

1 **Report Title:** Reduction of ASDA Conference Fees Report, Response to Resolution 203-2024

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3 **Reference Committee Assignment:** Membership

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5 **RESOLUTION**

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7 **Resolved,** that The American Student Dental Association will introduce a task force appointed  
8 by the 2024-25 Board of Trustees that will seek ways to reduce the cost of attendance for its  
9 members to national conferences, including The National Leadership Conference and Annual  
10 Session.

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12 And be it further:

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14 **Resolved,** that the task force present their findings at the 2025 House of Delegates.

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16 **REPORT BACKGROUND**

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18 At their April meeting, the 2024-25 Board of Trustees approved a task force to research items  
19 included in the resolution.

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21 Task Force Members:

- 22 • Claudia Larochelle, Detroit Mercy '25, 2024-25 Vice President, Chair
- 23 • Simona Loshi, Temple '25, 2024-25 District 3 Trustee
- 24 • Allison Tempel, East Carolina '25, 2024-25 District 4 Trustee
- 25 • Darius Warner, Indiana '26, 2024-25 District 7 Trustee
- 26 • Matthew Fazio, Ohio '26
- 27 • Emily Tarr, Midwestern-Arizona '25
- 28 • Emely Vidal, Tufts '25
- 29 • Ellen Ryan, ASDA Director of Finance
- 30 • Linda kay Tyler, ASDA Director of Business Development
- 31 • Kerri Roesch, ASDA Director of Meetings and Education, Staff Liaison

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33 The task force reviewed the following resources:

- 34 • Financial data and meeting trends from the 2022-2024 Annual Session and 2021-2023  
35 National Leadership Conference (NLC).
- 36 • 2023 Annual Session and NLC actual expenses.
- 37 • Report on meeting sponsorships and other non-dues revenue sources.

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39 **REPORT FINDINGS**

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41 To make an impact on the cost of meeting attendance for members, the task force discussed  
42 program changes and modifications to the attendee experience that could be implemented at  
43 one or both meetings to reduce costs. It was discussed that reducing overall expenses to ASDA  
44 could lead to a reduced cost of attendance for the member.

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46 The task force assessed expenses related to audio/visual, food and beverage, sponsor/industry  
47 opportunities, speakers, and attendee/registration material, as detailed in Appendix A.

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The task force did not believe significant changes should be made to existing education, sponsor, or governance programming, as it may negatively impact the attendee experience and value of the member opportunity.

As a result of their analyses and discussions, the task force recommends that the 2025-26 Board of Trustees investigate the following cost-saving measure to reduce the cost of attendance:

- Combine the gala and Gold Crown Awards at Annual Session into one evening program.
  - The task force identified both events as important elements of the meeting, but believe they can be combined into one program to reduce food, beverage and audio/visual costs.
  - They believe this approach maintains the intent of both events in recognizing member and chapter accomplishments, and celebrating the end of the leadership year.
- Eliminate all attendee printed materials at NLC.
  - The task force discussed that all meeting materials can be accessed through the event app. They do not believe that any materials need to be printed in bulk for attendees. If desired, attendees can print materials from the app on their own.

Anticipated cost savings varies by meeting location and final adjustments made to the program. Based on 2023 actual expenses, anticipated cost savings at Annual Session is around \$15,000-\$20,000. The cost savings reduces registration fees by 6%. Anticipated savings at NLC based on 2023 actual expenses is under \$100. The cost savings will not reduce the registration fees.

The task force identified the following as opportunities for future investigation by the Board of Trustees in conjunction with ASDA’s current strategic plan as a means to reduce the cost of meeting attendance:

- Explore hosting Annual Session in a dedicated city annually, rather than rotating locations.
- Assess alternate venues for NLC based on current attendance projections.

Lastly, the task force discussed non-dues revenue opportunities. They identified products and services that could benefit dental students as potential industry partners, as well as meeting sponsorship ideas. These suggestions, as outlined in Appendix B, should be assessed by the 2025-26 Board of Trustees for feasibility to offset the cost of the attendance at the meetings.

This report is informational, and no resolutions are presented.

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## **Appendix A - Proposed Cost-Saving Measures**

Task Force suggestions to reduce cost to attendees through changes to the program or attendee experience. Includes: Proposed measure, data reviewed, and task force decision.

