

Mingus Union High School District # 4

Study Session

Thursday, August 27, 2020

Time: 4:00 PM

Place: Mingus Union High School Library

1801 East Fir Street

Cottonwood, Arizona 86326

Members of the Board

Ms. Carol Anne Teague

Mrs. Lori Drake

Mr. Anthony Lozano

Mr. Chip Currie

Mr. Greg Roeller

Additional information or documentation regarding Public Agenda Items may be available for the public to review in the Office of the Superintendent.

The District endeavors to make all public meetings accessible to persons with disabilities. With 48 hours advance notice, special assistance can also be provided for sight and/or hearing impaired persons at public meetings. Please call (928) 634-8901 to request an accommodation.

Spanish Translation is available.

Members of the Governing Board will attend either in person or by telephone conference call. The Board reserves the right to change the order of items on the agenda, with the exception of public hearings set for a specific time.

AGENDA

PURSUANT TO A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(3), THE BOARD MAY VOTE TO CONVENE IN EXECUTIVE SESSION, WHICH WILL NOT BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, FOR DISCUSSION OR CONSULTATION FOR LEGAL ADVICE WITH THE GOVERNING BOARD'S ATTORNEY ON ANY ITEM LISTED ON THIS AGENDA.

I. OPENING

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Moment of Silence

5. Adoption of Agenda

II. INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

III. Requests for Future Agenda Items

IV. ADJOURNMENT

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INFORMATIONAL PAMPHLET CONSOLIDATION PLAN

Mingus Union High School District No. 4 of Yavapai County, Arizona

(which includes voters from the two feeder districts of Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School District No. 6 and Clarkdale-Jerome Elementary School District No. 3)

AND

Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School District No. 6 of Yavapai County, Arizona

**SPECIAL ELECTION
to consider a proposed consolidation
November 3, 2020**

**Compiled and issued by
Tim Carter
Yavapai County Superintendent of Schools**



This Informational Pamphlet Consolidation Plan may also be viewed on the YCESA website at
<https://ycesa.com/election-services/>
under “2020 Elections Informational Pamphlets” as “MUHS & COCS D Consolidation Pamphlet.”

TO THE VOTERS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

On November 3, 2020, the voters of Mingus Union High School District No. 4 ("Mingus Union"), which includes Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School District No. 6 ("Cottonwood-Oak Creek") and Clarkdale-Jerome Elementary School District No. 3 ("Clarkdale-Jerome"), will receive a separate ballot to decide if Mingus Union and Cottonwood-Oak Creek should consolidate to form a new Unified School District to serve K-12 students. The voters of Cottonwood-Oak Creek will also receive a separate ballot to decide if Mingus Union and Cottonwood-Oak Creek should consolidate to form a new Unified School District to serve K-12 students. If approved, the effect of this consolidation includes, but is not limited to:

- Mingus Union will no longer exist.
- Cottonwood-Oak Creek will no longer exist.
- A new Unified School District will be formed within the current boundary of Cottonwood-Oak Creek.
- Clarkdale-Jerome, upon dissolution of Mingus Union, remains a separate and distinct political subdivision. It will not be part of the new Unified School District. It will remain an elementary school district that will have a different designation for funding because it will no longer belong to a union high school district. The Clarkdale-Jerome Governing Board determines how the education of its students is provided, which includes determining how its high school students will be educated. Assuming that tuition will be paid for its high school students attending the new Unified School District, voters in Clarkdale-Jerome will not be eligible to serve on or vote for the Governing Board members of the new Unified School District.
- Valley Academy for Career and Technology Education No. 01 ("VACTE") will have its Governing Board reduced from five members to four members.

Arizona law requires that a majority of those voting in Mingus Union (which means a majority of those voting in Cottonwood-Oak Creek and a majority of those voting in Clarkdale-Jerome as Mingus Union voters) and a majority of those voting in Cottonwood-Oak Creek (as Cottonwood-Oak Creek voters) must vote yes in order for this consolidation to take place. This will require that Cottonwood-Oak Creek voters receive two ballots, one ballot as Mingus Union voters and one ballot as Cottonwood-Oak Creek voters.

This election to determine the question on consolidation is being called because my office received petitions bearing the appropriate number of signatures of qualified electors calling for consolidation pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) § 15-459(A). As a result, my office has a statutory duty to provide an Informational Pamphlet, which includes a Consolidation Plan. This Informational Pamphlet Consolidation Plan was prepared in consultation with the Committee for Better Upper Verde Valley Schools-2018, the school districts involved, the Yavapai County Attorney's Office, the Yavapai County Assessor's Office, the Yavapai County Treasurer's Office, Yavapai County Geographic Information Systems, Yavapai County Recorder and Elections Department, the Arizona Department of Education School Finance Division, the Arizona Tax Research Association, the Arizona Association of School Business Officials, the Arizona School Administrators, and my colleagues in various county school superintendent's offices in the State of Arizona. I greatly appreciate and respect the feedback I have received.

Please study the materials contained in this Informational Pamphlet Consolidation Plan so that you will be ready to exercise your right to vote in an informed manner.

Respectfully,



Tim Carter

Yavapai County School Superintendent

(This Informational Pamphlet constitutes the informational reports, the publicity pamphlet, pro/con statements, and consolidation plan required by A.R.S. § 15-459.)

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SCHOOL DISTRICTS SHORTENED REFERENCES

Throughout this Informational Pamphlet Consolidation Plan, shortened references are made to school districts as follows:

- Mingus Union High School District No. 4 is Mingus Union.
- Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School District No. 6 is Cottonwood-Oak Creek.
- Clarkdale-Jerome Elementary School District No. 3 is Clarkdale-Jerome.
- Valley Academy for Career and Technology Education No. 01 is VACTE.

CONSOLIDATION ELECTION IMPACT ON SCHOOL DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

A.R.S. § 15-459 requires registered voters to be provided with a detailed description of the changes that a consolidation will create regarding school district boundaries. Consolidation has a significant bearing on both governance (election boundaries and the elected officials serving the public) and taxing authority.

The School District Boundaries as They Currently Exist:

There are currently four separate and distinct political subdivisions of the State of Arizona that will be impacted by this election as follows:

- Mingus Union
- Cottonwood-Oak Creek
- Clarkdale-Jerome
- VACTE

The law also authorizes the County School Superintendent to provide any additional information that is important for voters to know and specifically if other districts are impacted. In this case, a consolidation would impact Mingus Union, Cottonwood-Oak Creek, Clarkdale-Jerome, and VACTE.

Currently Mingus Union provides instruction to grades 9-12 high school students who reside in either Cottonwood-Oak Creek (grades kindergarten (K)-8) or Clarkdale-Jerome (grades K-8).

VACTE is an overlay district that only provides instruction in career and technical education (CTE) for high school students (grades 9-12). In 2001, the voters approved the formation of VACTE and each of the following districts make up the VACTE boundary and the voters of each district elect a Governing Board member: Mingus Union, Cottonwood-Oak Creek, Clarkdale-Jerome, Camp Verde Unified School District No. 28, and Sedona-Oak Creek Unified School District No. 9.

The School District Boundaries as They Will Exist If Consolidation Is Approved:

- Mingus Union and its boundary will no longer exist.
- Cottonwood-Oak Creek and its boundary will no longer exist.
- The new Unified School District boundary will be the same boundary as the former Cottonwood-Oak Creek boundary and the new Unified School District will provide education to the K-12 students who reside in the new Unified School District's boundary.
- The current Clarkdale-Jerome boundary will remain unchanged and its Governing Board shall determine how the education of its students will be provided, which includes determining how its high school students will be educated.
- The current status of the VACTE boundary will need to be reconfigured from five to four district boundaries because Mingus Union and Cottonwood-Oak Creek boundaries will no longer exist. The new Unified School District will have a boundary that coincides with the previous Cottonwood-Oak Creek boundary. If consolidation is approved, the VACTE boundary will consist of the following four district boundaries: new Unified School District, Clarkdale-Jerome, Camp Verde Unified School District No. 28, and Sedona-Oak Creek Unified School District No. 9.

Additional Consolidation Plan Information That Applies From and After June 30, 2021:

Where will pupils attend school if the consolidation is approved?

- The new Unified School District grades K-12 students who reside in the new Unified School District boundary (the former Cottonwood-Oak Creek boundary) will be able to attend the new Unified School District.
- Former Mingus Union grades 9-12 high school students who resided in the Cottonwood-Oak Creek boundary will be able to attend the new Unified School District.
- Former Cottonwood-Oak Creek grades K-8 students who resided in the Cottonwood-Oak Creek boundary will be able to attend the new Unified School District.
- Any school aged child in Arizona may apply to attend the new Unified School District through open enrollment.
- Clarkdale-Jerome will serve grades K-8 students who reside in the Clarkdale-Jerome boundary.
- Clarkdale-Jerome will remain an elementary school district that will have a different designation for funding because it will no longer belong to a union high school district. The Clarkdale-Jerome Governing Board will determine how the education of its students is provided, which includes determining how its high school students will be educated.
- VACTE will be able to provide instruction to grades 9-12 career and technical education (CTE) students who reside in the new Unified School District, Clarkdale-Jerome, Camp Verde Unified School District No. 28, or Sedona-Oak Creek Unified School District No. 9 boundaries.

If consolidation is approved, the impact of the proposed boundary changes includes, but is not limited to: pupil transportation services, special education services, curriculum/instruction, administration, fiscal services, food services, changes to pupil-teacher ratios, school budgets (including teacher salaries), district policies and procedures, extra-curricular and co-curricular activities, health services, technology, facilities, human resources, and alternative education, all of which will be determined by the new Unified School District Governing Board.

None of the current school districts receive and none of the proposed school districts will receive Desegregation funding. The consolidation vote will not impact this.

CONSOLIDATION ELECTION IMPACT ON GOVERNANCE

A.R.S. § 15-459 requires the County School Superintendent to provide registered voters a detailed description of the changes that a consolidation of **Mingus Union and Cottonwood-Oak Creek** will create in regard to school district governance. This is extremely important because it impacts the options that citizens have to voice their will to local elected officials, in this case to school district Governing Boards, who in turn are vested with the power to control the direction and activities of the school district. Powers and duties of Governing Boards are outlined in A.R.S. § 15-341 (Required: those they must do) and § 15-342 (Permissive: those they may do).

The law also allows the County School Superintendent to provide any additional information that is important for voters to know, especially if other districts are impacted. In this case, a consolidation would also impact the governance of both **Clarkdale-Jerome** and **VACTE**.

The School Districts' Governance as They Currently Exist (Status Quo):

Mingus Union has a five-member Governing Board and each member serves a four-year term. The election is "at large" from within the school district's boundary. "At large" means members may be elected from any place within the school district. There are currently two members from Clarkdale, two members from Cottonwood, and one member from Jerome.

Cottonwood-Oak Creek has a five-member Governing Board and each member serves a four-year term. The election is "at large" from within the school district boundary. There are currently three members from Cornville and two members from Cottonwood.

Clarkdale-Jerome has a five-member Governing Board and each member serves a four-year term. The election is "at large" from within the school district boundary. Currently all five of the members are from Clarkdale.

VACTE has a five-member Governing Board and each member serves a four-year term. The election is "at large" from within the boundaries of its five-member districts: Mingus Union, Cottonwood-Oak Creek, Clarkdale-Jerome, Camp Verde Unified School District No. 28, and Sedona-Oak Creek Unified School District No. 9.

The School Districts' Governance as They Will Exist If Consolidation Is Approved:

Mingus Union Governing Board will no longer exist on June 30, 2021.

Cottonwood-Oak Creek Governing Board will no longer exist on June 30, 2021.

The new **Unified School District Governing Board** will be formed upon the signing of the official canvass by the Chairman of the Yavapai County Board of Supervisors and the Yavapai County School Superintendent, which makes the election results final. The signing of the official canvass should be completed in mid-November 2020. At that point, per A.R.S. § 15-459(R), the five members of the Mingus Union Governing Board and the five members of the Cottonwood-Oak Creek Governing Board will, if eligible, serve as a ten-member Governing Board for the new Unified School District through December 31, 2022. Unfortunately, since three of the Mingus Union Governing Board members will not reside in the new Unified School District boundary on June 30, 2021, three vacancies will exist due to Title 16 statutory residency requirements. In this situation, the County School Superintendent will make three appointments from qualified electors within the new Unified School District boundary to fill those seats.

An election will be held in November 2022 to select a five-member new Unified School District Governing Board, who will be elected "at large" from within the school district boundary, and the five members will begin serving on January 1, 2023. To begin a statutorily required rotation system, the initial election will have 2 members serve two-year terms and 3 members serve four-year terms. The three Governing Board members receiving the highest number of votes will serve four-year terms, while the fourth and fifth place finishers will serve two-year terms. Upon subsequent elections, each member will serve a four-year term.

To clarify, among the school districts subject to consolidation, there will be a time from the canvass of election in November 2020 until June 30, 2021, during which there will be three district Governing Boards operational at the same time. The Mingus Union Governing Board will be providing governance for Mingus Union while the Cottonwood-Oak Creek Governing Board will be providing governance for Cottonwood-Oak Creek, and the two Governing Boards combined (maximum of 10 members) will be providing governance for the new Unified School District. It is this new Unified School District Governing Board that will have the statutory authority to name the new Unified School District and make application to the Arizona Department of Education for a district number. The new Unified School District Governing Board may, or may not, incorporate former names into the new district name, and the Governing Board decides the process that will be followed in making that decision.

Among others powers and duties outlined in A.R.S. §§ 15-341 and 15-342, this combined Governing Board will have the authority to establish district and school budgets (including determining teacher salaries), open or close schools, determine administrative levels and structures, establish instructional and non-instructional staffing patterns, establish curriculum and instruction standards and alignment within statutory requirements and State Board of Education policies, establish grade cohorts at each school, establish school calendars and attendance zones, and create policies concerning transportation, special education, alternative education, food service, security and safety, maintenance, instructional technology, and extra-curricular and co-curricular activities.

Clarkdale-Jerome Governing Board will remain unchanged and its Governing Board shall determine how the education of its students is provided, which includes determining how its high school students will be educated. Assuming that tuition will be paid for its high school students attending the new Unified School District, voters in Clarkdale-Jerome will not be eligible to serve on or vote for the Governing Board members of the new Unified School District.

VACTE Governing Board will be reconfigured from a five-member Governing Board to a four-member Governing Board on June 30, 2021, because there will no longer be Governing Board members from Mingus Union and Cottonwood-Oak Creek and instead there will be a Governing Board member from the new Unified School District. The Yavapai County School Superintendent will work closely with the VACTE Governing Board to establish the process by which this modification can be completed. On June 30, 2021, the four-member Governing Board will have a member from each of the following four school districts: new Unified School District, Clarkdale-Jerome, Camp Verde Unified School District No. 28, and Sedona-Oak Creek Unified School District No. 9.

BUDGET AND FINANCE INFORMATION

K-12 School District Budget Information:

Every homeowner and business owner in Arizona pays property taxes for schools. Each year, the education budget is created by the Governor and the legislature, and the funds are divided among the school districts in Arizona using the state's equalization formulas. These formulas determine how much money each district will receive per pupil as well as how much of that funding is paid by the state and how much is paid through local property taxes.

The Maintenance and Operations Budget guides most day-to-day expenditures. Typical expenses include salaries (including teacher salaries), employee benefits, supplies, utilities, maintenance/repairs, and miscellaneous expenditures not of a capital nature. The primary components that drive a school district budget are:

- Average Daily Membership (student enrollment);
- Base Support Level (determined by the legislature);
- Transportation Support Level (determined by the legislature); and
- District Additional Assistance (determined by the legislature).

For determining the fiscal year/school year 2021-2022 (FY22) budget limits, a 2% for inflation was added to the Base Support Level. The Transportation Support Level is funding that districts receive for transportation on approved daily route miles for 180 days of school for eligible students. A 2% inflation factor was added to the Transportation Support Level. The Revenue Control Limit is then calculated by adding the Base Support Level to the Transportation Revenue Control Limit.

The District Support Level is the portion of the Revenue Control Limit that is eligible for state Equalization Assistance. It is calculated by adding the Base Support Level to the Transportation Support Level.

District Additional Assistance/Capital are funds for furniture, fixtures, technology, and equipment expected to last more than one year. The District Additional Assistance amount is a flat amount also set by the state legislature.

Equalization Assistance (State Aid) is the amount of money the state provides to school districts over and above the levy amount raised with the uniform Qualifying Tax Rate. If the tax rate necessary to fund the formulas is greater than the Qualifying Tax Rate, state Equalization Assistance is provided in order to keep this portion of local property taxes uniform throughout Arizona. The amount of Equalization Assistance provided varies inversely with a school district's per weighted student assessed property valuation. As the school district assessed valuation per student goes up, the Equalization Assistance goes down.

A portion of school district financing in Arizona comes from local property taxes. The funding of the Revenue Control Limit and District Additional Assistance for each school district is based upon what a tax rate generates for each district. This system results in school districts with high taxable property values per pupil paying a higher percentage of the total cost with local property taxes. In contrast, school districts with lower taxable property values per pupil pay a lower percentage of the total cost. Primary (Maintenance and Operations and District Additional Assistance) and secondary (overrides and bonds) property tax levies are determined by applying tax rates against the net assessed valuation of the school district.

Arizona law allows local school districts to ask voters to approve additional funding through local property tax increases called overrides. Overrides are to be used for Maintenance and Operations. Mingus Union, Cottonwood-Oak Creek, and Clarkdale-Jerome have voter-approved overrides. Mingus Union and Cottonwood-Oak Creek also have voter-approved bonds. Bond money may be used to acquire land, build schools, purchase pupil transportation vehicles, or pay contractors, construction consultants, and equipment vendors providing materials and services for facility projects and equipment designated on an appropriate election ballot. Overrides and bonds are funded through secondary property taxes.

Property Valuation Definitions:

- The market value, or full cash value, of all real property in Arizona is the starting point for determining taxable values. Arizona courts have interpreted the term "full cash value" to mean "cash equivalent value" of the property.
- Arizona uses two types of property values for taxing purposes. The limited property values are used to calculate primary property taxes. A.R.S. § 42-11001(7) defines limited property value as the value determined pursuant to A.R.S. § 42-13301. Under A.R.S. § 42-13301, the Limited Property Value of property for property taxation purposes is the limited property value of the property in the preceding valuation year plus 5% of that value. The Limited Property Value of a parcel of property shall not exceed its current full cash value. Per A.R.S. § 42-11001(7), the Limited Property Value is used to compute the levy limitations for counties, cities, towns, and community college districts, and for assessing, fixing, determining, and levying primary and secondary property taxes on all property except property described in A.R.S. § 42-13304, which includes personal property other than mobile homes and property included in property class one under A.R.S. § 42-12001(1)-(7), (11), and (14).
- The assessed value for an owner-occupied residence is based on 10% of the Limited Property Value.
- The assessed value of a business is based on 18% of the Limited Property Value.

Property Valuation Definitions Continued:

According to A.R.S. § 15-459(D)(3), the County School Superintendent is required to illustrate the full cash value, the assessed valuation, and the estimated amount of the primary property taxes and the estimated amount of the secondary property taxes under the proposed boundary changes for each of the following:

- (a) An owner-occupied residence whose assessed valuation is the average assessed valuation of property classified as class three, as prescribed by section 42-12003 for the current year in the school district.
- (b) An owner-occupied residence whose assessed valuation is one-half of the assessed valuation of the residence in subdivision (a) of this paragraph.
- (c) An owner-occupied residence whose assessed valuation is twice the assessed valuation of the residence in subdivision (a) of this paragraph.
- (d) A business whose assessed valuation is the average of the assessed valuation of property classified as class one, as prescribed by section 42-12001, paragraphs 12 and 13 for the current year in the school district.

Tax Rate Information:

The Four Property Tax Scenarios in the tax estimation tables on the following two pages of this Informational Pamphlet Consolidation Plan provide estimated information about current primary and secondary property taxes and primary and secondary property taxes in the new Unified School District and Clarkdale-Jerome if consolidation is approved.

- Currently and if the consolidation of Mingus Union and Cottonwood-Oak Creek is not approved (including, but not limited to):
 - Taxpayers within the boundaries of Cottonwood-Oak Creek and Clarkdale-Jerome pay property taxes to Mingus Union and to their specific elementary school districts.
 - Taxpayers within the boundary of Cottonwood-Oak Creek pay voter-approved override and bond property taxes for Mingus Union and voter-approved override and bond property taxes for Cottonwood-Oak Creek.
 - Taxpayers within the boundary of Clarkdale-Jerome pay voter-approved override and bond property taxes for Mingus Union and override property taxes for Clarkdale-Jerome.
- If the consolidation of Mingus Union and Cottonwood-Oak Creek is approved (including, but not limited to):
 - Taxpayers within the former school district boundary of Cottonwood-Oak Creek will pay property taxes for the new Unified School District, which includes the former voter-approved override and bond property taxes for Mingus Union and Cottonwood-Oak Creek.
 - Taxpayers within the district boundary of Clarkdale-Jerome are expected to no longer pay property taxes for Mingus Union. Taxpayers within the district boundary of Clarkdale-Jerome will pay property taxes for Clarkdale-Jerome, which includes the former voter-approved override property taxes for Clarkdale-Jerome. The Clarkdale-Jerome Governing Board will have multiple options to provide for the education of its high school students.
 - Taxpayers within the boundary of the new Unified School District may be impacted because Arizona law uses formula driven allocations for various funds, including, but not limited to, the Classroom Site Fund, Secure Rural Schools, and the Instructional Improvement Fund. The number of students attending the new Unified School District may impact the revenue of these funds.
 - In estimating the tax rates in the Four Property Tax Scenarios on the following two pages, especially with respect to the Mingus Union bond indebtedness, an assumption was made that Clarkdale-Jerome would pay tuition to the new Unified School District for its high school students. This estimated amount for tuition is included in the tax rate calculations in the "Estimated Primary Property Taxes" for the Clarkdale-Jerome / Mingus Property Owner table on page 9 of this Informational Pamphlet Consolidation Plan.

Arizona law bases a school district's bonding capacity on the school district's net assessed full cash property value. A decrease in this value could have the effect of decreasing bonding capacity. The bond tax rates have been estimated based on the bond payments due July 1, 2020, with an average cash balance of the prior two years and delinquency allowance of 7%. Mingus Union's override and bond calculations impact the secondary property taxes. In the current year calculations, the assessed value of Cottonwood-Oak Creek and Clarkdale-Jerome were used to set the tax rates. Voters in Cottonwood-Oak and Clarkdale-Jerome passed the Mingus Union override and bond. In the "Estimated Secondary Property Taxes" column in the table on the following page for the new Unified School District, only the assessed valuation of Cottonwood-Oak Creek was used.

The fiscal year/school year 2020-21 Qualifying Tax Rate was used to estimate the property tax rate in the Four Property Tax Scenarios in the tax estimation tables on the following two pages of this Informational Pamphlet Consolidation Plan. Tax rates are applied per \$100 of assessed property value. The 2020 assessed valuations were used for all calculations. The school districts' bond debt schedules were used to estimate the bond property tax rates in the Four Property Tax Scenarios in the tax estimation tables on the following two pages of this Informational Pamphlet Consolidation Plan.

Claim of Asset Information:

In general, a "union high school district" is made up of two or more adjoining school districts. In this case, Mingus Union works in partnership with Cottonwood-Oak Creek and Clarkdale-Jerome. As a result, they all contribute to the capital (now referred to as District Additional Assistance) needs of the union high school district, especially as bonds are considered. If a partnership of this nature were to dissolve, such as with the proposed consolidation, Clarkdale-Jerome would remain an elementary school district that will have a different designation for funding because it will no longer belong to a union high school district, and some attention would need to be paid to what Arizona law refers to as a "claim of assets." A "claim of assets" allows a non-continuing entity, in this case Clarkdale-Jerome, to seek relief from the new Unified School District to offset the amount of funds, minus depreciation, that Clarkdale-Jerome taxpayers provided for Mingus Union, which no longer exists and for which Clarkdale-Jerome no longer has any political control. A.R.S. § 15-459 is silent in this regard. If consolidation is approved, it is reasonable to believe that the Clarkdale-Jerome Governing Board may approach the new Unified School District Governing Board to seek a resolution of this issue. The resolution to this issue is yet to be determined.

