



Date: May 1, 2023  
To: Sharon A. Perry, Ed. D. - Superintendent of Conewago Valley Schools  
Anthony Colestock, AIA - Principal and Senior Project Manager CRA  
From: Fred S. Withum III, Ed.D. – Director of Educational Planning CRA  
Re: Decision Insite Enrollment Projections and Planning Numbers

I have had the opportunity to review the enrollment projections presented to the Conewago Valley School District (CVSD) by Decision Insite (DI). The purpose of the review was to determine the validity of DI's study by comparing their enrollment projections to those that Crabtree, Rohrbaugh & Associates (CRA) completed independently and to provide recommendations for the planned capacities of Conewago Valley School District schools.

It is important to note that DI and CRA complete enrollment projections for identical reasons, however, the methodologies are different. Decision Insite completes moderate and conservative enrollment projections using Adam's County birth rates, retention rates of students at each grade level, and the potential for construction of new residential housing. Rather than live birth rates CRA utilizes the district's enrollment experience over three and five years, retention rates within the district's grade bands (K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-12, and K-12), and the potential construction of new residential housing beyond what was accounted for in the years that the enrollment data was drawn for the study.

## Executive Summary

### District-Wide Findings (K-12):

- DI and CRA models are yielding very similar results for planning.
- While DI and CRA enrollment modeling demonstrates similar growth rates over the next decade, DI's increases are greater over the first five years as they are loading increased enrollment as a result of new residential developments over 5 years where CRA is accounting for that growth over 8 years. CRA believes that the span of 5 years is too aggressive for the current market.
- In 2027/28 (5 Years Out) DI and CRA are within 25 seats of each other for a recommended total planned capacity of 4325-4350 seats for grades K-12. The district currently maintains 5061 seats in all of its schools.
- Though DI and CRA are loading students from new residential construction at different rates by year 10 of the projections DI and CRA are within an average of 8 students per grade level of each other.
- Even though the birth rate is declining in Adams County as a whole, the US census reports that the Conewago School District is at a 10 year high for children residing in the district 5 years of age or younger. This is likely due to the sale of existing homes to young families. In 2022, 300 homes were sold in CVSD. The 300 homes sold in with an average of 7 days on the market.
- Annual sales of homes in the CVSD have exceeded 300 units since 2016 with a peak of 352 in 2018.
- Though there have been lengthy discussions to ensure the number of new residential units is accounted for properly in the enrollment projections, new developments have **not** been the primary growth factor for the district. Enrollment growth is more likely due to the turnover of existing residential properties.
- Over the time period the data was drawn to complete the analysis, Conewago Valley School District was the only district in Adams County with growing enrollments. From 2014/15 to 2019/20 the district grew by 125 students. As a result of the Pandemic (2020/21-2021/22) public school enrollment declined county wide. However, CVSD enrollment bounced back to nearly pre-pandemic levels by 2023 while other districts have not.

### Primary Grade Findings (K-3):

- The combined capacity of the two primary schools is 1262 seats with an educational capacity of 1136. As a standard in school planning, the educational capacity is 90% of the capacity and is the point at which it becomes challenging to schedule students and deliver the Board adopted curriculum.
- DI's models the growth in enrollment in grades K-3 to require 103% of the combined capacity of the two primary schools by 2027 and maintains capacity usage at or above 99% through 2032.

- CRA models the growth in enrollment in grades K-3 to require 92% capacity by 2027 and 96% of capacity by 2032.
- Based on this analysis CRA would recommend that the district plan for 1275-1350 students in grades K-3 by 2027 with the following understanding: Neither DI nor CRA models account for the growth in special education and support programs which have been on the rise as a result of the changing demographics of the student body. They also assume that all of the current instructional space, some of which was created from support areas, is maintained as instructional space. Increasing the number of special education rooms and reclaiming support spaces for their intended purposes will require additional square footage.

