

[← Back](#)

Pine-Richland gets \$250K grant for new synthetic turf field, lighting

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SUBMITTED

STATE REPRESENTATIVES MIKE TURZAI AND LORI MIZGORSKI WERE ON HAND AT THE FEB. 10 PINE-RICHLAND SCHOOL BOARD MEETING TO PRESENT A STATE GRANT CHECK FOR \$250,000 TO BE USED TO INSTALL A NEW, SYNTHETIC TURF ATHLETIC FIELD WITH LIGHTING.

BY 11:00 PM, KAREN PRICE

A \$250,000 state grant will help Pine-Richland School District replace a grass field at the high school with synthetic turf, allowing athletic teams a greater amount of access to practice and play space.

The grant comes from the state's Gaming Economic Development Fund, which provides funds for community projects in Allegheny County using tax money from casino slots games.

← Back

Both representatives helped secure the grant for the district. It required a two-step approval process, first from the Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County, and then the Commonwealth Financing Authority.

Turzai represents the Pine Township part of the district while Mizgorski represents Richland. Turzai initially announced the grant in late November.

"We know multiple teams struggle to garner the necessary practice and play time due to wet field conditions and lack of lighting, " Turzai said. "This project will provide a regulation play area with a synthetic turf and field lighting and add sidewalks and a 10-foot fence. The new surface will allow teams to play in any conditions."

Field No. 6 is located between the tennis courts and the middle school. It is currently a two-thirds scale soccer field and will be expanded to regulation size for soccer, lacrosse, field hockey and football.

The different elements of the project are currently out to bid and the district plans to make recommendations to the board Feb. 21, with voting at the March 2 planning meeting. The vendors invited to bid on the turf installation were AstroTurf, FieldTurf and Shaw Sports Turf while Musco Lighting and Qualite were invited to bid on the sale and installation of four light poles through the Cooperative Purchasing Program. The district began advertising for bids for the site work Jan. 20 and all sealed bids were due by Feb. 19.

"It is part of our plan and vision for students that athletics and diverse opportunities inside and outside the classroom be accessible, and today having only one turf field for a district of over 4,500 students wasn't sufficient, " board President Peter Lyons said. "We recognize that. These funds will allow us to bring a second turf field so students can play year-round, practice, hone their skills and develop their bodies as well as their minds. Certainly, it will go to good use throughout the community because the community uses the fields on weekends and off-hours as well so it's a tremendous addition to the campus we've built here. Thank you on behalf of all of Pine-Richland."

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