

Reimagining Our
Schools
Large Group
Meeting
November 3, 2025





Overview & Moving Forward

Susan M. Swartz





Grade Level Configuration Presentation

Facilitators -
Rick Arket,
John Geniti &
Matthew Hubbell



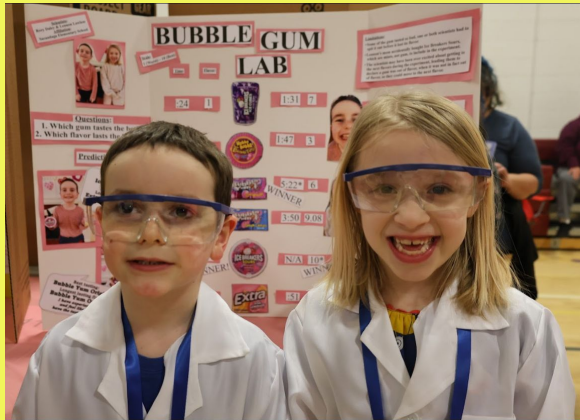
SG Grade Level Configuration Work Group

5 Nov 2025

Grade Level Configuration Group Goal

The Grade Level Configuration Work Group will identify and delineate the educational implications / logistical considerations of closing a school, **making a recommendation as to potential grade level configuration.**

-  Potential impact to student learning including the provision of academic support services (MTSS) to students.
-  Potential impact to students social and emotional development given specific grade configurations.
-  Potential impact upon provision of equitable services, programs, and opportunities for students and the impact to families and the community.
-  Need for staffing, including specific certification requirements, for any proposed grade level configuration.
-  Consideration of facility availability, classroom and other space, and class size guidelines.



Our North Star



GLC Process

Committee Composition

- 12 committee members in regular attendance
- Parents
- Grandparents
- Private sector
- Teachers
- Administrators
- Former BOE
- All levels

In-person Meetings

- Oct 8
- Oct 21
- Oct 29

Evidence Reviewed

- Enrollment
 - Current
 - Enrollment studies
- Demographics
- Capacity
- Academic performance
- SPED program
- Staffing
- Mission Statement / Commitment to Students
- Budget projection
- Birth rate
- Class size / distribution

*Our student
enrollment has been
in steady decline.*

GLC Throughlines

*Our enrollment has
been in steady
decline.*

*Our buildings,
particularly our
elementaries,
are well below
capacity.*

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*We face a systemic
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There is inequity across our elementary schools: Ex class size

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GLC Throughlines

Our community has deep ties to our elementary schools.

Our enrollment has been in steady decline.

Our buildings, particularly our elementaries, are well below capacity.

We face a systemic budget deficit.

There is inequity across our elementary schools: Ex class size

GLC Throughlines

Change is hard and can surface strong emotions.

Our community has deep ties to our elementary schools.

Our enrollment has been in steady decline.

Our buildings, particularly our elementaries, are well below capacity.

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There is inequity across our elementary schools: Ex class size

GLC Throughlines

A reconfiguration is an opportunity.

Change is hard and can surface strong emotions.

Our community has deep ties to our elementary schools.

Our enrollment has been in steady decline.

Our buildings, particularly our elementaries, are well below capacity.

We face a systemic budget deficit.

There is inequity across our elementary schools: Ex class size

GLC Throughlines

We must act decisively.

A reconfiguration is an opportunity.

Change is hard and can surface strong emotions.

Our community has deep ties to our elementary schools.

**Elementary
Capacity**

~ 60%

Recommendation # 1

Repurpose
or close 1
elementary
school.

~ 60%

Values

School values are the fundamental beliefs and guiding principles that dictate a school's culture, behavior, decision-making, and overall approach to education.

These core values, establish clear expectations for the community, align actions with the school's mission and vision, and foster a positive environment that supports academic and personal growth for students.



Grade Level Configuration Options

- Positive Impact
- Neutral Impact
- Negative Impact

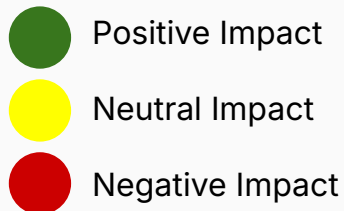
	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4
Fiscally Responsible				
Equity in Class Size and Program				
Meets SG Standard of Academic Excellence				
Robust Student Supports				
Logistically Sound and Stable				

Grade Level Configuration Options



	No Action	Three K-5 Buildings	One Gr K-1 Building One Gr 2-3 Building One Gr 4-5 Building	Two Gr K-2 Buildings One Gr 3-5 Building
Fiscally Responsible				
Equity in Class Size and Program				
Meets SG Standard of Academic Excellence				
Robust Student Supports				
Logistically Sound and Stable				

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Grade Level Configuration Options

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	No Action	Three Gr K-5 Buildings	One Gr K-1 Building One Gr 2-3 Building One Gr 4-5 Building	Two Gr K-2 Buildings One Gr 3-5 Building
Fiscally Responsible	Negative Impact	Positive Impact	Positive Impact	Positive Impact
Equity in Class Size and Program	Negative Impact	Positive Impact	Positive Impact	Positive Impact
Meets SG Standard of Academic Excellence	Neutral Impact	Positive Impact	Positive Impact	Positive Impact
Robust Student Supports	Neutral Impact	Positive Impact	Neutral Impact	Positive Impact
Logistically Sound and Stable	Negative Impact	Positive Impact	Positive Impact	Positive Impact

Recommendations

- 1. Repurpose / close 1 elementary school**
- 2. Reorganize the 3 remaining elementary schools**
 - a. Create 3 Grade Level Centers: Gr K-2, Gr K-2, SAC as Gr 3-5**
 - b. Create 3 K-5 Buildings**
- 3. Create attendance boundary swing zones**

Closing Thoughts

- **Each building would have “flex classroom” space in a 3 elementary school model**
- **Pre - K was not part of our committee charge**
- **Sense of Urgency**

Thank you!





