

# Parsippany-Troy Hills Township Schools

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## Board of Education Meeting Questions and Answers

**January 6, 2015**

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**Question: What is the current status of the Board's initiative regarding the initiative to turf the two high schools, replace the lights at Parsippany High and install lights at Parsippany Hills?**

**Answer: See Attached Resolution.**

**Question: What is the scope of the Board's proposed initiative with regard to improving the high school's athletic facilities?**

**Answer: The scope of the project will be to replace the athletic grass fields at Parsippany High School and Parsippany Hills High School with new permanent turf fields and replace the lights at the Parsippany High School field and install new lights at the Parsippany Hills High School field.**

**Question: What research and analysis has the Board conducted to determine whether or not it is safe to install turf fields. As I mentioned at last night's meeting there is considerable and growing concern in school districts and municipalities across the country regarding the health and safety risks associated with turf fields?**

**Answer: None at this time, however we have asked our architect and engineer to provide us with this information. They have completed a number of these projects at various school districts in Morris County and throughout the State and will have this information readily available.**

**Question: What are the projected costs for the Board's proposed initiative to improve the high school fields and where are those funds coming from? And who developed those projected costs?**

**Answer: The projected cost for the field project is \$2,268,000, which has been budgeted in the current year's budget in a capital reserve account. The installation of new lights and replacement of the current lights is projected to cost between \$600,000 to \$700,000 and will be paid for through the Energy Savings Improvement Project initiative being conducted throughout the district. The projected costs were developed by the district's architect.**

**Question: Has the Board determined what the impact will be on the residents who live next to or close to the fields? Specifically which, if any, not for profit organizations does the Board plan to allow to use the two High School fields? What days of the week and hours of the day will the fields be in use? What type of security, parking and litter issues might impact the surrounding neighborhoods if use of the fields is awarded to not for profit organizations and what is the Board prepared to do to mitigate any issues that might negatively impact the quality of life of the residents in the neighborhoods surrounding the two fields?**

**Answer: These specific issues have not yet been discussed because the project is in the preliminary stages but will be a priority of the Board of Education as the project proceeds.**

**Question: What, if any conversations, has the Board had with the Mayor and/or members of the Town Council regarding any initiative that might be taken to improve the fields?**

**Answer: An Adhoc committee of the Board did meet with the Mayor and discussed possible partnership opportunities relating to the field improvements.**

**Question: What are the next steps in the process as to when and in what format the Board will engage in to determine if and how it will proceed?**

**Answer: The next step in this process is to have the architect prepare bid documents, once the bid documents are completed vendors will be asked to submit bid proposals. Once the proposals are received by the district and prior to awarding the project to the lowest bidder the Board must pass a resolution authorizing the expenditure of funds for the project. As soon as the resolution is passed by the Board the project will then be awarded to the vendor and work can begin.**

**Question: Why is the Board considering spending millions of Parsippany taxpayer dollars on an initiative that was defeated in referendum by Parsippany voters in January 2013?**

**Answer: The Referendum in January 2013 asked voters to approve a tax increase for field improvements. The tax increase was what the voters defeated. The monies for this project are in the budget and represent no additional tax dollars to the residents.**

**Question: My understanding is that all music courses under the former program were offered during core school hours. Is this correct?**

**Answer: Yes, music courses are currently (former program) offered during school hours.**

**Question: Under the new music program, which of these courses will be offered during core hours, which will be offered during after school hours, and which will not be offered at all?**

**Answer: Music courses will continue to be offered during school hours next year (new program).**

**Question: Are there any music courses offered under the new program that were not available under the former program? What are they?**

**Answer: No, but the new middle school structure allows for a student to participate in full-time band and full-time chorus, which is not currently available.**

**Question: Is it also true that music students were often excused from core curriculum classes so that they could attend music classes that were given at the same time?**

**Answer: Yes, students are currently removed from core courses to attend music lessons, not music courses. Music lessons are instrument-specific lessons—e.g. flute, saxophone, not a music course/class made up of all students enrolled in that particular music course—e.g. band or chorus.**

**Question: Under the new music program, is the practice of excusing a student from regular classes so that he or she can attend music classes will be necessary?**

**Answer: In the new middle school structure, music lessons will not occur during regular school hours.**