**FOUR PROPERTY TAX SCENARIOS BASED ON CURRENT PROPERTY TAX YEAR (FY21)
&
THE ESTIMATED INCREASE/DECREASE IF CONSOLIDATION IS APPROVED (FY22)**

	Cottonwood-Oak Creek / Mingus Property Owner	FY21 (Current)			FY22 (with consolidation)	Change
Scenario #1	A.R.S. § 15-459(D)(3)(a): An owner-occupied residence whose assessed valuation is the average assessed valuation of property classified as class three:	Cottonwood-Oak Creek Tax	Mingus Tax	Total Collective Tax	New K-12 Unified Estimated	Increase/Decrease
	Full Cash Value	\$203,540			\$203,540	
	Limited Property Value	\$146,308			\$146,308	
	Assessed Value (based on Limited Property Value)	\$14,630			\$14,630	
	Estimated Primary Property Taxes	\$278	\$272	\$550	\$549	
	Estimated Secondary Property Taxes – Override	\$63	\$36	\$99	\$106	
	<u>Estimated Secondary Property Taxes – Bond</u>	<u>\$66</u>	<u>\$91</u>	<u>\$157</u>	<u>\$134</u>	
	Estimated Total Taxes	\$407	\$399	\$806	\$789	-\$17
Scenario #2	A.R.S. § 15-459(D)(3)(b): An owner-occupied residence whose assessed valuation is one-half of the assessed valuation of the average valued residence:	Cottonwood-Oak Creek Tax	Mingus Tax	Total Collective Tax	New K-12 Unified Estimated	Increase/Decrease
	Full Cash Value	\$157,231			\$157,231	
	Limited Property Value	\$73,157			\$73,157	
	Assessed Value (based on Limited Property Value)	\$7,316			\$7,316	
	Estimated Primary Property Taxes	\$139	\$136	\$275	\$275	
	Estimated Secondary Property Taxes – Override	\$32	\$18	\$50	\$53	
	<u>Estimated Secondary Property Taxes – Bond</u>	<u>\$33</u>	<u>\$46</u>	<u>\$79</u>	<u>\$67</u>	
	Estimated Total Taxes	\$204	\$200	\$404	\$395	-\$9
Scenario #3	A.R.S. § 15-459(D)(3)(c): An owner-occupied residence whose assessed valuation is twice the assessed valuation of the average valued residence:	Cottonwood-Oak Creek Tax	Mingus Tax	Total Collective Tax	New K-12 Unified Estimated	Increase/Decrease
	Full Cash Value	\$354,046			\$354,046	
	Limited Property Value	\$292,576			\$292,576	
	Assessed Value (based on Limited Property Value)	\$29,258			\$29,258	
	Estimated Primary Property Taxes	\$556	\$543	\$1,099	\$1,098	
	Estimated Secondary Property Taxes – Override	\$127	\$72	\$199	\$212	
	<u>Estimated Secondary Property Taxes – Bond</u>	<u>\$133</u>	<u>\$182</u>	<u>\$315</u>	<u>\$268</u>	
	Estimated Total Taxes	\$816	\$797	\$1,613	\$1,578	-\$35
Scenario #4	A.R.S. § 15-459(D)(3)(d): A business whose assessed valuation is the average of the assessed valuation of property classified as class one (§ 42-12001 paragraphs 12 and 13):	Cottonwood-Oak Creek Tax	Mingus Tax	Total Collective Tax	New K-12 Unified Estimated	Increase/Decrease
	Full Cash Value	\$324,555			\$324,555	
	Limited Property Value	\$232,042			\$232,042	
	Assessed Value (based on Limited Property Value)	\$41,767			\$41,767	
	Estimated Primary Property Taxes	\$794	\$775	\$1,569	\$1,568	
	Estimated Secondary Property Taxes – Override	\$181	\$103	\$284	\$303	
	<u>Estimated Secondary Property Taxes – Bond</u>	<u>\$190</u>	<u>\$260</u>	<u>\$450</u>	<u>\$382</u>	
	Estimated Total Taxes	\$1,165	\$1,138	\$2,303	\$2,253	-\$50

Note: Although the Yavapai County School Superintendent has obtained the information contained in the “Four Property Tax Scenarios” from the Yavapai County Assessor’s Office and Arizona Department of Education School Finance Division to make these estimates, all references are approximate only and no representations or warranties, express or implied, are made as to the accuracy or reliability of this information.

**FOUR PROPERTY TAX SCENARIOS BASED ON CURRENT PROPERTY TAX YEAR (FY21)
&
THE ESTIMATED INCREASE/DECREASE IF CONSOLIDATION IS APPROVED (FY22)**

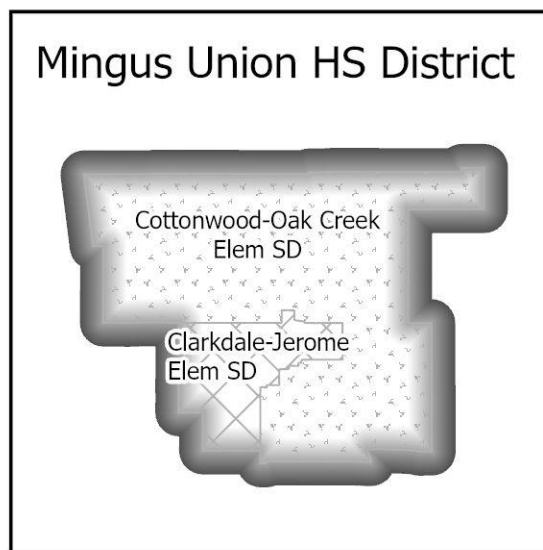
	Clarkdale-Jerome / Mingus Property Owner	FY21 (Current)			FY22 (with consolidation)	Change
Scenario #1	A.R.S. § 15-459(D)(3)(a): An owner-occupied residence whose assessed valuation is the average assessed valuation of property classified as class three:	Clarkdale-Jerome Tax	Mingus Tax	Total Collective Tax	Clarkdale-Jerome Estimated Tax	Increase/Decrease
	Full Cash Value	\$251,197			\$251,197	
	Limited Property Value	\$149,294			\$149,294	
	Assessed Value (based on Limited Property Value)	\$14,929			\$14,929	
	Estimated Primary Property Taxes	\$274	\$277	\$551	\$633	
	Estimated Secondary Property Taxes – Override	\$86	\$37	\$123	\$85	
	<u>Estimated Secondary Property Taxes – Bond</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$93</u>	<u>\$93</u>	<u>\$0</u>	
	Estimated Total Taxes	\$360	\$407	\$767	\$718	-\$49
Scenario #2	A.R.S. § 15-459(D)(3)(b): An owner-occupied residence whose assessed valuation is one-half of the assessed valuation of the average valued residence:	Clarkdale-Jerome Tax	Mingus Tax	Total Collective Tax	Clarkdale-Jerome Estimated Tax	Increase/Decrease
	Full Cash Value	\$77,835			\$77,835	
	Limited Property Value	\$74,652			\$74,652	
	Assessed Value (based on Limited Property Value)	\$7,465			\$7,465	
	Estimated Primary Property Taxes	\$137	\$139	\$276	\$317	
	Estimated Secondary Property Taxes – Override	\$43	\$18	\$61	\$42	
	<u>Estimated Secondary Property Taxes – Bond</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$46</u>	<u>\$46</u>	<u>\$0</u>	
	Estimated Total Taxes	\$180	\$203	\$383	\$359	-\$24
Scenario #3	A.R.S. § 15-459(D)(3)(c): An owner-occupied residence whose assessed valuation is twice the assessed valuation of the average valued residence:	Clarkdale-Jerome Tax	Mingus Tax	Total Collective Tax	Clarkdale-Jerome Estimated Tax	Increase/Decrease
	Full Cash Value	\$372,289			\$372,289	
	Limited Property Value	\$298,591			\$298,591	
	Assessed Value (based on Limited Property Value)	\$29,860			\$29,860	
	Estimated Primary Property Taxes	\$548	\$554	\$1,102	\$1,267	
	Estimated Secondary Property Taxes – Override	\$172	\$74	\$246	\$169	
	<u>Estimated Secondary Property Taxes – Bond</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$186</u>	<u>\$186</u>	<u>\$0</u>	
	Estimated Total Taxes	\$720	\$814	\$1,534	\$1,436	-\$98
Scenario #4	A.R.S. § 15-459(D)(3)(d): A business whose assessed valuation is the average of the assessed valuation of property classified as class one (§ 42-12001 paragraphs 12 and 13) **:	Clarkdale-Jerome Tax	Mingus Tax	Total Collective Tax	Clarkdale-Jerome Estimated Tax	Increase/Decrease
	Full Cash Value	\$153,667			\$153,667	
	Limited Property Value	\$119,864			\$119,864	
	Assessed Value (based on Limited Property Value)	\$21,576			\$21,576	
	Estimated Primary Property Taxes	\$396	\$401	\$797	\$915	
	Estimated Secondary Property Taxes – Override	\$125	\$53	\$178	\$122	
	<u>Estimated Secondary Property Taxes – Bond</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$134</u>	<u>\$134</u>	<u>\$0</u>	
	Estimated Total Taxes	\$521	\$588	\$1,109	\$1,037	-\$72

****Estimates for Scenario #4 do not include Phoenix Cement**

Note: Although the Yavapai County School Superintendent has obtained the information contained in the “Four Property Tax Scenarios” from the Yavapai County Assessor’s Office and Arizona Department of Education School Finance Division to make these estimates, all references are approximate only and no representations or warranties, express or implied, are made as to the accuracy or reliability of this information.

MINGUS UNION BALLOT INFORMATION

RESIDENTS OF MINGUS UNION MAY VOTE “YES” OR “NO” ON CONSOLIDATION



Mingus Union:

If you are a voter that resides in the separate and distinct political subdivision of Mingus Union, you will receive a ballot.

The Ballot Question required by A.R.S. § 15-459(E) is:

“Consolidation includes the assumption of liability by the resulting school district for all indebtedness of existing school districts or those parts of school districts proposed for consolidation. Do you support consolidation under the specified provisions of the consolidation plan? Yes () No ().”

The proposal to consolidate Mingus Union and Cottonwood-Oak Creek to form a new Unified School District from and after June 30, 2021, **excludes** the Mingus Union feeder district of Clarkdale-Jerome from being a part of the new Unified School District. It took a majority of voters in Cottonwood-Oak Creek AND a majority of voters in Clarkdale-Jerome to form Mingus Union; therefore, it will take a majority of voters in Cottonwood-Oak Creek AND a majority of voters in Clarkdale-Jerome to dissolve it or make it no longer exist. For that reason, the ballots of Mingus Union voters will have to be separated into two races to count the votes separately for those residing in the Mingus Union feeder district of Cottonwood-Oak Creek and to count the votes separately for those residing in the Mingus Union feeder district of Clarkdale-Jerome.

In order for the proposed consolidation to take place, Arizona law requires that a majority of those voting in Cottonwood-Oak Creek as Mingus Union voters **AND** a majority of those voting in Clarkdale-Jerome as Mingus Union voters **AND** a majority of those voting in Cottonwood-Oak Creek as Cottonwood-Oak Creek voters must vote yes.

If a voter resides in the boundary of Cottonwood-Oak Creek, the voter will receive **two ballots** with the exact same question. The voter will be voting one ballot as a Mingus Union voter and one ballot as a Cottonwood-Oak Creek voter.

If a voter resides in Clarkdale-Jerome, the voter will receive **one ballot** and will be voting that one ballot as a Mingus Union voter.

**SPECIAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 3, 2020
TO DETERMINE IF MINGUS UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4
AND COTTONWOOD-OAK CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 6
SHALL CONSOLIDATE TO FORM A UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT FROM AND AFTER JUNE 30, 2021**

MINGUS UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4

(which includes voters from the two feeder districts of Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School District No. 6 and Clarkdale-Jerome Elementary School District No. 3)

SAMPLE BALLOT

QUESTION NO. _

Consolidation includes the assumption of liability by the resulting school district for all indebtedness of existing school districts or those parts of school districts proposed for consolidation. Do you support consolidation under the specified provisions of the consolidation plan?

☐ **YES**

☐ **NO**

A "YES" vote shall have the effect (including, but not limited to) that on June 30, 2021:

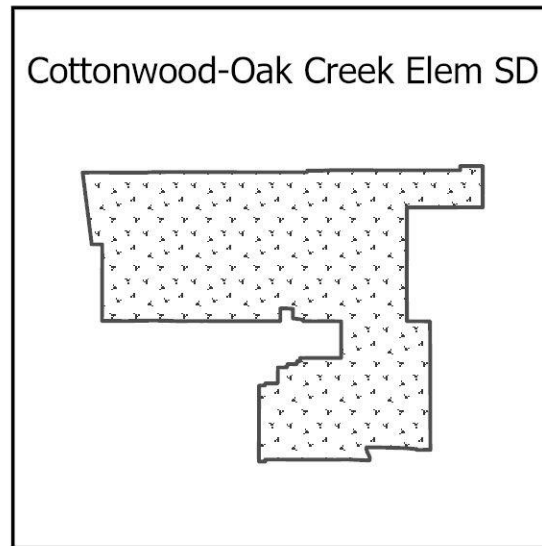
- Mingus Union High School District No. 4 and Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School District No. 6. will no longer exist;
- Clarkdale-Jerome Elementary School District No. 3 will continue operations, which include a determination with how its high school students are educated;
- A Unified School District (K-12) will be formed within the current boundaries of Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School District No. 6; and
- Valley Academy for Career and Technology Education No. 01 will have its governing board reduced from five members to four members.

A "NO" vote shall have the effect (including, but not limited to) that:

- The status quo shall be maintained;
- Mingus Union High School District No. 4, Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School District No. 6, and Clarkdale-Jerome Elementary School District No. 3 will continue operations as they currently exist; and
- Valley Academy for Career and Technology Education No. 01 will continue to be served by a five-member board.

COTTONWOOD-OAK CREEK BALLOT INFORMATION

RESIDENTS OF COTTONWOOD-OAK CREEK MAY VOTE “YES” OR “NO” ON CONSOLIDATION



Cottonwood-Oak Creek:

If you are a voter that resides in the separate and distinct political subdivision of Cottonwood-Oak Creek, you will receive a ballot.

The Ballot Question required by A.R.S. § 15-459(E) is:

“Consolidation includes the assumption of liability by the resulting school district for all indebtedness of existing school districts or those parts of school districts proposed for consolidation. Do you support consolidation under the specified provisions of the consolidation plan? Yes () No ().”

The proposal to consolidate Mingus Union and Cottonwood-Oak Creek to form a new Unified School District from and after June 30, 2021, **excludes** the Mingus Union feeder district of Clarkdale-Jerome from being a part of the new Unified School District. It took a majority of voters in Cottonwood-Oak Creek AND a majority of voters in Clarkdale-Jerome to form Mingus Union; therefore, it will take a majority of voters in Cottonwood-Oak Creek AND a majority of voters in Clarkdale-Jerome to dissolve it or make it no longer exist. For that reason, the ballots of Mingus Union voters will have to be separated into two races to count the votes separately for those residing in the Mingus Union feeder district of Cottonwood-Oak Creek and to count the votes separately for those residing in the Mingus Union feeder district of Clarkdale-Jerome.

In order for the proposed consolidation to take place, Arizona law requires that a majority of those voting in Cottonwood-Oak Creek as Mingus Union voters **AND** a majority of those voting in Clarkdale-Jerome as Mingus Union voters **AND** a majority of those voting in Cottonwood-Oak Creek as Cottonwood-Oak Creek voters must vote yes.

If a voter resides in the boundary of Cottonwood-Oak Creek, the voter will receive **two ballots** with the exact same question. The voter will be voting one ballot as a Mingus Union voter and one ballot as a Cottonwood-Oak Creek voter.

**SPECIAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 3, 2020
TO DETERMINE IF MINGUS UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4
AND COTTONWOOD-OAK CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 6
SHALL CONSOLIDATE TO FORM A UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT FROM AND AFTER JUNE 30, 2021**

**COTTONWOOD-OAK CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 6
SAMPLE BALLOT**

QUESTION NO. _

Consolidation includes the assumption of liability by the resulting school district for all indebtedness of existing school districts or those parts of school districts proposed for consolidation. Do you support consolidation under the specified provisions of the consolidation plan?

☐ **YES**

☐ **NO**

A "YES" vote shall have the effect (including, but not limited to) that on June 30, 2021:

- Mingus Union High School District No. 4 and Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School District No. 6. will no longer exist;
- Clarkdale-Jerome Elementary School District No. 3 will continue operations, which include a determination with how its high school students are educated;
- A Unified School District (K-12) will be formed within the current boundaries of Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School District No. 6; and
- Valley Academy for Career and Technology Education No. 01 will have its governing board reduced from five members to four members.

A "NO" vote shall have the effect (including, but not limited to) that:

- The status quo shall be maintained;
- Mingus Union High School District No. 4, Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School District No. 6, and Clarkdale-Jerome Elementary School District No. 3 will continue operations as they currently exist; and
- Valley Academy for Career and Technology Education No. 01 will continue to be served by a five-member board.

WHAT DOES A “YES” VOTE DO?

Mingus Union is a separate and distinct political subdivision that serves grades 9-12 high school students in its boundary. It was created by the two feeder districts of Cottonwood-Oak Creek and Clarkdale-Jerome to serve the high school students that reside in each of the two districts. Mingus Union will no longer exist if the proposed consolidation is approved.

Cottonwood-Oak Creek is a separate and distinct political subdivision that serves grades K-8 students in its boundary. Cottonwood-Oak Creek will no longer exist if the proposed consolidation is approved.

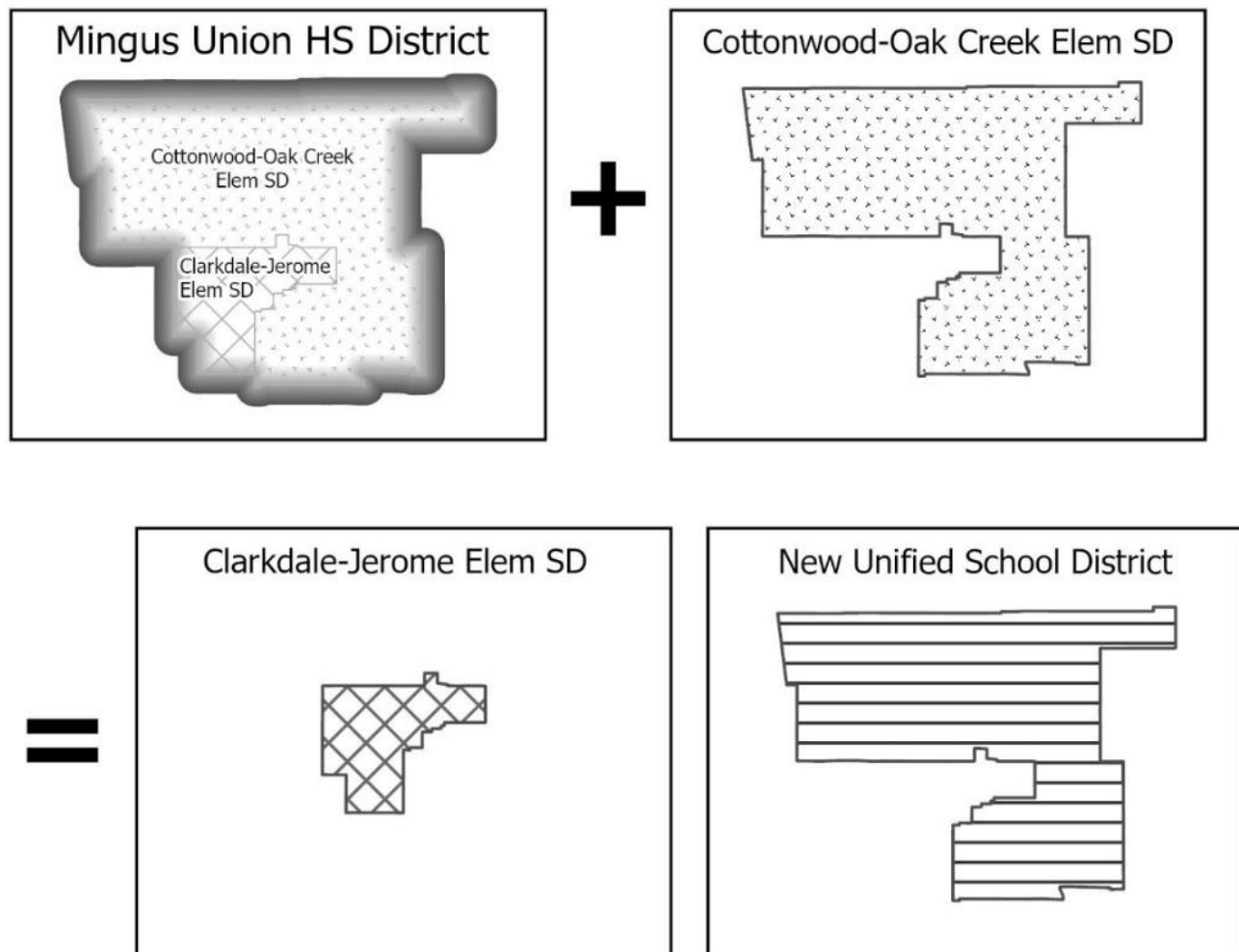
Clarkdale-Jerome is a separate and distinct political subdivision that serves grades K-8 students in its boundary. Clarkdale-Jerome will remain an elementary school district that serves grades K-8 students in its boundary; however, it will have a different designation for funding because it will no longer belong to a union high school district if the proposed consolidation is approved.

The new Unified School District would be formed as a separate and distinct political subdivision that serves grades K-12 students in its boundary (the current Cottonwood-Oak Creek boundary) if the proposed consolidation is approved.

Proposal for Consolidation:

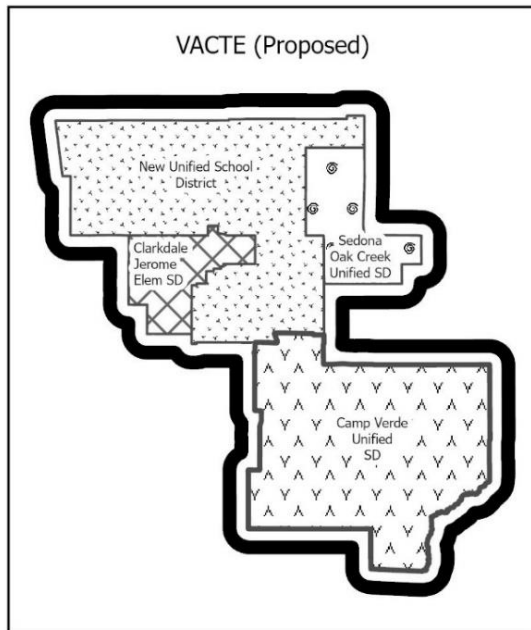
The proposal to consolidate Mingus Union **AND** Cottonwood-Oak Creek to form a new Unified School District from and after June 30, 2021, **excludes** the Mingus Union feeder district boundary of Clarkdale-Jerome from being a part of the new Unified School District.