Attendance Boundaries Presentation

Facilitators -
Clara Bisailon, Peter
Bednarek &
Marissa Gordon



Reimagining Our Schools

Attendance Boundaries Progress as of 11/5



Attendance Boundaries Group Goal

*Determine the most equitable /
efficient way to redraw the district's
attendance boundaries*

*Plan for updated bus routes including
safety and travel time considerations.*

Who:

About 14 members in regular attendance with varying perspectives: Director of Transportation, BOE members, current and retired educators, HS Principal, Director of Humanities, parents of elementary aged children, community members, and alumni. A few members of the group have years of experience in business and transportation oriented fields.

When:

10/8, 10/22, 10/29 (6 - 7:30)

What:

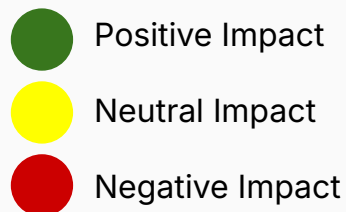
Meeting 1: Introductions, housekeeping, compiled a list of information needed to “dive in” (current attendance boundaries, enrollment data, cohort studies)

Meeting 2:

- Reviewed summary of enrollment study, district demographic information, current ridership data, information from the Grade Level Configuration Work Group
- Introduced the idea of grade level centers or three K-5 buildings, came to the determination that three K-5 buildings would be feasible from a transportation lens, needed more information regarding grade level centers

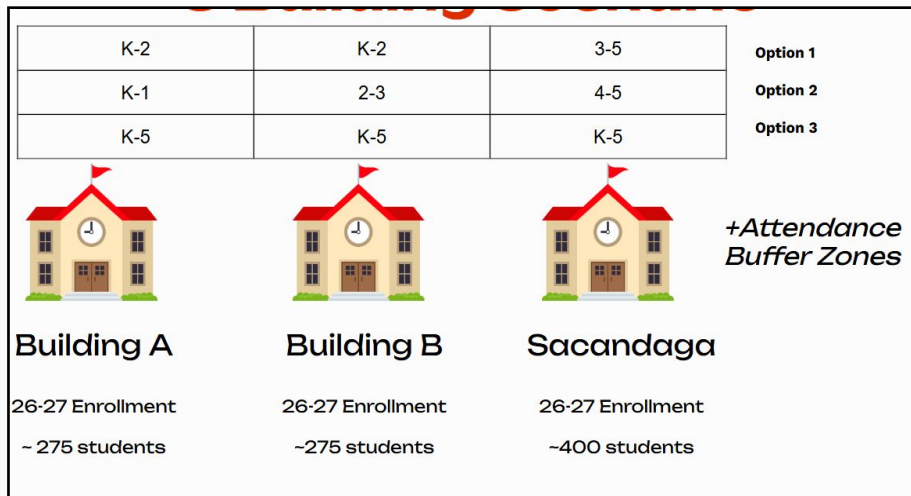
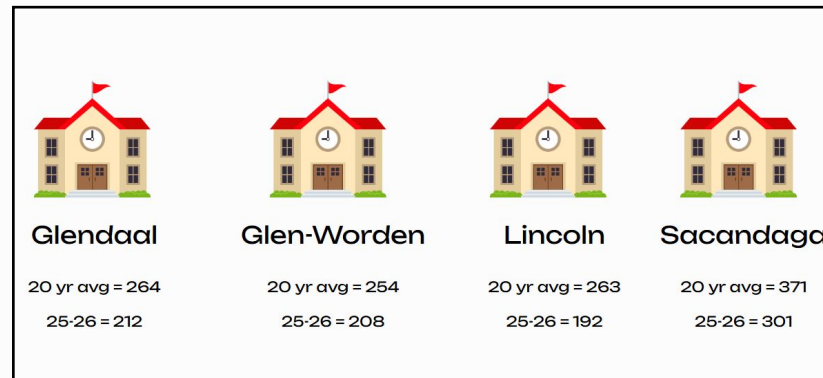
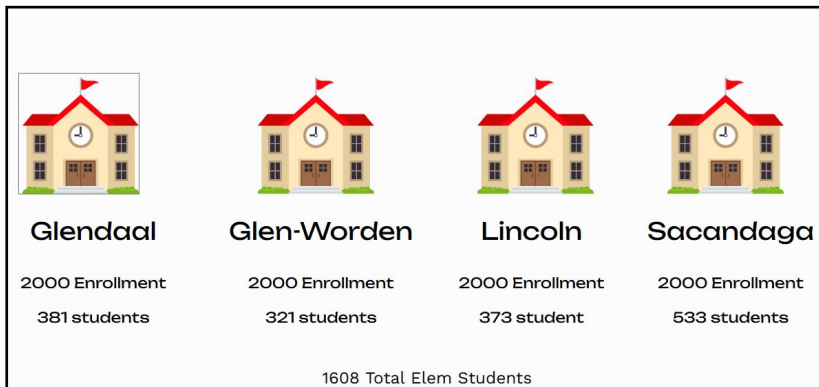
Meeting 3: Began reviewing potential models for grade level centers and three K-5 buildings

Informative Feedback from GLC Group



	No Action	Close 1 Elem Building & Redistrict K-5	Close 1 Elem Building and Create Grade Level Centers	Scenario
Fiscally Responsible				
Equity in Class Size and Program				
Meets SG Standard of Academic Excellence				
Robust Student Supports				
Logistically Sound and Stable				

Informative Feedback from GLC Group



After meeting #2, group ruled out Option 2, which was grade level centers in the K-1, 2-3, and 4-5 configuration.

