

# Society of Arts and Social Sciences

## Constitution and Bylaws

Ratified on 2020-06-26

Approved by SFSS BOD 2020-06-23

# Constitution

## Constitution

1. The organization shall be known as the “Society of Arts and Social Sciences”, a faculty student union of the Simon Fraser Student Society at Simon Fraser University
  
2. The Society of Arts and Social Sciences exists to:
  - a) Provide a structure to unite undergraduate students from the departments of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences [FASS], while working in collaboration with the Simon Fraser Student Society [SFSS].
  - b) Represent the diverse needs of students and to advocate for student interests within FASS to the SFSS, FASS Administration, the University administration, the government, and other organizations.
  - c) Establish a framework where students can share experiences, skills and ideas, and where they can communicate, exchange information, and debate, thereby building a sense of community among the students in FASS.
  - d) Explore opportunities for collaboration with other Arts and Social Sciences Societies with other societies across faculties.
  - e) Advocate for a system of post-secondary education, which recognizes and appreciates the unique contributions of the Arts and Social Sciences to the academic community and society at large.

# Bylaws

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## Bylaw 1 — Interpretation

1. All references within this document shall be inclusive of all gender pronouns.
2. "Constitution" shall refer to the SASS Constitution.
3. "Board" shall refer to the SASS Board.
4. "DSU" shall refer to a Department Student Union in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in accordance with Department Student Union bylaw.
5. "Executive" shall refer to the President, the Vice President Administration, the Vice President Internal Relations, the Vice President Student Life, the Vice President External Relations, the Vice Presidents Academic, the Vice President Communications and Marketing, and the Vice President Finance.
6. "Representatives" shall refer to the First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth year representatives in accordance with the duties of SASS Board members by-law.
7. "SFSS Council Representative" shall refer to a designate appointed by the Board.
8. "Committee" shall refer to a group or groups of SASS members headed by one Executive, created each year to fit a specific purpose.
9. "FASS" shall refer to the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of Simon Fraser University.
10. "General Business" shall refer to any business that does not involve changing Regulations, or the SASS budget.
11. "Voting Member(s) of Board" shall refer to members of Board as defined by members of the SASS Board bylaw.
12. "Non-voting Member(s) of Board" shall refer to members of Board as defined by the members of the SASS Board bylaw.
13. "Regulation" means any Rule, Standing Order, Administrative Policy, or Issue Policy enacted by the Board.
14. "SASS" shall refer to the Society of Arts and Social Sciences of Simon Fraser University.
15. "SFSS" shall refer to the Simon Fraser Student Society.
16. "Member(s) in Good Standing of SASS" shall refer to individuals fulfilling the membership requirements eligible to hold office under applicable bylaws.
17. "Signing Officer" shall refer to members of the Executive Committee who have signing authority on behalf of SASS. Under Board delegations, signing officers shall sign internal and external communication documents, SFSS financial documents, and any other documentation as delegated by the SFSS.
18. "SFU" and "University" shall refer to Simon Fraser University.
19. "IEC" shall refer to the Independent Electoral Commission appointed by the SASS Board.

## Bylaw 2 — Membership

1. The membership of SASS shall be the aggregate of all SFSS members of FASS as defined by the SFSS.
2. The voting membership of SASS shall be defined as individuals fulfilling all of the following criteria:
  - a. Registered and Active undergraduate students as defined by the University;
  - b. Individuals pursuing a major or minor program within the FASS as defined by the SFU Registrar.
3. The voting membership of SASS shall possess full speaking privileges at all Board and SASS Committee meetings and be eligible to hold a position, subject to the restrictions of all applicable Bylaws, Regulations, and parliamentary authorities.
4. Non-voting associate membership shall be granted to members of a DSU who do not fulfill voting membership eligibility.
  - a. This shall include students who have been registered in or have completed a FASS certificate program.
  - b. Individuals holding Associate Membership shall not count towards quorum in any Committee meeting.
  - c. Associate members shall be eligible to hold a non-voting position.
5. Honorary non-voting membership shall be granted to the Faculty members of the FASS and students pursuing graduate programs within the FASS.

