



**CAPITAL AREA SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION**



**LAKE GEORGE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**A Study of the Lake George Central School District  
with Comparisons to Similar School Districts**

Prepared By

Gregory J. Aidala, Ph.D.

Susan P. Tangorre

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Capital Area School Development Association

UAlbany Health and Science Campus

5 University Place - A409

Rensselaer, New York 12144

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nestled in the southern Adirondack Mountains, Lake George is a popular summer destination for many families. The 32-mile “Queen of American Lakes” well known for its natural beauty and Lake George village with its small town-feel, together attracts thousands of visitors each year during July and August. The hospitality industry provides financial stability for the Lake George Central School District with its K-12 student population of 748 in 2018-19. The student population has declined approximately 25% in the past ten years and according to projections will continue to do so for another five years before beginning to level off. The purpose of this study is to help decision makers in the Lake George Central School District plan for the future. A great deal of information and data were compiled, including feedback from key stakeholders – all intended to be a starting point for closer examination and further discussion.

The District’s budget for 2018-19 is \$23.35 million. The organization is financially sound, having ample reserve funds. Thus, Lake George is well insulated from any potential significant State Aid reductions. Its commercial and residential real estate tax base generates high property wealth as measured by the Combined Wealth Ratio metric (#38 in New York State). In fact, the Lake George Central School District receives only about ten percent of its revenue from New York State with approximately 84% derived from local property taxes.

The CASDA team recognizes that the Lake George Central School District is high performing in terms of student outputs. Using data from the 2016-17 New York State School Report Card, Lake George graduation rates were above 90 percent, ELA and Mathematics assessments in grades 3 through 8 were well above New York State averages, and Regents test scores in the five areas sampled (English, Algebra, Living Environment, Global Studies, and U.S. History) were also very strong. The CASDA team also examined enrollment trends, potential faculty turnover, and non-resident tuition issues.

In addition, data were examined relating to student performance in 13 similar school districts in New York State. Entry into the comparative group was based primarily on the district having similar enrollments (range of 762 – 941 students; Lake George with 792 in 2016-17); two

buildings, K-6 and grades 7-12 (or in some cases K-5 and grades 6-12); and to the extent possible, identifying districts with high Combined Wealth Ratios (CWR) compared to the New York State average of 1.0. More than a dozen tables were generated to help organize the feedback received from contacts with other elementary and secondary principals. This included information about the number of teachers, support staff, and administrators, teacher loads, responsibilities for developing the secondary master schedule, number of Advanced Placement courses, Academic Intervention Services, length of the school day, and number of after school clubs and activities.

From the information and data collected, ten areas were identified for further consideration by what we hope will be a district team with representation of major stakeholders. These areas included:

- Future planning and next steps
- Developing partnerships
- School structure
- Pre-K program
- Keeping a balance
- Class size protocols
- NYKids Research
- Developing the master schedule
- Non-resident students
- Marketing and promoting the District

In reviewing the results of this study, the emphasis should be focused on collaboration, team work, communication, and of course, what is best for students. As noted by Jim Collins in his leadership text, *Good to Great*, “much of the answer to the question of taking an organization from *good to great* lies in the discipline to do whatever it takes to become the best within carefully selected areas and then to seek continual improvement from there. It’s really just that simple. And it’s really just that difficult.”

## INTRODUCTION

Located in Warren County, the Lake George Central School District provides services to approximately 750 students in kindergarten through grade twelve. Over the past ten years, the district has seen a steady decline in enrollment, a trend that will likely continue for the next five years. Lake George Village is located almost halfway between New York City and the greater metropolitan area to the south, and Montreal to the north. The community relies heavily on spring, summer, and fall tourism as the main industry and its source of property wealth, which provides a critical revenue stream to support the school district financially.

The Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA) was asked to conduct a study for the Lake George Central School District (Lake George CSD or District). With the challenges brought about by declining enrollment, the intent of this study was to examine current conditions in terms of programs available to students as well as to review specific areas identified by the Board of Education and superintendent such as future enrollment trends, non-resident tuition, and potential staff turnover. In addition, the CASDA team reviewed data on class size, staffing assignments, administrative structure, teacher-student ratios, support personnel, and other general areas of school related interest. Student performance indicators on ELA and mathematics assessments in grades 3-8, Regents test scores and graduation rates are also presented as a baseline when comparing staffing, programs and activities in Lake George with 13 similar school districts across New York State.

A periodic review of District services by the administration and Board of Education is an important activity that facilitates both short- and long-term planning for staffing and budgeting purposes.

## OVERVIEW AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

The District Office is located at 381 Canada Street, Lake George, NY within the Jr.-Sr High School building. Superintendent of Schools Lynne Rutnik serves as the chief executive officer of the District. Working under Superintendent Rutnik are Kate DuBois, School Business Manager and Jeffrey Ziegler, who is currently serving as the Interim Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Student Services. Administrative duties are coordinated among these central office members.

James Conway is principal of Lake George Elementary School serving approximately 319 students in grades K-6, and Francis Coccozza is principal of the Lake George Jr.-Sr. High School, serving approximately 429 students in grades 7-12 based on the 2018-19 school year. Educational support programs and services offered in these schools are comprehensive in nature and will be described further in this report.

The philosophy of the Board of Education is closely aligned with the goals of the District which were developed as part of a collaborative district-wide planning process. In the spring of 2016, a team from the Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA) guided the District through the process of developing a strategic plan. The Strategic Planning And Review Committee (SPARC) involved stakeholders of parents, students, staff, community, Board of Education members, and administrators. The SPARC team created the following Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals which the Board of Education adopted in August 2017.

#### **Mission**

The Lake George CSD will personalize opportunities that empower all students to be lifelong learners, leaders and global citizens.

#### **Vision**

To foster academic and personal excellence, responsibility and cultural awareness, we are dedicated to creating:

- An engaging and innovative learning environment for each student
- A comprehensive K-12 instructional program using best practices
- Student connections to extra-curricular opportunities
- An appreciation for diversity and local traditions

**Values** Collaboration – Respect – Excellence – Accountability – Trust - Empathy

#### **District Goals for 2017-2020**

<b>GOAL 1</b>	Raise the Bar	Empower students to achieve local, national, and global academic standards at essential proficiency levels.
<b>GOAL 2</b>	Close the Gap	Increase proficiency rates of targeted subgroups.
<b>GOAL 3</b>	Create Innovation and Engaging Learning Environments	Empower future-ready learners to thrive in an evolving world.
<b>GOAL 4</b>	Student Leadership, Engagement, and Diversity	Cultivate powerful leadership, connections & engagement of students to develop cultural competence.
<b>GOAL 5</b>	Cultivating Community Partners	Engage the community in partnerships that actively support Lake George CSD initiatives.

A shared mission, vision, and goals provide a critical foundation and focus on educational programs and outcomes for students. The initial work of SPARC is commendable. The individual and collective efforts required of administrators, teachers, staff, parents, community and Board of Education members to put into practice these three-year goals are challenging. The work of DuFour and Marzano addresses the importance of establishing district goals and priorities. They ask for consideration of the critical question, “Have we aligned district practices with district priorities and been willing to change those practices that do not reflect our priorities?” (*Leaders of Learning*, 34) Implementing these goals and action plans will be one of the future challenges for all stakeholders in the Lake George CSD.

## DOCUMENT/DATA REVIEW

The CADSA team examined several data elements that relate to the operation of the District, the Elementary School and Jr.-Sr. High School. These items included:

- Strategic Action Plan – 2017
- BEDS Data for 2017-18 and 2018-19
- K-12 teacher rosters
- Elementary School master schedule
- Jr.-Sr. High School master schedule
- Lake George Junior High Program of Studies
- Lake George Senior High Program of Studies
- 9-12 electives, AP courses and BOCES programs
- AIS/Special Education program data
- K-12 Afterschool and Enrichment Activities
- Breakdown of teachers by age and experience categories
- Relevant Board of Education policies (online)
- District calendar and website
- Current collective bargaining agreements

Our thanks to District personnel who were very responsive in accommodating our requests for information and documents.

## METHODOLOGY

In undertaking this project, the CASDA team first requested and compiled extensive information about the Lake George CSD and its programs at the elementary and secondary levels. This effort was based on several sources including but not limited to a review of NYS School Report Cards with a focus on ELA and Mathematics assessment results, Regents exam scores, graduation

results, class size data, an update of enrollment projections, and a review of many internal and external documents to gain a better sense of student opportunities in K-6 and 7-12.

The next step was to conduct a series of individual interviews with District personnel on December 12, 14 and 18, 2018. When necessary, follow-up contacts were made to clarify issues and to request further information. Individual interviews of approximately one hour were conducted with:

- Kate Dubois, Business Manager;
- Jeff Ziegler, Interim Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Student Services;
- Jim Conway, Elementary School Principal;
- Fran Coccozza, Jr./Sr. High School Principal;
- Counselors, Social Workers, and Psychologists (7); and
- Director of Special Education, 504 Coordinator (2)

Focus Group sessions were also conducted on December 13 and 18, 2018 with various stakeholder groups for approximately one hour. The numbers in parenthesis below represent the count of participants in each session. Responses were collected from the following Focus Groups:

- K-6 faculty and staff (approximately 50);
- 7-12 faculty and staff (approximately 48);
- Jr./Sr. High School students (12); and
- Focus Group with parents and community members (15).

The CASDA team provided a consistent format for the focus group participants. Simple ground rules were shared, and responses were recorded to the extent possible during each focus group meetings. Three questions were raised:

1. What's working really well in Lake George CSD (elementary and secondary, respectively)?
2. With declining enrollment, how will you keep the momentum going?
3. Given these challenges, what are your highest priorities for the future?

The Interview/Focus Group Schedule (Appendix A), Focus Group - Format (Appendix B), and a summary of Focus Group Responses (Appendix C) are included at the end in this report.

In addition to the focus group sessions conducted with over 140 teachers, staff, students, and community members, 51 on-line responses were received anonymously from staff members via an in-house Blackboard on-line survey. Of these responses 19 were from the elementary level, 29 from the secondary level and three from individuals who indicated other. Although this feedback was optional for those who could not attend the originally



scheduled meetings, had to leave early, or who had additional feedback to share, the CASDA team received almost 100 additional written comments from the online survey. The Blackboard On-Line Survey (Appendix D) is also included. A record of the information generated from the focus groups with students, parents and community members, K-6 faculty and staff, and 7-12 faculty and staff are provided in Appendix C.

After meeting with Lake George CSD personnel and constituent groups, we able to frame the areas of interest and concern to be pursued when contacting superintendents and building principals from “similar” school districts. Thirteen similar districts were identified for the purpose of this study and listed in Table #8.

There were several criteria examined to determine which school systems to include in the comparable grouping. Based on the 2016-17 school year (latest available), the criteria were:

- Districts must have only two schools, preferably structured as K-6 and 7-12. Five school systems had secondary programs that were K-5 and grades 6-12. Readers are cautioned that when examining enrollments in this category, approximately 1/7 of the students needed to be subtracted from the secondary count and added to the elementary student population for comparative purposes.
- K-12 enrollments in the range of 800 students. In cases where the K-12 enrollment was notably lower or greater than 800, preference was given to declining numbers compared to the previous year, and/or a high CWR and a 7-12 student population consistent with the Lake George Jr.-Sr. High School (452 in 2016-17 and 429 in 2018-19).
- In descending priority order, Combined Wealth Ratio (CWR) was taken into consideration (explained again at the bottom of Table #8 ). This is one of the key factors used by the New York State Education Department in determining allocations of State Aid. The Combined Wealth Ratio (CWR) is a measure of relative wealth, indexing each school district against the statewide average on a combination of two factors: property wealth per pupil and income wealth per pupil. A school district’s wealth is measured by comparing its property value per pupil with the state average property value per pupil, and the district’s adjusted gross income per pupil with the state average adjusted gross income per pupil. The ratios derived from these comparisons are multiplied by .5 and added together to form the combined wealth ratio (Sources: [www.nyssba.org](http://www.nyssba.org) and [www.lohud.nydatabases.com](http://www.lohud.nydatabases.com) – Authors’ note: In

general, the higher the Combined Wealth Ratio, the wealthier the district). A CWR of 1.000 is approximately the NYS average and the median CWR is estimated to be .700. Generally, but not always, the higher a district's CWR, the lower the per pupil allocation of State Aid. This is an important planning tool for Boards of Education, administrators, and the school community as a whole. As a hypothetical illustration, if in 2016-17 Lake George CSD experienced a projected decline of 100 students in one year, the approximate loss of revenue in the form of State Aid would be  $100 \times \$2,702 = \$270,200$ . In contrast, a district with a very low CWR would under the same circumstances suffer a dramatic revenue drop ( $100 \times \$16,956 = \$1,695,600$ ) which undoubtedly would present significant challenges to maintain programs.

- Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) percentages were also a factor in determining the school districts as included in Table #8 . The percentages ranged from a low of 12% to a high of 55%. The combined rate for Lake George CSD in 2016-17 was 26%; the NYS average was 53% in that same year which includes the 1.1 million students in New York City.

Once the group of similar districts was selected, the CASDA team reached out to the superintendents from the respective school systems seeking their permission to be included in this study. Building principals were interviewed about programs, number of teachers and administrators, delivery of services, class size data, master scheduling responsibilities and a variety of related issues. The CASDA team presented its findings through the use of tables which summarized the information received from other school districts.

## **FINANCIAL OVERVIEW**

The approved budget for the 2018-19 school year was \$23,349,989 which represented a 1.89% increase (\$434,000) compared to the previous year. In support of the total planned expenditures, approximately \$19.54 million or almost 84% in revenue was collected through property taxes. State Aid is expected to account for \$2.34 million (approximately 10%) of total revenue with the balance of funding support (6%) derived from other sources such as federal aid, STAR reimbursement, interest earnings, appropriated fund balance, etc. The spending plan approved by the voters increased the tax levy by a projected 1.53% which was below the tax cap level of 2.68%.

Lake George CSD is fortunate because its property wealth allows it not to be dependent upon State Aid fluctuations. The District appears to be on sound financial footing. As of June 30, 2018, the District maintained reserve funds separate from the annual budget in several categories: Repair Reserve \$312,187; Unemployment Reserve \$80,766; Employee Benefit Accrued Liability Reserve \$845,190; Employee Retirement Contribution Reserve \$658,248; Tax Certiorari Reserve \$139,201; Insurance (Disability) Reserve \$19,362; Workers' Compensation Reserve \$101,426; and Capital Reserve \$1,655,503 (Total Reserves: \$2.16 million exclusive of the Capital Reserve Fund). On December 4, 2018 District voters approved a capital project for building improvements and site work in the amount of \$5,272,191 of which \$1.655 million from the existing Capital Reserve Fund will be utilized to reduce the local tax impact. In addition, the District maintained a \$934,000 Unassigned Fund Balance at the NYS legal limit of four percent. In summary, the superintendent, business manager, and Board of Education have been fiscally prudent in taking steps to ensure that the Lake George CSD is insulated from any economic downturn which might otherwise result in the loss of programs and personnel.

