

Cazenovia Central School District & Morrisville-Eaton Central School District

Reorganization Study

CAZENOVIA
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

MORRISVILLE-EATON
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Completed by the
Schmitt Leadership Group, LLC

July 15, 2026

Cazenovia CSD and Morrisville-Eaton CSD Reorganization Feasibility Study Submitted to SED on 7/15/26 with final approval on 9/4/26.

Study Purpose, Scope, and Principles

Comprehensive Impact Analysis

The study examines reorganization effects in areas such as enrollment, instruction, staffing, facilities, transportation, finances, and historical background using data-driven methods.

Alignment with Guidelines

The study aligns with state education guidelines to support informed governance and build trust with the public.

Key Areas Examined

Enrollment, instruction, facilities, staffing, transportation, finances, historical considerations were studied.

2025-2026 Timeline

Town Hall Meetings 2026
January 21- *Town Hall Meeting*
February 3- *Virtual Town Hall Meeting*
March 10- *Joint Board Meeting*
March 11- *Facilities*
March 19- *Operations: Food Service, Transportation and Buildings & Grounds*
April 14- *Curriculum/Instruction, Extracurriculars*
April 28- *District Finances*

Stakeholder Meetings 2026
March 10- *Cazenovia stakeholders*
March 11- *Morrisville-Eaton Stakeholders*
April 22-30- Board of Education member interviews

Superintendent/BOE Engagements 2026
March 5- *BOE Pres/Superintendents/Consultants* February 25- *Cazenovia Coffee with Superintendent*
March 10- Morrisville-Eaton Coffee with Superintendent
April 30- BOE Pres/Superintendents/Consultants

2022-2025
2022-23: Morrisville-Eaton first explored partnerships, sharing
Fall 2023: Morrisville-Eaton and Cazenovia began more formalized discussion on potential partnerships
Fall 2023-2025: Eight (8) meetings were held to engage communities

Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Five Community Forums

22 separate meetings

Bi-weekly meetings with SED, BOCES, Superintendents, and consultants

1,840 Community Engagements

https://www.moboces.org/mecs-cazstudy

Findings

Findings:

The Cazenovia Central School District and the Morrisville-Eaton Central School District should publicly present the Reorganization Study to the community to gauge stakeholder interest in proceeding to the next step in the process as dictated by the New York State Education Department and statute.

The Boards of Education, Superintendents, and Community are hearing this results simultaneously.

Findings:

Should the districts reorganize, the successor district should continue utilizing multiple communication platforms throughout implementation and maintain regular public reporting to preserve community confidence, transparency, and stakeholder engagement.

Findings:

Should the districts reorganize, the successor administration should assign staff as necessary to meet instructional, program, operational and administrative duties with stakeholder input as required in collective bargaining agreements and manage any potential workforce reductions through attrition.

Findings:

Should the districts reorganize, the successor district should continue emphasizing expanded academic opportunities, enhanced student programming, and long-term educational sustainability as the principal objectives of reorganization.

Findings:

Should the district reorganize, the successor district should maintain existing grade configurations during the initial transition period unless future enrollment patterns demonstrate a clear educational or operational benefit from modification.

Should the district reorganize, the successor district should leverage the larger combined enrollment to stabilize instructional programs, electives,

Findings:

Should the district reorganize, the successor district should preserve the instructional strengths of both districts while expanding equitable student access to specialized academic opportunities.

Findings:

Should the district reorganize, the successor district should extend access to Cazenovia's Advanced Placement, dual-enrollment, fine arts, and elective programming to all students.

Should the district reorganize, the successor district should preserve and expand Morrisville-Eaton's agricultural education, Career and Technical Education, and experiential learning partnerships as signature districtwide programs.

Findings:

If the schools reorganize, the Commissioner of Education holds the sole responsibility to determine the BOCES designation for the merged district, as the two original districts are currently located in different BOCES regions. This decision will be based on how to best serve the educational interests of the students in the proposed successor district, as well as how to promote the most effective and efficient delivery of cooperative educational services on a regional basis.

Findings:

Should the districts reorganize, the successor district should preserve each community's connection to its schools while investing strategically in facilities that support educational excellence, community access and future opportunities for program design and development.

Findings:

Should the districts reorganize, the successor district should continue utilizing existing school facilities during the initial implementation period while evaluating long-term utilization needs.

Should the districts reorganize, the successor district should develop a long-range capital improvement plan leveraging enhanced state Building Aid.

