

**Records System Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study  
For**

Canaseraga Central School District  
Cattaraugus-Little Valley Central School District  
Randolph Academy Union Free School District

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# **RECORDS SYSTEM NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND FEASIBILITY STUDY**

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# **Records System Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study**

## **Executive Summary**

This Records Management Feasibility Study for Canaserega School District, Cattaraugus-Little Valley School District and Randolph Academy has been made possible through a New York State Department of State under the Local Government Efficiency Grant Program. The purpose of this report is to review records management processes in each of these school districts and assess whether or not records management services can be provided more economically or more effectively on a shared basis.

Information was gathered during site visits to each district over the past several months. staff interviews, observations and reviews of current processes were conducted.

This project came about as a result of discussions in each district regarding the lack of funding, staff, space, security and other resources, and challenges of access to their records. All three districts experienced common issues in regards to their records management programs and it was decided to cooperatively search for solutions.

In conjunction with this project, a 2009-2010 New York State Archives Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund (LGRMIF) cooperative project to complete a physical inventory and disposition of records was conducted in each of these districts. A needs assessment was performed as a result of this activity. Results are incorporated into this report.

The departments/offices reviewed are listed below by school district:

Canaserega School District: Superintendent's Office, Business Office – includes Payroll and Human Resources, Guidance Office, Transportation Office, Special Education Office and related storage areas.

Cattaraugus-Little Valley School District: Business Office, Transportation, and related storage areas.

Randolph Academy: Superintendent's Office – includes Human Resources, Business Office, Guidance/Special Education Office, Main Office and related storage areas.

## **GENERAL SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

All of these districts have records management issues that need to be addressed in order to ensure their records are accessible, preserved and disposed of properly. Common areas of concern are storage and disposition of inactive records, along with accessibility and preservation of permanent records.

The needs assessment and inventory of each district's records has identified issues that can be addressed with little or no cost or staff time to the individual districts.

1. Basic records management training – contact James Tammaro, NYS Archives Region 8 Regional Advisory Officer (RAO) for training and workshop opportunities – this is a FREE service.
2. Create a Standard Operating Procedure Manual for Records Management in each district that includes basic records management procedures, a disaster recovery plan and addresses electronic records issues. Consult Mr. Tammaro for assistance.
3. Obtain a copy of the current ED-1 Retention Schedule for EACH office and train staff on its use. This can be found online at the State Archives website and downloaded to each employee's hard drive or printed out and copied.
4. Guidance office and Special Education offices – need to connect and communicate in regards to permanent student records.
5. Designate storage areas strictly for records storage – no Christmas decorations or discarded textbooks. Do not store with food – eliminate pest threat.
6. Storage areas should not be in basements or attics, no water or sewage pipes, no windows, environmental controls (temperature and humidity), fire suppression, sturdy 18 gauge steel shelving.
7. Designate official copies – do not keep multiple copies of the same record in different departments. Retention periods on the ED-1 schedule apply to one “official” copy designated by the local government unless otherwise stated.
8. No matter what the medium, local officials must ensure that the information will be retained for the specified retention period.
9. Create a list of records and retention periods for records specific to each department for easy reference.
10. Use appropriate containers – records cartons, archival quality boxes for historical documents. Label boxes, create box lists for reference.
11. RMO needs to keep a current list of every record created in the district
12. Mandate one or two days each year for records management activities.

Other recommendations:

Form a Records Advisory Board in each district. Suggested membership includes the Superintendent, the RMO, Director of Information Services, comptroller, school district attorney and anyone directly involved in the records management program. This board can address issues regarding security, disaster recovery, better access and cost effectiveness.

## **CURRENT ENVIRONMENT AND ISSUES**

### **CANASERAGA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

4-8 Main St.

Canaseraga, NY 14822

Mrs. Marie Blum, Superintendent

Frances Hoffman, Senior Account Clerk, RMO

[www.ccsdny.org](http://www.ccsdny.org)

The Canaseraga Central School serves students in Grades Pre-kindergarten through 12, in one building located in the Village of Canaseraga, NY. The school district has adopted the NYS Archives ED-1 schedule and has appointed a Records Management Officer (RMO). The RMO is Frances Hoffman, the District's Senior Account Clerk.

Site Visit #1: January 4, 2010 - Records Rooms, Business, Guidance & Transportation Offices

Site Visit #2: February 17, 2010 - Special Education Office, Main Office, Vault Area

### **Record Storage Area Survey of Conditions:**

**1/ Central Office Storage Room** – located on the main floor, next to the Guidance Office. It was remodeled from a locker room into a records storage area in 1999 with funding from a LGRMIF grant. Standard records shelving and records cartons were also provided through the grant. Even though the shelving is adequate, there are no environmental controls, an exterior window, and water pipes in the ceiling. The door does lock. There are two empty fire-proof filing cabinets stored there, not being used because the locks are broken.

This room contains in excess of one hundred fifty cubic feet of inactive personnel records, financial statements, grants files, former Superintendent's office files, and board clerk packets (just kept a year for reference). Empty computer boxes are stacked on one side. This area is currently being inventoried and reorganized through a LGRMIF grant. Records that have met or exceeded their retention are listed on disposition sheets, submitted for approval and prepared for shredding. The remaining boxes are being reorganized and in some cases, relabeled. A locator system is being developed for use by district RMO. The RMO will then maintain and update the locator system as needed.

### **2/ Second Floor Main Hallway Storage Area used by Guidance Office.**

This storage area contains inactive student records. The door does lock and access is limited to Guidance personnel. Since it is an interior room, there is no window, but there are some water pipes in the ceiling.

