



NIAGARA CATHOLIC

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MEDIA RELEASE

June 23, 2021

Niagara Catholic Funding Turf Fields All Catholic Secondary Schools: Blessed Trinity and Notre Dame First Projects

In 2017, Niagara Catholic installed a turf field at Saint Paul Catholic High School, in a partnership between Niagara Catholic, the Niagara Foundation for Catholic Education, the City of Niagara Falls and the Niagara Falls Soccer Club.

During the June 15 Board Meeting, trustees voted in favour of investing approximately \$3 million to install turf fields at Blessed Trinity Catholic Secondary School and Notre Dame College School. The projects will be funded through the Board's School Condition Improvement funding, as well as School Renewal Allocation and other community partnerships. Trustees also approved a plan to include funding in annual budgets moving forward, with a goal of ensuring all eight Catholic high schools in the Board have turf fields in the future.

In his report to the Board, Controller of Facilities Services Clark Euale pointed out the benefits of turf fields over traditional grass, including increased playing time, fewer injuries, lower maintenance costs (including no need for pesticides or irrigation), opportunities for community partnerships and less downtime on the fields due to inclement weather.

"Turf fields provide school boards with the opportunity to build relationships with the community, and recover the initial investment through fees and lower maintenance costs over the life of the field," said Mr. Euale. "We are extremely pleased that our Board of Trustees has supported this initiative, which will level the playing field for students over time."

Larry Huibers, Chair of the Board, said this decision ultimately benefits students.

"By making an investment in turf fields, we are ensuring that students coming to our high schools will find facilities on par with other schools in their communities," he said. "We know that safety on the playing field is a key concern for students and their families, and providing them with safer, state-of-the-art facilities sends our communities the message that student safety is our number one priority," said Chair Huibers.

Planning for the fields at Blessed Trinity and Notre Dame College School will take place during the 2021-2022 school year, and construction will take place next summer, in time for use in the 2022-2023 school year.