

December 10, 2008

Options regarding the Sacandaga Elementary School playground

The proposed building project would widen the running track to create an artificial turf multi-sport field. That MAY mean that the Sacandaga Elementary School playground would have to be moved. Here are some of the options. The project includes \$112,000 to move the playground, if necessary. At this point, nothing is decided or cast in stone regarding the playground.

Option 1

Keep the playground where it is now.

Athletic Director John Geniti believes that the bleachers could be moved to the opposite side of the field and the field shifted slightly so that the playground would remain where it is today.

That would allow reconfiguration of the current baseball and soccer fields, making better use of the space for those fields as well.

This option also makes sense from a security viewpoint. Right now, many parents sit on the bleachers and allow their children to play on the playground unsupervised. That would be difficult if the playground were a distance from the bleachers.

Option 2

Move the playground.

A few locations have been discussed. They are:

- Next to the parking lot near the kindergarten/office wing of the building. This option has been cited by the architect in his renderings of the proposed field.
- Away from the kindergarten/office wing and closer to the practice football field.
- West of its current location closer to the field house.
- Move the proposed field further north toward the tennis courts and change the bleacher configuration.

Other ideas????

If the project were approved, Sacandaga parents and staff would be involved in any decisions during the design stage of the proposal before it is submitted to the state Education Department for review.

From: Superintendent of Schools Susan Swartz

To: All Sacandaga parents and staff

Date: December 11, 2008

I want to thank the parents who attended the December 10 meeting to discuss the possible relocation of the Sacandaga playground. On the reverse is the handout that outlines some of the options regarding the playground.

I stressed to those attending that *no decisions have been made about the playground*. If the project were to be approved on Tuesday, December 16, Sacandaga parents and staff will be involved during the design phase of the project when those decisions will be made.

The building and field designs that have been published in our newsletter and displayed around the school district are only architectural renderings. Because school districts are prohibited from spending a lot of money before a public vote, the architects have given us drawings that reflect the needs that we have presented to them.

The only way to know what will fit in the land area of our Sacandaga, Middle School and High School campus is to conduct a land survey. That would need to happen before anything is done. Once that is completed, we will better know our options and how the wider track and field will fit into the space.

As you can see by the options on the reverse, our athletic director is hopeful that the playground could remain where it is now located.

If you hear misinformation about this topic from your friends and neighbors, please assure them that nothing has been decided.

The school district would never make such an important decision about your playground without involving Mr. Tobiassen, the school staff and the community's parents. You have my promise about that.

At Wednesday's meeting, we also heard about other issues. I have listed a few below:

- **How will we have a fair scheduling between various sports' games and practices on the artificial turf field?** *Our athletic director has promised a fair and flexible system; the field would allow at least 440+ 2-hour events each year;*
- **Who will physically move the playground, if necessary?** *We would likely involve Miracle Playgrounds, the company that installed the playground;*
- **Will boys and girls sports both use the artificial turf field?** *Yes. Boys and girls sports deserve to use the field equally – this will not be just a boys' field;*
- **The gated fence between the Sacandaga and high school parking lots causes an unsafe parking lot at Sacandaga caused by speeding cars from the high school. What can be done?** *This is a safety issue that has to be resolved. We have asked the architectural firm to look into this issue as part of the project;*
- **Would Pop Warner and other community sports be able to use the field?** *The field could be used all the time, so scheduling community sports on weekends should not be a major problem;*
- **Can we preserve the trees along the Sacandaga fence line?** *Without a survey, I cannot promise anything. If trees have to be removed, our goal would be to replant new ones.*

Let me assure you that all of these questions will be considered and answered to my satisfaction during the design and planning stages before construction would begin during the summers of 2010 and 2011.