This area contains student permanent records cards – earliest students (beginning of district.) Student cumulative folders beginning in 1962 from 2009 in 4 drawer filing cabinets (some files are missing\*) Records are filed according to graduated and non-graduated. There are three 4 drawer fireproof cabinets containing twelve cubic feet of permanent record cards. There are four, 4- drawer regular filing cabinets contain 16 cubic feet of cumulative folders. Note: None

of the permanent student records have been preserved in another format; nothing has been microfilmed or digitized.

The wall opposite the filing cabinets is comprised of wooden shelves containing old textbooks, former guidance counselor office files, notebooks, ELA (English language arts) state test results (copies returned by BOCES), free and reduced lunch applications from 1999, 4 shelves of office supplies, and more books.

### **3/ Second Floor Back Hallway Storage Area**

This area was designated for use by the Guidance Office; however it has a variety of items stored there. The shelves are collapsing under the weight of boxes of unused textbooks. Christmas decorations, teachers' lesson plans and old textbooks, student records\* are also stored there. Even though it is locked, it does not appear to be secure.

## **Interviews with Staff**

### **1/ Guidance Office interview – Secretary Susan Barnett**

Active student records are kept on E-School for PC (personal computer) through the regional BOCES WNYRIC. This is the second year the district has used this system for student information. The records are stored on a server located in the district building and are backed up at WNYRIC.

Concern – The RMO destroyed health records (following the ED-1 schedule). The Guidance secretary would like to recommend that medical records be kept permanently as they are being accessed more frequently for immunization records – former students returning to secondary education after graduation – require proof of immunizations. The Guidance secretary enters the data into e-school and has printed off the immunization record module at the end of each school year. The RMO has been advised that a change in the retention period specific to the district requires a resolution to the school board.

The Guidance secretary is concerned about inactive special education records being disposed of, with no permanent record being kept. She often does not have records to refer to when a request for records is received from a former special education student or outside agencies. Three lateral drawers for the paper version of active students Pre-K-12 are located in the Guidance secretary's office.

Of note, the current student enrollment is 301 (total with out of district students Pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade). The senior class expects to graduate 18 students this year (2010).

The RMO reported failed attempts to merge/annex with the Arkport School district.

### **2/ Main Office - Information received from RMO regarding the Main office records.**

The secretary follows the guidelines for records destruction by creating disposition lists of records meeting their retention period, submits them to the RMO for approval. There is a vault in the main office – very early (historical) records are kept there.

### **3/ Cafeteria**

The RMO reports these records were purged last year – no disposition lists were created by the cafeteria manager.

### **4/ Bus Garage**

The current manager (new to the position) is operating under information about retention of records from the previous manager. This information is *incorrect* and the current manager needs an Ed-1 schedule and training to use it properly.

Records reviewed included:

- Daily mileage logs – former manager kept for 3 years – ED-1 schedule requires 6 **year** retention

- Personnel files – (file drawer) School bus driver training file – 6 years after termination of employment

- Reports to the board – copies for office use

- Monthly fuel consumption reports

- Automated routing system – it was suggested that the manager check the Ed-1 Schedule for retention of this computerized information

### **5/ Superintendent's office**

These files consist mostly of copies of contracts, administrative policies, some correspondence.

### **6/ Business Office**

File cabinets (Lateral and Vertical) include the following

- ST3, budget books – need to be purged

- Old contracts – copies need to be purged

- Capital project files – need to be purged

- Four drawer fireproof cabinet - Payroll - needs to be purged

- Five lateral file drawers – active –

  - Include FLEX, supplies, current year financials, checks, school lunch applications, Billings

  - Vendor information, misc. grants (can be purged and transferred to records storage)

  - Warranties – kept in office for reference

  - Current health insurance

  - Contractual statements, lunch applications (2 years worth)

  - Current employees insurance, workers comp, TSA, PERB, Flex forms

  - Civil Service reports – TRS, ERS, (can be transferred to records storage area); Current Civil Service stored electronically

  - Check stock, forms, current time sheets, current personnel payroll files

  - Glass door cabinet purge, dispose and transfer remaining to records storage

  - Top – duplicate capital project information, former Supt. Files - Purge, dispose or store

Some records stored electronically using Finance Manager through BOCES – backups are stored offsite

### **7/ Supt. Secretary/School Treasurer**

This office contained the following

- Receipts, bank statements – disposed of according to the ED-1 schedule

- Yearbooks – since 1938 (beginning of district) are stored in a wooden cupboard.

Monthly newsletters – current and most recent issues are in electronic format. Paper format copies are stored in the secretary’s office.

Current Personnel files – two drawers

Board meeting minutes are not indexed. Recent copies of minutes are on District Clerk’s computer hard drive. No mention of backups.

### **8/ Special Education office**

A cursory review of this area was done as the director was not available to interview.

Three drawer filing cabinets in Special Education office contained current Medicaid information and files for 504 students and referrals.

The Directors office has 3 drawers with active SE student files, many three ring binders on book shelf. The Student cabinets can be locked.

**Special Education storage area** – accessible from hallway, lateral cabinets containing student files not locked. The files are arranged by year student left (graduated) then alphabetically in hanging folders with color coded sub folders.

Sampled file contained the following:

Red folder – contains current IEP

Blue folder – signature page, meeting minutes

Green folder – correspondence, due process rights, Notice of Determination, Parent Invitation to Meeting

Yellow folder – Psych report (possibly other service provider reports)

Purple folder – Requests for information, fax transmittal cover sheets, Waivers, Meeting requests, Requests for consent of placement

Other drawers contained forms, inactive office files, supplies (folders), test protocols, forms, and verification reports. There were a total of nine lateral file drawers.



