$107,720
Custodian in Charge	$80,411	2	$160,822
Custodial Worker	$66,122	1	$66,122
Cleaner	$55,156	1	$55,156
Cook	$36,772	2	$73,544
Food Service @ 4 hrs/day	$14,162	2	$28,324
Classroom teacher @ Class Size of 20	$81,142	2	$162,284
.4 PE Teacher	$81,142/$32,457	1	$32,457
.4 Art Teacher	$81,142/$32,457	1	$32,457
.4 Music Teacher	$81,142/$32,457	1	$32,457
Librarian	$81,142	2	$162,284
		TOTAL	$1,180,903

NOTE: This does not include 2 hourly cleaners or 4 full-time school monitors, some of whom would have to be replaced with hourly monitors depending on lunch and recess schedules.

In reviewing table 10.7 above, the advisory committee had some concerns that the staff reductions identified were too severe. In particular, the committee questioned whether there

would be sufficient supervision with only one principal in the larger Mexico Elementary School. The committee also questioned whether or not all of the special area teachers could actually be reduced. In order to respond to these concerns, for purposes of this study, an assistant principal is being added for the new elementary school and two of the three special area teachers are being included in the staffing as full time persons. This change will result in the following:

2 principal = savings of $267,276
1 assistant principal = addition of $113,091
NET DIFFERENCE = savings of $154,185 rather than $267,276

3 - 0.4 FTE teachers = savings of $97,371
2 - 0.4 FTE teachers = addition of $64,914
NET DIFFERENCE = savings of $32,457 rather than $97,371

Adding an assistant principal and adding back two of the three special area teachers to full time reduces the staffing savings by $178,005 from $1,180,903 to $1,002,898. Given this analysis, for purposes of this study, it will be assumed that the savings to the district in staffing costs to go from three elementary schools to one would be approximately $1,000,000.

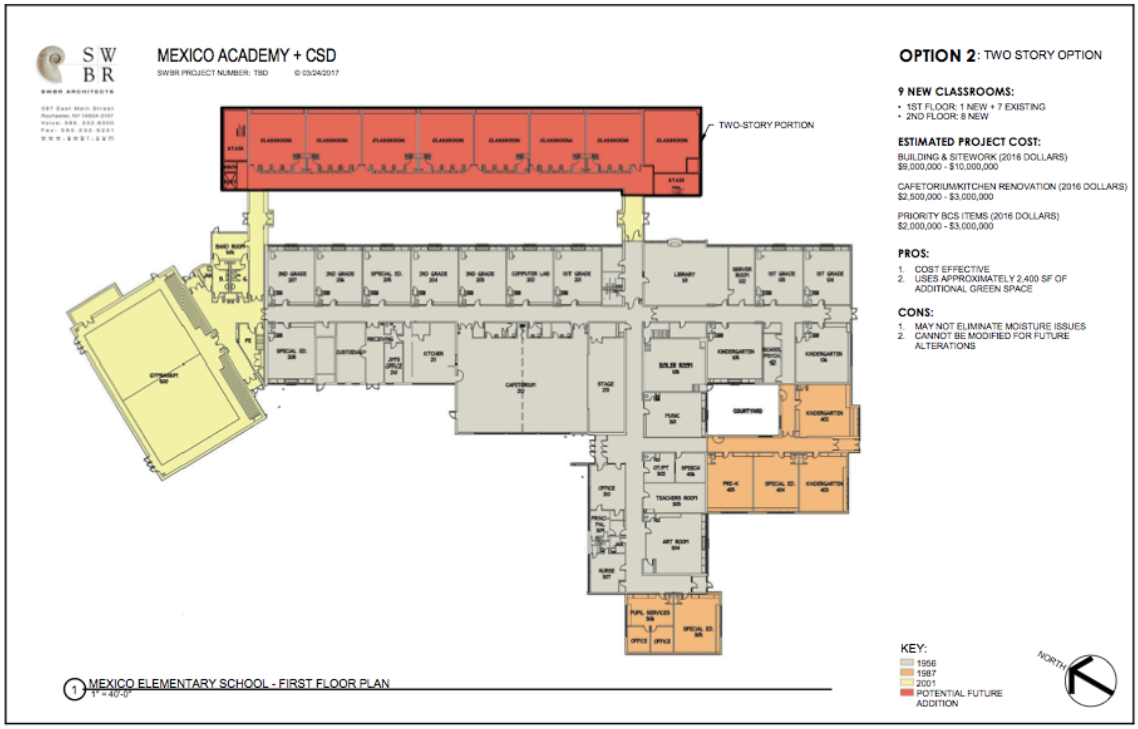
New Option 2 would also provide some financial benefit due to reduced utility costs associated with closing the New Haven and Palermo Elementary Schools. The table below summarizes the utility costs for all district schools during the 2016-17 school year. As can be seen, the New Haven Elementary school's total is $41,277 and Palermo's is $51,292. After conferring with the architects, it is estimated that a closed building would likely yield approximately 40% savings in utility costs, or about $37,028 per year if the New Haven and Palermo are closed.

Table 10.8
2016-17 Utility Costs

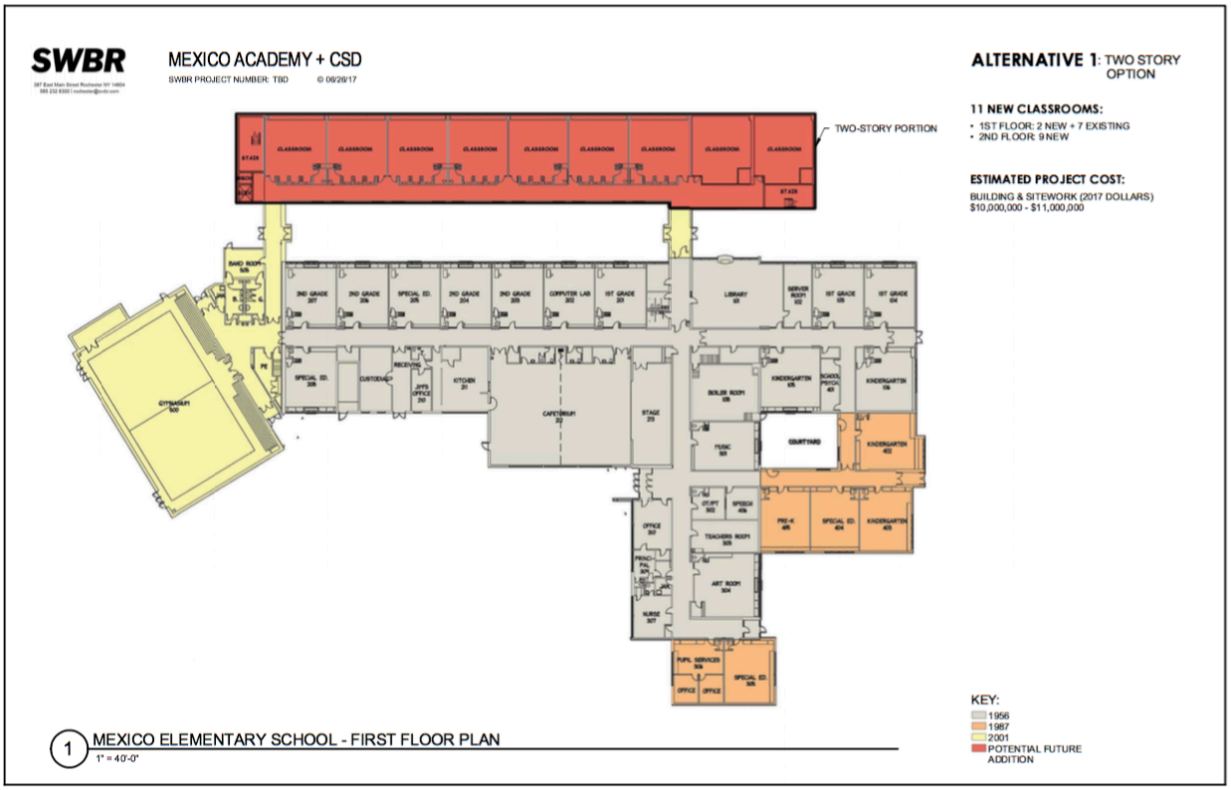
Utility	*New Haven Elementary*	*Palermo Elementary*	*Mexico Elementary*	*Middle School*	*High School*
Gas/Oil	$16,532	$18,641	See note	$42,821	$92,318
Electric	$24,745	$32,651	$37,059	$112,021	$157,494
TOTAL	$41,277	$51,292	$37,059	$154,842	$249,812

NOTES: 1-Palermo used $18,641 for oil heat as of 12/31/16. 2-New Haven also uses oil to heat so approximately $5,500 can be added to the total above. 3-The cost of Mexico Elementary gas is included with the High School amount due to a shared meter.

The district's architects were asked to provide "concept drawings" of how the necessary addition to the Mexico Elementary School might best be accomplished if this option is selected by the Board of Education. SWBR architects proposed an initial drawing below (enlarged versions are available at the District Offices).



In this concept, one additional classroom would be added to the 2001 addition and a second story of 8 classrooms would be built on top of this wing. Once this plan was studied in depth it was determined to provide insufficient space to accommodate all the grades (Pre-K-2). Consequently, the architects were tasked with providing additional concept sketches with more classroom space. The following concept is similar to the one previously presented however it adds two classrooms to the current wing of the building and a second story with 9 classrooms. In total, this concept creates an additional 11 classrooms permitting all three Pre-K-2 sections to be housed in the building.



In this two-story example, the existing roof structure of the single seven-classroom corridor (2001 addition) would be removed and the footprint of this corridor would be expanded by two classrooms on the north end. Then a second level of nine classrooms would also be added on top of the nine first floor rooms. This would add a total of 11 new classrooms to the building for housing students from New Haven and Palermo. As noted by the architects, the estimated cost (in 2017 dollars) to accomplish this would be approximately $11,000,000.