## **ENROLLMENT – PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE**

In early October 2018, the BEDS (Bureau of Education Data Systems) data were submitted to the NYS Education Department for the Lake George CSD. The K-12 enrollment was 748. This total showed 319 children attending Lake George Elementary School and 429 students in grades 7-12 at the Jr.-Sr. High School . Table # 1 shows the steady decline over the past ten years for both the individual schools and the District as a whole. Between 2009-10 and 2018-19, K-6 enrollment has declined by 34.0% (-164 students), 7-12 enrollment dropped by 16.9% (-87 students), and the K-12 student population decreased by 25.1% (-251 students).

Typically, enrollment projections are calculated using a method called Cohort Survival. This approach forecasts future enrollment by examining the previous ten years of students at each grade level. Then a "survival ratio" for the subsequent year is calculated and estimates for each grade level are projected for future years. The cohort survival ratio tends to be more accurate for the subsequent five-year period at the elementary school level (not ten years) and for up to a ten-year period at the secondary level for grades 7-12. The reason for the discrepancy between the elementary and secondary longevity periods is the difficulty of projecting kindergarten enrollments

beyond the “live births” data in Warren County from the five years prior to 2018-19 used to estimate kindergarten numbers.

One notable fact taken from the District’s Strategic Plan presentation to the Board of Education on March 13, 2018 was a line graph comparing the number of teachers over a ten-year period to the enrollment decline. In 2006, there were 1,058 students in the District being served by 95 teachers. Ten years later in 2016, there were 797 students (a decline of 261 or 25.7%), yet the number of teachers on staff remained almost the same at 94.

The Board of Education and school community are well aware of the significant decline in the number of students attending Lake George CSD. Thus, this study was undertaken to examine current conditions and help the District prepare for the future in terms of programs and staffing while simultaneously maintaining the high quality of offerings and support for students.

Many stakeholders expressed concern about the declining enrollment and are uncertain when and at what level it will stabilize.

**TABLE # 1**

**LAKE GEORGE CSD ENROLLMENT DATA 2009-10 THROUGH 2018-19**

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>
<b>K-6</b>	483	474	452	440	410	394	363	345	321	319
<b>7-12</b>	516	484	475	467	430	463	442	450	449	429
<b>K-12</b>	999	958	927	907	840	857	805	795	770	748

Source: BEDS data

Similar information was shared with the Board of Education and staff as part of the District’s efforts to develop a Strategic Plan which included actual data based on 2016-17 and the previous ten-year period. These numbers along with actual data from 2017-18 and 2018-19 were used to update projections as shown in Table #2 below. The cohort survival method of calculating enrollment projections does have limitations and can be influenced by changes in local conditions such as housing starts, a grade level bubble, closing of a private school in the District, number of students home schooled, increase in the number of non-resident students attending Lake George CSD, or other outside forces.

**TABLE # 2****COMPARISON OF PROJECTED AND ACTUAL ENROLLMENT FOR 2017-18 AND 2018-19**

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>2017-18 Projected Enrollment</b>	<b>2017-18 Actual Enrollment</b>	<b>2018-19 Projected Enrollment</b>	<b>2018-19 Actual Enrollment</b>
<b>K-6</b>	344	321	333	319
<b>7-12</b>	440	449	412	429
<b>K-12</b>	784	770	744	748

Source: BEDS data

Table #3 below illustrates the obvious reduction in student enrollment. The number of students entering kindergarten over the past five years has been much smaller than the student count for those graduating high school. As noted in Table #3 if all other grade levels were unchanged, the K-12 enrollment decline can predominately be traced to these two grade levels.

**TABLE # 3**

**FIVE-YEAR TREND**  
**COMPARISON OF THE NUMBERS OF INCOMING KINDERGARTNERS WITH**  
**GRADUATING SENIORS FROM THE PREVIOUS JUNE**

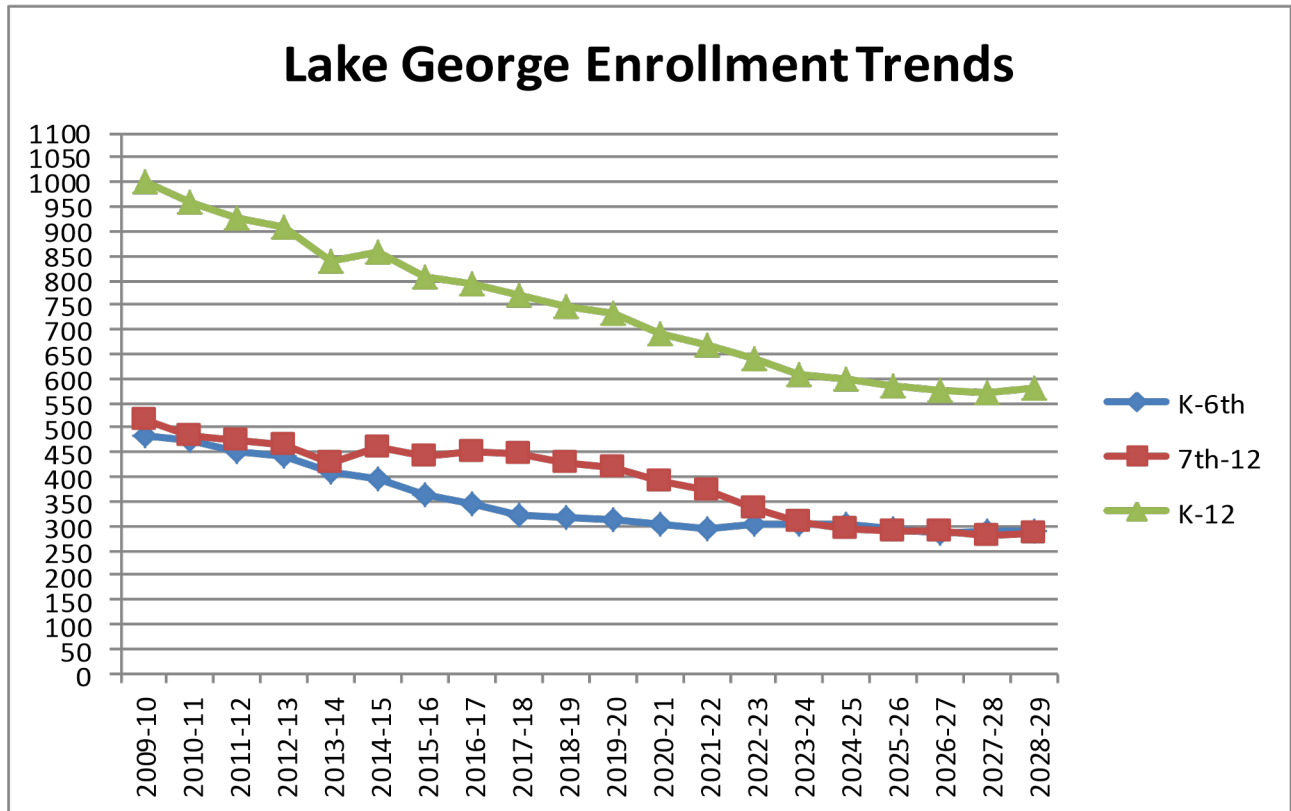
<b>School Year</b>	<b>Number of K Students</b>	<b># of HS Seniors from Previous Year</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>2018-19</b>	47	83	-36
<b>2017-18</b>	37	75	-38
<b>2016-17</b>	44	65	-21
<b>2015-16</b>	31	90	-59
<b>2014-15</b>	45	83	-38
<b>Five-Year Average</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>79.2</b>	<b>-192 Total -38.4 Avg.</b>

Source: BEDS data

When examining enrollment data, the logical question becomes when does the decline end? Will enrollments begin to increase again or, at the very least, level off? Starting with Lake George Elementary School, enrollments have already begun to stabilize. From 2017-18 through 2023-24, the actual and projected enrollments range from a low of 296 (2021-22) to a high of 321 (2017-18). The same conclusion is not the case for Lake George Jr.-Sr. High School where a generalization can reasonably be projected over a ten-year period through 2028-29 (these children are now in the Lake George CSD system). With a current enrollment in grades 7-12 of 429, the student population is projected to continue dropping until 2023-24 when the numbers will level off in the range of 290-300. Using this information and coupling the projected K-6 enrollments while also assuming no further changes because of other forces as mentioned previously, the Lake George CSD will have a K-12 student population of approximately 600 starting in 2023-24.

TABLE # 4

LAKE GEORGE CSD ENROLLMENT DATA 2009-10 THROUGH 2028-29



**Table #5**  
**Lake George Enrollment Trend Chart**

Grade	2009-10	2010-11	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	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
K-6	483	474	452	440	410	394	363	345	321	319	314	302	296	305	302	304	295	286	291	292
7-12	516	484	475	467	430	463	442	450	449	429	419	389	371	336	307	294	290	290	280	287
K-12	999	958	927	907	840	857	805	795	770	748	733	691	667	641	609	598	585	576	571	579



## NON-RESIDENT TUITION POLICY AND PRACTICES

As a way of increasing enrollment, one of the issues from the SPARC (Strategic Planning and Review Committee) outline suggested the development of a proactive approach to attract new students to Lake George CSD. For 2018-19, the District has no K-6 or 7-12 non-resident students. The calculated tuition expense in accordance with the New York State Education Department formula (commonly referred to as the Seneca Falls formula) for non-residents of Lake George CSD is \$16,820 and \$23,515 depending on the elementary or secondary level of the student. Because the Lake George CSD receives low amounts of State Aid per pupil, its non-resident tuition rates are high. However, the State Education Department formula typically represents the maximum amount of tuition that can be charged.

Section 174.2 of the Commissioner's Regulations under "Computation of Tuition Charges for Nonresident Pupils," stipulates how tuition rates are calculated and the maximum amount that can be assessed. The Commissioner's Regulations are silent on whether a lesser rate can be charged which is presumed to be possible. It is up to the Board of Education within its discretion to determine the actual annual non-resident tuition rate. The Lake George CSD Board of Education Policy #7132 Non-Resident Students (Appendix E) outlines the process and specific details by which families can enroll their children in the District. School districts that admit nonresident students may not exclude students with disabilities or charge non-resident students with disabilities a different tuition rate. Such an action would be a violation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (NYSSBA, School Law Handbook, 2004, p. 409).

Several faculty members commented in the K-6 and 7-12 focus group sessions, and the follow-up Blackboard electronic survey that the District should be proactive in combatting declining student enrollment by actively recruiting new students from beyond Lake George CSD's boundaries, including the children of teachers at a reduced rate. One teacher stated: "Tuition should be lowered to be affordable. Staff should be able to enroll their children, tuition free or at very reduced tuition, if they wish." Another suggestion submitted stated: "The focus should be on how are we as a district going to increase enrollment. Perhaps we can greatly decrease tuition. Allow children of faculty/staff to come at a reduced rate. We could promote small class sizes, abundance of options – academics, electives, and athletics."

Non-resident student enrollment practices can be a slippery slope and the Board of Education and administration should proceed cautiously if they are interested in pursuing this

option. Two illustrations in the region may be instructive. Newcomb CSD currently enrolls 16 non-resident students as part of its international program and charges \$10,350 per student in 2018-19 which includes room and board. In addition, for non-residents living nearby, but outside the Newcomb CSD borders, the tuition rate is \$800 for K-6 and \$1,300 for grades 7-12. There is a maximum fee of \$2,100 for multiple children from the same family accepted on a non-resident basis. In 2018-19, nearby Bolton CSD non-resident tuition rates were \$500 (K-5) and \$1,500 (grades 6-12). In total, there were 19 out-of-district students. Both Bolton and Newcomb school districts have a long-standing practice that the children of teachers can attend tuition-free.

School districts which permit children of teachers to attend tuition free typically have a long tradition which has been a Board of Education policy and/or a part of the teachers' contractual agreement. This benefit was meant to incentivize teachers to remain in the district (reduce turnover), foster loyalty to the organization, and promote a greater family-type atmosphere among employees.

Implementing such a practice for the Lake George CSD would be a significant change. In order to accept a greater number of non-resident students in Lake George CSD, the Board of Education would need to develop a plan which will very likely be difficult to reverse in the future, and could become a source of taxpayer concern if it expands too rapidly and creates unforeseen costs. Although the Board of Education's current policy enables the trustees to revoke a student's acceptance at any time, if a non-resident student remains in good standing and has been accepted for a given school year, revoking acceptance in future years would be difficult.

In summary, under present conditions, the acceptance of non-resident students offers a very limited approach to increasing enrollment. At Lake George CSD's current non-resident tuition rate, it is not likely that there will be many families seeking to enroll their children from outside the District when much lower cost options exist nearby. Decreasing the non-resident rate to be more competitive could be considered, but such a plan must be carefully developed and reviewed to identify advantages and potential disadvantages before any final decision can be made.

Another approach that may offer a more sustainable way of increasing the number of students is to promote and market the District and the exemplary opportunities available in a Lake George K-12 educational experience – most notably, small classes, child centered approach, caring and dedicated teachers, a wide variety of course offerings, and many clubs and activities for elementary and secondary students. In addition, the availability of a Prekindergarten programs for

four-year olds could provide a level of uniqueness not available in all districts, but becoming more and more prevalent.

## POTENTIAL FACULTY TURNOVER

The professional literature on teacher attrition often paints a bleak picture. The National Center for Education Statistics tracked new public school teachers over a five-year period from 2007-08 through 2011-12 through a representative sample and found that 17.3% had left their jobs in the first five years (“Public School Teacher Attrition and Mobility in the First Five Years: Results From the First Through Fifth Waves of the 2007–08 Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study,” National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). Anecdotally, teachers, administrators, and educational researchers have often claimed that this number was much higher. When we apply the same approach to the Lake George CSD faculty (recognizing that the number in this category is infinitely smaller) and compare the number of teachers in 2018-19 who were new to the District four and five years ago in 2014-15 and 2015-16, we find that the opposite is true in that the attrition rate is zero. From both years, however, there were only three new teachers on staff, but in 2018-19 all three remain on staff in Lake George CSD.

Teachers who resign their positions and leave a district do so for a variety of reasons. It may be voluntary – disenchantment with the profession, financial, lack of support, working in high poverty schools, etc. Sometimes teachers abandon their careers involuntarily due to declining enrollment, budgetary, or performance reasons. The belief is that the Lake George CSD faculty roster is stable, working conditions are very favorable, and faculty efforts are recognized as student-centered – all of which are positive factors toward providing consistency and continuity of programs.

