

# **A Study of the First Supervisory District of Monroe County**

**Prepared for the Commissioner of Education  
New York State Department of Education**

December 2005

The Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government  
411 State Street  
Albany, NY 12203

# Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>I. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
A. Evolution of Supervisory Districts and BOCES	1
B. Reorganization Options and Study Questions	3
C. Methodology	4
<b>II. Overview of Monroe One and Contiguous BOCES</b>	<b>6</b>
A. Demographic Profile	6
B. Fiscal Profile	9
C. BOCES Supervisory District and School Superintendents Overview	10
<b>III. Monroe One Reorganization Options: Genesee Valley and Wayne-Finger Lakes</b>	<b>11</b>
A. Monroe One/Genesee Valley Merger	11
B. Monroe One/Wayne-Finger Lakes Merger	13
C. Transferring Individual School Districts to or from Monroe One	15
<b>IV. Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans Reorganization</b>	<b>17</b>
A. Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans Program Comparisons	18
1. Financial Comparison	19
2. Services Spending Comparison	21
B. Input from BOCES Leadership	25
C. Cost Savings Considerations	29
D. Workforce Development Implications	31
1. Background	31
2. Input from the Workforce Development Community	33
E. Rochester City School District Considerations	34
<b>V. Summary of Findings</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>VI. Recommendations</b>	<b>38</b>
References	39
Appendix A: Component School Districts of BOCES Supervisory Districts Studied	A-1
Appendix B: BOCES Component School District Enrollment Data	B-1
Appendix C: BOCES Component School District CWR, Percent Free/Reduced Lunch, and Percent to College Data	C-1

## Executive Summary

This study was requested by the commissioner of education following the retirement of the district superintendent of the Monroe One BOCES in Monroe County, New York. In his charge to the Rockefeller Institute of Government, the commissioner asked for a review of options to restructure Monroe One with one or more neighboring BOCES, including Monroe Two-Orleans, Genesee Valley, and Wayne-Finger Lakes. The City of Rochester also borders Monroe One, but is not authorized under New York State law to participate as a member of a BOCES, and thus is not part of this study.

The four BOCES studied in this review are large and active educational enterprises. Only Genesee Valley has enrollment in its component school districts below the 40,000 level suggested by the State Education Department as the threshold for the establishment of a BOCES. No significant enrollment declines are projected for the four BOCES.

As requested by the commissioner, this study addresses potential educational benefits and cost savings from reorganization options, and whether these options would have implications for workforce development, academic standards, and the capacity of a BOCES district superintendent to perform his or her job.

The study team conducted interviews with a broad and diverse group of stakeholders, including members of the boards of the BOCES and their component school districts, BOCES staff, and workforce development experts in Monroe County. In addition, the team sent letters requesting feedback to many other interested parties including elected officials, City of Rochester and Monroe County officers, institutions of higher education, and others.

Key findings from this study include:

- **Potential benefits of a reorganization need to be weighed against disruption and risk:** Combining two BOCES or any other significant reorganization would entail disruption and cost for at least several years. Superintendents' offices would have to be merged, and the work and leadership of personnel offices, computer systems, and other central functions would have to be combined and meshed. The combined BOCES would almost certainly have to negotiate consistent salary schedules and contracts for employees previously working under different plans—likely leading to raises for workers from the lower-paying BOCES. Managers in special education, workforce development, and other program areas would have to combine different program philosophies, operational styles, and organizational cultures. This would compete for management attention with serving children and other core BOCES responsibilities during the merger period. This argues for caution—the benefits of reorganization should be substantial and clear before choosing to reorganize.
- **The option deserving the most consideration is a reorganization involving Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans:** Combining Monroe One with either

Genesee Valley or Wayne-Finger Lakes would create a very large supervisory district in terms of the number of component districts and land area, and would severely tax the district superintendent's capacity to manage. We do not believe these options are advisable. In addition, there was little interest among individual component school districts of the four BOCES in this study to leave their current BOCES and combine with Monroe One, with the exception of the Victor Central School District, discussed in the body of the report. We believe a combination of Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans deserves more consideration than these options and is the focus of much of the report.

- **Educational Services:** Despite repeated attempts to solicit views from many interested parties, the study team found little dissatisfaction with the quality of educational services now provided by Monroe One or Monroe Two-Orleans.
- **Cost Savings:** A merger of the two BOCES would likely result in both administrative cost savings and cost increases, with uncertainty through the merger's planning phase as to whether the savings would outweigh the increases. The most obvious savings would result from the elimination of one district superintendent position. Other high-level administrative positions such as some assistant district superintendent positions might also be eliminated, although this would likely only be achieved over time to avoid involuntary terminations. Savings may be offset by the need for additional administrators and other staff to meet the needs of the expanded supervisory district, and "leveling up" components of the labor union agreements of one BOCES. Net cost savings, if any, would likely be years in the future.
- **Workforce Development:** A merged BOCES with borders that follow the county workforce development area more closely could create potential for increased collaboration with community colleges and other organizations. Members of the workforce development community stated that the Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES has pursued workforce development funding more aggressively than Monroe One and is better known to the area's business community. Many believe that workforce development could be strengthened if, as part of a detailed merger implementation plan, the program delivery model and management approach of Monroe Two-Orleans were used for a consolidated BOCES district.
- **Academic Standards:** Both Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans offer active programs of assistance to component school districts in their efforts to raise academic standards. The study team found little evidence that component school districts found one BOCES materially stronger in this regard.
- **District Superintendent:** The district superintendent of a merged BOCES could face serious challenges in addressing the needs of the component districts. Although there are BOCES in New York with more component school districts, or greater student enrollment, or a larger geographic area, a merged Monroe One/Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES would present the district superintendent with

considerable management difficulties. These include the difficulty of merging two large and active organizations, each with vastly different organizational cultures and service delivery models. In addition, the salary cap for district superintendents may limit a merged BOCES ability to recruit a candidate with expertise to orchestrate a merger effectively while meeting the needs of the expanded district and the state responsibilities of the district superintendent.

- **Merger of Monroe County BOCES:** Although there are valid reasons to advance support of a merger between Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans—one of which would be transferring some of Monroe Two-Orleans’ operating style to Monroe One—the study team concludes many of such benefits can be achieved through other approaches.

Supervisory districts and Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), a component of New York State's educational system, were originally created to address the needs of rural public school districts by allowing them to participate in shared services. Over the years, supervisory districts and BOCES have expanded to offer services that supplement those of suburban and urban school districts as well, and have evolved into a mechanism that, to a certain extent, equalizes educational opportunities across districts.

This report examines possible reorganization options for the First Supervisory District of Monroe County (Monroe One) in the western part of New York State. It opens with an introduction that draws liberally from New York State Education Department documents to place this study in context with state law, and the evolution of supervisory districts and BOCES. The introduction also provides the study's questions and methodology.

## **I. Introduction**

When a vacancy occurs in the Office of District Superintendent in any supervisory district, New York State Education Law requires the State Education Department to conduct a survey of the district and those contiguous to it to determine if reorganizing the districts will better serve the educational interests of the region.<sup>1</sup> The commissioner of education may conduct a study to examine possible reorganization options should the survey results indicate that reorganization might be beneficial. The commissioner authorized this study pursuant to the August 2005 retirement of the district superintendent of the First Supervisory District of Monroe County and subsequent survey results suggesting possible benefits from reorganization.

### **I. A. Evolution of Supervisory Districts and BOCES**

Supervisory districts are sub-regions of New York State created to improve the overall supervision of local schools. In 1910 the State Legislature authorized the commissioner of education to divide the state, with the exception of cities and villages of more than 4,500 people, into supervisory districts. These first districts did not have the authority to provide educational services and were headed by district superintendents, who were state officials with salaries paid by the state.

In the 1930s groups began to express concern that the range of educational services available in rural school districts was inadequate and sought an intermediate or regional system to provide expanded services. Although there were efforts to consolidate schools, by the early 1940s there were still more than 4,000 small schools. Many of the schools serving rural students continued to lack sufficient enrollment and fiscal resources to provide the variety of programs available to students in city districts and emerging suburban schools.

---

<sup>1</sup> New York State Consolidated Laws, Article 45, Section 2201.

In 1948 an intermediate school district bill was signed into law that, among other things, authorized the establishment of a Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) to provide shared educational services in a supervisory district. To form a BOCES, the boards of education of a group of school districts could vote to request the commissioner of education to approve the establishment of a cooperative board. The district superintendent would also serve as the chief executive officer of the BOCES, and receive a salary for these responsibilities from the participating local school districts. Eleven BOCES were established in the first ten months following enactment of the 1948 legislation. During the first decade, the services offered by BOCES were limited primarily to shared itinerant teachers for rural districts with too few students to employ full-time instructors in areas such as art, music, and driver education.

In the 1950s BOCES membership was expanded from central and small union free school districts within a supervisory district to include larger, independent districts. This expansion ensured growth, and by 1960 82 BOCES had been created. School districts in cities, except those over 125,000 in population, were permitted to join BOCES in 1963. With this growth, the nature of services provided began to change from shared itinerant teachers to include services for students with disabilities, and career and technical education services. Growth in programs that brought students together from a variety of schools to one location was limited, however, by the inability of a BOCES to own facilities.

Legislation was passed in 1967 that allowed BOCES to construct and own facilities with voter approval and to use the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York to finance the cost of the facilities. As a result, BOCES services began to expand, as most BOCES constructed buildings with classrooms and shops having state-of-the-art equipment. Subsequent legislation was adopted authorizing BOCES to provide data processing services for schools on a multi-BOCES basis. School districts began requesting other services such as computer-assisted instructional services, planning and staff development services, and programs for adults. BOCES services continued to grow through the 1970s, and by 1980 most school districts in the state were members of a BOCES. BOCES were given the authority to operate academic programs such as summer school and alternative high school in the early 1980s.

There are currently 38 supervisory districts in New York State with a BOCES located in each. The number of supervisory districts will drop to 37 in July 2006 when the merger of the supervisory districts in Steuben-Allegany and Schuyler-Chemung-Tioga counties is completed. A district superintendent continues to lead each supervisory district and serve as the chief executive officer of the supervisory district's BOCES. A portion of the district superintendent's salary is paid by the state and a portion by the component school districts of the BOCES. All but nine of the operating school districts in the state are members of a BOCES. Of the nine, five (Buffalo, New York City, Rochester, Syracuse, and Yonkers) are not eligible to join BOCES, as they are city districts each with a population over 125,000.

## **I. B. Reorganization Options and Study Questions**

The commissioner of education retained the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government, the public policy research arm of the State University of New York, to research and analyze a possible reorganization of the First Supervisory District of Monroe County (Monroe One BOCES) and its contiguous districts. The three contiguous districts are the Second Supervisory District of Monroe County (Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES) and the supervisory districts of Genesee, Livingston, Steuben, and Wyoming counties (Genesee Valley BOCES), and Ontario, Seneca, Yates, Cayuga, and Wayne counties (Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES).

The commissioner identified the following reconfiguration options for consideration:

1. Retain the Monroe One BOCES Supervisory District as currently constituted;
2. Combine the Monroe One BOCES Supervisory District with a contiguous district;
3. Transfer one or more school districts from the Monroe One BOCES Supervisory District to a contiguous district; or
4. Transfer one or more school districts from a contiguous district(s) to the Monroe One BOCES Supervisory District.

The commissioner requested that the study address the following questions:

- Educational Benefits: Are there educational benefits for students and school districts from reorganizing the Monroe One BOCES Supervisory District with another supervisory district or districts? Or would it be more beneficial for the educational interests of the region to retain the Monroe One BOCES Supervisory District as currently organized?
- Cost-Savings Benefits: Would cost savings result from reorganizing the Monroe One BOCES Supervisory District with another supervisory district or districts? Or would it be more cost effective to retain the Monroe One BOCES Supervisory District as currently organized?
- Workforce Development Implications: What are the workforce development implications for reorganizing the Monroe One BOCES Supervisory District with another supervisory district or districts? Will such a reorganization better serve the economic development needs of the region? Or would it be more beneficial for the workforce/economic



development interests of the region to retain the Monroe One BOCES Supervisory District as currently organized?

- Academic Standards: Will a reorganized district(s) enhance BOCES ability to provide improved services to school districts by helping them to raise academic standards and close gaps in student achievement?
- District Superintendent: Will the district superintendent(s) of the reorganized district(s) be able to address the needs of all the component school districts?
- Other Factors: Are there other factors that support or argue against reorganizing the Monroe One BOCES Supervisory District with another supervisory district or districts?