Leaving Two Options:
 Grade Level Centers (Two K-2 & one 3-5)
OR
 Three K-5

Transportation Group Process

- Committee reviewed NYS Transportation rules, regulations, and current SG practices with regard to:
 - SG's non-eligible transportation zone
 - Savings through expanding the non-eligible zone
 - State regulation is within 2 miles
 - Establishing buffer zones for transportation flexibility
- From a transportation lens, the group came to consensus on the following:
 - SAC remains open due to size
 - GD remains open due to location
- Scenarios explored:
 - Three K-5 Buildings
 - K-2, K-2, & 3-5 (SAC due to building size)

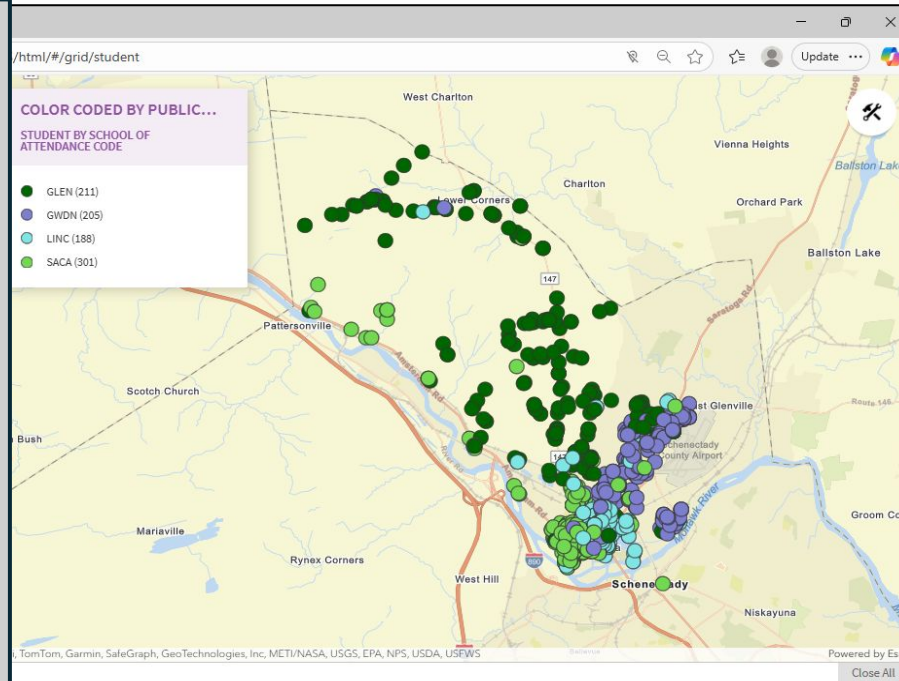
Grade Level Center Discussion

***Facilitators (Pete, Marissa, & Clara) decided to dive into grade level centers first, knowing it would be more complex from a transportation lens.*

- Major Concern:
 - Children in the same household would have to take two different buses
 - Transportation was able to confirm that siblings could ride the same bus with multiple drop points

This shows our
CURRENT
distribution of
students through
the 4 existing
elementary
schools.

