

**AAFP-APS Q&A Set
Final Version**

Q1: Why are the AAFP and APS merging?

A1:

- The American Academy of Fixed Prosthodontics and the American Prosthodontic Society *are joining forces* to create a new nonprofit organization.
- This is the outcome of a Strategic Planning initiative within each organization, occurring over the last 5 years, arising out of the recognition that the competition between the two groups was detrimental to their long-term sustainability and that a united organization will be better positioned to face current and future challenges.
- The new American Academy of Prosthetic Dentistry will offer the very best of both worlds from AAFP and APS, building on the combined 173-year rich histories and longstanding traditions to continue advancing the field of prosthodontics.
- This new organization will be better positioned for sustainability and global inclusiveness, and will offer a compelling value to members and stakeholders.

Q2. Who can join the new nonprofit organization?

A2:

- Membership will be open to licensed dentists, researchers and dental-laboratory technicians actively engaged in the field of prosthetic dentistry.
- Students enrolled full-time in an accredited predoctoral, graduate, post-graduate, school, hospital or military-based dental program also can join as Student Members.

Q3. How did this consolidation come about?

A3:

- Strategic Planning working groups from each organization began discussing the future of both organizations a few years ago. In recent years, there have been new threats to both groups, such as the rise of virtual CE, lagging membership recruitment, escalating meeting costs, and a challenging corporate sponsors environment.
- This work, advised by legal counsel, included a non-disclosure agreement and due diligence examination of the workings, finances, bylaws, and policies of each organization by the other.
- Ultimately, to preserve the rich traditions of each organization, new bylaws were created that reflected both organizations' charters and best practices.
- The respective boards of directors supported this careful and deliberate process that culminated in their unanimous endorsement of the consolidation decision.

Q4: The American Academy of Prosthetic Dentistry has already been created. Isn't that premature, given that the members haven't approved of it?

A4:

- The process to create a new organization is quite involved and requires careful counsel by attorneys, filing of Articles of Incorporation with the Illinois Secretary of State, bylaws and a careful consideration of the AAFP and APS existing policies.
- To have a seamless transition, the new organization had to be created first, as an empty vessel to be later populated by members and a Board of Directors, in order to continue to conduct its business and put on the 2027 and other Scientific Sessions.
- We sincerely hope, but do not presume that the members will approve the new entity; we just needed to have everything in place to hit the ground running, if the consolidation is approved.

Q5. Is this an effort to address declining membership?

A5:

- Member recruitment and retention can be a challenge for any professional association.
- Like any professional organization, AAFP and APS have had years when membership has remained steady and years when it has decreased.
- We believe that, through the AAPD, we will reach more prospective members and give dentists and researchers a value proposition worth becoming a part of.
- Our goals will remain focused on promoting excellence in patient care, education, and research in prosthetic dentistry, camaraderie, and to help dentists provide quality care to more patients worldwide.

Q6. Based on membership, the AAFP is clearly larger than the APS. Isn't this a case of the larger group taking over the smaller one?

A6.

- AAFP and APS are joining forces; neither organization is taking over the other.
- The new organization will build on the longstanding traditions and successes of the APS and AAFP. For example:
 - APS is the second-oldest prosthodontic organization in the world, it pioneered the admission of dental technicians into society membership and was one of the three founding organizations that created The Journal of Prosthetic Dentistry, the leading professional journal in the field.
 - AAFP provides for education enrichment, represents the discipline of fixed prosthodontics, promotes excellence in patient care and in teaching, encourages and supports research, and promotes camaraderie and fellowship among members.
- The AAPD will embrace the strengths and traditions of both the AAFP and APS, and in doing so will grow a stronger organization that provides greater value to members.

Q7. How will the new organization be structured?

A7.

- We plan to preserve and take advantage of the already established leadership of the two organizations.
- For the initial 4-year period, AAPD will be led by co-Presidents, co-President-Elects, and co-Vice Presidents. However, a single officer (Vice President) will be named for 2027 and then on, progressively right sizing the Board to 13 Directors, as currently it is the case for both AAFP and APS.
- A Secretary and a Treasurer will also be part of the AAPD board, again similarly to what the APS and AAFP currently have.
- The new corporation will have four membership classes: Active, Life, Student, and Honorary.

Q8. The boards of each organization voted to approve the new nonprofit. What happens if the members don't vote in favor?

A8.

- The boards are excited about the new organization and how we can join forces to advance the field of prosthodontics.
- We will be communicating the benefits of this consolidation to the members, and we fully expect them to be as excited as we are and to see the value of joining forces.
- The proposed organization will go to the membership of both AAFP and APS for a vote in February 2025. If the membership of either group does not approve it, we will not move forward.