The commissioner also requested consideration be given to the following criteria for an effective supervisory district:

- The number of component districts and geographic size are such that the district superintendent can execute his/her statutory and administrative responsibilities as a state officer, in accordance with Section 2215 of New York State Education Law, in a competent and cost-effective manner.
- The district superintendent should be able to carry out effectively his/her responsibilities as the chief executive officer of the BOCES, in accordance with Section 1950 of New York State Education Law.
- The reorganization should not infringe upon the BOCES ability to provide shared services to component school districts and respond effectively and efficiently to educational needs.
- The pupil enrollment base must be sufficient to support a variety of quality instructional and support services at appropriately located educational centers to extend and enhance the programs of component school districts.
- The financial base is sufficient to support BOCES administrative, instructional, and related support services costs at affordable levels for component school districts.

### **I. C. Methodology**

The Rockefeller Institute of Government collected input on the potential reorganization of the Monroe One BOCES and its contiguous districts from stakeholders in an open and inclusive manner. Institute staff collected feedback through the following efforts:

- Interviews with administrators and staff of Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans including the BOCES boards, district superintendents (past and current), assistant district superintendents, business officers, human resource directors, program staff, and union leaders. Institute staff also interviewed the district superintendents and BOCES board presidents of both Genesee Valley and Wayne-Finger Lakes.
- Focus group sessions and follow-up telephone interviews with the superintendents of the component school districts of Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans. Institute staff sent letters briefly describing the study and its purpose, and invited input from the Rochester City School District and the superintendents of the component school districts of Genesee Valley and Wayne-Finger Lakes.
- A focus group session and telephone interviews with community leaders from business, workforce development, higher education, and cultural organizations.
- Letters and electronic mail describing the study and its purpose, and inviting feedback from federal, state, and local elected officials; Monroe County government agency officials; presidents of higher education institutions; museums; and leaders of parents organizations of Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans.
- Interviews with key officials responsible for planning and implementing the Genesee Valley BOCES merger of the 1990s and the merger of the supervisory districts of Steuben-Allegany and Schuyler-Chemung-Tioga counties currently underway.
- Promotion of a Monroe One reorganization website developed by Institute staff that includes a description of the study and its purpose, and gives instructions for providing input.

Rockefeller Institute staff also collected information from the websites and publications of Monroe One and its contiguous BOCES, reports on the economic condition of Monroe County, and BOCES administrative manuals of the New York State Education Department.

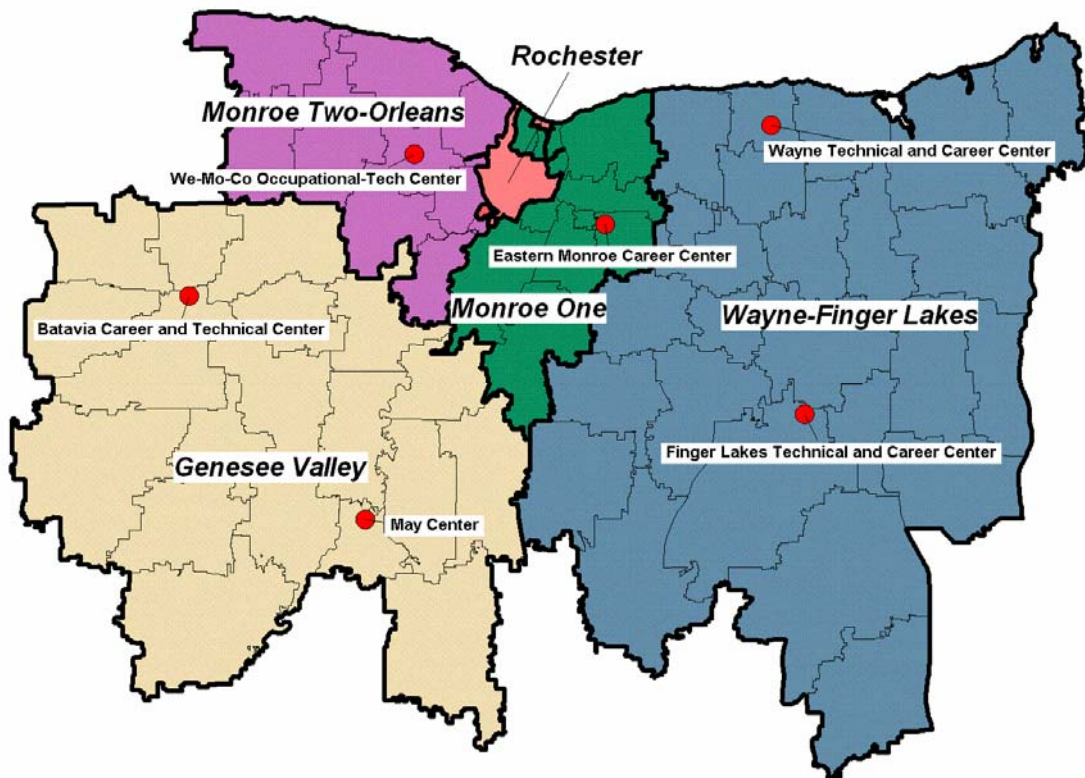
Finally, Institute staff analyzed fiscal and demographic data provided by BOCES officials and the New York State Education Department including BOCES annual budgets, CO-SERS (cooperative service applications), audit reports, A Preliminary Survey of Alternatives for the First Supervisory District of Monroe County, Public School Enrollment and Staff Data for New York State, Annual 602 Reports, Annual 655 Reports to the Governor and Legislature, and BOCES Program & Administrative/Capital Budget Summary Data.

## II. Overview of Monroe One and Contiguous BOCES

### II. A. Demographic Profile

The Monroe One Supervisory District is in the western part of New York State—almost equidistant between Syracuse and Buffalo. The Wayne-Finger Lakes Supervisory District borders Monroe One to the east. The City of Rochester and the Monroe Two-Orleans and Genesee Valley supervisory districts border Monroe One to the west (see map below).<sup>2</sup> The four supervisory districts combined cover 4,152 square miles with 66 component school districts.

#### Monroe One BOCES Supervisory District and Contiguous BOCES Districts: Current Configuration



● Denotes career and technical center locations in each of the four supervisory districts.

The four supervisory districts vary in geographic size and population density with the Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans supervisory districts being smaller in geographic area, but more densely populated than the Wayne-Finger Lakes and Genesee Valley districts. As noted in Table One, the Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans districts have ten and nine component school districts, respectively, which is less than half of the number of school districts in either Genesee Valley

<sup>2</sup> The City of Rochester School District is not a component district of Monroe One or its contiguous districts.

or Wayne-Finger Lakes. The Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans districts include 294 and 412 square miles respectively, which are also significantly less than Genesee Valley and Wayne-Finger Lakes. Overall, Monroe One and Monroe-Two Orleans include fewer component school districts and cover fewer square miles than over 75 percent of the state’s supervisory districts. However, Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans are also more densely populated than over 75 percent of the state’s supervisory districts with 161 and 96 students per square mile, respectively. In comparison, Genesee Valley has 16 students per square mile and Wayne-Finger Lakes has 24.

The supervisory districts also vary in the number of counties included in each of their regions. All of the ten Monroe One component school districts are in Monroe County. Seven of the nine component school districts in Monroe Two-Orleans are in Monroe County, with the remaining two predominately in Orleans County. Genesee Valley includes all of the school districts in Genesee, Livingston, and Wyoming counties, and one school district in Steuben County. Wayne-Finger Lakes includes all of the school districts in Ontario, Wayne, and Yates counties, and three of the four school districts in Seneca County. (See Appendix A for a list of component school districts of each of the four supervisory districts.)

**Table One**

	<b>Monroe One</b>	<b>Monroe Two - Orleans</b>	<b>Genesee Valley</b>	<b>Wayne-Finger Lakes</b>
Number of Component School Districts	10	9	22	25
Rank of 37 BOCES	29	32	10	6
Land Area (Square Miles)	294	412	1,696	1,750
Rank of 37 BOCES	33	32	11	10
Students Per Square Mile	161	96	16	24
Rank of 37 BOCES	7	9	27	19
Number of Vocational Centers	1	1	2	2

Source: A Preliminary Survey of Alternatives for the First Supervisory District of Monroe County.

The component school districts of Monroe One provide a larger enrollment base than the three other BOCES included in this study (see Table Two). Total enrollment for the Monroe One component school districts was 47,448 in 2003-04, the 10<sup>th</sup> highest in New York State, and above the minimum threshold of 40,000 recommended by the State Education Department. Total enrollment for the Monroe One school districts appears to be stable, increasing only one percent from 1999-00. Total enrollment of the component districts of Monroe Two-Orleans and Wayne-Finger Lakes is close to or above the recommended 40,000 threshold, although total enrollment for both supervisory districts has declined 3 and 4 percent, respectively when compared to 1999-00. The Genesee Valley BOCES, with an enrollment of 27,071, is the only BOCES included in this study

with a total enrollment base in 2003-04 that was significantly less than 40,000. (See Appendix B for component school district enrollment data.)

Monroe One component districts also appear to be wealthier as measured by the Combined Wealth Ratio (CWR), which reflects the property wealth and adjusted gross income of the district and compares it to state average wealth. Monroe One component school districts are 20 percent wealthier than the average district in the state. In contrast, the average CWR for the component districts in Monroe Two-Orleans, Genesee Valley, and Wayne-Finger Lakes is lower than the state average, equaling 70 percent, 60 percent, and 70 percent of the mean, respectively. As shown below, the highest CWR for school districts in the three other supervisory districts is only slightly greater than the lowest CWR among the school districts in Monroe One. On average, the Monroe One component districts also have a lower percentage of their student body participating in free and reduced lunch programs at 12 percent, compared to 24, 30, and 31 percent for Monroe Two-Orleans, Genesee Valley, and Wayne-Finger Lakes, respectively. Finally, the Monroe One component districts sent a slightly higher percentage of their graduates to college in 2002-03—88 percent—compared to Monroe Two-Orleans (83 percent), Genesee Valley (82 percent), and Wayne-Finger Lakes (81 percent). (See Appendix C for component school district Combined Wealth Ratio (CWR), percent free and reduced lunch, and percent to college data.)

**Table Two: Component School Districts**

	Monroe One	Monroe Two - Orleans	Genesee Valley	Wayne-Finger Lakes
Component School District Enrollment - 2003-04	47,448	39,682	27,071	42,383
Rank of 37 BOCES	10	17	21	14
Component School District Enrollment - 1999-00	46,950	40,981	29,220	44,182
Percent Change 1999-00 to 2003-04	1%	-3%	-7%	-4%
Average Combined Wealth Ratio - June 2004	1.2	0.7	0.6	0.7
Highest Combined Wealth Ratio - June 2004	1.8	1.0	1.0	1.1
Lowest Combined Wealth Ratio - June 2004	0.9	0.5	0.4	0.4
Average % Free/Reduced Lunch - October 2002	12%	24%	30%	31%
Highest % Free/Reduced Lunch - October 2002	31%	37%	60%	54%
Lowest % Free/Reduced Lunch - October 2002	1%	16%	16%	9%
Average % to College - 2002-03 /1	88%	83%	82%	81%
Highest % to College - 2002-03	98%	88%	98%	95%
Lowest % to College - 2002-03	67%	76%	73%	64%

/1 Monroe Two-Orleans average percent does not include the Holley Central School District. Genesee Valley average percent does not include the Wyoming Central School District. The source document showed both districts sending no graduates to college in 2002-03.

Sources: A Preliminary Survey of Alternatives for the First Supervisory District of Monroe County, and Annual 655 Report to the Governor and Legislature.

## II. B. Fiscal Profile

The budgets of the four supervisory districts vary in total spending, administration versus program spending, and spending per Resident Weighted Average Daily Attendance (RWADA). (See Table Three). These variations reflect, among other things, different enrollment levels, services, service delivery strategies, and student needs.

Monroe One has the highest 2005-06 total budget of the four BOCES at approximately \$94 million, well above the state average of \$58 million. The total budget for Wayne-Finger Lakes is also above the state average at \$74 million. These two BOCES have slightly higher RWADA than Monroe Two-Orleans and substantially higher RWADA than Genesee Valley. They also operate regional information centers (RICs) that provide information technology services to the other BOCES in the region.<sup>3</sup> The total budgets and total budget per RWADA for Monroe Two-Orleans and Genesee Valley are both below the state average. Administrative costs, including spending on capital purposes, comprise eight to ten percent of the four BOCES total budgets, close to the state average of nine percent. This is not surprising considering the ten percent limit on BOCES administrative costs in New York State Education Law.<sup>4</sup> Administrative costs per RWADA vary from \$96 at Genesee Valley to \$141 at Monroe One, with only Genesee Valley under the state average of \$113; Monroe One's measure exceeds the state average by nearly 25 percent. Total program expenditures per RWADA vary as well, from \$959 at Genesee Valley to \$1,724 at Monroe One, with Genesee Valley and Monroe Two-Orleans (\$1,059) below the state average of \$1,134; again, Monroe One's total exceeds the state average by 52 percent.