#### **Intermediate Grade Findings (4-6):**

- The capacity of the intermediate school is 1051 seats with an educational capacity of 946. As a standard in school planning, the educational capacity is 90% of the capacity and is the point at which it becomes challenging to schedule students and deliver the Board adopted curriculum.
- DI models the growth in enrollment in grades 4-6 to require 91% capacity by 2027 and projects that capacity usage through 2032.
- CRA's models the growth in enrollment in grades 4-6 to require 83% of capacity by 2027 and 87% of capacity by 2032.
- The rate at which the district moves from the current use of 82% of capacity to 90% of capacity may be accelerated by the growth in special education and support programs which have been on the rise as a result of the changing demographics of the student body. In other words, while there cannot be more students than projected, the changing needs of the student body can be expected to require more instructional space. This potential rate of change is not accounted for in DI or CRA's models.
- Both DI and CRA assume that all of the current instructional space, some of which was carved from support areas, is maintained as instructional space. Increasing the number of special education rooms and reclaiming support spaces for their intended purposes will require additional square footage.
- Based on this modeling CRA would recommend that the district plan to maintain 1050-1100 seats in grades 4-6 by 2027 allowing the district to work within the building for the immediate future. However, the district should realize that as it approaches and potentially passes 90% of capacity, it will become challenging to schedule students and deliver the Board adopted curriculum. As a result, CVSD may want to consider increasing the capacity of the Intermediate School beyond 1050-1100 in the next (5-10 years).

#### **Middle School Findings (7-8):**

- The capacity of the middle school is 934 seats with an educational capacity of 794. As a standard in school planning, at the secondary level the educational capacity is 85% of the capacity and is the point at which it becomes challenging to schedule students and deliver the Board adopted curriculum.
- DI models the growth in enrollment to 65% capacity by 2027 with a rise to 70% of capacity by 2032.
- CRA models the growth in enrollment to 63% of capacity by 2027 and 66% of capacity by 2032.
- CRA would recommend that the district plan to maintain 650-750 seats for grades 7-8 between now and 2032.
- There is more than adequate space exists to allow for projected growth and growth in special education and support programs which have been on the rise as a result of changing demographics of the student body.

#### **High School Findings (9-12):**

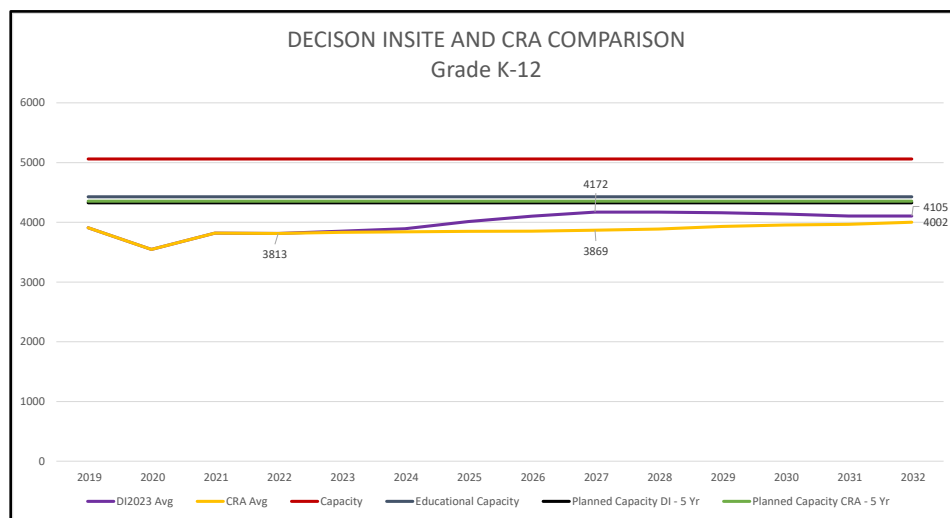
- The capacity of the high school is 1814 seats with an educational capacity of 1542. At the secondary level the educational capacity is 85% of the capacity and is the point at which it becomes challenging to schedule students and deliver the Board adopted curriculum.
- DI models the growth in enrollment to 71% of capacity by 2027 with a decline to 69% of capacity by 2032.
- CRA's models the growth in enrollment requiring 69% of capacity by 2027 and maintain that requirement through 2032.
- CRA would recommend that the district plan to maintain approximately 1440 seats for grades 9-12 through 2032. There is more than adequate space to allow for projected growth and growth in special education and support programs which have been on the rise as a result of changing demographics of the student body.

