

Questions and Answers About the Proposed Turf

- 1. Why are we spending so much money to redo the fields instead of spending the money on other items needed by the schools?**

We will need to do extensive renovations on the fields, regardless of whether we cover them with grass or artificial turf. Due to drainage issues, and environmental upgrades that we are required to make, the fields, especially Bonnel field, will require some major work over the next few years, including drainage and irrigation work, and repairing damage done by several years of harsh weather. The grass fields did not hold up well after Hurricane Sandy and last year's extreme winter. As we have to do these repairs that require this amount of work, the cost of adding turf is minimized.

- 2. Playing on turf fields has been tied to cancer. Why would we want to install turf and harm our children?**

Actually, it is the fill – black rubber balls made from recycled tires – that is in the news. And, although there is no actual study that supports the cancer claims, we want to ensure the safety of our children and other community members who use the facilities. For this reason, we are using an organic fill to turf the field. Several organic fill options are currently available, including cork, and we anticipate more options in the next few years. Organic fill will provide the longevity and durability of a turf field without the potential carcinogens.

- 3. I have heard that turf fields become very hot in the warm weather. What about the heat generated on turf fields? How will our children play on turf when it is so hot?**

The organic fill, which is lighter in color (compare the color of a cork stopper vs. a tire) does not absorb the heat like the black tire fill, and therefore, has been shown to be 10 to 20 degrees cooler in the warm weather. By using an organic fill, we will be able to maintain a more comfortable temperature on the field.

- 4. Why do we need to turf the fields?**

We will need to do extensive renovations on the fields, regardless of whether we cover them with grass or artificial turf. Due to drainage issues, and environmental upgrades that we are required to make, the fields, especially Bonnel field, will require some major work over the next few years. As we have to do the drainage and irrigation repairs that require an extensive amount of work, the cost of adding turf is minimized.

Also, over the past few years, severe weather conditions have made us realize that the grass field is simply not always functional when we need it to be. Last year's Thanksgiving Day game was just one example of how a turf field would be beneficial.

5. What are some key reasons for turf?

a. Longevity

A new artificial turf field will last for 10 to 20 years. A grass football field requires more regular maintenance if it is going to last more than two years under the wear and tear of practices, games and inclement weather.

b. Climate Changes

Grass fields are supposed to be soft and smooth for players to land on when they are blocked or tackled --- but just try telling that to any player who has been hit hard while playing in temperatures of 25 degrees or colder. Grass will not grow in winter weather conditions. If grass remains on the field, it is hard and brittle. Playing on painted dirt can result in serious injuries in winter conditions. Artificial turf, with organic infill for cushioning, is much easier on a player's body.

c. Saving Resources

To keep grass growing on a field throughout the year requires a lot of water and, although we limit the use of it, fertilizer.