

Smith River Students Share their Vision for a New Community Field

April 12, 2024



Some months back, a group of Smith River students representing their individual grade levels shared student discontent with the condition of the sports / athletic field.

The group met with principal Nicole Cochran and student advisor Marcus Endert and shared with Staff a heady idea: Students told Administration the condition of the athletic field at Smith River School has some serious issues. The Field is in need of major renovation. This group of students is comprised of Kaitlynn Lopez, 6th grade, Serenity Endert, 7th grade, Toby Endert, 6th grade, Dylan Walkley, 8th grade and Augustus Bieber, 8th grade.

Here are the challenges on the field:

- Gophers have chewed up the grounds, creating unsafe playing conditions.
- Unleveled ground equals uneven lines.

- The ground drops a hazardous 3-4 inches.

The students said they intend to renovate the athletic field before next semester with a start date later this Spring. The group stated, “We have solutions.”

Smith River School students have raised almost \$3,000 in cash donations with promises of more donations forthcoming. Area businesses have offered to donate services and provide big wholesale discounts for goods and materials to see this vision come to fruition. Area agri-business Growers United Lily Growers, Dahlstrom & Watt and Palmer Westbrook have all expressed interest in helping. Student Advisor Marcus Endert began to develop a plan which initiated this vision, last October.

- Step I... Hold meetings, meet with True North Advocacy group and its Promise Neighbor grants program. Funding remains unclear at this time.
- Step II... In December, the group met with Del Norte Unified School District Director of Maintenance Joshua McCubbin to discuss the plan to renovate the field.
- Step III... In January, the student group met with trustee Michael Greer who concurred the field is in poor condition.
- Step IV... The Group met again with True North, Superintendent Jeff Harris and Assistant Superintendent Tom Kissinger to discuss the feasibility of funding this vision. The group learned the proposed project could cost about \$106,000. With community involvement, the renovation would cost considerably less.

Last Thursday the group of student representatives, faculty advisor Endert and principal Nicole Cochran addressed the Trustee Board and shared their vision for a community field renovation. At present, the vision is in the embryonic stages...but this group of driven advocates should not be underestimated.

The Triplicate will be following the progress of the Smith River Community Field Renovation project.