**Table Three**

	<b>Monroe One</b>	<b>Monroe Two - Orleans</b>	<b>Genesee Valley</b>	<b>Wayne-Finger Lakes</b>	<b>State Average</b>
Total Budget 2005-06	93,908,633	50,773,925	31,436,177	73,616,988	58,285,685
RWADA 2003-04 School Year/1	50,348	43,101	29,806	45,947	46,721
Total Budget Per RWADA	1,865	1,178	1,055	1,602	1,248
Administration (General & Capital)	7,087,107	5,124,196	2,862,429	6,342,555	5,299,140
% of Total Budget	8%	10%	9%	9%	9%
Administration Per RWADA	141	119	96	138	113
Program Total	86,821,526	45,649,729	28,573,748	67,274,433	52,986,545
% of Total Budget	92%	90%	91%	91%	91%
Program Total Per RWADA	1,724	1,059	959	1,464	1,134

/1 Rockefeller Institute calculations of RWADA using NYSED data at <http://www.nysed.gov/stateaid/dist/FM04/BRWADA/269100.HTML>

Source: NYS Education Department, 2005-06 BOCES Program and Administrative/Capital Budgets Summary

<sup>3</sup> There are twelve BOCES regional information centers across New York State that provide technology services to the component school districts of multiple BOCES.

<sup>4</sup> NYS Education Law, Article 40, 1950.4(a), (b).

## II. C. BOCES Supervisory District and School Superintendents Overview

Three of the four BOCES included in this study have experienced somewhat recent turnover in the supervisory district superintendent position, and currently two district superintendents are providing leadership to the four supervisory districts. The previous Monroe One district superintendent held the position for seven years prior to retiring in August 2005. The Genesee Valley district superintendent has been in his position for the past three years and is currently serving as the interim district superintendent for Monroe One. The previous Monroe Two-Orleans district superintendent held the position for less than one year before leaving in November 2005. The current Wayne-Finger Lakes district superintendent has held this position for approximately 12 years, and is also currently serving as the interim district superintendent for Monroe Two-Orleans.

One of the responsibilities of the BOCES district superintendent is to provide guidance and leadership to the school superintendents in the region. The time and effort necessary to meet this responsibility is greater when the school superintendents have had fewer years in the position. As noted in Table Four, 30 percent of the Monroe One component school districts have experienced turnover in their superintendent of schools position in the last 36 months. The average tenure for the ten Monroe One school superintendents is 5.5 years, which is longer than the other three BOCES in this study. Seventy-eight percent of the Monroe Two-Orleans and 52 percent of the Wayne-Finger Lakes component school districts have recently experienced turnover in the superintendent of schools position. Although only 27 percent of the Genesee Valley component school districts have recently appointed new superintendents, this will increase to 45 percent as superintendents of four component school districts have announced they will leave their positions within the next year.

**Table Four**

	<b>Monroe One</b>	<b>Monroe Two - Orleans</b>	<b>Genesee Valley/1</b>	<b>Wayne-Finger Lakes</b>
School District Superintendents	10	9	22	25
Average Years in District	5.5	2.7	5.3	4.2
Number of Turnovers Nov. 2003 to Nov. 2005	3	7	6	13
% Turnover Nov. 2003 to Nov. 2005	30%	78%	27%	52%

/1 Figures do not take into consideration four school superintendents in the Genesee Valley BOCES, who have announced that they will leave their positions. The tenure of these superintendents ranges from eight to 13 years.

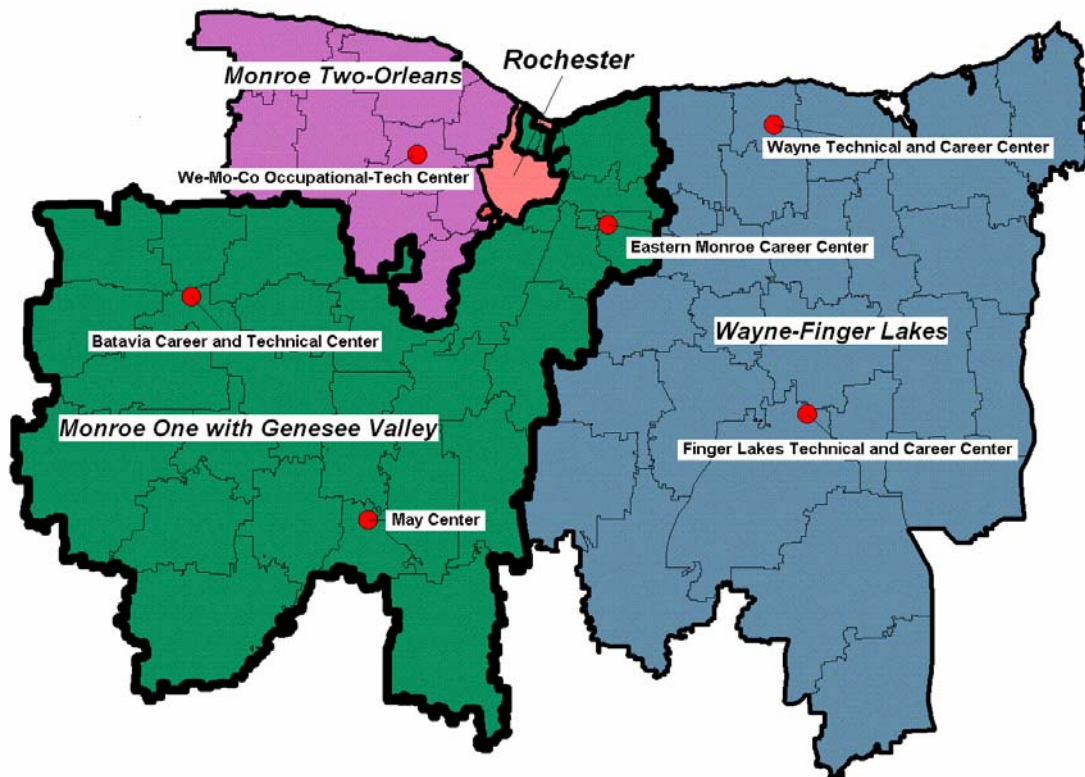
Sources: Monroe One, Monroe Two-Orleans, Genesee Valley, and Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES district superintendent offices.

### III. Monroe One Reorganization Options

#### III. A. Monroe One/Genesee Valley Merger

One option available to the commissioner of education is to merge the Monroe One BOCES Supervisory District with Genesee Valley. This potential Monroe One/Genesee Valley district is depicted in the map below and would include all—or portions of—five counties (Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Steuben, and Wyoming). Such a merger would create one of the largest supervisory districts in the state in terms of number of component school districts, land mass, enrollment, and total budget (see Table Five). A merged Monroe One/Genesee Valley district would include 32 component school districts (4<sup>th</sup> highest in the state) and cover 1,990 square miles (8<sup>th</sup> largest in the state). It would rank 6<sup>th</sup> in component school district enrollment at approximately 74,500 and have the third largest BOCES budget in the state at approximately \$126 million. Its budget would be lower than only the Suffolk One and Nassau BOCES, both with budgets that exceed \$200 million.

**Monroe One and Genesee Valley Merger**



● Denotes career and technical center locations in each of the supervisory districts.

Input from BOCES administrators suggests that it would be difficult for a single district superintendent of a merged Monroe One/Genesee Valley BOCES to



effectively carry out his/her responsibilities as a state officer and the BOCES chief executive officer. In the short-term, the district superintendent would need to plan and implement the merger while at the same time provide guidance and leadership to 32 school superintendents, of whom approximately 42 percent would be either new or fairly new to their positions. This reorganization would come on the heels of a recently completed effort by Genesee Valley to merge the operations and services of the two supervisory districts of Genesee, Livingston, Steuben, and Wyoming counties. This earlier reorganization was ordered in 1994, took approximately ten years to complete, and created the single Genesee Valley supervisory district operating today.

Feedback from the field also suggests that in the long run it would be difficult for one district superintendent to maintain a close working relationship with the 32 school superintendents, given their numbers and the geographic size of the merged district. For example, the Genesee Valley district office and the district offices of its 22 component school districts are, with the exception of two, over 30 miles from the Monroe One main campus in Fairport. One-way travel from Monroe One to the Genesee Valley district office and school districts ranges from 26 to 57 miles, and averages 47 miles. Travel time for each one-way trip ranges from 44 to 79 minutes a trip.

The availability of the district superintendent of a newly merged BOCES would most likely be more limited than the Genesee Valley component school districts experience today. Feedback suggests that interaction between the current Genesee Valley district superintendent and his component school districts may be more frequent than the interaction experienced by Monroe One component school districts. This is partly due to the different needs of the component districts of the two BOCES. For example, the Genesee Valley district superintendent has conducted the searches to fill all vacant school superintendent positions in his component school districts in the past three years, whereas the Monroe One district superintendent has not conducted a single search.

**Table Five**

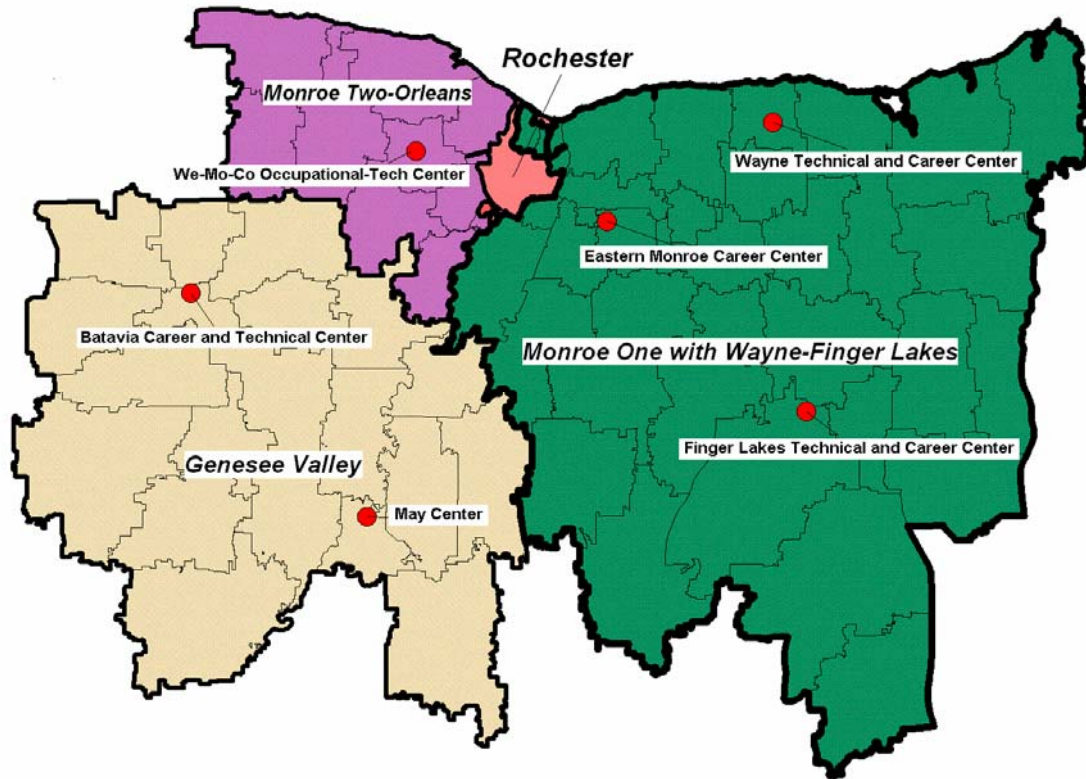
	<u>Current Profiles</u>			<u>Merger Profiles</u>	
	<u>Monroe One</u>	<u>Genesee Valley</u>	<u>Wayne-Finger Lakes</u>	<u>Monroe One/Genesee Valley</u>	<u>Monroe One/Wayne-Finger Lakes</u>
Number of Component School Districts	10	22	25	32	35
Rank of 37/Rank of 36	29	10	6	4	3
Land Area (Square Miles)	294	1,696	1,750	1,990	2,044
Rank of 37/Rank of 36	33	11	10	8	8
Component School District Enrollment - 2003-04	47,448	27,071	42,383	74,519	89,831
Rank of 37/Rank of 36	10	21	14	6	4
Total Budget 2005-06 (\$ in millions)	93.9	31.4	73.6	125.3	167.5
Rank of 37/Rank of 36	5	29	9	3	3

Sources: A Preliminary Survey of Alternatives for the First Supervisory District of Monroe County, and the NYS Education Department, 2005-06 BOCES Program and Administrative/Capital Budgets Summary.