Another way to examine faculty trends in Lake George CSD is illustrated in Table #6 which shows the breakdown of the elementary and secondary staff in 2018-19 based on age. This information is potentially helpful for future planning if we assume that between the ages of 55 and 60, teachers have accumulated the requisite 30 years of service. This important point is not reflected in Table #6, but is explained further on the next page. The 2018-19 roster totals were 43 K-6 faculty, 61 7-12 teachers, and 104 K-12.

**TABLE # 6**  
**BREAKDOWN OF K-6 AND 7-12 FACULTY BY AGE**

School Level	< or = 30 Years	>30 – 40 Years	>40 – 50 Years	>50 – 55 Years	>55 – 60 Years	>60 Years
K-6	4	12	13	8	3	3
7-12	5	7	23	10	12	4
<b>K-12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>

Digging deeper into the results of Table #6 by factoring the years of service, the results are somewhat different. From the groups >50 – 55, >55 – 60, and >60 years of age, the K-12 totals can be broken down further as listed in Table #7 below. Eligibility is based on 30 years of service in public education as defined by the New York State Retirement System (NYSTRS) and reaching the minimum age of 55.

**TABLE # 7**  
**BREAKDOWN OF K-6 AND 7-12 FACULTY ELIGIBLE TO RETIRE NOW, IN 5 YEARS, AND IN 10 YEARS**

School Level	Eligible to Retire Now	Eligible to Retire in 5 years or Less	Eligible to Retire in 5 to 10 Years
K-6	3	6	6
7-12	3	11	16
<b>K-12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>22</b>

Within the next ten years, it is possible that there will be significant turnover among teachers in the Lake George CSD (about 21%). In addition, Table #7 does not reflect that another five teachers will be at least 65 years old in ten years, but they will not have the minimum 30 years of public school service in the NYS Teachers' Retirement System. This brings the total of eligible retirees to 26%. No determination was made by the CASDA team to narrow the list into individual departments and/or grade levels because it would be unfair to indirectly identify individuals given the small size of such groups. The key point is that should there be any future retrenchment due to continued declining enrollment, the number of layoffs should be minimal, and the District could eliminate positions due to attrition. At the same time, the District must be cognizant of the difficulty in recruiting new teachers in some hard to fill areas, most notably STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) and special education. Innovative recruitment and selection processes and

early identification of upcoming vacancies will enable the District to maintain and enhance its efforts to hire outstanding candidates.

In the process of examining data about personnel and retirement eligibility, one final consideration is important to highlight. Decisions about retirement are deeply personal. Because individuals are indeed eligible to retire, they may not desire to end their teaching careers, nor would the Board of Education and administration necessarily want to encourage them to do so. Senior faculty members age 55 and older may remain very productive, are highly respected, and serve a dual role as building leaders, offering wise counsel and support to their younger colleagues. This point can be often overlooked, but should remain a consideration when planning for the future.

#### **PARTICIPATING SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN THIS STUDY**

There were 13 comparable school districts identified for this report covering 11 counties throughout New York State (Essex to the north, Suffolk to the south, Washington to the east, and Chautauqua to the west). Based on the 2016-17 NYS School Report Cards, the enrollments ranged from a low of 650 to a high of 941. The Lake George CSD K-12 student population was 797. In terms of combined wealth ratio (CWR), five school districts were above 1.000, ranging from 1.419 through 5.768, with Lake George CSD being 3.021 (second wealthiest as determined by CWR). The combined Free & Reduced Lunch rate ranged from a low of 12% to a high of 55% (LG = 26%; NYS average = 53%). Also, of note is that five school districts included buildings with grades 6-12 focusing on middle level services provided to students in grades 6, 7, and 8, while the remaining eight districts had secondary programs for grades 7-12. The list of school districts included in this report were:

Cambridge CSD	Lake Placid CSD	Warrensburg CSD
Cassadaga Valley CSD	Sag Harbor UFSD	Warsaw CSD
Chautauqua CSD	Southold UFSD	Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD
Cooperstown CSD	Tully CSD	Waterville CSD
Geneseo CSD		

**TABLE # 8**

## PARTICIPATING SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN LAKE GEORGE CSD STUDY

School District <i>(County)</i>	K-12 Enrollment <sup>(a)</sup>	<i>(Trend)</i>	Combined Wealth Ratio <sup>(b)</sup>	State Aid <sup>(c)</sup>	NYS Rank	F/R Lunch Rate <sup>(d)</sup>	School Building	Grade Levels	School Enrollment	<i>(Trend)</i>
Lake George CSD	797	F	3.021	\$2,702	(38)	26%	Jr-Sr HS	7-12	452	F
<i>(Warren)</i>										
Cambridge CSD	868	F	0.701	\$12,541	(374)	35%	Jr-Sr HS	7-12	426	F
<i>(Washington)</i>										
Cassadaga Valley CSD	828	D	0.458	\$16,959	(598)	55%	MS-HS	6-12	494	D
<i>(Chautauqua)</i>										
Chautauqua Lake CSD	799	D	1.550	\$7,940	(105)	45%	Jr-Sr HS	7-12	459	D
<i>(Chautauqua)</i>										
Cooperstown CSD	894	F	1.419	\$6,653	(121)	24%	Jr-Sr HS	7-12	447	F
<i>(Otsego)</i>										
Geneseo CSD	874	D	0.887	\$8,471	(264)	37%	MS-HS	6-12	480	F
<i>(Livingston)</i>										
Lake Placid CSD	650	F	2.701	\$4,214	(46)	44%	MS-HS	6-12	369	F
<i>(Essex)</i>										
Sag Harbor UFSD	941	D	5.768	\$1,839	(15)	12%	MS-HS	6-12	503	D
<i>(Suffolk)</i>										
Southold UFSD	783	F	2.885	\$2,335	(40)	32%	Jr-Sr HS	7-12	412	I
<i>(Suffolk)</i>										
Tully CSD	793	D	0.720	\$11,212	(363)	31%	Jr-Sr HS	7-12	414	D
<i>(Onondaga)</i>										
Warrensburg CSD	709	D	0.787	\$14,901	(320)	55%	Jr-Sr HS	7-12	349	D
<i>(Warren)</i>										
Warsaw CSD	856	F	0.581	\$12,719	(477)	44%	MS-HS	6-12	491	F
<i>(Wyoming)</i>										
Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD	782	D	0.725	\$10,229	(361)	43%	Jr-Sr HS	7-12	364	D
<i>(Saratoga)</i>										
Waterville CSD	762	F	0.517	\$14,064	(553)	43%	Jr-Sr HS	7-12	410	F
<i>(Oneida)</i>										

3/1/2019

Refer to Notes/Key on following page

**TABLE #8 (Continued)**  
**PARTICIPATING SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN THE LAKE GEORGE CSD STUDY**

**Notes:**

a.) Enrollment information is based on the 2016-17 school year as listed on the NYS Education Department website data.

b.) The Combined Wealth Ratio (CWR) is a measure of relative wealth, indexing each school district against the statewide average on a combination of two factors; property wealth per pupil and income wealth per pupil. A school district's wealth is measured by comparing its property value per pupil with the state average property value per pupil, and the district's adjusted gross income per pupil with the state average adjusted gross income per pupil. The ratios derived from these comparisons are multiplied by .5 and added together to form the Combined Wealth Ratio (CRW). Sources: [www.nyssba.org](http://www.nyssba.org) and [www.lohud.nydatabases.com](http://www.lohud.nydatabases.com).  
*Reviewers's note:* In general, the higher the Combined Wealth Ratio (CRW), the wealthier the district. A CRW of 1.000 is approximately the NYS average and a CRW of .700 is approximately the median.

c.) The per pupil State Aid based on the 2016-17 school year.

d.) The NYS average for combined free and reduced price lunch percentage in 2016-17 was 53%.

**Key:**

**D** = Enrollment declined from the previous year

**I** = Enrollment increased from the previous year

**F** = Enrollment was essentially flat compared to the previous year (plus or minus 10 or fewer students)

## A LOOK AT SOME OF THE DATA...

Once the 13 similar school districts were identified, the CASDA team examined specific data prior to any interviews with the respective elementary and secondary principals. Using primarily School Report Card information available online via the New York State Education Department website ([www.nysed.gov/](http://www.nysed.gov/)), the CASDA reviewers compiled information in the following areas:

- Class size averages for grades 1-6, grade 8 subject areas for Social Studies and Mathematics, and grade 10 for English Language Arts (ELA) and Science, all based on the 2016-17 school year.
- Student performance on ELA assessments in grades 3-8 based on the 2017-18 school year.
- Student performance on Mathematics assessments in grades 3-8 based on the 2017-18 school year.
- Student performance on five selected Regents examinations in English, Algebra I, Living Environment, Global Studies, and U.S. History based on the 2017-18 school year.
- Graduation results based on the 2016-17 school year listing the percentages of students who earned a local diploma, Regents diploma, or a Regents diploma with advanced designation.
- Miscellaneous data focusing on attendance rates at the elementary and secondary levels, student suspensions rates, and the number and rate of students classified for special education services.

Table #9 provides class size averages in selected grades for the 2016-17 school year. The class size composite for grades 1-6 ranged from 15 to 21 students; Lake George CSD was 18. For grade 8 in Social Studies and Mathematics the range was 10 to 24 students; Lake George CSD was 18 and 13, respectively. In grade 10 for ELA and Science, class size ranged from a low of 8 to a high of 21; Lake George CSD averaged 14 and 12 students in these two subject areas.

As evidenced by the data presented in Tables #10 - 14, students in Lake George CSD scored extremely well relative to NYS averages and their counterparts from schools in the comparable group. This is true for ELA and mathematics in grades 3-8 as well as in the five Regents examinations identified and June 2016-17 graduation results. Of note in the ELA and Mathematics testing was the surprising numbers of students who opted out of these assessments. Four of the districts had rates above 25% (Cooperstown, Sag Harbor, Southold, and Waterford-Halfmoon) which represented a significant number of children.



**TABLE #9  
2016-17 CLASS SIZE COMPARISONS**

School District	K-12 Enrollment	K-6 Enrollment	7-12 Enrollment	CLASS SIZE AVERAGES				
				GRADES 1-6	GR 8 SOC. STUDIES	GR 8 MATH	Gr 10 ELA	GR 10 SCIENCE
Lake George CSD	797	345	452	18	13	13	14	12
Cambridge CSD	868	442	426	18	21	11	15	14
Cassadaga Valley CSD (a, b)	828	334	494 <sup>(a)</sup>	18	16	14	20	NA
Chautauqua Lake CSD	799	340	459	15	22	21	13	12
Cooperstown CSD	894	447	447	18	21	21	17	17
Geneseo CSD (a)	874	394	480 <sup>(a)</sup>	16	19	14	17	18
Lake Placid CSD (a)	650	281	369	16	11	12	8	NA
Sag Harbor UFSD (a, c)	941	438	503 <sup>(a)</sup>	20	19	20	16	14
Southold UFSD	783	371	412	20	20	21	20	NA
Tully CSD	793	379	414	14	18	17	17	NA
Warrensburg CSD	709	360	349	18	14	10	16	NA
Warsaw CSD (a)	856	365	491 <sup>(a)</sup>	15	24	23	16	13
Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD	782	418	364	21	18	18	21	17
Waterville CSD (b)	762	410	352	19	NA	12	15	NA
3/1/2019								

**Notes:**

- (a) The secondary programs in these districts include grades 6-12 and therefore the elementary programs are grades K-5.
- (b) The K-5 program in Cassadaga Valley CSD is listed as Sinclair ES and in Waterville CSD is listed as Memorial Park ES.
- (c) The 6-12 program in Sag Harbor UFSD is listed as Pierson Middle-High School on the NYS School Report Card.

**TABLE # 10**  
**2017-18 NYS ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ASSESSMENT RESULTS - GRADES 3-8**  
**PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ACHIEVING PROFICIENCY**  
(Proficiency is defined as those students scoring at Level 3 or 4)

SCHOOL DISTRICT	Grade 3 (NYS)	Grade 4 (NYS)	Grade 5 (NYS)	Grade 6 (NYS)	Grade 7 (NYS)	Grade 8 (NYS)	# NOT TESTED	GRADES 3-8 (NYS)	Rank
Lake George CSD	81%	45%	35%	88%	53%	74%	19	62%	[#1] T
(NYS Average)	51%	47%	37%	49%	40%	48%		45%	
Cambridge CSD	53%	50%	53%	67%	32%	36%	53	49%	
Cassadaga Valley (a, b)	57%	40%	22%	48%	37%	40%	34	41%	
Chautauqua Lake CSD	46%	73%	32%	61% *	29%	52% *	68	47%	
Cooperstown CSD	74%	60%	52% *	58% *	62% *	67% *	120 *	62% *	[#1] T
Geneseo CSD (a)	40%	33%	31%	52%	31%	52% *	71	38%	
Lake Placid CSD (a)	38%	25%	31% *	26% *	24% *	40%	57	31%	
Sag Harbor (a, c)	62%	58%	47%	55%	72% *	54% *	120 *	57% *	[#3]
Southold UFSD	52% *	29% *	27% *	45% *	42% *	28% *	216 *	38% *	
Tully CSD	48%	31%	22%	67% *	35% *	55%	51	42%	
Warrensburg CSD	38%	45%	22%	43%	21%	29%	54	33%	
Warsaw (a, b)	47%	45%	28% *	31%	32% *	60% *	75 *	41%	
Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD	55%	46% *	31%	31% *	19% *	56% *	128 *	40%	
Waterville CSD (b)	55%	47%	30%	56%	28% *	29% *	77	41%	
3/1/2019									

**Notes:**

- (a) The secondary programs in these districts include grades 6-12 and therefore the elementary programs are grades K-5.  
(b) The K-5 program in Cassadaga Valley CSD is listed as Sinclair ES and in Waterville CSD is listed as Memorial Park ES.  
(c) The 6-12 program in Sag Harbor UFSD is listed as Pierson Middle-High School on the NYS School Report Card.  
"\*" Indicates a high rate of "Not Tested" students (>25%)  
[ \_ ] Indicates "ranking in the top 3" in this sample based on composite score for the grades 3-8 assessments. b

**TABLE # 11**  
**2017-18 NYS MATHEMATICS ASSESSMENT RESULTS - GRADES 3-8**  
**PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ACHIEVING PROFICIENCY**  
(Proficiency is defined as those students scoring at Level 3 or 4)

SCHOOL DISTRICT	Grade 3 (NYS)	Grade 4 (NYS)	Grade 5 (NYS)	Grade 6 (NYS)	Grade 7 (NYS)	Grade 8 (NYS)	# NOT TESTED	GRADES 3-8 (NYS)	Rank
Lake George CSD	74%	59%	49%	79%	76%	73%	36	69%	[#1]
(NYS Average)	54%	48%	44%	44%	42%	48%		45%	
Cambridge CSD	54%	29%	48%	54%	52%	30%	59	44% *	[#3]
Cassadaga Valley (a, b)	60%	48%	30%	35%	24%	32%	48	37% *	
Chautauqua Lake CSD	47%	66%	60%	69% *	38% *	26% *	90 *	50% *	
Cooperstown CSD	76%	56%	56%*	59% *	58% *	75% *	145 *	63% *	
Geneseo CSD (a)	52%	39%	43%	53%	58%	NA *	94 *	NA *	
Lake Placid CSD (a)	53%	28%	18%	29%*	20%*	32%*	66	30%	[#2]
Sag Harbor (a, c)	75%	55%	51%	58%	74% *	77% *	158 *	63%	
Southold UFSD	52%	0% *	19% *	31% *	42% *	23% *	211	35% *	
Tully CSD	46%	67%	37%	75% *	37% *	43% *	66	52%	
Warrensburg CSD	26%	36%	27%	31%	24%	10%*	71	27%	
Warsaw CSD (a)	74%	43%	36%	33%	36% *	54% *	89	47%	[#2]
Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD	63%	57% *	47%	25% *	26% *	43% *	145 *	47% *	
Waterville CSD (b)	68%	40%	43%	83%*	56%*	54%*	92*	56%*	
3/1/2019									

**Notes:**

- (a) The secondary programs in these districts include grades 6-12 and therefore the elementary programs are grades K-5.
- (b) The K-5 program in Cassadaga Valley CSD is listed as Sinclair ES and in Waterville CSD is listed as Memorial Park ES.
- (c) The 6-12 program in Sag Harbor UFSD is listed as Pierson Middle-High School on the NYS School Report Card.
- "\*" Indicates a high rate of "Not Tested" students (>25%)
- [ \_ ] Indicates "ranking in the top 3" in this sample based on composite score for the grades 3-8 assessments.