A discussion point of the committee was whether closing the any of the district's schools would adversely impact local property values. To explore this issue, the consultants reviewed the professional literature regarding the closing of a school and its impact on home values and the research on any link between a school district reputation and home values. After reviewing the literature, the consultants concluded that local property values *could* be negatively impacted because the elementary school children would be attending school farther from their home. On the other hand, the research indicates that there is a strong positive correlation between a school district's reputation and home values—the better the district's reputation, the higher the home values. Consequently, if closing one or both of the outlying elementary buildings results in an improved perception of the quality of the school district, home values *could* be positively impacted. In summary, the consultants have concluded that if New Haven Elementary School and/or Palermo Elementary School (or any school in the district) were to close, it is unclear if local property values would be adversely impacted.

A second window into the possible impact of school closure on local property values was through examining three rural school districts that have recently dealt with the issue of school

closures in their communities. The first district, Altmar-Parish-Williamstown in Oswego County, closed three elementary schools. The other two districts are Sidney in Delaware County and Gilbertsville-Mt. Upton in Chenango County. Sidney closed elementary schools in Sidney Center and in Masonville after the 2005-06 school year. GMU closed schools in both Gilbertsville and Mt. Upton after a 1990 merger of those two districts and the construction of a new K-12 building in 1994. The following tables illustrate either the assessed or full value of property in the townships surrounding the closed elementary schools in both districts.

Table 10.9
A-P-W Closed Elementary School Townships and Total Assessed Property Value in the Townships Before and After Closing the Elementary Schools

	Schools			
Year	Altmar	Parish	Williamstown	Total Assessed Value
2007-08	$71,003,677	$93,663,049	$55,530,142	$220,196,868
2008-09	$76,149,128	$93,609,716	$58,193,389	$227,952,233
2009-10	$89,177,362	$94,497,871	$65,829,816	$249,505,049
2010-11	$89,868,246	$93,596,737	$65,879,683	$249,344,666
2011-12	$77,210,580	$117,707,782	$58,874,237	$253,792,599
2012-13	$92,084,907	$140,318,700	$66,303,225	$298,706,832
2013-14	$89,952,721	$138,048,935	$66,526,050	$294,527,706
2014-15	$92,978,097	$141,411,076	$66,574,411	$300,963,584
2015-16	$92,208,868	$141,727,312	$67,458,888	$301,395,068
NOTES: (1) Shaded cells indicate the years prior to school closure				
(2) The Village of Altmar dissolved in 2012				

Table 10.10
Sidney Closed Elementary School Townships and Total Full Property Value in the Townships Before and After Closing the Elementary Schools

	Schools		
Year	Sidney Center	Masonville	Total Full Value
2005-06	$209,221,400	$66,435,559	$275,656,959
2006-07	$220,668,979	$67,159,626	$287,828,605
2007-08	$240,746,919	$81,273,627	$322,020,546
2008-09	$244,505,811	$83,694,640	$328,200,451
2009-10	$291,626,555	$85,069,757	$376,696,312
2010-11	$287,215,522	$85,407,851	$372,623,373
2011-12	$288,394,869	$86,381,182	$374,776,051
2012-13	$272,879,487	$79,327,490	$352,206,977
2013-14	$256,064,237	$85,458,041	$341,522,278
2014-15	$250,725,145	$82,652,328	$333,377,473
2015-16	$245,705,322	$82,899,307	$328,604,629
NOTES: (1) Shaded cells indicate the years prior to school closure			

Table 10.11 G-MU Closed Elementary School and Total Assessed Property Value in the Town of Guilford Before and After Closing the Elementary School	
Year	Assessed Property Value
1989	$18,142,679
1990	$18,637,522
1991	$18,504,400
1992	$18,509,400
1993	$22,831,950
1994	$23,108,552
1995	$23,459,052
2015	*$51,784,896*
Notes: (1) The district merger took place in 1990 and the new school opened in 1994	

In examining these tables, one can see that local assessed or full property values do not appear to have declined following the closing of the elementary schools in any of the three districts. Of course, this picture is related to the next issue to be discussed.

Although it is not included in the tables above as a possible disadvantage of implementing this option, the committee considered the issue of what to do with the either building if they were closed. Specifically, could the schools be sold and put into productive use and perhaps placed on the tax roles? If not, would they simply decay and become community eyesores? And, if the vacated schools are not put to productive use but rather sit idle, would this negatively impact local property values. These are serious concerns and so the consultants identified other districts that had closed elementary schools in their communities.

The first example was that of the Altmar-Parish-Williamstown Central School District in Oswego County. Working with a consulting group from the lower Hudson Valley, the district was fortunate to find buyers for its three shuttered elementary schools. Specifically, the Parish Elementary School sold June 30, 2012 for $245,000 to become a high tech manufacturing facility. The Altmar School sold on the same date for $400,000 and has been repurposed as a luxury salmon fishing resort. The Williamstown Elementary School sold in May 2013 for $55,000. The second example is the former school in Mt. Upton that has not been repurposed and sits in significant disrepair in the middle of the village of Mt. Upton. The third example is the Unadilla Valley Central School District that was formed in 1996 as a result of the merger of the New Berlin and South New Berlin Central School Districts. The South New Berlin school was purchased by a private spin off company in the pharmaceutical industry, the New Berlin elementary school was purchased by an area nursing home, and the New Berlin high school was purchased by a private school and is now operating as Milford Academy. The concern about what will happen to school buildings that have been closed is a significant issue for local communities. These examples from three area school districts show that the outcomes can be very positive……or not so positive!

After sharing the above information with the committee as it pertained to the sale price of the elementary schools in the case study districts, the current appraised value of Mexico's school

buildings was provided to the committee. The following table summarizes the current appraised values.

Table 10.12
Replacement Cost of School Buildings*

School Building	*Replacement Cost*
Mexico Elementary School	$16,462,561
New Haven Elementary School	$9,793,105
Palermo Elementary School	$10,273,867
Mexico Middle School	$23,659,930
Mexico High School	$49,306,855

NOTES: 1-Replacement cost is just for the building, not contents. 2-These values were provided by Utica National Insurance group as of 1/4/16.

As can be seen, the New Haven Elementary School is currently appraised for $9,793,105 and Palermo Elementary School is appraised for $10,273,867. It is important to note that this appraised value is what is commonly referred to as "replacement value". That is, if the school were to be completely destroyed, this is the cost to build the structure again. Importantly, however, despite the figures quoted in the table, if the either elementary is closed, and if the district is fortunate enough to find a buyer for the school, the sale price would not nearly approach the appraised value of the building. See the Altar-Parish-Williamstown school district example and what the district realized from the sale of its buildings.

Finally, a committee member was concerned about losing significant parental involvement in their children's education if both elementary schools were to close and asked the consultants to see what the experience of APW has been regarding parental involvement since closing its elementary schools. Checking with the district, a school principal that had "lived through the school closures" commented "At first, parents blamed a great deal on combining the small elementary schools into one building. Now, though it's taken several years, I believe parents are accustomed to the big building and the dust has settled. To answer your question directly, I do not feel the consolidation affected or hindered parental attendance at events. I would say the magnitude of the attendance at these events is overwhelming and often requires us to have two of the same events to accommodate everyone as far as parking, etc."

To examine the overall financial impact of option 3 (new Option 2) we must first summarize the additional cost savings and increases presented previously. The table that follows illustrates this summary using the 2016-17 year as a base for estimates and assumes the option had been fully implemented in this year.

Table 10.13 Estimated Financial Impact of Option 3 (New Option 2)					
Fiscal Year	Object of Expense				
	Staffing	Utilities	Transportation	Capital Cost	Total Impact
2016-17	-$1,002,898	-$37,028	+/-$0	+$663,716	-$376,210

Assumptions:
1-All staff savings occurs in the first year of implementation
2-Staff salary and benefits is the 2016-17 actual
3-Utility savings from New Haven and Palermo are estimated at 40% this year however some portion of these savings *may be* reduced due to the addition at Mexico Elementary
4-The district started repaying the additional principal and interest on a 20-year bonding this year
5-Does not include any additional savings from the district doing fewer repairs to the New Haven and Palermo schools than otherwise might have been done if they remained open
6-No additional transportation costs are shown assuming bus monitors are not added to the current K-2 daily runs from the New Haven and Palermo areas and the current salaried bus drivers running the shuttle daily from Mexico Elementary to the Middle School can do this without additional cost. Bus monitors are not aidable and cost the district $33,089 (salary and benefits) per year per person.

Financially Comparing the Options

The educational benefits of implementing New Option 2 have been stated previously. Therefore, the following discussion summarizes the overall financial impact of both options.

The district's financial advisory firm (Fiscal Advisors & Marketing, Inc.) has calculated an estimated financial impact of the borrowing necessary to implement capital work for Option 1 and New Option 2. The next table summarizes their work (complete files can be obtained in the District Offices).

Table 10.14 Comparison of Options 1 and New Option 2: Impact of Borrowing on the Tax Rate and Payer							
Option	Project Cost	Building Aid Ratio	Bond Percentage	Payback Period	Estimated Average Local Share Per Year	Estimated Average Impact per $1,000 Full Value	Estimated Yearly Impact on $100,000 Home
1	$16,500,000	87.7%	95.00%	15 years	$347,658	$0.87	$58.68
New 2	$24,000,000	87.7%	80.00%	15 & 20 years*	$663,716	$1.120	$112.02

*The debt is averaged over 20 years while aid is 15 years for reconstruction, 20 years for Mexico Elementary (the Transportation Center project has been removed from this analysis since it would likely occur with both options 1 and new option 2.

The capital work to accomplish the Board's priorities from the 2015 Building Conditions Survey, if Option 1 is adopted, would amount to approximately $16,500,000 (in 2016 dollars). Assuming the state building aid ratio on for this expense is 87.7% and the district receives a 95.0% bond percentage on the project, with a 15 year repayment of principal and interest on the

borrowed money, the average annual local share that would have to be budgeted for this would be roughly $347,658. This would add approximately $0.87 to the full-value tax rate of the district (per $1,000 of full value) and result in and estimated yearly rise of $58.68 for a homeowner with a house assessed at $100,000. If the New Option 2 is approved, the district would have to borrow approximately $24,000,000 to fund the implementation of the capital work necessary with the same estimated state aid ratio of 87.7%. Primarily because the capital work for this option is partially new construction and renovation, an estimated bond percentage of 80% is being used for this illustration and a repayment schedule that will span 15 and 20 years depending on the nature of the specific work. The average estimated local share after state aid is received would be approximately $663,716. This would add roughly $1.12 to the full-value tax rate of the district and a local homeowner with property assessed at $100,000 would see their tax bill go up about $112 per year. Clearly, the borrowing and repayment to implement these options shows that new option 2 is more costly and has a longer payback period. However, this does not represent the entire fiscal picture (Appendix C contains Fiscal Advisors and Marketing, Inc.-the district's financial advisor-analysis of the borrowing to fund both options).