### III. B. Monroe One/Wayne-Finger Lakes Merger

A second option available to the commissioner of education is to merge the Monroe One and Wayne-Finger Lakes supervisory districts. This reorganization is depicted in the map below and would also create one of the largest supervisory districts in the state, larger than a Monroe One/Genesee Valley merger. The new Monroe One/Wayne-Finger Lakes district would include all or parts of five counties (Monroe, Ontario, Seneca, Wayne, and Yates). As noted in Table Five, a consolidated Monroe One/Wayne-Finger Lakes district would include 35 component school districts (3rd highest total in the state) and cover 2,044 square miles (8<sup>th</sup> largest in the state). It would rank 4<sup>th</sup> in component school district enrollment at approximately 90,000, and have the third largest BOCES budget at approximately \$169 million. Its budget would be lower than only those of Suffolk One and Nassau.

**Monroe One and Wayne-Finger Lakes Merger**



● Denotes career and technical center locations in each of the supervisory districts.

BOCES administrators who would be affected by such a restructuring express similar concerns as with a Monroe One/Genesee Valley merger. They expect that it would be difficult for a single district superintendent of a merged Monroe One/Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES to effectively carry out his/her dual responsibilities as a state officer and the BOCES chief executive officer. Primary

concerns include potential difficulties maintaining a close working relationship with—and meeting the needs of—35 school superintendents. The current Wayne-Finger Lakes district superintendent and board use a “cooperative approach” with their component districts to ensure the BOCES is not viewed as simply a vendor of services. This approach requires more frequent interaction that may not be possible following an increase in the number of component school districts. In addition to planning and implementing the Monroe One/Wayne-Finger Lakes merger, the district superintendent, in the short term, would also have to meet the increased needs of approximately 45 percent of the component school superintendents who would be somewhat new to their positions.

BOCES administrators also maintain that the larger geographic size of a Monroe One/Wayne-Finger Lakes supervisory district would be problematic. For example, the district offices of 13 of the Wayne-Finger Lakes component school districts are more than 30 miles from the Monroe One main campus in Fairport. One-way travel from Monroe One to the Wayne-Finger Lakes component school districts ranges from 7 to 75 miles, and averages 33 miles. Travel time for each one-way trip ranges from 13 to 92 minutes a trip, and averages 49 minutes.

Finally, the needs of the Monroe One component districts and the Wayne-Finger Lakes component districts are potentially different, which may complicate a merger and possibly reduce the quantity and quality of services currently provided. BOCES administrators suggested that the Monroe One component districts are more capable in terms of enrollment and wealth to support in-house services while the Wayne-Finger Lakes component districts must rely on BOCES for more “basic” services. The Monroe One component school districts have higher enrollments ranging from approximately 1,200 to 8,700, and averaging approximately 4,700. The Wayne-Finger Lakes component school district enrollments range from approximately 600 to 4,000, and average approximately 1,700. The noted disparity in wealth is evidenced in the Combined Wealth Ratios for the two supervisory districts. The average Combined Wealth Ratio for the Monroe One component districts is 1.2, with individual ratios ranging from 0.9 to 1.8. The average ratio for the Wayne-Finger Lakes component districts is lower at 0.7, with individual ratios ranging from 0.4 to 1.1.

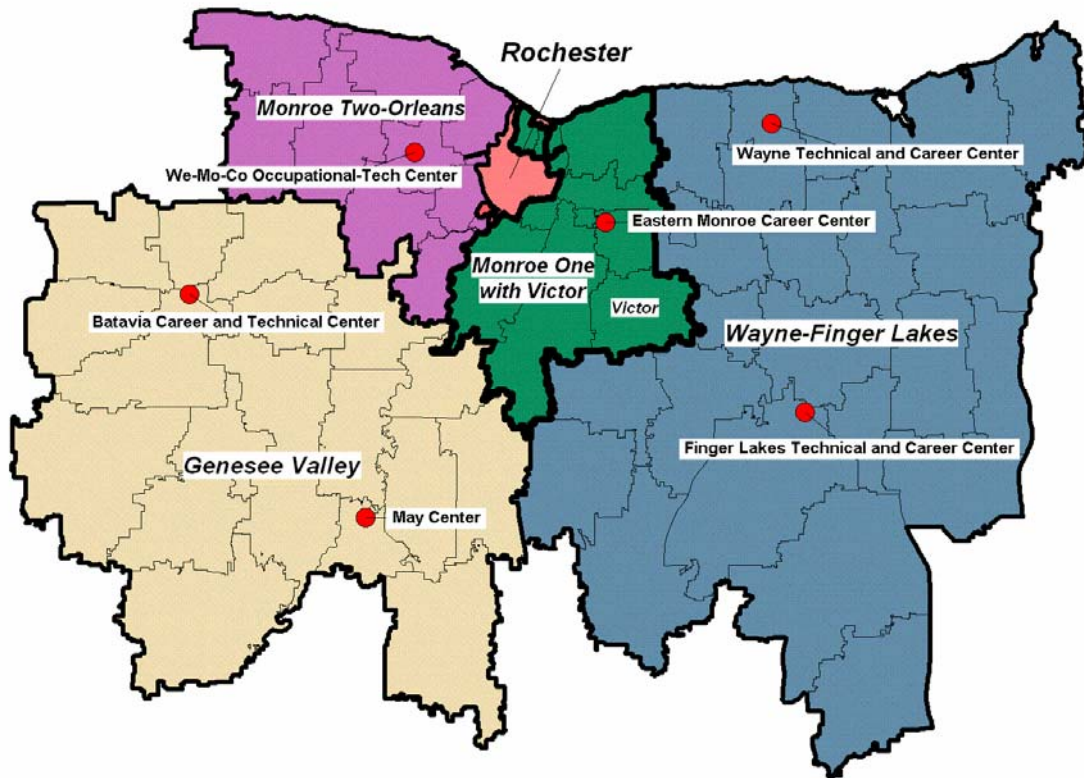
A Monroe One/Wayne-Finger Lakes reorganization comes with one unique, although not insurmountable issue, in that both BOCES currently operate a regional information center (RIC). The Monroe One BOCES operates a RIC that serves primarily the Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans component school districts. The Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES operates a RIC that primarily serves the Wayne-Finger Lakes and Genesee Valley component school districts. Any planning for a merged Monroe One/Wayne-Finger Lakes supervisory district would need to address how to combine the services of the two RICs while continuing to meet the RIC-related needs of Monroe Two-Orleans and Genesee Valley.

### III. C. Transferring Individual School Districts to or from Monroe One

A third option available to the commissioner of education is to transfer component school districts of the Genesee Valley and Wayne-Finger Lakes supervisory districts to the Monroe One district, or vice versa. Simply put, there appears to be little or no interest on the part of the school districts that border the three supervisory districts to leave their current BOCES. This is not surprising considering the border districts have long-standing relationships with their current BOCES and the borders of the supervisory districts cleanly follow county lines.

One exception is the Victor Central School District, a component school district of Wayne-Finger Lakes, which is the only district that expressed an interest in leaving its current BOCES to transfer to Monroe One. As depicted in the map below, Victor is on the eastern border of Monroe One and is in Ontario County. One Victor School District official cited proximity as a reason to expand Monroe One to include Victor. Victor's campus is approximately 11 miles, or 20 minutes, from Monroe One's office in Fairport, compared to approximately 24 miles, or 40 minutes, to Wayne-Finger Lakes Newark offices. This official also noted that Victor's enrollment (approximately 3,500 students) and wealth (Victor's combined wealth ratio is approximately 1.1) are more similar to the Monroe One component school districts than Wayne-Finger Lakes.

#### Transfer Victor School District from Wayne-Finger Lakes to Monroe One



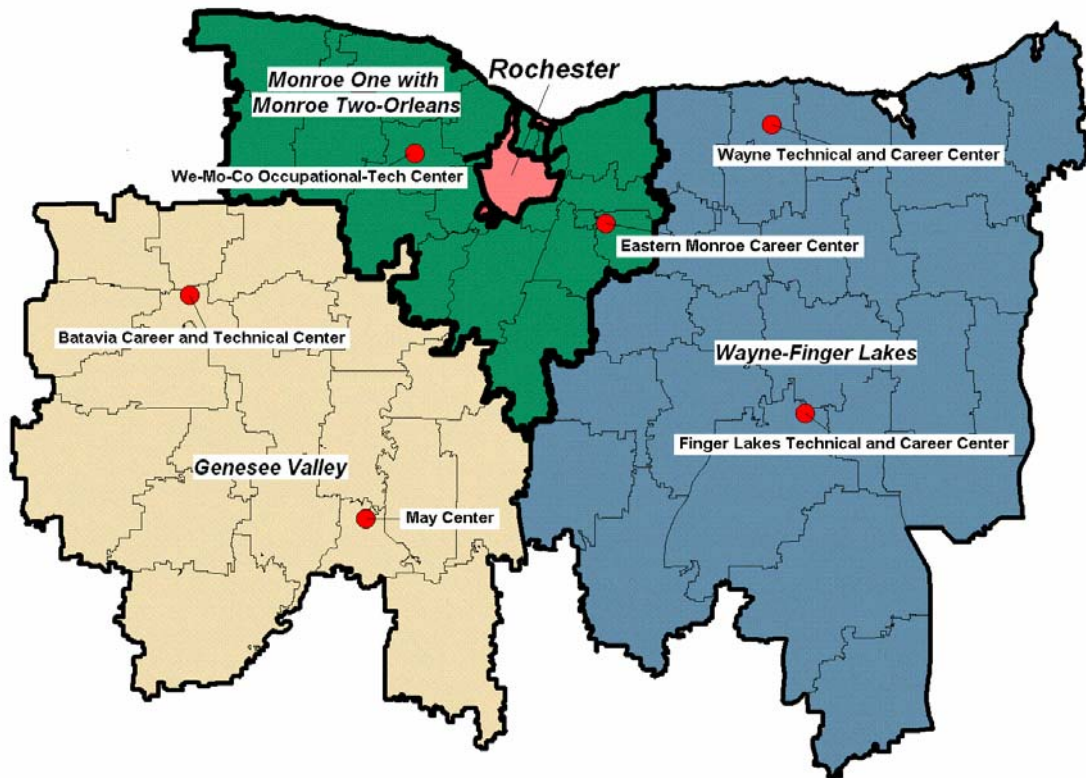
● Denotes career and technical center locations in each of the supervisory districts.

Although efforts to solicit feedback on a potential reorganization of the Monroe One supervisory district were extensive for this study, they did not exhaust all of the parties who may be interested in providing input on transferring the Victor School District to the Monroe One Supervisory District. The Wayne-Finger Lakes officials interviewed briefly noted that the supervisory district relies on the enrollments and wealth of its border districts, including Victor, to achieve some degree of economy of scale. This issue and the interests of the Victor School District may be better served if they are addressed more fully outside the scope of this study.

#### IV. Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans Reorganization

A fourth option available to the commissioner of education is to merge the Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans supervisory districts. This reorganization option is depicted in the map below. The new Monroe One/Monroe Two-Orleans district would include 17 of the 18 school districts in Monroe County and two that are predominately in Orleans County. The Rochester City School District is the only Monroe County school district that could not be included in such a new supervisory district; it is currently not eligible to join a BOCES because its population exceeds 125,000.

**Monroe One and Monroe-Two Orleans Merger**



● Denotes career and technical center locations in each of the supervisory districts.

The number of school districts and geographic size of a merged Monroe One/Monroe Two-Orleans supervisory district would be more manageable than the potential reorganizations involving Genesee Valley and Wayne-Fingers Lakes discussed earlier. As noted in Table Six, the new supervisory district would include 19 component school districts (14<sup>th</sup> largest in the state) and would cover 706 square miles (29<sup>th</sup> largest in the state). Its enrollment base of approximately 87,000 would rank fourth in the state and would be more than double the 40,000 threshold suggested by the New York State Education Department. The supervisory district's total budget of approximately \$145 million would be the



third largest BOCES budget in the state. Its budget would be lower than those of only Suffolk One and Nassau.