**TABLE # 12**  
**2017-18 NYS REGENTS EXAMINATION RESULTS - GRADES 9, 10 AND 11**  
**PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ACHIEVING PROFICIENCY**

School District (County)	ENGLISH (NYS)	ALGEBRA (NYS)	LIVING ENVIRONMENT (NYS)	GLOBAL STUDIES (NYS)	U.S. HISTORY (NYS)	Rank
Lake George CSD	88%	91%	97%	92%	89%	[#2]
(NYS Average)	79%	70%	73%	73%	81%	
Cambridge CSD	80%	89%	94%	86%	94%	[#1]
Cassadaga Valley CSD (a)	83%	87%	73%	76%	84%	
Chautauqua Lake CSD	85%	88%	92%	83%	84%	
Cooperstown CSD	92%	93%	96%	99%	97%	
Geneseo CSD (a)	79%	92%	84%	84%	89%	
Lake Placid CSD (a)	91%	75%	88%	73%	83%	[#3] T
Sag Harbor UFSD (a, b)	85%	84%	98%	88%	96%	
Southold UFSD	85%	80%	70%	79%	90%	
						[#3] T
Tully CSD	82%	91%	88%	90%	93%	
Warrensburg CSD	78%	76%	76%	67%	86%	
Warsaw CSD (a)	84%	95%	86%	93%	68%	
Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD	89%	90%	96%	91%	85%	[#3] T
Waterville CSD	87%	79%	78%	88%	90%	
3/1/2019						

**Notes:**

- (a) The secondary programs in these districts include grades 6-12 and therefore the elementary programs are grades K-5.  
(b) The 6-12 program in Sag Harbor UFSD is listed as Pierson Middle-High School on the NYS School Report Card.  
[ \_ ] Indicates "ranking in the top 3" in this sample based on the average percentages for the five Regents exams selected.

**TABLE # 13**  
**COMPARISON OF 2016-17 JUNE GRADUATION RESULTS \***

SCHOOL DISTRICT	COHORT SIZE (a)	LOCAL DIPLOMA (b)	PERCENTAGE REGENTS DIPLOMA (c)	REGENTS DIPLOMA ADV. DESIGNATION (d)	GRADUATION RATE (e)
Lake George CSD	78	4%	41%	51%	96%
(NYS Graduation Rate)	207165	5%	43%	33%	80%
Cambridge CSD	74	5%	47%	35%	88%
Cassadaga Valley CSD	75	1%	5%	32%	88%
Chautauqua Lake CSD	108	1%	51%	22%	74%
Cooperstown CSD	70	3%	37%	51%	91%
Geneseo CSD	82	1%	28%	60%	89%
Lake Placid CSD	46	9%	30%	54%	93%
Sag Harbor UFSD (f)	58	3%	41%	43%	88%
Southold UFSD	84	10%	31%	45%	86%
Tully CSD	77	3%	29%	62%	94%
Warrensburg CSD	51	2%	47%	41%	90%
Warsaw CSD	66	5%	42%	41%	88%
Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD	71	4%	39%	39%	83%
Waterville CSD	78	8%	56%	24%	88%
3/1/2019					

**Notes:**

- (a) Cohort Size: A group of students who first entered grade 9 in the same school year (September 2013).
- (b) Local Diploma: Can only be obtained by students with disabilities with an individualized education program or 504 Accommodation Plan.
- (c) Regents Diploma: Requires a student pass a minimum of 5 Regents examinations in addition to meeting course and credit requirements.
- (d) Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation: Requires a student pass a minimum of 8 Regents examinations in addition to meeting course and credit requirements.
- (e) The NYS graduation rate in June 2017 was 80%.

**TABLE # 14**  
**2016-17 MISCELLANEOUS COMPARATIVE DATA \***

School District	ANNUAL K-6/K-5 ATTENDANCE RATE (d)	ANNUAL 7-12/6-12 ATTENDANCE RATE (d)	7-12/6-12 #	SUSPENSION (d)	# OF K-12 SP ED STUDENTS	SP ED CLASSIFICATION RATE
Lake George CSD	96%	96%	10	2%	108	13.3%
Cambridge CSD	96%	94%	23	5%	113	12.3%
Cassadaga Valley CSD (a,b)	94%	94%	37	7%	132	15.0%
Chautauqua Lake CSD	95%	95%	13	3%	114	12.1%
Cooperstown CSD	95%	95%	23	5%	84	9.0%
Geneseo CSD (a)	96%	95%	9	2%	129	13.3%
Lake Placid CSD (a)	92%	95%	8	2%	104	10.6%
Sag Harbor UFSD (a,c)	94%	95%	30	6%	122	12.6%
Southold UFSD	95%	95%	10	3%	121	15.2%
Tully CSD	96%	96%	23	5%	114	13.3%
Warrensburg CSD	96%	92%	25	7%	136	18.1%
Warsaw CSD (a)	96%	96%	30	6%	88	9.8%
Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD	96%	96%	22	6%	114	11.4%
Waterville CSD (b)	97%	95%	14	4%	106	13.0%
3/1/2019						

**Notes:**

- (a) The secondary programs in these districts include grades 6-12 and therefore the elementary programs are grades K-5.
- (b) The K-5 program in Cassadaga Valley CSD is listed as Sinclair ES and in Waterville CSD is listed as Memorial Park ES.
- (c) The 6-12 program in Sag Harbor UFSD is listed as Pierson Middle-High School on the NYS School Report Card.
- (d) The attendance and suspension rates were reported on the 2016-17 School Report Cards, but the data are for 2015-16.

## **INTERVIEWS WITH PRINCIPALS FROM COMPARABLE SCHOOLS**

The next phase of this project involved contacting the elementary and secondary principals from each of the similar school districts. Susan Tangorre was responsible for gathering information from the elementary school principals and Gregory Aidala made contact with each building administrator at the secondary level. A contact list of participating school district administrators is included in this report for future reference (Appendix F).

## **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

Telephone Interviews with 13 elementary principals from similar schools were conducted by Susan Tangorre between mid-January and mid-February. Table 15 reflects the data gathered from the interviews with these elementary principals. The focus of this part of the study includes items such as, class size, teacher to student ratio, support personnel, special education or other programs and activities show very similar patterns. By comparison, the Lake George Elementary School appears to have developed a strong, collaborative academic program and a very effective service delivery model for providing special education and AIS services as well as enrichment offerings. The design of the AIS program with the inclusion of all teaching staff to supplement reading/math instruction and thus reduce the teacher to student ratio is exceptional. The data from other elementary programs may provide some other perspectives regarding the academic and social benefits of prekindergarten programs and a variety of school-to-community partnerships. Overall, the elementary schools in Lake Placid CSD and Chautauqua CSD may have the most similar community issues and school structures. It may be mutually beneficial as a resource in the future to have further dialog with leaders in those schools.

TABLE #15

## COMPARABLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS - SELECTED DATA

School District (County)	Grade Levels	Student Enrollment 2018-19	Pre-K Enrollment (District Funded)	# Admin/ Building	# Classroom Teachers	# AIS ELA Teachers (+TAs)	# AIS Math Teachers (+TAs)	# Sp Ed Teachers	# School Counselors	# School Psychologists	# Social Workers	Additional Comments
Lake George CSD	K-6	319	None	1.0	19	3 (+1)	1	7		1	1	WIN - AIS Integrated Block; STEAM Block; Young Scholars Program
(Warren)												
Cambridge CSD	K-6	435	None	1.0	21	3	2 (+1)	6	1	1		6th Grade - Hybrid Schedule
(Washington)												
Cassadaga Valley CSD	K-5	353	1 Full-Day	1.5	17	2	1	5		1	1	AP: Focus on C & I; Shared AD; PBIS;
(Chautauqua)			2 Part- Day									Afterschool "Cougar University"
Chautauqua Lake CSD	K-6	352	1 Part-Day	1.0	21	3	1.6	5	1	1		Dean of Students
(Chautauqua)			1 UPK									
Cooperstown CSD	K-6	446	None	1.0	24	3	3 (+1)	5	1	1		Grant through Clark Museum; Behavior
(Otsego)										shared K-12		Specialist; Dir of C & A
Geneseo CSD	K-5	390	None	1.0	29	2 (+1)	1 (+1)	6	1	1		Liaison w/Geneseo University; ESL
(Livingston)												
Lake Placid CSD	K-5	265	None	1.0	18	(+3)	0.5	5	1	1		Community Connections-Olympics;
(Essex)												Child-Book Program; Declining Enrollment
Sag Harbor UFSD	K-5	400	3 Part- Day	2.0	22	(+1)	1	6	1	1	1	Tuition Students; Spanish K-5;
(Suffolk)												
Southold CSD	K-6	337	UPK	1.0	14	3.0	0.5	7		1	1	Sp Ed: cointegration at each grade
(Suffolk)												
Tully CSD	K-6	386	1 Full-Day	1.0	21	2.0	2.0	6		1	1	Strong Technology; Declining enrollment;
(Onondaga)										shared K-12		
Warrensburg CSD	K-6	380	2 Part Day	1.0	21	3.0		5		0.5	1	Business partnerships; Food/Backpack;
(Warren)											shared K-12	Declining Enrollment
Warsaw CSD	K-5	365	None	2.0	23	4.0	2 (+1)	6	1	1	1	AP-Literacy Coach; Leader in Me
(Wyoming)			Start 2019- 20								shared K-12	
Waterford- Halfmoon UFSD	K-6	419	None	1.0	20	3.0	1.0	5.0		1	1	Liaison w/ Skidmore College
(Saratoga)												
Waterville CSD	K-6	401	None	2.0	20	2.0	2.0	5.5	1.4	0.8		AP- Dir of Special Program K-12; Positivity
(Oneida)												Program; Food/Backpack- Food Pantry



## SECONDARY SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Telephone Interviews with secondary principals from similar schools were conducted by Gregory Aidala in January 2019. On the following pages, five tables were generated from the contacts that the CASDA team made with each secondary principal. By means of comparison, Lake George CSD is listed at the top of each table in bold print. The use of tables helped to summarize large amounts of information that was compiled. This included updated enrollment counts, number of teachers and administrators on staff, number of support personnel, Academic Intervention Services (AIS) and special education staffing, information about the master schedule, number of singleton sections, class size minimums, Advanced Placement (AP) courses offered, and the number of clubs and after school activities. Lake George CSD compares very favorably to its counterpart schools in almost all areas cited. The list of tables includes:

- Table #16 Comparable Secondary Schools – Administrators
- Table #17 Comparable Secondary Schools – Master Schedule and Related Issues
- Table #18 Comparable Secondary Schools – Support Personnel
- Table #19 Comparable Secondary Schools – AIS Services
- Table #20 Comparable Secondary Schools – General Information and Comments

Table #16 entitled “Comparable Schools – Administrators” lists the updated enrollment for each secondary program based on the 2018-19 school year. The range is from a low of 350 in Warrensburg to a high of 578 in Warsaw. However, in four of the schools with higher numbers (Cassadaga Valley, Geneseo, Sag Harbor, and Warsaw), grade six is included in the population. The student to teacher ratio (enrollment divided by the number of teachers) for Lake George CSD is 8.21:1, wherein the range for the other 13 schools is 6.92:1 – 10.80:1. Two districts had lower student to teacher ratios than Lake George CSD – Chautauqua Lake, 6.92:1 and Geneseo, 7.80:1.

One of the controversial issues for Lake George CSD in the past year was the elimination of the assistant principal position. Two other schools did not have assistant principals (Chautauqua Lake and Cooperstown), while four other schools had a combined full-time assistant principal/dean and athletic director position. One program had a full-time dean position who handled student discipline and other duties. Finally, two schools (Lake Placid and Sag Harbor) had no assistant principals but two principals, one each for the middle school and high school.

Of the 14 schools including Lake George CSD, 10 programs have some form of department chairpersons, team leaders, or coordinators in their buildings. Also, among the 14 schools, there

were 12 who had at least one full time central office administrator or teacher on leave with responsibilities for special education, pupil personnel services, and/or curriculum and instruction. Two districts (Cassadaga Valley and Warsaw) had two full-time central office administrators other than the superintendent and business official.