## Study Details:

### Decision Insite and CRA Comparison for Grades K-12

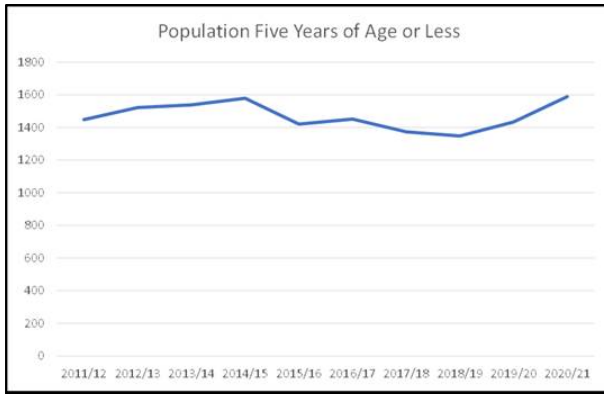
The average of DI's enrollment projections indicates that over the next five years the district is expected to climb to 4172 students, up 359 students from the current enrollment of 3813. The average of CRA's enrollment projections indicate that over the next five years the district enrollment is expected to climb to 3866 students, up 56 students from current enrollment. Based on DI's methodology they would recommend that the district plan to maintain 4327 seats by 2027. This is the moderate projection for enrollment. CRA's methodology would recommend that the district plan for 4353 seats by 2027. In terms of planned capacity, that is only a 26-student difference between DI and CRA.

The graph below, which shows the average of DI's moderate and conservative projections (purple line) and CRA's projections based on 3- and 5-year experiences of the district (yellow line) are within 2.5% of each other after ten years. The initial difference over the first 5 years is the result of DI loading students from new residential development over five years as opposed to CRA loading them over 8 years. CRA believes that 5 years is too aggressive for the residential units being proposed.

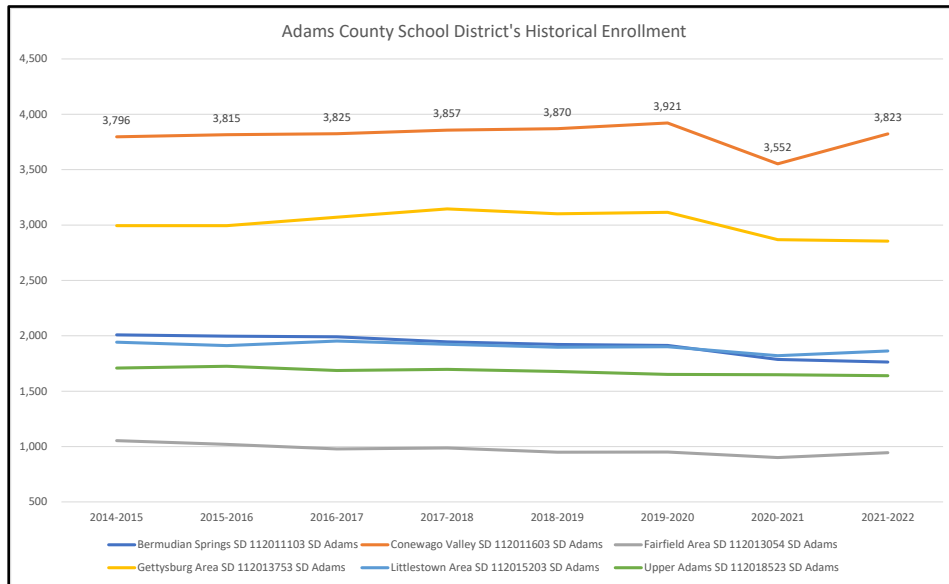


Beyond five years the margin of error in both sets of projection models begins to increase. As a result years 6-10 should be thought of more as a trend. In DI's Model they stop accounting for any additional development beyond current rates after 5 years. As a result, their trend shows a decline in years 6-10. In this model, DI is indicating no additional seats will be required as a result of new development beyond what is built into the retention rates. CRA is accounting for additional development over 8 years and accounts for some continued growth as a result of increased housing availability. While CRA does not suggest CVSD build in additional capacity now for years 6-10, the district should be aware that the continued steady growth the district has traditionally experienced is likely to continue.