Showing all public
K-5 students in the
entire district

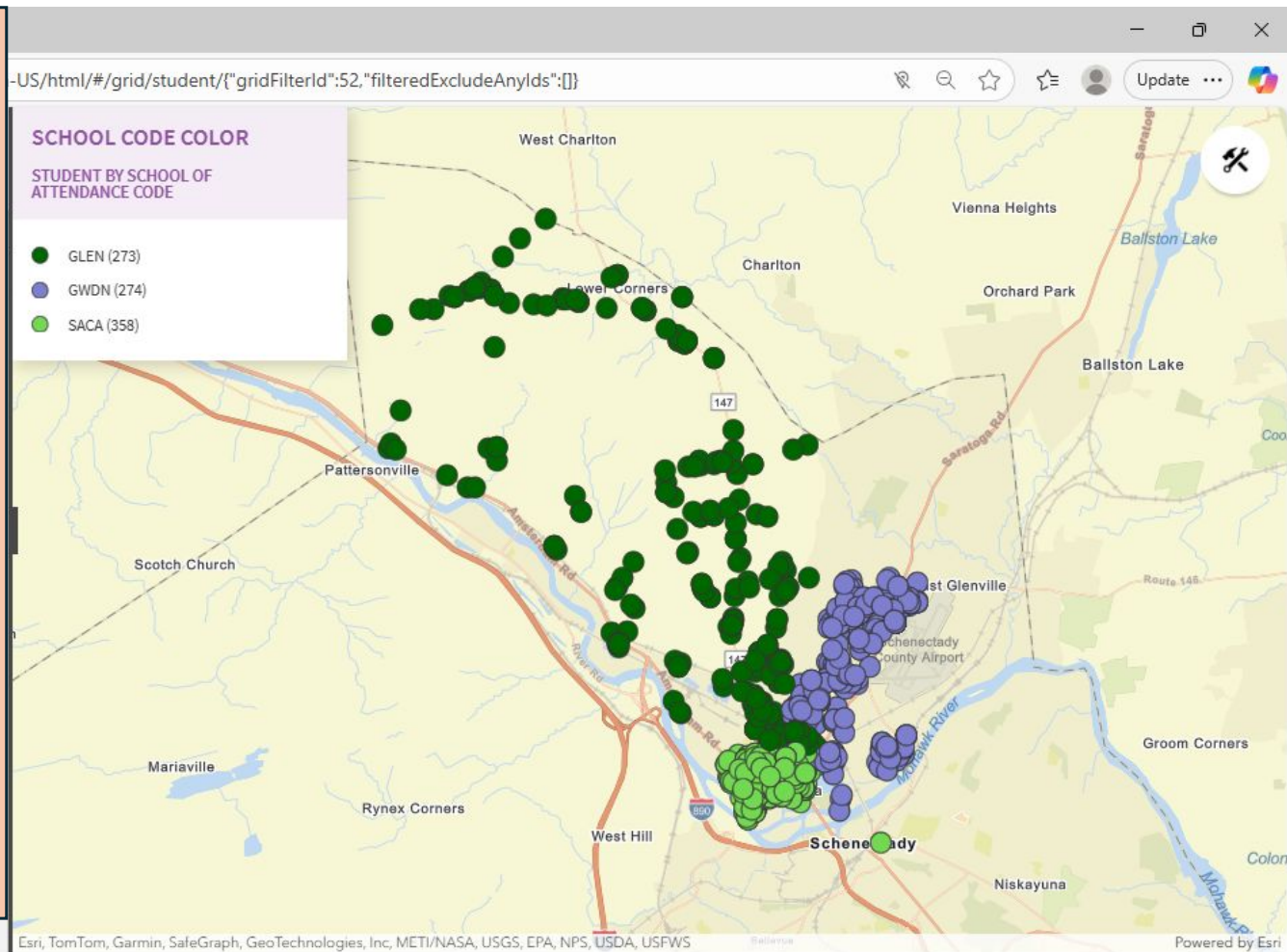


Starting Point
Reviewing current
distribution of
students



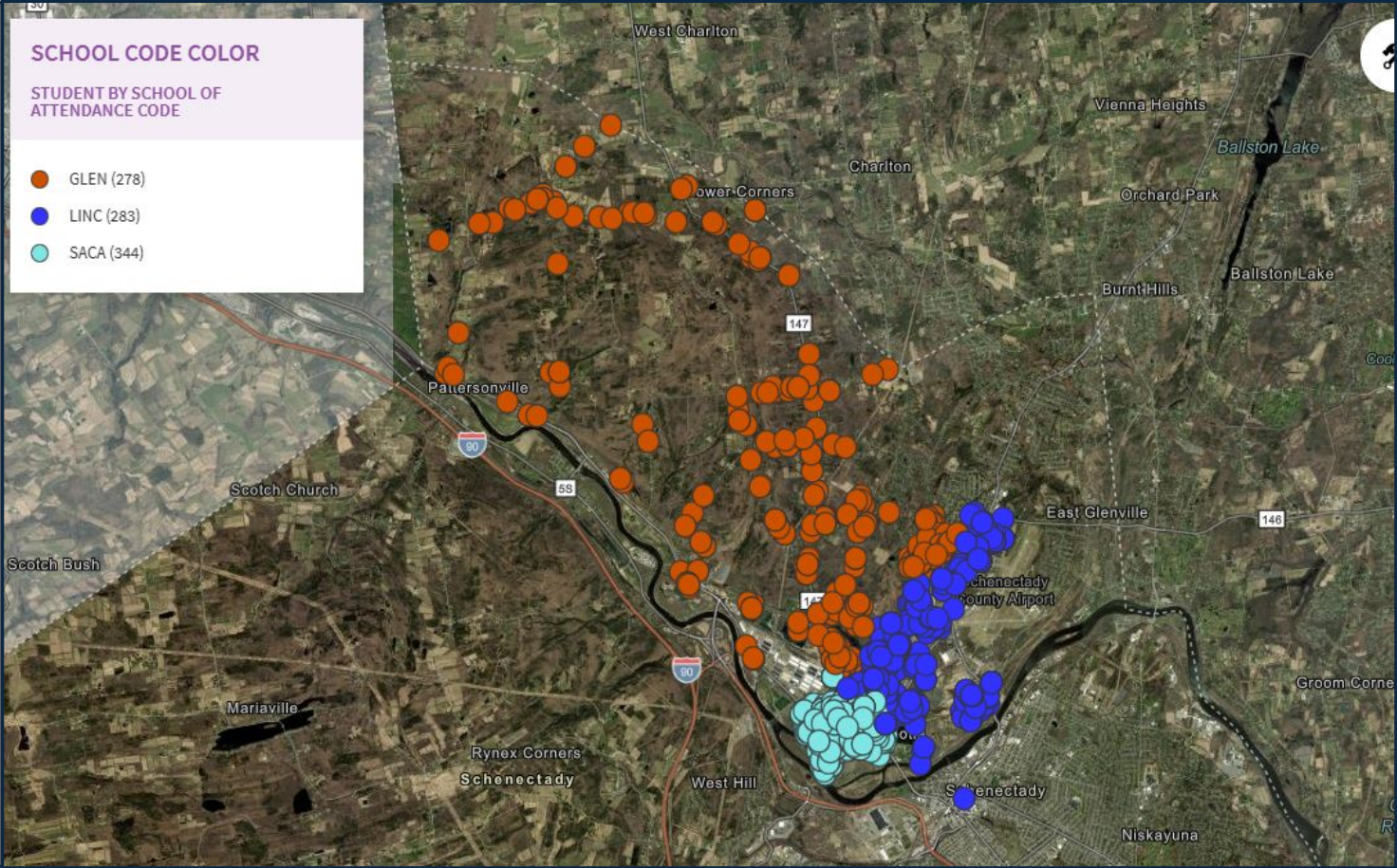
If we close Lincoln, and keep 3 Elementary Schools Grade K-5

