

Nantucket Public Schools

Athletic Improvements Project

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the proposed project components?

400-meter 6/8 lane running track; (2) multi-sport synthetic turf fields; upgraded athletic field lighting (for one field); 980-seat grandstand and press box; (1) natural grass baseball field; (5) post-tensioned concrete tennis courts; plaza space; parking and circulation improvements.

Why is it important to update our existing sports facilities?

Beginning in 2013, NPS began the master planning efforts to improve the current athletic facilities on the 45-acre campus. The fields behind the high school were constructed in 1956; the Backus Lane fields were constructed in 2008. NPS has a student athlete involvement of approximately 30% more than the state average, and with an expanding athletic program the need for playing field access has never been greater. Middle & high school outdoor sports, all spring and fall gym classes, some academic classes, and year-long recess all contribute to the overuse and wear the natural grass fields suffer. The grounds department can no longer properly maintain them to provide safe playing areas for our student athletes.

With more floating teachers than usual, troubles finding substitute teachers and bus drivers, and increased class sizes, why is the focus on upgraded athletic amenities?

Building and planning for any kind of project and construction takes years of planning, and for a new school it is almost always enrollment driven. The current enrollment numbers are almost the same as they were in 2018. There is currently a “bubble” going through the middle school, so when the 8th grade class of (149) moves to the high school next fall, the class coming in is (95). When the 7th grade class moves to the high school the class coming in is currently at (114). This will ease the space needs for years to come and will allow for proper planning based on the actual enrollment numbers. With that said, the committee has been planning for another new school for many years. The campus masterplan specifically identifies the preferred location of an additional school in a future phase after the athletic fields are in place and after the 24 Surfside Road property has been turned over to the schools.

How much will the complete project cost?

The project is currently estimated to cost 17.5-million dollars.

This includes all design, engineering, bidding, construction, escalation, contingency, and project oversight. The identified total project costs are based on the considered opinion of Ryder Leavitt Bucknall, a professional construction cost estimator with previous experience on the island.

Where is the project funding coming from?

Funding for the project will be asked for at Town Meeting and Town Election in May 2022.

The project funding will not take away from the general school budget.

No money will be taken away from staff positions, curriculum materials, or general building improvements.

What are components of the proposed synthetic turf fields?

Greenfields Iron Turf – made from a blend of slit film and monofilament turf fibers with a woven backing.

Brock YSR Shock Attenuation Pad – made from virgin expanded polypropylene beads.

Brock Fill – 100% organic infill; made from engineered wood particles (southern yellow pine).

There will be NO crumb rubber infill.

Are synthetic turf fields safe to play on?

Yes. Synthetic turf fields are just as safe to play on as natural grass fields.

Synthetic turf provides a level consistent playing surface, helping to reduce potential for lower body injuries.

The shock attenuation pad helps provide cushioning to reduce potential for head injuries.

Synthetic turf promotes year-round activity which has shown to help reduce childhood obesity and promote enhanced well-being.

Synthetic turf eliminates the use of potentially harmful pesticides and fertilizers.

Are there any environmental benefits to synthetic turf fields?

Yes. Synthetic turf fields do not require mowing which reduces the amount of carbon released into the atmosphere. They do not require irrigating, which reduces the amount of water that is consumed. They do not require the use of fertilizers, herbicides, or disinfectants which benefits the quality of the ground water.

Synthetic turf fields can be cleaned using soap and water, and research has shown that relatively short exposure to UV light from the sun will inhibit or destroy bacterium and viruses.

What environmental baseline testing has been conducted?

Soil testing for PFAS24.

Soil testing for metals.

Refer to test results posted on the NPS website.

How will the accessibility to the fields and bleachers compare to the existing condition?

The existing grandstand and press box spaces are not fully accessible.

The proposed new track, fields, grandstand, and press box will be fully accessible.

The proposed grandstand will provide accessible seating at both the top and bottom rows (referred to as a 'top and bottom loaded' system).

The proposed parking area will provide accessible spaces near the grandstand (100' distance).

What is post-tensioned concrete and why are the tennis courts proposed to be constructed out of it?

Post-tensioned concrete is a form of reinforced concrete in which steel tendons are put under tension or "stressed" once the concrete has reached a specific strength. This provides a sturdy and durable playing surface that can withstand the rigors of constant use. Post-tensioned concrete has a 20-year warranty from cracking, increased resistance to settling and/or heaving, and more controlled slope for better drainage and playability.