The following table summarizes a comparison of the two options from a financial perspective including cost savings for both considered options.

Table 10.15
Comparing the Financial Impact of Options 1 and New Option 2

Option	Additional Yearly Capital Cost if Option is Implemented	Savings if Option is Implemented	Difference
1	+$347,658	+/-$0	$347,658
2	+$663,716	-$1,039,926	-$376,210

NOTE: It is important to point out that the additional capital cost for option 1 will extend only 15 years while the additional capital cost for option 2 will extend 20 years.

As can be seen, once savings from staff reductions and reduced utility costs are factored into the overall picture, there would be considerable yearly savings if new Option 2 is adopted over Option 1. However, it is important point out that the repayment period for borrowed money for new Option 2 is 20 years while there is a shorter repayment period for Option 1 (15 years).

The committee did propose additional options it asked the consultants to consider including (a) closing one elementary school (either Palermo or New Haven) and changing the grade configuration to Pre-K-2 at either New Haven or Palermo, grades 3-4 at Mexico Elementary, grades 5-8 at the Middle School, and grades 9-12 in the High School; (b) closing New Haven and Palermo and realigning the grades as follows-Pre-K-3 at Mexico Elementary School, 4-8 in the Middle School, and grades 9-12 at the High School; (c) closing all three elementary school and building a new one on the Middle School campus; (d) developing a grade center plan across all three elementary schools (for example, Pre-K-1, 2-3, 4); (e) realigning the grades as follows-Pre-K-2 in all three elementary schools, grades 3-6 in the Middle School, and grades 7-12 at the High School, and finally; (f) closing all the district's schools and building a

new K-12 facility to house all the grades. (NOTE: A sub-group of the committee also suggested simply redistricting the elementary attendance areas that was deemed as outside the parameters of this study).

These additional options were studied and, although most were considered feasible, several were not viewed as desirable for further consideration for the following reasons:
(a) **Closing one elementary school (either Palermo or New Haven) and changing the grade configuration to Pre-K-2 at the one school not closed, housing grades 3-4 at Mexico Elementary School, the Middle School would have grades 5-8, and the High School would continue to have grades 9-12.** This option would lengthen the bus ride to and from school for many elementary children and it makes for very inefficient use of Mexico Elementary School.

CHAPTER 11
FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Key Findings

The following are key study findings.

Finding 1: Mexico residents have consistently shown support for the school district by passing school budgets each of the past ten years.
Finding 2: Live births in the school district have been declining for the past several years leading to smaller kindergarten cohorts of students.
Finding 3: K-12 enrollment in the district has declined from 2,132 in 2011-12 to 2,042 in 2016-17.
Finding 4: K-12 enrollment is projected to continue to decline another 4.2% by 2023-24 and most of this decline will be felt at the high school.
Finding 5: The district's enrollment dip and projection is not surprising given the fact that Oswego County population has been declining since 2004 and will likely continue to drop until 2040 according to the U. S. Census.
Finding 6: The median age of Oswego County residents has been rising and the childbearing age cohort-25-44 has been declining as other indicators of future district enrollment predictions.
Finding 7: There is a growing number of youngsters that are being home-schooled in Mexico going from 23 in 2011-12 to 61 this year.
Finding 8: Mexico is also experiencing an increase in the number of resident students attending school elsewhere (31 in 2015-16).
Finding 9: All three elementary schools house half-day Pre-K classes.
Finding 10: The district maintains very reasonable class sizes at the elementary level in each of the three schools as compared to other Oswego County and New York State school districts.
Finding 11: At the elementary level, the district provides students with special area subjects (Art, Music, Library, and Physical Education) to complement the core academic curriculum and the special area schedules are the same regardless of which elementary school a student attends.
Finding 12: An examination of the middle school schedule shows that a comprehensive program is offered to students at this level.
Finding 13: For a school of its size, Mexico High School offers a very comprehensive program with AP courses, various electives, Project Lead the Way, three foreign languages, and a Junior ROTC program.
Finding 14: Mexico students also have the opportunity to take classes at the Citi BOCES and in fact over 40% of the junior and seniors in 2016-17 did so.

Finding 15: The district offers special education programs to approximately 330 special needs students this year or 16% of the district's overall enrollment; most students receive their services in-district.
Finding 16: The district's current grade configuration is Pre-K-4 in three elementary schools, grades 5-8 in the middle school, and grades 9-12 at the high school.
Finding 17: In examining the available space in the elementary schools, it is apparent that New Haven is the most crowded elementary building while both Mexico and Palermo have excess capacity.
Finding 18: The middle school has a number (20) of large classrooms that are used for purposes other than core academic classes. While some changes will have to be made, there is room to add another grade level in the middle school.
Finding 19: Two methods (whole classroom and period-by-period analysis) were used to assess the capacity of Mexico High School. Using both methods, it is clear that the high school has excess capacity and could accommodate more students than presently (and in the near future) are being educated in the building.
Finding 20: According to the Building Condition Survey completed in 2015, all of the district's schools need capital improvements. In total, approximately $43,000,000 worth of work has been identified.
Finding 21: Like all school districts, staff salary and benefits comprise most of the district's annual expenditures. However, in recent years, due to a decline in state aid, the district has had to reduce some program offerings including several BOCES special education programs; at the same time, however, the district has made program additions since 2010-11 including a Middle School Exploratory Occupations Program, AVID, and expansion of AP courses.
Finding 22: If the three elementary schools were consolidated into one, approximately $1,000,000 in staff savings could be realized.
Finding 23: Given the history of retirements in the district and the ages of the current staff, there is a strong possibility that any staff reductions could be accomplished through attrition.
Finding 24: Mexico's daily transportation program is a typical double trip bussing system with the secondary students being picked up first in the morning and the elementary children taken to school on a second run. The reverse happens at the afternoon dismissal.
Finding 25: Mexico has approximately 85-100 grade 5-12 students that walk to school each day in the Village of Mexico.
Finding 26: The district provides a late bus run for students that participate in sports and other activities.
Finding 27: The June 30, 2016 General Fund balance sheet showed Mexico had a number of reserves for specific purposes such as unemployment, retirement, tax certiorari, liability, employee benefits, and a capital reserve. Most importantly, the district had established and funded a Nuclear Facility Tax Stabilization Reserve at $21,787,373. The latter is extremely important in light of the uncertain future of the nuclear plant in the Town of Scriba.
Finding 28: The district's restricted fund balance has been growing for the last five years showing sound fiscal planning.
Finding 29: Mexico, like all districts, has outstanding capital debt, some of which will be retired after 2017-18, a second after 2020-21, and a third following the 2022-23 school year. The timing of debt retirement makes it feasible for the district to assume new capital debt without seriously impacting the local taxpayer.

Finding 30: Both the April 2016 State Comptroller's general fund audit and the most recent independent audit conducted by Insero & Company commend the district for sound fiscal planning yet also point out serious financial challenges ahead as they relate to a new PILOT agreement on the nuclear plant.

Conclusion

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

How can we educationally and fiscally reconfigure our grades and/or facilities to provide a sound instructional program now and in the future?

The consultants have concluded that there two options that are both "feasible" (they could be accomplished) and "desirable" (they offer a positive path forward for the district)—Option 1: Keep the grades and buildings organized as at present and just make capital improvements to the schools; Option 2: Realign the grades and buildings by closing both New Haven and Palermo Elementary Schools; putting an addition on the Mexico Elementary School so that it can house grades Pre-K-2 for all three elementary schools, transition Mexico Middle School into a grade 3-7 Intermediate School, and moving the 8th grade to the high school. Each of these options offers potential educational and financial advantages for the district.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made for Board consideration:

1. It is recommended that the Mexico Board of Education review the two feasible and desirable options noted above and, in doing so, assess the advantages and disadvantages of each as noted by the consultants and members of the Advisory Committee. Additionally, the Board should evaluate whether the short-term or long-term plan for the grades and buildings is most appropriate given current district and community considerations, particularly in relation to the overall fiscal status of the area.
2. If the Board supports the second option presented, and particularly in light of what appears to be an enrollment increase at New Haven in 2017-18, the Board may wish to begin phasing in this option. Specifically, for the 2018-19 year, the Board may choose to move the eighth grade to the High School thus opening up classroom space at the Middle School to allow the 4th grades to be relocated there.
3. Lastly, regardless of which option the Board endorses, we strongly recommend that a Facilities Advisory Committee (perhaps with members from the Advisory Committee that work on this study) be appointed to assist with detailed planning of the next capital construction phase the district will enter.

Discussion

The recommendations that are made as part of this report are flexible. This means that the Mexico Board of Education is free to implement none, some, or all of the recommendations. Should the board decide to implement all of the recommendations, it can do so as a phased approach to implementing decisions about the future of the district's facilities.

Should the board decide to phase in the recommendations contained in this report, it might choose to immediately form a district facilities committee to provide input on the district's future facilities changes. This committee of school staff and community members would work directly with the district's architects to determine facilities priorities, explore financial options, and develop a timeline for updating the prioritized areas defined by the Building Condition Survey.

The challenge for the district facilities committee will be to make wise short-term decisions while keeping long-term needs in mind. It is clear that the financial advantages identified in this study can only be achieved by the consolidation of school buildings. The district's interest in realizing these savings will be heightened as the reduction in the PILOT payments the district is currently receiving begins to decline or even disappear. However, knowing exactly when this is going to happen is not now known and may not be known for several years. In addition, the committee is faced with the reality that implementing facilities changes takes years, not months.

