

Aviation Tax Information

www.ascendwithnbaa.org

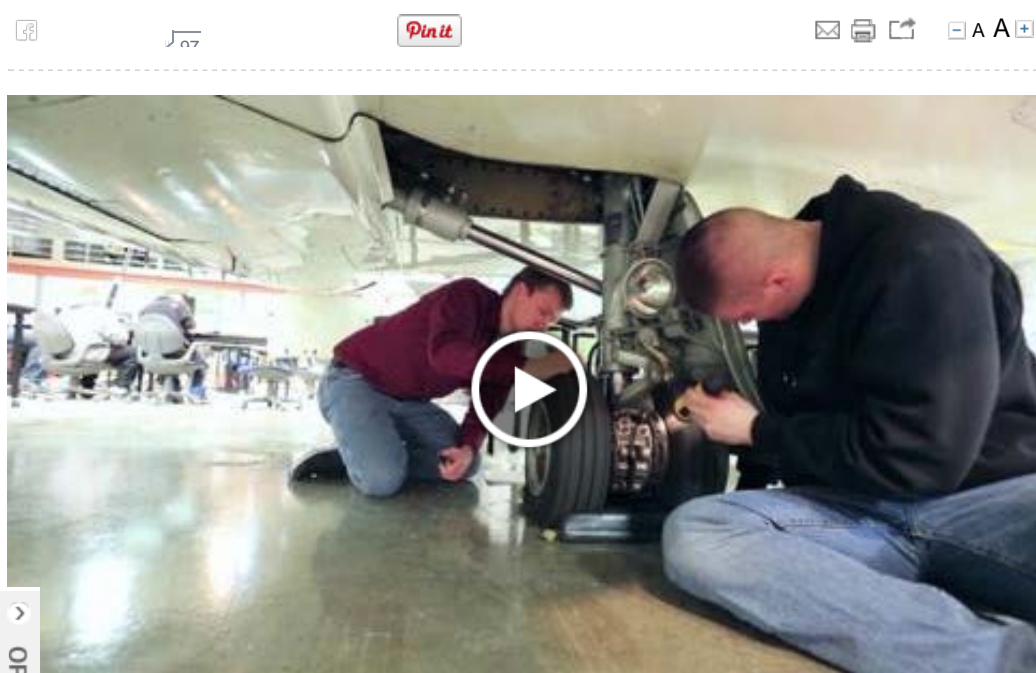
Get your free State Aviation Tax White Paper - only from NBAA!

ADVERTISEMENT

Lease issue poses threat to Des Moines schools' aircraft repair instruction

Feb. 3, 2014 | 10 Comments

You and 97 others recommend this. 97 people recommend this.



Look inside Des Moines schools' aviation program: A look inside the Des Moines school district's aviation engineering technology program.

Written by **Mary Stegmeir**

A flagship Des Moines school district program could soon find its wings clipped.

FILED UNDER

News

For the past 40 years, area students enrolled in the Midwest's only aviation engineering technology program for high schoolers have learned how to repair aircraft inside a 29,500-square-foot facility at the Des Moines International Airport.

The lease for that structure expires June 30, and the Airport Authority Board has refused to extend the contract.

District officials signed papers agreeing to move into a hangar that is roughly one-fourth the size of the current space. But parents and

BuildDirect

LAMINATE FLOORING
STARTING AT
\$0.49

SHOP LAMINATE NOW

ADVERTISEMENT

Most Popular

Most Commented

More Headlines

- 1 Iowa State men win triple OT thriller at Oklahoma State
- 2 Peterson: What I wanted to write about the Iowa State OT thriller at Oklahoma State
- 3 Dog left out in cold ate parts of its kennel mate

Most Viewed



supporters say the switch costs more money, reduces the number of students in the program, and possibly causes revocation of the program's federal certification.



It's a classroom like few others: Students in the Des Moines schools' aviation engineering technology program meet in a hangar at the Des Moines airport. The lease on the building expires in June, and the Airport Authority Board doesn't want to extend it because the building sits in an area ripe for development. / Christopher Gannon/The Register



Jerry Bradley, director of the Des Moines school district's aviation program, instructs Saydel High senior Mattingly Stone and Des Moines Christian senior Luke Bruflatt. / Christopher Gannon/The Register

About the aviation technology program

The Des Moines school district's aviation engineering technology program began in 1943 and is the second-oldest program of its kind in the nation. It is also one of only three high school programs in the country with Federal Aviation Administration certification to teach aircraft maintenance. Students can earn up to 44 hours of college credit in the three years they spend in the program.

