



Marion & Williamson Boards of Education

REORGANIZATION UPDATE



The themes outlined below encompass and reflect the questions, comments, and feedback from the joint Board of Education meeting on March 18, 2025, as well as responses submitted through the ThoughtExchange survey. Through these conversations, we heard valuable insights that we would like to share with our communities.

Feasibility Study

A NYSED Reorganization Feasibility Study is a detailed report that helps school districts decide if reorganizing makes sense. It looks at whether combining districts would be good for students, financially smart, and practical to do.

New York State Education Department Reorganization Feasibility Study Process

- School boards from the districts considering reorganization hold joint meetings to explore the potential advantages and challenges of reorganization.
- If the Board of Education decides to move forward, they will vote to complete a comprehensive feasibility study. This study examines various aspects including: current and projected enrollment, staff planning facility utilization, educational opportunities, transportation and financial implications.
- After reviewing the feasibility study, each board will determine the next steps in the process for their individual districts including the creation of a reorganization committee. The reorganization committee will be an important resource to guide decision making during this collaborative process.
- If a reorganization is recommended by the board, evidence of community support (through a petition or straw vote) in each district is gathered.
- The process follows legal and NYSED approval requirements before any final decisions are made.

Impact on Students

The key priority in these discussions is ensuring that students in the Marion and Williamson Central School Districts have access to opportunities and resources that support their success. The feasibility study itself will have no direct impact on students or the school community at this time. However, the study will include a deeper dive of the data and will identify ways to enhance student educational experience in the future.

Resources

The Marion and Williamson Central School Districts are valuable resources for their students and school communities. Additional information regarding shared resources, strengths, and growth opportunities will be gathered and shared through the feasibility study.

Building and Facilities

At this time, there is no specific information regarding the impact on buildings and facilities. The purpose of the feasibility study is to provide additional information on opportunities and the best options for utilizing the current space.

Financial Implications

The feasibility study will provide further analysis to understand these implications fully.

- **Incentive Aid:** A merger or centralization would qualify the districts for \$70 million in incentive aid over 14 years, equivalent to 40% of their current foundation aid for the first five years, with gradual decreases over time.
- **Building Aid Ratio:** A merged district would qualify for up to 95% building aid, meaning they would receive 95 cents back for every dollar spent on capital projects for the first ten years of the reorganized district.
- **Tax Levy Reduction:** A portion of the incentive aid is intended to reduce the tax levy.
- **Increasing Costs:** Both districts face rising payroll and healthcare costs which outpace state aid and tax levy increases.
- **Feasibility Study Funding:** Grant funding is available to help offset the study's cost.
- **Debt Considerations:** Any pre-existing debt would be aided at the higher of the two districts' rates.

Enrollment and Staffing

Current enrollment: Marion – 601 students, Williamson – 944 students.

Additional information regarding staffing and projected enrollment will be gathered and shared through the feasibility study.

Transparency and Engagement

Transparency and communication are top priorities for both districts. To ensure access to information, each district has created a landing page where all updates and shared information will be available:

- **Marion Page:** https://www.marioncs.org/140310_2
- **Williamson Page:** <https://www.williamsoncentral.org/district/reorganization>

All updates will be shared with appropriate stakeholders, including staff, students, families, and community members.