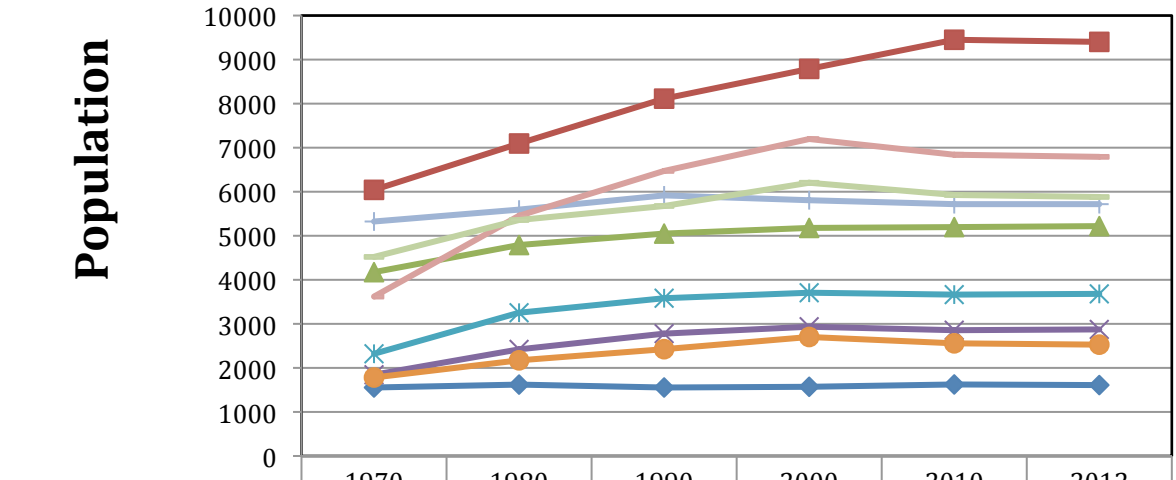
Assuming that the phased approach is considered, the committee might wish to recommend that prioritized changes be made to the middle school and to the high school. The committee and the board will be challenged to wisely spend the district's resources….this means that prudent decisions must be made about the amount of money that should be spent upgrading Palermo and New Haven if they are going to be closed in the next 5-10 years. The same caution should be observed for Mexico Elementary if it is going to accommodate the children from Palermo and New Haven and be dramatically renovated in the next 5-10 years.

Challenging as it appears, the board may be best served by making a decision about when to begin implementing its long-term plan. Consideration should be given to the debt that will be retired between now and 2024. It might well be possible to:

- Implement a short-term plan by renovating the middle school and the high school (Option 1);
- Implement a transition plan by moving one grade level at a time to alleviate crowding conditions in New Haven;
- Implement a long-term plan realizing the financial savings associated therewith by closing New Haven and Palermo, making Mexico Elementary a Pre-K-2 building, making the middle school a 3-7 intermediate building, and making the high school 8-12 (Option 2).

APPENDIX

Appendix A: Population Trends by Municipalities Located in the School District



	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2012
Village of Mexico	1555	1621	1555	1571	1624	1610
Town of Hastings	6042	7095	8113	8789	9450	9402
Town of Mexico	4174	4790	5050	5178	5197	5219
Town of New Haven	1845	2421	2778	2935	2856	2874
Town of Palermo	2321	3253	3582	3707	3664	3681
Town of Parish	1782	2172	2425	2702	2558	2528
Town of Richland	5324	5594	5917	5807	5718	5718
Town of Scriba	3619	5455	6472	7197	6840	6792
Town of Volney	4520	5358	5676	6204	5926	5881

Appendix B: Minutes from Advisory Committee Meetings

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mexico Facilities Study Advisory Committee
FROM: Alan Pole and Bill Silky
RE: Meeting Notes-Meeting of October 24, 2016
DATE: October 26, 2016

Attendance:

Committee Members: Jane Backus, Sadie Blauvelt, Bob Briggs, Lisa Buske, Rick Chapman, Kelly Cullen, Donna Herrmann, Sue Hewitt, Andrew MacDonald, Charlee Mathia, Tammie Nipper, Mark Norton, Jessica Parker, Peggy Scorzelli, Susan Teifke, and Kevin Upcraft

Consultants: Alan Pole and Bill Silky

Observers: Janice Clark, Julie Brandish, Sean Bruno, Darlene Upcraft, Amy Shaw, Jeremy Belfield, Mary Beth Horn, and Kelly Freihofer

Location: Mexico High School

1. Board President Jim Emery and Superintendent Sean Bruno welcomed everyone to the meeting, provided an overview for the purpose of the study, and introduced the study consultants. Committee members were asked to introduce themselves and discuss their connection with the school district.

2. Alan Pole reviewed the purpose of the study which is to answer the following question:
How can we educationally and fiscally reconfigure our grades and/or facilities to provide a sound instructional program now and in the future?

3. Meetings of the Advisory Committee will be held from 6:30-8:30 pm as follows:

Date	Topic	Location
October 24	General overview of the study process including the committee's role; student enrollment projections	High School Library
December 12	The instructional program; facilities review	Middle School Library
January 9	Begin exploring possible future facility options; transportation implications of options	Palermo Elem Cafeteria
February 27	Staffing implications of options; Continued implications of options	New Haven Elem Cafeteria
April 10	Financial implications of options; Continued implications of options	Mexico Elem Cafeteria
June 12	Review of draft report and tentative recommendations	High School Library

July 10	Presentation of final report to the Board of Education	Board Room

While the meetings of the advisory committee will begin at 6:30 pm, optional tours of the five schools will be held before each of the next five meetings beginning at 5:45 pm. These tours are for committee members and for anyone that will be observing the business meeting that will follow.

4. A contact list of the members of the advisory committee was shared with email addresses. Members of the group were asked to verify the accuracy of the information since email will serve as the primary means of communication between the consultants and the committee members. Meeting materials will be emailed to all committee members prior to the meeting. Paper copies of the materials will also be made available at each meeting.

5. Meeting notes will be provided after each meeting. The notes will be emailed to all committee members and copied to the superintendent. It will be the responsibility of the superintendent to distribute the notes within the district, as he deems appropriate. It is anticipated that, at a minimum, notes will be provided to board members and posted on the district's website. The PowerPoint that is used at each meeting will also be posted on the district's website after the meeting occurs.

6. All meetings of the advisory committee will be open. Members of the public will be welcome at these meetings. At the conclusion of each meeting, the observers will have the opportunity to offer comments or ask questions.

7. Alan Pole presented a PowerPoint overview of the study process and the role of the advisory committee. He indicated that the function of the committee is to advise the Board of Education and the consultants and to communicate with the public about the process. In addition, the committee will add a cultural context for Mexico as the various aspects of the study emerge. The superintendent is not a member of the committee but serves as a resource to the committee. Committee members are expected to attend all committee meetings, freely express their points of view, be key communicators with stakeholder groups, and be a respectful, contributing member of the committee.

He emphasized that the consultants bring an outside, unbiased perspective and will ensure that the process is open. They will produce meeting notes after each committee meeting and will be responsible for the final report. The recommendations in the report will benefit student learning and will be educationally sound and fiscally responsible. They will also be independent of special interest groups.

8. Bill Silky presented an overview of past enrollments for Mexico as well as projected future enrollments for the district. The study begins by reviewing enrollment trends since enrollments influence all decisions regarding staffing, course and curricular offerings, facilities, transportation, and finances.

Enrollment has been declining slightly since at least 2011-12 when the analysis began. Since 2011-2012, the enrollment in Mexico has declined from 2,132 students to 2,042 students in the 2016-17 school year, a decrease of 90 students or 4.2%.

To predict future enrollment, the consultants employ the Cohort Survival Projection method that uses information on the number of births in each school district over a period of years and calculates patterns of enrollment. A cohort survival ratio is developed that tracks how each cohort of students changes as it moves through the grade levels. This ratio, used with the live birth information, predicts what the enrollment will be for a period of years given consistent and predictable conditions. It does not take into account significant economic development changes such as a major employer leaving or entering the area and other similar changes. However, it is not anticipated that either of these conditions will be taking place in Mexico.

Using this method, the enrollment in Mexico is predicted to decrease from 2,042 in 2016-17 to 1,979 students in the 2023-2024 school year, an additional decrease of 63 students or 3.1%. The number of home schooled students, non-resident students, and resident students enrolled in non-public schools are all factors that are considered in projecting enrollment. It does not appear that any of these factors will significantly influence the enrollment projections that were made for Mexico. Bill also reviewed demographic information for Oswego County as well as the major towns and villages within the school district. This review clearly demonstrated that the county is aging and a slight decrease in the population of the county and the school district are anticipated for the future. Bill mentioned that updated live birth counts were received that afternoon so he indicated he would update the projections at the next meeting. This is a process we are going through and the consultants will make corrections and updates at the beginning of each meeting.

Bill also reviewed the "big picture take-aways" that were identified for this meeting as follows:

- The purpose of the study is to answer the question, "How can we educationally and fiscally reconfigure our grades and/or facilities to provide a sound instructional program now and in the future?"

- The study process will be open to ensure there is not a perception it is being conducted behind closed doors.

- The Advisory Committee was formed to assist the consultants throughout the process, but the final recommendations will be the consultants.

- The district has seen declining enrollments and will likely continue to see enrollments drop slightly.

9. The meeting was opened up to the observers for questions and comments.
10. The next advisory committee meeting will be held on Monday, December 12, 2016 in the middle school library. An optional tour of the middle school will begin at 5:45 for anyone who is interested. The meeting of the advisory committee will begin at 6:30 p.m.

We believe this covers the essence of the discussions at our meeting on October 24. If you have questions with these notes, please feel free to contact me. We will also review these notes as the first agenda item at our next meeting.

Thanks again for agreeing to serve on this committee. Looking forward to seeing you again on 12.12.16. The tour will begin at 5:45 and the meeting will start at 6:30!!

C: Sean Bruno

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mexico Facilities Study Advisory Committee
FROM: Alan Pole and Bill Silky
RE: Meeting Notes-Meeting of December 12, 2016
DATE: December 15, 2016

Attendance:

Committee Members: Sadie Blauvelt, Bob Briggs, Lisa Buske, Kelly Cullen, Heather Donath, Donna Herrmann, Sue Hewitt, Andrew MacDonald, Charlee Mathia, Tammie Nipper, Mark Norton, Jessica Parker, Peggy Scorzelli, Susan Teifke, and Kevin Upcraft

Consultants: Alan Pole and Bill Silky

Observers: Sean Bruno, Darlene Upcraft, Amy Shaw, Jeremy Belfield, Mary Beth Horn, Joe Kisorak, and Chad Bigelow

Location: Mexico Middle School

1. Bill Silky started the meeting by thanking Kim Holliday, Principal of the Middle School, for hosting the meeting and conducting the tour of the school for interested committee members. He then reviewed the meeting protocol for new meeting observers, circulated the attendance sheets, and asked committee members to review the updated contact list for any changes. The agenda for the meeting was presented and reviewed as well. Joe Kisorak from SWBR Architects was introduced to the committee. SWBR is the architectural firm that recently conducted the Building Condition Survey for the district.