## **Bylaw 3 — Finances**

1. The fiscal year of SASS shall be concurrent with the SFSS's fiscal year.
2. The accounts of SASS shall be maintained in accordance with SFSS practices unless otherwise specified in SASS Regulation.
3. Any member wishing to see the accounts of SASS must submit a request in writing to the VP Finance.
  - a. The VP Finance shall respond to any requests by members to see the accounts of SASS within a reasonable time.



## Bylaw 4 — Powers and Duties of the SASS Board

1. The governing body of SASS shall be known as the Board and as such shall:
  - a. Subject to the provisions of these Bylaws and the SFSS Bylaws, exercise full control over all activities of SASS,
  - b. Recognize the authority of the SASS Constitution and be bound by it,
  - c. Be empowered to implement Regulation subservient to the Constitution and Bylaws where it deems necessary for the day-to-day operations of SASS,
  - d. Be empowered to make all decisions and take action on behalf of SASS, and
  - e. Ratify the SASS annual budget as approved by the Executive Committee.
2. The SASS Board may:
  - a. Delegate its powers, duties and obligations as it may deem fit for the conduct and operations of SASS.
  - b. Subject to these Bylaws, have the power to create or amend Regulation as it may deem necessary.
  - c. Subject to these Bylaws, have power to make rulings in connection with all Regulation including any Regulation governing the conduct of its members relating to the affairs of SASS, and any such ruling made by it shall be final and binding.
  - d. subject to the bylaws and regulations... have the power by 2/3 majority to dismiss a member for violating constitutional values as per the Bylaws and Regulations.
3. In the event that a Vice President position becomes vacant, the Board may by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote appoint a Member in Good Standing of SASS to assume the powers and fulfill the duties and obligations of the position so vacated.
4. In the event of a leave of absence by the SFSS Council Representative, the Board shall have the authority to appoint a temporary replacement from its membership.
  - a. If deemed necessary, the Board may appoint a voting member as a temporary replacement.
5. SASS shall recognize standing regrets.

## **Bylaw 5 — Members of the SASS the Board**

1. The voting members of the Board shall consist of:
  - a. The Executive
  - b. Year Representatives
  - c. A representative of each of the SASS DSUs to be chosen in accordance with their respective union's constitution
  - d. SFSS Council Representative
2. Members of the SASS Board shall not be remunerated by SASS.
3. Members of the Board shall be Members in Good Standing of SASS.

## Bylaw 6 — Duties of SASS Board Members

1. The Year Representatives shall:
  - a. Consist of the First (1<sup>st</sup>) year, Second (2<sup>nd</sup>) year, Third (3<sup>rd</sup>) year, Fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) year, and Fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) year representatives,
  - b. Encourage and, in conjunction with appropriate committees, organize initiatives that will benefit SASS members as appropriate to their year at the University,
  - c. Encourage and support the involvement of students with SASS,
  - d. Promote SASS through active recruiting efforts,
  - e. Act as a liaison between SASS and the year of FASS undergraduate students of which they represent,
  - f. Serve on at least two (2) committee of SASS, and
  - g. Have such other duties as are outlined in the Bylaws or Regulation or assigned by the Board from time to time.
2. The Speaker in the Board shall:
  - a. Be the neutral chairperson of Board,
  - b. Have such other duties as are outlined in Regulation.
3. The Recording Secretary shall:
  - a. Create the agenda for meetings of Board in conjunction with the Speaker in the Board, as per applicable Regulation,
  - b. Take the minutes of Board ,
  - c. Circulate details of any upcoming Board meeting to the membership, as per applicable Regulation
  - d. Oversee the preparation of the minutes of all SASS meetings,
  - e. Transmit the minutes to the Vice President Administration, and
  - f. Have such other duties as are outlined in Regulation.

## **Bylaw 7 — Department Student Unions**

1. The SASS Board may recognize Department Student Unions (DSUs) in accordance with the provisions in the SFSS Bylaws.
2. Each Department Student Union shall be entitled to one (1) seat on the Board, filled by a representative elected from the DSU as per the members of the SASS Board bylaw.
  - a. The Board shall ratify DSU Representatives upon presentation of authorizing minutes at a quorate Board meeting.
  - b. In the absence of an elected SASS Council representative, the duty of DSU representation shall fall to the president of the DSU, who shall be a council member ex- officio.

