

STHS football field scoring upgrades

By Kathryn Reed

By next football season Viking fans will be watching games from a new seating area.

At a January Lake Tahoe Unified School District meeting the board is expected to approve a contract for new bleachers at South Tahoe High School that will seat approximately 1,000 people. A press room and coaches box will be at the top of the structure.

“It includes emergency lighting for the field and seating areas. The back up lighting system is in the event of a power failure we have about 45 minutes of light to evacuate the facility,” Steve Morales, LTUSD director of facilities, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The \$400,000 project is being funded by Measure G, the \$65 million school facilities bond voters approved in 2008.

The current home stands were built in 1966. They don't allow disabled access or meet federal regulations.

The new structure will meet the American with Disabilities Act, which includes a spot for a wheelchair and companion seating.

Today people in wheelchairs must watch the action from the end zone.

While both structures are bleachers, a difference with the new ones is the flooring is enclosed. This means no legs to dangle through the air, and no kids or personal items falling to the ground.

Officials also believe it will be easier to clean up any discarded trash.

“It will be weather dependent, but our hope is to have it installed prior to graduation,” Morales said. Graduation is June 5.

The current stands have a capacity of less than 800. The visitor seating is about a decade old and has room for about 300 people. It is not being replaced.

The added capacity could also be a boon for organizations wanting to rent the field. The high school football and soccer teams use it today. Plus, it’s where graduation takes place. The Come Up for Air Soccer tournament each June also uses this field.

Restrooms and a concession stand are still on the drawing board, but won’t be part of this project. Porta-potties are brought in to accommodate ADA issues. The bathrooms at Mount Tallac High are open during games, but the road to get to them is not ADA approved. Next football season the district plans to bring in higher-end temporary restrooms; the ones that come on a trailer.

A donor wall was going to be installed by the concession stand, but with no date in sight for that building the district is going to use the bricks in next spring’s project. There will be a permanent wall honoring the 118 people who donated to the field upgrades – which included the lights that were installed in 2011.