**TABLE # 16  
COMPARABLE SECONDARY SCHOOLS - ADMINSTRATORS**

Secondary School	2018-19 Enrollment	# of Teachers (b)	Typical Teacher Course Load	# of Principals	# of Ass't Principals	Athletic Director	Dept. Chairs	Other District Administrators **/Comments
Lake George CSD	427	52	5 + SH (a)	1.0	0	PT (.4)	Yes (10)	Sp Ed (.8) ***; AIS/504 (.8) *** (Teacher on Leave); Dir of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
Cambridge CSD	420	42	5 + SH (a)	1.0	1.0	PT (.4)	No	7 Coordinators
Cassadaga Valley CSD *	450	48	6	1.0	1.0 AP/AD	combined	Yes (6)	Director of Sp Ed; Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Chautauqua Lake	415	60	5 + SH (a)	1.0	0	PT (.4)	No	Director of Sp Ed (Teacher on Leave)
Cooperstown CSD	430	38	6	1.0	0	1.0	Yes (9)	Director of Sp Ed (Teacher on Leave); Team Leaders in 7 & 8
Geneseo CSD *	468	60	5 + SH (a)	1.0	1.0 AP/AD (adm)	combined	No	Team Leaders (11); Director of Sp Ed (adm); Director of Tech (adm)
Lake Placid CSD *	420	47	6	1 MS; 1 HS	0	PT (.5)	Yes (5)	Director of Sp Ed (Teacher on Leave)
Sag Harbor UFSD *	511	62	5 no SH	1 MS; 1 HS	0	1.0	No	AD is full-time Teacher on Leave; Lead Teachers (5); Director of PPS
Southold CSD	433	44	5 + SH	1.0	Dean/AD	combined	No	Director of PPS
Tully CSD	380	39	5 + SH (a)	1.0	1.0	PT (.6)	Yes (7)	Director of Student Support Services
Warrensburg CSD	350	39	5 + SH (a)	1.0	Dean (adm)	FT teacher	No	AD is a full-time Teacher + stipend; Teacher Leaders (5); Director of PPS
Warsaw CSD *	578	60	5 + SH (a)	2.0	1.0 (6-12)	PT (.6)	Yes (5)	Team Leaders for grades 6,7,8; Director of Sp Ed; Director of Instructional Services
Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD	365	38	5 + SH	1.0	1.0	PT (.2)	No	Director of Curriculum, Development & Sp Ed
Waterville CSD	378	35	5 + 2 duties	1.0	1.0 AP/AD (adm)	combined	No	
3/1/2019								

\* K-12 structure is K-5 and 6-12 (Middle School-High School). \*\* This category does not include the superintendent and business administrator.

\*\*\* Position existed but was not served by an administrator, usually a Teacher on Leave

(a) Some teachers have a sixth class in place of a study hall

(b) The number of teachers excludes counselors, psychologists, social workers and speech.

Table # 17 focuses on the master schedule. One of the major obstacles in developing a master schedule is the number of singleton classes which raises the number of conflicts for students wanting to take a specific course. Lake George CSD has 57 singletons in its master schedule, while for the other 13 schools the range is 22 to 57 with the average being 44. The responsibility for developing the master schedule differs from school to school. In six of the 14 schools including Lake George CSD, the head counselor is the dominant player (or in some cases a team of two counselors), while in the remaining eight schools the principal assumes the major duty. In conversation, the administrators often pointed out that it was critical for them to hold that responsibility.

In feedback from Lake George CSD faculty members, there were comments about the master schedule regarding the repetitive individual teacher schedules from year to year and the range of class size in some of the same sections (e.g. one teacher's load for three science classes was 6, 18, and 23 students). While it is understandable that for 47 students, it is almost impossible to divide the groups evenly (15, 16, and 16) given other constraints. Nonetheless, the range of 17 (23-6) is an imbalance and any others like it should be addressed more closely in the future.

We also tested the concern about individual teacher schedules lacking variation from year to year by identifying nine random teachers in the core areas of social studies, science, English, mathematics, and Spanish as well as a special subject area and checking their individual schedules over a three-year period, 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19. There was a certain repetitive nature (67-90%) from year to year. If, for example, Teacher A started his/her day with four consecutive classes during periods 1-4 with other assignments period five, seven, eight and nine (semester courses), he/she generally did so for three years in a row. Using another example, Teacher B, he/she started the day with academic courses and labs periods one through four with other assignments for periods five, seven, eight and nine (alternate days for the final two periods). Here again, the three-year schedule for this teacher was 80-90% the same. In the special subject area, over the same three-year period, the schedule of this teacher was the same for four of six assignments in all three years which is not unusual.

What does this all mean? Developing a master schedule is an ongoing complex task involving several factors. It is not surprising to see a certain level of repetition given the student enrollment, number of singletons (57), and variety of student needs (CTE in the morning or afternoon, interdisciplinary blocking consecutive periods, back-to-back academic and lab periods, sharing staff between the junior high and high school, need for AIS, etc.). The number one reason for

restructuring or revising the master schedule is to respond to student needs. However, the key

question remains, is the master schedule in any given year built to accommodate the greatest number of students? Given the scheduling constraints, has Lake George CSD reached a level where the master schedule becomes relatively stagnant from year to year with few actual changes in the individual teacher schedules? This is a hard question to answer, but one that clearly needs to be addressed. If a schedule is built from the bottom up based on student needs, will the final draft look the same from year to year? The only way to find out is to start with that goal and make it a priority with check points along the way. The current Director of Curriculum, Assessment, and Student Services, Jeff Ziegler has extensive experience in developing master schedules. Why not tap into this resource in working with the Director of Guidance and principal to develop the 2019-20 schedule? Also, two schools in the study, Chautauqua Lake and Southold have indicated that they will be undergoing a major overhaul by recreating their master schedules in the year ahead.

This raises another question regarding a succession plan when the Director of Guidance decides to retire. Is there a plan in place to train others sooner rather than later? Will the principal take a more active role in developing the actual schedule? What training and professional development activities designed specifically for creating master schedules are being supported and who is being asked to participate? Developing some form of succession plan should be considered.

With respect to class size minimums, principals shared general numbers of five or ten students, but were quick to point out that the “number” was a benchmark, not a requirement. For example, if the course was at the Advanced Placement level or part of a sequence, the district would almost always be willing to commit the necessary resources to accommodate as few as three students. For AP courses, 12 of the 14 secondary schools offered a minimum of four and in one case (Geneseo), there were 12 AP courses available to challenge students and the district pays the cost of the AP exam for students (estimated to be \$90-\$100 per student). One of the questions raised with each principal was the number of college credits a student could earn at the time of high school graduation. In all cases, there were at least 15 credits and several as high as 30 or more. Regardless of the region, arrangements with local two- and four-year colleges were prevalent as well as programs such as Career Exploration Internship (CEIP), New Visions for Engineering and Health careers, and the Early College Career Academy.

Several of the schools contacted, including Lake George CSD, had unique offerings not available among their counterparts. For example, Lake George CSD has a three-year Science Research course where students who complete the program can earn up to 18 college credits. Its Rock Solid program, a pilot program focusing on peer leadership and building relationships by

training seniors to work with small groups of freshmen. Sag Harbor offers the very challenging and highly respected International Baccalaureate (IB) program in addition to AP courses. A few schools (Cambridge, Warrensburg, Chautauqua Lake, Waterville) provided students with the opportunity to participate in distance learning programs, with the latter two having students enrolled in Mandarin Chinese for a three- or four-year sequence. Project Lead The Way (PLTW), a problem-solving project-based program with an emphasis on technology was offered in Chautauqua Lake (although several schools including Lake George CSD offered modified versions). One school, Cambridge, enables its high school students to earn .5 credits during the summer for individual courses such as Farm-To-Table, Archeology Dig, Floating Classroom, and Hiking & Biking. Lake Placid MS-HS requires that all students complete 40 hours of service-learning activities in order to graduate. Lake Placid also enables students in good standing to take an educational leave if they are involved in national and international athletic competitions (e.g. skiing).

**TABLE #17  
COMPARABLE SECONDARY SCHOOLS - MASTER SCHEDULE AND RELATED ISSUES**

Secondary School	Rotation	Software Used	Major Responsibility**	Class Size Minimum	# of Singletons	# of Adv Place. (AP)	Comments
Lake George CSD	4-day (A,B,C,D)	School Tool	Coun + Principal	5	57	5	Unique Science Research (3 yrs); blocks 7 & 8 grade; Eng + SS block in gr 10,11; Rock Solid Program
Cambridge CSD	2-day (A,B)	School Tool	Principal + Coun.	10	42	5	Distance Learning (4)
Cassadaga Valley CSD *	2-day (A,B)	Power School	Principal + Coun.	5	50	0	21 college level courses through Jamestown CC; master schedule to be revised 2019-20
Chautauqua Lake CSD	Alt.Day Block (80 min)	Power School	Coun. + Principal	8-10	29	5	16 courses offered through Jamestown CC; Distance Learning - Mandarin Chinese I, II, III; Project Lead the Way (5) - very strong
Cooperstown CSD	2-day (A,B)	Power School	Coun. + Principal	10	42	5	TAs and monitors supervise study halls, not teachers
Geneseo CSD *	4-day (A,B,C,D)	School Tool	Principal + Coun.	10	47	12	80% of students take at least 1 AP course - district pays fees
Lake Placid CSD *	4-day (A,B,C,D)	School Tool	Coun. + Principal	5	44	7	Unique ed. Leave policy for students; 40 hrs of service learning requirement
Sag Harbor UFSD *	2-day (A,B)	E-School	Principal + IT + Coun.	5	51	5 AP +1B	Offer International Baccalaureate (1B) program; 10th period-all students required to stay; 30+ non-resident students @ \$23,000 each
Southold CSD	2-day (A,B)	E-School	Principal + Coun.	5	30	7	Will rebuild the master schedule from scratch in 2019-20. SH supervised by teachers aides.
Tully CSD	2-day (A,B)	School Tool	Coun. + Principal	5	49	6	Agricultural/FFA Program; plan to shift to MS-HS
Warrensburg CSD	6-day rotation	E-School	Coun. + Principal	5	57	4	Distance Learning program; Business Law and Adol. Psych.; receive Marine Sci. and College Stats;academic support period mid-day
Warsaw CSD *	5-day rotation	School Tool	Principal + Coun.	10	22	5	
Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD	2-day (A,B)	School Tool	Principal + Coun.	10	47	0	All college level through HVCC; UAlbany; online courses for gr. 11 & 12 - supervised by teachers
Waterville CSD	6-day rotation	School Tool	Principal + Coun.	5	56	4	Distance Learning-Mandarin Chinese I-IV; receive Sign Language, Psychology, Sociology
3/1/2019							

\* K-12 structure is K-5 and 6-12 (Middle School-High School).

\*\* The title listed first is dominant and implies major responsibility.

Table # 18 deals with data relating to the number of support personnel. Included in this group are psychologists, social workers, counselors and for the purposes of this study, the number of special education teachers. For special education, the number of teachers ranged from a low of three to a high of 11, with an average of 6.3. The median and mode numbers were six and for Lake George CSD, they have six special education teachers working with students in grades 7-12. The continuum of special education services for school-age students with disabilities in most if not all of the school districts is an array of models designed to meet an individual student's needs that included consultant teacher services (direct and/or indirect), resource room services, related services, integrated co-teaching services, and special class. The role of chairperson of the Committee on Special Education (CSE) in comparable districts was filled by many different individuals – Director of Special Education (administrator), Director of Special Education (Teacher on Leave), Director of Pupil Personnel Services, psychologist, or an assistant principal.

All of the secondary schools had a psychologist on staff; in ten of the 14 schools, a full-time psychologist (1.0 FTE) was assigned to the building. In the other four schools, the psychologist was full-time, but shared with the elementary school and thus could be considered a .5 FTE in each building. One psychologist (Cambridge) also served as the CSE chair. For social workers, six of the 14 schools including Lake George CSD had someone full-time (1.0 FTE) in the building. Five buildings had access to a part-time social worker, while three schools did not have the services of a social worker at all.

For counselors, most schools (10) in the study had two with one typically assigned to the middle or junior high grades and the second serving the 10-12 student population. Three schools, Lake George, Sag Harbor, and Warsaw had three or more counselors. Warsaw with 3.5 FTE counselors was the only district that had a part-time counselor assigned to work with students having an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).



**TABLE # 18**  
**COMPARABLE SECONDARY SCHOOLS - SUPPORT PERSONNEL**

Secondary School	Special Education Teachers **	Psychologists	Social Workers	Counselors	Comments
Lake George CSD	6	1	1	1 gr 7 & 8; 2 gr 9-12	CSE Chair (.8) - Teacher on Leave
Cambridge CSD	6	1 ( inc. CSE chair)	1	1 gr 7-9; 1 gr 10-12	SW through Parsons
Cassadaga Valley CSD	6	1	0	1 gr 6-9; 1 gr 10-12	CSE chair is Director of Sp Ed
Chautauqua Lake CSD	6	1 (K-12)	1 (K-12)	1 gr 7-9; 1 gr 10-12	CSE chair is (.4) - Teacher on Leave
Cooperstown CSD	5	1	1	1 gr 7-9; 1 gr 10-12	CSE chair is full-time Teacher on Leave
Geneseo CSD	8	1	0	1 gr 6-8; gr 9-12	
Lake Placid CSD	6	1	0.6	2	CSE chair is a Teacher on Leave; part-time SW through county
Sag Harbor UFSD	8	1	1 (K-12)	1 gr 6-8; 2 gr 9-12	
Southold CSD	8	1	1	1 gr 7-9; 1 gr 10-12	
Tully CSD	4	1 (K-12)	0	1 gr 7-9; 1 gr 10-12	
Warrensburg CSD	6	1 (K-12)	1	1 gr 7-9; 1 gr 10-12	CSE chair is Director of PPS
Warsaw CSD	11	1	1 (K-12)	3.5 (MS, HS, Career, IEP (part-time)	
Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD	5	2 (K-12)	2 (K-12)	1 gr 7-9; 1 gr 10-12	
Waterville CSD	3	1 (K-12)	1 (K-12)	1 gr 7 & 8; 1 gr 9-12	CSE chair is K-6 Assistant Principal
3/1/2019					

\* K-12 structure is K-5 and 6-12 (Middle School-High School).

\*\* Special Education services were delivered in a variety of ways: self-contained programs (12:1:3; 8:1:1); do-teaching models, consultant teacher and resources room services

In almost all cases, Academic Intervention Services (AIS) were provided to students through teacher assignments in addition to their normal loads. For example, if teachers taught four classes, their fifth assignment may have been two AIS sections meeting one or more days per week. The number of students assigned to an AIS section varied in all schools. Generally, the minimum was two and the maximum reported was seven or eight students. As required, AIS services were provided in ELA and mathematics, although some schools expanded the service to include science and social studies, and in the case of Lake George CSD foreign language (French, Spanish). A student receiving AIS did not necessarily participate in the program for the entire school year. Several principals reported that AIS is very fluid with students moving in and out of the program at various junction points. Some schools had established Learning Labs staffed by a teacher or teaching assistant wherein students reported to a designated classroom to receive services.

Table # 19 highlights two additional issues – who is responsible to coordinate the program and the number of reading teachers on staff. Nine of the 14 secondary schools had at least one certified reading teacher in the building including Warsaw which had two. The reading teacher in most, but not all cases worked with AIS students to provide additional support. Five schools had no reading teachers on staff.

Coordinating the AIS program fell to the building principal in ten out of the 14 schools surveyed. In five of those ten schools, the principal was supported by counselors, Special Education Director, or department heads. In one school (Tully) coordinating the AIS program was the sole responsibility of the two counselors, while in Lake Placid the duty was assigned to the reading teacher. Lake George CSD was the only district with a part-time coordinator (.8 FTE; Teacher on Leave) to oversee the AIS program.

