

# District reaches goal for fields

Hillcrest, Glendale, Kickapoo slated for artificial turf

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Mark Fisher, AD

Springfield Public Schools has surpassed a fundraising benchmark to proceed with the resurfacing of its high school athletic fields, district athletic director Mark Fisher said Wednesday. Fisher said \$3.5 million has been raised. Officials had set a \$2.5 million goal to proceed with the project. The hope is to raise more than \$4 million before the drive is complete, Fisher said.

Fisher will present the selected bid for the project to the school board at 2 p.m. today at a special meeting, with hopes to begin construction soon for artificial turf at Hillcrest, Kickapoo and Glendale high schools. In addition, the project would include resurfacing at Parkview's JFK Stadium. The district's fifth high school, Central, uses Drury University's Harrison Stadium, which was surfaced last in 2005.

The district contracted Athletic Surfaces Plus, a Memphis, Tenn.-based company, to privately raise funds for the upgrades.

"It was going back to our business partners and community partners and talking about our facilities and stadium fields and tracks," Fisher said. "And we were comparing them to other school districts and showing the need for improvement." A two-year survey of district coaches and other officials determined a slit-film surface would be used, Fisher said. The surface is what is used at Harrison Stadium and also currently at JFK. It is different from monofilament Turf-type surfaces, which was installed in recent years at Cooper Soccer Complex's main field. Then, officials combed about 10 different bids for the project, he said. Fisher said the project will include the adjustment of tracks at Glendale, Hillcrest and Kickapoo, changing the 440-meter tracks to 400 meters. In addition, the Glendale and Hillcrest tracks will be resurfaced. Also, the project will include the updating of about 80 percent of the district's scoreboards, Fisher said, the plan is to have the fields ready for the fall sports season.

In the Ozark Conference, Joplin, Camdenton and Waynesville have artificial turf surfaces. Ozark also has one, and Nixa is installing one this summer.