



## NCHS and Athletic Field Space



**Field space usage challenges for Naperville School District 203, the Naperville Park District and community athletic organizations**



The Naperville Park District and Naperville School District 203 have a long-standing partnership that benefits the community by sharing park and school facilities.

District 203 provides its indoor and outdoor facilities for Park District programming after school and on weekends; in turn, the Park District provides fields and tennis courts for use by District 203 for athletic practices, games and PE classes.

Due to the Naperville Cemetery's plans to reclaim land currently being leased as athletic fields, some District 203 programs must be relocated either to Knoch Park or elsewhere.

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additional field space near the school. All four of the boys' and girls' club lacrosse teams currently practice and play their games off-campus. A third team for each is likely to be added in the future.

Available field space will be reduced when the lease with the Naperville Cemetery ends in the summer of 2009. Some of this problem will be ameliorated when improvements to Central's stadium are completed in late fall of 2009. The stadium will have synthetic turf, allowing it to be used throughout the day and for all sports seasons. However, this will not solve the entire problem; some teams will still be forced to move further onto existing Knoch Park fields or move elsewhere.

### When the cemetery property is lost, what will the result be?

With the return of the Naperville Cemetery property in 2009, PE classes can no longer be held on that land, but when the stadium is completed with synthetic turf many classes can be held there. Naperville Central's 100 varsity and junior varsity football players and discus track members will be displaced for practice and competition, along with game space for lower level football. One football team can move into the NCHS stadium for practice (once it is completed) for some days and games. One football team would have to move to the third football field at Knoch Park, or elsewhere, during the week. If an additional field is used on weekends at Knoch Park by Naperville Central, community leagues would be displaced. Use of the field would also increase wear and tear on that field. It is not optimal to continue to have 110-125 members of the NCHS lacrosse teams practice off-site at multiple locations. These teams would have to be bused daily to one or more sites, and an additional trainer would have to be assigned to the off-site practices.

### Who makes the decisions regarding use of these fields?

Initial concepts to relocate the garden plots were presented as part of the Caroline Martin Mitchell study that took place last year to begin gathering community input regarding these ideas. Any decision would need the support of the Naperville School District 203 Board of Education and the Naperville Park District Board of Commissioners. In addition, since the property is owned by the City of Naperville, any changes to the current use also would require approval by the City Council.

### What opportunities exist for public input?

Recommendations to these governing bodies would only take place after the completion of an extensive public input process. Join Naperville School District 203 and the Naperville Park District as they provide background and seek resident input through a series of three community engagement meetings:

**October 29, 7 PM** at the District 203 Administrative Center, 203 W. Hillside Rd.

**November 10, 7 PM** - Alfred Rubin Riverwalk Community Center, 305 W. Jackson Ave.

**November 12, 7 PM** - District 203 Administrative Center, 203 W. Hillside Rd.

Those unable to attend are encouraged to provide comments via email to District 203 at [athleticfields@naperville203.org](mailto:athleticfields@naperville203.org) or to the Naperville Park District at [info@napervilleparks.org](mailto:info@napervilleparks.org). Please insert "Garden Plots" in the subject line. For further information, see the websites below.

**Naperville  
Community Unit  
School District 203**

Administrative Center  
203 W. Hillside Rd.  
Naperville, IL  
60540  
630-420-6300  
[www.naperville203.org](http://www.naperville203.org)

**Naperville  
Park District**

Administrative Center  
320 W. Jackson Ave.  
Naperville, IL  
60540  
630-848-5000  
[www.napervilleparks.org](http://www.napervilleparks.org)

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### What needs are filled by the athletic fields?

Since Naperville Central is sited on approximately 35 acres (compared to 60-100 acres on more recently built schools), PE classes, marching band and athletic teams use or practice on land currently leased from the Naperville Cemetery and on Knoch Park athletic fields. These fields are also used by

community football and baseball leagues, club soccer and Park District teams. Hundreds of members of community youth football leagues facilitated by the Park District (Naperville Youth Football League and St. Raphael Football) practice and play on fields at Knoch Park in the fall season.

Currently, land leased from the Naperville Cemetery is used for varsity and junior varsity football and certain track events' practices.