**TABLE # 19**  
**COMPARABLE SECONDARY SCHOOLS - AIS SERVICES**

Secondary School	Grade Levels	Coordinated by	Subject Areas Support Provided	# of Rdg Teachers	Comments
<b>Lake George CSD</b>	<b>7-12</b>	<b>Coordinator (.8) Teacher on Leave</b>	<b>ELA, Math, SS, World Languages</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Students scheduled 1 or 2 times/A,B,C,D</b>
Cambridge CSD	7-12	Principal	ELA, Math, SS	1	
Cassadaga Valley CSD *	6-12	Principal & Sp Ed Dir	ELA, Math, Sci, SS	1	AIS alternate days; some every day
Chautauqua Lake CSD	7-12	Principal + Coun.	ELA, Math	1	Direct Learning Lab time during day
Cooperstown CSD	7-12	Coun. + Dept Head	ELA, Math	0	Dept Head serves as AIS coordinator; TA in Math Lab
Geneseo CSD *	6-12	Principals + Coun.	ELA, Math, Sci, SS	1	Student Support Center-English Teacher (also in-school suspension)
Lake Placid CSD *	6-12	Reading Teacher	ELA, Math	1	Reading teacher coordinates AIS -ELA/Math Dept coordination AIS Math for students
Sag Harbor UFSD *	6-12	Principal	ELA, Math, Sci, SS	1	Math Lab with full-time Math teacher
Southold CSD	7-12	Principal	ELA, Math	1	Labs for ELA and Math staffed by teachers
Tully CSD	7-12	Counselors	ELA, Math, Sci, SS	0	
Warrensburg CSD	7-12	Principal	ELA, Math	0	Benchmark meetings 3/year
Warsaw CSD *	6-12	Principal	ELA, Math	2	
Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD	7-12	Principal	ELA, Math, Sci, SS	0	
Waterville CSD	7-12	Principal	ELA, Math, SS	0	
3/1/2019					

Note: All schools indicated that their AIS program was flexible with students moving in and out periodically. Also the frequency of AIS varied. Typically one day in either a 2-day or 4-day schedule; some students received support daily.

The final table (Table # 20) generated for this report provides some general information about the comparable schools. This included the length of the school day, after school period, number of clubs and after school activities (excluding athletics), the existence of a PTA/PTSO, and some general comments

Most schools had a nine-period day (8 academic periods plus lunch) with each class approximately 40 minutes in length. Three notable exceptions stand out. Chautauqua Lake follows an 80-minute alternating day block schedule format. In the middle of the students' daily schedule, there is a shorter period of time for Direct Learning Lab where students can receive extra help, make up tests, work with individual teachers, etc. Cooperstown Jr.-Sr. High School follows a schedule with 10 periods; teachers are assigned six (6) classes with no study hall duties which are handled by teacher aides and monitors. Sag Harbor has the longest day at seven hours, one minute (7:50 a.m. – 2:51 p.m.). In Sag Harbor students are required to stay for the tenth period where extra help and support can be provided, making the school day just over seven hours long. Southold UFSD was the only other school whose length was over seven hours. On average among the 14 schools, the length of the school day (excluding an optional after school period) was six hours, 39 minutes. The school day in Lake George CSD is six hours, 33 minutes in length.

To varying degrees, all schools (except Southold UFSD) operated a late bus to provide transportation for students staying after school. The late bus option occurred three, four, or five days a week depending on the district. After school activities were extensive in most of the schools in the study, ranging from 10 – 30. There were 30 Lake George CSD clubs and after school activities.

Just over half of the schools in the group had functioning parent-teacher organizations (8/14) with the strength of the organization varying from “in name only” to very strong and vital, particularly in fund-raising. Some schools had active booster clubs and one school (Southold) had an established education foundation which supported individual grants awarded to teachers.

Principals cited some of the key issues facing their secondary schools as declining enrollment, impact of the opioid epidemic, dealing with student poverty issues, student mental health

concerns, affordable community housing for families, lack of diversity, restrictions of NYS requirements, and the challenge to fill certain teaching positions. In our conversations, the principals also identified the many positive attributes of their schools. These included small classes, a nurturing family-like atmosphere in the building, a safe environment for students to take risks, students being known well by an adult and not falling through the cracks, a strong and supportive faculty and staff willing to work hard and be creative to meet the needs of students, many opportunities for students to participate in co-curricular activities, access to technology, and a team spirit to successfully address any problems or issues that might be presented. As one Lake George CSD staff member stated in the CASDA online feedback survey: “As a teacher, there is little that I can do to control the declining enrollment. What I can do is to ensure that I provide a rigorous and quality education for every student that addresses the increasingly diverse types of learners coming to our district. To keep the focus student centered in a constructive and professional manner seems the most important thing I can do as a teacher.”

**TABLE # 20**  
**COMPARABLE SECONDARY SCHOOLS - GENERAL INFORMATION AND COMMENTS**

Secondary School	Grade Levels	Length of School Day	After School Dismissal	# of Clubs/ Activities	PTSO/ PTA	Future Challenges/Other
Lake George CSD	7-12	8:00-2:33	3:15 M-F	30	YES	Active alumni recognition; declining enrollment; Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Cambridge CSD	7-12	7:53-2:21	3:05 M-F	10	No	Parents want more for students; unique summer enrichment programs, grades 10-12; (credit bearing .5 e.g. Farm-to-Table, Archeology)
Cassadaga Valley CSD *	6-12	7:44-2:10	3:00 M,T, Th	11	Yes	Unique offerings - Cougar University; restrictions of NYS limits flexibility; mental health issues of students a concern
Chautauqua Lake CSD	7-12	7:55 -2:57	4:00 T, W, Th	13	Yes	Accepts 130 students from neighboring district -tuition rate of \$8,000 each (5 yr. contract)
Cooperstown CSD	7-12	8:00 - 2:52	4:00 M, W	28	Yes	10- period day + afterschool; Late bus M and W. 87% participate in afterschool activities
Geneseo CSD *	6-12	7:55-2:46	3:30 M-F	30	Yes	Strong Ed. Foundation; unique graduation-a teacher 2-3 minutes for every student. Emphasis on school community-3Rs: Relationships, Relevancy, Rigor
Lake Placid CSD *	6-12	7:33-2:07	2:45 M-F	20	No	40-hours community service requirement for graduation
Sag Harbor UFSD *	6-12	7:50-2:51	3:45 M-F	28	Yes	Lack of diversity; Influx of ELL students; maintaining a comprehensive program
Southold CSD	7.12	7:50-2:30	3:45 (No Late Bus)	25	Yes	Advisory 2:08-2:30 daily; Southold Foundation; In-house student broadcast TV; joint superintendent with Greenport CSD
Tully CSD	7-12	8:00-2:27	3:15 M,W,Th,F	25	No	Student mental health issues; decline in socio-economic levels
Warrensburg CSD	7-12	8:00-2:55	4:00 M-Th	11	No	Dealing with student poverty
Warsaw CSD *	6-12	8:00-2:50	3:45 M-Th	20	No	Increasing poverty levels; county seat - family mobility issues
Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD	7-12	7:57-2:20	3:15 M-F	10	Yes	Dealing with mental health issues
Waterville CSD	7-12	7:50-2:41	3:30 M-Th	17	No	Dealing with student poverty; student mental health issues, faculty recruitment.
3/1/2019						

Note: Clubs and activities do not include interscholastic athletics, National Honor Society, or music programs such as All-County and NYSSMA  
CASDA Lake George CSD Study

## SUMMARY AND OPTIONS TO CONSIDER

*”Not everything that counts can be counted and not everything that can be counted counts.”*

-Albert Einstein

In preparing this report, the CASDA team has generated a great deal of information about the Lake George CSD. The team gathered data on student performance, collected feedback from K-6 and 7-12 faculty, and met with administrators, students, parents and community members. In addition, we have identified 13 similar districts to provide a means of comparing Lake George CSD with other elementary and secondary schools and to initiate dialog based on the compiled results. This report is intended to stimulate further discussion. Our findings indicate that Lake George CSD students in the Elementary School and Jr.-Sr. High School perform at a high level; students have access to a broad base of educational programs and many opportunities to participate in clubs and activities. However, it would be a mistake to just “pat yourselves on the back” and conclude that there is nothing further to be done. In the words of Jim Collins, author of *Good to Great*, “much of the answer to the question of taking an organization from *good to great* lies in the discipline to do whatever it takes to become the best within carefully selected arenas and then to seek continual improvement from there. It’s really just that simple. And it’s really just that difficult” (*Good to Great*, 128). With these thoughts in mind, we present a list of options that the Board of Education, faculty, staff, and community members can jointly determine as areas of concentration in developing a plan of action. The CASDA team purposely did not title this section as “Recommendations” because we feel that it is up to the District team, however identified, to determine what it values most and where it will devote its energies and resources to provide optimum opportunities for its students in the future.

The culture, uniqueness of the community and the long-standing traditions of the Lake George CSD cannot be measured. These are values and beliefs of students, staff and community members that are not measured by trophies won, Regents exams or performance evaluations.

Despite the strong student results in Lake George CSD and excellent array of programs, in our meetings with the faculty, administration, and parents/community members, we could not help but notice the erosion of trust and existing obstacles to more effective communication among constituent groups. People seem to be in certain “camps” which is not healthy and indirectly is a hindrance to a fully

functional shared decision-making approach. Recent efforts in developing the Strategic Plan and the Board of Education creating an advisory committee are commendable steps. We are not assigning blame, nor can the undercurrents be ignored if this report is to result in greater collaboration and team work. The District mission, goals and strategic objectives adopted by the Board of Education and District leaders focus their work to coordinate the educational program and its outcomes. The recently developed Strategic Plan reflects the importance of this shared mission. By adopting these initiatives, all stakeholders commit to a high standard of performance for the staff and students of the District. The clear communication of these beliefs becomes part of a theory of action. The work of Rene Townsend, a former school superintendent, supports this initiative, stating:

*School districts have a single focus: teaching and learning. District goals, strategies, policies, and major activities must encourage, promote, and support excellence in teaching and learning throughout the district and in every school.*

*(A Practical Guide to Effective School Board Meetings, 3)*

The Strategic Plan becomes the foundation upon which each school strategically examines current status, initiates change and monitors progress. In their book *Odd-Beating Schools: Exemplars for Getting Better at Getting Better* (2017). Kristen Campbell Wilcox, Hale A. Lawson, Janet Angelis, researchers from the University of Albany School of Education, found that teachers in odds-beating schools, managed to adapt their instruction to maintain both academic rigor and connection of the curriculum to their students' own lives while integrating standards.

Reconvening SPARC or a similar district-wide shared decision-making team engaged in a collaborative process to address the future needs of the District may be productive. John P. Kotter a renowned author from Harvard Business School states:

*No one individual is ever able to develop the right vision, communicate it to large numbers of people, eliminate all obstacles, generate short-term wins and manage dozens of change projects and anchor new approaches deep in an organization's culture. A strong, guiding coalition is always needed - one with a high level of trust and shared objectives that appeal to both head and heart. Building such a team is always an essential part of the early stages of any effort to restructure a set of strategies. (Kotter, 2012, 52)*

The work previously completed by the SPARC team provided a good foundation for the development of a district-wide Strategic Plan. A similar shared decision-making process to collectively



consider the impact of declining enrollment and a range of future options for the District may be helpful. Anecdotally, several staff and community members, referred positively to their experiences as part of this planning process. The five District Goals were an important first step. The values developed by the SPARC team: *Collaboration - Respect - Excellence - Accountability - Trust - Empathy* can serve as a touchstone for this work.

As the District looks to the 2019-20 school year, a renewed commitment to these goals and the development of specific, measurable action plans would be a valuable process to build a greater sense of collaboration and trust within the school community. Subsequently school-based teams at the Elementary School and Jr.-Sr. High School may create individualized school objectives and action plans to align with these district-wide goals. Implementing the goals and action plans, in fact, will be one of the future challenges for all stakeholders of the Lake George CSD.

Some options for the members of the Lake George CSD to consider :

- **Future Planning and Next Steps** Given that declining enrollment is a reality and not to ignore that student performance levels are strong, there is an opportunity to examine key issues in an open and transparent manner with this report providing a great deal of background information and data. In conjunction with the District's current Strategic Plan, a committee with representation from the BOE, administration, teachers, support staff, parents, and community members without children in school could provide feedback and help develop a plan for addressing the future of the Lake George CSD Central School District.
- **Developing Partnerships** Consider starting a paired relationship with that school district most similar to Lake George CSD for the purpose of exchanging ideas and pertinent information about how your counterparts are addressing some of the same issues. Or for that matter, contact several schools whose programs or approaches pique your interest where you might want to replicate a similar effort in Lake George CSD.
- **School Structure** Explore the idea of establishing a 6-12 building, thereby modifying the elementary school to K-5. Under this plan, there might be two administrators, one to oversee the middle school in grades 6-8, and one for the high school which would focus on grades 9-12 only. The two administrators could support each other when one is out of the building. Also, this plan

could be coupled with the introduction of a pre-school program at Lake George Elementary School. This plan may result in the re-examination of the newly created Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Student Services position or other quasi-administrative positions now in place and shifting some of the duties and responsibilities to building administrators, department chairpersons, and team leaders.

- **Prekindergarten Program** At some point in the future, the Lake George CSD may want to consider creating a prekindergarten program. Such an option would require consideration of issues such as financial resources, program design (part-day or full day), staffing, possible community partnerships, transportation, and most importantly student need. Universal Prekindergarten Programs (UPK) is an allocational grant offered to public school districts only, but may only be offered to districts in need. ([www.p12.nysed.gov/upk/](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/upk/)). Additional information on the guidelines for early childhood program options would be available through the NYS Education Department Office of Early Learning ([oeel@nysed.gov](mailto:oeel@nysed.gov)) which provides oversight and technical support to school districts in the development, implementation and evaluation of programs that are aligned with NYS Board of Regents Early Childhood Policy.
- **Class Size Protocols** Develop a more precise system to monitor very small class sizes in the master schedule at the secondary level and try to create a better balance among multiple sections. For example, if a section is projected to have less than five students, then discussion among the Director of Guidance, Principal and Superintendent is automatically triggered to determine whether that section will remain in the master schedule.
- **NYKids Research** Another resource for the Lake George CSD would be the research completed by Dr. Kristen Wilcox and her team at the University of Albany for NYKids. Dr. Wilcox and her colleagues have recently completed a study of odds-beating secondary schools. Her work on College and Career Readiness has a particular focus on rural schools that might be helpful to the District. ([www.ny-kids.org](http://www.ny-kids.org))
- **Developing the Master Schedule** With respect to the master schedule for grades 7-12, there should be a clearly defined succession plan when and if there is a change in the Director of Guidance. Training of other personnel should be underway sooner rather than later. For some

schools included in this study, the principal played a more dominant role in developing the master schedule. As noted earlier in this report, an effort to build the master schedule from scratch rather than what appears to be more of a roll over plan can be attempted. Chautauqua Lake and Southold are schools undertaking this challenge for 2019-20. As the process of building the master schedule for 2019-20 begins, an expanded team consisting of at least the Director of Guidance, the Jr.-Sr. High School principal, and the Interim Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Student Services might be beneficial. The experience and knowledge of the Interim Director to work with the master scheduling team is worth considering now since his status for 2019-20 has not yet been determined. With respect to grades K-6, there is greater autonomy to design a master schedule to support student learning needs, with the exception of coordinating shared staff which appears to be minimal.

