**WORCESTER EDUCATION**

Establishment of the first schools in town dates to the late eighteenth century. Joseph Taintor conducted an elementary school – called “select,” or likely private – in Brighton in 1798. Another select school, “The Hall of Science,” opened in Tusculum. An early log schoolhouse appeared on the present site of the Worcester Market (143 Main Street).

The town meeting of March 2, 1813 established a public school system and elected Commissioners and Inspectors of Common Schools. The town was divided into seven school districts – increased to 19 by 1868 – each of which featured its own traditional one-room schoolhouse. More select schools appeared in the mid-nineteenth century.

Josephus Simmons built a large two-story wooden schoolhouse in District 6 at 198 Main Street in the West Worcester hamlet in 1874. This building became the Worcester Union Free School about 1883, later called Worcester High School.

A brick high school building followed on this site in 1893. Its colonial-style replacement at the same location in 1932 became the Worcester Central School, which by 1958 had absorbed all the students resident in the old common school districts and some from the adjacent towns of Decatur, Maryland and Westford. In recent years the central school has expanded its property holdings and its 70-year-old building on several occasions and routinely serves more than 600 students in kindergarten through twelfth grade.

For a long time this school facility has been the largest employer in southeastern Otsego County. The system has also assumed an increasingly greater role in the community, expanding its curriculum, student services, athletics, youth recreation program, community outreach and economic impact. Its high academic standards and reputation have been a constant feature of the school’s history.

Four attempts between 1974 and 1996 to consolidate the Worcester Central School District with that in Schenevus have all failed.

In addition, the Charlotte Valley Central School serves a portion of South Worcester, and the Cobleskill-Richmondville Central School District occupies some of the eastern part of the town.