

Board Summary

Over the past two years, SASSED and its Board of Directors have been conducting a facility study to examine their current facilities, identify additional needs, and to develop a long term facility plan. Financial specialists, facility specialists, and focus groups have been included in this process. Currently, SASSED owns and operates Southeast School, located at the corner of Maple and Naper in Naperville. In addition to this property, SASSED rents over 45 classrooms and office spaces in their partner districts as well as leases their District Office in Lisle.

As a result of the facility planning, it has been determined that the current facilities operated and rented by SASSED are not meeting all the exceptional needs of the students in their programs. Additionally, given SASSED's current facility structure, concerns have been identified with resource efficiency, program efficiency, instructional continuity, and student, family, and staff engagement. As such, a recommendation to consolidate SASSED programming was made.

The SASSED Administration has been actively pursuing consolidated options. Several properties for sale within DuPage County have been explored. At the same time, funding mechanisms were studied and recommended. SASSED will issue debt certificates in order to fund any new facilities. A price point has been established that will be cost neutral based on current expenses for leasing and rent costs. Also, it has been determined that the debt certificates will be paid back via the SASSED tuition costs. Given the price point established based on current rent expenditures, it is not anticipated that partner districts will need to take on additional debt, nor will they be expected to pay more via tuition costs.

Lastly, as part of this process, SASSED has reviewed and revised their Joint Articles of Agreement and By-Laws to include mandated updates and an equitable withdrawal process based on SASSED student enrollment. Partner Districts will be asked to approve the new Joint Articles of Agreement and By-Laws at an upcoming District Board of Education Meeting.

This is an exciting time for SASSED and its partner districts. SASSED has identified a handful of viable properties centrally located in DuPage that would meet the needs established throughout this process. Their next steps are to fully explore the identified properties to ensure viability and cost neutrality, as well as to issue debt certificates once a property has been chosen based on viability and cost neutrality. The timeline for acquiring a new property is this summer, 2026. SASSED's Governing Board will need to approve the issuance of debt certificates at a forthcoming SASSED Governing Board Meeting. It is firmly believed that a centralized location(s) will lead to improved student outcomes in all areas of programming, better staff recruitment and retention, and improved efficiencies.

Additional Talking Points for SASSED Facility Planning:

- Aligns with SASSED's Strategic Plan
 - Operations-Determine facility (infrastructure) planning strategies
- SASSED Board of Directors have been working with SASSED Executive Director for past 2 years regarding facility planning
- Space Utilization conducted in Fall of 2024
- Determination of consolidated building or buildings made in SY 2025
 - Reasons:
 - Current spaces are not permanent- too many moves
 - Not all current spaces are equitable
 - Impacts of student outcomes and inefficiencies were identified
 - Expected Outcomes of consolidated building(s):
 - Equitable facilities
 - Authentic Inclusion
 - Robust Instruction
 - Exceptional Programming
 - Program Efficiency
 - Increased Collaboration
 - Meeting the needs of students
 - Resource Efficiency
 - Long Term Savings
 - Sophisticated Innovation
 - Professional Development
 - Family Connections
 - Staff Retention
 - Experiences for students
- Facility Specialist retained in Fall of 2025
- Properties pursued for acquisition
- SASSED working with PMA and SASSED Finance Committee to identify funding
- Determination made to have SASSED issue debt certificates
- All costs are expected to be offset by current rental costs
 - Districts will not need to pay additional fees for new property
- Joint Articles of Agreement was revised to allow districts to exit without penalty and to update withdrawal process
- Currently working with architects to obtain estimate of renovation costs
- Reviewing previous cost analysis to ensure cost neutrality

Next Steps:

- SASSED is working on negotiating purchase price for possible site in Oak Brook
- Renovation costs being determined
- Debt Certificates to be issued by SASSED