2. Bill then reviewed the purpose of the study which is to answer the following question:
How can we educationally and fiscally reconfigure our grades and/or facilities to provide a sound instructional program now and in the future?
He indicated that this purpose will be shared at each meeting to keep the committee focused on what the Board has asked the consultants to accomplish.

3. Notes from the October 24th meeting were approved by the committee without any changes and/or additions.

4. Bill provided updated live birth data and enrollment projections for the district. He reported that the updated trend still shows that the district is likely to continue to see a decline in Pre-K to 12 enrollment at even a slightly greater rate than shared last meeting.

5. The grade organization of the district (PK-4, 5-8, 9-12) was shared with the committee and it was noted this is a very common grade arrangement pattern in New York. Bill then offered an overview of the educational research on grade level patterns. He reported that the bottom line is that there is no one best way to organized school grades and that "what" a district does with its

grade arrangement is more critical to student success than "which" grade organization it has adopted.

6. Bill then provided an overview of the 2016-17 elementary class sizes in each of the three elementary schools. Bill said that the class sizes seem very reasonable and quite equitable (except at second grade) across the three schools. Most sections of the grades are between 15 and 20 students per section.

7. Recent elementary (grades 3 and 4) student scores on the New York State ELA and math tests were shared with the committee. Bill's observation was that the results, while possibly varying widely due to the low number of students, show that the district is not performing as well as it should. In addition, he offered comparative test results for all district students grades 3-8 on the state ELA and math tests for the past two years which also indicate district performance on both is below state averages, another indicator that improvement in warranted.

8. The elementary school special area subject offerings were presented to the committee as an indicator of the curricular breadth in grades K-4. Bill noted that these opportunities provide a rich program of study for the students and there is comparability across all three elementary schools.

9. An overview of the district's special education program was discussed. Bill offered a five-year summary of the number of students in the district that have special educational needs and whether they are receiving their educational program in the district or elsewhere. He indicated that the district currently has 333 students (or 16% total enrollment) identified as having special educational needs. This is slightly greater than the 12% New York State says most districts should experience. He praised the district for programming in-district for 95% of its resident special needs students.

10. Alan Pole then took over the presentation and reviewed the high school curricular offerings. Alan shared the number of students in each course section for all subject areas this year including English, Social Studies, Math, Science, Foreign Language, Family & Consumer Science, Technology, Music, Art, PE, Health and ROTC as well as a few other courses. He pointed out that the district offers a very comprehensive secondary program given the district enrollment. However, he did note there were a large number of study hall sections in the high school schedule (177) as well as some courses with low enrollments .

11. Alan presented a summary of the number of high school junior and seniors that attend the BOCES for various career and technical education classes. In total this year there are 73 juniors (44% of the class) and 90 seniors (40%) of the class.

12. The meeting focus then shifted from educational program to an overview of the districts facilities. Alan began this with a general overview of all the schools before going into a summary of space utilization of each individual building. He reported that New Haven was the most densely occupied of the three elementary schools. All other buildings have some excess

capacity but probably not enough this year to move entire grade levels from one school to the next.

13. The 2015 Building Conditions Survey (BCS) conducted by SWBR architects was highlighted. Alan reported that the full report was available in the district office and that he was just presenting an overview of the estimated cost for upgrading each of the schools. Those costs were as follows: Mexico Elementary, $5,097,979; New Haven Elementary, $6,549,850; Palermo Elementary, $6,092,288; Mexico Middle School, $7,128,630; and Mexico High School, $14,210,651. Alan did indicate that not all of the noted work would necessarily have to be done and that the district should engage a committee to determine priority items.

14. The presentation concluded with six big ideas or take-aways that the consultants reviewed: 1-Student enrollment is expected to decline by approximately 85 students over the next 7 years; 2-There is no one best way to arrange the grades in a school district; 3-For a school district of its size, Mexico has a broad range of courses available to its students; 4-Approximately 40-44% of the juniors and seniors attend CTE classes at BOCES for half a day; 5-The school buildings have some available space but are generally well scheduled; and 6-The BCS has identified approximately $43,000,000 worth to work to be addressed in the next five years.

15. The committee was then asked for comments and/or questions. A couple of questions/comments included:

- Have some high school course enrollments dropped recently? Assistant Superintendent Mary Beth Horn noted that the high school has expanded its offerings thus fewer students are enrolled in more sections of courses due to this.
- It was mentioned that there are some accelerated course offerings at the 8th grade level (such as Algebra and Biology) that should be noted.
- It was suggested that the consultants provide an overview of the Middle School educational program.

16. The meeting was opened up to the observers for questions and comments.

17. The next advisory committee meeting will be held on Monday, January 9, 2017 in the Palermo Elementary School cafeteria. An optional tour of the school will begin at 5:45 for anyone who is interested. The meeting of the advisory committee will begin at 6:30 p.m.

We believe this covers the essence of the discussions at our meeting on December 12. If you have questions with these notes, please feel free to contact me. We will also review these notes as the first agenda item at our next meeting.

Thanks again for agreeing to serve on this committee. Looking forward to seeing you again on 1.9.17 at Palermo Elementary.

C: Sean Bruno

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mexico Facilities Study Advisory Committee
FROM: Alan Pole and Bill Silky
RE: Meeting Notes-Meeting of January 9, 2017
DATE: January 13, 2017

Attendance:

Committee Members: Sadie Blauvelt, Bob Briggs, Lisa Buske, Kelly Cullen, Heather Donath, Donna Herrmann, Sue Hewitt, Andrew MacDonald, Charlee Mathia, Tammie Nipper, Mark Norton, Jessica Parker, Peggy Scorzelli, Susan Teifke, and Kevin Upcraft

Consultants: Alan Pole and Bill Silky

Observers: Sean Bruno, Darlene Upcraft, Amy Shaw, Jeremy Belfield, Mary Beth Horn, Julie Bradish, Janice Clark, Abigayle Garrett, and Chad Bigelow

Location: Palermo Elementary School

1. Bill Silky started the meeting by thanking Peggy Scorzelli, Principal of Palermo Elementary School, for hosting the meeting and conducting the tour of the school for interested committee members. He then reviewed the meeting protocol for new meeting observers, circulated the attendance sheets, and asked committee members to review the updated contact list for any changes. The agenda for the meeting was presented and reviewed as well.

2. Bill then reviewed the purpose of the study that is to answer the following question:
How can we educationally and fiscally reconfigure our grades and/or facilities to provide a sound instructional program now and in the future?
He indicated that this purpose will be shared at each meeting to keep the committee focused on what the Board has asked the consultants to accomplish.

3. Notes from the December 12th meeting were reviewed by the committee without any changes and/or additions.

4. Bill provided an overview of the district's transportation program. The district has a double trip busing pattern that picks up the middle and high school students first in the morning and then picks up the elementary school students. There are 35 in-district runs each day. Approximately 85-100 students who live in the village of Mexico, are in grades 5-12, and have a sidewalk in front of their home walk to school. The longest time that any student would be on a bus going to or from school would be 45-60 minutes. The first middle/high school students are picked up at 6:15 am and the earliest elementary school students are picked up at 7:50. Mexico also provides late bus runs at 5:15/5:30 for students in sports, plays, musicals, tutoring sessions, etc.

5. The consultants then reviewed three different options they had developed that might be considered for reconfiguring the district's grades and/or facilities. While the consultants provided some of the pros and cons for each of the options, the committee members were asked to agree or disagree with these and to add to these items. The committee members were also asked to propose additional options for consideration. The options that follow along with the pros and cons include the items from the consultants as well as the input from committee members.

Option 1: Remain As Is: K-4, 5-8, 9-12 and renovate current buildings

Pros

- There would not be a major community backlash as perhaps with other options.
- Each community would still have a local school for its elementary children to attend.
- The transportation program would not have to be altered.
- Keeps the same grade configuration.
- There would be no split of siblings as with other options.
- There would not be the possibility of staff lay-offs.
- Younger students would have a shorter bus ride as compared to other options.

Cons

- No fiscal savings would be realized.
- Would not offer an opportunity to improve the transportation program by having a centralized elementary campus.
- Class sizes would not be equal across buildings.
- We would still have old buildings despite investing $47 million
- Palermo is not on municipal water and is on septic.
- This option does not address space issue in New Haven.
- There would need to be building expense due to renovations.
- Building maintenance and upkeep is still an expense (would not be reduced as possible with other options).

Option 2: Develop a grade center plan by having New Haven Elementary as a PK, 2-4 building and Palermo a PK-1 school. The other schools remain as is.

Pros

- All three elementary communities will still have a school locally.
- Greater efficiency of staffing and saving of money
- Easier to balance the class sizes between the two buildings.
- It would be easier to develop curriculum and do staff training; and staff could specialize.
- No duplication of special education services.
- Keep section sizes?

Cons

- Transportation would become more complex with perhaps a shuttle system between the two elementary schools.
- Some students would ride the bus longer; particularly elementary children.
- There would be one more transition in the K-12 sequence for New Haven and Palermo students.
- There would be a transition for PK students in New Haven when they enter kindergarten (not smooth).
- Alters the grade configuration people are used to.
- Transportation issue with Pre-K students.
- Parent involvement will decrease.
- Possible split of families with children close in age (i.e., open houses).
- We would still have old buildings.
- Housing for specials, cafeteria.
- Staffing-care/cuts.
- Will it overwhelm students?
- Transportation: Number of buses/number of drivers needed
- Class sizes would increase (not an improvement); 25-26 are large sections
- Scheduling-housing specials.
- Doctor appointments/ER pick-ups a difference for parents.

