

Whittell football field, track to be overhauled



Whittell football players likely will be playing on artificial turf in 2017. Photo/Boyd Dangtongdee

By Kathryn Reed

Track meets will again be able to be run at Whittell High School, possibly as soon as the 2017-18 school year.

A donation of \$2.5 million from the Lisa and Robert Maloff Endowment Fund is paying for the football field to be completely renovated as well as the track. The Douglas County School District board is being asked today to accept the donation.

“That football field and stadium have been high on our list, but we could never get to them because they are not a classroom,” Superintendent Teri White told *Lake Tahoe News*.

“The turf is fine, but it’s not as state-of-the-art as other districts. It will be upgraded to an artificial turf football field and an all weather track.”

Drainage issues exist with the current field that will also be remedied with the funds.

Lisa Maloff has been donating millions of dollars to various South Shore entities since her husband, Bob, died in 2011. The South Shore woman gave \$10 million for the Robert Maloff Center of Excellence, a health and sports performance center just behind Barton Memorial Hospital near the emergency room. The other significant donation was nearly \$8 million to Lake Tahoe Community College for the university center that will bear the Maloff name.

Bob Maloff co-owned and operated Lake Tahoe Inn and Timber Cove Lodge in South Lake Tahoe. Plus, he had other significant real estate dealings. Lisa Maloff was a founding member of the Barton Hospital Auxiliary. Promoting wellness, activity, and fitness in the community have long been goals of the Maloffs, which ties in well with WHS’ plans.



Cheerleaders will be on a track that will have some give instead of compacted dirt. Photo/Boyd Dangtongdee

The current track is dirt. It's suitable for practices, but not competition. The all weather track will allow the Warriors to actually have home events at home. The number of lanes will be dependent on final costs.

White said the artificial turf is the route most schools are going.

The current stadium is not compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act, so some of the money will go toward those improvements.

Bleachers for visitors will also be built.

If there is any money left over, a concession stand is on the wish list, too.

When it comes to maintaining the new facilities, White said it should be a wash based on watering and mowing the grass today

to needing to vacuum the new field. Snow will need to be removed from the track for its longevity. With artificial turf fields having a life expectancy of 10-12 years, a replacement fund will be needed.

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Notes:

- The July 12 board meeting starts at 3:30pm at the Lake Tahoe Visitors Center conference room in Stateline.