

DISSOLUTION OF BUENA VISTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is Buena Vista Public Schools being dissolved?

This June, the Legislature and Governor approved two bills (Public Act 96 and 97 of 2013) specifically crafted to lead to the dissolution of two school districts governed by a locally elected school board: Inkster Public Schools and the Buena Vista School District.

On What Basis?

Under those two new laws, the State Superintendent and State Treasurer have the ability to jointly decide to dissolve a school district if six specified criteria are met. The six specified criteria include:

- (a) A district either did not submit a deficit elimination plan or if they did, they lacked the capability to implement the plan and still meet obligations to provide educational services.
- (b) A district is not financially viable and is unable to educate K-12 students for a full school year;
- (c) A school district has between 300 – 2,400 students.
- (d) The number of students in 2012-13 was at least 10% less than in 2011-12.
- (e) A district has an operating deficit which is projected to grow throughout the school fiscal year, or received an emergency loan from the local emergency financial assistance loan board that effectively reduced said deficit.
- (f) The district did not consolidate with another district in the last 12 months.

Did the State Superintendent and State Treasurer jointly order the dissolution of Buena Vista?

Yes. Buena Vista Public Schools will be officially dissolved, although it will remain intact for taxation purposes only until its existing debt is satisfied.

Can Saginaw ISD decline to carry out the order of the State Superintendent and the State Treasurer?

The law makes it clear that it is Saginaw ISD's responsibility to take one of two actions: either dissolve the district and redraw the boundary lines of the district or request the State Superintendent to make those decisions instead. The law states that if Saginaw ISD does not take this action, the State Superintendent will do it.

Given only those two options under statute, Saginaw ISD and the affected local school districts believe strongly that the reassignment of students should be handled by Saginaw ISD and constituent districts, as opposed to allowing Lansing to make these decisions.

Because of that belief, the Saginaw ISD Board of Education will adopt a plan to reassign current Buena Vista Public School students to other Saginaw County District(s).

With school starting in only five weeks, Saginaw ISD believes strongly that the students and families deserve to know where they will be continuing their education in September, and their new district(s) need time to welcome them as seamlessly as possible.

Saginaw ISD also has the fiduciary responsibility to close out the operations of the district, distribute assets and administer the debt.

How did Saginaw ISD come up with the new boundaries?

Saginaw ISD's focus is 100% on doing what's best for the students and families in Buena Vista, as well as the receiving district(s) who are accepting these new students and families to their schools. The Saginaw ISD tirelessly met with a variety of local educators, community leaders and Buena Vista parents to discuss all options in formulating this plan. The goal from the outset was to develop a strong reassignment plan that was in the best interest of the Buena Vista students and their families. There were also many other factors that were considered in this decision, some of which were required to be considered by the legislation.

Some of the other factors include the following:

- State Equalized Valuation (SEV) Data
- Student population
- Schools of Choice data
- Parental input
- Board members', administrators' and teachers' input
- Conversations with various organizations with the Saginaw Community
- Industrial, agricultural and mixed data

What happens to all of the Buena Vista School District employees?

Teachers, staff and the superintendent will not have employment once the school district is dissolved.

Where are the student records and how do parents access them?

Saginaw ISD will have student transcripts, records and CA 60's. If parents want to request records they can call Vivienne Jaynes at Saginaw ISD at (989)249-8755. This information will be posted on the SISD webpage at www.sisd.cc and the Buena Vista Administration Office.

Will BV students be provided transportation to their new schools?

Transportation depends on the policies/procedures of the school district where the student(s) will be located. It seems practical that it will be provided.

Who can answer questions about my child's transportation needs?

Specific transportation issues will be addressed by the receiving school district(s).

What will happen to the Buena Vista School buildings?

The buildings will become the property of the new school district(s). The new school district will determine how they will be used.

What about school taxes?

The 18 mill assessment will be assessed as long as it takes to pay off the debt. That is calculated to take approximately 2-3 years. SISD does not yet have those records. When the Buena Vista School District is dissolved, an audit firm will look at all records and determine this formula. After the debt is paid, the 18 mills will continue based on a vote of the people within the new school district.

Can a neighboring school district reject the SISD's decision on new school district boundaries?

No. School districts cannot reject the ISD's decision on new boundaries

Can the decision to dissolve the Buena Vista School District ever be changed or reversed?

No, this is a forever decision.

Will classrooms in the new school district be overcrowded?

Student crowding should not be an issue.

If someone has donated items to the Buena Vista School District will they be returned to them?

Any donated items will likely become the property of the new school district and the receiving school district will need to answer this question.

What about the Reese School District? Can they be included in the new school district boundaries?

No. Reese cannot be considered in the boundary change since they are located outside of Saginaw ISD boundaries.

My son or daughter currently receives special education and related services at Buena Vista Public Schools. Will those services be provided at the new school?

The receiving districts will be provided with each eligible student's IEP and the receiving districts will follow-up to make sure that the appropriate services are provided.

I am a Buena Vista parent, where can I learn more?

Unfortunately, the law does not give us much guidance on many important questions. In the case of Buena Vista Public School families, Saginaw ISD will be sending each student's family a map and other related information via U.S. Mail in the next few days. Also, this information can be viewed

www.sisd.cc.

This information will also be posted on the school buildings in Buena Vista. In addition, if you are the parent of a student who lives in Buena Vista, you will also be hearing from your new school district in the very near future

I am a parent in the Buena Vista District and my child attends another district through Schools of Choice. Where will my child be able attend school in the fall?

Unless there are circumstances with which we are unaware, the student may continue in the school that they attended this year. In addition, they may also choose to attend school in the new district that has been assigned the property in which the family resides.

Is there another meeting scheduled when parents can receive additional information about the transition of their children to their new school district?

A tentative meeting has been scheduled on Tuesday, August 13th for parents to receive additional information about the transition. More details will be available soon. New school districts have indicated they will have counselors, principals and enrollment information available at the meeting.