Q9. If this has been discussed over several years, why am I just hearing about it now?

A9.

- It was impossible to go through this process without the guidance of legal counsel, a due-diligence process, the creation of bylaws, and a structured consolidation plan to submit to the boards' and members' vote. These preparatory steps that led to the boards' endorsement of the consolidation had to be carried out under a nondisclosure agreement. This meant that we were legally unable to share our discussions about this with others earlier, other than the Boards of both organizations.

Q10. Will the new and now larger group have to move to another hotel for annual meetings, and will this increase meeting costs?

A10.

- As part of the due-diligence process, the AAFP and APS working groups visited each other's hotels and met with hotel staff. While it appears the Swissotel will not meet the larger group's needs, the Marriott will be able to accommodate a larger meeting space and room block, allowing us to avoid potential cost increases that might potentially accompany changing hotel venues.

Q11. If the membership of both groups votes to become the AAPD, will this happen immediately?

A11.

- No. Part of the process of uniting as a new organization is the Plan of Merger. Among other items, this document defines the logistics of the two groups becoming one; for example, the transition of governance by co-officers is described here, as well as the date that the consolidation takes effect. To allow for an easier transition, the date of March 30, 2026, has been chosen. This affords the opportunity for the new Board and committees to get together and prepare to host the first AAPD meeting in February 2027.

Q.12 What will happen with the awards that each organization confers every year?

A12.

- They will continue into the new organization, the AAPD.
- We believe that these awards, and the leaders they are named after, represent the best each organization has to offer, and we are proud to continue this rich tradition.

Q.13 How will the credentialing process be run in the new organization?

A13.

- It will continue to be the same as it is currently in AAFP and APS.
- Applicants will need to be nominated by active members, attend the meeting when their membership is considered, be interviewed by the credentialing committee, and be approved by the Board of Directors.

Q.14 Are the organizations in financial trouble, and that's why they decided to join?

A14.

- No, both organizations are financially healthy.
- However, they are both aware of current and future challenges to professional organizations and desire to be the "first movers" in ensuring a vibrant future for the discipline of Prosthodontics.

Q.15 Are the bylaws of the new organization significantly different from the AAFP and APS ones?

A15.

- Not really!
- The strategic working group combed through, line by line, the APS and AAFP bylaws which were not that different from each other.
- Then, with assistance of legal counsel, and endorsed by the BODs, it created a set of bylaws for the AAPD that reflects best practices by both organizations and are in line with Illinois law.
- These bylaws were then approved by both the AAFP Board of Directors and APS Executive Council.

Q.16 Were the costs of this process very high, and how were they allocated?

A16.

- Of course, there were costs related to legal counsel and the creation of a communication plan, but these were quite moderate and approved by both Boards.
- The costs were evenly split between the APS and AAFP, reflecting their shared intention of joining forces.

Q.17 Are there clear financial advantages related to the two groups joining forces?

A17.

- Yes, absolutely.
- By joining forces, the cost of holding a meeting as well as organizational costs can be contained.
- This will allow the AAPD to be better positioned to attract new members and improve the value it delivers to its members.

Q.18 Is this the only notice I will receive before the vote in February?

A18

- No, this is just the first notice. We want to be open and transparent and provide all the information the members need.
- We are planning to hold Zoom meetings open to the membership in the fall.
- The Fact Sheet and a Q&A currently on our websites will be periodically updated to reflect questions and feedback we receive from members.
- In addition, other emails will be sent.

Q.19 What will be the relationship of AAPD with the ACP?

A19

- We look forward to working with the leadership of the specialty of Prosthodontics as a collaborative member of the Prosthodontic community.
- We will seek, as APS and AAFP already do, to continue to contribute to the Prosthodontic Forum.

Q.20 Will I continue to receive The Journal of Prosthetic Dentistry?

A20.

- Yes, you will.
- The Executive Council of The Journal of Prosthetic Dentistry (ECJPD) is aware of this merger and is eager to have AAPD as one of its sponsoring organizations.

- The AAPD, like the APS does now, will continue to work together with the ECJPD in identifying 2 ECJPD council members.

Q.21 What would be the combined membership number?

A21.

- Approximately 900 members.

Q.22 Why have the AAFP and APS boards acted now and not in 5-10 years?

A22.

- While both organizations are currently healthy, we know that significant challenges lie ahead of many professional organizations, and we wanted to be prepared. As the saying goes, “one should fix the roof while it is sunny.”
- What we heard from many Past Presidents is, “this merger should have occurred long ago.”

Q.23 How will the new organization be managed?

A23.

- We will retain a volunteer model that relies on membership willingness to serve.
- However, if at any given time in the future we need to have external help from a management firm, this can be done, and this provision has been included in the bylaws.