- **Keeping a Balance** Given the declining enrollment trends, academic successes, and the District's obvious commitment to providing students with ongoing access to a high-quality educational program, what ways can be devised to maintain programs with consideration to the potential financial impact on local taxpayers, especially those without school-aged children?
- **Non-Resident Students** Ideas about increasing enrollment often suggested steps to add non-resident students who pay annual tuition. In reality, given the SED formula driven non-resident tuition rate for Lake George CSD which exceeds \$23,000 for 7-12 students, the likelihood of attracting students from outside the District is improbable. It is important to note that the non-resident tuition rate determined by the State Aid formula is the maximum amount that can be charged. Recruiting non-resident students can be a minefield and must be reviewed very carefully if this approach is to be considered. There are some notable illustrations of non-resident tuition programs that are successful in Bolton CSD, Newcomb CSD, Chautauqua Lake CSD and Sag Harbor UFSD; the latter two were included in the group of comparable districts.
- **Marketing and Promoting the District** School districts experiencing ongoing declining enrollments face critical decisions of major funding losses. Fortunately for Lake George CSD because of its high Combined Wealth Ratio, the financial impact has not been as dramatic. Nonetheless, it behooves the District to develop an Enrollment and Marketing Plan (see Strategic

Plan). One of the issues that we often see in a school experiencing declining enrollment is the lack of a plan. Such a plan might include highlighting the available options and programs for students, emphasizing the District's successes, promoting the excellent work of teachers and staff, and constantly nurturing the District's reputation. All employees are good will ambassadors of the school district and have a role to play.

The Lake George CSD has established a long-standing and well-deserved public reputation as an outstanding district. This CASDA study has outlined several potential options for consideration by a district-wide shared-decision making team working in collaboration with the Board of Education to reexamine the overall educational goals and develop an action plan for the 2019-20 school year. Subsequently, this study and other resources may be used to examine the specific impact of enrollment, staffing, and program options at each school. Hopefully a concentrated focus on collaboration and communication among all stakeholders would support effective organizational changes and future opportunities for the District.

The CASDA team wishes to thank the Board of Education, administrators, teachers, support staff, students and community members who graciously gave their time to provide information to us. In preparing this report, their feedback was candid, helpful, and much appreciated as were the telephone conversations the CASDA team had with superintendents and principals from the comparable districts. Hopefully the Lake George CSD community will find the data, information and future options covered in this report helpful. As a final thought after reading this report, we would be happy to elaborate further on our findings and answer follow-up questions about its contents.

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## APPENDIX A



### Interview/Focus Group Schedule

Lake George Central School District  
CASDA Study by Gregory J. Aidala and Susan P. Tangorre

#### Thursday, December 13<sup>TH</sup> - Day #1

TIME	LGCS D INVITED	CASDA Facilitator	LOCATION
2:30 - 3:15	LGHS Faculty/Staff Focus Group	Gregory Aidala/ Susan Tangorre	LGHS Library

#### Friday, December 14<sup>TH</sup> - Day #2

TIME	LGCS D INVITED	CASDA Facilitator	LOCATION
9:00 - 9:30	Lynne Rutnik/Kate Dubois Superintendent/Business Official	Gregory Aidala/ Susan Tangorre	LGHS Lynne's Office
9:30 - 10:15	Jeff Ziegler Interim Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Student Support Services	Gregory Aidala/ Susan Tangorre	LGHS Jeff's Office
10:30 - 11:15	Fran Cocozza Principal, Jr./Sr. High School	Gregory Aidala/ Susan Tangorre	LGHS Fran's Office
11:30 - 11:45	<b>TRAVEL to LGES</b>		
11:45 - 12:30	Jim Conway Principal, Elementary School	Gregory Aidala/ Susan Tangorre	LGES Jim's Office

#### Tuesday, December 18<sup>TH</sup> - Day #3

TIME	LGCS D INVITED	CASDA Facilitator	LOCATION
11:00-11:30	Jr./Sr. HS Student Focus Group	Gregory Aidala/ Susan Tangorre	Alumni Room
11:30- 12:15	Jamie Bearor, Kemm Wilson SPED/504 Intervention	Gregory Aidala/ Susan Tangorre	Alumni Room
12:15 -1:00	Rosemarie Sandora-Earl, James Perrigo, Stephen Pruess, Stephen Clark, Ann Molleman, Katy Price & Scott Smith Counselors/Social Workers/Psychologists	Gregory Aidala/ Susan Tangorre	Alumni Room
1:15 - 2:00	LGUE Parent/Community Focus Group	Gregory Aidala/ Susan Tangorre	Alumni Room
2:00 - 2:15	<b>TRAVEL to LGES</b>		
2:20 - 3:00	LGES Faculty/Staff Focus Group	Gregory Aidala/ Susan Tangorre	LGES Auditorium



## APPENDIX B



Lake George Central School District

Study conducted by Gregory Aidala and Susan Tangorre, CASDA Faculty

### Focus Groups - Format

#### **SCRIPT:**

- *Welcome – Thank you for attending.*
- *We are from CASDA as part of a study of the Lake George CSD enrollment, staffing and programs.*
- *Your BOE has requested a study of your District with a comparison to similar districts across NYS.*
- *This is a Focus Group. We hope to use this time with you efficiently. This is your opportunity to share your opinions about the future of your district.*
- *Today we will ask 3 or 4 questions. As we go around the room you may share your ideas or you may “pass”.*
- *There will also be an opportunity to respond on Survey Monkey.*

#### **GROUND RULES**

- Our discussion today is confidential.
- Only ONE person talks at a time.
- We will keep student’s best interests at the center of our work.
- There are no right or wrong answers to questions – just ideas, experiences and opinions, which are all valuable. It is important for us to hear everyone’s ideas and opinions.
- If you just want to listen and do not want to share... just say, “I pass”.
- Please LISTEN with an INTENT to UNDERSTAND.

#### **SCRIPT:**

- *The purpose of this study: “With declining enrollments, how will Lake George CSD maintain and enhance programs for students?”*
- *So... Here is what is known about Lake George CSD.*
- *The District has a Strategic Plan and Goals*
- *Strong student performance on NYS ELA and Math assessments & grades 3-8 -High graduation rates*
- *A supportive learning environment wherein students are known by adults.*

#### **FOCUS GROUPS - QUESTIONS**

- #1. WHAT’S WORKING REALLY WELL IN THE LAKE GEORGE CSD?**
- #2. WITH DECLINING ENROLLMENT, HOW WILL YOU KEEP THE MOMENTUM GOING?**
- #3. GIVEN THESE CHALLENGES, WHAT ARE YOUR HIGHEST PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE?**
- #4. (IF TIME) IS THERE ANY OTHER INFORMATION THAT YOU WANT TO SHARE?**

#### **SCRIPT:**

- *Thank you so much for your contributions and coming today.*

## APPENDIX C



### Focus Group Responses

#### Lake George Jr.-Sr. High School Faculty/Staff Focus Group - Thursday, December 13, 2018

Lake George Central School District  
CASDA Study conducted by Gregory J. Aidala and Susan P. Tangorre

*Focus Group participants were asked to share their ideas, opinions and feelings about the following questions:*

#### ***RESPONSES to Questions #1... “What’s working really well in the Lake George CSD?”***

- Kids don’t slip through the cracks – lots of support from adults
- Meeting needs of special education kids in classes and Resource Room
- Tremendous number of kids in extra-curricular events
- Student-centered
- Great amount of support during and after school
- Lots of course offerings - diverse subjects at higher levels
- Empowering students – shared leadership – e.g. “Rock Solid”
- Enjoy healthy relationships with town and village – collaboration
- Enjoy healthy relationships with each other
- 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade team models – knowing students
- Tremendous art and music for such a small school – students compete well – need to continue funding for the arts
- Dedicated staff – find new opportunities to help kids
- Staff is always looking for our own learning – new opportunities
- Small class size
- Parents really like small classes – lower-middle-upper levels
- Decreasing class size (15 or less) helps teachers build relationships with students
- Class size can be from 5 to 22 for the same course – not always balances
- We work collaboratively and have the autonomy to be creative
- Access to technology for students and staff – Great! - support from “IT Team” in-house e.g. Apple TV, interactive Books, math curriculum support – including in-service for students
- Departments can do within their departments what they NEED – flexibility in departments, ability to change formats with students in mind
- Ability to hire high quality faculty
- Strong building leadership
- Stable faculty – not high turnover

#### ***RESPONSES to Questions #2... “With declining enrollment, how will you keep the momentum going?”***

- We had a plan 2 years ago to increase enrollment ( 5a or 5b on the Strategic Plan) – what happened to it?
- It would be nice not to lose more faculty
- Class sizes vary quite a bit i.e. class size is 5 to 23 – need greater balance – need to be proactive

- Taxpayers are supportive – “Don’t hit the panic button!”
- Don’t change for the sake of change
  - Lot of institutional knowledge here (in this room) – USE people in this room to find a solution!
- Lot of people who have been her (at Lake George CSD) for 20 to 30 years – we are familiar with the Shared- Decision- Making model
- With the SPARC study – communication was totally collaborative – not this time
- To keep from decreasing enrollment... encourage the Jr/Sr High School program is attracting families because they believe in the program, i.e. families move into district ( maybe 40% rate after leaving Elementary School)
- Value staff initiatives
- Be proactive to keep families in the district (names/families were provided previously)
- If teachers are being underutilized, use existing staff to increase course options
- Is it the assumption that decreasing enrollment means cutting staff?
- Are we marketing our schools? E.g. Saratoga brought in the local realtors to promote the district.
- Maintaining the robustness of our program options – at all levels too – Create electives across the board
- Provide more Professional Development so that teachers can develop more courses
- Offer AP course to students from neighboring districts

***RESPONSES to Questions #3... “ Given these challenges, what are your highest priorities for the future?”***

- Uniqueness of Lake George – it’s attractive to families – supportive - not wanting to loss that uniqueness “kids can find their niche”
- WANT TO HOLD ON TO THAT (uniqueness)
- Are we really that unique? – Would be interested in the comparative districts’ information
- Student-centered – small class size - focused on what’s best for students
- HIGHEST PRIORITY – not to lose staff positions
- Marketing the district! Non-resident tuition at Bolton Landing is only \$1,500- can we look at non-resident tuition rate?
- Consider options for reduced or free rate for children of staff members – it’s a legitimate question.
- Keeping positions is keeping programs and their funding
- Continue to value innovation and growth for students & staff
- Look at positions that were cut previously
- Shared-Decision-Making process – what will report “look like” – we would like to be part of the review and analysis
- Priority: to create paths and opportunities for students after school
- Concern: AIS data and guidance – need to look at numbers and focus for students

***RESPONSES to Questions #4... “ Is there any other information that you want to share with us?”***

- Repairing relationships underlying animosity in the building – “I feel like we are not the same faculty”
- Lack of trust in the district – over time is becoming a problem
- We were always involved in school issues
- Kids in the district: “I would eat roadkill to keep programs for kids!”

- Transparency: The lack of trust is transferring to our building – concern we may not have a voice – this might not be a collaborative process – data was shared but there is a lot of fear on the part of staff.
- Implication of your question assumes a problem... Is there a crisis? Or not?
- There may be a real concern, a taxpayer group a few years ago helped the budget go down

## **Focus Group Responses**

### **Jr.-Sr. High School Student Focus Group – Tuesday, December 18, 2018**

Lake George Central School District

CASDA Study conducted by Gregory J. Aidala and Susan P. Tangorre

*Focus Group participants were asked to share their ideas, opinions and feelings about the following questions:*

#### ***RESPONSES to Questions #1... “What’s working really well I the Lake George CSD?”***

- Good job giving us freedom
- Good variety of electives
- Lots of opportunities e.g. New Visions
- Teachers make classes interesting – not monotone
- Resources – like on-line classes
- Tons of different sports, clubs, activities
- Friendly teachers and students and adults
- Clubs – LOTS!
- I like how they have the open library
- Access to technology – like in the classrooms - each student has a MacBook
- Classes and opportunities i.e. Accelerated classes and electives
- Good special education teachers – follow people’s learning plans
- Programs to support families – charities
- Teachers are very supportive

#### ***RESPONSES to Questions #2... “With declining enrollment, how will you keep the momentum going?”***

- Leadership opportunities (want to preserve) don’t decrease clubs or other activities
- If there are not as many kids – or fewer clubs – it will be harder to meet people
- Keep music and art – to help you pick your careers
- I agree – (music and art) I like being able to choose like a world language such a Mandarin
- Everyone should get the choice for classes – if the enrollment if decreasing, we might not have as many classes
- Small class – nicer than higher classes – some like 15 or more than 5 – it depends on the teacher
- GPA – if not good in math – I can get my average up with other classes
- Sports teams – If you’re stressed, it’s helpful
- Keep the musical!
- Ceramics -painting – protect the arts – fine & performing

- Out of school programs, like the ACC program - keep accelerated tracks
- Keep late buses

***RESPONSES to Questions #3... “ Given these challenges, what are your highest priorities for the future?”***

- Keeping it interesting!
- Keeping the school alive
- As school gets smaller, use auditoriums for special assemblies

***RESPONSES to Questions #4... “ Is there any other information that you want to share with us?”***

- Time was limited for this question – students indicated that they had covered their issues/concerns

## **Focus Group Responses**

### **LGUE Parent/Community Focus Group – Tuesday, December 18, 2018**

Lake George Central School District

CASDA Study conducted by Gregory J. Aidala and Susan P. Tangorre

*Focus Group participants were asked to share their ideas, opinions and feelings about the following questions:*