A “YES” Vote Will:

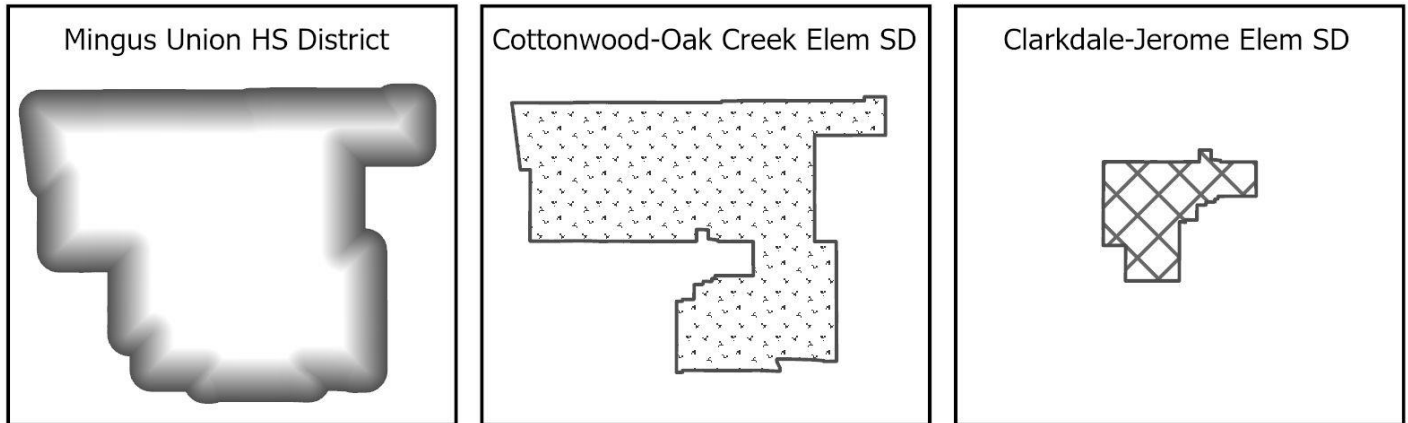


A "YES" Vote Will:

- Take a portion of the Mingus Union boundary (the portion that is the Cottonwood-Oak Creek boundary and that does not include the Clarkdale-Jerome boundary) and consolidate that portion of the Mingus Union boundary with all of the Cottonwood-Oak Creek boundary.
- Dissolve the separate and distinct political subdivision of Mingus Union, so it will no longer exist.
- Abolish the separate and distinct political subdivision of Cottonwood-Oak Creek, so it will no longer exist.
- Have the separate and distinct political subdivision of Clarkdale-Jerome continue operations to serve the grades K-8 students in its district; however, with Mingus Union no longer in existence, Clarkdale-Jerome will now have to determine how its high school students are educated.
- Form a new not yet named Unified School District within the current boundary of Cottonwood-Oak Creek to educate the grades K-12 students within its boundary.
- Affect the separate and distinct political subdivision of VACTE. Although the separate and distinct political subdivision of VACTE will continue to exist to serve grades 9-12 career and technical education (CTE) students in Clarkdale-Jerome, Camp Verde Unified School District No. 28, and Sedona-Oak Creek Unified School District No. 9, with it also now serving grades 9-12 CTE students in the new Unified School District; its Governing Board will go from five members to four members with a representative from each of the four school districts it would then serve.

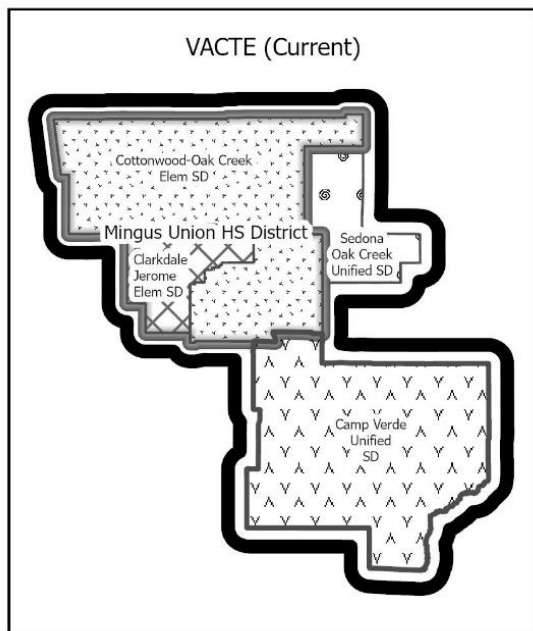


WHAT DOES A “NO” VOTE DO?

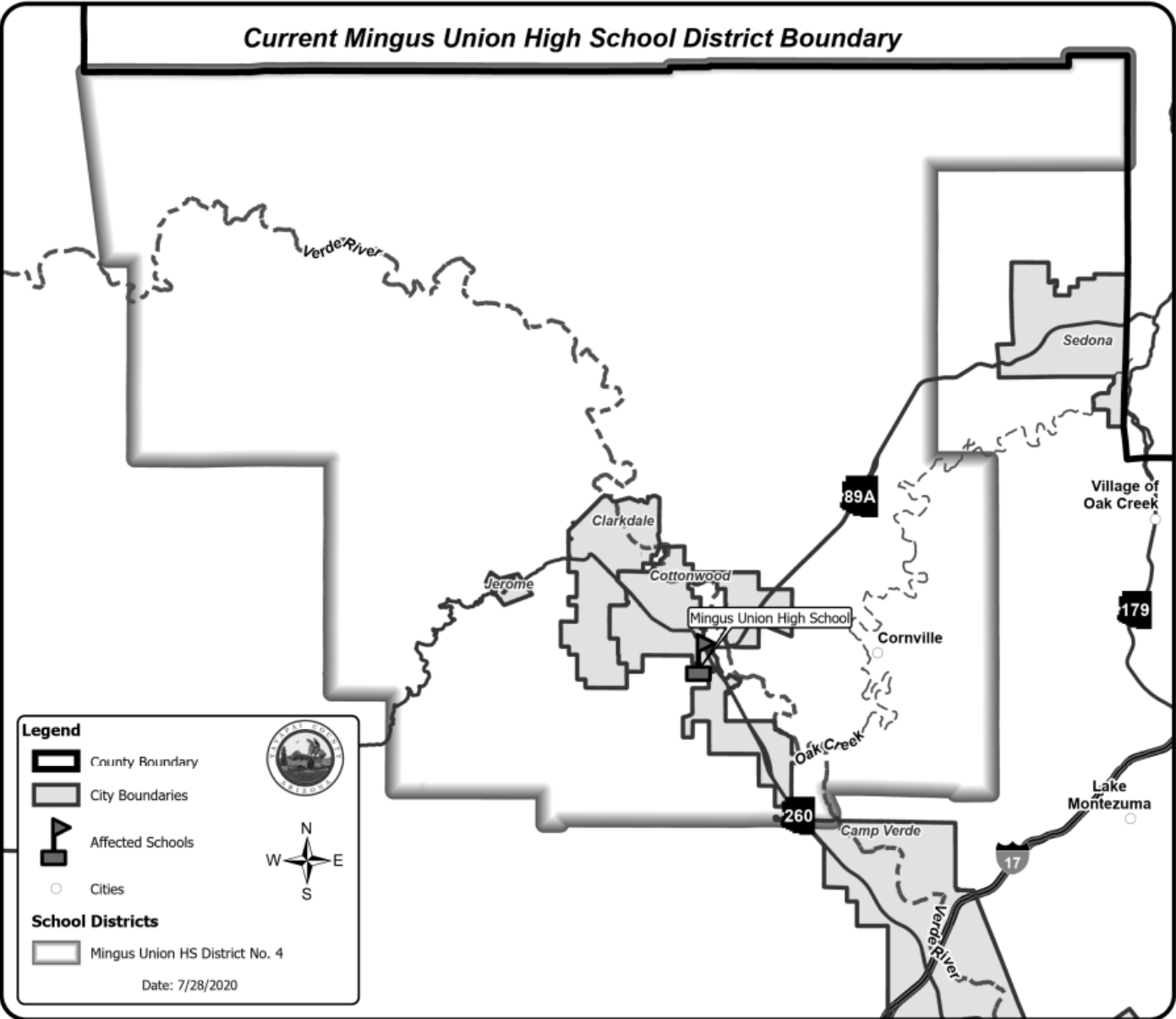


A “NO” Vote Will:

- Maintain the current status (status quo) and NOT consolidate school districts.
- Continue to have the separate and distinct political subdivision of Mingus Union serve grades 9-12 high school students in its boundary and have operations continue as they currently exist.
- Continue to have the separate and distinct political subdivision of Cottonwood-Oak Creek serve grades K-8 students in its boundary and have operations continue as they currently exist.
- Continue to have the separate and distinct political subdivision of Clarkdale-Jerome serve grades K-8 students in its boundary and have operations continue as they currently exist.
- Continue to have the separate and distinct political subdivision of VACTE serve grades 9-12 career and technical education (CTE) students in Mingus Union, Cottonwood-Oak Creek, Clarkdale-Jerome, Camp Verde Unified School District No. 28, and Sedona-Oak Creek Unified School District No. 9 and have it continue with a five-member Governing Board with a representative from each of the five school districts it serves.

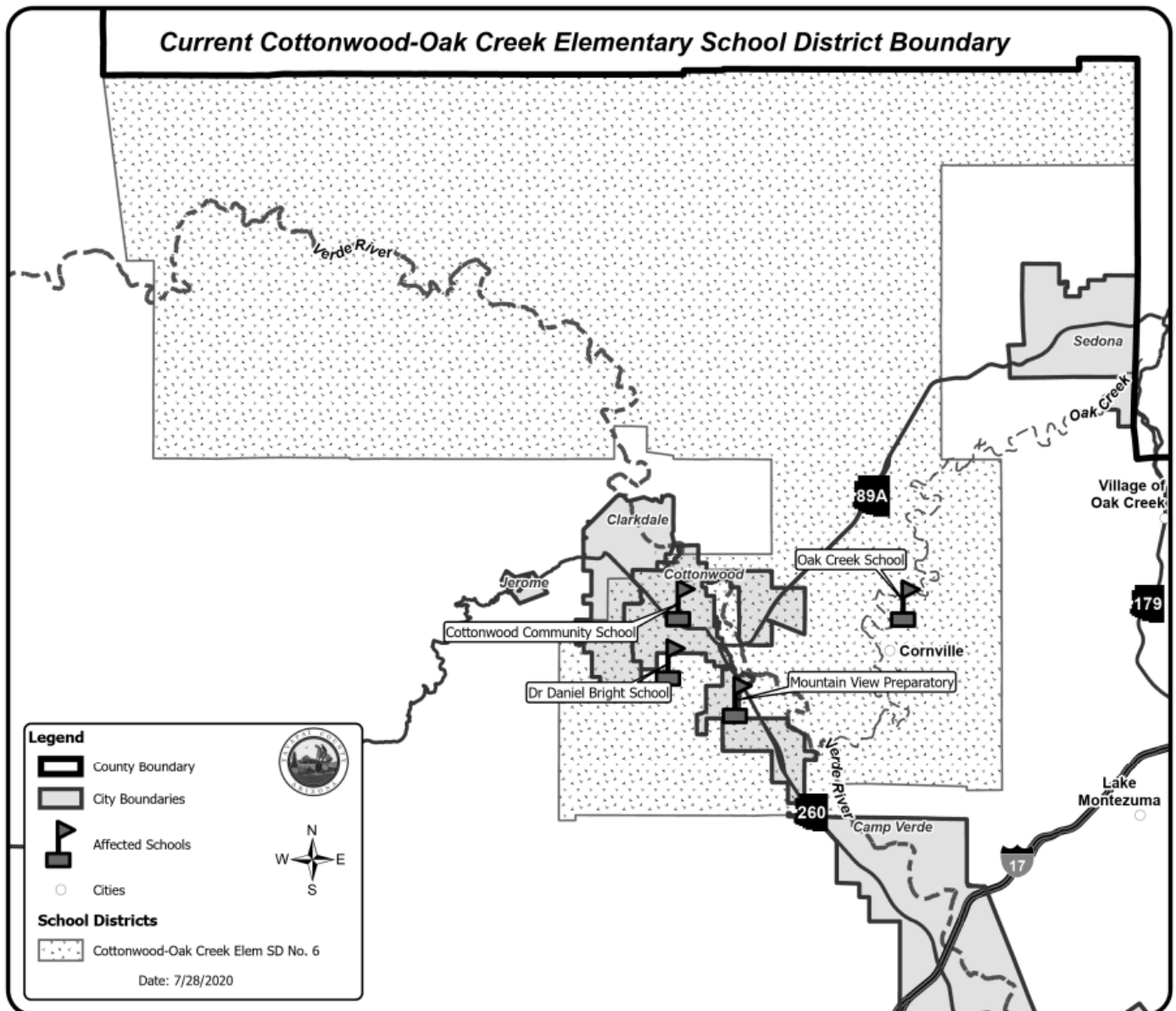


MINGUS UNION CURRENT BOUNDARY



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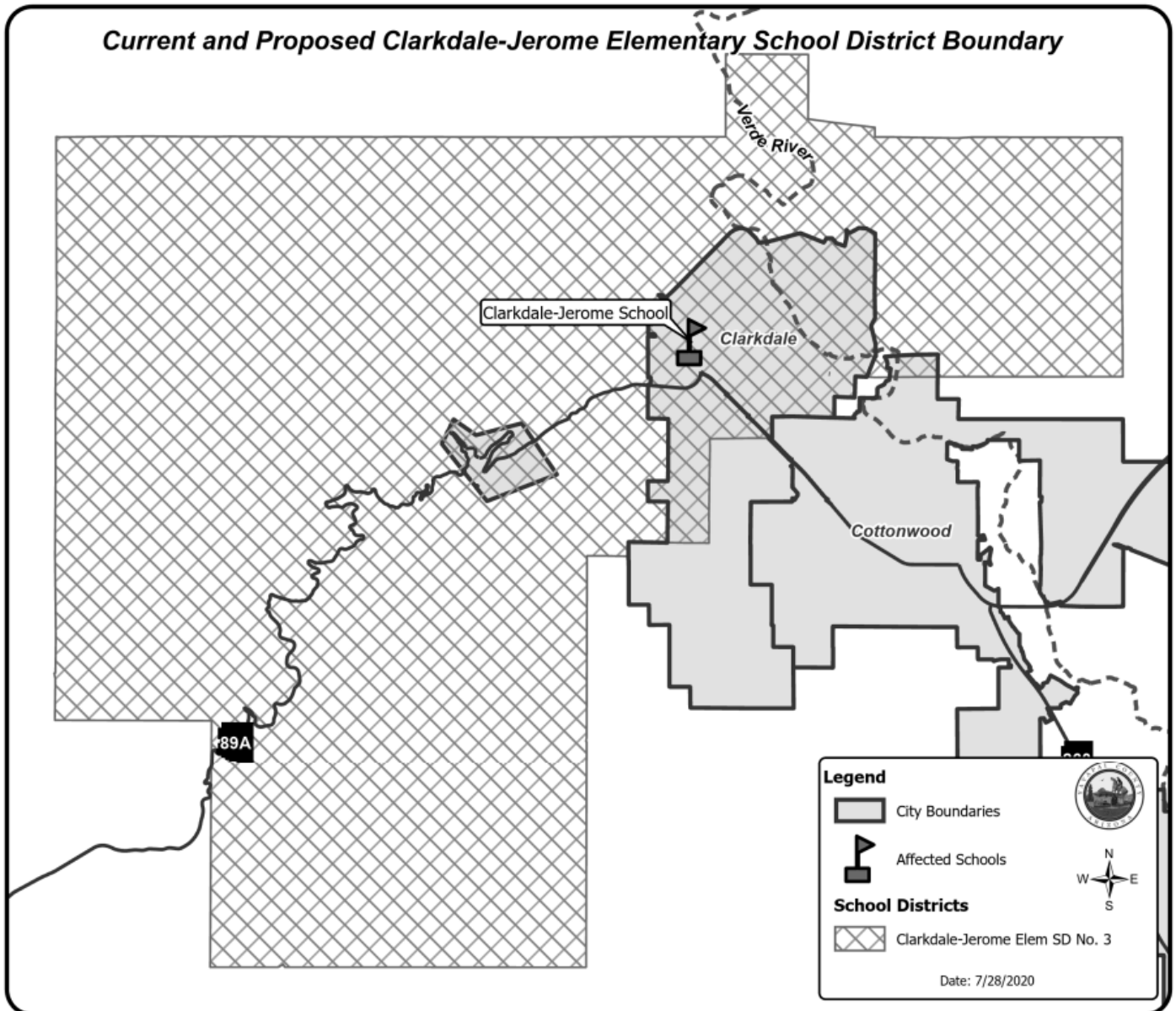
COTTONWOOD-OAK CREEK CURRENT BOUNDARY



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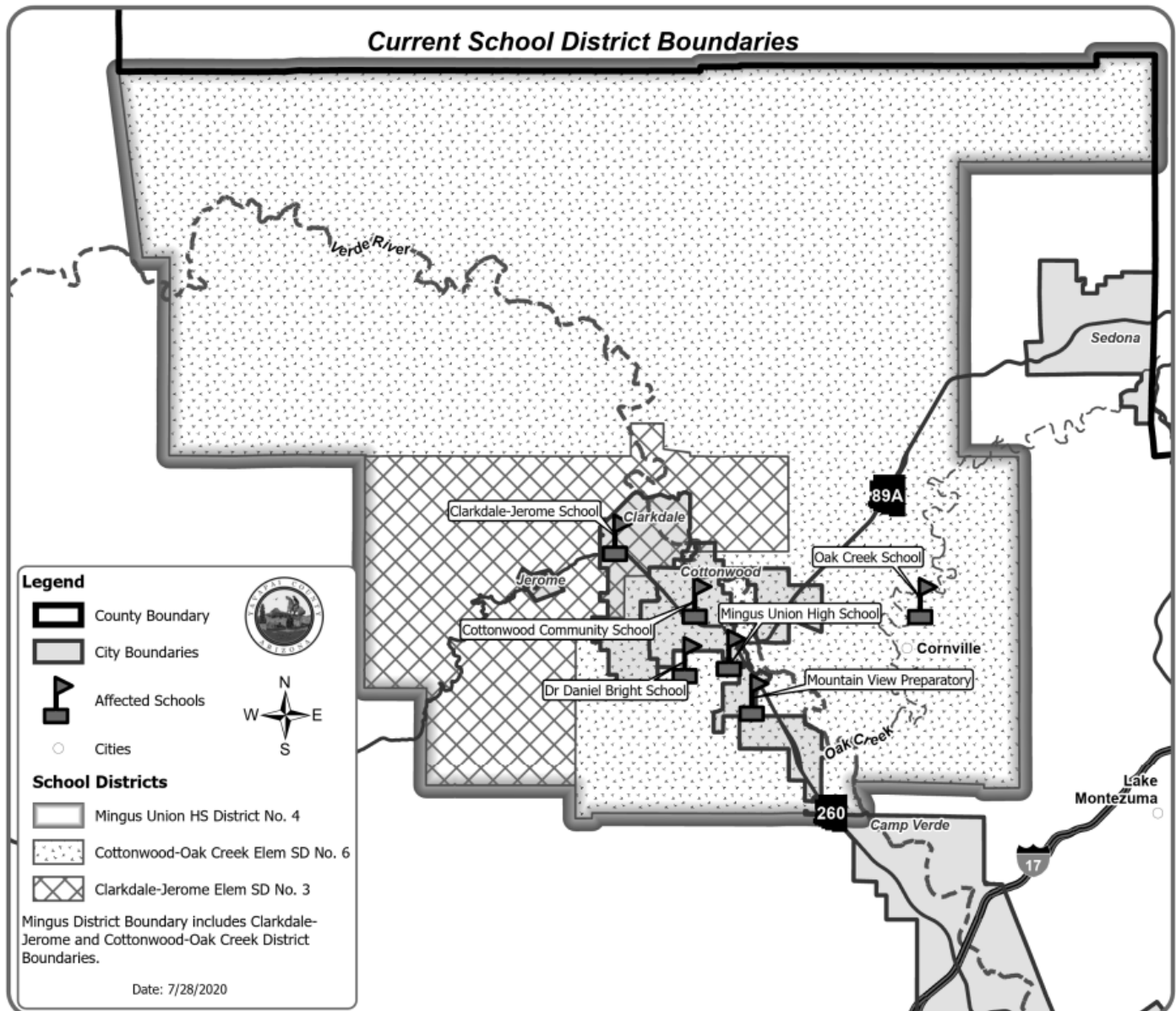
CLARKDALE-JEROME BOUNDARY (CURRENT AND PROPOSED)

The Clarkdale-Jerome Boundary will remain unchanged even if consolidation is approved.



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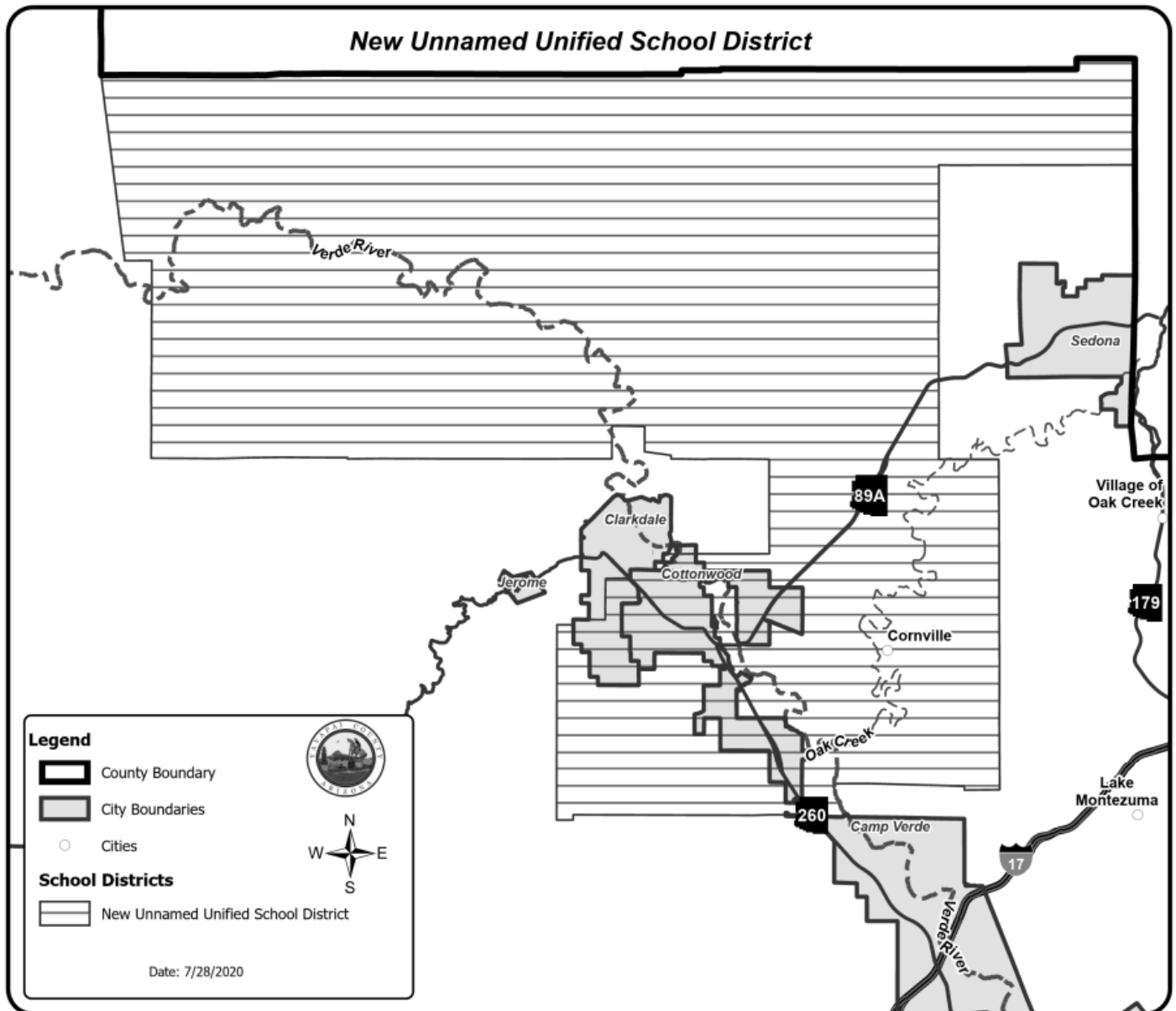
MINGUS UNION, COTTONWOOD-OAK CREEK, AND CLARKDALE-JEROME CURRENT BOUNDARIES



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NEW UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOUNDARY

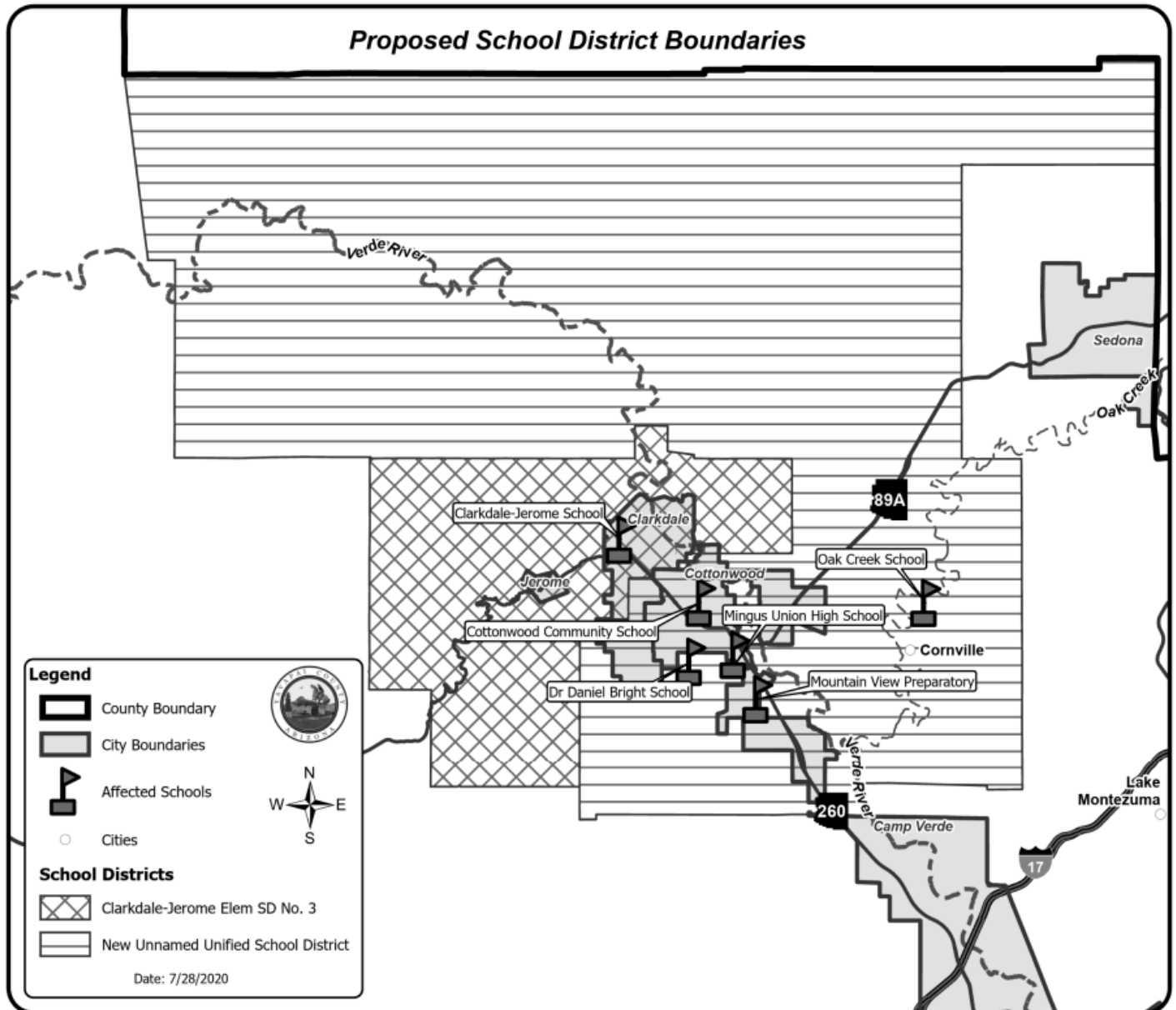
If consolidation is approved, the boundary for the new Unified School District will be the same as the former Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School District No. 6 boundary and will provide education to the K-12 students who reside in the district boundary.



