



The Schools of McKeel Academy, Inc.

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10/17/2017

As per discussion in the July board meeting, the Board recommended creating an athletics committee to pursue evaluation of field lighting and other sports-related issues. The Board expressed interest in seeing if current sports parents would commit to assisting with the costs even if the benefits would not be shown for several years down the road. The Committee was charged with exploring student athlete spending and needs. Said Committee met on October 17, 2017. Those in attendance included staff members Ron Black, Chuck Smith, Julie Ehle, Joyce Powell, and Lauren Rexroad along with Board members Phillip Walker and Andy Snyder.

The meeting started at 11:40am. Ms. Ehle asked Athletic Director, Chuck Smith, for his input on the needs of the athletic department. Mr. Smith indicated the baseball field needed to be leveled for drainage purposes. This item was submitted with his budget for FY18. Mr. Black indicated additional cost to also include the softball field should be minimal by comparison and that both fields could be done at the same time. Next, would be the following:

- Baseball/softball – outfield sod replaced. Estimated price (not quoted) ~\$32k for both fields. Ideal timeline would be summer 2018. (Soccer field was re-sodded recently.)
- Weight room – replacing equipment as needed. Nothing major there.
- Wrestling mats – replacing as needed

Ms. Ehle asked for thoughts on field lighting. If TSMA agreed to invest \$500k, would lighting be the way we would chose to invest? She mentioned the continued growth in student population at MAT which means expanded student parking, repair of existing student parking, additional instructional space and additional buses. Also on the Board's radar has been the possibility of relocating SMA 7th graders to the MAT campus which creates an even greater need for expansion at MAT if it is even possible to accommodate. Further, there is an active investigation regarding the relocation of the MAT baseball and softball fields to the 5 acres we own on Grady Ave. Should that prove to be possible in the space available, **and** we obtain permission from the school board, lighting would be included as part of that relocation. Then we would light the remaining areas on the existing MAT campus at some point in the future after the relocation project was finalized. School #4 would be built in the area of the current baseball/softball fields. A brief discussion was had about car line and school start times. It was noted the advantage of School #4 on MAT would be the ability to use existing infrastructure and some shared resources such as the cafeteria which would save TSMA money in construction costs. It would also provide a nicer athletic facility at the new complex. Parking was noted to be a challenge along with turning lanes and traffic flow accommodations which are all part of the ongoing, existing investigation. Mr. Black indicated we should have an idea of the feasibility of this idea within a couple of weeks.

The Committee discussed field lighting on the existing MAT fields and noted the following:

- Expanded seating would be needed if lights are installed due to an anticipated increase in attendance.
- Baseball/softball lighting would likely result in the need for additional parking as well as additional seating.
- If we did install lights, it would impact the most students to install soccer first. Estimated price for only soccer would be ~\$165k for labor and materials alone.
- Softball/baseball would follow at ~\$335k for labor & materials.
- The Committee asked about fundraising and how committed parents seemed to be. Mr. Smith and Ms. Ehnle indicated they had heard lots of discussion about it from parents; however, Ms. Ehnle shared \$1,000 had been donated to date towards field lighting. Ms. Ehnle asked the Board's thoughts on fundraising. The general consensus was a significantly higher amount of money would need to be raised before the Board considered completing the project.
- Mr. Snyder asked for total athletic expenditures (FY18 budget \$141k) and expressed concern about spending \$500k+ which is about 3 ½ times the athletic expenditures on only lighting. He would rather us consider putting more money into sports overall and asked Mr. Smith for his thoughts on how additional funding for each sport could benefit student athletes. Ms. Ehnle indicated teams generally pay for their own uniforms and tournaments which is something the Board could decide to pay for from its operational budget thereby allowing each team to fund raise for other items/events if they chose to do so. Mr. Smith indicated it would only be fair to include uniforms with some restrictions as to the number permitted and how often they would be replaced as some sports use more than one uniform whereas others only have a need for one. Ms. Ehnle suggested possibly a flat dollar amount per team each year as an alternative.
- Mr. Smith is going to develop a few options for increasing athletic funding for the Committee to evaluate prior to the next board meeting which is likely December.

The Committee discussed perception about McKeel athletes and our program. They indicated their interest in student athletes and maintaining a quality program. Mr. Snyder discussed expansion to middle school teams with Mr. Smith. Available competition and the location thereof were noted as the main obstacles along with gym/field availability.

Being no further business or discussion, the meeting adjourned at 12:45pm.

Julie A. Ehnle

Julie Ehnle, Board Treasurer

Andy Snyder

Andy Snyder, Trustee