

EHS to display beautiful new artificial turf at McCluer North football game

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August 24 2018 10:35 AM



EDWARDSVILLE – It has been a decade since the Edwardsville artificial turf was installed and tonight a new field will be unveiled at the District 7 Sports Complex.

Edwardsville's football team plays McCluer North at 7 tonight.

The football squad plays all its home games on the field and often practices there. Boys and girls soccer, band and field hockey also make considerable use of the turf.

The EGHM Foundation is the driving funding force behind the new turf and Edwardsville High School Athletic Director Alex Fox said he was thankful for their support.

“The new turf was completed on the 16th of August,” Fox said. “We are excited to be able to provide all the Edwardsville teams and activities a safe new surface to practice, play and participate. Additionally, a number of community organizations will also benefit by being able to use the facility.”

This was information provided Edwardsville School District 7 about the EHS turf replacement:

The District recently completed its Ten-Year Health Life Safety Assessment of all buildings and grounds. This assessment is required of all Illinois school districts and provides a blueprint for the use of Health Life Safety Funds and/or other District funds to repair and maintain the infrastructure and buildings that house students. As a part of this analysis, the District reviewed the condition of its athletic facilities, including the main field turf (football/soccer/field hockey/band) at the Sports Complex.

History

District 7 added artificial turf to the main field at the Sports Complex in July 2008. The field is in daily use by Edwardsville High School football teams (all levels), boys and girls soccer teams (all levels), the EHS band, and girls field hockey (all levels) each year in addition to the rental of the facility to local select soccer clubs; including Glen-Ed. The field is truly a community asset.

Since the field is approaching its 11th year of use, the District commissioned an independent analysis of the condition of the field in order to ensure the safety of all the students.

The life span of artificial turf is generally considered to be 8-10 years under normal use. These fields degrade faster over time with both increased use and sun exposure. Two of the main areas the District asked to be reviewed were concussion testing levels and seams condition of the field itself.

Independent testing was conducted in April 2018 to determine the field's current Gmax levels (concussion prevention) using ASTM F1936 standards. ASTM F1936 currently requires Gmax levels to be less than 200 at all test points. A Gmax rating of 165 can indicate areas that will begin to present possible safety liabilities. The independent report received by the District indicated several areas where the Gmax levels were nearing 165 and an area that exceeded 270.

The independent report further indicated that the field had significant areas of extreme wear and torn seams that would make repairs nearly impossible to guarantee a consistent, safe turf that could be used by the District's students and athletes. After receiving the independent report, the only method to ensure student safety was to replace the entire playing field.

The Edwardsville School District 7 administration requested the EGHM Foundation secure a \$300,000 note to assist with the installation and payment of the main field turf replacement this past summer. The total cost of the project was under \$400,000, the district said prior to the start of the project.