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NEW UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT AND CLARKDALE-JEROME PROPOSED BOUNDARIES

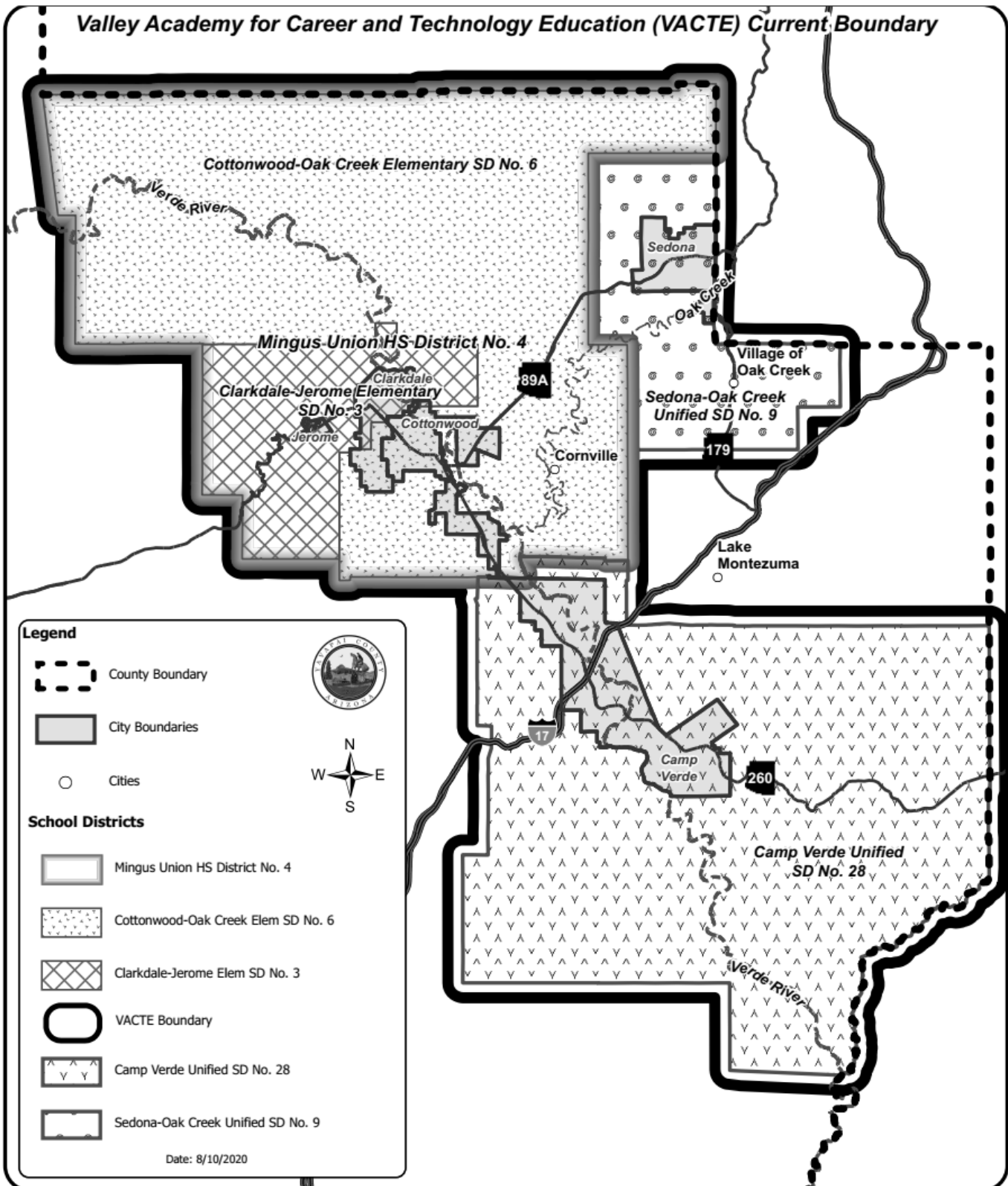
If consolidation is approved, the new Unified School District boundary will be the same as the former Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School District No. 6 boundary and the Clarkdale-Jerome Elementary School District No. 3 boundary will remain unchanged.



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VACTE CURRENT BOUNDARY

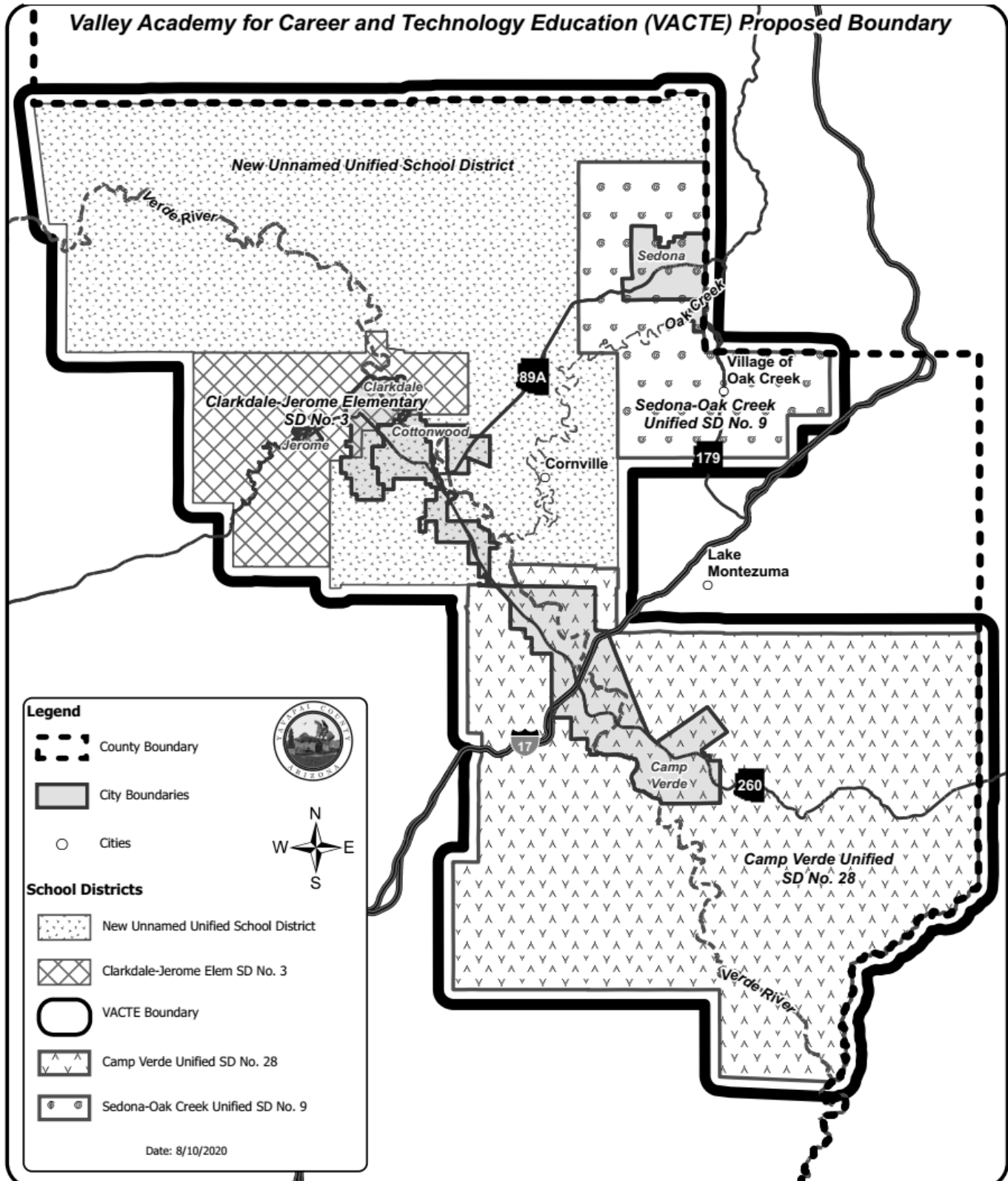
VACTE is an overlay district that provides instruction to grades 9-12 career and technical education (CTE) students who reside in the district boundary. In 2001, the voters in five-member districts approved the formation of VACTE and each of those districts elected a Governing Board member from: Mingus Union High School District No. 4, Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District No. 6, Clarkdale-Jerome Elementary School District No. 3, Camp Verde Unified School District No. 28, and Sedona-Oak Creek School District No. 9.



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VACTE PROPOSED BOUNDARY

VACTE is an overlay district that provides instruction to grades 9-12 career and technical education (CTE) students who reside in the district boundary. If consolidation is approved, VACTE will have its Governing Board reduced from a five-member board to a four-member board and the districts who will represent VACTE will be: new Unified School District, Clarkdale-Jerome Elementary School District No. 3, Camp Verde Unified School District No. 28, and Sedona-Oak Creek School District No. 9.



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ARGUMENTS FOR CONSOLIDATION

I'd like to voice my support for the consolidation of these two school districts. I acknowledge that there are many issues and considerations, aside from financial ones, that concern this issue. My reason for supporting consolidation is purely financial. With the nearly 11M budget proposal for MUHSD, I'm convinced that property owners will realize some savings funding a single, consolidated district.

Douglas Meyer, Cottonwood

The duplication of facilities and superintendents is wasteful. My wife and I have been a resident of Cottonwood for almost 21 years and from the beginning we were aware of the news reports of the continuous debate of the consolidation of Cottonwood's school districts, Mingus Union high school (grades 9-12) and Cottonwood Oak Creek School District. The funds spent on this subject could very well go towards educating our youth instead of funding for lawyers and paying for duplicated positions of personnel. This is affecting our taxes as well as being senior citizen's we believe it would cost less, for less operators to manage our school districts.

Raymond and Marion Freuding, Cottonwood

As a member of this community for the last 36 years, I feel we as the people of this community deserve the right to decide whether the Mingus Union School District and the Cottonwood-Oak Creek School districts consolidate. I have had all my children attend these schools, and money allocated to the classroom has always been our number one goal. I feel that the consolidation can provide that with cutting unnecessary spending for 2 school districts and combine them into one. I look forward to making a difference for the kids of today and into the future.

Scott Stokes, Cottonwood

It seems that the school districts in the upper Verde Valley are the exception to the norm. Both Camp Verde and Sedona Public Schools are K-12. Many of the surrounding communities in north central Arizona including Flagstaff, Prescott, Williams, Payson, Bradshaw Mountain, Chino Valley and Mayer have K-12 school districts. It is time that Mingus Union High School and Cottonwood Oak Creek School Districts consolidate into one district. Both schools are located in Cottonwood. Their district offices are 2.6 miles apart. If consolidated, there is an estimated substantial cost savings from both administration and plant operations that could be reallocated back into the classroom to benefit our students. Consolidating both districts into one could result in increased student achievement. Both districts have considerable room for improvement regarding student test scores. Operating as one school district would result in consistent management from the top down; alignment of curriculum K-12; early release schedules would be the same; and the school calendars would be identical making it much better for families who now have students in both districts. Consolidation means that there will be more uniformity and continuity in the new district. Vote YES to improve the educational opportunities for our students.

Andy Groseta, Cottonwood

One unified community needs only one unified school district. My wife and I raised three children on L.I. N.Y. one of the largest school districts in the state, 13 square miles, 12 elementary, 2 J.H. and 2 H.S. student population of 12,000 plus, all run by one school board and one administration. Teachers, parents, school board working together year after year for the children. Next few months you will be reading why we should and should not consolidate. Ronald Reagan said, "Trust but verify", I believe all should do before casting their vote. For example, claims made the UVVC used taxpayer funds to push their agenda. Not one dime of taxpayer funds were used by this volunteer committee. Only donation raised. Where were the voices when Mingus Board used tax payer funds to stop UVVC from getting on the ballot? Yes, years we have heard about consolidation only to be blocked by small special interest groups and school boards. Consolidation now on the ballot for the benefit of teachers, students, community. Now let's have an honest conversation why consolidation is the best for the community and students.

Mike Rabasca, Cottonwood

My wife, Sandy, and I have been blessed to have all four of our children graduate from Mingus Union High School. Mingus prepared them for college, and all four earned a 4 year BS college degree. Two of our grandchildren are currently at Mingus. It's our firm belief that Consolidation is the correct course. Former Mingus School Superintendent, Dr Jack Keegan, presented savings numbers to the Joint Advisory Committee on 3/6/2018, reinforcing that belief. He feels Consolidation could generate savings between 1.1 to 1.3 million dollars per year. It would be a step forward for the newly elected school board to use those savings for teachers salaries and classroom expenses. Aside from cost savings, a consolidated District would help to unify the curriculum from K-12 and keep both schools on the same schedule. There's sufficient talent in the Verde Valley to elect a Consolidated School Board that can wrap a Unified District in a sensible business model and move forward!

Vote YES for Consolidation in November.

Bob DeGeer, Cottonwood

I support consolidating Cottonwood-Oak Creek and Mingus Union school districts. There are many advantages gained in combining the two districts. Curricular advantages include alignment of textbooks, early releases and school calendars. Financial advantages include better utilization of facilities, combining bus routes and cost savings through improved purchasing power for maintenance, support services and supplies. The number of requested bond over-rides would be reduced with one combined district. Combining districts could result in more money for special education and extracurricular activities. Combining these two districts will not have a significant impact on the local Vocational Education Programs (VACTE) and at their request, the Clarkdale-Jerome School District is not included in this consolidation. It takes a community to raise a child, the community also has a responsibility to educate that same child. All of the voters in the community have a stake in educating our children. Whether a voter has children in the school system, owns property or rents, everyone pays taxes to the school districts. All tax payers want to see their dollars used efficiently in the classroom. To improve the quality of education for Cottonwood-Oak Creek and Mingus Union High School students, I urge you to vote for consolidation.

Charles Mackey, Cottonwood

As a strong supporter of efficiencies in public education to produce the best outcomes for students I will vote in favor of consolidation for the Mingus Union High School District and the Cottonwood Oak Creek Elementary District. By reading the mission statements of the Mingus Union High School District and the Cottonwood Oak Creek Elementary School District you would think these two entities are already a single district. The one item that would ensure the highest possible outcome for student achievement would be an uninterrupted K-12 curriculum. This will only happen if we vote to consolidate both the Mingus Union High School District and the Cottonwood Oak Creek Elementary District. A yes vote will ensure a single district wide curriculum that will serve the students' needs in the best possible fashion. Join me in voting yes for consolidation of the Mingus Union High School District and the Cottonwood Oak Creek Elementary District.

A yes vote - is a vote for all of our students.

Eric Wyles, Cornville

In our opinion, consolidation of Mingus Union High School with Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District will result in one newly created unified K-12 district that will benefit our students. One unified school district will allow for much improved communication regarding the needs of our students and insure teacher training is consistent and focused throughout the grade levels. We believe one school district will be more cost effective and efficient due to the streamlining of administrative personnel, plant operations and other services. Freeing up financial resources to be better spent on students is one of the major reasons to consolidate into one district. Cottonwood is a small community that should not have to support two school districts, each having their own individual administrations, plant operations and support services that serve the same population. In 2019, legislation sponsored by Senator Sylvia Allen was passed at the State Legislature to insure that there will be less adverse impact to Valley Academy for Career and Technology Education (VACTE). Now is the time for voters to support school consolidation. A newly unified K-12 school district will definitely better serve the needs of our students.

Vote "yes for consolidation".

Committee for Better Upper Verde Valley Schools, Cottonwood

I encourage you to vote YES to consolidate the Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District (COCSD) and the Mingus Union High School District (MUSD). The majority of school-aged children living within Cottonwood-Oak Creek boundaries attend COCSD schools for elementary and middle school and then naturally promote to the Mingus Union High School District, since MUSD is the only local high school. Many families have children of varying ages and have children enrolled in both school districts. Having a centralized District Office and one school calendar would simplify matters of planning and understanding for parents. Additionally, both MUSD and COCSD has asked us, as taxpayers, for separate bond over-rides many times throughout the years. Supporting only one district would ease the burden on tax payers. My family has been in the Verde Valley for six generations and the issue of consolidation is not new. The financial savings is difficult to calculate as numbers can be manipulated. That being said, we as taxpayers can look at our own lives and agree: owning one house is cheaper than owning two.

Vote YES to consolidate COCSD and MUSD.

Connie (Phillips) Ross, Cottonwood

A "yes" vote on school consolidation would be supporting a PreK-12 district with one Governing Board, a seamless curriculum and support services for the children/youth in Cottonwood. Cottonwood-Oak Creek is the largest feeder elementary school into Mingus Union High School District. While I was Principal of Cottonwood Middle school (2006-2015), COCSD and MUHS tried to collaborate on shared administrative services in the areas of transportation and a special education director. These efforts were short lived. I believe the challenge was trying to balance the priorities between two Governing Boards and two Superintendents which created communication problems on the part of both Administrations and Directors. Consolidation will create one Governing Board and one Superintendent to manage fixed costs across a broader base. Savings on duplicated administrative services would provide funds to equalized staff salaries. Clarkdale-Jerome Elementary School District is a community school that feeds its students into MUHS. CJES would have the choice to continue to send their students to the high school in Cottonwood. Voting "YES" will unite the two in-town schools into one district with an approximately enrollment of 3,200 students. This is a reasonable sized district for one Governing Board and Superintendent to manage.

G. Denise Kennedy, Clarkdale

As a resident of Cottonwood, I feel I must speak for the consolidation of Mingus Union High School District and Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School District. I believe it is a misuse of taxpayer money to have two school districts in a community this size. There is a duplication of jobs, services, and expenses. There is no question there will be savings. Even if the opposition's claim of increased cost were true, it would be for a short period of time until the new school district is operating as one. The long term saving are clear. I will be voting for consolidation.

Steven Palmer, Cottonwood

It makes good sense to support the unification of Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District (COCSD) and Mingus Union High School (MUHS). This is a complicated and challenging issue with varying financial projections that have used best guesses in preparing data for the possibility of consolidation. Our small community experiences inefficiencies with two districts. Taxpayers pay for the management of two business offices, two technology and transportation departments and two food services. There are duplications of support personnel, business/payroll, purchasing, building maintenance and plant operations departments. Consolidation will better prepare Kindergarten through eighth grade students to seamlessly blend into high school grades nine through 12. Curriculum will be aligned and coordinated. Our children will be better prepared to attend trade school, Yavapai College, or a university with one consolidated district. There will be more communication among teachers with a unified curriculum. Early release and school calendars will be coordinated. It will be easier for families to make plans. Consolidation will provide a unified voice that will influence decisions made by the governor and legislators concerning schools, funding, students, and teachers.

Please vote YES on consolidation of COCSD and MUHS.

Diane Joens, Cottonwood

Unification of the Mingus Union High School and Cottonwood/Oak Creek Elementary/Middle School Districts would be beneficial because it could lower administrative costs, increase buying power, coordinate school calendars and curriculums and provide staffing flexibility. However, in our opinion, the greatest benefit would be in equalizing high school and elementary/middle school teacher salaries. During Don's years on the Cottonwood/Oak Creek School Board and my years as a high school counselor we saw first hand how critically important a strong elementary school foundation was to a student's success in high school. Elementary/middle school teachers are just as important as high school teachers on setting a child's path to successful learning. They should not be paid thousands of dollars less per year than high school teachers. With unification of the MUHS and COCS Districts, this wrong would finally be righted.

Don and Chris Godard, Cottonwood

As a business owners in Cottonwood we have always wondered why there are two school districts serving the kids in Cottonwood. It is our thought that having two administrations definitely cost more to run and do not have a clear and focused path from K-12th grade. We would expect that a focused path would give our children the best start in life's journey. Having one consolidated school district makes a lot more sense and stands to reason that would allow for more efficient operations. The district could save money and better spend it on our students in the classroom. Those saved dollars could be spent to reduce class sizes, enhance and/or start new programs including Career and Technical Education programs. Here locally in Cottonwood, we have a major shortage of kids who are trained to "enter the world of work" to be carpenters, electricians, plumbers, framers, block layers, equipment operators, welders, air conditioning/ heating technicians, etc. The saved dollars could be reinvested to train young people to be better prepared to go to work in our workforce.

Doug & Dez Noble, Cottonwood

My wife and I support the Consolidation of Cottonwood -Oak Creek School District with Mingus Union. As a retired School Administrator for two School districts in the West Valley (Phoenix area) with one school being K-8 and the other K-12. I had the opportunity to see firsthand how they operated and how the students performed in both environments. The only downside to consolidation is if the districts involved have many schools. Trying to oversee and maintain many schools can be overwhelming and challenging. With smaller Districts you don't have these problems. I believe it's easier for 8th graders to be introduced into the High School environment with the friends they had in K-8 all in the same K-12 school system. Also, the consolidation of two District offices into one may save money on staffing in the District office but in maintenance, custodial, food services, transportation, grounds and utilities. These saving can be returned to the classroom. My wife and I support the Consolidation of Mingus Union and Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District.

Gary and Linda Mitchell, Cottonwood

During these difficult times, Let's look at consolidation from a business perspective. Overhead costs can quickly become a drain on school revenues. With only 66% of funds for Cottonwood schools going into the classroom, administrative expenses are taking a significant chunk of school revenue. It is time for us to reevaluate school funding. Educational expenses seem to be increasing. These include items such as salaries, insurance and retirement benefits for those employees who are not directly involved in classroom instruction. And having duplicate administrative staffs at several schools in Cottonwood is a waste of limited funding. Fewer administrative personnel and combining operations like purchasing, food service, transportation, building maintenance, etc. is more efficient and saves money. Funds saved can be used to lower class size, hire more teachers, more aides, etc., and provide for better instruction. By comparison, the Kenai School District has 42 schools with one superintendent, one purchasing agent for 42 schools allows for large volume discounts on supplies such as copy paper by the semi, with the added savings going into the classrooms which allows Kenai to devote 82 % of funding into the classroom. Wouldn't you prefer more dollars for the classroom and less costly overhead?