It may be more important to recognize that new residential housing units have **not** been the primary growth factor for the district. According to the U.S. Census 52.7% of the population is comprised of Gen-X, Baby Boomers and Greatest Generation; all whom are 43 years of age and older. 32.3% of the population are ages 59 and older. CVSD is well known and appealing to young families. Even though the birth rate is declining in Adams County as a whole, as shown in the graph below the US census reports that the Conewago School District is at a 10 year high for children 5 years of age or younger.



In addition, over the time period the data was drawn to complete the analysis, Conewago Valley School District the district is the only district in the county with growing enrollments. From 2014/15 to 2019/20 the district grew by 125 students. As a result of the Pandemic (2020/21-2021/22) public school enrollment declined county wide. However, CVSD enrollment bounced back at a greater rate than all of the other districts.



According to the Realtors Association of York and Adams Counties, in 2022 the average residential unit in Conewago Valley was on the market for 7 days. This has been steadily dropping since 2012 at the peak when residential units were on the market for an average of 100 days.

### Decision Insite and CRA Comparison for Grades K-3

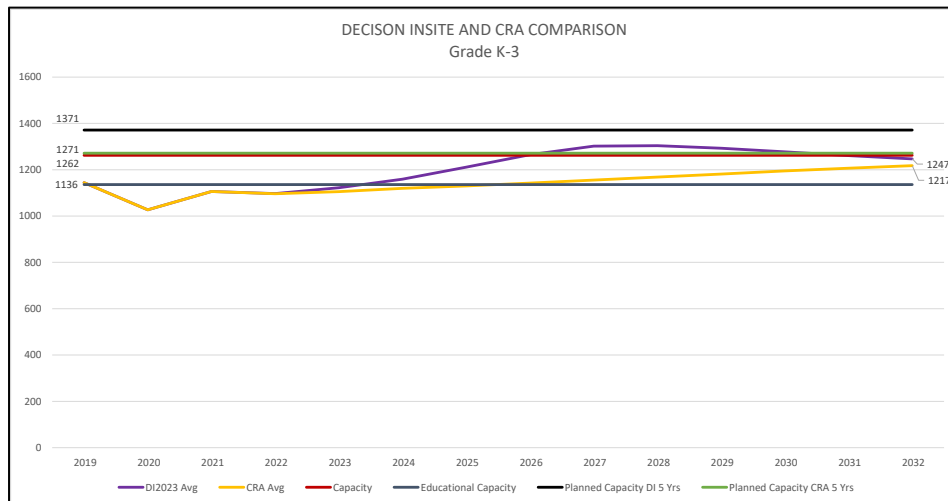
The average of DI's enrollment projections indicates that over the next five years the district's K-3 enrollment is expected to climb to 1302 students, up 205 students from the current enrollment of 1097. The average of CRA's enrollment projections indicate that over the next five years the district enrollment is expected to climb to 1156 students, up 60 students from current enrollment.

Based on DI's methodology they would recommend that the district be prepared to maintain 1371 seats for grades K-3 by 2027. The two schools housing grades K-3 have a combined capacity of 1262 seats with an educational capacity of 1136. As a standard in school planning, the educational capacity is 90% of the capacity and is the point at which it becomes challenging to schedule students and deliver the Board adopted curriculum. DI's models the growth in enrollment requiring at 103% of the combined capacity by 2027 maintains capacity usage at or above 99% through 2032.

CRA's methodology would recommend that the district plan to maintain 1271 seats by 2027 and 1339 seats by 2032. Again, it is important to recognize that CRA is loading students from new residential development at a slower rate. By 2032, DI projections indicate the district should be planning to maintain 1330 seats and CRA is projecting 1339 seats. A difference of only 9 students. CRA models indicate that the school will be at 92% capacity by 2027 and 96% of capacity by 2032.