### **TASK 3 - Conduct research and Prepare Study –**

#### **CANASERAGA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**A/ Conduct a needs assessment for each school district including the amount, condition, and location of records; condition, size and location of storage areas; organization and disposal process; equipment currently in use; personnel time spent on RMO functions; costs of storage, staff, and equipment**

##### **Records**

- **Amount** 170 cubic feet of records
- **Condition**, Records in good condition, stored in an assortment of boxes
- **Location**  
Main location for records is in the Inactive Record Storage Room  
Two other “closets” are used to store mostly student records

##### **Storage Area**

- **Condition** – Storage areas are dry, well lit and clean. The Inactive Records Storage room contains pipes and a window. Rooms contain items other than records including text books, empty boxes and Christmas decorations
- **Size** - the main Inactive Record Storage Room is 12x20  
Storage Closets are 10x10 and 6x8.
- **Location** - main Record Storage Room is located on the first floor within the Guidance Office, one Storage Closet is on the first floor next to the Special Education Office. The other room is located on the second floor.

##### **Organization and disposal process**

In the Inactive Records Room records are grouped by series chronologically. Student Records are stored chronologically then alphabetically in file cabinets.

Records are brought to the records room by staff when time is available and when there is no more room in their offices. The RMO takes a few days during summer months to organize and identify some records for disposal.

Records marked for disposal were either stored in the bus garage or shredded/burned as time allowed.

##### **Equipment currently in use**

The only equipment in use is file cabinets, boxes and shelving. Since the records inventory was completed from a 2009-2010 NYS Archives grant, the school has a database with a listing of all records stored in the inactive records room and any records disposed through that process. The grant did not cover student records.

Electronic systems/software is being used to create records such as payroll; database of inactive and disposed records.

##### **Personnel Time Spent on RMO Functions**

The Guidance Secretary, Special Education staff and RMO spend approximately one to two hours a month each on records management.

## Costs

- **Storage**

The school was not able to give a cost per foot of the storage rooms. The rooms are small with minimal light and don't take much to heat. However, with the permanent records stored in another medium, the storage closet space can be put to better use. The Inactive Records Room would be able to hold all records.

- **Staff**

Funds budgeted for records management - \$498.00

Records Management Officer (\$412.00/yr) takes care of records on an as needed basis and as time is available. The Board agreed that a part time person within the school would assist with the initial backfile conversion preparation during the summer months (whether the grant is awarded or not). It is estimated that 73 cubic feet of records can be prepared in 73 hours for \$1000.

IT person (\$36,000/yr salary) currently spends 8 days per month at the school for all projects. This does not involve any records management at this time. She would be needed for initial setup then as any problems that may arise.

Guidance Secretary (\$28,000/yr) would be spending approximately one hour a week to scan incoming student records. She would be involved in initial set up of the filing system. Currently, any search for student records takes approximately one hour to look through boxes and find appropriate records.

CSE Secretary – (\$22,600/yr) \$11/hr would be spending minimal time per week to scan incoming records. She would also be involved in initial set up of the filing system.

- **Equipment** – purchase of boxes - \$50 per year.

## **B/ Conduct interviews with RMO's, staff, and administrators in each district as to policies and procedures regarding records management including disaster preparedness**

### **FROM INTERVIEWS WITH STAFF & RMO's**

#### **Records management policies and procedures**

The School District has adopted and utilizes the NYS Archives ED-1 Records and Disposition Schedule as required. See above for more details on staff interviews.

**Disaster preparedness** – no policies in place

## **CATTARAUGUS-LITTLE VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Cattaraugus-Little Valley School District campus

25 N Franklin St.

Cattaraugus, NY

Site Visit - April 15, 2010 – Cattaraugus Campus

Site Visit – September 2010 – Little Valley Campus

John Peterson, Superintendent

Sally Hadley, School Business Executive and RMO

Phone: 257-5296

Website: <http://cattlv.wnyric.org>

### **History**

The Cattaraugus and Little Valley Central School Districts merged almost ten years ago and the Cattaraugus campus has undergone expansion and reconfiguration through capital construction projects to accommodate the entire merged district student body. Cattaraugus Campus houses Prek-2, 6-12 classes. Little Valley Campus houses Pre K- grade 5 students. The enrollment of 1,050-1,100 has seen a decrease in recent years. The campuses were reconfigured again last year, bringing the elementary grades from both schools together. They are looking forward to bringing the 5<sup>th</sup> graders to the Cattaraugus campus as the middle school wing is completed in September 2011.

The Business Office is responsible for budget, payroll, purchasing, accounts payable, accounts receivable, accounting, cash management, financial reporting, records management, insurance administration and tax collection.

This office has three full-time employees and Ms. Hadley. Each full-time employee has designated areas of responsibility:

A/P, Payroll, Tax collector

Payroll/Health Insurance

Fixed Assets/Extracurricular activities

The district uses WINCAP, WASP for fixed assets (clerk and IT person working on transferring information to WASP system from excel spreadsheets.)

### **Records Management**

**Cattaraugus Campus** - No formal storage area for the inactive records is provided for in the new capital construction. There is an inactive records storage area in the basement of the Cattaraugus building with over 130 cubic feet of records. Inactive records from the Business office, Health office, and student records are stored there.

Note: This basement area is dirty, with pipes (water) in ceiling and electric panels on the wall. Accessibility to the room is limited, not secure. Temperature – 80 degrees plus depending on weather conditions. Note: Master copies of microfilm and microfiche were found and have been transferred to the business office – needs lower temperature for storage. Ideally, master copies should be stored offsite. There are several empty filing cabinets stored in this basement storage room which could be removed to make room for more shelving. Additional shelving will be purchased through the LGRMIF project.