Jack Castimore, Cottonwood

I believe consolidation of the COCSD and MUHSD is best for the children in our community. Given that districts are now tasked with reimagining and redefining education in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, creating two independent systems and response plans to serve the children and families in one community is simply not an effective way to handle the crisis. It seems to me that now, more than ever, we should embrace the opportunity to combine resources (human, financial, technological) to create a system that would not only weather this storm but also build an innovative educational structure that will meet the future needs of all students, PreK-12. A consolidated district would make educating the whole child PreK-12 a shared responsibility, allowing for flexibility to direct resources and services where they are most needed. By eliminating redundancies, restructuring operational departments, and combining state funding (which assigns higher value to students in grades 9-12 than those in K-8), a consolidated district could be more efficient and better able to meet the needs of all students at all levels. A systematic, focused approach to PreK-12 education through consolidation is long past due and more important now than ever before. Our children deserve it.

Deana DeWitt, Cottonwood

I am a retired resident of Yavapai county for over 25 years,(nine years in Prescott, 16 years here in Cottonwood). I have been unable to fathom why a small community like Cottonwood/Clarkdale has two school districts, when Prescott only has one. Why are we supporting two separate Superintendents with their office support staff and all that goes with them. One district would make it possible for a smoother transition from lower grades to the high school. It would make a path for teachers and staff to placed in the best interest of the students. Inventories and resources would be under one entity. Bond issues would be controlled. Please use our tax money in a sensible and prudent way. Keep our students at the highest priority. Vote yes on Consolidation of Cottonwood-Oak Creek and Mingus Union.

James Brown, Cottonwood

I believe that a vote against consolidation does not put students first. Though there will be up front costs, the long term savings from consolidation could redirect administrative redundancy dollars to classrooms and programs. Aligning curriculum from the top down versus this disjointed model should improve student achievement and better hold educators accountable. Regarding staff salary disparity, I do not believe that a high school teacher deserves a higher wage or is any more important than an elementary teacher. Because high schools receive a higher weighted funding per student than elementary districts, we will never see the elementary district able to pay its teachers what a stand alone high school district does. Unified districts can spread those differently weighted funding amounts across all K-12 teachers. All teachers deserve a fair living wage and consolidation can help free up considerable dollars to help make this happen. Let us put this old model to rest and vote YES to consolidate these two districts that educate the same students in the same community, and finally make a decision putting the needs of students first.

Jason Finger, Cottonwood

A single district, with one administration responsible for the success of all students and teachers from kindergarten through 12th grade, will result in the best outcomes for our children. A single governing board dedicated to this model will better serve taxpayers and administration. Much good could be accomplished if less time was spent fighting and resisting and more time was spent cooperating and supporting. A "yes" vote for consolidation is the first step in pursuing the best outcomes. Kindergarten through 12th grade works for many other districts in Northern Arizona. With a single board and administration, motivated to achieve success, it will work for us. Our bigger challenge is to select and elect leaders who are dedicated to making great things happen. It has been over two years since this proposal was first presented. Much has happened since then. The opposition has brought forth many objections based on speculation of financial issues. Many opinions have been characterized as facts. The real fact is that this model works in other districts and it can work here.

Jerry Brown, Clarkdale

When gathering signatures for the consolidation of School Districts, a common question was "why wasn't this done a long time ago"? As a person with 40 years in public safety, I have been involved in several Verde Valley Fire District consolidation efforts and successes. They are all still in place and working well. One thing that seems to be common in the reluctance to consolidate is the resistance to change and a fear of losing what is "mine". There can even be a short period of adjustment as ideas come together, but in the long run, the communities being served and the employees come out better. Where we had five Boards and five administrations, we now have two. I formed an opinion in favor of school consolidation after attending several meetings on both sides, doing research, and getting feedback from neighbors. Consolidation is a step in the right direction to have less administration and direct funds to teachers and classrooms. Please take the emotion out of the decision and do what is right for teachers, students, and taxpayers. A vote for consolidation is a step in the right direction.

James "Jim" Elmer, Clarkdale

I support the consolidation of the Mingus and Cottonwood-Oak Creek School Districts. I believe consolidation would provide all children the best educational experiences and opportunities, streamline the education process, and potentially save money in reducing administrative costs that could be redirected into the classroom (teacher salaries). With state budget constraints the timing is good for consolidation and could present an opportunity to resolve the salary equalization issue that opponents argue is a reason not to consolidate. The formation of a new consolidated district would be governed by one board with one vision and mission. One governing body could provide direction that would ensure that curriculum is aligned and facilitate the best educational experiences and outcomes for all students PreK-12.

JoAnne Cook, Cottonwood

Now is the time to consolidate the Mingus Union High School District and Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District as the benefits are substantial. These include streamlining administration and support service system costs which would enable additional funds to be allocated to teachers and the classroom, and providing the opportunity to align curriculum and academic services through a K-12 unified district. Communication across the district in relation to students such as special education, electives, clubs, and other programs would be enhanced through a single unified district. A new district culture of viewing students as ours from K-12 would benefit the district and community.

John K. Ligon, Cornville

In the early 1980s the Clarkdale-Jerome school district built a new school after a fire burned the middle school down. In the process of acquiring land for construction we also bought 20 acres adjacent to the site. Our thinking was that someday in the future Clarkdale-Jerome may want to build it's own high school. Independence has always been a fierce part of the district and if Cottonwood and Mingus consolidate, Clarkdale-Jerome becomes even more independent. They would now have total control of their own high school students. With the state funding for those students they can tuition them to Mingus. If the Clarkdale-Jerome district decides to keep those high school students they could pursue building their own fabulous high school campus on the 20 acres and continue their strong tradition of independence.

Dr. John Tavasci, Clarkdale

We support the vote for consolidation/ unification. It just makes sense to us as tax paying citizens who have lived in Cottonwood for many years, although we do not have children, we are definitely interested in the education and the schools in our area. We have always wondered why Cottonwood had two districts! With the two in-town schools, it appears to us there is a duplication of administrative operating cost. Does it need to be? Is this really a smart use of dollars that should be spent in classrooms? The more we investigated the question of whether we would vote in favor of consolidation or not, the more we are convinced it is a good idea. Good for the students, the families and the community as a whole. We feel that a more cohesive and unified manner of managing finances for education should fall under one superintendent and one district.

Larry and Electra Strubhar, Cottonwood

As a retired Superintendent of the Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District, I have always believed that the unification of Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District and Mingus Union High School would be beneficial to the students and save much needed funding. I am confident that student achievement will improve when the curriculum becomes consistent and student needs are more effectively managed. Higher achieving students are more likely to access honors classes, consistency in special education programs will provide for more student success and second language students will have more options to meet their educational needs when the districts become unified. Likewise, having an aligned curriculum will provide for more effective teacher training and utilization of staff. Cottonwood is a small geographical area that does not need to support two school districts that require specialized staff. The duplication of Superintendents, business managers, and other District level employees should be combined under one leader and one Governing Board. Combining Mingus Union and COCSD could create an exceptional school district, one that can only benefit the community and its students.

Julie Larson, Sedona

Having the honor and privilege of serving on the local School Governing Boards for 16 years, I have been involved in many discussions concerning the consolidation of school districts. During those discussions progress was always impeded by administration or personal issues. The major conclusions I took away from these countless hours of discussion and research are; coordination curriculum; Perhaps the most important reason of all, one board with input from all staff would decide one common curriculum. Special needs assessment could be developed at an early age and carried throughout their educational time. Cost savings; We were presented with information that over a million dollars could be saved and injected directly into the classrooms. These savings could be derived from administration reduction, shared services, volume purchasing, elimination of duplicity, etc. Calendar and start times; Parents could have a say in scheduling so the older children and younger students could be on a convenient schedule. We need to keep in mind that this is not a typical merger of districts with large student populations. This is a consolidation of two separate districts with the same students. The unique small school environment can and will remain intact.

Mike Mulcaire, Cottonwood

Consolidation simply makes \$cents. Everyone's ultimate concern should be to insure that the maximum dollars are available for educating our kids. Every dollar that's wasted on doubling up of administrators, school board members, business managers, transportation, food services etc. is one less dollar available for school resources, including increased teacher salaries. Concerns that Mingus \$ would be diverted to increase elementary teachers' salaries are selfish and shortsighted. The K-8 teachers form the foundation of our children's education, and they deserve to be equally compensated. Multiple nearby cities like Sedona, Camp Verde, Flagstaff, Prescott, Prescott Valley, Payson, all have K-12 school districts, therefore don't waste money on job duplication. Why do those against consolidation say it can't possibly work here? Might it instead have something to do with them losing their jobs and benefits? Since Mingus only received a "C" grade last year from the Arizona Department of Education, it seems a change is in order. Consolidation will transfer money from redundant salaries to student needs. A new consolidated board will bring fresh eyes and innovative ideas to better serve and educate our students.

Mr and Mrs Gene Schneider, Cottonwood

It takes money to educate the children in our communities, and this consolidation effort is not about any tax savings to citizens' property taxes. It's about improving K-12 education, and the system for delivery. Just as Amazon has created a new paradigm in delivery of goods to consumers, Wal-Mart, & Home Depot have learned they must evolve into a better strategic delivery system to remain competitive. Education delivery must also change with the times. We cannot stand by like Sears, & JC Penny's have, and be left to figure out our own demise. They must evolve into a more efficient delivery system, thru a unified district. Shared services between the 2 districts has been tried, and have not been effective, and unification/consolidation appears to be the best alternative. Student achievement should improve with a continuous K-12 curriculum, school calendars will be one and the same, & special education programs become seamless. Any savings available from reduction in duplication, should be used to enhance the educational experience for our youth. Take this opportunity to assist all our students in the Public School sector.

Vote: YES on Consolidation

Philip & Rebecca Terbell, Clarkdale

As a former School Board Member of the Cottonwood Oak Creek School and Mingus Union School Districts I do not believe there is a need for two separate school districts. The Verde Valley does not need two Superintendents, Business Managers, and school boards to fulfill the needs of our students and faculty. The students would best be served by a single school district with an articulated curriculum beginning at the elementary level and follow through their high school years. In my experience, direction has been given to the districts to align the curriculum but that has not been the case. My children attended both school districts and I can assure you this did not happen. A unified district would promote a continuum of the educational needs of the students throughout the grade levels. The elimination of duplicate administrative costs, along with other duplicate expenses, would result in more dollars to be spent wisely to improve the educational opportunities for our children. Please vote yes to consolidate Mingus Union High School and the Cottonwood Oak Creek School District. I suggest it is best for our children!

Susan Foley, Cottonwood

When I moved to the Verde Valley in 2002 from Chicago I was surprised to learn we have overlapping single-school districts which means taxpayers have to fund duplicative administrative expenses. In Chicago there is one school district for hundreds of schools. It is simple common sense that unifying the school districts should result in a reduction in the cost of administration which would leave more money to fund education. A single board of governors can focus on coordinating the curriculum, coordinating calendars and start times and most importantly increase spending for education by reducing administrative costs. Please vote YES to consolidate Mingus Union High School and Cottonwood-Oak Creek School Districts into one district.

Sybil Malinowski Melody, Clarkdale

I believe the only way to sustain curriculum and scheduling coordination between Cottonwood Oak Creek Schools and Mingus Union High School is for the two districts to consolidate. With a new engaged board, it can be done without harming Clarkdale or the Mingus teachers' compensation. I believe that, eventually, consolidation will lead to better student outcomes, better staff retention, more dollars flowing in to the classroom, the ability to explore every efficiency available at many levels of operation and a reduction in the multiple taxing districts that we now have to support. A new, dedicated board of governors representing a consolidated district will have more tools available to them than ever before to create the best possible student outcomes. I believe that, eventually, with consolidation, all of the dedicated staff at both existing districts can be even more proficient when they are all pulling in the same direction.

Dan Mabery, Cottonwood

I was against consolidation until becoming convinced that Clarkdale had a fair shake. Clarkdale will remain a district and their Board will be able to have their students attend the same high school if they wish. Cottonwood will join with the high school and create a new district. Separate towns, separate districts. I grew up in the Cottonwood District. I graduated from Mingus Union. I have dear friends in Clarkdale who are concerned whether they will get to keep their district or not. No matter how the vote goes, Clarkdale will get to keep their district. Cottonwood should have the same opportunity by combining the elementary with the high school districts. I have a big concern whether the ballot questions will be confusing. Please beware of how the question on the ballot is worded. VACTE will continue as a separate district. Cottonwood residents please vote for consolidation! Clarkdale residents please vote to dissolve the union high school so Cottonwood can be a combined K-12 district. This may not change your students' ability to attend the same high school they have been attending. It is my understanding any tuition charges will be paid for by the Clarkdale-Jerome district and state equalization.

Vicki Jo Anderson, Cottonwood

As a native of Cottonwood Arizona, and a student of both Mingus Union and Cottonwood Oak Creek School system, I feel consolidation is an extremely important factor in bringing schools together. It will streamline the curriculum K-12, align school calendars, coordinate teacher in-service education classes and seminars, and possibly increase the Cottonwood Oak Creek teacher's salary to be comparable to Mingus teacher's, pay phased in over a period of time. Also, by consolidation there is no question administrative and plant operations cost (elimination of one superintendent, one business manager, one transportation supervisor, one food service director etc.) will definitely result in a saving that could be much better spent (reinvested) in the classroom where it needs to be spent, if no other administrative positions are added back. Since I have a daughter now coming up thru the Cottonwood Oak Creek and Mingus Union School system this is especially important to me. Time to take back our schools. Vote YES on consolidation.

Monica Mongini, Cottonwood

I am writing today to advocate strongly for the consolidation of Mingus Union High School District #4 and Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School District #6 to form a Unified School District of Yavapai County, Arizona. My support of unification is on the basis of common sense. First and foremost, unification has the potential to create a considerably more cohesive and collaborative environment for our students as well as a stronger voice for our community. Of equal importance, unification allows for far greater efficiencies in resource and talent utilization to help maximize our tax dollars and maintain high standards of learning. I strongly urge everyone to Vote YES for school consolidation. It is best for our students.

Kristin Gassick, Cottonwood

Consolidating Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District and Mingus Union High School will not only benefit every student by providing them with consistency in programming and aligned curricula, but it may benefit every teacher as well. Regardless of the grade level a teacher is teaching, he/she is working in the "trenches" and should share equal benefit packages and equal pay. The grade level or position should not determine the benefit or pay scale. As for the students, speaking as a Special Education teacher, I watched my students struggle to adjust to a different philosophy of instruction at MUHS. The students going through Cottonwood Oak Creek elementary/middle school had an inclusion system for learning. Students with special needs were fully included with their peers in the general education programs. The gap between COCSD and MUHS has needed to be bridged for years to improve student programming across PreK-12. The model of "Inclusion" benefits everyone. All students learn and participate in the same curriculum, participate on the same sports teams, join the same clubs and access the same education across the board. Consolidation of COCSD and MUHS may be a great benefit for all students, teachers, families in Cottonwood.

Kerry Miller, Milford, NH

I am a past student, parent, and now a grandparent of a Cottonwood Oak Creek student. I am writing this in response to the upcoming consolidation of Mingus Union High School District #4 and Cottonwood Oak Creek Elementary School District #6. I am for the consolidation. It could provide families with a unified school calendar, students with a K-12 aligned curriculum, and a potential reduction in administration cost. A reduction in administrative cost could result in more money spent in the classroom. Transportation and food service would be shared. Supplies purchased as one district would be a larger bulk amount with a reduced expenditure saving both the district and the taxpayer. Being part of this school system my whole life, I have always been for one district! With a need for more money in the classroom, this seems like the perfect answer without further burdening the taxpayer. Please vote YES for consolidation of the Mingus Union High School District and the Cottonwood Oak Creek Elementary District.

David Mongini, Cottonwood

ARGUMENTS AGAINST CONSOLIDATION

Very simply, if consolidation were good for our schools, if our schools would have more money, if consolidation was better, wouldn't you expect to see "pro" statements from Mingus teachers and admin? You certainly would. You don't see the people who are actually involved in either school advocating for consolidation. I think, that because consolidation is bad for schools. According to financial statements from both schools, there are no cost savings. Consolidation actually takes money away from our kids. There is little "duplication of positions," since Mingus has not filled many positions as they become vacant. Mingus' teachers, admin, and staff have doubled up to perform the duties of these available positions. Because Mingus has done this, Mingus sends more dollars than any other school in the area to the classroom. Cottonwood Oak Creek teachers need to be paid more. Yes, they do. Their pay rate is a fiscal decision made by COCSD. Cottonwood Oak Creek needs to figure out how to pay their teachers more, possibly by conserving on overhead. Consolidation "equalization" might get COCSD teachers a pay raise at the expense of Mingus teachers getting a pay cut or pay freeze. That's not fair. It's wrong.

Carol Anne Teague, Jerome

I am writing to express my dismay that consolidation is once again on the agenda for consideration. I am a Clarkdale resident and our children are smart and respectful. They make up a positive part of the Mingus culture. I do not want Clarkdale residents to pay tuition to send their children there. Mingus is fine the way it is. The administrators are efficient and care deeply for the Mingus family. As a feeder school, if consolidation passes, there would be a loss of identity and loss of programs and highly qualified teachers. I wholeheartedly disapprove consolidation.

Cindy Bruchman, Clarkdale

Despite voters consistently deciding against the consolidation of the Mingus Union High School and Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary school districts, it is once again on the ballot. In my opinion, as a private citizen, the consolidation of these two districts is a bad idea, and two reasons stand out to me. For one, it would result in Clarkdale-Jerome students paying tuition to attend Mingus. Additionally, it appears unAmerican. Our founders objected to "taxation without representation" after the British imposed unfair taxes on the American colonists. Tax dollars from both Clarkdale-Jerome and the Yavapai-Apache Nation could be paid toward this new district in the form of high school tuition, but those taxpayers would be prevented from being able to vote for the new unified school district governing board.

David D Beery, Cottonwood

We keep hearing "this is common sense". Combine two districts and you will see savings that can be diverted to classrooms; align curriculum and student outcomes will improve. However, when you analyze the details of consolidation it does not make sense. Research has demonstrated a larger district does not consistently result in higher student achievement, in fact, in most cases it is the opposite. The cost to consolidate far outweighs the savings and forcing the districts to combine will negatively affect staff morale and forever alter the cultures of MUHSD and COCSD. The cost and upheaval will have a lasting impact, not only on staff, but on current and future students. Mingus offers a tremendous amount of opportunities, programs, extracurricular activities, and educational avenues for its students that will be threatened by consolidation. Consolidation will not benefit students. Vote NO on consolidation!

Lynn Leonard, Cottonwood

As a Clarkdale resident and Mingus Union High School employee, I have serious concerns over our local school districts consolidating. These are the same concerns I had in 2008 when I was also working for the district and a similar consolidation effort was again voted down. I am proud to work for a school that serves students with a rich variety of programs and very much want to see those same program offerings going forward. This, in addition to the following facts have convinced me to again vote no on Consolidation. 1) In a new, consolidated district, revenues will decrease due to the fact that if Clarkdale-Jerome students now attend grades 9-12 in the new district, they will not count toward the district's average daily membership (ADM). 2) Clarkdale, Jerome and Yavapai Apache Nation residents will lose the opportunity to elect board members to govern the new district. 3) Clarkdale, Jerome, and Yavapai Apache Nation residents will no longer be allowed to vote on school bonds and overrides for the new district. Please join me in again voting NO on the November 2020 ballot initiative of consolidation of our two school districts.

Amanda Lange, Clarkdale

Residents of the Verde Valley have elected school board members who serve the community by ensuring that district resources are used wisely to provide the best educational opportunities for all students. These members of the community are entrusted with the thoughtful oversight of the district's instruction, budget, and general operations. In 2019 and 2020, there has been absolutely no formal support for consolidation by the Mingus Union, Clarkdale-Jerome, or Cottonwood Oak Creek Governing Boards, and yet a small group of individuals from the community believe that they alone know what is best for students. When faced with opposition from local districts, these same individuals invested significant amounts of personal money in an effort to change legislation and push through their own private agendas. Consolidation is not about what is best for students, it is an attempt by a small special interest group to restructure the Verde Valley schools without any clear evidence as to how it will benefit students. Vote NO on consolidation.

Amy Badger, Cottonwood

This consolidation petition is funded by a small group, so well connected that they are capable of having a state senator, Sylvia Allen, submit legislation to change the law 3 times in order to make it easier for them to accomplish their agenda. The citizens of the Verde Valley have elected 15 members to the three school boards involved in this consolidation, and to my knowledge, none of these 15 board members have publicly supported consolidation. Why? In my opinion it's because they realize it's a poorly thought out plan that will negatively impact the students of the Verde Valley. This group is so intent on winning that they have twice tried to change the law in order to prevent the citizens of Clarkdale, Jerome, and the Yavapai Nation from having an equal say on this vote. Enough is enough. Join me in supporting our local schools and their communities by saying no to special interests, no to inside politics, and no on consolidation.

Angelica Alcalá, Cottonwood

As a former Clarkdale-Jerome ESD board member and citizen, I don't feel we have the information to make a good decision on consolidation. A successful reorganization model for a department, agency, or company includes starting with a vision about what's important, what's not, and what are the specific goals. What would this look like if we built it from the ground up? With a common vision developed by leaders and stakeholder representatives, we can design strategies and criteria and identify problems and solutions plus take ownership in the outcome. Consolidation of school districts could benefit from this model. We all know we want to do what's best for kids as we balance fiscal, academic, and cultural elements. We've had a starting effort in this respect, but still much confusion and contention. Curriculum, administration, safety, cultures, finances, leadership, staffing, shared assets, and facilities are just a few pieces needing assessment and prioritization. I will vote against the consolidation not because I don't think it's optimal, but because we haven't done the work to assess if it's the best thing and to make the whole effort less fraught with challenges and risks. Let's start with developing a vision, plan and timeline together.

Becky O'Banion, Cornville

I have lived in the Verde Valley for nearly 2 decades and have had children attend schools in both the COCSD and MUHSD. I believe that these schools do their best day in and day out for our children. I see everyone working hard out of love and caring for these kids. I have followed consolidation closely and have yet to see a single piece of evidence that shows any savings, any benefit, let alone any plan for how this consolidation would work. Our children's future is our future and it is too precious to gamble on something as haphazardly thought out as this consolidation push. Join me in voting for our children's future by voting NO on consolidation.

Carla Jacinto Renard, Cottonwood

I offer the argument against consolidation of Mingus Union and Cottonwood-Oak Creek for the voter information pamphlet: "Whether you are for or against the consolidation of these two districts, I'd ask you to consider whether the time is right for such a disruptive event. School districts today are overwhelmed by adjusting to the ever-changing conditions brought on by the coronavirus. Their staffs and School Boards are engaged in what one Verde Valley Superintendent described as the most "profound and complex" challenge in 32 years of delivering education. Consolidation of two large districts in the best of times would be a major challenge to school resources and would demand intensive staff and School Board time. There is only one job that should occupy their time and thoughts right now, and that is how to provide quality education in the time of COVID-19. Consolidation of Mingus Union High School and Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary may make sense someday, but this is just not the time to burden our Verde Valley schools with yet another complex disruption."

Doug Von Gausig, Clarkdale

As Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District Governing Board President, writing as a private citizen, I recommend a "No" vote. It is irresponsible to consider consolidation when our schools face the crisis of safely educating children during COVID-19 combined with years of state funding cutbacks. It dilutes administrative and faculty attention, disrupts schools, and is not in our childrens' best interest. COCSD even has to pay for this election with its tight budget. Research demonstrates that combining two districts does not necessarily produce higher student achievement. Studies show smaller districts often improve student outcomes. Placing COCSD and MUHS teachers on the same salary schedule will increase expenses by at least \$250,000 and as much as \$400,000 every year which may not be offset by the reduction in administrative costs. The secondary tax rate will likely increase with future bonds and overrides spread among a smaller taxing area. Operating costs at COCSD and MUHS are among the lowest in the state when compared to peer schools. Clarkdale-Jerome taxpayers may pay an unknown amount of high school tuition to the consolidated district. Looking thoughtfully to our moral compasses, our childrens' needs at this time of crisis calls for a "No" vote.

