

Dear City Councilors,

We are writing in support of renovation of the turf fields at Newton North and Newton South High Schools. The multi-purpose fields are extremely critical to the success of our Athletic programs currently and in the future.

These fields provide multiple teams not only safe practice and game space because they can handle unlimited use, but also 1 field can provide a home to many teams across different sports because of the ability to paint multiple team lines on each synthetic field surface. During the 2022 Fall sports season, Newton North had 650 athletes playing while Newton South had 500 participants plus the teams hosted by two Middle Schools. Without having a multi-purpose turf field on the high school grounds, we would not be able to provide adequate field space for the varsity and sub-varsity teams that compete at Newton North.

At Newton South the access to turf fields is critical since our grass fields are located adjacent to the wetlands. This means that the water table is high and the turf fields allow for quick drainage of the playing surface without impacting the ability to use the fields by the 500 high school athletes and the Middle schools teams and classes.

It is important to also recognize that the school athletics are not the only teams that depend on accessible and available turf fields. As athletic directors for both high schools, we enthusiastically support sharing access to turf fields with the youth sports groups who are working with up and coming athletes, many of whom will one day wear uniforms. The ability to hold our practices and games on the turf fields regardless of weather conditions ensures that we do not need to take allocated time away from the youth sports programs to spread our play further throughout the city and negatively impact youth sports scheduling. It is important to note that a rescheduled game (such as due to an overly wet grass field) requires coordination with and availability of the visiting team, bus drivers, league athletic directors, and officials.. We would rarely be able to pick an open time slot that would automatically suit all parties. This is why the vast (nearly all) teams that we play have access to synthetic turf fields at their schools and why it is important for Newton schools to retain access to ours.

In a similar vein, our extensive use of the turf fields has allowed the Parks and Recreation Department to better manage grass fields including limiting potential overuse. We sincerely hope that you will support the field replacement projects over the next 2 summers so that we may continue to provide a first class experience to our student athletes without interruption or delay. Keeping these projects on track to be done over the coming (and following) summer will minimize any scheduling impacts to our fall and spring seasons, this is very much appreciated.

Thank you for your attention toward these important projects and please do not hesitate to reach out to us if we can provide any further information on the importance of these fields to our athletics programs.

Respectfully,

Mike Jackson, AD NNHS  
Pat Gonzalez, AD NSHS