## Bylaw 8 — Meetings of the Board

1. The Board shall hold at least two (2) meetings per month.
  - a. This shall not apply in the months of April, August and December.
2. Board meetings shall be open to the public.
  - a. Notwithstanding the above, the Board may, when deemed necessary, conduct private meetings, with a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the Board in favour of such a motion.
3. Special meetings may be called forthwith
  - a. At the Executive Committee's discretion; or
  - b. Upon a Resolution of the Board; or
  - c. Upon a petition duly signed by twenty (20) Members in Good Standing of SASS, delivered to the Vice President Administration.
4. Board meetings shall be such that only Voting Members of the Board may move or second motions.
5. Except where otherwise specified in this Constitution and Bylaws, meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.
6. Notice of all Board meetings shall be given to all members of the Board at least five (5) business days in advance
  - a. In pressing and substantial cases, the President or Executive Committee may call an emergency meeting no less than twenty-four (24) hours in advance and take meeting minutes

## **Bylaw 9 — Quorum for Meetings**

1. Quorum for a meeting of the Board shall be majority of the seats filled by the Voting Members of the Board including at least four (4) Executive members.
2. If, fifteen (15) minutes after the beginning of the meeting, quorum is not met, the Board may conduct general discussions, but may not conduct any business.
3. Should there be a tie in the Board, the Speaker in the Board may cast the tie-breaking vote.

## Bylaw 10 — Powers and Duties of Executive Officers

1. The Board shall facilitate communication between the Board and the members of SASS.
2. The Board shall liaise with and work in collaboration with the SFSS.
3. The Board shall oversee the day-to-day operations of SASS and execute functions and projects as mandated by the Board.
  - a. Where necessary, the Board may, by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote in favour, task the Executive as a collective to assume limited powers of expenditure authorization relating to a Board-approved function or project.
4. For the purpose of room booking on SFU and SFSS property, all executive officers shall be considered Room Booking Authorities.
5. The President shall:
  - a. Coordinate and supervise the affairs of SASS,
  - b. Be the official spokesperson and formal representative for SASS in a manner consistent with established Regulations,
  - c. Maintain relationships with FASS and all Faculty Student Unions,
  - d. Lead strategic planning and goal setting for the Executive and SASS at large,
  - e. Be the chairperson of Board meetings in the absence of a Speaker in the Board or a Board-appointed external chair,
  - f. Be a Signing Officer, and
  - g. Have such other duties as are outlined in the Bylaws or Regulation or assigned by the Board from time to time.
6. The Vice President(s) Administration shall:
  - a. Assume and carry out the rights, duties, and obligations of the President during their absence or in the event that they should resign, be dismissed or abandon office,
  - b. Be responsible for the organizational concerns of SASS,
  - c. Be responsible for monitoring adherence to the SASS Constitution, Bylaws, and Regulations,
  - d. Be responsible for maintaining SASS documentation and archives,
  - e. Become Recording Secretary during Board meetings in the absence of a Recording Secretary or a Board-appointed Recording Secretary
  - f. Be a Signing Officer, and
  - g. Have such other duties as are outlined in the Bylaws or Regulation or assigned by the Board from time to time.
7. The Vice President(s) Internal Relations shall:
  - a. Be responsible for the internal relations of SASS,
  - b. Be responsible for SASS Board relations with the SFSS, in collaboration with the SFSS Council Representative,
  - c. Serve as a liaison between SASS and its constituent DSUs,
  - d. Contribute to the development of DSU projects and campaigns through SASS and DSU collaboration,
  - e. Coordinate SASS Executive attendance at DSU meetings, and
  - f. Have such other duties as are outlined in the Bylaws or Regulation or assigned by the Board from time to time.
8. The Vice President(s) External Relations shall:
  - a. Serve as a liaison between SASS and external organizations,
  - b. Be responsible for coordinating sponsorships,
  - c. Be a Signing Officer, and