**Table Six**

	<u>Current Profiles</u>		<u>Merged Profile</u>
	<u>Monroe One</u>	<u>Monroe Two-Orleans</u>	<u>Monroe One/Monroe Two-Orleans</u>
Number of Component School Districts	10	9	19
Rank of 37/Rank of 36	29	32	14
Land Area (Square Miles)	294	412	706
Rank of 37/Rank of 36	33	32	29
Component School District Enrollment - 2003-04	47,448	39,682	87,130
Rank of 37/Rank of 36	10	17	4
Total Budget 2005-06 (\$ in millions)	93.9	50.8	144.7
Rank of 37/Rank of 36	5	17	3

Sources: A Preliminary Survey of Alternatives for the First Supervisory District of Monroe County, NYS Education Department, 2005-06 BOCES Program and Administrative/Capital Budgets Summary.

At first glance, merging Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans appears to result in a somewhat reasonably sized supervisory district that includes all of the BOCES-eligible school districts in Monroe County. The subsequent sections of this paper focus on a potential reorganization of Monroe One and Monroe-Two Orleans. As will be seen from the following discussion, although there are many similarities between the two supervisory districts, significant differences exist as well.

#### **IV. A. Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans Program Comparisons<sup>5</sup>**

The Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans supervisory districts provide a broad array of services to their constituent school districts but each uses a materially different functional model. Monroe One provides services primarily through a centralized approach with student instruction offered largely at facilities centrally located and owned and operated by the BOCES. In contrast, many services offered by Monroe Two-Orleans are provided off-site in leased space at schools owned and operated by the component school districts or at one of Monroe County's One-Stop Career Centers.

---

<sup>5</sup> Data and language for this section obtained from A Preliminary Survey of Alternatives for the First Supervisory District of Monroe County, July 2005, and the New York State Education Department's Financial and Statistical Outcomes of the Boards of Cooperative Educational Services report, February 2005.

These contrasting service delivery models represent quite different approaches and have implications for a number of areas of program management. For instance, Monroe One, by necessity due to its use of a centralized service delivery structure, has a far more extensive physical plant with all of the operational requirements that entails; Monroe Two-Orleans leases space in its component school district facilities to provide instructional services to students. Monroe One's student transportation service is extensive, while Monroe Two-Orleans has no real transportation service of its own—most students remain in their home district and thereby reportedly spend less time on buses being transported to a central location. And, according to several district officials interviewed by the study team, the decentralized model utilized by Monroe Two-Orleans appears to foster a greater degree of collaboration between BOCES leadership and the individual school districts.

#### IV. A. 1. Financial Comparison

This section presents a more detailed profile of the financial operations of the Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES. It uses data from the 2003-04 fiscal year, as contained in the 602 Report prepared by the State Education Department earlier this year; 2003-04 data is the latest available on actual spending results for the 38 BOCES operating that year.

As measured by their finances, the Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES are large and complex operations:

- Monroe One reports total (unaudited) spending of \$87,331,339 in 2003-04. This is the 6<sup>th</sup> highest spending total among the BOCES in New York.
- Monroe Two-Orleans total (unaudited) spending was \$51,867,591 in 2003-04, the 15<sup>th</sup> highest total spending among the BOCES.

Assuming no other changes were made to spending patterns, a merger of the two BOCES would make this new entity the third largest in the state, on the basis of spending.

For reporting purposes, the State Education Department classifies BOCES spending into three categories. Administrative expenses are those for the district superintendent and others with central administrative responsibilities, and for offices with financial and administrative duties such as personnel and business services. Service expenses include spending for all the services a BOCES provides to its component districts (and other districts through contractual arrangements); these services may be provided to students or to the districts and typically include special education and vocational education, alternative education, professional development, and management services. Finally, capital expenses include the costs of operating and maintaining BOCES facilities and lease costs



for facilities the BOCES leases from third parties, including school districts.

- Administrative expenses in 2003-04 at Monroe One totaled \$3,709,154 and \$2,552,073 in Monroe Two-Orleans. This spending accounts for 4.25 percent of total 2003-04 spending in Monroe One and 4.92 percent in Monroe Two-Orleans. In most organizations, administrative spending is generally, although not always, related to the overall size of the budget; however, administrative spending usually represents a somewhat larger share of the budget in smaller organizations and a smaller share in organizations with larger budgets. This economy of scale reflects the fact that every organization, regardless of size, needs a core of functions and personnel to handle administrative duties; in larger units, spending on these items is generally proportionately smaller than in smaller units. Although the share of total administrative spending is slightly greater in Monroe Two-Orleans, both are under the 5.4 percent statewide average for BOCES. Administrative spending at Monroe One is significantly below the BOCES average.

Another measure of the burden of administrative costs is spending per pupil (with pupil counts measured in RWADA). Using this measure, total administrative spending (as opposed to the amount allocated to the component school districts) was \$73.67 for Monroe One and \$59.21 in Monroe Two-Orleans. The statewide average of administrative spending per pupil was \$64.98 for BOCES. However, it should be noted that the Monroe One administrative spending total may reflect higher spending attributable to Monroe One's oversight of a RIC and its extensive contractual relationship with the Rochester City School District.

Each BOCES allocates a portion of its administrative costs to component school districts, in all but one case on the basis of the number of pupils in the districts. Using this measure of allocated administrative costs, Monroe One administrative spending per pupil totaled \$51.59 in 2003-04 while Monroe Two-Orleans administrative spending was \$50.64. Both Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans exhibited administrative spending well below the per student statewide average in 2003-04.

- Capital expenses relate to spending for the maintenance and operation of BOCES-owned facilities and rent payments for leased space. In 2003-04, Monroe One, which owns and operates extensive facilities, incurred total capital expenses of \$2,717,852, which represented 3.1 percent of total expenses. Monroe Two-

Orleans, which relies heavily on space leased from its component districts, incurred capital spending of \$1,783,601, or 3.4 percent of its total spending. Both BOCES exceeded the 2003-04 state average of 2.8 percent of total spending for capital purposes.

Using the capital and rent expense amount that is allocated to component districts, Monroe One spent \$53.98 per pupil (RWADA) while Monroe Two-Orleans spent \$41.38 per pupil. Although Monroe One's capital spending per pupil is considerably greater than that of Monroe Two-Orleans, the portion of the budget devoted to capital expenses is relatively minor for both, at approximately three percent.

- Services expenses represent the greatest portion of the budget in all BOCES. The scope and depth of services provided by a particular BOCES is highly dependent on the school districts it serves, and their need for and interest in such shared services. BOCES costs are apportioned to individual districts on the basis of the number of students participating in BOCES instruction in a particular area or, for non-instructional services, by the time allotments the district purchases from the BOCES. Component school districts support the costs of these services through their general revenues.

Of its total 2003-04 spending of \$87,3331,399, Monroe One devotes 92.6 percent to instructional services and programs benefiting the component districts. This is slightly higher than Monroe Two-Orleans in which services account for 91.6 percent of total spending. The BOCES statewide average was 91.9 percent in 2003-04.

#### IV. A. 2. Services Spending Comparison

BOCES in New York are engaged in a wide array of services to their school districts and the students. For comparison purposes, the State Education Department categorizes the expenditures for these services into six shared service categories: career and technical education (CTE), special education, itinerant personnel, general education, instructional support, and non-instructional support. As noted above, school districts have the option of purchasing most services offered by a BOCES and can do so from their "own" BOCES or from a neighboring one through a mechanism known as "cross-contracting."

Although located largely in the same county and with approximately the same number of school districts, Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans provide their component school districts with a somewhat different range of services, as measured by spending in the six shared service categories.

This section presents information regarding the number of pupils served and the tuition per pupil for various categories of services offered by Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans. It should be noted that the number of pupils served and the tuition rate charged for certain services are subject to significant variation from one year to the next. Such enrollment fluctuations may reflect the normal ebb and flow of the number of students in need of a particular service or it may reflect school district and student confidence in the quality of such services. A detailed examination of the causes of such variations and the differences in tuition charged by two comparable BOCES was outside the scope of this study.

- Special education programs and support services are for students whose disabilities limit their full participation in a regular education program. School districts have been strongly encouraged in recent years to operate their own classes for students with mild disabling conditions. The students who attend shared classes at BOCES tend to be those with more severe conditions. Special education services are generally the largest area of activity by BOCES in the state, comprising 40.0 percent of total services spending. At 45.2 percent, Monroe One is somewhat above the state average. Monroe Two-Orleans devotes a somewhat smaller share, 35.9 percent, of its services budget to special education.

Special education services are classified into four groups, depending upon the staffing ratios involved (as a measure of the intensity of services offered). Thus, the 1:6:1 category is reserved for students most in need of special service; it is the most labor-intensive category and involves one staff professional, six students and one paraprofessional. At the other end is the 1:12:1 group, which has one professional, 12 students, and one paraprofessional. As noted in Table Seven, Monroe One services are most heavily weighted toward those in the most intensive group, while Monroe Two-Orleans has the largest cohort of its special education students in the 1:12:1 group.

Table Seven

	2003-04 Enrollment		2003-04 Tuition Rate	
	Monroe One	Monroe Two-Orleans	Monroe One	Monroe Two-Orleans
<b>Special Education Staffing</b>				
1:6:1	468	164	\$26,472	\$23,005
1:8:1	151	83	\$21,900	\$15,094
1:12:3	315	26	\$19,517	\$24,777
1:12:1	172	237	\$16,950	\$15,991

Source: New York State Education Department's Financial and Statistical Outcomes of the Boards of Cooperative Educational Services report, February 2005.

- Non-instructional support is the second largest category of service provided by BOCES. These services are administrative in nature, and include the finance and business area, class scheduling, and transportation. Non-instructional services account for 17.1 percent of total BOCES spending in New York. Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans offer sharply different spending patterns in this category. Monroe One reports fully 22.0 percent of its spending is in non-instructional support, while at Monroe Two-Orleans, the figure is 10.3 percent. Monroe One's non-instructional services division includes cooperative bidding, textbook coordination, and safety/risk management. It also provides technology services at a regional information center (RIC) for all of the component districts of Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans.

At Monroe Two-Orleans, non-instructional services include cooperative bidding, safety/risk management, coordination of the Rochester Area Workers' Compensation plan, and substitute teacher coordination.

- Instructional support includes instructional technology, and other communications and technology programs aimed at student instruction, and represents 16.1 percent of total BOCES spending in the state. Significant differences are also exhibited in this area among Monroe County BOCES. This category accounts for 9.8 percent of total spending at Monroe One and includes services such as school and curriculum improvement, instructional computers, and summer school.

Instructional support represents 25.9 percent of services spending at Monroe Two-Orleans. Its Office for Instructional Support

oversees three divisions: Communication and Technology Services (CaTS), the Elementary Science Program (ESP), and the Department of Curriculum and Professional Development.

- Career and technical education, the fourth largest category, includes a range of services designed to meet student needs and interests, and is heavily reliant on equipment and technology. Fourteen percent of all BOCES spending is in this category. Both Monroe County BOCES are under the statewide average. Monroe One devotes 5.8 percent of its services budget to career and technical education (CTE) and offers twenty-eight courses at its single center in Fairport, eight more than the state average.

Monroe Two-Orleans spends a considerably greater share of its services budget on CTE, but at 11.9 percent, is still below the statewide average. Monroe Two-Orleans offers thirty-two courses at its single center in Spencerport, which is twelve more than the state average.

- General instructional expenses includes a range of other services that meet more targeted needs, such as alternative education, summer school, arts and programs for gifted students. On average, the state's BOCES spend 7.7 percent of their services budget in this category. Both Monroe One (5.9 percent) and Monroe Two-Orleans (6.2 percent) are below the average but are reasonably close to that level. Monroe One general education programs include arts, summer school, continuing education, jailed youth, alternative education, environmental education, and distance learning.

At Monroe Two-Orleans, general education includes such programs as gifted and talented education, English as a second language, the Westside Junior Academy, the Westside Senior Academy, and regional summer school.

- Itinerant services represents the smallest category of services provided by BOCES at 5.1 percent of the total. The category includes highly specialized services that often cannot be provided economically by school districts, such as psychologists, physical therapists, and speech therapists. Although this category is often a minor portion of the services menu at larger BOCES, Monroe One devotes 11.3 percent of its services budget to itinerant services, which include a teacher for the visually impaired, teacher for the deaf/interpreter/notetaker, assistive technology, school psychologist, occupational and physical therapy, speech impaired services, and public relations.

At Monroe Two-Orleans, itinerant services also account for a relatively larger portion of shared services, 9.8 percent of the total, and closely mirror those services offered by Monroe One.

#### **IV. B. Input from BOCES Leadership**

The study team conducted extensive interviews with various stakeholders in the BOCES community. In-person and telephone interviews were held with supervisory district superintendents of Monroe One, Monroe Two-Orleans, Wayne-Finger Lakes, and Genesee Valley BOCES. In addition, the team met with the boards of Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans and with the board chairs of Wayne-Finger Lakes and Genesee Valley. Interviews were also held with the superintendents of the component school districts of Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans, and with senior staff of both supervisory districts.

