



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 18, 2025

For more information, contact:

Rob Kleman

Rob@oshkoshchamber.com

**Oshkosh Chamber Announces Support for the Oshkosh Area School District's 2025 Phase 2
Facilities Consolidation Referendum**

OSHKOSH (2.18.25) — Oshkosh Chamber Board of Directors unanimously voted to support Oshkosh Area School District's 2025 Phase 2 Facilities Consolidation Referendum that will appear on the April 1 ballot.

The school district is asking voters to approve a \$197.8 million capital referendum. This referendum focuses on the district's facilities consolidation plan, prioritizing student safety and improving learning spaces while maintaining a zero-dollar tax increase to the debt levy. If approved by voters, the referendum would allow the district to:

- Build a new consolidated middle school at the Shapiro site (close South Park and Perry Tipler, reducing from three to two westside middle schools)
- Make additions and renovations at Franklin, Carl Traeger and Oakwood Elementary Schools (close Roosevelt and Shapiro, reducing from seven to five westside elementary schools)
- Convert Perry Tipler Middle School into a pre-kindergarten center and recreation department
- Add an auditorium at Oshkosh North High School
- Install air conditioning at Emmeline Cook, Lakeside, and Read Elementary Schools



The Oshkosh Chamber Board of Directors acknowledged that the referendum would allow OASD to build, consolidate, and improve our current educational facilities to prepare Oshkosh students for future success and keep Oshkosh at the forefront of regional workforce success. The Board of Directors also noted the passage of the Phase 2 Facilities referendum will help OASD stay competitive and continue to be a leader in education throughout the Fox Valley region.

“The overwhelming consensus of the Board was that a strong educational system is critical to growing local businesses and the economy. Providing high-quality, safe, and functional learning environments are all critical factors in laying the groundwork for positive student outcomes in the long run,” said Rob Kleman, President & CEO of the Oshkosh Chamber.

The Board of Director’s also felt the passage of the referendum will continue to help prepare the future workforce, help recruit and retain employees at local businesses and help recruit and retain quality educators in our schools.

“A strong educational system is the backbone of a thriving economy and without continued investment in education, we will ultimately face worsening worker shortages, higher costs to doing business and community decline. Investing in our educational facilities now will lead to business growth and community prosperity for years to come,” Kleman added.

While the investment in this phase of the facilities plan is significant, the Board felt the commitment by OASD to maintain a zero-dollar levy increase through 2030 was an important factor residents will want to consider when voting. Oshkosh residents can help OASD maintain and strengthen the quality of education it offers and help our community remain competitive in the region by voting YES to the referendum on April 1.

About Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce

For more than 100 years, Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce has served as the advocate and guardian of business and industry to support the thriving Oshkosh and northeast Wisconsin region. As a five-star accredited Chamber of Commerce, our non-profit represents over 900 members, from small businesses to international corporations.

###