This image is **ONE POSSIBILITY** for a way to split students into these three buildings.



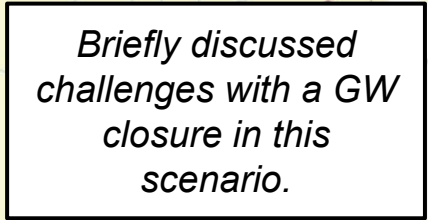
If we close GW,
and keep 3
Elementary
Schools Grade
K-5.

This image is **ONE
POSSIBILITY** for
a way to split
students into
these three
buildings.



With current enrollments,
this would mean:
451 students divided into
the two buildings

(All K-2 students would be bussed to school)



If Sacandaga becomes a Grade 3-5 Center

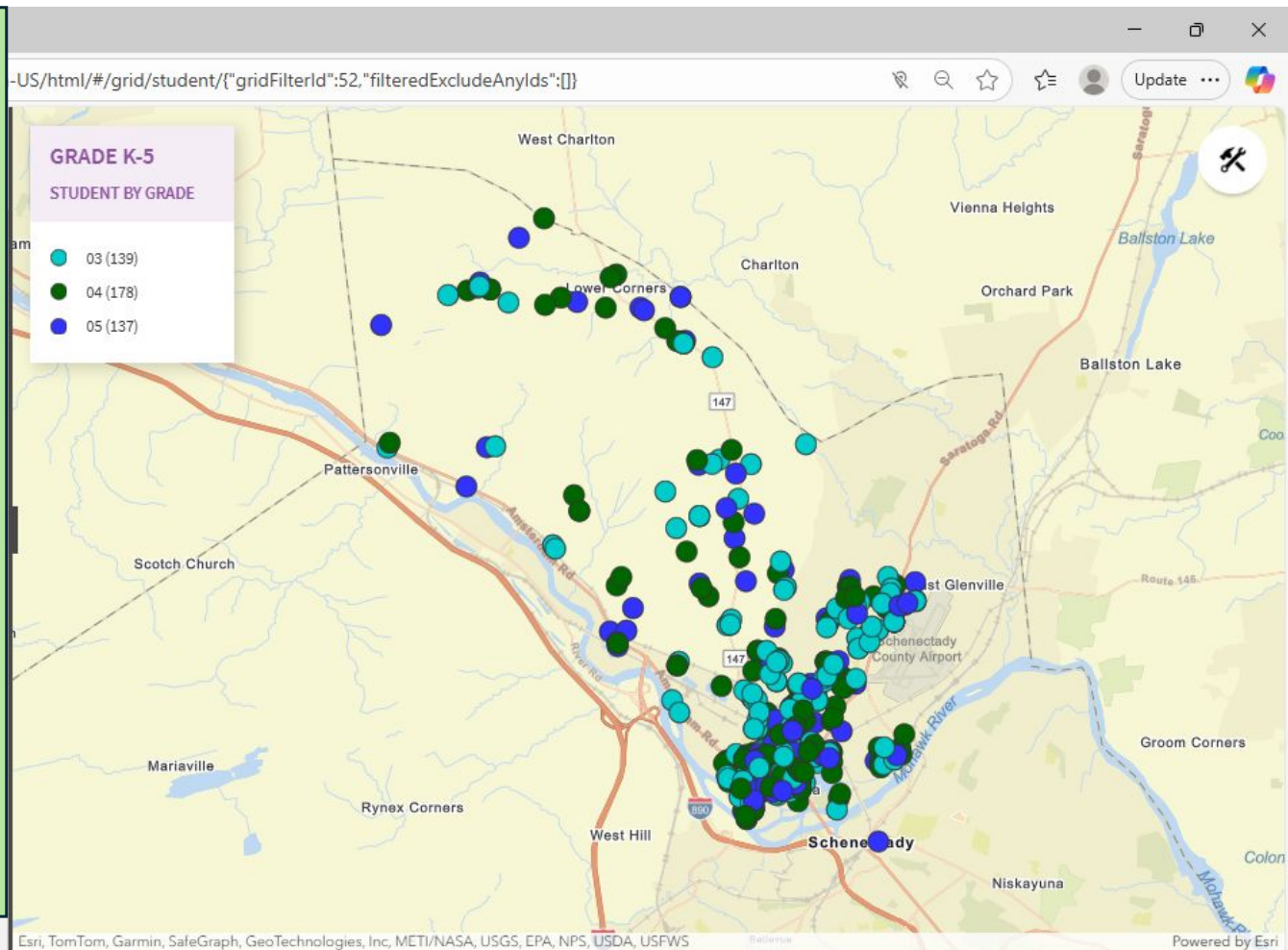
With current enrollments,
this would mean:

455 students total

Grade 3: 139

Grade 4: 178

Grade 5: 137

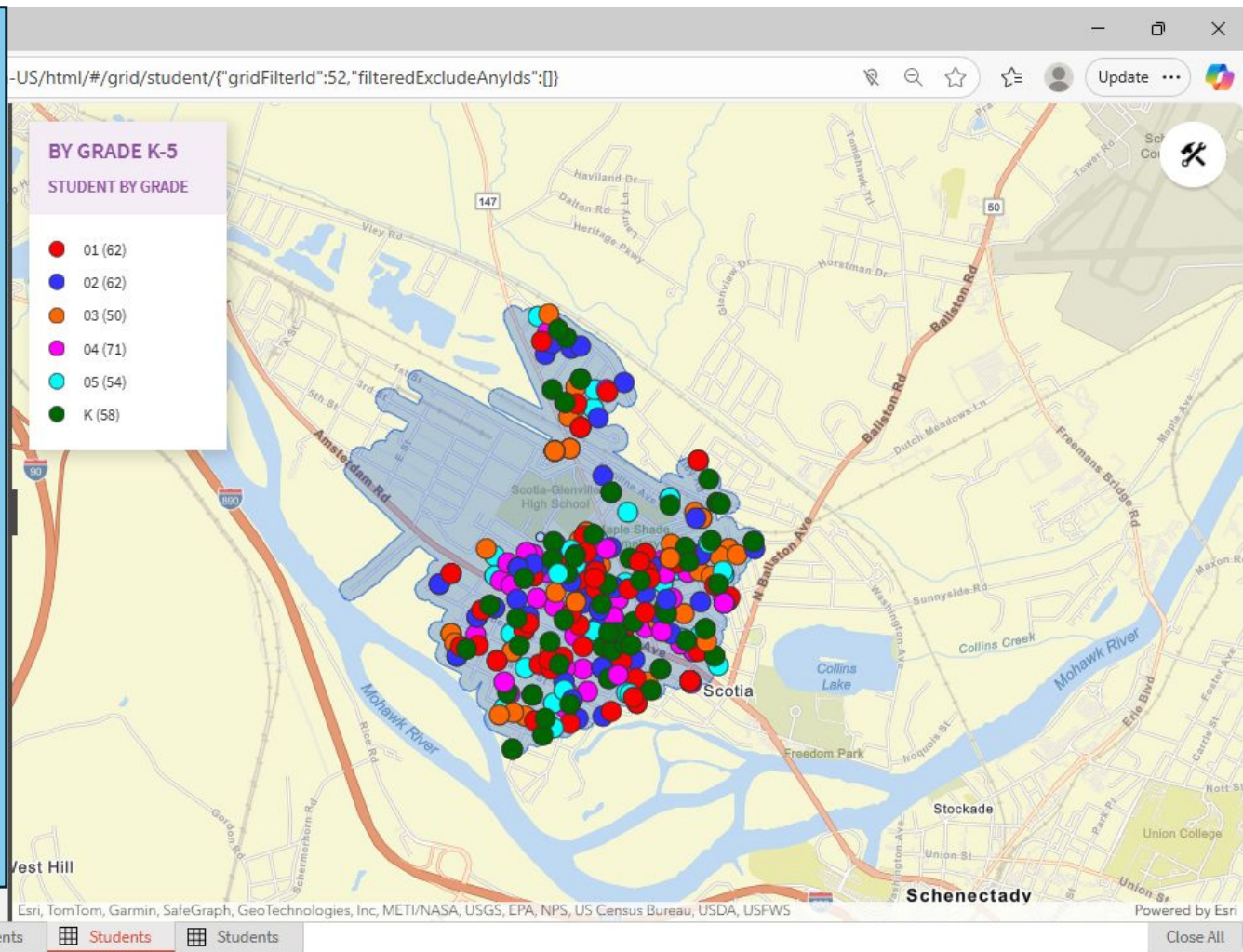


Eligibility/Walkzone Assessment

Sacandaga School

Maximum walk to school distance in NYS for this age group is 2.0 miles

Of the 455 current Grade 3-5 students enrolled, **175** are within 1.0 mile of this school.



Based on our work to date...

- Repurpose/close 1 elementary school
- SAC and GD remain open
- GW & GD work as K-2 centers, SAC as 3-5 center
- Non-eligible transportation zones could be expanded
- Need clear, expanded buffer zones to increase efficiency



Human Resources & Personnel Presentation

Facilitators -
Jill Bush,
Robert Cosmer,
Ryan Fedele

Human Resources and Personnel

Group Goal

Determine the effect of closing a school on personnel needs, costs of instruction, administration, transportation, and other support services.