It is important to note that Monroe Two-Orleans districts cross-contract with Monroe One BOCES for services and Monroe One districts cross-contract with Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES. As a result, the superintendents of the 19 school districts covered by these BOCES are familiar with the operations, management, and responsiveness of both entities.

The consensus of the BOCES and school district leaders was that many challenges would have to be overcome if the commissioner of education were to consolidate the Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES. The results of the study team's interviews are summarized below:

- The two BOCES operate using vastly different service models. Monroe One uses a traditional centralized model where most (but not all) direct instructional services are provided at central campuses or facilities operated directly by the BOCES. This model naturally requires considerable effort to transport students throughout the Monroe One area. In contrast, Monroe Two-Orleans uses a more decentralized approach that relies much more heavily on satellite programs offered in the component school districts, in space provided by the schools. A number of Monroe Two-Orleans students thereby remain in their home districts rather than travel to central facilities.

The study team makes no qualitative assessment regarding these two approaches. However, the relatively sharp distinctions between the models pose considerable differences in terms of capital costs, maintenance and operations, transportation, etc. A full consolidation of the two BOCES presumably would require an effort to harmonize the two approaches, a process that could be expected to take many years. This would present significant

challenges in how the different program and cost accounting structures would be integrated.

- Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans appear to operate with disparate organizational cultures. The study team heard from virtually all concerned—including most senior staff at both BOCES—that Monroe Two-Orleans operates in a more collaborative manner regarding both staff and component school districts than does Monroe One. The school superintendents from both BOCES were clear regarding their high level of satisfaction with the leadership of Monroe Two-Orleans. They cited the BOCES for its more transparent organizational structure, its willingness to work with component districts to initiate needed programs, and the extent to which it consults with the districts on their needs and level of satisfaction with BOCES services. They noted that the decentralized service model (described above) encourages, and in fact forces, more consultation and collaboration with the districts.

Monroe One, in contrast, was often described as being more independent of the districts, less consultative, and less responsive to the component districts' needs. The superintendents of the component school districts indicated that starting new programs was difficult in Monroe Two-Orleans, but even more so in Monroe One. It should be noted that this does not indicate that the quality of educational services offered by Monroe One was considered inferior to Monroe Two-Orleans, but rather that the operating style of Monroe One leadership was less collaborative than that of Monroe Two-Orleans. It is possible that the greater relative wealth of the districts in Monroe One versus Monroe Two-Orleans and their resulting ability to offer services on their own may account for the greater need on the part of Monroe Two-Orleans to work with the districts in a more cooperative and responsive manner.

- There is widespread concern about the ability of a district superintendent to meet the needs of the students and school districts in a BOCES created from a merger of Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans. A merged supervisory district would be the fourth largest in the state, when measured by district student enrollment. Although the number of school districts (19, or the 14th largest) and the geographic area (706 square miles, or the 29th largest) would not appear to present insurmountable obstacles, Monroe County is relatively urbanized with considerable traffic congestion. These factors would exacerbate the difficulty of travel around the enlarged BOCES, for both students being bused to

services, and supervisors traveling throughout the district to meet with parents and staff, and to monitor activities and operations.

Many expressed concerns about the difficulty of managing a combined BOCES with such a widely disparate group of school districts. These observers point to the significant disparities among the districts in terms of enrollment size, wealth per pupil, and even degree of urbanization. However, it should be noted that the Albany area's Capital Region BOCES includes districts as diverse as Schenectady, Bethlehem, Niskayuna, Cobleskill, and several very rural districts. It also serves the City of Albany, which is not a component district.

It bears repeating that the district superintendents also serve as representatives of the state commissioner of education. They perform important duties that are crucial to the ability of the commissioner and the State Education Department to oversee the operations of the 700 school districts in the state. Past and current district superintendents interviewed report that these departmental responsibilities have grown sharply in recent years as the commissioner and the Regents have imposed new accountability and reporting standards. Select district superintendents and their boards noted that state responsibilities have grown to take more than 50 percent of the district superintendent's time, leaving less time for local responsibilities.

- There is widespread concern that the salary cap for supervisory district superintendents, which is set in New York State Education Law, will limit the ability of Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans to fill their vacant district superintendent posts.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, there was agreement across high-level BOCES administrators that the salary cap would make it extremely difficult to recruit a new district superintendent with the expertise to effectively orchestrate a merger of the two BOCES, meet the needs of an increased number of component school districts, meet his/her state responsibilities, and potentially work with the Rochester City School District. (Rochester considerations are discussed in detail in Section IV.E of this paper.) The cap appears to be particularly troublesome for Monroe County BOCES because their component school districts are often capable of offering their school district superintendents a salary higher than the district superintendent cap. Many interviewed also cited a diminishing pool of candidates for supervisory district superintendent positions and a perception that the position was no longer widely held as a career capstone as hindering efforts to recruit qualified candidates.

---

<sup>6</sup> See New York State Education Law, Article 40, Section 1950, a(2)



- Few BOCES leaders or staff interviewed in the course of this study could offer clear examples of potential educational benefits that would result from a merger of the Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES. In fact, many interviewees had positive assessments of the educational services offered by both BOCES. The study team heard few, if any, reservations about the quality of direct services provided to students, such as special or vocational education. Moreover, the study team made repeated attempts to solicit the comments of parents of students served by the two BOCES but few comments were received, and none expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of such services.
- A significant challenge would appear to be the difficulty of merging two functioning entities with separate administrations, policies, procedures, financial controls, and personnel systems. Several BOCES officials warned of the administrative obstacles presented by such a consolidation. The seriousness of these challenges would only be heightened by the material differences in the operating model used by the two BOCES. The study team discussed the issues involved in such a merger with staff from a BOCES that was the result of a past merger. That individual identified the areas of administrative and business systems as being particularly subject to disruption and difficulty. Individual policies and procedures have to be evaluated and one common set implemented; such a change involves significant retraining. The human resource implications should not be underestimated. Although successful BOCES consolidations have been accomplished in New York, the large size of the operations of Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans, the relative parity in the size and scope of their operations, and the vast differences in the current operating models suggest to many local observers and the study team that the organizational and personnel difficulties that would be posed by a consolidation of Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans would be significant.

The study team heard dissatisfaction expressed, particularly by superintendents of component school districts, with aspects of the operations and management of Monroe One. In the opinion of several observers, these reported deficiencies were of sufficient magnitude and importance that a major restructuring should be carefully considered.

- There were numerous reports of frustration with administrative services, particularly with those of Monroe One. The area most often cited by officials as needing significant restructuring was technology services. The two BOCES have collaborated on a

regional information center (RIC). The functions of the RIC are shared—with Monroe Two-Orleans performing certain test scoring services—and Monroe One handling almost all other RIC-related duties. There appears to be widespread dissatisfaction with the RIC among school districts in both BOCES. School superintendents feel the RIC is not cost-effective, and provides a low level of services. This specific function was cited as being particularly unresponsive to school district needs.

- Monroe One component school superintendents expressed considerable dissatisfaction with the level of communication among the BOCES leadership and the districts. The superintendents feel they have been left out of major decisions involving program development and implementation, and their BOCES leadership is not always aggressive in representing the needs of the component districts. However, instances where recent progress toward increased collaboration were reported, as well. For example, the RIC has established a Regional Advisory Council designed to provide a broader and more inclusive governance structure and to ensure the needs of the districts are being met.
- General concerns were also expressed about the financial management capacity of Monroe One’s leadership, particularly that the BOCES does not currently have a high-level individual (i.e., at the assistant district superintendent level) responsible for business affairs. This situation poses some concern for the study team because of the magnitude of the financial operation of Monroe One and the reported lack of responsiveness by the BOCES to concerns expressed by its component school districts. Currently, budget and general financial oversight responsibility for the BOCES appears to be with a business manager who reports to the chief operating officer. On paper, financial oversight appears to be somewhat understaffed compared to the previous organizational structure that included an assistant district superintendent of finance and three business managers.

#### **IV. C. Cost Savings Considerations**

There would be both cost savings and cost increases as a result of a merger. It is not clear whether the savings would outweigh the costs.

The more obvious and substantial savings from merging the Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES would come from combining the duplicative, higher level administrative positions of the two organizations—such as the district superintendents’ offices, the finance and payroll offices, and certain other

positions. The savings described in this section are limited to salaries and fringe benefits and can be characterized as probable or possible.

*Probable* savings are those costs that have a high likelihood of being eliminated due to a merger. Probable savings are limited to those associated with the elimination of one district superintendent position and could be as high as \$200,000 a year, including fringe benefits. *Possible* savings are those costs that may be avoided but are subject to board approval of the new organizational structure of the merged BOCES. Possible savings could be as high as approximately \$700,000, assuming five positions are eliminated including an assistant to the district superintendent, two assistant district superintendents, one human resource director, and one finance director. These possible savings assume that the new district superintendent and the newly constituted BOCES board would adopt an organizational structure that consolidates central office administrative and programmatic oversight responsibilities under one individual wherever possible. In this way, responsibility for instructional services, for example, would be focused in one cabinet-level BOCES officer. Under these assumptions, probable and possible savings total approximately \$900,000 and account for less than one percent of the combined budgets of the Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans supervisory districts. Savings could be higher if clerical positions supporting the aforementioned positions are eliminated or the new BOCES board identifies duplicative, lower-level positions, administrative or program-related, for elimination. (Savings to local taxpayers would be less than the total expenditure reductions because state BOCES aid to component districts would decline if district expenditures on BOCES services decline.)

The following are potential offsets that may lower the actual savings from merging the Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES or delay their full realization.

- Need for additional administrators, mid-level managers, and support staff: As noted earlier, the merged BOCES would be one of the largest in the state in total budget (over \$140 million) and component school district enrollment (over 80,000 students), possibly requiring additional staff to manage day-to-day operations. For example, the organizational structure of neither Monroe One nor Monroe Two-Orleans includes an assistant superintendent for finance, a position that may be necessary to appropriately oversee the fiscal operations of the larger organization. Additionally, the assistant to the district superintendent position included in the possible savings described above may ultimately be required for the district superintendent to meet his/her responsibilities given the larger supervisory district. Finally, cabinet-level staff may need more mid-level managers and support staff to adequately administer the increased number of programs and meet the needs of the larger student body. For instance, it may be appropriate for the assistant superintendent for instruction of the

merged BOCES to appoint a high-level “second in command” to assist in the management of such a large and complex organization.

- Leveling-up components of labor union agreements: Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans each have separate labor agreements with five unions representing different levels and types of staff. Parties responsible for planning a potential merger would have to carefully compare the current agreements of the two organizations for differences and possibly renegotiate new contract terms with the individual member groups. It is possible that the terms of the agreements differ in salary structure and increments, benefits, length of work day/week, educational requirements of positions, etc. Based on the experience in previous BOCES mergers, it can be assumed that such compensation differences would be eliminated by “leveling up,” salaries for comparable positions, thus increasing costs.
- Delay in realizing some savings: Experience from previous BOCES reorganizations suggest that planning and implementing a merger is a fairly labor intensive process requiring the full staff of both BOCES in the early stages. As a result, one should assume that any possible savings from changes in the organizational structure noted above would not be fully realized in the short-term.

There are also costs that will not offset the savings from a merger, but may increase the costs of BOCES services to the component school districts of one supervisory district. These include obligations and liabilities such as long-term debt, settlements or adverse judgments from lawsuits, and future retirement benefits that are typically spread across the component school districts of the new BOCES without regard to whether or not the obligations or liabilities were incurred before the merger. These costs would need to be more fully explored in the planning phase of a merger. This study was unable to identify significant long-term debt for either Monroe One or Monroe Two-Orleans. Additionally, although both BOCES have ongoing lawsuits that could result in settlements or adverse judgments, the study team did not assess whether potential costs would require actual funding in future budgets. Future retirement benefits could prove to be a more troublesome issue as the two BOCES are taking somewhat different approaches to project and plan for these costs, the impact of which would not be fully understood until a detailed analysis was conducted as part of planning and implementing the merger.