The Des Moines district is one of only three school systems in the nation with Federal Aviation Administration certification to teach aircraft maintenance.

Parents are circulating a petition they plan to present to the Airport Authority Board and the school board asking that aviation students be allowed to continue their studies in the current facility.

"It's really a blessing to have this program in our community," said parent Lyrio Read, who began the petition. "Moving them out of their building is just going to hurt the students."

The existing facility, built in 1974, was paid for with a Des Moines school tax levy. The property was recently appraised at just under \$1 million, said Jerry Bradley, director of the district's aviation program.

Roughly a dozen aircraft, including a Learjet, are housed at the facility.

Forty to 70 students enroll in the program annually. Participants earn college credit and can graduate with the professional certifications required for a career in aircraft maintenance and repair — perks that parents say are now at risk.

Airport official Kevin Foley noted that under current agreements, the district can continue to teach students at the airport. Leases for fiscal years 2015 and 2016 have been approved for a facility on the airport's south side that is less than 8,000 square feet.

The district's current building has belonged to the airport for the past two decades under



A look inside Des Moines schools' aviation program

PHOTO GALLERIES



10 most expensive homes around Des ...



\$14.9 million house at Okoboji

SPONSORED LINKS

Sponsored Content by Taboola



88 Year Old Yoga Teacher Shares Health 1st



Pastor Mocked for His 'Biblical Money Cod... Moneynews

BuildDirect

\$0.79 / sq ft	\$1.69 / sq ft
up to 80% OFF top quality laminate flooring	
\$1.59 / sq ft	\$1.89 / sq ft

click for more of our best sellers ▶

ADVERTISEMENT

ADVERTISEMENT



Avionics students Russell Price, left, a Roosevelt High School senior, and Chandler Baty, a Lincoln High School senior, inspect the landing gear of a Learjet in their 'classroom' at the Des Moines airport. / Christopher Gannon/Register photos

an agreement between the airport and the school board, said Foley, assistant executive director and general manager of the airport.

The airport board chose not to extend the lease because the building sits on the airport's north side, an area ripe for corporate development. A review of airport properties — along with suggestions for the best uses of those facilities — will be presented Feb. 11 to the airport board.

“What we've got is some corporate demand for space for corporate aircraft, which generate jobs and boost the economy of the metro area,” Foley said. “That is actually one of the only locations that we have to accommodate (those requests).”

School officials want aviation students to remain at their current location in 2014-15. Discussions about building a replacement facility off airport grounds are underway, but that work could not be completed in time to serve students next school year, Superintendent Thomas Ahart said.

Leasing the airport's smaller building is not a suitable alternative, he said. In addition to potentially losing FAA certification, it's unlikely that the district would have enough time or money to retrofit the hangar by August. School buildings, like all public facilities, are required to meet the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Ahart said.

“We do hope to have discussions with the airport authority to see if there's any way to eke out one more year to give us enough time to have a suitable facility off the airport,” he said.

Although the school board signed a lease on the smaller property this summer, the terms allow it to back out without penalty, as long as it gives the airport board proper notice, Ahart said.

Losing the current facility would be damaging to aviation students, and to the program as a whole, he said.

“(The aviation program) does an excellent job of preparing students to be work-ready when they graduate, and also college-ready,” Ahart said. “We have students that leave that program that go directly into the workforce with a good-paying job, and we also have some that continue on and get their four-year degree and stay in the industry.”

Rick Bruflat of Johnston has signed the petition asking officials to keep the aviation program at its current facility. His son, Luke, is in his second year of the three-year program.

"It would be a shame if the kids who are involved in the program were not at least given the opportunity to finish it," he said. "They shouldn't have the rug pulled out from under them."

View Comments (10) | Share your thoughts »

TOP VIDEO PICKS
selected by Taboola



A look inside Des Moines schools' aviation program
Jan 31, 2014



West Des Moines family pleads for pet pit bull 'K'
Jan 21, 2014



Welcome to the Blue Ribbon Bacon Festival
Feb 1, 2014

YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN

Dateline Iowa: Snowmobile driver killed in accident

Police: Injured teen drove stolen SUV to hospital

More snow on horizon (thanks a lot, Phil)

Des Moines police respond to dispute; scuffle ensues

Molly Schuyler tops own mark, devours gut-busting meal...