Plan for staffing and human resource considerations including personnel displacement plans, needs and participation of collective bargaining group members, reassignment, and reduction in force procedures

-  Potential impact on staffing, including specific certification requirements, for any proposed changes.
-  Potential impact on all staff , contract obligations, operational needs, civil service , reduction in force
-  Potential impact upon students and the impact to families and the community.
-  Consideration of facility availability, resources available and other supports
-  Consideration of transition planning and logistics

Human Resources & Personnel Work Group

Committee Members - 12-15 in attendance
Work Group Meetings October 8,21,28

**Members of the community including
educators, private sector, long time
community members, parents**

DATA AND INFORMATION REVIEW

- Enrollment - Current and enrollment study
- Staffing - Current elementary staffing
- Class Size and distribution
- Contracts - Bargaining units
- Certification requirements and Civil Service guidelines
- Requirements for reduction in force
- Reviewed energy and utilities per building/Building survey
- Reviewed state aid as a funding mechanism
- Economic development in the community, tax rate, tax levy

Best thinking of our work group

- Providing quality programs with experienced staff is important to our district
- Savings in personnel reduction through attrition, closing a school reallocating resources and fiscal planning are all areas to be considered
- Review of operational costs and building condition surveys show that all elementary schools are in good condition and the operational costs are reviewed as part of the budget process

ONGOING WORK

- Collaboration with the other work groups
- Staffing demographics - estimated cost by position
- Planning for staff transitions
- Planning for staff reductions, resources



Staff & Student Transitions Presentation

Facilitators -
Tonya Federico &
Andrea Polikoski



Reimagining Our Schools: Staff & Student Transitions

11/5/2025

Staff & Student Transitions

- Plan for transition including reassignment/redistricting of students, student support for transition, orientation for students, special education and support programs.
- Plan for transition including supporting parents and guardians through their child's or children's transitions.
- Plan for staff transition including reassignment/redistricting staff, staff support for transition, orientation for staff, staff support for special education and support programs.

Overview of Anticipated Needs

- Meetings held on October 8th, October 27th and November 3rd
 - Identified potential needs for transition activities for students, families and staff (team building, orientations, etc.) based on configuration determination.
 - Identified potential needs for closure events (ceremony, time capsule, etc.) based on configuration determination.
 - Identified potential needs for supporting logistical moves for staff based on configuration determination.
-

Current Work

- Determined that all 4 elementary schools hold very similar:
 - PTA events
 - Building level traditions.
 - Discussed options for reimagining mascots.
 - Brainstormed ideas for possible end of year events that all 4 elementary schools could participate in to build a larger sense of community.
 - Brainstormed ideas to determine needs of staff who may be moving.
-

Future Work

- Once configuration changes have been determined we can focus our work for transition activities for students, families and staff to those directly impacted.
- Discussing a district wide community building event for the the spring.



Communications Presentation

Facilitators -
Megan Johnson &
Nancy Lussier



Overview



Key Focus Area

Our Group's Thinking

Status

Messaging Clarity	Resolve mixed messaging to reduce public unease and confusion.	PENDING
Communication Channels	Leverage existing communication channels to ensure consistent reach through multiple modalities.	PENDING
Targeted Outreach	Develop specific communication assets to reach various segments of the community.	IN PROGRESS





Messaging Clarity

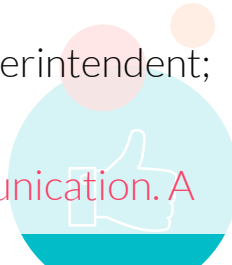


Problem: Clarify messaging and perceptions regarding purported decisions to close or repurpose a school.

Our Group's Thinking:

- Define and Adopt Common Vocabulary:
 - **Holistic, human-centered approach:** Emphasis on students and staff impact rather than the “brick and mortar” building.
 - "Closing a school": Students/staff are reallocated; a new use is found (selling, mothballing, or repurposing). Impacts all district schools.
 - "Repurposing a school": New programs, services, or resources are redistributed into one location, targeted toward student/family benefits.
 - “Recommendations vs Decisions”: Committees make recommendations to the Superintendent; The Board of Ed makes a final decision through a vote

Immediate Clarification: Use this standardized vocabulary consistently in all future communication. A decision or recommendation has not yet been made to close or repurpose a school.





Communication Channels



Goal: Leverage existing communication channels to ensure consistent reach through multiple modalities.

Our Group's Thinking:

- ParentSquare
- Newsletter
- Flyers/handouts
- Website optimization
- Track website data
- Short video/audio clips

Action Items:

- Finalize ParentSquare Framework: Confirm the distinction between:
 - Internal (Auto-Sync) Groups (e.g., Rostered Sports, Grade Levels).
 - Community Groups (Self Sign Up) (e.g., Athletics/Arts Invitations, "Reimagining Our Schools" Updates).