***RESPONSES to Questions #1... “ What’s working really well I the Lake George CSD?”***

- Small class sizes
- Special education inclusion at the Elementary School
- Daughter: long term (positive) impact of ES teach to HS to RPI
- They spend money very well!
- (2011 retired teacher) success of students – opportunities – I agree with comments on school climate
- Very happy – leadership is “top notch”
- As an overall principle in the school, after-school activities – very robust – “in my opinion” this builds a sense of community - compared to the other districts I’ve lived in
- Taxes (at Lake George) reasonable ... I moved back into district after living in two other districts – Lake George is a 1/3 of what it was in the other districts
- (Moved from another district) School has enthusiasm – positive, happy environment or school climate – teachers are happy working here
- Learning and teaching climate – (2 standard deviations from mean) students at all levels – all students are encouraged to do their best – emphasize leadership besides education – encouraged by families and community as well as a growing good citizens
- Teaching them computers – accessibility important – stay focused with security in mind
- Size excellent – (my child) able to go to ACC with 36 credits
- Kids are lucky – they can get summer jobs – unique!
- Lake George is 3 hours from major cities and get experience here with folks from other countries
- I like the teachers – kids don’t fall through the cracks
- Small classroom size! (we were from Albany) and paid 6 to 7 times in school taxes. Safety was HUGE

- Come here for the integration of our children – lived previously for 34 years in another district – feel much more involvement in just 2½ years
- I like integration- small class size – community
- Teachers: no slugs or slackers
- This community has 4 towns and 2 counties – need to work together

***RESPONSES to Questions #2... “ With declining enrollment, how will you keep the momentum going?” RESPONSES to Questions #3... “ Given these challenges, what are your highest priorities for the future?” (Due to time constraints blended these two questions)***

- Tuition charge for out-of-district students has to come down
- At some point available resources will have an adverse impact on our programs ...therefore community clubs should be developed outside of school
- Some families have household challenges – living in motels (Oct-Apr) – community problem – need to do something
- Worry about how the Common Core is affecting our kids – it’s still a challenge. Want to maintain the creativity – concern if there is less staff in this educational community.
- When you say “community” do we mean community (i.e. those on fixed incomes) – you need to consider them as an important part of the district
- Right now it’s not the Lake George we knew (speaking for my family and my 2 kids) thinking of moving
- When I was a teacher – not as easy as people think – talented teachers are constrained – The most important thing are the students. My recommendation: Have an outsider come in and revamp the schedule – you like the smaller classes – a regular science teacher should be able to teach several classes. I try to put myself in others shoes... we need to “open our minds” in order to accommodate a different schedule – it shouldn’t be put only on the Guidance Counselor.
- Data collection – enrollment – tax base – programs: We just may need to consolidate classes – Let’s do it respectfully – we can figure it out in a civil way – need to work together
- A lot of it is the State – may need to change – we don’t want Lake George to lag ( BOCES forensics class)  
e.g. important to share with other districts
- Actively search for outside resources – constant focus away from the kids – Don’t know how to balance these impacts on the budget
- Thinking of students: art, music, literature, sports, awards – how did they get these?
- Look to the wider community – look outside your borders – cost of living – affordable housing – we have a resort community – engage with the town and village – NEED to be proactive – NEED to work together more, e.g. Scarsdale (common core) I wish we could do that.
- Based on my experience in other school districts, if you start with collaboration, you won’t have division. Focus on strengths – objectives are going to focus on what we’re good at.
- Four teachers in my family ... the problem isn’t here – its NYS. The unfunded mandates – NYSUT – NYSBA etc. Need unity in the State rather than property tax.
- I’ve been here for over 14yrs – You’ve got everything here.
- The school is a business – need to increase market share... it’s no one’s fault -never heard a complaint (about teachers) we just don’t need the same amount
- Decrease staffing by attrition

- How can we be best? It like a little, free, private school – we’re not that much more innovative – not using all these (local) resources i.e. the lake, nature in the area, resort business, Sagamore. We have to be more creative compared to other districts – go on the lake, the mountains.
- Three kids in a class is NOT reasonable – it’s ridiculous!
- Our public relations are poor (with parents and other school teams for instance) other districts don’t like us or... they’re jealous
- Five years ago, I tried to get schools to send SED a petition – our teachers are gifted but they should start teaching classes to other schools – Now if we have approximately 54 7<sup>th</sup> graders – what will happen to our teams? Can we merge with Bolton Landing? Warrensburg?

***RESPONSES to Questions #4... “Is there any other information that you want to share with us?”***

- Let superintendent do her actual job
- Check previous enrollment data (done with SPARC Committee)

**Focus Group Responses**

**Lake George Elementary School Faculty/Staff Focus Group - Tuesday, December 18, 2018**

Lake George Central School District

CASDA Study conducted by Gregory J. Aidala and Susan P. Tangorre

*Focus Group participants were asked to share their ideas, opinions and feelings about the following questions:*

***RESPONSES to Questions #1... “What’s working really well I the Lake George CSD?”***

- Small class sizes
- Collaborative staff
- Supportive parents
- With decreasing enrollment is a known at Elementary School – have gone from 26 to 19 sections – not a new problem – this has been addressed at the Elementary School
- Provides opportunities for the classroom and curriculum
- Support for struggling students
- We’re provided with the most up-to-date curriculum
- Number of resources available – Great!
- Good technology support
- Excellent amount of teaching assistant support to allow meeting children’s needs
- Intervention is provided for kids in after-school programs
- “School of Excellence” -has been recognized for many awards of excellence: nationally, state-wide and locally
- Professional Development supported by administration -both in district and out-side of district
- Materials and supplies are readily available
- Reading, art, music, PE – come into classrooms – collaboration with curriculum
- AIS groups
- Enrichment – help them find their aspirations and interests, long term and short term
- We all like each other – family atmosphere
- Colleagues are supportive of each other

- Our special programs are excellent (e.g. Winter Olympics) – teachers go the extra mile
- Strong PTO
- Teachers are generous
- Everyone here is invested in students
- Substitute teacher shortage – luckily a lot of retirees come back
- Building is immaculate!
- Our bus drivers are excellent few problems

***RESPONSES to Questions #2... “With declining enrollment, how will you keep the momentum going?”***

- Maintain small class size
- We have a decreasing enrollment, but I don’t think we are seeing a decrease in student needs – i.e. enrollment is decreasing; student needs are increasing
- Maintain or increase the support staff we have e.g. teaching assistant may need additional hires
- We need more AIS support – majority see classroom teachers, especially at the higher grade levels for math AIS (K-6) to improve higher level thinking skills; students with reading issues have math issues related to reading problems also
- If you do not spend more money... as people retire, you may need to reduce the number of people by attrition
- Needy students need consistency of special education services and coordination from 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Students are being identified at 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade – we don’t have someone allocated to provide the extra support
- Data: at the younger grades, especially kindergarten – we need so much more help and have to back track to support student needs
- It’s a testament to our teachers that we meet kids’ needs - we teach kids with significant needs all year (the millionaires’ kids don’t live here year-round)
- When people buy a house, they keep it – pass it on to family – in the larger community this is a problem
- Consider school mergers, but everyone says...“not for my school”
- Consider the use of “shared services” rather than consolidation or merger

***RESPONSES to Questions #3... “Given these challenges, what are your highest priorities for the future?”***

- No new items were offered – there was consensus that the items mentioned previously covered the challenges as well as their priorities (due to timing at the end of the day)

***RESPONSES to Questions #4... “Is there any other information that you want to share with us?”***

- Look at the total number of administrators in the district
- Consider the number of teachers, number of administrators, number of supervisors/teachers on special assignment and the number of non-instructional personnel
- Refer to the data in the previous Strategic Plan
- Consider non-resident tuition rates: for e.g. Bolton Landing is something like \$1,500 and Lake George is \$18,000



## APPENDIX D



### Lake George CSD Study

Study conducted by Gregory J. Aidala and Susan P. Tangorre, CASDA Faculty

#### BLACKBOARD ON-LINE SURVEY SENT TO FACULTY/STAFF MEMBERS

*Lake George CSD Faculty/Staff Member,*

*The Board of Education has requested that CASDA conduct a study of the Lake George CSD enrollment, staffing and programs. The key question is, “With declining enrollment, how will the Lake George CSD maintain and enhance programs for students?”*

*Some faculty and staff members have participated in interviews and focus groups. If you were not able to attend, you can use Survey Monkey to share your thoughts and opinions. Your comments may be used in reports or discussions. All responses MUST be received by Friday, December 21<sup>st</sup>. Thank you for your contribution to this study.*

Gregory Aidala and Susan Tangorre, CASDA Faculty Members

**I am a faculty/staff member at:**

☐ LGES      ☐ LGHS      ☐ Other

**Please share your ideas, opinions and feelings about the following questions:**

- 1. What’s working really well in the Lake George CSD?**
- 2. With declining enrollment, how will you keep the momentum going?**
- 3. Given these challenges, what are your highest priorities for the future?**
- 4. Is there any other information that you want to share with us?**

**Thank you for your responses.**

12/10/18

## APPENDIX E



Book	Lake George Central School District Policy Manual
Section	Students
Title	Non-Resident Students
Code	7132
Status	Active
Adopted	July 1, 2013

### **SUBJECT: NON-RESIDENT STUDENTS**

Non-resident families who wish to enroll children in the Lake George Central School District shall submit a request in writing to the Superintendent who shall determine whether or not admission will be granted.

The following general conditions for acceptance will be met when considering admittance:

- a. There is sufficient space to accommodate the non-resident student;
- b. Upon a determination that the needs of the students can be met within the District's existing programs;
- c. No increase in the size of faculty or staff will be necessary;
- d. Admittance will not result in the establishment of a new section;
- e. Parents/guardians must work out transfer conditions with the home school district or provide their own transportation;
- f. All rules and regulations in effect for District students will be applicable to non-District students;
- g. Tuition may be charged to families of non-resident students in accordance with formulas approved by the State Education Department.

Final decisions regarding the acceptance of non-resident students rest with the Board of Education. Such acceptance may be revoked at any time by the Board of Education.

### **Tuition-Paying Students**

#### Future Students

The children of families who have signed a contract to buy or build a residence in the School District may be enrolled for the semester in which they expect to become residents. Non-resident tuition shall be charged, payable in advance, with an adjustment to be made when the family becomes a resident in the District.

#### Foreign Students

Students from other nations who are living with District residents may be enrolled at the discretion of the District. In accordance with federal law, a foreign student who attends a public secondary school under an F-1 Visa must reimburse the School District for the full unsubsidized per capita cost of providing education at the school during the student's attendance. The administration is authorized to file with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security the forms necessary for the monitoring of non-immigrant foreign students during the course of their stay in the District in accordance with the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

### Other Non-resident Students

Non-resident students other than those affected by the above provisions may be accepted as tuition-paying students at the discretion of the Board of Education on an annual basis provided the general conditions listed above are met. Requests should be submitted to the Superintendent.

### **Non-Tuition Students**

#### Former Residents

- a. Students of any grade who move from the Lake George Central School District during the school year may be given permission to finish the semester in which the move occurs. Transportation will not be provided.
- b. A student who moves from the District in his/her senior year may be given permission to complete his/her senior year in the Lake George Central School District.

### Foreign Exchange Students

Only foreign students participating in a recognized Student Exchange Program under a J-1 Visa may attend District schools without payment of tuition. The administration is authorized to file with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security the forms necessary for the monitoring of non-immigrant foreign students during the course of their stay in the District in accordance with the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

### **Proof of Residency**

Such documentary or sworn proof as shall be required by the administration or Board of Education must be furnished prior to the admission of any child residing in the District with a person not his parent or who is the child of a non-resident. The admission of homeless children and youth will be in accordance with law.

### **Reservation of Claims**

Should a material misstatement of fact be made and relied upon by any administrator or the Board of Education in admitting a non-resident student without tuition, the Board shall be entitled to recover the cost of instruction for the time the student was not authorized to attend a school in the District from the person having made the misstatement or from a person in parental relation to the student.

### **Tuition Fees**

Where applicable, tuition fees are computed according to a formula established by the Commissioner of Education.

Tuition of individual non-resident students shall be computed in advance at the time of enrollment. Methods of payment may be arranged in the District Office and approved by the Superintendent. Non-resident status is contingent upon timely payment of tuition fees as established by the Board of Education.

### **Legal Residence**

Upon proof of payment, school tax payments of non-residents who own assessable property which must be individually owned by the parent(s) (not a business or corporation) in the District will be deducted from any tuition charges levied against such non-resident.

8 United States Code (USC) Chapter 12

Education Law Sections 1709(13), 2045 and 3202

8 New York Code of Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) Section 174.2

NOTE: Refer also to Policy #7131 -- Education of Homeless Children and Youth

Last Modified by Sarah Barton on August 9, 2018

<https://www.boarddocs.com/ny/lgcds/Board.nsf/private/open&login#>

## APPENDIX F

### Contact List of Participating School Districts

District	Superintendent/Phone	District Address	ES Principal	MS Principal	HS Principal
Cambridge CSD	Vince Canini	24 South Park St	Colleen Lester		Caroline Goss
	518.677.2653 x1010	Cambridge, NY 12816			
Cassadaga Valley CSD	Charles Leichner	5935 Route 60 - PO Box 540	Josh Gilevski		Scot Stutzman, grades 6-12
	716.962.5155	Sinclairville, NY 14782			
Chautauqua Lake CSD	Benjamin Spitzer	100 North Erie St	Megan Lundgren		Josh Liddell, grades 6-12
	716.753.5808	Mayville, NY 14757			
Cooperstown CSD	William Crankshaw	39 Linden Ave	Ann Meccariello		Jim Brophy (interim)
	607.547.5364	Cooperstown, NY 13326			
Geneseo CSD	Tim Hayes	4050 Avon Rd	Kelly Sattora		Michael Salatel, grades 6-12
	585.243.3450	Geneseo, NY 14454			
Lake Placid CSD	Roger Catania	50 Cummings Rd.	Sonja Franklin	Teresa Lindsay	Teresa Lindsay, grades 9-12 Interim
	518 523-2475	Lake Placid, NY 12946			
Sag Harbor UFSD	Katy Graves	200 Jermain Ave	Matt Malone	Brittany Carriero	Jeff Nichols
	631 725-5300	Sag Harbor, NY 11963			
Southold UFSD	David A. Gamberg	420 Oaklawn Ave PO Box 470	Ellen O'Neill		Terence Rusch
	631.765.5400 x1304	Southold, NY 11971			
Tully CSD	Robert Hughes	20 State Street	Ed Kupiec		Mary Ann Murphy
	315 696-6203	Tully, NY 13159			
Warrensburg CSD	John Goralski	103 Schroom River Rd	Amy Langworthy		Doug Duell
	518 623-2861	Warrensburg, NY 12885			
Warsaw CSD	Joseph Englebert	153 West Buffalo St	Kim Monahan	Kim D'Amico	Rick Ellis
	585.786.8000 x1147	Warsaw NY 14569			
Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD	Patrick Pomerville	125 Middletown Rd.	Joe Siracuse		Chris Scanlon
	518 237-0800 X3308	Waterford, NY 12188			
Waterville CSD	Charles Chafee	381 Madison Street	Maureen Gray		Nick Rauch
	315 841-3900	Waterville, NY 13480			

Effective 3/1/19