#### **IV. D. Workforce Development Implications**

##### **IV. D. 1. Background**

A merged Monroe One/Monroe Two-Orleans supervisory district would include all of the school districts in Monroe County, with the exception of the Rochester City School District, and two school districts that are predominately

in Orleans County. Monroe and Orleans are two of the nine counties in the Finger Lakes Region of New York State, as defined by the New York State Department of Labor.<sup>7</sup> The region is moving from a manufacturing-based economy to one more reliant on information and technology industries as manufacturing companies downsize and shed jobs (such as Eastman Kodak). The education and health services sector has recently accounted for most of the region's private sector job growth.<sup>8</sup>

The Finger Lakes Region is divided into three local workforce investment areas, including one that follows Monroe County's geographic borders.<sup>9</sup> The Monroe County workforce investment area includes the component school districts of the Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans supervisory districts—with the exception of the two component school districts of Monroe Two-Orleans in Orleans County—and the Rochester City School District. Six of Monroe County's top twenty employers are from K-12 education, including Monroe One.<sup>10</sup>

A local Workforce Investment Board (WIB), with approximately 50 percent of its membership from business, is responsible for setting workforce development policy for and overseeing the workforce development efforts of the Monroe County area under the federal Workforce Investment Act. The Monroe County WIB oversees the operations of three full-service One-Stop Career Centers that provide job placement, training, and other services to job seekers, and employee placement, workforce training, and other services to employers. The three centers are within the Rochester City limits, although they provide services to all of Monroe County.

Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans are vendors in the Monroe County workforce development system and provide education and training services to job seekers, and workforce training services to employers. Both BOCES are approved providers on New York's eligible training provider list for the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA), with each BOCES listing well over 30 programs that are pre-approved for WIA participants.<sup>11</sup> These programs

---

<sup>7</sup> The other seven counties in the Finger Lakes Region are Genesee, Livingston, Ontario, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates. The Finger Lakes Region includes all of the counties of the component school districts of Monroe One and contiguous BOCES supervisory districts with the exception of Steuben County, which is in the Southern Tier Region of the state. Only one component school district, Wayland-Cohocton Central School District, a component of the Genesee Valley BOCES, is located in Steuben County.

<sup>8</sup> See <http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workforceindustrydata/apps.asp?reg=fin&app=regions>

<sup>9</sup> The other two workforce investment areas in the Finger Lakes Region are 1) Genesee, Livingston, Orleans, and Wyoming and 2) Ontario, Seneca, Wayne and Yates.

<sup>10</sup> The other five K-12 entities among the top Monroe County employers are three Monroe One component school districts (Fairport, Rush Henrietta, and Webster), one Monroe Two-Orleans component school district, (Greece) and the Rochester City School District. See <http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workforceindustrydata/fin/top.asp#1>

<sup>11</sup> Federal WIA statute and regulations require states to maintain an eligible training provider list of vendors and their pre-approved programs for the state's WIA program. WIA participants eligible for training services and in receipt of an individual training account, must select a training provider from the state's eligible training provider list.

prepare participants for jobs in computer applications, auto services, carpentry, industrial electricity, heating, air conditioning and refrigeration, building maintenance, and other areas.

Monroe Two-Orleans is closely linked to Monroe County's workforce development and One-Stop system. The director of the Monroe Two-Orleans Center for Workforce Development is a member of the Monroe County WIB.<sup>12</sup> The BOCES Center for Workforce Development is co-located with Monroe County's other workforce development programs offering adult education and training programs at one of Monroe County's One-Stop Career Centers. Monroe One is a "community partner" of the Monroe County WIB, and offers programs predominately at its campus rather than at one of the county's One-Stop Career Centers.<sup>13</sup>

#### IV. D. 2. Input from the Workforce Development Community

The study team solicited input from members of the Monroe County workforce development community, including the local WIB, WIB staff, business leaders, representatives from higher education, and others, on the merits of merging the Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES. In general, those interviewed supported merging the two organizations, citing the following:

- Common geographic borders: The borders of a merged Monroe One/Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES would closely follow those of the Monroe County workforce development area. As noted above, the Rochester City School District would be the only district in the Monroe County workforce development area not included in a merged Monroe One/Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES supervisory district.
- Increased collaboration from one BOCES serving Monroe County: Merging Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans would create a single BOCES for the workforce development area, thus allowing workforce development leaders to strengthen their efforts to communicate and work with BOCES administrators. Workforce development officials interviewed for this study indicated that a merged supervisory district would better position the workforce development community to meet the needs of Monroe County through increased collaboration. They are hopeful that having one unified BOCES in the region would identify more opportunities to eliminate some of the duplication in services offered by BOCES and local colleges and to develop stronger articulation agreements.

---

<sup>12</sup> See <http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workforcenypartners/localboardsmonroe.shtm>

<sup>13</sup> See [http://www.rochesterworks.org/about\\_partners.html](http://www.rochesterworks.org/about_partners.html)

WIA board members and representatives from higher education interviewed expressed a strong interest in working with officials from BOCES and the Rochester City School District, which includes a technical high school, to create “regional academies.” These academies would better marry the programs offered by all parties to create a “pathway” for high school students to enter technology jobs. Although there have been efforts to link some of the BOCES programs with local community colleges, there is still a disconnect between the programs offered by BOCES, local colleges, and the Rochester City School District.

- Capitalize on the successes of the Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES: Workforce development officials interviewed for this study indicated that a merged district would better position BOCES administrators throughout the county to capitalize on the workforce development lessons learned by Monroe Two-Orleans. They indicated that in the last five years Monroe Two-Orleans has been more aggressive in pursuing adult education funding outside of traditional BOCES sources and as a result, has closer ties with the workforce development community. They noted that the business community is more familiar with Monroe Two-Orleans and perceives it as offering a broader range of programs and services for job seekers and employers.

#### **IV. E. Rochester City School District Considerations**

Although the Rochester City School District is not eligible to join a BOCES because of its population size, the school district nevertheless purchases services from Monroe One (totaling approximately \$12.5 million in 2004-05) without receiving state BOCES aid.<sup>14</sup> Comments from a high-level Rochester official indicate that the City is pleased with the quality of Monroe One’s services and at this time does not have evidence that a reorganization of the Monroe One supervisory district is warranted.

Field research for this study solicited feedback from BOCES officials on their ability to meet the needs of the Rochester City School District should the New York State Legislature enact legislation allowing the City to join a BOCES. Officials from both Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans are excited about the prospect of working more closely with the City School District, although meeting the City’s needs may require capacity building in some of the BOCES programs. Many offered the opinion that it would be difficult to plan for and address the needs of the City as a new component school district while at the same time planning and implementing a merger of the Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans supervisory districts.

---

<sup>14</sup> The Rochester City School District contracts for services with Monroe Two-Orleans as well, totaling approximately \$700,000 in 2004-2005.

It is difficult to assess if a merged Monroe One/Monroe Two-Orleans supervisory district would be better positioned to work with the Rochester City School District than the two districts as they currently operate. On the one hand, a merged district that is stronger and more unified may have more resources to quickly build capacity needed to partner with the City. On the other hand, the two BOCES operating separately with different service delivery models, cultures, program offerings, etc., may offer a broader range of offerings and expertise to meet the City's needs.

One certainty is that adding the Rochester City School District as a component school district to either Monroe One or Monroe Two-Orleans as currently organized, or to a merged Monroe One/Monroe Two-Orleans district, drastically increases the enrollment base of the BOCES. As noted in Table Eight, the City's School District enrollment was approximately 34,000 in 2003-04, which is 70 percent of Monroe One's enrollment and 85 percent of Monroe Two-Orleans enrollment for that same year. Layering the City on top of a merged Monroe One/Monroe Two-Orleans district would increase the base enrollment of the new BOCES to approximately 121,000, creating the third largest BOCES by this measure in the state. The Combined Wealth Ratio and percentage of students participating in the free/reduced lunch programs of the Rochester City School District are far different than the average component school district of the Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans, suggesting that the City may require a somewhat different package of services than the component districts.

**Table Eight: Component School Districts and Rochester City School District**

	<b>Monroe One</b>	<b>Monroe Two - Orleans</b>	<b>Rochester City School District</b>
Enrollment - 2003-04	47,448	39,682	33,832
Enrollment - 1999-00	46,950	40,981	37,159
Percent Change 1999-00 to 2003-04	1%	-3%	-9%
Average Combined Wealth Ratio - June 2004	1.2	0.7	0.5
Highest Combined Wealth Ratio - June 2004	1.8	1.0	N/A
Lowest Combined Wealth Ratio - June 2004	0.9	0.5	N/A
Average % Free/Reduced Lunch - October 2002	12%	24%	85%
Highest % Free/Reduced Lunch - October 2002	31%	37%	N/A
Lowest % Free/Reduced Lunch - October 2002	1%	16%	N/A

Sources: A Preliminary Survey of Alternatives for the First Supervisory District of Monroe County, and Annual 655 Report to the Governor and Legislature.



## V. Summary of Findings

This section presents the study team’s overall findings related to the reorganization options and study questions posed by the commissioner of education. These findings reflect those of the study team only and do not necessarily reflect the observations and opinions of the commissioner, State Education Department staff or members of the BOCES community in the Monroe County area.

**Educational Benefits:** The study team found no evidence to suggest that consolidating or substantially restructuring the Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES would lead to improved educational programming for the students in those districts. As noted above, despite repeated attempts to solicit views from a wide-ranging array of interested parties, the study team found little dissatisfaction with the quality of educational services now provided by Monroe One or Monroe Two-Orleans. However, it should be noted that BOCES officials involved with consolidations that were either recently completed or are now underway indicated that the very process of completing the detailed planning for such restructurings brought to light opportunities for improvements that were not theretofore anticipated.

Although no specific opportunities for improvements to educational services have yet been identified, this does not mean that such opportunities do not exist. But opportunities that might exist would only be uncovered in the course of a merger, which can be disruptive and expensive. The uncertain potential for educational benefits—or drawbacks—would have to be weighed against the certainty of disruption that a merger would entail.

**Cost-Saving Benefits:** The study team found that a merger of the two BOCES would likely result in both administrative cost savings and cost increases, with uncertainty through the merger’s planning phase as to whether the savings would outweigh the increases. The most obvious savings would result from the elimination of one district superintendent position. Other high-level administrative positions such as some assistant district superintendent positions could also be eliminated, although this would likely only be achieved over time to avoid involuntary terminations. Such savings may be offset by the need for additional administrators and other staff to meet the needs of the expanded supervisory district, and “leveling up” components of the labor union agreements of one BOCES. Cost savings, if any, would likely be realized years in the future. In the interim, the two BOCES would have to integrate many different systems and modes of operating, reflecting their different payroll systems, salary contracts, program operations, and organizational culture, which is a labor-intensive process.

**Workforce Development Benefits:** Enhancements could be expected in the area of workforce development, in programs affecting both students and adults, should the commissioner merge the Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans supervisory districts. Members of the Monroe County workforce development community noted potential for increased collaboration between the BOCES, community colleges, and others with a merged supervisory district having borders that more closely follow the county’s

workforce development area. They indicated that Monroe Two-Orleans had more aggressively pursued workforce development funding and is better known to the area's business community. Potential benefits would accrue to this area if, as part of a detailed merger implementation plan, the program delivery model and management approach of Monroe Two-Orleans were used as the template for the consolidated BOCES district.

**Academic Standards:** Both Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans offer active programs of assistance to component school districts in their efforts to raise academic standards. The study team found little evidence that component districts found one BOCES materially stronger in this regard.

**District Superintendent:** The study team believes there is significant risk that a district superintendent of a merged BOCES would face serious challenges in addressing the needs of the component districts. Although there are BOCES in New York with more component school districts, or with a greater student enrollment, or with a larger geographic area, a merged Monroe One/Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES would present the district superintendent with considerable management difficulties. These include the difficulty of merging two large and active organizations, each with vastly different organizational cultures and service delivery models. Another factor to consider is the current widespread concern that the salary cap for district superintendents may limit the ability of a merged BOCES to recruit a candidate with expertise to effectively orchestrate a merger, while at the same meeting the needs of the expanded district and the state responsibilities of the district superintendent position.

**Other Factors:** Other factors that must be taken into account when considering a merger of two or more BOCES are the size, program offerings, and financial base of the entities. On these bases, no structural or managerial changes to Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans are warranted.

However, the differences in organizational culture noted above are a factor that indicates some measure of change is warranted, especially in Monroe One. There is a considerably greater level of satisfaction among component school districts and certain other groups reliant on BOCES with the operating style and philosophy of Monroe Two-Orleans. This is not to suggest that Monroe One leadership is any less capable and dedicated than their Monroe Two-Orleans counterparts. However, collaboration and cooperation are the very hallmarks of the BOCES program and structure in New York State, and by these measures, Monroe One is widely regarded as deficient.

## **VI. Recommendations**

Although the commissioner's charge to the study team did not require that recommendations be included in this report, the study team offers several recommendations for the commissioner's consideration.