Knoch Park fields are used for NCHS marching band practice, all levels of boys' football practice and practice for three girls' softball and four boys' baseball teams. Five boys' and four girls' soccer teams practice on 2.5 acres of District-owned soccer fields located at the corner of West and Oswego Streets. Lacrosse, a new sport, is expected to become IHSA sanctioned, causing a need for

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## Options to deal with the loss of fields and increased teams

<b>Option 1:</b> Work with Park District to redevelop and relocate a portion of the garden plots and create a football/soccer/lacrosse field area on a portion of that land. This would add 3 soccer-sized fields - to be used in the fall for football and in the spring for boys' and girls' lacrosse.	<b>Option 2:</b> Move teams onto the third field at Knoch Park, currently used by youth football leagues.	<b>Option 3:</b> Move one or more Naperville Central football teams and other teams off campus to District 203 or Park District sites and/or to leased space.	<b>Option 4:</b> Create athletic fields at DuPage River Park or Nike Park for use by football and lacrosse teams.
<b>Note:</b> Of the 590 garden plots currently located on West Street, approximately 370 plots would be relocated from the northern area of the West Street Community Garden Plots, with 220 plots remaining exactly where they are. Under one proposed scenario 144 of the 370 plots being moved would remain at the West Street location through the development of a portion of the area to the west of the existing southern plots. 332 new garden plots would then be developed at DuPage River Park, or at undeveloped Southwest Community Park (near the corner of 248th Street and Wolf's Crossing). The end result would be an increase of over 100 garden plots overall.		<b>Note:</b> Use Wil-O-Way Park, fields at Prairie Elementary School, or Arrowhead Park for football team practice for junior varsity and varsity football, or lacrosse teams. District 203 owns all of the Wil-O-Way and Prairie land, and a portion of Arrowhead Park.	<b>Note:</b> This is a long-term solution.
<b>Advantages:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Close to Naperville Central, close to athletic trainers and other personnel. No additional transportation costs or student time for transportation</li> <li>■ Knoch Park would have a net increase of one more available field</li> <li>■ Athletic fields to use during and after Ribfest</li> <li>■ Better maintenance of fields, increased safety and less wear and tear, thus reducing maintenance costs</li> <li>■ More field use, scheduling flexibility and no displacement for community programs</li> <li>■ More Park District field space near northern end of the community. Possible walking trails and open green space</li> <li>■ Expansion of the gardening program to other areas of the community with total increase of over 100 plots</li> </ul>	<b>Advantages:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Garden plots would not be moved</li> <li>■ District 203 football programs remain near Naperville Central</li> </ul>	<b>Advantages:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Garden plots would not be moved</li> <li>■ Less crowding at Knoch Park than Option 2</li> </ul>	<b>Advantages:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Garden plots would not be moved</li> <li>■ Less crowding at Knoch Park than Option 2</li> </ul>
<b>Disadvantages:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Relocation of garden plots</li> <li>■ Cost of development, relocation and expansion</li> <li>■ Gardeners have expressed concerns about soil quality, inconvenience and disruption with this change</li> </ul>	<b>Disadvantages:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Youth football leagues would need to be relocated on weekends</li> <li>■ More wear and tear on Knoch Park fields, decreasing playability and increasing potential concerns with having safe turf areas</li> <li>■ Still a need to find alternate space for discus and to lacrosse teams in spring; Knoch Park fields are used for baseball and softball in spring</li> </ul>	<b>Disadvantages:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Students to be bused to locations, resulting in increased fuel costs and time away from training schedules</li> <li>■ Relocation of St. Raphael Football, club soccer, community baseball teams and Park District teams</li> <li>■ Added athletic trainer time for off-site use</li> <li>■ Additional equipment would need to be purchased for training purposes at these sites</li> <li>■ Increased traffic and noise in residential areas of Wil-O-Way, Prairie and Arrowhead Parks</li> <li>■ Annual cost to lease space owned by organizations other than the District 203 or Park District</li> <li>■ No long-term guarantee space leased from outside organizations will remain available for school use</li> </ul>	<b>Disadvantages:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Students to be bused to locations, resulting in increased fuel costs and time away from training schedules</li> <li>■ New fields would need to be developed</li> <li>■ Timing of completion would be questionable</li> <li>■ Added athletic trainer time for off-site use</li> <li>■ Additional equipment would need to be purchased for training purposes at these sites</li> </ul>