Findings:

Should the district reorganize, the successor district should establish centralized dispatching, routing, and fleet management systems to improve operational efficiency and emergency responsiveness.

Should the district reorganize, the successor district should establish maximum student ride-time expectations and conduct periodic ridership and route utilization audits.

Findings:

Should the district reorganize, the successor district should develop and communicate a comprehensive multi-year financial plan directing Reorganization Incentive Aid toward instructional programming, facilities, technology, transportation, and long-term organizational sustainability.

Should the district reorganize, the successor district should prepare a unified five- to ten-year financial forecast with stakeholder input incorporating enrollment trends, staffing, contractual obligations, and anticipated operational costs.

Financial Impact of Reorganization

Alignment & Cohesion

Future Forecasting

ESTIMATED FINANCIAL BENEFITS

Immediate & Long-Term Value

REORGANIZATION INCENTIVE AID
Paid over 14 years based on current Foundation Aid levels.
Provides stable, predictable support during and after transition.
$60+ MILLION Total Over 14 Years

IMMEDIATE BUILDING AID INCREASE
Increase in Building Aid ratio from 67.4% to 87%
= approximately $9 Million in added aid immediately.
$9 MILLION Immediate Annual Increase

FUTURE CAPITAL AID
Reorganized districts eligible for 95–98% state aid on future capital projeces.
Greatly reduces local tax impact for facilities investments.
$25+ MILLION Estimated 15-Year Savings

TRANSPORTATION AID INCREASE
Increase in Transportation Aid ratio from 64% to 90%.
Supports safer, more efficient busing for students.
$8+ MILLION Estimated Annual Increase

DEBT REFINANCING & FISCAL FLEXIBILITY
Opportunities to refinance existing debt and generate savings.
Creates resources to manage future uncertainty and invest in student success.
$15+ MILLION Estimated 15-Year Benefit

TOTAL ESTIMATED BENEFIT: $60+ MILLION OVER 15 YEARS

Figures are estimates based on current aid formulas and district data. Actual amounts may vary.

LONG-TERM FINANCIAL IMPACT (15 YEARS)

A Stronger Financial Foundation for the Future

A STRONGER FINANCIAL FOUNDATION
A reorganization provides stability, protects our community, and creates opportunities for the next generation.

DEBT REFINANCING SAVINGS
Lower interest costs and extended terms create long-term savings.

RESOURCES TO ADDRESS TAX PRESSURES
Helps moderate tax increases and provides relief to local taxpayers.

STABILITY AGAINST AID FLUCTUATIONS
Builds reserves to offset Foundation Aid fluctuations and economic changes.

PREPARED FOR FEDERAL AID CHANGES
Creates flexibility to navigate potential federal aid restructuring.

INVESTING IN STUDENTS
Sustained financial strength allows us to protect programs, enhance opportunities, and support student achievement.

SMARTER FINANCES. STRONGER SCHOOLS. BRIGHTER FUTURES.
This reorganization is a strategic investment in our community—delivering millions in aid, reducing taxpayer burden, and creating a stronger future for every student.

Projected Reorganization Aid

- Projected Aid of at least $60,485,162.00 over fourteen years (14)
- $6,366,859.00 in merger aid the first five years, declines each year for the following nine years
- Projected Capital Project Aid is 98%

Table 8.18 Incentive Operating Aid for Merged District		
Year	Incentive Operating Aid %	Incentive Operating Aid
2027-28 (1)	40%	$6,366,859.00
2028-29 (2)	40%	$6,366,859.00
2029-30 (3)	40%	$6,366,859.00
2030-31(4)	40%	$6,366,859.00
2031-32 (5)	40%	$6,366,859.00
2032-33 (6)	36%	$5,730,173.00
2033-34 (7)	32%	$5,093,487.00
2034-35 (8)	28%	$4,456,801.00
2035-36 (9)	24%	$3,820,116.00
2036-37 (10)	20%	$3,183,430.00
2037-38 (11)	16%	$2,546,744.00
2038-39 (12)	12%	$1,910,058.00
2039-40 (13)	8%	$1,273,372.00
2040-41 (14)	4%	$636,686.00
2041-42 (15)	0%	$ 0
	TOTAL	$60,485,162.00

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	TOTAL	**$60,485,162.00**

WHAT CHANGES FINANCIALLY IF DISTRICTS JOIN?