Option 3: Close New Haven and Palermo elementary schools and centralize all the elementary grades at Mexico Elementary School with an addition.

Pros

- Much greater efficiency in staffing
- Financial savings
- Easier to balance elementary class sizes for all sections
- Easier to provide transportation (all to one school) and possible transportation savings
- Keeps the same grade configuration.
- Could sell both Palermo and New Haven elementary schools; perhaps create senior care facility in Palermo
- Possibly put two elementary schools back on the tax rolls.
- Would reduce maintenance cost and save money on grounds, clerical and administrative costs.
- All students and families and all elementary staff would be together.
- All grade levels would become a more cohesive unit through collaboration.
- Would permit better mixing of students with academic & personality similarities/differences.

Cons

- Community concern and backlash in Palermo and New Haven due to school closings.
- Question about what to do with closed elementary schools; are there alternate uses?
- Some students would have to ride the bus longer- particularly younger children.
- Too tight spaces; would have to figure out how to house and schedule special area classes, lunches, library, etc. (common area spaces).
- There would be disruption during the construction of addition; existing Mexico elementary staff and students would be displaced and then there would have to be post-construction reorganization.
- The lunch line would be too long.
- There would be an adjustment for students.
- Would there be enough space if in the future new sections of grades were added?
- It would be a large elementary school.
- Emergency evacuation would be complicated.
- There would be difficulty with parking spaces (for staff and family events) and traffic flow (bus loading).
- Green space would be lost.

6. In addition to adding to the list of pro's and con's for the original three options above, committee members were also asked to brainstorm whether there were additional options that should be considered. The committee members offered the following additional options:

- ✓ **Option 4**-Close one elementary school (either Palermo or New Haven) and change the grade configuration to PK-2 (at either Palermo or New Haven), 3-4 (at Mexico Elementary), 5-8 (Middle School), and 9-12 (High School).

- ✓ **Option 5**-Redistrict the current elementary attendance boundaries to better balance school enrollments and class sizes.

- ✓ **Option 6**-Close New Haven and Palermo and realign the grades as follows: PK-3 (Mexico Elementary), 4-8 (Mexico Middle School), 9-12 (High School).

- ✓ **Option 7**-Close all three elementary schools and build a new elementary school on the Middle School campus.

- ✓ **Option 8**-Develop a grade center plan across all three elementary schools (for example, PK-K in one elementary school, 1-2 in another elementary school, and 3-4) in another elementary school; 5-8 middle school and 9-12 high school.

- ✓ **Option 9**-Realign the grades as follows: PK-2 (all three elementary schools), 3-6 (Middle School), 7-12 (High School).

- ✓ **Option 10**-Close all the district's schools and build a new K-12 facility to house all grades.

Further discussion on these options will take place at future meetings of the advisory committee.

7. The presentation concluded with five big ideas or take-aways that the consultants reviewed:
   - ✓ The district runs a two-tiered daily transportation program to and from school—secondary students on one run, elementary on another.
   - ✓ There are very few walkers in the district; only grade 5 and up who reside in the Village of Mexico and have a sidewalk in front of their home.
   - ✓ Mexico does transport some students outside the district to special education programs and BOCES.
   - ✓ The consultants and committee are brainstorming possible "feasible" options for future configuration of the grades and schools primarily based on enrollments and available space at this point in time.
   - ✓ At least three (3) possible feasible options were offered by the consultants and seven (7) more were added by the advisory committee.

8. The meeting was opened up to the observers for questions and comments.

9. The next advisory committee meeting will be held on Monday, February 27, 2017 in the New Haven Elementary School cafeteria. An optional tour of the school will begin at 5:45 for anyone who is interested. The meeting of the advisory committee will begin at 6:30 p.m.

We believe this covers the essence of the discussions at our meeting on January 9. If you have questions with these notes, please feel free to contact me. We will also review these notes as the first agenda item at our next meeting.

Looking forward to seeing you again on 2.27.17 at New Haven Elementary.

C: Sean Bruno

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mexico Facilities Study Advisory Committee
FROM: Alan Pole and Bill Silky
RE: Meeting Notes-Meeting of February 27, 2017
DATE: February 28, 2017

Attendance:

Committee Members: Sadie Blauvelt, Bob Briggs, Lisa Buske, Kelly Cullen, Donna Herrmann, Sue Hewitt, Andrew MacDonald, Charlee Mathia, Mark Norton, Jessica Parker, and Susan Teifke

Consultants: Alan Pole and Bill Silky

Observers: Sean Bruno, Darlene Upcraft, Amy Shaw, Jeremy Belfield, Mary Beth Horn, Janice Clark, Kenvyn Richards, Joe Carollo, Jena Carollo, George Wills, Cindy Noyes, Jenn Silverio, Chad Bigelow, Tara Litwin Snyder, Tim Parkhurst, Karlene Krzyiewski, Renee Nuzzo, Jennifer Willis, Ray Willis, Julie Bradish, and Bill Lighthall

Location: New Haven Elementary School

1. Alan Pole started the meeting by thanking Kelly Cullen for conducting the tour of the school for interested committee members. He then reviewed the meeting protocol for new meeting observers and circulated the attendance sheets. He also announced that Jane Backus had resigned from the advisory committee because of conflicts with the meeting schedule. The agenda for the meeting was presented and reviewed as well.

2. Alan then reviewed the purpose of the study that is to answer the following question:
How can we educationally and fiscally reconfigure our grades and/or facilities to provide a sound instructional program now and in the future?
He indicated that this purpose would be shared at each meeting to keep the committee focused on what the Board has asked the consultants to accomplish. He then reviewed future meeting dates and locations.

3. Notes from the January 9th meeting were reviewed by the committee without any changes and/or additions.

4. Alan then reviewed some follow up items from previous meetings. He reviewed the listing of middle school course offerings that also contained the section sizes for each class. He also reviewed elementary school class size information for Mexico compared with six other districts in Oswego County as well the most recent class sizes from other New York State school districts. The class size numbers in Mexico compare very favorably with other Oswego County districts and statewide averages.

Alan also compared the middle school room utilization numbers on a period-by-period basis. Average room usage is at approximately 58.5%. This is due at least in part to the enrollment decrease at the middle school going from 923 students in 2000-01 to 629 students in 2016-17. From these data, it appears that it would be possible to add an additional grade level at the middle school given current and projected enrollment figures.

Alan also compared the high school room utilization numbers on a period-by-period basis. Average building-wide usage is at approximately 73.1%. This is due at least in part to the enrollment decrease at the high school going from 844 students in 2000-01 to 701 students in 2016-17. From these data, it appears that it would be possible to add an additional grade level at the high school given current and projected enrollment figures.

5. Alan reviewed the salaries associated with instructional staff in the district. He also included the cost of staff fringe benefits that are estimated at 37% of salaries. The committee asked him to provide salary information for support staff as well. This information will be provided at the next meeting.

6. Bill Silky shared an update on the options that were discussed at the last meeting. He reviewed three feasible and possible desirable options as follows:

- Option 1: Remaining as is and renovate the schools.
- Option 2: (revised-PK only at Palermo) Develop a grade center plan; Palermo houses grades PK-1; New Haven houses grades 2-4; other buildings remain as is.
- Option 3: Close two elementary schools and add onto Mexico Elementary; centralize the campus.

If option 1 is pursued further, the renovation costs from the Building Condition Survey generates the following costs for each building.

Cost to Improve Schools: BCS Priority Ranking						
Building	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4	Priority 5	Total
Mexico Elem	$184,794	$1,980,875	$204,276		$2,728,034	$5,097,079
New Haven Elem	$276,007	$718,803	$2,297,777	$489,854	$2,767,409	$6,549,850
Palermo Elem	$307,991	$236,768	$690,244	$647,109	$4,210,176	$6,092,288
Middle School	$497,523	$1,523,814	$273,235	$467,867	$4,366,191	$7,128,630
High School	$2,843		$1,992,014	$90,456	$12,125,338	$14,210,651

Bill then reviewed five other options that appear to be feasible but not desirable and asked committee members to argue for keeping some of these options on the table. There was no support voiced for keeping any of these five options at that time.

7. Bill reviewed the transportation implications for the options that are under consideration. There are plusses and minuses with each option regarding the transporting of children to school and home again.

8. Bill shared the regulations that are in place for closing a school building. He also reviewed the impact on property values in APW and Sidney after school buildings had been closed. It does not appear that the closing of the school buildings had an adverse impact on property values. Rather, the property values in both districts increased after the schools were closed.

9. Bill reviewed the utility costs of each building as shown in the following table. He indicated that only if a school is sold or leased out would it be possible to realize savings of the full amount in the table. Assuming a school is vacant the district would still have to support some basic utilities and would likely only realize a savings of about 40% of the annual cost.

2016-17 Utility Costs By Building					
Utility	New Haven Elementary	Palermo Elementary	Mexico Elementary	Middle School	High School
Gas/Oil	$16,532	$18,641	See note	$42,821	$92,318
Electric	$24,745	$32,651	$37,059	$112,021	$157,494
Total	$41,277	$51,292	$37,059	$154,842	$249,812
NOTES: 1-Palermo used $18,641for oil heat as of 12/31/16. 2-New Haven also uses oil to heat so approximately $5,500 can be added to the total above. 3-The cost of Mexico Elementary gas is included with the High School amount due to a shared meter.					

10. The advisory committee members were broken in to groups to further discuss possible options and well as the advantages and disadvantages associated with each option. One of the groups suggested that the following grade configuration be explored: Pre-K-3, 4-7, and 8-12.

11. The meeting was then opened up to the audience for questions and comments. They included the following:

- ✓ Are the gym facilities at Mexico Elementary sufficient for the changes that are being considered?
- ✓ Can the Pre-K program be located at the Methodist Church like it was a number of years ago?

- ✓ Should there be consideration given to the option of closing two elementary schools and having the grade configuration be Pre-K-2 at Mexico Elementary, 3-7 at the middle school, and 8-12 at the high school?

12. The next advisory committee meeting will be held on Monday, April 10, 2017 in the Mexico Elementary School cafeteria. An optional tour of the school will begin at 5:45 for anyone who is interested. The meeting of the advisory committee will begin at 6:30 p.m.

