

Proposal

School Facilities & Efficiency Study

Prepared for the

Oswego City School District



OSWEGO
CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Proposal submitted by:

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School Facilities & Efficiency Study Proposal

Oswego City School District

***Alan Pole and Deb Ayers
Castallo & Silky LLC***

This study will examine the current grade/facility configuration and educational programming in the Oswego City School District to determine if there may be opportunities to utilize school district facilities more efficiently to enhance the educational opportunities for students. Additionally, the study will review the staffing structure of the district in an effort to maximize efficiency, increase productivity and collaboration, and plan for the long-term success of all staff and the district as a whole. This proposal is presented by **Castallo & Silky LLC** (Syracuse, NY) pursuant to a request from the Superintendent of Schools.

Purpose/Methodology

This study will review district facilities to determine if the current space is supporting the needs of the educational programming. Enrollment history and projections, grade alignment, class sizes, staffing patterns, and course enrollments are some of the factors that will be assessed to support the study conclusions. Additionally, the study will examine opportunities for increased efficiency in district operations. The study will seek options to strengthen educational opportunities while striving to improve operational efficiency.

The study will be conducted in consultation with district administration and staff and the Board of Education. The consultants will begin by formulating and agreeing with the Superintendent and Board of Education on a “critical question(s)” that the study will answer (see Appendix A). Once this is complete, the consultants will request a significant amount of information from the school district. After the information has been secured, meetings with key school district staff will be held to review the information and to probe other critical areas of district operations. Should the staffing analysis require comparative data from other school districts of similar size, it will be the responsibility of the Oswego City School District superintendent to obtain permission from the comparative districts for the consultants to meet with comparative district staff to gather relevant data.

A written report will be prepared and presented first to the superintendent for review and comment. Once finalized, a presentation will be made to the Board of Education regarding the findings and recommendations, if requested.

Principles

The following principles will govern the conduct of this study:

1. The study will be conducted in a fair manner
2. All data will be presented to the board of education, if requested
3. Recommendations will:
 - a. benefit student learning,
 - b. be sensitive to the unique cultural context of the school district,
 - c. be independent of special interest groups,
 - d. be educationally sound, and
 - e. be fiscally responsible and realistic.

Areas of Study

The following critical information will be examined:

1- Student enrollment history and projections will be prepared for the district. Additionally, student enrollment history for each school building will also be generated to assess trends and estimate future enrollments and the related impact on future building enrollments and capacity.

2- The organizational chart for the district will be reviewed for purposes of reporting and communications and current staffing patterns in the district/schools will be assessed.

3- Interviews with district staff may be conducted to inquire about any additional information that would add to the study results.

4- A survey of other similar school districts will be completed to compare staffing patterns.

5- The academic program and class sizes for the 2021-22 school year will be reviewed.

6- Current space utilization of the district's schools will be studied to determine if the facilities are meeting the educational needs of the district and the degree to which each school is approximating its "practical" capacity.

7- A high-level review of current district non-instructional operations to identify possible opportunities for improving efficiency will be undertaken.

8- The study will provide a list of advantages and disadvantages to potential options for configuration of grades/schools to include the impact on the educational program, staffing, and related cost estimates.

Study Cost, Product, and Timeline

The estimated cost of this proposed facilities and efficiency study will be \$35,000 plus ordinary expenses (mileage, meals, copying, etc.) related to the conduct of the study. Once the study is completed, the consultants will prepare a written report to present their findings and recommendations. The study will begin in November 2021 and be completed by June 30, 2022.

Consultants

Alan Pole and Deborah Ayers are the consultants assigned to this study. These consultants have extensive experience in working with school districts on school district management studies. The backgrounds of these individuals are presented below.

Mr. Alan D. Pole retired in September 2008 as the BOCES District Superintendent for the Delaware-Chenango-Madison-Otsego BOCES after 18 years in this role. Prior to this Mr. Pole spent 16 years at the Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES in several key positions, including Personnel Director, Assistant Superintendent, and Deputy Superintendent. Alan has conducted numerous superintendent searches and has participated in a variety of merger and facilities studies. He has been an adjunct professor at SUNY Cortland, Syracuse University, and Ohio State. Among his many awards, Alan has received the William Deming Leadership Award from the Rural Schools Program at Cornell University and the Amy Bull Crist Leadership Development Award given by the New York State Association for Women in Administration. Mr. Pole joined Castallo & Silky LLC as an associate in fall 2008. In 2021, the Norwich campus of the DCMO BOCES was named in his honor.

Ms. Deborah (Deb) Ayers retired in October 2017 from the position of Assistant Superintendent for Administration for the Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES in Syracuse after nearly forty years in public education. Prior to the seventeen (17) years in her position at OCM BOCES, Ms. Ayers served as the Business Administrator in Tully for nine (9) years and the Business Manager in DeRuyter for seven (7) years after beginning her career as a teacher at DeRuyter. She has served in a variety of leadership positions at the state and local levels of the New York State Association of School Business Officials. Additionally, Ms. Ayers has been an adjunct professor in the educational leadership program at SUNY Cortland, teaching courses in Public School Finance, School Business Management, and Capital Project Administration. Over the course of her 33 years as a school business official, she has had extensive experience with business operations, transportation, facilities, school food service, and capital projects.

References

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Superintendent
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Mr. David Bills
Superintendent
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Ms. Kristine Orr
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Appendix A

Draft Critical Question:

How can the district maintain and enhance the educational opportunities for Oswego students while continuing to ensure efficient and effective utilization of staff and facilities as well as fiscal responsibility for the district's taxpayers?

While the draft critical question above will guide the overall direction of the study, the district has offered a number of specific questions that it would like to have answered in the study. Responses to these questions will be included as part of the study. These questions are as follows:

- 1. How might the district be better efficient?*
- 2. What are areas where we could enact efficiencies that would result in significant cost savings?*
- 3. Are there better/other ways to configure how we serve our various grade levels?*
- 4. Are we using pupil capacity which we now have effectively/efficiently?*
- 5. Are there spaces that could be rented to other agencies to bring more revenue into the district?*
- 6. What might future enrollments look like at Oswego CSD?*
- 7. Are we deploying staff directly involved with instruction efficiently?*
- 8. Are we deploying non-instruction efficiently?*
- 9. What are class size section numbers as compared to class size sections goals?*
- 10. Is there a gap between current enrollment and future enrollment? If so, how does it relate to our space needs?*
- 11. How many students can we serve in various programs and how many are actually enrolled for the 2021-2022 school year?*
- 12. What are the patterns of our spring kindergarten enrollment data as compared to who actually shows up in September?*
- 13. Does the district have too many staff members?*
- 14. Does the district have too many schools? If we were to close a school, how much cost savings would the district realize?*
- 15. If the district were to reconfigure its schools would it result in cost savings? If so, how might we reconfigure to realize efficiencies?*
- 16. Is there any aid (State or Federal) or grants that the district should consider exploring or maximizing that we currently aren't.*
- 17. Are there any budgetary considerations that the district should take into account that might reduce our overall budget?*