- d. Have such other duties as are outlined in the Bylaws or Regulation or assigned by the Board from time to time.
9. The Vice President Academic shall:
  - a. Be responsible for all educational and curricular concerns of SASS,
  - b. Be a liaison, promote, and facilitate working relations between the faculty administration and Arts and Social Sciences students,
  - c. Explore and establish opportunities to showcase the academic accomplishments of the DSUs and the SASS membership at large,
  - d. Explore opportunities for collaboration with other faculties and their respective constituencies,
  - e. Represent or cause to be represented the prevailing views of the Board at all Faculty Committees, and
  - f. Have such other duties as are outlined in the Bylaws or Regulation or assigned by the Board from time to time.
10. The Vice President Communications and Marketing shall:
  - a. Be responsible for communicating to students the goals and activities of SASS,
  - b. Aid in the production of SASS publications,
  - c. Fulfill the duties of the Recording Secretary in the event of both the Recording Secretary's absence and the Vice President Administration's absence, and
  - d. Have such other duties as are outlined in the Bylaws or Regulation or assigned by the Board from time to time.
11. The Vice President Student Life shall:
  - a. Be responsible for the organization of social and cultural activities for the members of SASS,
  - b. Work with the Vice President Communications and Marketing to actively seek input on the programming interest of the members of SASS,
  - c. Shall be responsible for at least two (2) or more committees and related to programming social and cultural activities for the members of SASS
  - d. Be in communication with members of SASS in order to prepare events and activities that benefit SASS members, and
  - e. Have such other duties as are outlined in the Bylaws or Regulation or assigned by the Board from time to time.
12. The Vice President Finance shall:
  - a. Advise the SASS Board on all financial matters of SASS,
  - b. Prepare and present accounting reports to members of the Board,
  - c. Prepare the yearly SASS budget and financial statement in accordance with the appropriate financial regulations,
  - d. Be responsible for the oversight of monies received and disbursed by SASS and shall keep or cause to be kept all bills, receipts, and vouchers,
  - e. Maintain accurate financial records in conjunction with the Vice President Administration,
  - f. Be a Signing Officer, and
  - g. Have such other duties as are outlined in the Bylaws or Regulation or assigned by the Board from time to time.
13. The SFSS Council Representative shall:
  - a. Consult with SASS Board and reasonably represent the prevailing views of SASS at SFSS meetings,
  - b. Report the relevant and/or important discussions and decisions of the SFSS to SASS Board and of SASS Board to the SFSS, and
  - c. Have such other duties as are outlined in Regulation.
14. The First Year Representative shall:



- a. Be responsible for attending SASS Board meetings
  - b. Act as a representative for all first year FASS undergraduate students
  - c. Advise the SASS Board regarding student inquiries, concerns and feedback during meetings
15. The Second Year Representative shall:
- a. Be responsible for attending SASS Board meetings
  - b. Act as a representative for all second year FASS undergraduate students
  - c. Advise the SASS Board regarding student inquiries, concerns and feedback during meetings
16. Each member of the Executive committee shall be responsible for the preparation of a transition manual for their successor within 30 calendar days after the end of their elected term

- a. These shall include procedures, records, passwords, email lists, recommendations, suggestions, and previous transition documents.

## **Bylaw 11 — Committees**

1. Each year, the Executive shall be responsible for the creation of two (2) or more committees
  - a. The decision to renew committees shall be at the discretion of the current SASS Executive members
2. Each committee shall be responsible for upholding the duties of its Executive as outlined by the Bylaws and regulations outlined in this Constitution

## Bylaw 12 — Elections

1. General Elections shall be held once a year, during the Spring Semester. The Independent Electoral Commission shall set the dates for general elections following consultation with the SASS Board.
2. By-Elections shall be held at the discretion of the Board to fill vacant positions, during the Fall Semester or upon unanimous resolution by the Executive.
  - a. The Independent Electoral Commission shall set the dates for by-elections following consultation with the SASS Board.
3. No member of the Independent Electoral Commission may run in the elections.
4. If the vote is within a 10-vote margin, candidates shall have the opportunity to motivate themselves again to the SASS Board, after which a vote shall occur in which the top person or persons unanimously agreed upon by SASS will be elected
5. Candidates nominated to any office shall be members in good standing of SASS.
6. No member shall run for or concurrently hold more than one position on the Board.
7. Nominations must be submitted to the Independent Electoral Commission by a date and time specified by the Electoral Commission.
8. Nominations must contain signatures and corresponding student numbers of at least ten (10) members of SASS.
9. Nominations will close a minimum of ten (10) days after the Independent Electoral Commission declares the nominations open.
10. The terms of office for the SASS Board shall be for one (1) year starting May 1st and ending April 30th.