**Little Valley Campus** – there is a basement storage area containing records from the former Little Valley district, special education records and business office records. All of the available space was taken in this area and the extra cartons spilled out into the hallway. Over 200 cubic feet of records will be inventoried. Used cardboard boxes of different sizes and quality were used to store records. Some of the records stored in the hallway appeared confidential in nature. This is definitely a security issue.

Two years ago, Ms. Hadley requested that employees responsible for records at the Cattaraugus campus with records in the storage room be given time to organize the boxes, etc. Permission to proceed was granted by the school board. The employees started to reorganize, recorded the records eligible for disposition and disposed of them. They ran out of time before they could work on the storage area at the Little Valley building.

Ms. Hadley requires staff preparing records for storage to:

1. Store in appropriate records carton
2. Label the box clearly with dept., contents, destruction date
3. Custodial personnel are not to transfer boxes to records storage area without the box being labeled with above information.

There is no written procedure/schedule for disposition of records which have met their legal retention period. Shredding is done (for the most part) on site by a young man confined to wheelchair. He is supervised by business office staff.

Ms. Hadley does use the disposition forms and keeps them in a notebook. Staff has been trained to complete disposition requests when destroying series of records. The elementary secretary is especially good at keeping records organized.

**Student records** are stored by year of graduation.

Note: Permanent Record cards are stored in 3 boxes in the storage area. The Student records (cumulative files of graduates?) with 6 year destruction after graduation date are stored separately. Ms. Hadley was cautioned to make sure all grades, test scores, etc. are recorded on the “permanent record cards” prior to destruction of folders. She made a note to review this procedure with the high school and guidance secretaries.

**Student Health** records are transferred to storage by graduating class.

Note: Early dismissal slips and excuses for absences are kept in each student’s file. These documents need to be purged before sending records to storage since they have a short retention span (one year after end of school year). It was suggest that early dismissal and excuses be kept in one folder during the year, storing for a year and then disposing of them.

**The Special Education** administrative office is located at the Little Valley campus. Ms Hadley, as the RMO, does not have much communication with them. They do not send her disposition requests.

**Guidance** – Ms. Hadley noted that communication in regards to permanent student records between Special Education and Guidance are difficult.

**Transportation Department** - These records are fairly well organized. There is a new facility in a separate building located on Rte. 393. The district just transferred to an automated routing system/schedule. It is working well.

Ms. Hadley noted that an automated Central Registry for students had been discussed for implementation this year, but wasn't sure what progress had been made.

Ms. Hadley noted to the best of her knowledge, the district has few historical records. She believes there are old yearbooks in the library and the inventory clerk did find a 1954 scrapbook and yearbook pictures in the basement storage area at Cattaraugus. (Note – I brought this to the attention of the district's Library Media Specialist, Dr. Candace Broughton. She is interested in creating a school archive.)

Ms. Hadley would like to begin implementing an electronic document management system and asked for information about the Jamestown Public School's electronic document management system (EDMS). She would like more information about the Laserfiche system being used by Jamestown. Her one main concern is having staff available to do the scanning, especially if they decide to do a backfile conversion. She is aware of the BOCES records management services, but decided she wanted to keep the system in-house. It was suggested that she take advantage of State Archives workshops on Managing Electronic Records and seek advice from James Tammaro, the State Archives Region 8 Advisory officer.

### **TASK 3 - Conduct research and Prepare Study –**

#### **CATTARAUGUS-LITTLE VALLEY CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**A/ Conduct a needs assessment for each school district including the amount, condition, and location of records; condition, size and location of storage areas; organization and disposal process; equipment currently in use; personnel time spent on RMO functions; costs of storage, staff, and equipment**

##### **Records**

- **Amount** - 480 cubic feet of records
- **Condition** - Records are in good condition, stored in an assortment of boxes in piles and on shelves. However, the boxes were very dirty and dusty.
- **Location** - Cattaraugus Little Valley has two campuses. At Cattaraugus Campus about 147 boxes were stored in a storage room with another 15 boxes in the hallway. Over 325 boxes were located in the Little Valley basement records storage room and hallway. A records purge was completed this past year disposing of over 180 cubic feet of records.

##### **Storage Area**

- **Condition** – Storage areas are dry and well lit. However, both storage locations are in a room next to the boiler for the school and have pipes overhead. Temperatures fluctuates between a comfortable 60-65 during the summer to 80-85 degrees in the winter. The Cattaraugus room contains multiple electric panels. There is no fire suppression, humidity control, heat or air conditioning in the rooms.
- **Size** - the Cattaraugus Record Storage Room is 18’x20’ and the Little Valley Storage Room is 16’x24’.
- **Location** – Both Cattaraugus and Little Valley Campus Records Storage Rooms are located in the basement.

##### **Organization and disposal process**

In the records are grouped by series chronologically as much as possible.  
Records are brought to the records room by staff when time is available and when there is no more room in their offices. The RMO takes a few days during summer months to organize and identify some records for disposal.  
Records to be shredded are done in house.

##### **Equipment currently in use**

File cabinets, boxes and shelving  
Approximately five years of payroll is saved on Microfiche  
Electronic systems/software to create records

##### **Personnel time spent on RMO functions**

RMO may spend one hour a month. The RMO is also the Chief Financial Officer. IT Person and HR Person may spend two hours per month on records.

## Costs

- **Storage**  
Little Valley Campus approximately \$2,000 per year; Cattaraugus campus approximately \$1,000 per year
- **Staff**  
Average \$50 per hour including benefits. The Business Office staff handles payroll and personnel records. Any records search could take from half hour to three hours depending on location of the record.
- **Equipment**  
School has not spent any funds on equipment for paper documents other than record storage boxes amounting to \$100 per year. Electronic equipment is not used for Records Management purposes other than the recently created database for the inactive and disposed records.