CRA would recommend that the district plan for 1275-1350 students in grades K-3 by 2027.

This does **not** include growth in special education and support programs which have been on the rise as a result of changing demographics of the student body. In other words, while there cannot be more students than projected, the changing needs of the student body can be expected to require more instructional space. This potential rate of change is not accounted for in DI or CRA's models. It also assumes that all of the current instructional space, some of which was carved from support areas, is maintained as instructional space. Increasing the number of special education rooms and reclaiming support spaces for their intended purposes will require additional square footage.



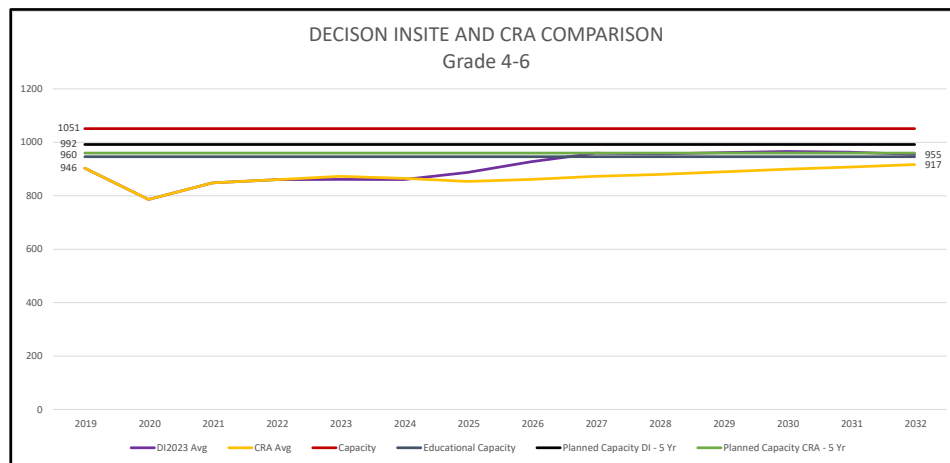
## Decision Insite and CRA Comparison for Grades 4-6

The average of DI's enrollment projections indicates that over the next five years the district's 4-6 enrollment is expected to climb to 959 students, up 99 students from the current enrollment of 860. The average of CRA's enrollment projections indicate that over the next five years the 4-6 enrollment is expected to climb to 873 students, up 13 students from current enrollment. Based on DI's methodology they would recommend that the district plan to maintain 992 seats for grades 4-6 by 2027. The schools' capacity is 1051 with an educational capacity of 946. As a standard in school planning, the educational capacity is 90% of the capacity and is the point at which it becomes challenging to schedule students and deliver the Board adopted curriculum in an efficient manner. DI models the growth in enrollment to 91% of capacity by 2027 and is anticipated to maintain that capacity usage through 2032.

CRA's methodology indicates that the district should plan to maintain 960 seats for grades 4-6 by 2027. It is important to recognize that CRA is loading students from new residential development at a slower rate than DI. By 2032, DI projections indicate the district should be planning to maintain 1013 seats and CRA is projecting 1009 seats. A difference of only 4 students.

CRA would recommend that the district plan to maintain 1050-1100 seats in grades 4-6 by 2027. CRA models the growth in enrollment to 83% of capacity by 2027 and 87% of capacity by 2032.

Neither DI nor CRA includes growth in special education and support programs which have been on the rise as a result of the changing demographics of the student body. In other words, while there cannot be more students than projected, the changing needs of the student body can be expected to require more instructional space. This potential rate of change is not accounted for in DI or CRA's models. It also assumes that all of the current instructional space, some of which was carved from support areas, is maintained as instructional space. Increasing the number of special education rooms and reclaiming support spaces for their intended purposes will require additional square footage.