### **Annual Session**

1. Provide conference materials and handouts digitally rather than in print to reduce printing costs
  - a. Data/Background: Reviewed printing costs from Annual Session 2023.
  - b. Decision: Do not pursue printing reductions as cost-saving measure.
2. Combine the Gold Crown Award ceremony with the gala.
  - a. Data/Background: Reviewed applicable expenses from Annual Session 2023 and non-dues revenue considerations associated with eliminating an evening program.
  - a. Decision: Investigate combining the Gold Crown ceremony with the gala, and eliminating the Gold Crown reception, as cost-saving measure.
3. Eliminate Sunday programming, including education sessions.
  - a. Data/Background: Reviewed applicable expenses and actual attendance numbers from Annual Session 2023. Discussed considerations such as the benefit of programming, risks associated with cutting a day from the program agenda
  - b. Decision: Task force would like the Committee on Sessions to investigate eliminating chapter training sessions on Sunday and, instead, offering alternate programming that aligns with the mission of the meeting at a lower cost. However, they were not in favor of eliminating chapter programming altogether.
4. Identify consistent locations for annual session venue and/or alternate coasts each year.
  - a. Data/Background: reviewed historical context about the conference location rotating between regions and the Board decision to prioritize securing second-tier cities instead.
  - b. Decision: Task force agreed to keep this as part of ASDA's overall strategic plan assessment rather than investigating separately.
5. Purchase electronic voting machines to reduce yearly rentals and purchase breakout room projectors and microphones.
  - a. Data/Background: reviewed pricing structures for equipment rental and implications for maintaining equipment in-house.
  - b. Decision: Do not pursue ASDA-owned A/V equipment as cost-saving measure.

### **National Leadership Conference**

1. Offer early bird registration rates.
  - a. Data/Background: reviewed historical context of discounted rates and budgetary implications.
  - b. Decision: Do not pursue discounted registration fee as cost-saving measure.

- 134 2. Modify or eliminate Sunday programming including: eliminate closing general session;  
135 eliminate all programming; reduce number of breakout sessions; replace education with  
136 community service project.
- 137 a. Data/Background: Discussed the mission of NLC and reviewed historical  
138 background about the closing session and breakout sessions. Reviewed attendee  
139 engagement data and historical attendance. Reviewed estimated cost savings  
140 based on 2023 NLC costs.
- 141 b. Decision: After much discussion, task force determined not to pursue eliminating  
142 the closing session or breakouts on Sunday as cost-saving measure.
- 143 3. Collaborate with external vendors to provide snacks for refreshment breaks.
- 144 a. Data/Background: Discussed vendor policies for food and beverage.
- 145 b. Decision: Do not pursue as cost saving measure.
- 146 4. Remove refreshment breaks in the afternoons of the conference.
- 147 a. Data/Background: Discussed possible implications for sponsorship revenue and  
148 estimated savings based on 2023 actuals.
- 149 b. Decision: Do not pursue as cost saving measure.
- 150 5. Contract with a restaurant to host a breakfast offsite and/or offer coupons to restaurants.
- 151 a. Data/Background: Discussed possible cost implications to attendees, such as  
152 transportation, and cost for meals. Discussed need for meal space to  
153 accommodate all attendees and possible implications to agenda to allow for  
154 transportation times.
- 155 b. Decision: Do not pursue as cost saving measure.
- 156 6. Eliminate or reduce name badge ribbons.
- 157 a. Data/Background: Reviewed possible cost savings based on 2023 actuals.
- 158 b. Decision: Do not pursue as cost saving measure.
- 159 7. Provide conference materials and handouts digitally rather than in print to reduce  
160 printing costs
- 161 a. Data/Background: Reviewed printing costs from NLC 2023.
- 162 b. Decision: Investigate eliminating printed attendee handouts, however total cost-  
163 savings is nominal and does not impact the cost of attendance for members.
- 164 8. Investigate hosting NLC at a smaller venue in Chicago.
- 165 a. Data/Background: Reviewed timeline for existing contracted space and discussed  
166 how this aligns with ASDA's strategic plan.
- 167 b. Decision: Investigate in conjunction with ASDA's existing strategic plan.
- 168 9. Explore alternate audio/visual vendors and/or purchasing projectors and microphones.
- 169 a. Data/Background: Reviewed process for sourcing vendor proposals and  
170 background regarding the scope of the meeting. Discussed pricing structures for  
171 equipment rental and implications for maintaining equipment in-house.
- 172 b. Decision: Do not pursue ASDA-owned A/V equipment as cost-saving measure.
- 173 10. Investigate freight/shipping expenses for materials used for the conferences.
- 174 a. Data/Background: Discussed background regarding general contractor sourcing  
175 for freight and material handling.

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- b. Decision: Task force member to provide contact information for their personal contact for reference at future meetings.

218 **Appendix B - Proposed Non-Dues Revenue Opportunities**

219 **Exclusive Discounts on Products and Services**

220 Partner with companies to offer exclusive discounts to ASDA members to generate revenue  
221 through royalties or other sponsorship agreement.

- 222 1. Meal services and meal delivery such as HelloFresh and DoorDash
- 223 2. Sneakers
- 224 3. Airlines
- 225 4. Gym memberships
- 226 5. Study materials
- 227 6. Energy drinks/coffee shops
- 228 7. Tablets
- 229 8. Equipment such as loupes, handpieces and instruments
- 230 9. Post-graduate services such as contract review and CE courses

231 **Online ASDA Store**

232 Recreate online store selling ASDA-branded products such as scrubs, bags, shirts, pins, gift  
233 baskets, etc.

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235 **Sponsored Programs**

236 Create local community outreach projects for underserved populations that is sponsored by an  
237 industry partner.

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239 **Meeting Sponsorships**

240 Expand exhibitors at Dental Marketplace to include additional local companies and dental  
241 associations.