Paragon Standard Pop Popcorn Machine on Sale at Amazon
(Oven Info)

SPONSORED LINKS

The 10 Highest Salaries of Formula 1 Drivers in 2014 (The Richest)

Vanessa Williams' Surprising DNA Test (Ancestry.com)

Foods That Could be Causing an Irregular Heartbeat (Slideshows - Heart Disease)

What your car color says about you (Bankrate)

If Republicans Re-Take Senate, Say Goodbye To The... (Downtrend)

Don't Touch that Ketchup: Keep Healthy by Avoiding... (AARP) [?]

SPONSORED LINKS

Sponsored Content by Taboola



88 Year Old Yoga Teacher Shares Her ...
Health 1st



Pastor Mocked for His 'Biblical Money'
Moneynews



You Won't Believe Who's Related to Abr...
Ancestry.com

ARCHIVES

View the last 30 days

Yesterday, Feb. 03

Sunday, Feb. 02

Saturday, Feb. 01

Friday, Jan. 31

Thursday, Jan. 30

Wednesday, Jan. 29

Tuesday, Jan. 28

See our [paid archives](#) for news older than a week.



Latest stories

Tuesday YP essentials

YP Spotlight: Chef Tom McKern, 29, helps bring Zombie Burger and Drink Lab to life

Remember Philip Seymour Hoffman with these great Netflix options

At home with: Ben Easter

[More Juice](#)

[Photo galleries](#)

[Newsletter](#)

[Calendar](#)

PROMOTIONS



CUSTOMER SERVICE

Place an ad

[Submit a milestone](#)

[View milestones](#)

[Work for us](#)

[Feedback/news tips](#)

[Newspapers in Education](#)

Subscribe Today!

[Sign up for EZPay](#)

[Manage Account](#)

[Delivery problem](#)

[Pay your bill](#)

DesMoinesRegister.com

[Site Map](#) | [Back to Top](#) ^

NEWS

[Politics](#)
[Crime & Courts](#)
[Education](#)
[Kyle Munson](#)
[Nation & World](#)
[Weather](#)
[Archive](#)
[Investigations & Watchdog Reports](#)
[Reader's Watchdog](#)
[Famous Iowans](#)

OBITUARIES

[Submit an obituary](#)
[Submit a memorial](#)

SPORTS

[HawkCentral](#)
[Cyclone Insider](#)
[High School Insider](#)
[Bryce Miller](#)
[UNI Panthers](#)
[Drake Bulldogs](#)
[National Sports](#)
[History & Databases](#)
[Photos](#)

OPINION

[Editorials](#)
[Rekha Basu](#)
[Kathie Obradovich](#)
[Guest Essays](#)
[Letters to the Editor](#)
[Your 2 Cents' Worth](#)
[Blogs](#)
[A Better Iowa](#)

BUSINESS

[Agriculture](#)
[Central Iowa Networking](#)
[Green Fields](#)
[Biz Buzz](#)
[Finance & Insurance](#)
[New in the Neighborhood](#)
[Iowa's Top Workplaces](#)
[Iowa Innovation](#)
[Shopping Scene](#)

LIFE

[Mike Kilen](#)
[Juice](#)
[Young Professionals](#)
[Health](#)
[Dating](#)
[Milestones](#)

ENTERTAINMENT

[Datebook](#)
[Events](#)
[Dining](#)
[Music](#)
[Theater](#)
[Movies](#)
[TV Listings](#)
[Comics](#)






COMMUNITIES

[Altoona](#)
[Ankeny](#)
[Clive](#)
[Des Moines](#)
[Indianola](#)
[Johnston](#)
[Norwalk](#)
[Urbandale](#)
[Waukee](#)
[West Des Moines](#)

HELP

[About us](#)
[Subscriber Solutions](#)
[Advertising Solutions](#)
[Reader Solutions](#)
[Register Media](#)
[Contact us](#)

FOLLOW US

 [Twitter](#)
 [Facebook](#)
 [Mobile](#)
 [RSS](#)
 [E-mail Alerts](#)

[News](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Cars for Sale](#) | [Homes for Sale](#) | [Apartments for Rent](#) | [Shopping](#)



GANNETT

Copyright © 2014 www.desmoinesregister.com. All rights reserved.

Users of this site agree to the [Terms of Service](#), [Privacy Notice/Your California Privacy Rights](#), and [Ad Choices](#)