



March 14, 2023

Representative Sandra Feist
409 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Feist:

My name is Bryan Jones, and I am the chairperson for the St. Anthony Athletics, Academics and Activities Committee (SAAAC). The SAAAC members are a cross section of the community that includes parents, music and arts advisors, coaches, alumni, sports booster members, students, and Faculty of the school system. I am also an alumnus of St. Anthony High School, I live in the community, am a business owner in St. Anthony and now my children attend district 282.

I am writing to express the unanimous support of the SAAAC for inclusion in the bonding bill for upgrades and improvements to St. Anthony's Community Center. We support this strongly due to the need of the community for a space that can be used by taxpayers and students, during the weekday, evenings, and weekends. We recommend and support requesting \$8 million dollars in funding to reduce the financial investment by the city and taxpayers while maximizing the improvements that can be achieved to this facility for the whole community to utilize.

Our area of the Twin Cities is highly developed, and space is at a premium. The school district has engaged community organizations recently and conducted a facility needs assessment. This assessment identified spaces that could be used by everyone and identified the Community Center specifically. One of the things we lack, however, is an indoor space and fitness center for walking and running that can be used year round. As a greater community our gyms, meeting spaces, and mixed-age fitness opportunities are beyond capacity. The answer has been to, unfortunately, limit access for the diverse and underrepresented groups who would greatly benefit from this space. It is imperative that our Village has access to spaces like this for the health and well-being of our residents.

The SAAAC sees many possibilities for improvements in the Community Center with the city, school and state partnering. A few of the ideas we would encourage them to incorporate include:

- An indoor walking track for community use
- Meeting spaces for activities, adult education, and enrichment
- Indoor Turf for practice space
- Accessible and appropriate bathrooms and locker rooms updates.

The St. Anthony-New Brighton school district has an excellent history of financial management. I feel that by partnering the school district with the city and with your help on the bonding funds, they can create an amazing community wide resource that is accessible and welcoming to everyone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bryan Jones', is written over a white background.

Bryan Jones
SAAAC Chairperson
612-990-5678