## **Bylaw 12 — By-Elections**

1. Subject to the elections bylaw, by-elections may be called by the Board to fill vacant positions of SASS Board.
2. Notwithstanding the provisions of the elections bylaw, the Board must call a by-election at any time of the year to fill all vacant Executive positions if the number of Executives falls below the number required for quorum as per the quorum for meetings bylaw.
3. By-elections shall occur in accordance with the procedures set out for elections in these Bylaws, and any other Bylaws or Regulations governing the conduct of elections or by-elections.
4. The terms of members elected to the Executive in a by-election shall commence on the date of the first meeting of the Board following the by-election and end on April 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **Bylaw 13 — Referenda**

1. Members may vote on resolutions concerning the activities of SASS by means of a referendum.
2. Any such resolution shall require a majority of the votes cast except where prohibited by these By-Laws or by the SFSS.
3. A resolution may be put to referendum by a simple majority vote of the Board, except where prohibited by these Bylaws, or upon presentation of a petition to the Board which contains the text of the proposed resolution and the signatures of twenty-five (25) to fifty (50) Members in Good Standing of SASS.
  - a. Such resolutions shall be placed on a ballot concurrently with the next regularly scheduled SASS election.
4. The referendum shall be conducted by the Independent Electoral Commission in accordance with the Independent Electoral Commission bylaw.
5. Due notice shall be deemed sufficient if given at least two (2) weeks in advance of any voting.
6. No referendum shall be deemed valid or binding on SASS unless a minimum of two hundred (200) Members in Good Standing of SASS have cast votes in the referendum.
7. The Independent Electoral Commission shall report on the conduct and results of the referendum to the Board for ratification.

## **Bylaw 14 — Independent Electoral Commission**

1. The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) shall be responsible to ensure that SASS elections and referenda occur in the prescribed manner as set out in this constitution and Bylaws, and any regulations governing the conduct of elections or referenda.
2. The Independent Electoral Commission shall be appointed by the SASS Board at a quorate Board meeting.
  - a. The IEC shall be appointed a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to any election, by-election, or referenda.
3. The IEC may delegate to a group of students the task of supervising polling for any positions.
4. The IEC may, at their discretion, set a limit for campaign expenditures for a given election, by- election, or referenda.
5. The IEC shall be empowered to interpret and apply By-Laws and Regulation as relevant to elections, by-elections, and referenda.

## Bylaw 15 — Annual and Special General Meetings

1. The Annual General Meeting of SASS shall be held nearing the end of the Spring semester each year.
2. In addition to any other business set forth by the Executive, the Board, or members of SASS, the following business shall be conducted at the Annual General Meeting:
  - a. Appointing a Chair for the Annual General Meeting.
  - b. Receiving the Annual Report of the Executive.
  - c. Receiving the Vice President Finance's Report.
3. Notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be given at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the date on which the meeting is to be held, and all notices shall clearly state the date, time, and location. Sufficient notice will be deemed to have been given with the posting of all of the following:
  - a. A prominent notice not less than eleven (11) inches by seventeen (17) inches in size (standard poster size) upon three (3) or more different bulletin boards about the Burnaby Campus, upon at least one (1) bulletin board at the Vancouver Campus, and upon at least one (1) bulletin board at the Surrey Campus,
  - b. Written or electronic memoranda to all DSUs,
  - c. Prominent notice on the SASS website,
  - d. An advertisement in the student newspaper or other student publication normally available to all members of the Society
4. Accidental omission in giving notice of the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting, or the non-receipt of notice by the members of SASS, shall not constitute a violation of the proceedings of the meeting.
5. Each member in good standing of SASS fulfilling the requirements of the membership bylaw shall be entitled to vote at the Annual General Meeting or at any Special General Meeting.
  - a. In order to exercise their vote the member shall be present at the meeting at the time the vote is put.
  - b. No votes by proxy shall be allowed.
6. If within fifteen minutes from the time appointed for the Annual General Meeting a quorum is not present, the meeting shall transact only such business as is specifically referred to in the Annual and Special General Meetings bylaw.
  - a. In such cases, quorum shall be twenty (20) members in good standing of SASS.
7. Special General Meetings may be convened at any time by resolution of two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Voting Members of the Board.
8. The President shall convene a Special General Meeting within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of a petition signed by a minimum of seventy-five (75) members in good standing of SASS.
9. Resolutions of the Annual General Meeting and of any Special General Meeting shall be governed by a simple majority of votes cast, except where the provisions of these bylaws or the *Society Act* require otherwise.
10. Quorum for the Annual General Meeting and any Special General Meeting shall be twenty (20) members of SASS
11. *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the conduct of the Annual General Meeting.
  - a. A simplified version of Robert's Rules may be used if agreed upon by the SASS Board unanimously



