The Future of Bosworth R-V School District

Understanding Our Options and What They Could Mean for Our Community

Dear Bosworth Residents,

The Bosworth R-V School District is facing important decisions about the future of our school. As we consider the best path forward for our students, families, and community, we believe it is essential that residents understand the options available to us, the potential benefits and challenges of each, and the broader impact these decisions could have on the town of Bosworth.

Our district has experienced declining enrollment, and we must carefully consider how to provide students with a strong education while maintaining a financially sustainable school system. These are not easy questions, and there is no single solution without trade-offs.

Our goal is to provide our community with clear, factual information so residents can better understand the possibilities before us. **No matter which direction we ultimately pursue, the decision will affect more than our school building. It will help shape the future of Bosworth itself.**

Below are four options worth understanding as we look ahead.

Option 1: Keep Bosworth R-V Open as It Is

What does this mean?

Under this option, Bosworth R-V would continue operating as an independent school district, serving students in our existing school building with our own administration, school board, and staff.

The district would work to maintain enrollment, manage expenses, strengthen academic programs, and find ways to make the most of our small-school environment.

Potential advantages

- **Preserving our community identity.** Bosworth would retain its own school, a longstanding community institution that connects generations of residents.

- **Small classes and individual attention.** Teachers may have more opportunities to understand students' individual needs, monitor progress, and provide personalized support.
- **Local decision-making.** Our community would continue to have a local school board responsible for decisions about the district.
- **Convenience for families.** Students could continue attending school close to home, reducing the need for longer daily commutes.
- **Supporting the local economy.** The school would continue providing local jobs and purchasing some goods and services, contributing to economic activity in the community.
- **Opportunity to build on our strengths.** We could continue developing programs that benefit from our small size, including individualized instruction, strong relationships between students and teachers, and closer school-family communication.

Potential disadvantages

- **Financial pressure.** Many school expenses do not decrease proportionally with enrollment. A small number of students must still be supported by a building, transportation, administration, utilities, and other operating costs.
- **Limited course offerings.** With fewer students and staff, it can be difficult to offer a wide variety of electives, advanced courses, foreign languages, and specialized programs.
- **Fewer extracurricular opportunities.** Small enrollment can limit the number of students available for sports teams, clubs, and other group activities.
- **Difficulty attracting and retaining families.** Some parents prefer larger schools with broader course selections, more extracurricular activities, and larger peer groups.
- **Dependence on enrollment.** If enrollment continues to decline, the district may face increasingly difficult financial and staffing decisions.

What could this mean for Bosworth?

Keeping the school open would preserve a major community institution and help maintain Bosworth's identity as a town with its own public school. Families who value a small, close-knit learning environment could continue choosing to live in or move to the area for that reason.

However, keeping the school open without a sustainable plan for enrollment, finances, and educational opportunities could leave the district facing the same questions again in the future.

Option 2: Annexation by an Adjacent School District

What does this mean?

Annexation generally means that Bosworth R-V would become part of an existing neighboring school district rather than continue operating as a separate district.

Unlike consolidation, which creates a new district, annexation typically adds Bosworth's territory, students, and district assets to an existing district. The receiving district would assume responsibility for operating the school district under the approved arrangement.

The receiving district inherits the physical zone where the school building sits - they take complete ownership of the real estate, school grounds, property inside, and structures.

Annexation can only be proposed during a November election and must be approved by voters. This option is not viable for the 2027/2028 school year, but could make the ballot for the 2028/2029 school year.

Annexation can be proposed by the School Board OR by residents via petition.

Potential advantages

- **Access to more educational opportunities.** Students might gain access to a broader selection of courses, electives, advanced classes, career and technical education, and extracurricular activities.
- **Shared resources.** A larger district may be able to provide specialized staff, instructional resources, technology, and student services that are difficult for a small district to support independently.
- **Potential administrative efficiencies.** Combining operations may reduce duplicated administrative responsibilities or allow certain expenses to be shared.
- **Potentially greater staffing flexibility.** A larger district may have more teachers and staff available to cover specialized subjects and student needs.

Potential disadvantages

- **Loss of local control.** Bosworth would no longer operate as an independent district with its own school board making decisions about the district as a whole.
- **Loss of property.** The receiving district gains control of the property and Bosworth residents have no control over what happens to the building.
- **Longer transportation times.** If students attend school in another community, bus rides and family travel could become longer.
- **Changes to school culture.** Students and families would need to adjust to a different school system, policies, schedules, and community.
- **Financial implications that require careful review.** Taxes, outstanding debt, property, assets, and operating costs would need to be examined as part of any proposal. Savings or financial benefits should not be assumed without a detailed analysis.