***B/ Conduct interviews with RMO's, staff, and administrators in each district as to policies and procedures regarding records management including disaster preparedness***

**Records management policies and procedures** - The NYS Archives ED-1 Records and Disposition Schedule is the only approved records policy. No other plans are in place.

**Disaster preparedness** – There are no disaster preparedness policies in place. However, various departments have started working on the policy. See above for more detailed staff interviews.

## **RANDOLPH ACADEMY UNIFIED FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT**

336 Main Street,  
ER Randolph, NY 14772  
Site Visit – August 20, 2010

Superintendent:       Lori DeCarlo  
Principal:               Richard Weikel  
[www.randolphacademy.org](http://www.randolphacademy.org)

Randolph Academy is a public Special Act School district created to provide intensive quality education for special needs students. The school offers therapy, counseling and behavior management as well as a full 12 month academic program. The district serves 34 area school districts with its Day program and also provides education to students in residential placement at the adjacent Randolph Children's Home.

Mission Statement: “The mission of the Randolph Academy is to Support, Empower, and Educate a diversity of learners to develop positive attitudes and responsible behaviors. All students will be accountable for gaining the knowledge and skills necessary for becoming life-long learners, enabling successful transition back into their home school and full participation in society.”

### **Principal's Office – Janise Rhodes, Principal and Guidance Secretary, District Clerk**

This office is at the entrance to the school and is a hub of activity receiving visitors and staff. Janise is secretary to both the principal, Richard Weikel and the Guidance offices. She is also the District Clerk. Records storage areas in the office include lateral files and a small storage room. All can be locked. Some of her duties and the records generated are listed below:

1. Processes purchase orders for the District using the Financial Manager software provided through BOCES. She generates four copies of purchase orders, keeping one for her records. It was suggested that one copy be designated as the “official” copy and those departments (like Receiving) destroy their copy when finished. Only the “official” copy needs to be kept for the retention period of 6 years.
2. Field Trip and Conference Requests – stored by date/year with several years stored.
3. Fingerprinting – paper records are eliminated by checking progress of applications online.
4. Copies of some personnel records such as Reasonable Assurance of Continued Employment and Staff development information.
5. Day Student Transportation – information is kept for the current and previous year. All information can be found on the Administrative Plus – Attendance module and Transportation schedule.
6. Paper copies of Board, Policy and Audit meeting minutes. The official copy is electronic and backed up.
7. Daily logs and administrative records are kept for the current year as needed.
8. The previous clerical staff kept many years worth of information that did not need to be retained. This information included teacher schedules, board meeting agendas, phone lists, end of the year information and memos. This will be disposed of when the LGMRIF Inventory is completed.
9. Several copies of the policy and handbook are available for reference.



10. Discipline referrals are kept on file.

Board of Education information is stored in the vault area of the Superintendent's Office. Official copies of past board minutes are stored in three ring binders. It was suggested that these records be taken out of the binders and placed in records storage cartons in the vault area. Currently, she stores the official copies electronically as PDFs. It is recommended that the Board Minutes be digitized.

**CSE Secretary – Tina Rogers – Student Records**

Clear Track is used to write IEPs, for demographics, enrollments – for both active and inactive students.

Paper files are created for all students. The files are kept permanently and transferred to an offsite storage area when more room is needed in the records storage area located in the building.

Besides the active student records, inactive student records from 2002 are stored in the building. Records prior to 2002 are stored in the second floor of the school's horse barn across the street.

Tina explained that the folders contain IEPs (Individualized Education Plan), assessments, some medical and "official" reports. There are two types of students – day and residential. The day students' files consist of copies sent by the public school where the child resides. The residential placement students' records contain official information for their entire stay.

Offices on the second floor of the school building are being converted to records storage space. She would like to have all the files in one place and this may solve the offsite storage situation. She would also like the school district to consider digitizing student records for ease of access.

**Superintendent's Secretary – Paula Heyl**

Personnel files – active records are kept in secure files in her office, inactive records are kept in the vault. She is running out of room and would like to purge records ready for disposition.

Insurance and medical information for personnel are kept in separate files. Other inactive records are kept in files in the storeroom. Some of these records include BEDS reports.

The vault contains payroll information (eligible for destruction), inactive personnel files and compensation claims. Student attendance records and legal documents are also kept in the vault.

**District Treasurer – Regina Burritt**

Three years of inactive A/P and Payroll information including time sheets, bank statements are stored in her office. Electronic records are kept through BOCES Finance Manager software.

The Record Storage Vault contains backups. It was suggested that offsite storage should be found with another local government – (ex. Randolph Central School or the Village of Randolph). Some financial and A/P information was recently reformatted to microfiche by Biel's.

The district's storage for student records is located in the second story of the district owned horse barn located across the street. There are no environmental controls and security is limited.

Because there is no HVAC system, temperatures vary greatly from season to season. This area contains inactive student records from the Randolph Children's Home from 1932 and then from the Academy since 1940. The record boxes are not well organized and overstuffed. These records need to be relocated, purged and the permanent records should be reformatted for preservation and access.

## RANDOLPH ACADEMY UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

### TASK 3 - Conduct research and Prepare Study –

*A/ Conduct a needs assessment for each school district including the amount, condition, and location of records; condition, size and location of storage areas; organization and disposal process; equipment currently in use; personnel time spent on RMO functions; costs of storage, staff, and equipment*

#### **Records**

- **Amount** - 170 cubic feet of records in the school building approximately 200 boxes in the second floor of the horse barn. 42 cubic feet stored in the Records Vault and Storage room.
- **Condition** - Records in good condition, stored in an assortment of boxes. Those stored in the horse barn are dusty.
- **Location** – Older inactive records are stored in the horse barn second floor storage room.  
The main location for current and most recent inactive records is in the Record Vault and Storage Room in the School Business Office.