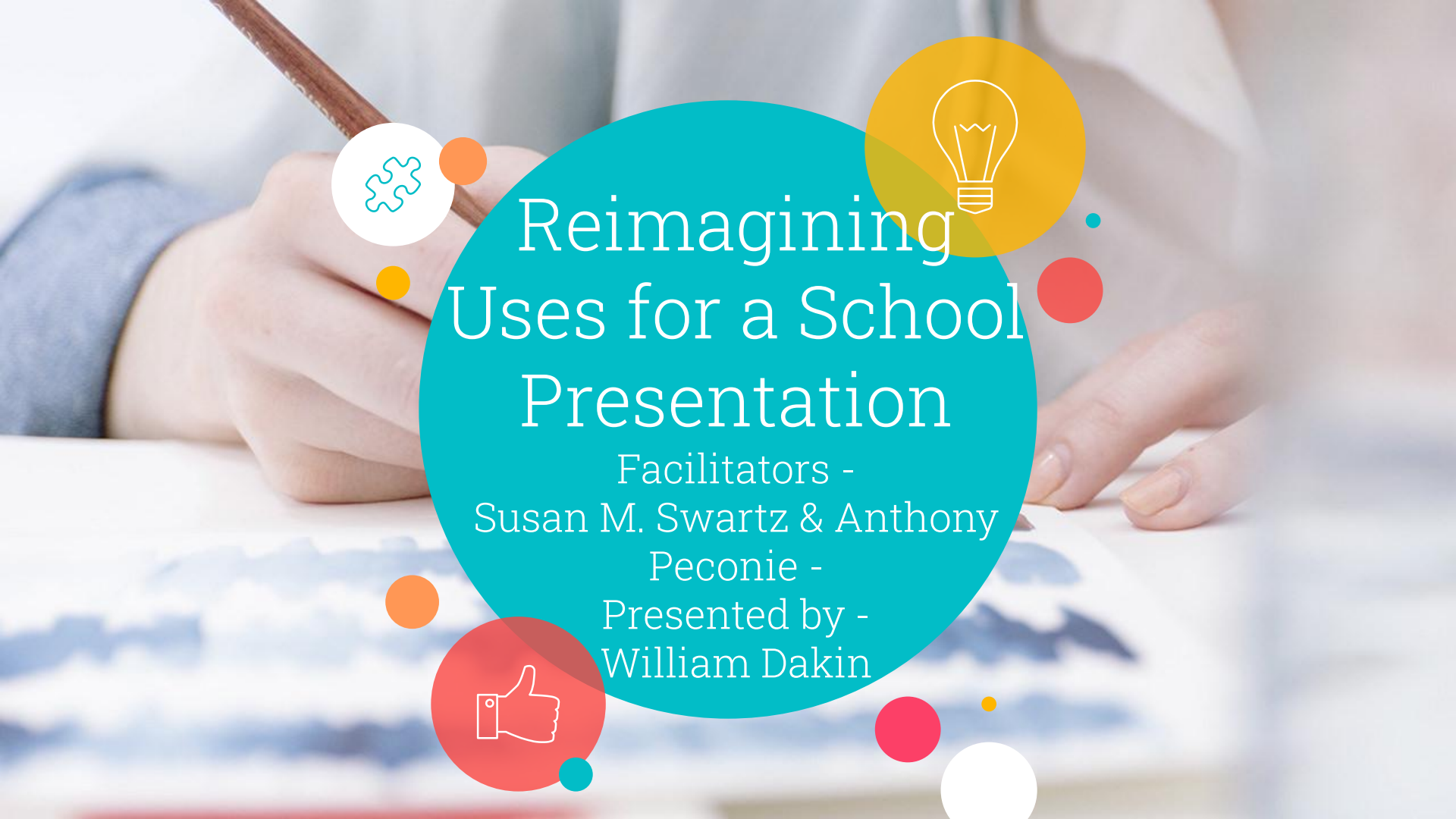
Targeted Outreach & Future Deliverables



Goal: Develop specific communication assets to reach various segments of the community.

Our Group's Thinking:

Target Audience	Topic	Status
Students	Draft "Communication for Kids" document/FAQ.	PENDING
Families	Explore a Webinar on navigating change (suggested topic).	PENDING
Community	Evaluate the feasibility and cost of a physical mailer to the entire community after the November 5th meeting.	PARKING LOT



Reimagining Uses for a School Presentation

Facilitators -
Susan M. Swartz & Anthony
Peconie -
Presented by -
William Dakin

Work done:

The **Reimagining Uses for a School Work Group** has been working on a Parent Survey that we plan to send out to gauge the temperature of the community.



Section 1: General Information



These questions will give us an idea of where our survey pool is located within the district, and which student programs are most relevant.

1. Do you have a child/children in the district? (Please check all that apply.)

List of all 6 schools

2. Does your child(ren) receive any of the following services? (Please check all that apply.)

**Gifted and Talented
Special Education
Section 504
Academic Intervention Services**



Section 2: Impact of a School Closure



These questions will help us gauge the community's level of concern, and provide feedback about what we can do to aid in this process.

3. How concerned are you about the potential closure of a district elementary school on a scale from 1-5? (1 being not concerned at all, to 5 being extremely concerned)

4. Please provide a list of any concerns you have starting with your highest concern, moving to your lowest concern.

5. In what ways do you believe the district could support your child and family during a transition to another school?



Section 3: School and Community Priorities



These questions will give us an idea of what our community is thinking, their biggest concerns and what they hold most precious living in Scotia

6. **When making decisions about possible school closures, which factors do you believe are most important? (Rank your top three)**

List of key factors with the choice of “Other”, so participants can add their own.

7. **What opportunities or benefits do you see in consolidating schools or reconfiguring grade levels?**
8. **Are there particular programs, traditions, or supports at your current school that you feel should be preserved if a closure occurs?**



Section 4: Additional Thoughts



This question will allow participants to expand on their thoughts, concerns and answer any questions they might still have at this time.

10. Please share any additional comments, concerns, or ideas you would like the Board of Education and district leaders to consider as part of this process?





Section 5: Communication and Engagement

These questions help us streamline communication by seeing how people tend to get their information and what avenues we could look into for further communication

- 11. How would you prefer to receive updates and information about the process? (Select all that apply)
List of ways with option of “Other” to write their own.**
- 12. How satisfied are you with the communication from the district about this issue so far?**
- 13. What suggestions do you have for how the district could improve communication and parent engagement during this process?**



Timeline:

Nov 14 - Turn into a **Google Form** and Send out on **ParentSquare**, post on **Reimagine webpage**, and put up as website story

Nov 26 - **Deadline** for survey Submissions

Dec 3 - **Share results** with Large Group Committee Meeting





Reimagining our Schools

*Next Large
Meeting Date*

December 3, 2025
M.S. Cafeteria