

What am I hearing about a possible partnership?

Oakland County Parks and Bloomfield Hills Schools are exploring a potential intergovernmental partnership to support and strengthen Bowers School Farm and the Johnson Nature Center. While no agreements have been made, early discussions suggest a model where Bloomfield Hills Schools would continue to have priority access for educational programming, while Oakland County Parks would oversee operations and management with a focus on bolstering recreation activities.

What is the status of the conversation?

This is still in the exploratory phase. No formal proposal or agreement has been drafted or reviewed.

What are the potential benefits of a partnership?

A partnership could:

- Ensure long-term sustainability and environmental stewardship of both properties
- Bring in new facility and infrastructure investments and improvements
- Offer more programs and activities for families
- Preserve first-in-line access for BHS students
- Combine Oakland County Park's recreation expertise with BHS's commitment to education and community
- Help win state and federal grants that require joint ownership

Will this increase my taxes?

No. This would not raise taxes.

How long would the partnership last?

The exact length has not yet been determined. In similar agreements, partnerships run 20–30 years. A long-term agreement would allow OCP and BHS to jointly apply for state and federal grants, bringing additional resources to enhance and sustain the Farm and Nature Center.

Why does this make sense for Oakland County Parks?

Oakland County Parks is committed to delivering increased value to residents by expanding access to recreation, education, and nature. Partnering with BHS on Bowers Farm and Johnson Nature Center would:

- Strengthen OCP's mission to connect people with outdoor learning and recreation
- Extend services into an area of the county that currently has limited OCP presence
- Leverage county resources to invest in and sustain two well-loved community destinations
- Ensure that more families and students benefit from high-quality programs and facilities

Why does this make sense for BHS?

This partnership could bring important resources to preserve and enhance these treasured spaces, while expanding recreational opportunities and addressing long-term facility needs.

Who would decide?

Any agreement would need approval from:

- The Bloomfield Hills Schools Board of Education
- The Oakland County Parks Commission
- The Oakland County Board of Commissioners

Will current programs change?

An intergovernmental partnership could strengthen long-term sustainability and expand offerings. It could help fund new programming, provide essential operational investments and maintenance, and improve accessibility.

Would the Farm and Nature Center be shared more widely with the public?

These spaces already serve the broader community through school field trips, camps, and public events. A partnership could maintain or expand these already established experiences.

Where do things stand now?

These are early talks only. No agreement has been written. Both Oakland County Parks and Bloomfield Hills Schools agree that nothing will move forward unless the community is on board.

What role do Friends of Bowers Farm and Friends of Johnson Nature Center play?

Both are independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that exist to advance the mission and reach of their respective sites through fundraising, volunteer efforts, and community events. Both organizations support any and all investments that strengthen and expand these facilities, including a partnership with Oakland County Parks.

When will a decision be made?

October will be dedicated to gathering community feedback, followed by a thorough analysis of the results in November. A summary of the feedback will be shared with both the Bloomfield Hills School Board of Education and the Oakland County Parks Commission at their November meetings. This website will continue to be updated as the timeline evolves.

How can I share my opinion?

Community input is essential in shaping how these treasured spaces can best serve students, staff, and residents in a sustainable, fiscally responsible, and operationally efficient way for

years to come. To gather feedback, Bloomfield Hills Schools is working with Oakland County Parks to offer public forums and a community survey.

Public Forums: Two sessions will be held for residents to learn more and share their views:

- Saturday, October 18, 2025, at Bowers School Farm during the Fall Festival event from 10 a.m.–12 p.m.
- Monday, October 20, 2025, at Johnson Nature Center from 4 p.m.–6 p.m.

Complete the short survey.