#### **Storage Area**

- **Condition** – Horse Barn storage area is locked and dry. There is equipment, straw, and dust outside the room. There is no heat in the room so conditions are very cold in the winter and extremely hot in the summer. The Records Vault is locked, clean and accessible only to a few staff – primarily the HR and Fiscal people. The Lateral files in the Storage room can be locked. The room is not locked.
- **Size** – The Horse Barn Storage Room is 12x12. The Record Vault is 6x8 and the Storage Room is 12x16
- **Location** - The Record Vault and Storage Room is located on the first floor within the Administration Office. The inactive storage is in the second floor horse barn. The school is in the process of creating a new records room on the second floor of the school building to house all inactive records.

#### **Organization and disposal process**

The horse barn storage boxes are grouped by record series. Until an inventory and disposal project was completed last year there was no disposal process. The Maintenance Person takes record boxes to the barn once there is no more room in the school records area.

#### **Equipment currently in use**

File cabinets, boxes and shelving  
Current student records and employee information is kept electronically.

#### **Personnel time spent on RMO functions**

The Guidance Secretary, Special Education staff and RMO spend approximately one to two hours a month each on records management.

## Costs

- **Storage**  
Currently there is minimal cost involved in storage of records. At least half of the inactive records are stored in the unused area of the horse barn. There is no cost involved with no HVAC, just a lock on the door. The secure vault estimated cost is \$1,000 per year. The new second floor storage will be \$2,000 per year.
- **Staff**  
IT person at \$19/hour.  
Business Person \$22/hour (\$478 per year on RMO)  
Guidance Counselor \$13/hr  
Nurse - \$23/hr
- **Equipment**  
Randolph will be purchasing shelving for the new records storage room. Three shelving units from the Horse Barn and one unit purchased through the Inventory Grant will be used also. These will be needed for inactive records not involved in the scanning project. Approximate cost of \$1,000  
Computer software is used for the Inactive/Disposed records database created this year. Some student records are kept on computer if they arrive digitally. Otherwise no other equipment is used in records management currently.

***B/ Conduct interviews with RMO's, staff, and administrators in each district as to policies and procedures regarding records management including disaster preparedness  
FROM INTERVIEWS WITH STAFF & RMO's***

### **Records management policies and procedures**

Currently the only procedure in use is the NYS Archives ED-1 Records and Disposition Schedule.

**Disaster preparedness** – There are no records management policies in place. See above for more staff interview details.

## **Review of Possible Solutions**

Possible solutions for shared services in records management are listed below.

### Possible Solution #1:

The school districts would share an offsite physical storage facility at one of their campuses for inactive records. This solution is not practical for Canaseraga because of its physical proximity to the other school districts. It is 86.42 miles from Cattaraugus-Little Valley and 87.5 miles from Randolph Academy. Access would be time consuming and difficult, and costly. The other two districts, while in closer proximity to each other (15.23 miles), would have to consider several factors including location of the storage facility, building or renovating a facility adequately to store records, security of the other district's records, district personnel time and accessibility,

### Possible Solution #2:

Microfilm the permanent record series in each district using funding through a cooperative grant from the New York State Archives LGRMIF or the Department of State. This would allow for disaster recovery and security. The microfilm system may make accessibility more difficult (especially if the school does not have a microfilm reader/printer scanner). The preparation of documents and microfilming would be more costly than the current paper system. Each district would need to take steps to continue with microfilming after the initial grant funded project. This may not be fiscally possible.

### Possible Solution #3:

The school districts could consider the possibility of a shared EDMS or an Electronic Content Management System (ECMS). Document imaging records would achieve better access and security to their records, provide a disaster recovery method, and provide a tool to be more cost effective and efficient in records maintenance and storage. They should research this method more completely by contacting vendors representing document imaging solutions. The vendor solutions provide hardware, software and consulting fees to implement a document imaging system for their records. They should also seek out other school districts who have incorporated and EDMS or ECMS into their records management program to use as a model. Note that even though Randolph Academy and Cattaraugus-Little Valley had considered services through the local Erie 2 Chautauqua and Cattaraugus Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES), a cooperative project between the districts would provide a greater price savings. They should consider starting the EDMS by applying for funding through a cooperative grant from the New York State Archives LGRMIF or the Department of State.

### **TASK 3C**

*Draft recommendations on how to best share services and/or consolidate the records management service **including costs to implement, cost savings to be achieved, and changes to management structure needed***

Preferred alternative –

Utilize an EDMS system

- Application submitted on 2/1/2011 for funding through NYS Archives LGMRIF grant program. Awards are scheduled to be announced in July. However, the past three years the announcements have not been made until October through December.
- Each school has identifying the record series to be digitized. Randolph Academy and Canaseraga chose to digitize student records and immunization records. Cattaraugus-Little Valley has chosen to digitize personnel and payroll records.
- Because of the possibility of delays in announcing grant awards, the NYS Archives application will deal with an amount of records that can be completed in the shortened timeframe of 6-9 months.
- Records will be scanned into the system as they are created or arrive on location. Backfile conversion of permanent records will continue throughout the year. Student records will be indexed by Year of Departure/Graduation, Last Name, and First Name. Personnel/payroll records will be indexed by Social Security Number, Last Name, and First Name.
- Server for all three schools will be located at Southern Tier West. Schools will not need individual servers or extra time for IT personnel. No fees will be charged.
- Security measures will be in place at the schools and STW. Schools will be responsible to upkeep their end of the system; renew maintenance agreements with software provider and hardware provider; continue backfile conversion and current records as acquired.
- There would be no need for any management structure. Scanning of records as they come into the districts would be completed by staff members who normally deal with those records by filing paper into file cabinets.