## Bylaw 16 — Removal from Office

1. Any member of the SASS Board may be removed from office for violating any duties of their executive position or gross violation of the provisions of the SASS Constitution, or Bylaws, or Regulations.
  - a. Such violations include, but are not limited to, impropriety, delinquency of duties, or misappropriation of funds
2. A motion to remove a member of the Board must be presented in writing to the Speaker in the Board or the Board-appointed chairperson and signed by at least twelve (12) voting members of the SASS Board, or thirty (30) Members in Good Standing of SASS and distributed to all Board members.
  - a. Such a motion will be put on the agenda of the next SASS Board meeting.
3. The person being removed shall be given the opportunity to respond to the motion.
4. A motion to remove a member of SASS Board from office shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote at a quorate Board meeting.
5. If any member of the Board has been absent three (3) consecutive scheduled meetings or five (5) within a semester without sending regrets, they shall be automatically removed from office at the time of adjournment of the relevant meeting.
  - a. A courtesy letter shall be sent by the Vice President Administration for notification, but receipt of this letter does not affect the removal from Office.

## **Bylaw 17 — Freedom of Information**

1. All documentation of the Board and its Committees shall be public, except those minutes and documents from and relating to a confidential in-camera session.
2. All documentation of SASS shall be kept on the SASS website.
3. Requests to see the minutes and documents of the Board and its Committees shall be addressed to the Vice President Administration.
4. Freedom of Information shall further be regulated as per appropriate SFSS Regulation.

## Bylaw 18 — Prohibition on Discrimination

1. SASS shall not discriminate against any person on any ground enumerated in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* or the *British Columbia Human Rights Code*.
  - a. SASS shall further develop Regulations to facilitate involvement and engagement with its members without hindrance.
2. The SASS Board may subject to the bylaws and regulations have the power by 2/3 majority to dismiss a member for violating constitutional values as per the Bylaws and Regulations
  - a. If attempts to discuss the matter and reach common understanding are ineffective, voting to dismiss a member may occur.

## **Bylaw 19 — Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws**

1. The Constitution and Bylaws may only be amended by a seventy-five percent (75%) majority vote in a quorate Special General Meeting, in accordance with the Annual and Special General Meetings bylaw.
  - a. In the event that a quorate Special General Meeting is not possible, then the Constitution and Bylaws may be amended by means of a referendum question.
    - i. Such a referendum question can only be resolved by at least a seventy-five percent (75%) majority vote.

## **Bylaw 20 — Disputes**

1. Disputes as to the interpretation of this Constitution and Bylaws shall be decided by the President, the Executive, or the Board, with the ultimate authority residing in the Board.
2. In the event of a dispute, the Executive or the Board may appeal in accordance with current SFSS policies.

## **Bylaw 21 — Superseding Clause**

1. This Constitution repeals and supersedes all previous constitutions.
2. If conflicts arise between this Constitution and the SFSS Constitution and Bylaws, the SFSS Constitution shall supersede this Constitution in those conflicting areas.

## **Bylaw 22 — Dissolution Clause**

1. Should SASS be inactive for two (2) consecutive fiscal years, all SASS assets shall revert to the SFSS.