What could this mean for Bosworth?

The effect on Bosworth would be significant - another district controls property in our town.

Bosworth would lose local jobs, daily school-related activity, and an important reason for families with children to remain in or move to the area.

Families could potentially move out of town, making it much more expensive to maintain our water system, sewer system, and roads.

Option 3: Consolidation with Another School District

What does this mean?

Consolidation generally means two or more neighboring school districts combine to create a new school district.

Rather than Bosworth simply joining an existing district, the districts involved would work through a formal process to establish the new district's organization, leadership, boundaries, and operations.

The resulting district would determine how to organize grade levels, staffing, transportation, facilities, and academic programs.

Consolidation does not automatically require closing the Bosworth school building. However, a new district could decide that operating multiple buildings is not financially or educationally practical. The outcome for the Bosworth building would depend on the final plan.

Consolidation must be approved by voters in BOTH districts before it’s a viable option. The vote can be brought by the School Board OR residents via petition.

Potential advantages

- **A larger student population.** More students could create additional opportunities for friendships, group projects, clubs, activities, and participation in sports.
- **Broader academic offerings.** A combined district might be better positioned to offer more electives, foreign languages, advanced coursework, science courses, and career preparation.
- **Shared staffing and resources.** Districts could potentially combine specialized staff, equipment, technology, instructional materials, and administrative resources.
- **Greater flexibility in scheduling.** A larger student body and staff could make it easier to offer courses that require particular enrollment numbers or specialized instructors.

- **Potential long-term financial benefits.** Consolidation may create opportunities to share expenses, but the actual financial outcome would depend on transportation, staffing, facilities, debt, and other costs.

Potential disadvantages

- **Loss of independent district identity.** Bosworth R-V would no longer exist as a separate school district under the new arrangement.
- **Potential loss of the local school.** The new district would likely educate Bosworth students in another community or use the Bosworth building for a different purpose.
- **Longer commutes.** Depending on where students attend school, families would face longer bus rides and less convenient transportation.
- **Less direct local influence.** Bosworth residents would participate in a larger district rather than govern their own independent district.
- **Transition challenges.** Combining different policies, schedules, staffing arrangements, financial systems, and school cultures takes time and planning.
- **Uneven effects on communities.** If one building closes or resources shift to another town, the communities involved may experience different benefits and costs.

What could this mean for Bosworth?

Consolidation could offer students more academic and extracurricular choices, while potentially giving the new district greater flexibility in staffing and resource allocation.

However, the effect on Bosworth would depend significantly on where students attended school and what happened to the local building.

If the building closed and students traveled elsewhere, Bosworth could lose not only its school but also an important community gathering place and local source of employment. Families considering where to live might also weigh the absence of a school in town when making decisions.

If the building remained in use for some grades or programs, Bosworth could retain a local educational presence while participating in a larger district.

Option 4: Restructure the School as a K–6 or K–8 School

What does this mean?

Another possibility is to change which grade levels Bosworth serves.

A K–6 school serves kindergarten through sixth grade. A K–8 school serves kindergarten through eighth grade. Under either arrangement, students would attend school in Bosworth for

those grades and then transition to another school district or designated school for the grades not offered locally.

This option is different from annexation or consolidation because it does not, by itself, change the district's legal status or eliminate the independent school district. It changes the grade levels served locally.

The district would need to determine whether this arrangement is financially and educationally workable, how students would transition to another school, and what agreements would be needed with a receiving district.

Potential advantages

- **Keeping a school in Bosworth.** The community could retain a local school serving younger students, which may help families remain connected to the town.
- **A more focused educational model.** The district could concentrate its resources on a defined group of grade levels and design programs around those students' needs.
- **Potentially more manageable staffing.** Depending on enrollment and the grades retained, the district might be able to adjust staffing and scheduling to better match student needs.
- **A natural transition point.** Students could move to a larger school at a defined age, potentially gaining access to broader academic and extracurricular opportunities as they grow older.
- **Preserving early-grade relationships.** Younger students could continue benefiting from a familiar, small-school environment and close relationships with teachers and families.