We believe this covers the essence of the discussions at our meeting on February 27. If you have questions with these notes, please feel free to contact me. We will also review these notes as the first agenda item at our next meeting.

Looking forward to seeing you again on 4.10.17 at Mexico Elementary.

C: Sean Bruno

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mexico Facilities Study Advisory Committee
FROM: Alan Pole and Bill Silky
RE: Meeting Notes-Meeting of June 12, 2017
DATE: June 20, 2017

Attendance:

Committee Members: Sadie Blauvelt, Bob Briggs, Lisa Buske, Kelly Cullen, Donna Herrmann, Sue Hewitt, Andrew MacDonald, Charlee Marthia, Jessica Parker, Peggy Scorzelli, Susan Teifke, and Kevin Upcraft

Consultants: Alan Pole and Bill Silky

Observers: Sean Bruno, Amy Shaw, Jeremy Belfield, Janice Clark, Chad Bigelow, Julie Bradish, Joe Kosiorek, Kelly Freehof, and Stephen Bocciolatt

Location: Mexico Elementary School

1. Alan Pole started the meeting by thanking Bob Briggs for conducting the tour of the school for interested committee members. He introduced colleague Stephen Bocciolatt, retired superintendent from Westhill, who was present to observe the meeting. Alan introduced Joe Kosiorek from SWBR, the district's architect. Alan also congratulated committee member Susan Teifke who was recently elected to the Mexico Board of Education.

2. Alan then reviewed the purpose of the study that is to answer the following question:
How can we educationally and fiscally reconfigure our grades and/or facilities to provide a sound instructional program now and in the future?

3. The committee reviewed the notes from the February 27th meeting without any changes and/or additions.

4. Alan then reviewed some follow up items from previous meetings. As the staffing implications for various options have been discussed in previous meetings, attrition was discussed as one of the options for reducing staff. The committee asked whether people regularly retire from Mexico and whether or not staff are 50 or older so that retirements might be plausibly considered for the future. Alan showed that an average of 12 people have retired over each of the past five years and that the district has 211 staff members who are 50 and older so the possibility that staff will continue to retire in the near future is strong.

5. Bill Silky then reviewed the financial condition of the school district by examining ten straight years of community supported budgets, an increasing pattern of restricted fund balance over the past five years, and a stable history of unassigned and assigned fund balance figures over the past

five years. Bill also reviewed the recent history of full value tax rates and the general fund balance sheet.

Bill Silky then reviewed the comments of the district's auditors which agreed with Bill's analysis of the district's financial condition; that is that the district's finances have been very well managed but the uncertain nature of the PILOT agreement with the power plant puts the future financial condition in a precarious situation. Specifically, the audit report said*, "Using the terms of the new PILOT agreement, we projected the results of operations the District may expect if it does not continue to control expenses. In addition, since the PILOT agreement payment decreases annually, the reserves will need to be used as a budgetary financing source. However, since fund balance is a finite resource, continued reliance on it will eventually be detrimental to the District's financial stability." (p. 5).*

Bill then noted that the PILOT payments have been $7,860,000 in 2016-17 and 2017-18 but remain uncertain for the future. He also reviewed the summary of principal and interest payments on capital debt for the district.

6. Bill Silky then reviewed the two facilities options that remain on the table:

Option 1-Remaining as is and renovate the schools

The cost to renovate the schools according to the 2015 Building Condition Survey is as follows:

Priority Items 1-$1,269,158
Priority Items 1 & 2-$5,729,418
Priority Items 1, 2, & 3-$11,186,964
Priority Items 1, 2, 3, & 4-$12,882,250
Priority Items 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5-$39,078,498

The estimated impact of Option 1 is expected to be approximately $58.68 per year for the owner of a $100,000 house.

Option 2-Close New Haven and Palermo; put addition on Mexico Elementary for Pre-K-2; Mexico Middle School becomes a grade 3-7 intermediate school; the high school houses grades 8-12

Bill reviewed some of the educational advantages of Option 2 and also reviewed the enrollment projections for this option. He then estimated the cost of Option 2 to be approximately $28,000,000. The estimated impact of Option 1 is expected to be approximately $101.99 per year for the owner of a $100,000 house. However, the cost of Option 2 would be dramatically reduced by the potential staff savings from closing two elementary schools of approximately $1,000,000 and the savings of utility costs for the two school buildings of approximately $37,000. The impact of this option using these savings would save the district approximately $600,000 per year.

7. Bill then reviewed the take-aways from the presentation which included the following:

- The district is in a decent financial position, however the long-term financial status is uncertain.
- There are two "feasible" and "desirable" options for reconfiguring the grades and buildings as determined by the consultants—a short-term or long-term direction.

8. The advisory committee was then asked to break up into smaller groups and discuss the pros and cons of the two options. These included the following:

Option 1: Remain As Is: K-4, 5-8, 9-12 and renovate current buildings

▪ ***PRO'S***

- There would not be a major community backlash as perhaps with other options.
- Each community would still have a local school for its elementary children to attend.
- The transportation program would not have to be altered.
- Keeps the same grade configuration.
- There would be no split of siblings as with other options.
- There would not be the possibility of staff lay-offs.
- Younger students would have a shorter bus ride as compared to other options.
- There would be a shorter period of time to pay off debt as with the other option.

▪ ***CON'S***

- No fiscal savings would be realized.
- Would not offer an opportunity to improve the transportation program by having a centralized elementary campus.
- Class sizes would not be equal across buildings.
- We would still have old buildings despite investing $47 million
- Palermo is not on municipal water and is on septic.
- This option does not address space issue in New Haven.
- There would need to be building expense due to renovations.
- Building maintenance and upkeep is still an expense (would not be reduced as possible with the other option).

Option 2: Close New Haven and Palermo; put an addition on Mexico Elementary School for PK-2; Mexico Middle School becomes a grade 3-7 Intermediate School; the High School houses grades 8-12.

PRO'S

- The testing schedule would not be affected at the elementary level-no testing at the primary school.
- There would be one location for after school programs
- K-4 SACC morning and afternoon-there won't be a need to bus kids to New Haven and Palermo but rather to the Middle School.

CON'S

- Parental involvement might decrease
- There may be challenges of scheduling at the Middle School
- There could be some certification issues
- Modified sports/extra-curricular activities for middle school students could be a problem
- There would be a loss of common grade level planning as all teachers at a grade level could not be freed up at the same time
- New playground equipment would have to be purchased
- Parking for all facilities may have to be increased
- Scheduling of enough special area time for students at the elementary level would be a challenge
- Space needs to be available for RTI, Special Ed, OT/Pt, Speech
- Would there be enough space for growth if it occurs
- Would there be sufficient group space such as assemblies
- The Middle School library would have to be reconfigured to accommodate greater number of reading levels
- Could be a challenge bringing different parent groups together
- At the Middle School, there would be challenges with staggered arrival and departure times; how affect after-school programs and sports.
- Handling lunches at Mexico Elementary would be difficult

9. The meeting was then opened up to the audience for questions and comments.

10. The next advisory committee meeting will be held on Monday, July 10, 2017 in the high school library at 6:30 p.m.

We believe this covers the essence of the discussions at our meeting on June 12. If you have questions with these notes, please feel free to contact me. We will also review these notes as the first agenda item at our next meeting.

Looking forward to seeing you again on 7.10.17 at the high school.

C: Sean Bruno

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mexico Facilities Study Advisory Committee
FROM: Alan Pole and Bill Silky
RE: Meeting Notes-Meeting of July 10, 2017
DATE: July 15, 2017

Attendance:

Committee Members: Lisa Buske, Kelly Cullen, Donna Herrmann, Sue Hewitt, Andrew MacDonald, Charlee Marthia, Tammie Nipper, Mark Norton, Jessica Parker, Peggy Scorzelli, Susan Teifke, and Kevin Upcraft

Consultants: Alan Pole and Bill Silky

Observers: Janice Clark, Chad Bigelow, Mary Beth Horn, Jeanine Spicer, Karlene Krzyiewski, Dave von Holtz, Kim Julian, and Lisa Brooks

Location: Mexico High School

1. Bill Silky started the meeting by thanking Mary Beth Horn for conducting the tour of the high school for interested committee members.

2. Bill then reviewed the purpose of the study that is to answer the following question:
How can we educationally and fiscally reconfigure our grades and/or facilities to provide a sound instructional program now and in the future?

3. The committee reviewed the notes from the June 12 meeting without any changes and/or additions.

4. Bill then reviewed some follow up items from previous meetings. He shared an e-mail exchange he had with an administrator from APW about parent involvement following the closing their elementary schools who said that, "I do not feel the consolidation affected or hindered parental attendance at events." Bill also reviewed revised building plans for Mexico Elementary School should the Board choose to adopt Option 2 consolidating the elementary schools. This latest concept drawing from the architects would add 11 classrooms to the Mexico Elementary School permitting adequate room for Pre-K. He then provided further financial analysis of future capital projects. Finally, Bill noted that the projected staff savings from elementary school consolidation that was estimated to be approximately $1.2 million at the last meeting had been revised based on committee input to approximately $1 million due to the addition of an assistant principal and keeping two teachers at full time instead of reducing them to 40%.

5. Alan Pole then reviewed the 30 key findings from the study.

6. Bill Silky then reviewed the conclusion for the study:

The consultants have concluded that there two options that are both "feasible" (they could be accomplished) and "desirable" (they offer a positive path forward for the district)—Option 1: Keep the grades and buildings organized as at present and just make capital improvements to the schools; Option 2: Realign the grades and buildings by closing both New Haven and Palermo Elementary Schools; putting an addition onto the Mexico Elementary School so that it can house grades PreK-2, transition Mexico Middle School into a grade 3-7 Intermediate School, and moving the 8th grade to the High School. Each of these options offers potential educational and financial advantages for the district.