First, the study team recommends that Genesee Valley and Wayne-Finger Lakes not be included in any major restructuring of BOCES entities in the greater Monroe County area. In both cases, a merged BOCES district would be one of the largest in New York, on the basis of the number of school districts, student enrollment, and geographic size. The Genesee Valley BOCES, although considerably smaller in terms of enrollment, is at the end stages of completing a complicated merger that began approximately one decade ago, and the team is concerned that beginning a new merger would unnecessarily prolong disruption and organizational uncertainty. The Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES has a student enrollment almost equal to that of Monroe One, and including these two entities in a merged BOCES would present serious challenges for effective leadership.

Second, the study team recommends that the boundaries of Monroe One or Monroe Two-Orleans not be realigned, with one possible exception. Currently, the borders of the various BOCES supervisory districts generally adhere to county lines and the team has not seen evidence that wholesale realignment of districts among the various BOCES is warranted. However, the Victor School District, although located in Ontario County and part of Wayne-Finger Lakes, has expressed interest in being transferred to Monroe One, primarily because of comparability with the component school districts of that BOCES and its proximity to the service locations used by Monroe One. Wayne-Finger Lakes officials point out that its financial base would be weakened if the Victor School District were transferred to another BOCES. The study team recommends that a separate review be conducted of the potential realignment of Victor.

Third, regarding merging or consolidating Monroe One and Monroe Two-Orleans, the study team acknowledges that several valid reasons have been advanced in support of such a restructuring. Various parties who are part of the BOCES community or rely on it for services contend that a merger would help transfer some of Monroe Two-Orleans perceived strengths to Monroe One, thereby leading to an improved service delivery network throughout most of Monroe County. The study team has concluded that the benefits to be gained through a merger—a more customer-driven approach to management and a stronger workforce development presence—can be achieved through other means without effecting a complex, lengthy, and difficult merger.

## References

### **New York State Education Department:**

Annual Financial and Statistical Report of the Board of Cooperative Educational Services, [SA-111 reports for Monroe One, Monroe Two-Orleans, Genesee Valley, and Ontario-Seneca-Yates-Cayuga-Wayne (Wayne-Finger Lakes) BOCES], State University of New York, 1999-2004

BOCES Program & Administrative/Capital Budget Summaries, Elementary, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education, Office of Educational Management/Grants Management, State University of New York, 2004-2005

Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) Report Card, Monroe One, BOCES Report Card, Monroe Two-Orleans, BOCES Report Card, Genesee Valley, BOCES Report Card, Ontario-Seneca-Yates-Cayuga-Wayne (Wayne-Finger Lakes), State University of New York, 2003-2004

Financial and Statistical Outcomes of the Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (Chapter 602 Report), the State University of New York, February 2005

New York State School Report Cards, the State University of New York, 1999-2004

Public School Enrollment and Staff, New York State, Information and Reporting Services, State University of New York, 1994-2004

The First Supervisory District of Monroe County: A Preliminary Survey of Alternatives, report prepared for the Commissioner of Education, State University of New York, July 2005

New York: The State of Learning, A Report to the Governor and the Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools (Chapter 655 Report), State University of New York, July 2004

### **BOCES Supervisory Districts:**

Monroe One BOCES Supervisory District data, 1999-2005

Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES Supervisory District data, 1999-2005

Genesee Valley BOCES Supervisory District data, 1999-2005

Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES Supervisory District data, 1999-2005

**Other Resources:**

MapQuest, online at [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com)

New York State Consolidated Laws, Article 45, Section 2201, online at <http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/menuf.cgi>

New York State Department of Labor, Workforce New York, online at [www.labor.state.ny.us/workforceindustrydata/apps.asp?reg=fin&app=regions](http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workforceindustrydata/apps.asp?reg=fin&app=regions)

New York State Education Law, Article 40, 1950 (a) and (b), online at <http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/menuf.cgi>

United States Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, online at [www.doleta.gov/usworkforce/wia/](http://www.doleta.gov/usworkforce/wia/)

## Appendix A

### Component School Districts of BOCES Supervisory Districts Studied

#### **Monroe One BOCES Supervisory District**

##### **Monroe County**

Brighton Central School District  
East Irondequoit Central School District  
East Rochester Union Free School District  
Fairport Central School District  
Honeoye Falls-Lima Central School District  
Penfield Central School District  
Pittsford Central School District  
Rush-Henrietta Central School District  
Webster Central School District  
West Irondequoit Central School District

#### **Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES Supervisory District**

##### **Monroe County**

Brockport Central School District  
Churchville-Chili Central School District  
Gates-Chili Central School District  
Greece Central School District  
Hilton Central School District  
Spencerport Central School District  
Wheatland-Chili Central School District

##### **Orleans County**

Holley Central School District  
Kendall Central School District

#### **Genesee Valley BOCES Supervisory District**

##### **Genesee County**

Alexander Central School District  
Batavia City School District  
Byron-Bergen Central School District  
Elba Central School District  
Le Roy Central School District  
Oakfield-Alabama Central School District  
Pavilion Central School District  
Pembroke Central School District

##### **Livingston County**

Avon Central School District  
Caledonia-Mumford Central School District  
Dalton-Nunda Central School District (Keshequa)  
Dansville Central School District  
Geneseo Central School District  
Livonia Central School District  
Mount Morris Central School District  
York Central School District

## **Appendix A Continued**

### **Steuben County**

Wayland-Cohocton Central School District

### **Wyoming County**

Attica Central School District

Letchworth Central School District

Perry Central School District

Warsaw Central School District

Wyoming Central School District

### **Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES Supervisory District**

#### **Ontario County**

Canandaigua City School District

East Bloomfield Central School District

Geneva City School District

Gorham-Middlesex Central School District (Marcus Whitman)

Honeoye Central School District

Manchester-Shortsville Central School District (Red Jacket)

Naples Central School District

Phelps-Clifton Springs Central School District

Victor Central School District

#### **Seneca County**

Romulus Central School District

Seneca Falls Central School District

Waterloo Central School District

#### **Wayne County**

Clyde-Savannah Central School District

Gananda Central School District

Lyons Central School District

Marion Central School District

Newark Central School District

North Rose-Wolcott Central School District

Palmyra-Macedon Central School District

Penn Yan Central School District

Red Creek Central School District

Sodus Central School District

Wayne Central School District

Williamson Central School District

#### **Yates County**

Dundee Central School District

## Appendix B

	K-12 Public School Enrollment 2003-04 /1	% of Total Component School District Enrollment
<b>Monroe One BOCES</b>		
Brighton	3,567	7.5%
East Irondequoit	3,512	7.4%
East Rochester	1,226	2.6%
Fairport	7,115	15.0%
Honeoye Falls-Lima	2,601	5.5%
Penfield	4,960	10.5%
Pittsford	6,023	12.7%
Rush-Henrietta	5,759	12.1%
Webster	8,736	18.4%
West Irondequoit	3,949	8.3%
<b>Total Component School Districts</b>	<b>47,448</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES</b>		
Brockport	4,480	11.3%
Churchville-Chili	4,482	11.3%
Gates-Chili	5,049	12.7%
Greece	13,568	34.2%
Hilton	4,441	11.2%
Holley	1,363	3.4%
Kendall	1,044	2.6%
Spencerport	4,350	11.0%
Wheatland-Chili	905	2.3%
<b>Total Component School Districts</b>	<b>39,682</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Genesee Valley BOCES</b>		
Alexander	1,028	3.8%
Attica	1,775	6.5%
Avon	1,167	4.3%
Batavia City	2,607	9.6%
Byron-Bergen	1,255	4.6%
Caledonia-Mumford	1,142	4.2%
Dalton-Nunda	936	3.5%
Dansville	1,686	6.2%
Elba	585	2.2%
Geneseo	929	3.4%
Le Roy	1,410	5.2%
Letchworth	1,216	4.5%
Livonia	2,132	7.9%
Mount Morris	651	2.4%
Oakfield-Alabama	1,107	4.1%
Pavilion	927	3.4%
Pembroke	1,398	5.2%
Perry	1,062	3.9%
Warsaw	1,171	4.3%
Wayland-Cohocton	1,767	6.5%
Wyoming	197	0.7%
York	962	3.5%
<b>Total Component School Districts</b>	<b>27,110</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



## Appendix B Continued

	<b>K-12 Public School Enrollment 2003-04 /1</b>	<b>% of Total Component School District Enrollment</b>
<b>Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES</b>		
Canandaigua	4,154	9.8%
Clyde-Savannah	1,061	2.5%
Dundee	917	2.2%
East Bloomfield	1,117	2.6%
Gananda	1,224	2.9%
Geneva City	2,534	6.0%
Gorham-Middlesex	1,597	3.8%
Honeoye	1,052	2.5%
Lyons	1,049	2.5%
Manchester-Shortsville	929	2.2%
Marion	1,111	2.6%
Naples	980	2.3%
Newark	2,616	6.2%
North Rose-Wolcott	1,644	3.9%
Palmyra-Macedon	2,222	5.2%
Penn Yan	2,003	4.7%
Phelps-Clifton Springs	2,044	4.8%
Red Creek	1,118	2.6%
Romulus	560	1.3%
Seneca Falls	1,497	3.5%
Sodus	1,403	3.3%
Victor	3,405	8.0%
Waterloo	2,001	4.7%
Wayne	2,774	6.5%
Williamson	1,371	3.2%
<b>Total Component School Districts</b>	<b>42,383</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

/1 Data Source: *Public School Enrollment and Staff, New York State, 2003-04*

### Appendix C

	Combined Wealth Ratio June 2004/1	% Participating in Reduced/ Free Lunch/2	% of Graduates to College 2002-03/3
<b>Monroe One BOCES</b>			
Brighton	1.69	7	94
East Irondequoit	1.00	31	98
East Rochester	0.94	27	82
Fairport	1.11	8	87
Honeoye Falls-Lima	1.00	8	91
Penfield	1.21	8	93
Pittsford	1.81	1	96
Rush-Henrietta	1.16	20	87
Webster	1.07	8	67
West Irondequoit	0.94	7	81
<b>Monroe Two-Orleans BOCES</b>			
Brockport	0.59	27	80
Churchville-Chili	0.73	17	88
Gates-Chili	0.95	22	82
Greece	0.79	26	82
Hilton	0.77	16	87
Holley	0.50	37	0
Kendall	0.51	21	76
Spencerport	0.73	16	85
Wheatland-Chili	0.96	27	85
<b>Genesee Valley BOCES</b>			
Alexander	0.53	24	85
Attica	0.63	30	79
Avon	0.72	28	83
Batavia	0.68	41	91
Byron-Bergen	0.66	23	83
Caledonia-Mumford	0.69	16	77
Dalton-Nunda	0.44	31	73
Dansville	0.51	34	75
Elba	0.50	23	86
Geneseo	1.04	31	82
Le Roy	0.67	23	87
Letchworth	0.41	32	98
Livonia	0.64	16	73
Mount Morris	0.49	60	79
Oakfield-Alabama	0.46	30	86
Pavilion	0.52	33	87
Pembroke	0.52	28	82
Perry	0.58	27	73
Warsaw	0.63	30	79
Wayland-Cohocton	0.44	35	80
Wyoming	0.55	38	0
York	0.56	25	78

**Appendix C Continued**

	<b>Combined Wealth Ratio June 2004/1</b>	<b>% Participating in Reduced/ Free Lunch/2</b>	<b>% of Graduates to College 2002-03/3</b>
<b>Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES</b>			
Canandaigua	0.81	16	86
Clyde-Savannah	0.44	36	86
Dundee	0.59	48	73
East Bloomfield	0.75	20	81
Gananda	0.65	9	84
Geneva City	0.64	54	88
Gorham-Middlesex	0.72	33	90
Honeoye	0.87	15	91
Lyons	0.50	47	64
Manchester-Shortsville	0.65	27	90
Marion Central	0.55	33	86
Naples	0.95	28	91
Newark	0.54	36	75
North Rose-Wolcott	0.57	40	69
Palmyra-Macedon	0.73	18	82
Penn Yan	0.89	36	76
Phelps-Clifton Springs	0.54	35	71
Red Creek	0.44	41	75
Romulus	0.66	28	95
Seneca Falls	0.66	31	80
Sodus	0.56	45	87
Victor	1.14	10	86
Waterloo	0.58	45	71
Wayne	0.90	18	83
Williamson	0.61	24	72

/1 Data Source: [http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/655report/2004/Volume2/RptTable02\\_2004.pdf](http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/655report/2004/Volume2/RptTable02_2004.pdf)

/2 Data Source: [http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/655report/2004/Volume2/RptTable01\\_2004.pdf](http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/655report/2004/Volume2/RptTable01_2004.pdf)

/3 Data Source: [http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/655report/2004/Volume2/RptTable01\\_2004.pdf](http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/655report/2004/Volume2/RptTable01_2004.pdf)