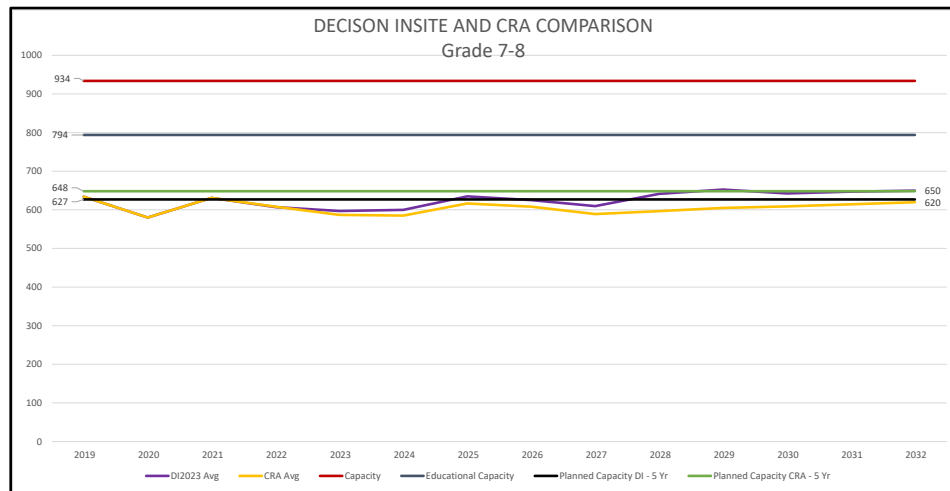
## Decision Insite and CRA Comparison for Grades 7-8

The average of DI's enrollment projections indicates that over the next five years the district's 7-8 enrollment is expected to maintain an enrollment of approximately 610 students through 2027. The average of CRA's enrollment projections indicate that over the next five years the 7-8 enrollment is expected to decline by 19 to 589 students. Based on DI's methodology they would recommend that the district plan to maintain 627 seats for grades 7-8 by 2027. The schools' capacity is 934 with an educational capacity of 748. As a standard of school planning, the educational capacity of a secondary school is 85% of the capacity and is the point at which it becomes challenging to schedule students and deliver the Board adopted curriculum in an efficient manner. DI models the growth in enrollment to 65% capacity by 2027 with a rise to 70% of capacity by 2032.

CRA's methodology indicates that the district should plan to maintain approximately 650 seats for grades 7-8 through 2027. It is important to recognize that CRA is loading students from new residential development at a slower rate than DI. By 2032, DI projections indicate the district should be planning to maintain 684 seats and CRA is projecting 713 seats. A difference of 29 students.

CRA would recommend that the district plan to maintain 650-750 seats for grades 7-8 through 2032. This is well within the building capacity of 934 and educational capacity of 794.

CRA's models the growth in enrollment requiring 63% of capacity by 2027 and 66% of capacity by 2032. Currently, more than adequate space exists to allow for projected growth and growth in special education and support programs which have been on the rise as a result of changing demographics of the student body.



## Decision Insite and CRA Comparison for Grades 9-12

The average of DI's enrollment projections indicates that over the next five years the district's 9-12 enrollment is expected to increase in enrollment by 52 to 1301 students by 2027. The average of CRA's enrollment projections indicate that over the next five years the 9-12 enrollment remain stable at approximately 1255 students. Based on DI's methodology they would recommend that the district plan to maintain 1337 seats for grades 9-12 by 2027. The schools' capacity is 1814 with an educational capacity of 1542. As a standard of school planning, the educational capacity of a secondary school is 85% of the capacity and is the point at which it becomes challenging to schedule students and deliver the Board adopted curriculum in an efficient manner. DI models the growth in enrollment to 71% of capacity by 2027 with a decline to 69% of capacity by 2032.

CRA's methodology indicates that the district should plan to maintain approximately 1440 seats for grades 9-12 through 2027. It is important to recognize that CRA is loading students from new residential development at a slower rate than DI. By 2032, DI projections indicate the district should be planning to maintain 1306 seats and CRA is projecting 1436 seats. A difference of 130 seats.

CRA would recommend that the district plan to maintain 1350-1450 seats for grades 9-12 by 2027. This is well within the building capacity of 1812 and educational capacity of 1542.

CRA's models the growth in enrollment requiring 69% of capacity by 2027 and maintain that requirement through 2032. Currently, more than adequate space exists to allow for projected growth and growth in special education and support programs which have been on the rise as a result of changing demographics of the student body.