7. After reviewing the criteria for making the recommendations, Bill then reviewed the recommendations for the study:

1. *It is recommended that the Mexico Board of Education review the two feasible and desirable options noted above and, in doing so, assess the advantages and disadvantages of each as noted by the consultants and members of the Advisory Committee. Additionally, the Board should evaluate whether the short-term or long-term plan for the grades and buildings is most appropriate given current district and community considerations, particularly in relation to the overall fiscal status of the area.*
2. *If the Board supports the second option presented, and particularly in light of what appears to be an enrollment increase at New Haven in 2017-18, the Board may wish to begin phasing in this option. Specifically, for the 2017-18 year, the Board may choose to move the eighth grade to the High School thus opening up classroom space at the Middle School to allow the 4th grades to be relocated there. This may mean all the fourth grade sections in the district or perhaps just the New Haven sections of the grade level.*
3. *Lastly, regardless of which option the Board endorses, we strongly recommend that a Facilities Advisory Committee (perhaps with members from the Advisory Committee that work on this study) be appointed to assist with detailed planning of the next capital construction phase the district will enter.*

8. Bill then invited comments and questions from the audience; there were none.

9. Bill reminded everyone that the study will be presented to the Mexico Board of Education on Thursday, July 27 at approximately 7:30. He invited everyone to attend.

We believe this covers the essence of the discussions at our meeting on July 10. If you have questions with these notes, please feel free to contact me. Looking forward to seeing you again on 7.10.17 at the high school.

C: Sean Bruno

Appendix C: Fiscal Advisor's Analysis of Borrowing to Finance Options 1 and New 2

Schedule A

MEXICO CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OSWEGO COUNTY, NEW YORK
$16,500,000 PROPOSED SCHOOL CAPITAL PROJECT
OPTION 1 - BCS PRIORITIES
ESTIMATED DEBT SERVICE

Assumptions:

- *Voter approval Early 2018. SED approval early 2019, construciton begins Spring 2019.*
- *Financing:*
  Capital Reserve amount to be used if available.
  1. *Bond Anticipation may be issued for preliminary costs;*
  2. *Bond Anticipation Notes issued July 2019 to July 2020;*
  3. *Bond Anticipation Notes issued July 2020 to June 2021;*
  4. *Bonds issued to permanently finance in 2021. Maturing June 15, 2022-2035. DASNY Bonds issued.*

(1)	*(2)*	*(3)*	*(4)*	*(5)*	*(6)*	*(7)*	*(8)*	*(9)*	*(10)*
Fiscal Year Ending June 30th	*Balance Outstanding*	*Estimated BAN Principal Payment*	*Estimated BAN Interest*	*Estimated June 15th Bond Principal Payment*	*Estimated Bond Interest Estimated*	*Total Debt Service*	*Less: Est. State Aid Amortization Payments*	*Less: Premium & Interest Earnings*	*Total Net Estimated Taxes to be Raised*
2020	$ 10,000,000	$ -	$ -	-	-	-	-	-	-
2021	16,500,000	725,000	703,750	-	-	1,428,750	1,086,751	-	341,999
2022	15,775,000			900,000	536,350	1,436,350	1,086,751	-	349,599
2023	14,875,000			930,000	505,750	1,435,750	1,086,751	-	348,999
2024	13,945,000			960,000	474,130	1,434,130	1,086,751	-	347,379
2025	12,985,000			995,000	441,490	1,436,490	1,086,751	-	349,739
2026	11,990,000			1,025,000	407,660	1,432,660	1,086,751	-	345,909
2027	10,965,000			1,060,000	372,810	1,432,810	1,086,751	-	346,059
2028	9,905,000			1,100,000	336,770	1,436,770	1,086,751	-	350,019
2029	8,805,000			1,135,000	299,370	1,434,370	1,086,751	-	347,619
2030	7,670,000			1,175,000	260,780	1,435,780	1,086,751	-	349,029
2031	6,495,000			1,215,000	220,830	1,435,830	1,086,751	-	349,079
2032	5,280,000			1,255,000	179,520	1,434,520	1,086,751	-	347,769
2033	4,025,000			1,295,000	136,850	1,431,850	1,086,751	-	345,099
2034	2,730,000			1,340,000	92,820	1,432,820	1,086,751	-	346,069
2035	1,390,000			1,390,000	47,260	1,437,260	1,086,751	-	350,509
TOTALS		725,000	703,750	15,775,000	4,312,390	21,516,140	16,301,266	-	5,214,874

Average Impact 2021-2035:	$347,658
Average tax impact per $1,000 FV:	$0.587

Notes: - State Aid based on building aid ratio of 87.7% and estimated bond percentage of 95.00%.
- Building aid will begin 18 months after SED approval date assuming final cost reports are completed. Aid based on assumed rate of 2.00%.

Prepared by:
Fiscal Advisors & Marketing, Inc.
5/31/2017

Above financing schedule is preliminary

MEXICO CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OSWEGO COUNTY, NEW YORK
$16,500,000 PROPOSED SCHOOL CAPITAL PROJECT

Project Cost	Building Aid Ratio	Bond Percent	Term of Building Aid Payback	Estimated Average Local Share per Year	Estimated Average Impact per $1,000 Full Value	Estimated Yearly Impact on a $100,000 Home	Estimated Monthly Impact on a $100,000 Home
$16,500,000	87.70%	95.00%	15	$347,658	$0.587	$58.68	$4.89
$16,500,000	87.70%	80.00%	15	$519,249	$0.876	$87.64	$7.30
$16,500,000	87.70%	65.00%	15	$690,841	$1.166	$116.60	$9.72

Notes:

- Interest rates are estimated high to be conservative.
- STAR is not included in the caclulation above.
- Tax impact based on 2016-17 Full Value of $592,486,820.

Prepared by:

Fiscal Advisors & Marketing, Inc.
5/31/2017

Schedule B

MEXICO CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OSWEGO COUNTY, NEW YORK
$24,000,000 PROPOSED SCHOOL CAPITAL PROJECT
BCS PRIORITIES AND ADDITION AT MEXICO ELEMENTARY - 21ST CENTURY

ESTIMATED DEBT SERVICE

Assumptions:

- *Voter approval Fall 2017. SED approval early 2019, construction begins Spring 2019.*
- *Financing:*

  Capital Reserve amount to be used if available.

  1. *Bond Anticipation may be issued for preliminary costs;*
  2. *Bond Anticipation Notes issued July 2019 to July 2020;*
  3. *Bond Anticipation Notes issued July 2020 to June 2021;*
  4. *Bonds issued to permanently finance in 2021. Maturing June 15, 2022-2035. DASNY Bonds issued.*

(1)	*(2)*	*(3)*	*(4)*	*(5)*	*(6)*	*(7)*	*(8)*	*(9)*	*(10)*
Fiscal Year Ending June 30th	*Balance Outstanding*	*Estimated BAN Principal Payment*	*Estimated BAN Interest*	*Estimated June 15th Bond Principal Payment*	*Estimated Bond Interest Estimated*	*Total Debt Service*	*Less: Est. State Aid Amortization Payments*	*Less: Premium & Interest Earnings*	*Total Net Estimated Taxes to be Raised*
2020	$ 12,000,000	$ -	$ -	-	-	-	-	-	-
2021	24,000,000	810,000	960,000	-	-	1,770,000	1,105,612	-	664,388
2022	23,190,000			925,000	846,435	1,771,435	1,105,612	-	665,823
2023	22,265,000			955,000	812,673	1,767,673	1,105,612	-	662,061
2024	21,310,000			990,000	777,815	1,767,815	1,105,612	-	662,203
2025	20,320,000			1,030,000	741,680	1,771,680	1,105,612	-	666,068
2026	19,290,000			1,065,000	704,085	1,769,085	1,105,612	-	663,473
2027	18,225,000			1,105,000	665,213	1,770,213	1,105,612	-	664,601
2028	17,120,000			1,145,000	624,880	1,769,880	1,105,612	-	664,268
2029	15,975,000			1,185,000	583,088	1,768,088	1,105,612	-	662,476
2030	14,790,000			1,230,000	539,835	1,769,835	1,105,612	-	664,223
2031	13,560,000			1,275,000	494,940	1,769,940	1,105,612	-	664,328
2032	12,285,000			1,320,000	448,403	1,768,403	1,105,612	-	662,791
2033	10,965,000			1,370,000	400,223	1,770,223	1,105,612	-	664,611
2034	9,595,000			1,420,000	350,218	1,770,218	1,105,612	-	664,606
2035	8,175,000			1,470,000	298,388	1,768,388	1,105,612	-	662,776
2036	6,705,000			1,245,000	244,733	1,489,733	828,290	-	661,442
2037	5,460,000			1,290,000	199,290	1,489,290	828,290	-	661,000
2038	4,170,000			1,340,000	152,205	1,492,205	828,290	-	663,915
2039	2,830,000			1,390,000	103,295	1,493,295	828,290	-	665,005
2040	1,440,000			1,440,000	52,560	1,492,560	828,290	-	664,270
TOTALS		810,000	960,000	23,190,000	9,039,955	33,999,955	20,725,630	-	13,274,325

Average Impact 2021-2040:	$663,716
Average tax impact per $1,000 FV:	$1.120

Notes: - State Aid based on building aid ratio of 87.7% and estimated bond percentage of 80.00%.
- Building aid will begin 18 months after SED approval date assuming final cost reports are completed. Aid based on assumed rate of 2.00%.

Prepared by:
Fiscal Advisors & Marketing, Inc.
6/30/2017

Above financing schedule is preliminary

MEXICO CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OSWEGO COUNTY, NEW YORK
$24,000,000 PROPOSED SCHOOL CAPITAL PROJECT

Schedule	Building Aid Ratio	Bond Percent	Term of Building Aid Payback	Estimated Average Local Share per Year	Estimated Average Impact per $1,000 Full Value	Estimated Yearly Impact on a $100,000 Home	Estimated Monthly Impact on a $100,000 Home
A	87.70%	95.00%	15 & 20	$466,201	$0.787	$78.69	$6.56
B	87.70%	80.00%	15 & 20	$663,716	$1.120	$112.02	$9.34
C	87.70%	65.00%	15 & 20	$861,185	$1.454	$145.35	$12.11

Notes:

- Interest rates are estimated high to be conservative.
- STAR is not included in the calculation above.
- Tax impact based on 2016-17 Full Value of $592,486,820.
- Reconstruction work aided at 15 years, additions at Mexico Elementary aided at 20 years. Transportation facility has been removed.
- 5% in bond percent represents $64,767 per year and $1,295,346 in aid over 20 years.

Prepared by:

Fiscal Advisors & Marketing, Inc.
6/30/2017