## **Requirements for a New Recordkeeping System**

The following would be guidelines for the electronic document management system for the School Districts:

### **Business Requirements**

1. Provide reliable information to customers (staff, parents, students, public and other administration departments).
2. Adhere to privacy regulations and provide limited access to records such as personnel files, medical files, payroll, student records, etc.
3. Distribute information to assist staff with completing their work efficiently and effectively.
4. Acquire a system that will integrate with the current systems used in each district so that moving from one system to another is transparent to the users.

### **Records Management Requirements**

1. There must be a quick and easy way to implement the New York State Archives ED-1 Records Retention and Disposition Schedules for each record series on the new record keeping system.

### **Technical Requirements**

The system would also

2. Integrate with current databases and electronic files: MS Word, Access and Excel
3. Allow work to be processed electronically. For example, job applications, Board of Education meeting minutes.
4. Allow multiple users access the system and same record simultaneously
5. Provide for controlled access to protect privacy and confidentiality of records. Specify access for individuals with security controls.
6. Allow for quick distribution of records and information when necessary.
7. Provide easy access to records. Each record will need to have a user-friendly indexing scheme, making access quick and easy.
8. The new record keeping system must be user friendly and easier to use than the current processes. All required information must be available or the users will return to processing records as they currently do.
9. The system needs protocols to allow for authenticity of the record and to verify that the record cannot be tampered with once in a digital format.
10. The capability to search on terms for some of the records series is essential.
11. Provide a disaster recovery system for the records.
12. Reduce staff time in processing records.
13. Reduce cost of paper and supplies.
14. Reduce the amount of documents lost or misfiled.
15. Ease in storing documents in electronic format.
16. Reduce space requirements for active filing and inactive storage of records.

## State or Federal Requirements

The records retention requirements followed by all of these districts are the New York State Archives Records and Disposition Schedules ED-1, 2001. This retention schedule gives the minimum requirements for each school. However, they may have chosen to retain some record series longer for research, historical or business purposes. Other state or federal requirements that apply are tied to federal and state aid received for students. Examples of this are Medicaid reimbursements and services provided for classified students.

## **NYS Archives LGMRIIF Grant Application Summary**

The following was submitted to NYS Archives on February 1, 2011 for Local Government Records Management Improvement funding:

The option of Digitizing student or personnel files and storing on one server offsite was determined as the most logical solution for protection of permanent records. This would also allow for more storage for records with short retention periods. A grant application was sent to NYS Archives in the amount of \$99,590. This includes:

Purchased Services	\$71,000	
Document Shredding - \$2000/3		\$ 666 each
Support, Training, Installation	\$5000	\$1666 each
Backfile Conversion	\$64,000	\$10,400 CCSD
		\$14,800 CLV
		\$40,800 RA
Equipment & Supplies	\$28,590	
Server	\$3500	\$1166 each
3 Scanners	\$6690	\$2230 each
Document Management Software	\$18,150	\$6050 each
System Backup Software	\$250	\$ 83 each

### **TOTAL PROJECT COST PER SCHOOL IF GRANT NOT AWARDED**

(Based on the vendor quote used in the grant application and not counting personnel time)

CCSD	CLV	RA
\$11,861	\$11,861	\$11,861
<u>\$10,400</u>	<u>\$14,800</u>	<u>\$40,800</u>
\$22,261	\$26,661	\$52,661

**ANNUAL COST TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS AFTER PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION - \$750**



Annual School district costs once the project is completed will include Annual Software maintenance charges – approximately \$750 per year.

Southern Tier West will not be charging the School Districts for hosting the data or any other costs incurred by the project.

School staff will continue to do records scanning and backfile conversion during the normal course of business.

#### **ANNUAL COST SAVINGS PER SCHOOL**

Normally, staff would spend 3-4 hours per month searching through boxes and paper records for personnel or student records. Once records are stored electronically, staff will be able to retrieve records in minutes than hours. At an average of \$20 per hour, that saves the school district \$60-\$80 per month; \$720-\$960 per year. This does not amount to a lot of direct cost savings. But service levels will increase and staff will have an accessible, usable system.

#### **TASK 3D**

##### **Public Meetings/Outreach**

Outreach was completed in conjunction with Board of Education meetings at each school. Each RMO discussed the project, its goals, anticipated benefits, possible future costs, staff participation and possible assistance from outside sources. The project received positive input from Board members. Since completion of the project, the Boards have been kept apprised of the NYS Archives grant application. Each Board has voted to continue on with the project by submitting for funds through the LGMRIF grant program.

## **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**February 2011** – Submit Grant Application to NYS Archives LGMRIF

The following is completed on the assumption that the Grant Application will be funded. This project timeline/implementation schedule was used for the LGMRIF Grant application.

**July 2011** – Lead Agency and Participant representatives meet with Regional Advisory Officer, James Tammaro for Grant Start Up

**July 2011** – STW sign agreements with School Districts for the project and for storage of school records in accordance with Commissioner of Education regulations, submit to NYS Archives for approval

**July 2011** – Participants identified a cost effective program/Vendor to use for this project using Biel's Information Systems - Documentum ApplicationXtender. The School Districts reviewed three proposals received through the RFQ to create a computer based records system for personnel and student files. They also talked with Jamestown City School District who is currently working on a cooperative grant with 4 other school districts similar to this proposed project and felt this electronic records management system would fit with their needs of security, access, no physical storage requirements and ease of use. The cost of completing it individually would be more prohibitive with the cost of software, security software and more time for IT person. With a cooperative Project, the school districts can share a server, software and technology staff.