Structural Changes

- One combined budget, one tax levy, one governance structure.
- Aid streams consolidate.
- Aid levels elevated
  - 98% Building Aid
  - 90% Transportation Aid
  - Debt recalculated

Benefits of Reorganization

- Preserve all district buildings.
- Improve campuses.
- Stabilize tax burden for all residents.
- Stabilize future district budgets.
- Expand instructional opportunities for all students.
- Expand extracurricular opportunities for all students.
- Maintain all current faculty and staff.

Challenges if Reorganization Does Not Occur

- Continued Unsustainable Tax Levy Increases.
- Further Staff reductions.
- Loss of academic programming.
- Reductions of co-curricular clubs, activities, and athletics.
- Increase class sizes PK-8.
- Reduction of academic supports.

What did we hear, learn and verify?

- Stakeholders universally desire preservation of the buildings, programs, faculty, and staff.
- Preservation of instructional success and desire to expand instructional and extracurricular opportunities for students at both districts.
- Districts face fiscal stressors include staffing, TRS, ERS, operations, transportation, contractual, and benefits.

What did we hear, learn and verify?

- District could become too big. “Merge but remain the same” supports capacity to grow (Micron) or constrict (no Micron).
- Cultural differences between two communities are a concern for some residents, but not students.
- Neighborhood schools and district identities are important to both communities. Any changes to the current district structure will require ample community input.
- District branding decisions are a local Board of Education responsibility in accordance with regulations.

Conclusion

Cazenovia and Morrisville-Eaton Boards of Education engaged in a partnership of exploration because they face current and anticipated future academic, extracurricular, and fiscal challenges.

- The Boards should determine whether to **pursue additional community engagement through a non-binding straw poll, petition process**, or other appropriate mechanism to assess public interest.

Next Steps

- The Boards should also identify **future governance actions, establish a preliminary implementation timeline and maintain transparent, consistent communication** with students, staff, families, and community stakeholders throughout the decision-making process.

Updated Timeline

Timeline of the Study

February 2026: Community engagement begins; districts provide background information.

February – May 2026: Community Forum Focus Groups / Stakeholder Survey to gauge community support.

June 2026: Draft report reviewed by Madison-Oneida and OCM BOCES and NYSED officials.

Once NYS Department of Education approves the final study recommendations, SED will release the study to the respective communities.

October 2026: Study presented to both Boards of Education in a joint session.

October 2026: Boards decide next steps (Petition Process / Nonbinding vote date).

November 2026-Governor's preliminary budget numbers released

Now to December 2026: Boards communicate study findings, execute petition process / host nonbinding straw vote

Recently Received Questions:

If a merger takes place, will additional student spots be available for AP classes? Or will there be a class size limit that could result in students that otherwise may have been able to take the class, not being able to take the class?

This will be determined by the future BOE and school leadership, however the study recommends expanding access to students in both districts for AP classes.

Recently Received Questions:

How much money will it take to bring the employees of Morrisville-Eaton school district up to the same level of Cazenovia in salaries and benefits ?

Equalization is estimated at $600,000. However, this is contingent upon future employment agreements and staffing models at the time of reorganization. The newly formed BOE in consultation with the respective parties would determine the timeline to level up a newly formed district.

Recently Received Questions:

What will foundation aid be in a merged district?

Short answer this is very complicated and based on several factors including enrollment, wealth ratio, economically disadvantaged designations, English Language learner designations, disability categories, etc. But it is based on student counts and in a merged district, the student count is higher and the factors mentioned above plus a higher student count will be favorable to a reorganized district. It is estimated to be approximately the combined foundation aid amounts of the 26-27 school year.

Recently Received Questions:

Who determines which BOCES a reorganized district would be part of?

The Commissioner of Education (Dr. Rosa) has the full authority to make this determination.

Will a BOCES determination be known prior to a Straw Poll Vote?

The consultants, district and BOCES superintendents would pose this question to the Commissioner and seek guidance. It is probable the Commissioner would want to see if there is community support (straw poll or petition process) prior to making an indication where she would land. BOCES superintendents would also have a roll to provide input to NYSED prior to a final determination and potential timeline to transition. We have been advised that abrupt changes that would impact student would be unlikely.

Questions?

Schmitt Leadership Group
Mr. Robert Breidenstein, Lead Consultant
Dr. Brian Schmitt, Consultant
www.schmittleadershipgroup.com
brian@schmittleadershipgroup.com
(585) 281-6251
(716) 220-2815