Eric Marcus, Cornville

There are a lot of issues with consolidation, but I want to speak briefly about the arts. In consolidation, the larger district (COCSD) absorbs the smaller district (MUHS). When COCSD had budget issues, they cut the arts - band, choir, theatre, and visual art. Today, the arts are barely present in COCSD schools with some of their schools not having any performing arts at all. The cost savings of a consolidation isn't much and some predictions end up costing more with salary equalization and other various costs. In a district like COCSD, they have proven that they will make up a budget shortfall by cutting the arts. Mingus has a thriving, award-winning visual and performing arts department. Mingus' theatre department alone has several state awards. I cannot get behind a school consolidation with a school that values the performing arts so little. I urge voters to financially and emotionally support and grow our school's art programs. If consolidation happens, Mingus' funds would be redistributed and Mingus may be forced to cut and downsize several programs - including their amazing arts programs. Please join me in voting NO for consolidation.

James Ball, Cottonwood

It is fiscally irresponsible to reduce the size of a school district and rebuild our local public schools yet again. Both business managers prepared an in-depth presentation to the consolidation committee. The result was at a higher cost to the taxpayers not a savings. I recommend voting NO on school consolidation.

Steve W. Drake, Cottonwood

I am writing to ask you to vote NO on the issue of Consolidating the MUHS and COCSD school districts. The Business Managers for both districts worked together to create a report on the cost of Consolidating the 2 districts in 2018. They found that the newly formed district would lose over \$450,000 per school year due to Consolidation. Tell me, what programs at the Elementary and High School level are you willing to sacrifice to cover this cost? Which teachers are you willing to have forced out of the classroom? You will see arguments that Consolidation will make education in the Upper Verde Valley more efficient. It will save the schools and the tax payers money and will improve the education of all students. The numbers simply don't back up these claims. Please join me in voting "NO" on consolidation this November.

Jason Teague, Cottonwood

As long time residents of Cottonwood and graduates of Mingus Union High School when it was located in Jerome, My wife and I would like to encourage a NO vote on school consolidation. This measure was not brought forward by our local schools for the benefit of our community or children, but, rather by a private organization. In addition, Clarkdale Jerome should have been forced to go into the consolidation to be fair for everyone Taxes will likely be increased because of the shortfall of losing Phoenix Cement as well as other business in the Mingus district that will be lost. The only fair way is for consolidation of all the Cottonwood and Clarkdale-Jerome Schools or not to consolidate at all.

John & Susanne Verretto, Cottonwood

Several years ago I sought out and was appointed to an open seat on the MUHS Board. As a (then) newcomer to the Verde Valley, I was intrigued by the recurring prospect of consolidation and thought I could contribute to a resolution to what I assumed would be a simple problem. I began the year-and-a-half journey with the default judgement that there must be a logical pathway to consolidation that would benefit both students and taxpayers. The collaborative process was exhaustive and included a fair share of drama and politics. All should be aware consolidation from a larger to a smaller school district is unprecedented in Arizona. There is no template or reliable data to reference. As others knee-deep into the topic at the time, I was left with serious concerns of the potential risk to our children's education and community as a whole if consolidation were to occur. Compounding these frustrations, evidence indicating benefits to taxpayers was also allusive. Please don't gamble with our kids' education and vote 'No' on consolidation once again.

Steve Gesell, Cottonwood

Consolidation of the elementary and high school districts has been a local issue for many years and has already been struck down by voters. The study commissioned by the committee formed recently to explore this issue found more questions than answers when it came to potential cost-savings and some definite increased costs. It would not lead to a better education for Verde Valley students due to the potential loss of higher-level programs and highly-qualified secondary teachers in a state facing severe teacher shortages. The new Governing Board may put an emphasis on raising elementary teacher salaries to match the current high school level which could lead to a loss of high school programs that are difficult to fill with current salaries and will be nearly impossible if high school salaries become stagnant." These include arts, foreign languages, and advanced classes. Math and science teachers that are qualified to teach college-level classes won't do it at a low-paying high school when they can be paid what they're worth elsewhere. Elementary teachers deserve to be paid more, but not on the backs of their fellow teachers. If consolidation doesn't benefit all teachers then it's not good for all students.

Susanna Ventura, Cottonwood

After robust research and debate, there is a clear vision for students of the Verde Valley: Mingus Union High School District #4 must continue as an inclusionary stand-alone district. Mingus promotes fine arts in spite of elementary districts reducing such programs. As an example, MUHS musical theatre and arts programs have received many prestigious awards. Vote no on consolidation with Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District #6. Mingus has numerous technical/vocational programs that have also received state and national recognition. Consolidation could force changes in vocational funding. Vote no on consolidation with Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District #6. Mingus has over 14 athletic programs competing at local, district and state levels. Pay-to-play and cancelling of 9th grade athletics is the go-to option when districts are forced to find funds for basic education. Consolidation does not save money. Vote no on consolidation with Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District #6. Mingus sets the gold standard for rural high schools. Do not allow this consolidation effort to impede MUHS's forward trajectory. Please vote NO on consolidation and preserve and protect Mingus Union High School District #4. Bigger is not better.

Anita J. Glazar, Cottonwood

I have lived in the Verde Valley for 7 years and have become increasingly involved with this incredible community. This community has a rich history and powerful voices. Some of the great parts of our history are our Mingus Marauders, and some of the great voices include the many students who have passed through those hallways. However, it is my opinion that the creation of a new unified district without the voice of the Clarkdale Jerome student population feels downright wrong. How can we idealize a better new district for students when it seems we are excluding some from the conversation? What is our answer for Clarkdale students who are no longer an integral part of this community?! I believe in this community of diverse learners. But I feel that there is a large group not being considered. Residents of Clarkdale have seemingly been silenced by the Committee for Better Upper Verde Valley Schools and this is before we address the issues of curriculum alignment or evaluate the true financial costs of consolidation. I urge voters to consider what is best for all students. Vote NO on a consolidation that excludes so much of our vibrant community.

Kristy Meyers, Cottonwood

Every few years we get to vote for our schools governing boards and trust them to take the knowledge and information they have and do what is best for the district. If we don't like them, we vote them out. What this petition does is try to second guess our votes. In 2019 and 2020, none of the school districts involved formally asked for this vote. Trust our school boards and vote no on consolidation.

Mina Jacinto Renard, Cottonwood

Vote "NO" to consolidating Mingus and Cottonwood Oak Creek. I really thought it was "No big deal" to consolidate our district when this started a little more than 3 years ago. Consolidation is a "Big deal" 1) Devastates student programming. Shrinking a school district has a negative financial impact on school districts, they run on local property taxes. 2) Higher property taxes in the newly created k-12 district. The new k-12 district will be smaller triggering higher property taxes. 3) Loss of local control. Our public schools are just that, "our" public schools and losing another layer of local control gives you another layer of red tape. Clarkdale Jerome school district will also have a right to pull an undetermined amount of money from the new district as reimbursement for taxes paid into Mingus. Clarkdale Jerome residents will have no say in the governance of their high school students that attend the new district high school.

Lori Drake, Cottonwood

This consolidation could involve the payment of tuition for students who would be attending high school at what is now Mingus Union High School because it will terminate the existing partnership between MUHS and Clarkdale-Jerome. Residents of Clarkdale-Jerome will not be allowed to vote for board members of this new consolidated district and they will also not be able to vote for bonds or overrides even if they have children who attend the new consolidated and unified High School. Please join me in voting "NO" for consolidation.

Marti Gilmore, Cottonwood

I have two children. My oldest is in his second year of college after graduating from Mingus, and my youngest is starting his Sophomore year at Mingus. Both of my boys were enrolled at MVP at the Cottonwood-Oak Creek school district. Throughout their education, I was consistently impressed with the quality of education and support that both districts have offered my family. That being said, I am opposed to the issue of Consolidation. Everything I have seen shows that Consolidation will take away much needed money from the school district. I worry that if Consolidation is approved, that programs that our families and children have grown to depend on will be cut. Let's face it, the money has to come from somewhere! Arts, Music, Theater, Sports Programs. These are programs that both of my son's benefited from throughout their education and have helped them grow into well rounded young men. I would hate to see these opportunities taken away from future students in our community. That is why I am voting "NO" on consolidation this November.

Miranda Moore, Cottonwood

Regarding Verde Valley Schools Consolidation: Verde Valley residents have twice voted to reject local school district consolidation, in 1998 and again in 2008. Yet it appears on the ballot again this fall. Has no changed its meaning? Currently the Clarkdale and Cottonwood districts are equal partners and make up the Mingus Union district. With consolidation, the union will be terminated. Clarkdale District taxpayers may fund tuition for Clarkdale students to attend high school in a new district. Clarkdale residents will lose the opportunity to elect board members to govern the new district even though they will likely continue to send their graduating 8th graders to the district for high school. Clarkdale residents will also no longer be allowed to vote on school bonds and overrides for the new district, no matter how many Clarkdale families send their students to high school in the district. Mingus Union High School has a long-standing record of dedicated support and high quality education for the communities it serves. Be informed on the negative impact consolidation will have - Mingus is not broken, nor does it need fixing!

Oouida Dorr, Sedona

In the past 5 years, Mingus Union High School has been a US News and World Report Best High School twice, has won 3 state championships in its theater arts program, has shown national and state excellence in areas such as auto, welding, agriculture, business, music, choir, and nearly all its sports. To fully list all the great things about it would take pages and pages and pages. This doesn't scratch the culture built by Mingus and COCSD over the past decades. This consolidation risks all of that with no research, no evidence, and no showing that this will benefit any of the students affected. Help Celebrate these schools and their accomplishments by ignoring the propaganda of the Consolidation committee and vote "NO" on this ill-thought out, poorly planned, and likely destructive plan.

Stephen Renard, Cottonwood

The consolidation committee, not the districts are forcing the consolidation question, that the districts have not requested, and voters have repeatedly rejected, once again. Therefore, school districts are responsible for the costs; this is not a responsible use of tax dollars that could be used in classrooms. Clarkdale-Jerome residents will have no voice in regard to the new unified school district and CJ will have to bear the cost associated if the students attend the new district. Salary equalization for COCSD teachers may eliminate any potential savings associated with administrative restructuring requiring a freeze or reduction of MUHS salaries. There would be little or no cost savings in transportation services or plant operations. The exact impact on the tax structure is unknown, however, there will be decreased revenue to the new district due to the loss of the CJSD students no longer being counted in the average daily membership of the new district. There is no evidence that student performance will improve with a larger district. MUHS and CJSD students, have consistently performed higher on state mandated testing. All schools align their curriculum to state guidelines, consolidation will not change that process. Classroom instruction makes the difference.

Allen Mitchell, Cottonwood

When voting No consider these possible outcomes. Clarkdale-Jerome residents would no longer have a say in the governing of the high school in the new district. All Clarkdale-Jerome high school students would be considered out of district if they attended the new unified district. In that case, the Clarkdale- Jerome District would pay tuition for them to attend. The primary tax rate may or may not go up because it is based on a number of factors in a formula including equalization. Ultimately, it would be up to the Clarkdale-Jerome Governing Board to decide how our K-12 students will be educated. Please vote No on the proposed consolidation of Mingus Union High School and Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School.

Janice E. Benatz, Clarkdale

We neither support nor oppose school consolidation. We do, rely on our school board members that we elected to study complex issues such as consolidation and make sound decisions based on well-researched facts and practices; rather than well intentioned voters who are subject to being influenced by monied special interest groups, believe that with the current Covid-19 pandemic affecting school openings and operations, that stability and continuity outweigh potentially disruptive short-term consolidation goals, believe that increased efforts towards shared services between the school districts and adjacent municipalities will realize more cost saving benefits than the elimination of an administrative layer once salary and benefit equalizations are factored in. This is a more appropriate short-term step towards possible future consolidation, feel concern that the long-term property tax implications for Clarkdale-Jerome School District #3 households are uncertain and will ultimately be more costly due to higher tuition rates charged to "common school" incoming students that are not within Mingus Union High School District No. 4 or another high school district. We will be voting "NO" on the consolidation of Mingus Union High School District No. 4 and Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School District No. 6.

Bill and Janet Regner, Clarkdale

Vote no on consolidation. It was no in 1998. It was no again in 2008 and it is time once again to Vote no on school consolidation. There has been no significant change in school finance benefits to warrant consolidation. The most recent Arizona Auditor General analysis has Mingus: having the highest classroom spending percentage, the fewest number of administrators per student, and, the lowest non-classroom (administrative, transportation, plant operations) spending percentage. In addition, the Auditor General Office stated in the October 2010 report to the Arizona Legislature referencing two similar-sized districts who had consolidated and realized: no savings in administration, no increase in classroom spending, no elimination of duplicate positions but, added there would be a sizable increase in costs associated with equalization of salaries between districts. Do I hear higher taxes? Don't be fooled. Vote NO on consolidation.
David and Cheryl Gray, Clarkdale

I am pleased for the opportunity to express my opinion regarding the proposed consolidation of the Mingus Union High School and the Cottonwood Elementary School Districts. I have had the opportunity to substitute teach at Beaver Creek School, Cottonwood Elementary School, Minus Union High School and the Immaculate Conception Catholic School as well as being a board member at Immaculate Conception Catholic school. As such my knowledge of the school districts in question is substantial. I have studied the available literature concerning the finances in particular. After reviewing in depth, it is my opinion the financial impact to Mingus would be substantial and would severely, negatively affect their financial future. Another devastating impact, which would be unfortunate, is the effect it would have on Marauder Pride and its legacy. There is underlying obligation to the 1000's of Marauder graduates to maintain the namesake and legacy. This is game day- all Marauders stand up and say NO!
Don Leonard, Cottonwood

In my opinion, consolidation is a bad idea for the Verde Valley. Despite repeatedly failing in their quest, the committee is forcing the districts to pay for funding this election after voters have twice soundly refused consolidation. Financial gain on their part is certainly speculation as we have no other thought on why they would continue to push the subject. Consolidation's glaring flaw is its complete alienation of Clarkdale-Jerome. A Yes vote could have Clarkdale-Jerome paying tuition to attend the only high school in Cottonwood. Because these students will be out of district they will also not count toward average daily membership. Clarkdale-Jerome families lose their vote for school board members who control their children's schooling, and for overrides or school bonds no matter how many of those Clarkdale-Jerome students attend Mingus. This group's seemingly indifference to Clarkdale-Jerome's plight speaks to what may be a disingenuous nature, regardless of their "better for students" slogan. I ask, how is it better to exclude Clarkdale-Jerome, and how is their excision better for Cottonwood? It isn't. The exclusion of an entire community is something we cannot stand for. Vote "NO" on consolidation and protect our communities educational voice.
Lauren Thagard, Cottonwood

Regarding the proposed consolidation of Mingus Union High School and Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School, please consider that we have twice voted against this in the recent past and none of the current duly-elected school boards responsible for the governance of the districts support this consolidation. The Clarkdale and Cottonwood districts are currently equal partners and make up the Mingus Union district. With consolidation, the union will be terminated. Clarkdale-Jerome taxpayers might have to, at least in part, fund tuition payments through an increased primary tax levy if high school students were to attend high school in the new unified district. Clarkdale-Jerome residents would also lose the opportunity to elect board members to govern the new district, whether any Clarkdale-Jerome students were to attend in the new district or not. Clarkdale-Jerome residents would also no longer be allowed to vote on school bonds and overrides to support the new district, that their students might attend. Please vote "NO" on the proposed consolidation of Mingus Union High School and Cottonwood-Oak Creek Elementary School.
Roberta and Mike Westcott, Clarkdale

Logic would dictate that any movement toward consolidation of school districts in the Upper Verde Valley would have, at its core, an across-the-board benefit to all communities and students. This is clearly not the case with the current iteration of this oft-failed effort. As a Clarkdale citizen, it troubles me that consolidation would strip Clarkdale residents of the opportunity to elect board members to govern the new district. Thus, students attending the new district from the Clarkdale-Jerome School would not have the benefit of district leadership that is fully cognizant of their specific background and needs. Further, no matter how many former Clarkdale-Jerome students would attend the new district's high school, Clarkdale residents would no longer be allowed to vote on school bonds and overrides. This is a slap in the face of an active and informed voter base. In a nutshell, consolidation of the schools of the Upper Verde Valley is not a benefit to all communities and students.
Tim Kessel, Clarkdale

The committee responsible for the consolidation effort suggests salary and benefits increases for Cottonwood-Oak Creek teachers as a reason to consolidate. This is only possible by holding back the salary increases of Mingus teachers. The committee has stated duplicate positions could be eliminated to increase revenue, but certain revenues may decrease if Clarkdale-Jerome students attend high school in the new district as they will not count towards the district's average daily membership (ADM). Now is not the time to vote for consolidation which might impact school revenue negatively or lead to salary increases which discriminate against any group of teachers. If consolidation occurs, Clarkdale-Jerome residents will lose the opportunity to elect board members to govern the new district even if they send their graduating 8th graders to the district for high school. If Clarkdale-Jerome students attend high school in the new district, the CJ district could fund the associated tuition costs largely through an increased primary tax levy. Due to the potential decrease of revenue, costs associated with equalization of teacher salaries, the loss of school board governance in the new district for CJ residents, and the possible cost of tuition, please vote NO on local school consolidation.
Joni Westcott, Clarkdale

SCHOOL DISTRICT PROFILES

To enable voters to have a better understanding of each of the four school districts that are impacted by the proposed consolidation, these school district profiles were provided directly from each individual school district in their own words.



MINGUS UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4 **(Mingus Union)**

Mingus Union High School District No. 4 was formed on December 6, 1957, out of a desire to bring Verde Valley high school students together in a single high school district formed by the union of equal partner districts. Mingus Union serves a large portion of the Verde Valley – including Jerome, Clarkdale, Page Springs, Cottonwood, Cornville, Perkinsville, Beaver Creek/Rimrock and the Verde Village. There are two high-schools within this district, Mingus Union High School and the Mingus Academy - which is located on the same campus. The district also holds a certificate for a distance-learning school, the Mingus Online Academy.

As a union high school, Mingus accepts most of its students from two local community districts, Cottonwood-Oak Creek and Clarkdale-Jerome, who make up the high school district boundary and send the vast majority of their graduating 8th grade students to Mingus. This unique partnership allows residents in either of the two elementary districts to participate in the governance of “their” high school as Board members. It is only through this union that such representative governance of the high school is possible.

Mingus Union High School employs 63 teachers, has an average annual enrollment of 1300 students from the 9th to 12th grade, and has a student to teacher ratio of 21 to 1. Over one-third of the instructional staff possess advanced degrees. Mingus Union employs 76 staff and administrative personnel to support the school mission and vision. We were awarded the Arizona Education Foundation's A+ School of Excellence Award and have several Yavapai County Teachers of the Year and finalists on our staff. Mingus Union High School is a professional learning community which educates every student and prepares them to be self-directed learners, critical thinkers, effective communicators, and responsible citizens.

The Mingus Union High School District prides itself on fiscal responsibility and its “very low” spending on administrative and plant operations costs as defined by the Arizona Auditor General. The district allocates more than 72% of its operational budget to classroom spending, which ranks Mingus highest among other schools in the region. Importantly, the Auditor General's latest Financial Stress Assessment ranking of the district is “low”.

MUHS is a robust high school offering the full spectrum of academic options including Advanced Placement courses, dual credit courses in partnership with Yavapai College, and Career and Technical education. Mingus is also the home of award-winning theater, fine arts, band, and athletic programs. Here, each student is valued as an individual with unique physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs and we believe in providing a well-rounded education with opportunities for every student. Students are the driving force behind every decision made for our district and we rely heavily upon the input, creativity and innovation from our teachers, students, and the community. We believe that staff, parents, and the community share the responsibility for the support of the school's mission to help our students succeed in school and life. Mingus Union High School's Vision Statement clearly defines our culture: Every Student Celebrated. Every Student Prepared.



COTTONWOOD-OAK CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 6 **(Cottonwood-Oak Creek)**

Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District No. 6 is a rural district located in central Arizona, with a geographic size of 420 sq. miles. The journey of improving teaching and learning at Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District is continuous. We have had outstanding visionaries before us who have made continuous improvement a priority. Our Governing Board understands that preparing our students for the 21st century is a priority. The district's vision, mission and goals include:

Students will be provided the tools necessary to develop the highest possible level of achievement and encouraged to be lifelong learners through:

- Partnership with family and community
- Highest level of staff training
- Excellent facilities
- Embracing cultural diversity
- Providing a wide range of learning methods and experiences in a safe environment

COCSD is the home of 4, K-8 schools including Dr. Daniel Bright Elementary School, Cottonwood Community School, Oak Creek Elementary School (Cornville) and Mountain View Preparatory at Tavaschi (in the unincorporated area of Verde Village).

COCSD is listed with Arizona Department of Education as serving students in grades Pre-K-12th. This is inclusive of our online program, AZ-IZone (Cottonwood Online Instruction). COCSD is home to approximately 2000 students, and employs a staff of nearly 250 employees, 125 of which are teachers.

Unique programs offered include an International Baccalaureate program at Mountain View Preparatory School; Cognia STEM program at Oak Creek Elementary; two high quality, four-star preschool programs including Bright Bears and CASPER. At our Cottonwood Education Services Campus we also have a public/private partnership with RISE providing services for children with autism and emotional disabilities, Bridgeway Alternative Program for middle school students, Science Vortex partnership as well as a family resource center. COCSD is the only district in the state of Arizona using neurosequential modalities of treatment for students who have experience trauma. COCSD is systems accredited with Cognia and has been since 2015. COCSD is a proud Capturing Kids' Heart's district and during 2019-20 SY had 2 of its schools recognized as National Showcase Schools for this program.



CLARKDALE-JEROME ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 3 (Clarkdale-Jerome)

The Clarkdale-Jerome Elementary School District No. 3 is a Kindergarten-8th grade district that encompasses the towns of Clarkdale and Jerome, AZ. The school is located in Clarkdale and covers approximately 83 square miles that includes a portion of the Yavapai-Apache Nation.

The district embodies the vision of “Every Student, Every Day, Preparing for Tomorrow” by individualizing instruction to meet the unique needs of our students. At Clarkdale-Jerome School, we strive to meet three overarching elements within our mission: achieving high academic excellence, cultivating personal accountability for all and encouraging citizenship and respect. By keeping these elements in the forefront our teachers strive to better prepare students for the future.

The current school location was built in 1984 after a fire broke out in the 6th-8th grade building next to the copper museum. We combined those grade levels with the K-5 school in lower Clarkdale to form our K-8 district.

Enrollment for the 2019-'20 school year was 480 students with a demographic breakdown that includes approximately 9% of our population being of minority descent. We currently employ 23 teachers, a school counselor and 31 classified employees. Our school administration includes a superintendent, school principal and part-time business manager. Many of us serve multiple roles within the district organizational structure. Clarkdale-Jerome has been a past Verde Independent “Reader’s Choice” award winner and has had several Yavapai County Education Foundation category winners as part of their Teacher of the Year program.

As a Cognia accredited school district, Clarkdale-Jerome School offers a wide variety of programs. Not only do we provide special education and English Language Acquisition services, but we also offer art, P.E. and music to our students along with a gifted academy. In partnership with the Clarkdale Police Department, we have a full-time uniformed officer on campus during the school day who provides law-related education to our students. We involve students in National Junior Honor Society, Student Council, Red Ribbon Week, and Capturing Kids’ Hearts. What we see as being unique is our philosophy of experiential learning. As culminating activities, our students are involved in many field trips. Students go to San Diego, the Phoenix Zoo, Red Rock State Park and a host of other places where they receive “hands-on” learning. Students complete their middle school experience with our seventh graders camping along the Verde River and eighth grade students spending 3 nights along the San Juan River in southeastern Utah.



VALLEY ACADEMY FOR CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION NO. 01 (VACTE)

The Valley Academy for Career and Technology Education (VACTE) was established in 2001 by overwhelming voter approval by the citizens of the Verde Valley and Sedona. VACTE is 1 of 14 Career and Technical Education Districts (CTEDs) in Arizona. Its member school districts are Camp Verde, Clarkdale/Jerome, Cottonwood/Oak Creek, Mingus Union, and Sedona Red/Rock.

Career and Technical Education Districts (CTEDs) are specialized public-school districts designed to deliver career and technical education (CTE) offerings to high school students in cooperation with their member districts by providing a pathway for students to earn industry certification and college credit, as well as experience career-based learning, hands-on instruction, and leadership development through such organizations as Educators Rising, FBLA, FFA, HOSA, and SkillsUSA. VACTE supports 14 CTE programs, 18 instructors, and more than 1,700 CTE students at the three local high schools. These programs include agriculture, audio production, automotive, business, cabinetmaking, culinary arts, digital photography, drafting, film and TV, graphic design, law enforcement, sports medicine, stagecraft, and welding.