Potential disadvantages

- **The district would still have fixed costs.** A smaller grade configuration does not automatically make the school financially sustainable. The district would still need to operate a building and provide administration, transportation, and other essential services.
- **Additional transportation needs.** Students attending higher grades elsewhere would need reliable transportation to another school.
- **A mid-school transition.** Students and families would need to adjust to a different school environment, policies, expectations, and peer groups.
- **Potentially fewer opportunities for older students locally.** Depending on the arrangement, students may have to leave Bosworth earlier to access middle-school or high-school courses and activities.
- **Coordination with another district.** The districts would need to address enrollment, course alignment, transportation, special education services, records, extracurricular participation, and other practical details.
- **Possible effects on enrollment.** Some families may appreciate a local elementary school, while others may prefer a district that educates children through graduation.

What could this mean for Bosworth?

A K–6 or K–8 model could allow Bosworth to retain a school building and a local educational presence, even if it no longer serves all grade levels.

For the town, that could mean preserving some school-related employment, activity, and community identity. A local school could remain a selling point for families with younger children.

However, the benefits would depend on how many students remained enrolled, whether the school could operate sustainably, and whether families were comfortable sending older children elsewhere.

The district would also need to carefully consider whether this arrangement would genuinely improve its long-term outlook or simply postpone difficult decisions.

What Happens to a Town When Its School Closes?

It is easy to view a school closing as a decision about where children will attend classes. For a small rural community, however, the consequences can extend well beyond the classroom.

A school is often one of the few remaining public institutions that brings people into town regularly. It connects generations of residents, creates opportunities for community involvement, and gives families a reason to stay connected to the area.

If Bosworth no longer had a school operating locally, several effects would need to be considered.

1. Attracting and retaining families

For some families, access to a local school is an important factor in deciding where to live. A school closing could make Bosworth less attractive to families who value having their children educated close to home.

Not every family would leave, and some families may be comfortable with a neighboring district. However, losing the local school could remove one of the reasons families choose to settle in Bosworth.

2. Local jobs and economic activity

Schools employ teachers, administrators, support staff, and other workers. They also purchase supplies, use local services, and bring families and visitors into town for school activities.

A closure could reduce some of that economic activity. The size of the effect would depend on staffing changes, where students attend school, and whether the building continues to be used.

3. Property values and housing demand

The presence of a school can be one factor families consider when evaluating a community. If a school closes, some prospective residents may look elsewhere.

It would be inaccurate to promise that property values would decline by a particular amount, but reduced demand from families seeking a town with a local school is a possibility worth considering.

4. Community identity and traditions

School programs, sporting events, Veterans Day celebrations, holiday performances, and other activities bring residents together. These events provide opportunities for children, parents, grandparents, alumni, and other community members to share experiences.

Without a local school, Bosworth could lose some of these regular opportunities for community connection unless other organizations stepped in to continue them.

5. The future of the school building

If the building were no longer used as a school and Bosworth retains ownership, the community would need to consider what happens next. Maintaining, repurposing, selling, or otherwise managing a former school building can involve financial costs and difficult decisions.

A new use might bring value to the community, but that outcome would require planning, investment, and an interested organization or buyer.

If a different district gains control of the property, Bosworth has no say in what happens to the building in our town.

6. The long-term vitality of Bosworth

No single institution determines a town's future. However, schools can play an important role in a community's ability to attract families, support local activity, and maintain a sense of shared purpose.

A school closing would not automatically mean Bosworth would decline, just as keeping a school open would not automatically guarantee growth. The broader impact would depend on how the community responds and what other opportunities exist.

Nevertheless, the potential loss of a local school deserves to be considered as a community issue, not solely an administrative or financial decision.

Our Community Has a Stake in This Decision

The future of Bosworth R-V is not simply a decision for the school board or school employees. It is a decision with implications for parents, students, grandparents, local businesses, property owners, and residents who care about the future of this town.

We recognize that residents may have different opinions about the best path forward. Some may prioritize preserving an independent school, while others may favor a larger district with broader educational offerings. Still others may see value in a smaller grade configuration or a partnership with a neighboring district.

Those differences are understandable. What matters is that we approach this conversation with accurate information, thoughtful consideration, and a shared commitment to our students and community.

Our responsibility is to provide students with a strong education while making responsible decisions about the district's future. We also believe residents deserve to understand the potential consequences of each option before decisions are made.

Bosworth's future deserves thoughtful consideration. We encourage residents to learn about the available options, ask questions, participate in public discussions, and share their perspectives respectfully.

Whatever path lies ahead, we hope the process will reflect the values that have sustained this community: commitment to our children, care for our neighbors, and a desire to see Bosworth remain a place where people want to live, work, and raise their families.

Thank you for your continued interest in and support of Bosworth R-V School District.

Sincerely,

Bosworth R-V School District
Board of Education and Administration