**July 2011** – Project Administration Team will be created and meet to set up schedule. They will also be charged with putting together the Standard Operating Procedures Manual. Team will include from each school: RMO's, IT personnel, School District Superintendent, identified users from each school and STW Project Manager and IT Staff Person.

**July 2011** – Site visits by STW Project Manager.

**July 2011** – Train identified school personnel in records preparation. As part of the Project inkind, each School District will have at least one person who will work on records preparation along with assistance from STW staff especially for Randolph Academy records. Amount of records to be scanned and approximate preparation time:

Canaseraga - 73 cubic feet of student record files - 1 hour per CF - 73 hours

Cattaraugus LV - 108 cubic feet of payroll/personnel files - 1 hour per CF - 108 hours

Randolph Academy - 295 cubic feet of student record files - 3 hours per CF - 885 hours

(Approximately 7 days or 49 hours per month for 9 months with 2 people involved.)

**July 2011** - Begin preparation of identified records in each school including purging obsolete and duplicate records, removing of any staples, paper clips. Prepare spreadsheet with a per box listing of records. This will be used if records must be pulled from a box for school use while the records are at the Vendor location. Vendor has a secure electronic process for providing needed records during the conversion process. As their inkind, STW Community Assistance Specialist will be available on a part time basis to assist with the records preparation especially for Randolph Academy who has an large amount of records to prepare.

**August 2011** – Finalize contract with Vendor

**August 2011** – Purchase of Hardware - 1 Server and 3 scanners

**August 2011** – Installation of software by vendor

**August 2011** – Train identified personnel in each school district in use of software and scanners

**August 2011** – Site visits by STW Project Manager and continuation of records preparation

**September 2011** – Site visits by STW Project Manager; continuation of records preparation

**September 2011** – Vendor pickup of prepared records for scanning. All records, when not in production will be stored in a secure facility. While in the vendor’s possession, records will be available for the school district for retrievals within 24 hours.

**October 2011** – Site visits by STW Project Manager; continuation of records preparation

**October 2011** – Vendor pickup of prepared records for scanning

**October 2011** – Project Administration Team meet for progress review; begin work on Standard Operating Procedures Manual that will include no less than the following:

- Responsibilities of each School District and STW
- Security of the system and protection of Data
- No Data Mining Assurances
- Data ownership
- Procedure if School District wishes to leave the cooperative
- Procedure if STW cannot live up to its agreements for various reasons

**November 2011** – Site visits by STW Project Manager; continuation of records preparation; commence destruction of records purged from the files during record preparation.

**November 2011** – Vendor pickup of prepared records for scanning

**December 2011** – Site visits by STW Project Manager; continuation of records preparation; destruction of purged records

**December 2011** – Vendor pickup of prepared records for scanning

**December 2011** – Report to RAO Jim Tammaro and School Boards on progress of the project and creation of Standard Operating Procedures Manual

**December 2011**- Project Administration Team meets for progress review

**January 2012** – Site visits by STW Project Manager; continuation of records preparation

**January 2012** - Vendor pickup of prepared records for scanning. Final pickup for Canaseraga and Cattaraugus.

**January 2012** – Commence shredding of paper records after QC and verification of images is completed

**February 2012** – Site visits by STW Project Manager; continuation of records preparation; destruction of purged records. Records preparation finished for Canaseraga and Cattaraugus-LV, Randolph continues.

**February 2012** - Vendor pickup of prepared records for scanning

**February 2012** - Vendor trains Canaseraga and Cattaraugus-LV authorized staff in software program

**February 2012** – Project Administration Team meet for progress review and finalize SOP manual

**March 2012** – Site visits by STW Project Manager; continuation of records preparation

**March 2012** - Vendor pickup of prepared records for scanning

**April 2012** – Site visits by STW Project Manager; Final records preparation and destruction of purged records for Randolph records

**April 2012** - Final Vendor pickup of Randolph prepared records for scanning

**April 2012** - Project Administration Team meet for progress review; Report to RAO Jim Tammaro and School Boards on progress of the project

**April 2012** – Commence shredding of paper records after QC and verification of images is completed

**May 2012** – Software training for Randolph

**May 2012**- Project Team meets with Vendor for final review; any review of training for Software Users

**June 2012** – Final reports to Jim Tammaro, School District Boards

**June 2012** - Submit final reports to NYS Archives for Grant Closeout

Once the initial project has been completed at each school, identified staff at each school will be scanning paper records and transferring electronic documents into the system as the records are received. This might include student immunization records, records transfer for new student, Pre K or Kindergarten new students. Payroll records will be transferred into the system on schedule with the pay period. Requests for information can be completed at the desk with little time involved.

Meanwhile, during the slower summer months, staff will be able to complete backfile conversion on more records with permanent retention such as Board minutes and payroll or student records depending on the school.

This system has the capability to expand, enabling other schools to join the system in the future.

## COST ANALYSIS

Initial Project without funding

Annual Fee

(after initial project complete)

### CCSD

Cost Impact -	\$22,261	\$750
Cost Impact per capita -	\$7.42	\$.001
Estimated Prop Tax Impact -	\$.358/1,000	\$.01/1,000

### CLVCSD

Cost Impact -	\$26,661	\$750
Cost Impact per capita -	\$4.07	\$.001
Estimated Prop Tax Impact -	\$.678 /1,000	\$.02/1,000

### RA

\$52,661	increase tuition	\$750
Cost Impact per Student -	\$554	\$ 8