VACTE has additionally established 7 CTE programs offered at locations throughout the Verde Valley which provide career training to students from the three high schools, area charter schools, and home schools. These programs include: certified nursing assistant, construction, culinary arts, fire science, pre-engineering, law enforcement, and teacher training.

A strong partnership with Yavapai College has been developed in providing dual or concurrent enrollment courses, whereby, high school students are able to earn both high school and college credits for the courses in which they are enrolled. VACTE pays for the college tuition, textbooks, and uniforms for these programs. VACTE courses also support several industry recognized licenses and certifications which the students may earn upon exit from the programs such as Arizona Board of Nursing Certified Nursing Assistant Licensure, Core Four Forklift certification, OSHA 10 certification and Arizona Hazmat, Firefighter I and II certification.

Our vision at VACTE is to develop a collaborative effort with all community stakeholders and work in conjunction with academic education to enhance career-based education and applied learning programs. Our goal is that all students will be inspired to make a successful transition from school-to-career and become contributing members of society.

MINGUS UNION CURRENT LEGAL DESCRIPTION

MINGUS UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 4

All that portion of Sections 1 through 6, 9 through 16 and 21 through 24, Township 15 North, Range 2 East; Sections 1, 12, 13, 24 and 25, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East; Sections 1 through 36 Township 15 North, Range 3 East; Sections 1 through 33, Township 15 North, Range 4 East; Sections 6, 7, 18, 19 and 30, Township 15 North, Range 5 East; Sections 1, 12, 13, 24, 25 and 36, Township 16 North, Range 1 1/2 East; Sections 1 through 36, Township 16 North, Range 2 East; Sections 7 through 36, Township 16 North, Range 3 East; Sections 7 through 36, Township 16 North, Range 4 East; Sections 7, 18, 19, 30 and 31, Township 16 North, Range 5 East; Sections 1 through 36, Township 17 North, Range 1 East; Sections 1 through 36, Township 17 North, Range 2 East; Sections 1 through 36, Township 17 North, Range 3 East; Sections 1 through 36, Township 17 North, Range 4 East; Sections 1 through 36, Township 18 North, Range 1 East; Sections 1 through 36, Township 18 North, Range 2 East; Sections 1 through 36, Township 18 North, Range 3 East; Sections 1 through 36, Township 18 North, Range 4 East and Sections 1 through 18, Township 18 North, Range 5 East of the Gila and Salt River Meridian, Yavapai County, Arizona, described as follows:

BEGINNING at the Northwest corner of Township 18 North, Range 1 East, a corner of the North Boundary of Yavapai County;

Thence **EASTERLY** and **SOUTHERLY** along the North and West Boundary of Yavapai County to the Southeast corner of Section 13, Township 18 North, Range 5 East;

Thence **WESTERLY** along the South line of Sections 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18, Township 18 North, Range 5 East to the East line of Township 18 North, Range 4 East;

Thence **SOUTHERLY** along the East line of Township 18 North, Range 4 East and Township 17 North, Range 4 East to the Southeast corner of Township 17 North, Range 4 East;

Thence **EASTERLY** along the North line of Township 16 North, Range 4 East and Township 16 North, Range 5 East to the Northeast corner of Section 7, Township 16 North, Range 5 East;

Thence **SOUTHERLY** along the East line of Sections 7, 18, 19, 30 and 31, Township 16 North, Range 5 East and Sections 6, 7, 18, 19 and 30, Township 15 North, Range 5 East to the Southeast corner of Section 30, Township 15 North, Range 5 East;

MINGUS UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 4 (continued)

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Section 30, Township 15 North, Range 5 East to the West line of Township 15 North, Range 5 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the West line of Township 15 North, Range 5 East to the Southeast corner of Section 25, Township 15 North, Range 4 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Sections 25, 26, 27, 28 and 29, Township 15 North, Range 4 East to the point of intersection with the Verde River;

Thence SOUTHEASTERLY along the Verde River to its intersection with the South line of Township 15 North, Range 4 East;

Thence WESTERLY along South line of Township 15 North, Range 4 East and Township 15 North, Range 3 East to the Southwest corner of Township 15 North, Range 3 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY along the West line of Township 14 1/2 North, Range 3 East to the Northeast corner of Section 36, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East;

Thence WESTERLY along North line of Section 36, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East to the North 1/4 corner of Section 36, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the North-South mid-section line of Section 25, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East to the South 1/4 corner of Section 24, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Section 24, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East and Sections 24, 23, 22 and 21, Township 15 North, Range 2 East to the Southwest corner of Section 21, Township 15 North, Range 2 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the West line of Sections 21, 16 and 9, Township 15 North, Range 2 East to the Southwest corner of Section 4, Township 15 North, Range 2 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Sections 5 and 6, Township 15 North, Range 2 East to the West line of Township 15 North, Range 2 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the West line of Township 15 North, Range 2 East and Township 16 North, Range 1 1/2 East to the Southeast corner of Township 17 North, Range 1 East;

MINGUS UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 4 (continued)

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Township 17 North, Range 1 East to the Southwest corner of Township 17 North, Range 1 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the West line of Township 17 North, Range 1 East to the Northwest corner of Township 17 North, Range 1 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Township 18 North, Range 1 East to the Southwest corner of Township 18 North, Range 1 East;

Thence NORTHWESTERLY along the West line of Township 18 North, Range 1 East to the Northwest corner of Township 18 North, Range 1 East, a corner of the North Boundary of Yavapai County and the **POINT OF BEGINNING**.

Revised 3/2014



COTTONWOOD-OAK CREEK CURRENT LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COTTONWOOD-OAK CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 6

All that portion of Sections 1, 12, 13, 24 and 25, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East; Sections 1 through 36, Township 15 North, Range 3 East; Sections 1 through 33, Township 15 North, Range 4 East; Sections 6, 7, 18, 19 and 30, Township 15 North, Range 5 East; Section 36, Township 16 North, Range 2 East; Sections 25 through 29 and 32 through 36, Township 16 North, Range 3 East; Sections 7 through 36, Township 16 North, Range 4 East; Sections 7, 18, 19, 30 and 31, Township 16 North, Range 5 East; Sections 1 through 36, Township 17 North, Range 1 East; Sections 1 through 36, Township 17 North, Range 2 East; Sections 1 through 32 and Sections 34 through 36, Township 17 North, Range 3 East; Sections 1 through 36, Township 17 North, Range 4 East; Sections 1 through 36, Township 18 North, Range 1 East; Sections 1 through 36, Township 18 North, Range 2 East; Sections 1 through 36, Township 18 North, Range 3 East; Sections 1 through 36, Township 18 North, Range 4 East and Sections 1 through 18, Township 18 North, Range 5 East of the Gila and Salt River Meridian, Yavapai County, Arizona, described as follows:

BEGINNING at the Northwest corner of Township 18 North, Range 1 East, a corner of the North Boundary of Yavapai County;

Thence **EASTERLY** and **SOUTHERLY** along the North and East Boundary of Yavapai County to the Southeast corner of Section 13, Township 18 North, Range 5 East;

Thence **WESTERLY** along the South line of Sections 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18, Township 18 North, Range 5 East to the East line of Township 18 North, Range 4 East;

Thence **SOUTHERLY** along the East line of Township 18 North, Range 4 East and Township 17 North, Range 4 East to the Southeast corner of Township 17 North, Range 4 East;

Thence **EASTERLY** along the North line of Township 16 North, Range 4 East and Township 16 North, Range 5 East to the Northeast corner of Section 7, Township 16 North, Range 5 East;

Thence **SOUTHERLY** along the East line of Sections 7, 18, 19, 30 and 31, Township 16 North, Range 5 East and Sections 6, 7, 18, 19 and 30, Township 15 North, Range 5 East to the Southeast corner of Section 30, Township 15 North, Range 5 East;

COTTONWOOD-OAK CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 6 (continued)

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Section 30, Township 15 North, Range 5 East to the West line of Township 15 North, Range 5 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the West line of Township 15 North, Range 5 East to the Southeast corner of Section 25, Township 15 North, Range 4 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Sections 25, 26, 27, 28 and 29, Township 15 North, Range 4 East to the point of intersection with the Verde River;

Thence SOUTHEASTERLY along the Verde River to its intersection with the South line of Township 15 North, Range 4 East;

Thence WESTERLY along South line of Township 15 North, Range 4 East and Township 15 North, Range 3 East to the Southwest corner of Township 15 North, Range 3 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY along the West line of Township 14 1/2 North, Range 3 East to the Northeast corner of Section 36, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East;

Thence WESTERLY along North line of Section 36, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East to the North 1/4 corner of Section 36, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the North-South mid-section line of Sections 25, 24, 13, 12 and 1, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East and Section 36, Township 16 North, Range 2 East to the North 1/4 corner of Section 36, Township 16 North, Range 2 East;

Thence EASTERLY along the North line of Section 36, Township 16 North, Range 2 East to the West line of Township 15 North, Range 3 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the West line of Township 15 North, Range 3 East to the Northwest corner of Township 15 North, Range 3 East;

Thence EASTERLY along the North line of Township 15 North, Range 3 East to the Northwest corner of Section 5, Township 15 North, Range 3 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the West line of Sections 32 and 29 to the Northwest corner of the Southwest 1/4 of the Southwest 1/4 of Section 29, Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

COTTONWOOD-OAK CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 6 (continued)

Thence EASTERLY to the Northeast corner of the Southwest 1/4 of the Southeast 1/4 of Section 29, Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

Thence NORTHERLY to the Northwest corner of the Northeast 1/4 of the Southeast 1/4, Section 29, Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

Thence EASTERLY along the East-West mid-section line of Section 29, Township 16 North, Range 3 East to the East 1/4 corner of Section 29, Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

Thence EASTERLY along the East-West mid-section line of Section 28, Township 16 North, Range 3 East to the Center 1/4 corner of Section 28, Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

Thence NORTHERLY to the Northwest corner of the Southwest 1/4 of the Northeast 1/4 of Section 28, Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

Thence EASTERLY to the Northeast corner of the Southwest 1/4 of the Northeast 1/4 of Section 28, Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

Thence NORTHERLY to the Northwest corner of the Northeast 1/4 of the Northeast 1/4 of Section 28, Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

Thence EASTERLY along the North line of Sections 28, 27, 26 and 25, Township 16 North, Range 3 East to the West line of Township 16 North, Range 4 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the West line of Township 16 North, Range 4 East to the Northwest corner of Township 16 North, Range 4 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Township 17 North, Range 4 East and Township 17 North, Range 3 East to the Southeast corner of Section 33, Township 17 North, Range 3 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the East line of said section to the Northeast corner of Section 33, Township 17 North, Range 3 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the North line of said section to the Northwest corner of Section 33, Township 17 North, Range 3 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY along the West line of said section to the South line of Township 17 North, Range 3 East;

COTTONWOOD-OAK CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 6 (continued)

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Township 17 North, Range 3 East, Township 17 North, Range 2 East and Township 17 North, Range 1 East to the Southwest corner of Township 17 North, Range 1 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the West line of Township 17 North, Range 1 East to the Northwest corner of Township 17 North, Range 1 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Township 18 North, Range 1 East to the Southwest corner of Township 18 North, Range 1 East;

Thence NORTHWESTERLY along the West line of Township 18 North, Range 1 East to the Northwest corner of Township 18 North, Range 1 East, a corner of the North Boundary of Yavapai County and the POINT OF BEGINNING.

Revised 3/2014



CLARKDALE-JEROME CURRENT LEGAL DESCRIPTION

CLARKDALE-JEROME ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 3

All that portion of Sections 1 through 6, 9 through 16 and 21 through 24, Township 15 North, Range 2 East; Sections 1, 12, 13 and 24, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East; Sections 1, 12, 13, 24, 25 and 36, Township 16 North, Range 1 1/2 East; Sections 1 through 36, Township 16 North, Range 2 East; Sections 7 through 24 and 28 through 31, Township 16 North, Range 3 East and Section 33, Township 17 North, Range 3 East of the Gila & Salt River Meridian, Yavapai County, Arizona, described as follows:

BEGINNING at the Northeast corner of Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY along the East line of Township 16 North, Range 3 East to the Southeast corner of Section 24, Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Sections 24, 23, 22 and 21, Township 16 North, Range 3 East to the Northeast corner of the Northwest 1/4 of the Northeast 1/4 of Section 28, Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY to the Southeast corner of the Northwest 1/4 of the Northeast 1/4 of Section 28, Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

Thence WESTERLY to the Southeast corner of the Northeast 1/4 of the Northwest 1/4 of Section 28, Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY along the North-South mid-section line of Section 28, Township 16 North, Range 3 East to the Center 1/4 corner of Section 28, Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the East-West mid-section line of Section 28, Township 16 North, Range 3 East to the West 1/4 corner of Section 28, Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the East-West mid-section line of Section 29, Township 16 North, Range 3 East to the Southeast corner of the Southwest 1/4 of the Northeast 1/4 of Section 29, Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY to the Southeast corner of the Northwest 1/4 of the Southeast 1/4 of Section 29, Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

Thence WESTERLY to the Southwest corner of the Northwest 1/4 of the Southwest 1/4 of Section 29, Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY along the East line of Sections 30 and 31, Township 16 North, Range 3 East to the South line of Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

CLARKDALE-JEROME ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 3 (continued)

Thence WESTERLY along said line to the Southwest corner of Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY along the East line of Township 16 North, Range 2 East to the Southeast corner of Section 25, Township 16 North, Range 2 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of said Section 25 to the South 1/4 corner of Section 25, Township 16 North, Range 2 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY along the North-South mid-section line of Section 36, Township 16 North, Range 2 East and Sections 1, 12, 13, and 24, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East to the South 1/4 corner of Section 24, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Section 24, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East and Sections 24, 23, 22, and 21, Township 15 North, Range 2 East to the Southwest corner of Section 21, Township 15 North, Range 2 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the West line of Sections 21, 16 and 9, Township 15 North, Range 2 East to the Southwest corner of Section 4, Township 15 North, Range 2 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Sections 5 and 6, Township 15 North, Range 2 East to the West line of Township 15 North, Range 2 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the West line of Township 15 North, Range 2 East and Township 16 North, Range 1 1/2 East to the Northwest corner of Township 16 North, Range 1 1/2 East;

Thence EASTERLY along the North line of Township 16 North, Range 1 1/2 East, Township 16 North Range 2 East and Township 16 North, Range 3 East to the Southwest corner of Section 33, Township 17 North, Range 3 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the West line of said section to the Northwest corner of Section 33, Township 17 North, Range 3 East;

Thence EASTERLY along the North line of said section to the Northeast corner of Section 33, Township 17 North, Range 3 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY along the East line of said section to its intersection with the North line of Township 16 North, Range 3 East;

CLARKDALE-JEROME ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 3 (continued)

Thence EASTERLY along the North line of Township 16 North, Range 3 East to the Northeast corner of Township 16 North, Range 3 East and the POINT OF BEGINNING.

Revised 3/2014



VACTE CURRENT LEGAL DESCRIPTION

VALLEY ACADEMY FOR CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION (IN YAVAPAI AND COCONINO COUNTIES)

All that portion of Yavapai and Coconino Counties of the State of Arizona (Gila and Salt River Meridian) lying within the boundaries of the Camp Verde Unified School District No. 28; Clarkdale - Jerome Elementary School District No. 3; Cottonwood - Oak Creek Elementary School District No. 6 and Sedona - Oak Creek Joint Unified School District No. 9 of Yavapai And Coconino Counties; the boundary of said School Districts combined, described as follows:

BEGINNING at the Northwest corner of Township 18 North, Range 1 East, a corner of the North Boundary of Yavapai County;

Thence **EASTERLY** along the North Boundary of Yavapai County to the Northeast corner of Township 18 North, Range 5 East;

Thence **EASTERLY** into Coconino County along the North line of Township 18 North, Range 6 East to the Southwest corner of Section 34, Township 19 North, Range 6 East;

Thence **NORTHERLY** along the West line of Sections 34 and 27, Township 19 North, Range 6 East to the Northwest corner of Section 27, Township 19 North, Range 6 East;

Thence **EASTERLY** along the North line of Section 27, Township 19 North, Range 6 East to the Northeast corner of Section 27, Township 19 North, Range 6 East;

Thence in a **SOUTHEASTERLY** direction along the East line of Sections 27 and 34, Township 19 North, Range 6 East to the Southeast corner of Section 34, Township 19 North, Range 6 East;

Thence **WESTERLY** along the South line of Township 19 North, Range 6 East to the Northwest corner of Section 3, Township 18 North, Range 6 East;

Thence **SOUTHERLY** along the West line of Sections 3, 10, 15 and 22, Township 18 North, Range 6 East to the Southwest corner of Section 22, Township 18 North, Range 6 East;

Thence **EASTERLY** along the South line of Section 22, Township 18 North, Range 6 East to the Northeast corner of Section 27, Township 18 North, Range 6 East;

Thence **SOUTHERLY** along the East line of said Section to the Southeast corner of Section 27, Township 18 North, Range 6 East;

VALLEY ACADEMY FOR CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION (continued)

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of said section to the South 1/4 corner of Section 27, Township 18 North, Range 6 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY along the North-South mid-section line of Section 34, Township 18 North, Range 6 East to the South 1/4 corner of Section 34, a point on the South line of Township 18 North, Range 6 East;

Thence in a SOUTHWESTERLY direction along the South line of Township 18 North, Range 6 East to the Northeast corner of Section 4, Township 17 North, Range 6 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY along the East line of said section to the Southeast corner of Section 4, Township 17 North, Range 6 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of said section to the Northeast corner of Section 8, Township 17 North, Range 6 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY along the East line of said section to the Southeast corner of Section 8, Township 17 North, Range 6 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of said section to the Northeast corner of Section 18, Township 17 North, Range 6 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY along the East line of Sections 18, 19 and 30, Township 17 North, Range 6 East to the Southeast corner of Section 30, Township 17 North, Range 6 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of said section to the Southwest corner of Section 30, Township 17 North, Range 6 East, a point on the East Boundary of Yavapai County;

Thence SOUTHERLY and EASTERLY, along the Yavapai County Boundary to the Northeast corner of Section 11, Township 16 North, Range 6 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY along the East line of Sections 11, 14 and 23, Township 16 North, Range 6 East to the Southeast corner of Section 23, Township 16 North, Range 6 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Sections 23 and 22, Township 16 North, Range 6 East to the Southeast corner of Section 21, Township 16 North, Range 6 East;

VALLEY ACADEMY FOR CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION (continued)

Thence SOUTHERLY along the East line of Sections 28 and 33, Township 16 North, Range 6 East to the South line of Township 16 North, Range 6 East

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Township 16 North, Range 6 East and Township 16 North, Range 5 East to the Southeast corner of Section 31, Township 16 North, Range 5 East

Thence SOUTHERLY along the East line of Sections 6, 7, 18, 19, 30 and 31, Township 15 North, Range 5 East to the South line of Township 15 North, Range 5 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Township 15 North, Range 5 East to the Northeast corner of Section 6, Township 14 North, Range 5 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY along the East line of Sections 6 and 7, Township 14 North, Range 5 East to the Southeast corner of Section 7, Township 14 North, Range 5 East;

Thence EASTERLY along the North line of Sections 17, 16, 15, 14 and 13, Township 14 North, Range 5 East to the East line of Township 14 North, Range 5 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY along the East line of Township 14 North, Range 5 East to the Northwest corner of Section 18, Township 14 North, Range 6 East;

Thence EASTERLY along the North line of Sections 18, 17, 16, 15, 14 and 13, Township 14 North, Range 6 East and Sections 18, 17, 16, 15, 14 and 13, Township 14 North, Range 7 East to the East Boundary of Yavapai County,

Thence SOUTHERLY and SOUTHWESTERLY along the East Boundary of Yavapai County to its intersection with the Verde River, Section 25, Township 11 North, Range 6 East;

Thence NORTHWESTERLY along the Verde River to the South line of Section 24, Township 11 North, Range 6 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Sections 24, 23, 22, 21, 20 and 19, Township 11 North, Range 6 East to the South 1/4 corner of Section 19, Township 11 North, Range 6 East;

VALLEY ACADEMY FOR CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION (continued)

Thence NORTHERLY along the North-South mid-section line of Sections 19, 18, 7 and 6, Township 11 North, Range 6 East to the North 1/4 corner of Section 6, Township 11 North, Range 6 East and the South line of Township 12 North, Range 6 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Township 12 North, Range 6 East, Township 12 North, Range 5 East and Township 12 North, Range 4 East to the Southwest corner of Township 12 North, Range 4 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the West line of Township 12 North, Range 4 East to the Northwest corner of Township 12 North, Range 4 East;

Thence EASTERLY along the North line of Township 12 North, Range 4 East to the Southeast corner of Township 13 North, Range 3 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the East line of Township 13 North, Range 3 East to the Northeast corner of Township 13 North, Range 3 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the North line of Township 13 North, Range 3 East to the West line of Township 13 North, Range 4 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the West line of Township 13 North, Range 4 East and Township 14 North, Range 4 East to the Southwest corner of Township 15 North, Range 4 East;

Thence WESTERLY along South line of Township 15 North, Range 3 East to the Southwest corner of Township 15 North, Range 3 East;

Thence SOUTHERLY along the West line of Township 14 1/2 North, Range 3 East to the Northeast corner of Section 36, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East;

Thence WESTERLY along North line of Section 36, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East to the South 1/4 corner of Section 25, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the North-South mid-section line of said section to the North 1/4 corner of Section 25, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Section 24, Township 15 North, Range 2 1/2 East, Sections 24, 23, 22, and 21, Township 15 North, Range 2 East to the Southwest corner of Section 21, Township 15 North, Range 2 East;

VALLEY ACADEMY FOR CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION (continued)

Thence NORTHERLY along the West line of Sections 21, 16 and 9, Township 15 North, Range 2 East to the Southwest corner of Section 4, Township 15 North, Range 2 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Sections 5 and 6, Township 15 North, Range 2 East to the West line of Township 15 North, Range 2 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the West line of Township 15 North, Range 2 East and Township 16 North, Range 1 1/2 East to the Southeast corner of Township 17 North, Range 1 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Township 17 North, Range 1 East to the Southwest corner of Township 17 North, Range 1 East;

Thence NORTHERLY along the West line of Township 17 North, Range 1 East to the Northwest corner of Township 17 North, Range 1 East;

Thence WESTERLY along the South line of Township 18 North, Range 1 East to the Southwest corner of Township 18 North, Range 1 East;

Thence NORTHWESTERLY along the West line of Township 18 North, Range 1 East to the Northwest corner of Township 18 North, Range 1 East, a corner of the North Boundary of Yavapai County and the POINT OF BEGINNING.

Revised 6/2014



IMPORTANT VOTER INFORMATION

LAST DAY OF REGISTRATION

In order to vote in any election, you must live in the jurisdiction's limits and you must have registered to vote at least 29 days prior to an election.

- For the **November 3, 2020** election, the last day to register to vote is **October 5, 2020**.
- Ballots will be mailed out starting **October 7, 2020**.
- Re-registration is required if you change your residential address, name or party affiliation.

If you do not know if you are qualified to vote in this election, please call the County Recorder's Office at 928-771-3248.

EARLY VOTING

OFFICES DESIGNATED FOR EARLY VOTING

Yavapai County Administration Building
1015 Fair Street, Prescott

Yavapai County Cottonwood Annex Building
10 South 6th Street, Cottonwood

To Vote Early in Person

Appear at an Office Designated for Early Voting no later than the close of business on the last day to vote in person. Early Voting will be permitted Monday through Friday during regular business hours.

The first day early ballots are available is **October 7, 2020**.

The last day you may vote early in person is **October 30, 2020**.

To Vote Early by Mail

Written or verbal requests must be received in an Office Designated for Early Voting before the close of business on the last day to request. Specify where to mail the ballot. Include: name, residence address, birth date, election for which the ballot is being requested, address where ballot is to be mailed if other than residence address, signature of requester.

The last day to request a ballot be mailed to you is October 23, 2020.

Filling out your mail ballot

Once you have received your ballot, read all the instructions carefully.

Fill out your ballot in **BLACK INK** only.

Insert your voted ballot into the white affidavit envelope, **SIGN** the white affidavit envelope and place it into the pink postage paid envelope pre-addressed to Yavapai County Recorder, seal it and return it.

In order to be valid and counted, the ballot and signed affidavit must be delivered to:

- an Office Designated for Early Voting
- an Official Ballot Drop Box (listed below) or
- at any vote center designated for this election (on Election Day only from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.)

The last day to return a ballot is 7:00 p.m. **November 03, 2020**.

Lost or never received mail ballot

If you lost your ballot or never received your ballot, you may request a replacement ballot by mail, vote early in person at an Office Designated for Early Voting, or on Election Day, vote at any vote center designated for this election from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

To Vote Using Assistance

Written or verbal requests must be received in an Office Designated for Early Voting before the close of business on the last day to request. Include: name, residence address, birth date, election for which the ballot is being requested, place of confinement, signature of requester. The officer in charge of the election may appoint boards for the purpose of making it possible for qualified electors who are ill or disabled to vote.

To request voting assistance, contact

Yavapai County Voter Registration: (928) 639-8100 x3248 or 928-771-3248

OFFICIAL BALLOT DROP BOXES

Camp Verde

Town Hall, 473 S. Main St.
Yavapai-Apache Nation Community Ctr., 3462 Smith Ave.

Chino Valley

Town Hall, 202 N. State Route 89

Clarkdale

Town Hall, 39 N. 9th St.

Cottonwood

County Administration Building, 10 S. 6th St.

Dewey-Humboldt

Town Hall, 2735 S. Highway 69

Jerome

Town Hall, 600 Clark St.

Paulden

Public Library, 16 Big Chino Rd.

Prescott

County Administration Building, 1015 Fair St.

Prescott Valley

Town Hall, 7501 Skoog Blvd.

Sedona

City Hall, 102 Roadrunner Dr.

Skull Valley

U.S. Post Office, 3085 S Iron Springs Rd.

Spring Valley

Public Library, 17320 E Mule Deer Dr.

ELECTION DAY VOTING

Electors who vote at a vote center are required to present identification before receiving a ballot.

LIST 1 – Acceptable forms of ID with voter’s photograph, name, and address. The address must reasonably match the precinct register (1 required):

- Valid Arizona driver license
- Valid Arizona non-operating identification license
- Tribal enrollment card or other form of tribal identification
- Valid United States federal, state, or local government issued identification

An identification is “valid” unless it can be determined on its face that it has expired.

LIST 2 – Acceptable forms of ID (no photo) with voter’s name and address. The address must reasonably match the precinct register (2 required):

- Utility bill of the elector dated within 90 days of the date of the election (may be electric, gas, water, solid waste, sewer, telephone, cellular phone or cable TV);
- Bank or credit union statement dated within 90 days of the date of the election;
- Valid Arizona Vehicle Registration;
- A valid Indian or Native American census card;
- Property tax statement of the voter’s residence;
- A valid tribal enrollment card or other valid form of tribal identification
- A valid Arizona vehicle insurance card;
- A valid Recorder’s Certificate;
- Any mailing to the elector marked “Official Election Material” including a valid Arizona voter registration card; or
- Any valid United States federal, state, or local government-issued identification

LIST 3 – Acceptable forms of ID, one with photo, one without (2 required):

- A valid Arizona driver license;
- A valid Arizona non-operating identification license;
- A tribal enrollment card or other form of tribal identification; or
- Any other valid United States federal, state, or local government-issued identification

Other forms of identification not on this list must be deemed acceptable by the county election official in charge of elections and must establish the identity of the elector.

If the elector does not provide identification as described, the elector shall be issued a provisional ballot. The elector must provide identification to the county recorder or to an official deemed acceptable by the county recorder per the instructions provided at the polling place in order for the provisional ballot to be processed and counted. The deadline to provide Identification is 5:00 p.m., **November 10, 2020**.

Any registered voter may, at the voter's option, be accompanied by a minor who is permitted in the voting booth pursuant to A.R.S. §16-515, subsection E, be accompanied and assisted by a person of the voter's own choice or be assisted by two election officials, one from each major political party in a partisan election, during any process relating to voting or during the actual process of voting on a paper ballot, machine or electronic voting system. A person who is a candidate for an office in that election other than the office of precinct committeeman in a partisan primary election is not eligible to assist any voter.

Any qualified elector who, at 7:00 p.m., is in the line of waiting voters, shall be allowed to prepare and cast a ballot.

CONTACT ELECTIONS AND VOTER REGISTRATION

TOLL FREE PHONE CONTACTS

Ash Fork \ Bagdad \ Seligman \ Yarnell Areas

800-771-2797

Black Canyon City

602-495-8800

Verde Valley Areas

928-639-8100

Prescott Quad City Areas

928-771-3248

Email Voter Registration

web.voter.registration@yavapai.us

Email Elections

web.elections@yavapai.us

CONTACTS

Yavapai County Voter Registration: (928) 639-8100 x3248 or 928-771-3248

Yavapai County School Superintendent: (928)-771-3326

YAVAPAI COUNTY VOTE CENTERS

General Election, November 3, 2020

Ash Fork

Ash Fork Public Library – 450 W. Lewis Avenue

Bagdad

Freeport-McMoran – 700 Palo Verde B

Black Canyon City

Pioneer Masonic Lodge #82 – 19055 E. K-Mine Road

Camp Verde

Camp Verde Community Library – 130 N. Black Bridge Road

Chino Valley

First Southern Baptist Church - 1524 N. Highway 89

Grace Baptist Church – 2010 S. Highway 89

Clarkdale

Clark Memorial Clubhouse – 19 N. 9th Street

Congress

Grace Bible Chapel – 25605 Ghost Town Road

Cordes Lakes

Cordes Lakes Community Center – 16357 S. Cordes Lakes Drive

Cottonwood

Cottonwood Bible Church – 1020 S. Camino Real

Immaculate Conception Catholic Church – 700 N. Bill Gray Road

Yavapai County Cottonwood Annex – 10 S. 6th Street

Dewey-Humboldt

Gateway Baptist Church – 12900 E. Prescott Dells Ranch Road

Rimrock

Beaver Creek Adult Center – 4250 E. Zuni Way

Prescott

Central Yavapai Fire Station #57 – 4125 W. Outer Loop Road

Prescott Community Center – 1280 E. Rosser Street

Trinity Presbyterian Church – 630 Park Avenue

Yavapai College, Community Room – 1100 E. Sheldon Street, Bldg 19

Yavapai County Administration Building – 1015 Fair Street

Prescott Valley

Humboldt USD – Bradshaw East Campus – 6411 N. Robert Road

Prescott Elks Lodge #330 – 6245 E. 2nd Street

Sedona

Sedona Elks Lodge #2291 – 110 Airport Road

VOCA Community Center – 690 Bell Rock Boulevard

Seligman

Seligman Library – 54170 N. Floyd Street

Yarnell

Yarnell Presbyterian Church – 16455 W. Table Top Way



TO: GOVERNING BOARD PRESIDENTS AND SUPERINTENDENTS

FROM: Ann O'Brien, Legislative Committee Chair

DATE: August 10, 2020

SUBJECT: PROPOSED 2021 POLITICAL AGENDA AND DELEGATE ASSEMBLY PROCESS

Thank you for lending your voice to every public-school student in Arizona. Enclosed you will find ASBA's Vision, Mission, and Core Beliefs; and the proposed 2021 Political Agenda.

The Legislative Committee reviewed and discussed every submitted proposal at its meeting on June 15th. Most boards indicated support for items included in the 2020 Political Agenda, and the committee appreciates your overwhelming support of ASBA's agenda to advance public education statewide.

This year, the committee modified the streamlined political agenda approved in years past to reflect the current public health concerns school leaders face. You will see in the enclosed report:

1. **The *draft* 2021 ASBA Political Agenda.** As with the 2020 agenda, the committee feels this 4-item document will create a simple, readily digestible agenda that will serve as a guide to advocating for legislation aligned with ASBA's mission and values, but also allow for the expression of more specific related concerns by ASBA member districts. This document will be the one given to legislators outlining ASBA's priorities.
2. **COVID-19 Appendix.** This year, the Legislative Committee created a fifth section to the Political Agenda based on member submissions related to addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. While it is challenging to create a document to adequately address a rapidly-changing situation, we feel the items presented strike the right balance between specific enough to be actionable and flexible enough to adapt to changing circumstances.

The Delegate Assembly determines the positions of the Arizona School Boards Association and will consider both documents. Registration for Delegate Assembly will open on August 31st. You may register via the [registration page](#). **We look forward to seeing you at the Delegate Assembly on October 17th.**

The Delegate Assembly will be held remotely this year, with opportunities for non-delegate members to watch as participants. ASBA is in the process of creating rules of procedure to make the process as smooth as possible and will communicate these with delegates and alternates well in advance of the meeting.

Please copy and distribute this ENTIRE packet to all board members and place the proposed 2021 Political Agenda on your next board agenda for discussion and to provide any instruction to your district delegate as to your board's position on proposed agenda items. A sample board agenda item has been included for your reference. While all board members and superintendents are welcome to attend the Delegate Assembly, each member district has only one official delegate.

Delegate registration can be completed [online beginning August 31st](#).



Core Purpose (Mission):

We cultivate excellence in locally-governed school districts.

Core Beliefs:

- The basic life needs of children must be met for them to succeed.
- Meeting the unique educational needs of all students must be the foundation of our school systems.
- The governance of publicly-funded schools must lie with locally-elected and publicly-accountable governing boards.
- The responsibility for student success is shared by students, parents, governing board, district staff and the community.
- Public education funding must be broad-based, stable and at a level that assures all students are successful.
- Knowledgeable and professionally trained governing board members are fundamental for ensuring student success.
- Closing the opportunity and achievement gap is a moral and economic imperative that must be addressed to ensure all Arizona's students are successful.

Model Governing Board Agenda Items

Model agenda item for selection of district delegate (may be consent if no discussion required)

1. Consideration and possible action to appoint [NAME] to represent [DISTRICT NAME] as the district delegate to the Arizona School Boards Association delegate assembly on October 17, 2020

Model agenda item for board consideration of the draft political agenda in general session

1. Governing Board to discuss and may consider action to approve the Arizona School Boards Association's (ASBA) draft 2021 Political Agenda, and, direct the District's delegate to the ASBA delegate assembly to represent the Board's determined position.

ASBA Draft 2021 Political Agenda

I. Adequately and Equitably Fund District Schools to at least the National Median per Pupil Funding

1. Maximize state funding for nationally and locally competitive salaries to attract, recruit, and retain talented teachers and staff, including incentives for difficult to fill positions.

Rationale: This item is of primary concern to ASBA member districts. Despite investments made in the 20x2020 plan, teacher salaries will remain a concern in the near term.

2. Revise the School Finance formula to:

- a. Provide a stable, dedicated revenue source less reliant on the general fund or annual legislative appropriation.
- b. Provide dedicated school capital funding consistent with the constitutional requirement of a general and uniform public school system.
- c. Ensure the formula addresses the unique financial needs of schools serving students in poverty and in rural & remote schools.
- d. Revise the funding formula to add funding for student mental health and well-being initiatives.

Rationale: Given that the Legislature has (until 2018) been remiss in dedicating General Fund dollars to K-12 education, the system would be best served by establishing a revenue source outside the reach of the Legislature to increase /maintain funding. An economically stable revenue source would be less vulnerable to a decline in state revenue collections due to a downturn or tax cuts.

Poverty weights (i.e. a weight per-student where the community served by the district meet established poverty thresholds) have long been recommended as a means to recognize and reduce educational disparities associated with growing up in poverty. A poverty weight speaks to adequacy and would reduce dependence on other funding sources in low Socio-economic Status (SES) districts. Rural and remote school districts also have unique financial challenges to due to economies of scale and geography that require consideration beyond what urban/suburban schools require. Item (D) was added by the Legislative Committee this year to emphasize the importance of school counselors, social workers, mental health professional development for all staff, and other wellbeing programs.

3. Fully fund full-day kindergarten and include kindergarten students in the override calculations.

Rationale: All-day Kindergarten, when funded, should be funded as 1.0 ADM rather than a Group B weight as before. This would allow districts to generate override capacity for 1.0 ADM rather than 0.5 ADM.

4. Advocate to preserve and protect the voters' original intent of Prop 301.

Rationale: Given that the Legislature created a mechanism to continue the 0.6% sales tax beyond its original expiration, the focus should now shift to protecting the voters' intent for Prop. 301 to increase base compensation for teachers, and supplement, not supplant, other state funding for public schools.

5. Index district additional assistance (DAA) funding for inflation

Rationale: District additional assistance is an important source of funding for districts that is now set to be fully restored in FY2022. Therefore, it is not possible to accelerate it any further. Indexing the DAA formula to inflation would allow a fully funded formula to keep pace with growing needs for capital replacement. The charter additional assistance formula is already indexed for inflation.

6. Provide funding for new space before existing schools exceed their maximum capacity and become overcrowded, and provide dedicated and flexible ongoing maintenance funding, including building replacement. Advocate for capacity standards that reflect the design of instructional space.

Rationale: ASBA believes that it is not appropriate to require students to attend an overcrowded school for years before state-funded facilities are provided.

7. Eliminate unfunded mandates and administrative burdens.

Rationale: It is a fundamental position of ASBA to oppose all new, and work to eliminate all existing, unfunded mandates.

8. Return desegregation funding to a primary tax levy.

Rationale: The Legislature moved desegregation levies to the secondary property tax in FY19. This was intended to both save the state money and create political pressure on certain districts due to their high tax levies by raising property liability for homeowners in those districts. The secondary property tax is designated for voter-approved taxes. Desegregation funding is not and should not be a voter-approved tax. It is a tax levied to remedy civil rights complaints, which are not by their nature items for a public vote. Deseg funding should be a primary tax levy.

9. Conduct an exceptional student services cost study to assure students, including in rural or remote areas, are being funded at the actual cost of their services.

Rationale: Special education funding weights have not been updated in many years, and the cost of serving exceptional students far exceeds the amount the state provides. In addition, individual weights for specific diagnoses are not necessarily reasonably aligned to the cost of services for students.

10. Adequately fund the cost of student transportation.

Rationale: In some districts, the transportation budget, including TRCL levy, is greater than the total transportation budget. In others, transportation must be subsidized with other funds. In some districts, state funding does not cover the costs, and in others, they are forced to levy a local tax to make up for inadequate funding elsewhere.

11. Provide funding for preschool programs.

Rationale: Currently, Arizona only provides publicly funded preschool for students with disabilities. All other preschool programs must be tuition-based or grant-funded.

12. Reform current year funding to a system that provides districts with appropriate stable annual budgeting ability and technical reliability.

Rationale: Current year funding does not provide enough predictability for school districts to make efficient budgeting decisions. Without access to timely, reliable data, planning is very difficult. Current year funding hits declining districts especially hard.

13. Prorate funding over the entire school year among all public schools that a student has attended during the year.

Rationale: Prorating funding over the entire 180-day school year (as opposed to the first 100 days) would guarantee a district funding for a student who switches to a new district/charter some funding for that year.

14. Provide funding to individual districts to implement locally directed school safety programs as well as student mental health and wellbeing initiatives.

Rationale: School districts should retain the authority to operate a comprehensive school safety program according to the needs of each individual community. School safety must include a comprehensive approach that addresses mental health.

15. Equitably invest in technology and reliable internet access for all students.

Rationale: While this has been a topic for several years, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the inequitable access to technology that exists statewide. Districts and students must have access to technology that allows for remote instruction when the need arises.

16. Adequately fund programs under exceptional student services.

Rationale: The cost of delivering special education services often outweighs funding available via federal and state sources. Support should be increased.

17. Provide funding for districts to improve student achievement by addressing social-emotional learning needs and create training programs for school staff in cultural proficiency and responsiveness.

Rationale: Cultural proficiency is an essential element to eliminate disparities in the educational status of students of diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. Establishing a culturally proficient foundation requires districts to train employees to enable them to engage effectively and appropriately with all students.

II. Preserve and Strengthen Local Control

1. Ensure local control and flexibility in managing funds and programs when possible, given the Arizona constitutional requirements of a general and uniform public school system.

Rationale: The ability of districts to have flexibility in managing funds is important, but flexibility in the use of certain funds does not relieve the state of its responsibilities to maintain the public schools in the manner prescribed in the Arizona Constitution.

2. Change “override/budget increase” language to better reflect what voters are being asked to support.

Rationale: “Budget override” is an outdated term that tends to lead voters to believe that something is wrong in the district. If transparency is important, the terminology should accurately reflect what is being asked of the voters.

3. Allow school districts greater flexibility in the divestiture or use of taxpayer-funded assets.

Rationale: School district buildings and equipment are the property of the taxpayers in the school district, even if they are built partially with state funds. School boards and the voters they represent should have the final say over when and how school district buildings are used, repurposed, and/or disposed of without burdensome and intrusive state regulation.

4. Oppose legislative intrusion on school site budgeting decisions.

Rationale: This was included to challenge efforts by the Legislature to continue restricting district decision making on how to allocate funding. This item was initially intended to challenge true “backpack funding” that would require funding to follow a student to their specific school site.

5. Maintain exclusive local authority over any measure that would propose to consolidate and/or unify any number of school districts into a larger district.

Rationale: The ultimate approval of any measure that proposes the consolidation and/or unification of school districts must lie with the voters of those school districts or their locally elected boards. The tax and expenditure implications of combining districts are great enough that local residents absolutely deserve the final say, either directly or via their elected representatives on the school board.

6. Support local board authority for student suspensions and open enrollment.

Rationale: School boards should have the final say in determining whether or not a student who has been suspended from another school should be admitted.

7. Support policy that eliminates the use of corporal punishment in Arizona schools.

Rationale: In the few districts where it is still authorized, corporal punishment is rarely if ever used. Staff was not able to determine a recent case of use during research last year. More positive forms of discipline are more effective. Removing its use permanently from statute conforms to current educational best practice.

8. Amend current statute to allow school board members to use the E-Qual system in addition to in-person signatures to appear on the ballot.

Rationale: School board candidates are some of the only candidates not able to use E-Qual to electronically collect signatures to appear on the ballot. Allowing the use of electronic signatures in addition to in-person petitions will bring parity to school board candidates, and is especially crucial during the current pandemic.

III. Improve Outcomes For All Students

1. Increase the compulsory attendance age from 16 to 18 years.

Rationale: Increasing the compulsory age of attendance will increase graduation rate/educational attainment and decrease the number of students who become “opportunity youth” rather than pursuing college or a career.

2. Enact research-based reform of the English Language Learner model of instruction that may include primary language literacy to improve student achievement that does not segregate English Language Learners from English speaking peers; integrates reading, writing and oral language instruction; and incorporates multiple assessment measures to demonstrate English proficiency.

Rationale: The four-hour model of ELL instruction has become a hindrance to the success of ELL students. ASBA advocates allowing flexibility in the four-hour requirement for all students, but especially those who are in their second or subsequent year of ELL instruction. The current

system does not allow for sufficient content delivery and causes students to fall behind academically.

3. Fully restore 9th grade CTE/CTED eligibility and funding to allow students to explore career fields and/or certification completion.

Rationale: Allowing 9th grade students to enroll in CTED courses increases the probability a student will be engaged throughout high school and will complete a CTE certification by the time the student graduates.

4. Allow CTEDs to serve students through age 21 regardless of graduation status.

Rationale: Currently, JTEDs are not able to continue to serve students once they graduate from high school, because the state ceases to provide funding for students who have received a diploma. They must transition to a community college program if one is available.

5. Support policy that recognizes, respects, and promotes teaching as a profession.

Rationale: It is important for the Legislature and the public in general to recognize, as ASBA does, that teaching is a profession that requires a set of standards for qualification. Undermining those standards is harmful to the K-12 system.

6. Defend against efforts to chill the free speech rights of school employees.

Rationale: In the wake of the work stoppage and Red for Ed demonstrations of 2018, it was necessary to affirmatively state that governing boards, not the Legislature, are responsible of the oversight and discipline of employees for violation of district policy regarding conduct in the classroom.

This may become an issue again in 2020 as employees advocate for safe work environments.

7. State standardized testing shall not be used for any purpose other than a year over year measurement of student growth in the tested subject.

Rationale: The insistence on using standardized testing to “grade” schools as a method of encouraging them to improve has not been successful. Testing results and any type of accountability system should be used only to identify potential instructional deficiencies and improve them, without public shaming or financial repercussions.

8. Support policy that protects school district employees and students from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Rationale: As a matter of educational equity and encouraging opportunity for all individuals, ASBA should support efforts to include prohibitions on discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in federal, state, and local educational and employment policies where they do not currently exist.

IV. Require Public Accountability for Taxpayer Dollars Spent on Education

1. Establish financial and academic transparency for all institutions and individuals that accept public funds.

Rationale: ASBA believes that all public funds, including those that go to charter schools and private schools through ESAs/vouchers, should be accounted for in the same manner, and if the public policy of Arizona is to make assessment results available for all public education programs, the public has a right to the same information on all the education programs it is funding.

2. Repeal any program that gives public funds for private schools, vouchers (Empowerment Scholarship Accounts) and private school subsidies (Student Tuition Organizations) and prevent any future expansion.

Rationale: ASBA does not support public funding of private schools.

3. Require comparative classroom spending audits for school districts and all other institutions that accept public funds and define “classroom spending” as both instructional spending and student support spending.

Rationale: The auditor general’s current classroom spending report is applied only to school districts, so the public has no similar window into the spending patterns of charter schools. Further, the definition of “classroom spending” is too narrow and does not encompass all that is essential to helping students succeed.

4. Enforce financial requirements and seek recovery of improperly received and/or expended public funds by charter and private schools and organizations.

Rationale: School districts face strict accountability standards and repercussions for misusing public funds. Charter schools and private schools accepting public money, whether directly or indirectly, should be bound by similar standards to ensure funds are used for their intended purpose.

V. COVID-19 Response

1. Hold school districts harmless for significant enrollment losses for school year 2020-2021.

Rationale: Fluctuating and declining enrollments are likely to occur this school year as parents make decisions whether to send their children to school based on rapidly evolving local infection rates. Ensuring districts have budgetary stability will allow administrators to focus on creating the best school environment possible.

2. Provide flexibility in seat time and attendance requirements for school districts for the 2020-2021 school year.

Rationale: Given the use of online and hybrid learning models being used this school year, flexibility in seat time requirements may be necessary to ensure school districts aren't punished financially for adhering to public health guidelines by keeping students at home.

3. Suspend state standardized testing requirements for school year 2020-2021.

Rationale: Given the high stakes of our standardized tests, suspending state standardized testing requirements for this school year will allow instructors to focus on adapting to distance learning with engaging curriculum, not standardized test preparation.

4. Enact a moratorium on school letter grades for school year 2020-2021.

Rationale: Given that school letter grades are largely based on standardized test performance, and the added pressure of Results-Based Funding, schools should not be punished with a bad letter grade given the equity issues and challenges associated with distance learning.

5. Provide districts flexibility in teacher evaluation requirements and procedures.

Rationale: Procedures for teacher evaluations are strictly laid out in state statute, but flexibility around notification and evaluation dates may be necessary to ensure both administrators and teachers have adequate time and are fairly represented in the process.

6. Regulatory relief in the event the pandemic continues to (or does so at a future date) interrupt the academic year.

Rationale: Many federal and state regulatory requirements have been difficult or impossible to comply with during the pandemic. Waiving any such issues that arise will help school leaders focus on delivering educational services, rather than working around government regulations.

7. A state-funded program designed to bulk purchase sanitation supplies (i.e. PPE, cleaning supplies, etc.) for distribution to school districts & schools.

Rationale: Shortages and price gouging of sanitation supplies has been a nationwide problem during this pandemic. School districts need guaranteed access to affordable supplies that will keep schools open safely.

8. Funding for increased expenses incurred due to COVID-19, including costs to meet the social/emotional needs of students.

Rationale: The social and emotional impact of the pandemic has hurt students, particularly those who rely on the safety and stability of the school environment to succeed.

9. Technology modernization and accessibility to ensure students have the technology and equipment to use during times like these with the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Rationale: Lack of modern technology at home has highlighted an equity gap among our students during the pandemic. Schools need resources to ensure every student and staff member has a quality device to stay connected with their schools from home.

10. Unless a public emergency is declared, maintain the right of school districts to close for safety concerns related to COVID-19 outbreak in the community.

Rationale: School districts should maintain flexibility to adapt to the public health circumstances in their community to safely serve students in the most effective manner.

11. Protect public schools from liability if a community member contracts COVID-19 while engaged in school-sponsored activities.

Rationale: While it's difficult to prove with certainty where and how a person contracts COVID-19, ensuring school districts don't have liability concerns will allow them to remain open to the community to the fullest extent possible given the circumstances.