

CAPITAL PROJECT - DECEMBER 21

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OESJ BOYS' AND GIRLS' SOCCER TEAMS CLAIM SECTION 2 CLASS D CHAMPIONSHIPS



ABOVE and BELOW: OESJ's girls' and boys' soccer teams played in the Class D regional competition. Both teams had won Class D sectional championships to get to the regionals. The girls' team bested Fort Ann 2-1 and the boys beat Argyle 3-0. The teams were recognized by the Board of Education at its Wednesday, November 3rd, meeting.



SOCCER AND SOFTBALL FIELDS SLATED TO BECOME A TURF FIELD

Space would also be used for physical education classes, marching band and community events

OESJ is proposing to spend a maximum of \$5.9 million from the district's Capital Reserve Fund to upgrade the soccer and softball fields behind the Jr./Sr. High School into a multi-sport turf field.

A December 21 vote has been scheduled for this project. Voting will be held from 12

"This is a great opportunity to use money we already have, without any borrowing, to upgrade fields that desperately need upgrades."

**SUPERINTENDENT
ADAM HEROTH**

**COMMUNITY TO CONSIDER A CAPITAL...
CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE DECEMBER 21 CAPITAL PROJECT

Q: When and where is the vote?

A: Voting will be held from 12 noon to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, December 21 at

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS...
CONTINUED ON PAGE 3**



COMMUNITY TO CONSIDER CAPITAL PROJECT FOR A TURF FIELD, FROM PAGE 1

noon to 8 p.m. at both school buildings (see page 4 for more information).

The school district needs voter approval to spend the money from the Capital Reserve Fund. ***There is no tax impact for this project.***

The Capital Reserve will still have a balance of \$2.47 million after the money for the turf field is paid.

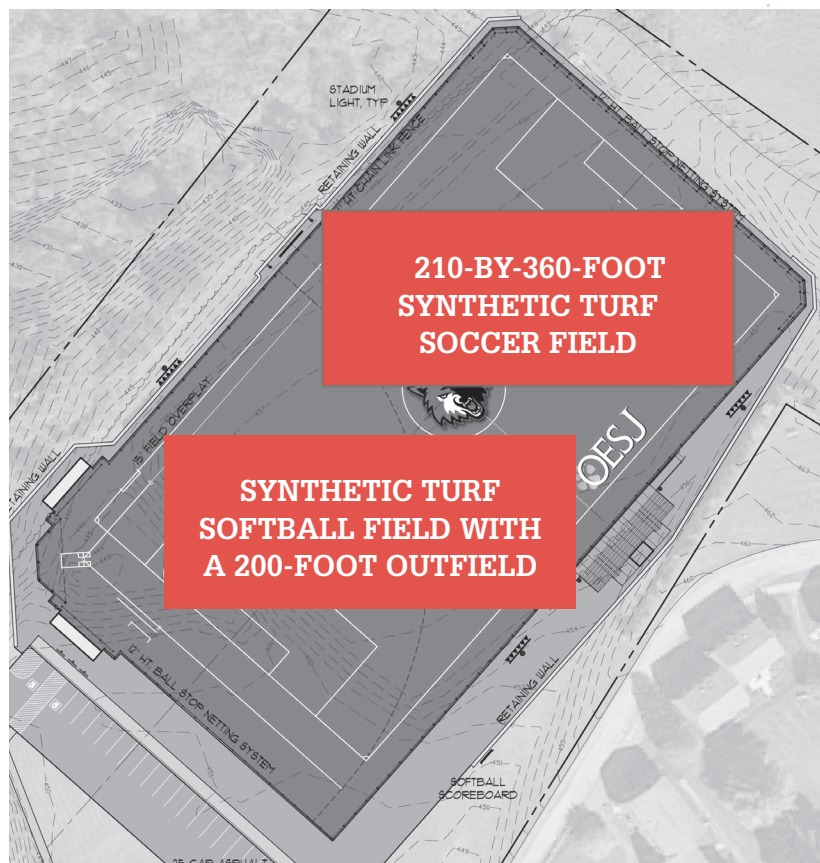
"This is a great opportunity to use money we already have, without any borrowing, to upgrade fields that desperately need upgrades," said Superintendent Adam Heroth.

The plans call for a synthetic turf softball field with 200-foot outfield and a 210-by-360-foot synthetic turf soccer field as well as a 500-seat grandstand with video platform, stadium lights and a 25-car parking area and access road to the field.

Athletic Director Travis Heiser said the current fields have been an issue for several years. The fields "have a long history of draining issues leading to standing water on the fields, making them unplayable. We have had to move numerous home soccer games to other school districts many times over the last several years due to poor and unsafe playing conditions of our current fields."

Heiser spoke of the several advantages to having a turf field. He said, "a new turf field would make outdoor activities available to athletes and students from approximately early March to early December – much longer than the current grass fields – because the turf can better withstand hard weather conditions. It would also help with accommodating practices for spring sports while snow is still on the ground."

Heiser also discussed the value a turf field would provide beyond just the high school athletics program. He said, "it would be great for our physical education classes, the marching band practices, graduations, assemblies, youth programs, community events and so much more...the possibilities are endless!"



LEFT: The proposed turf softball and soccer fields behind the Jr./Sr. High School at the site of the current softball and soccer fields.

BELOW: Shows how the turf field would be positioned on the property.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE COMMUNITY VOTE, FROM PAGE 1

these locations:

- **OESJ Junior/Senior High School** auditorium, 44 Center St., St. Johnsville
- **OESJ Elementary School** auditorium, 6486 State Highway 29, St. Johnsville

If you have any questions about where you vote, contact District Clerk Stephanie Bonk at stephanie.bonk@oesj.org or by calling (518) 568-7280.

Q: What would be done if this project were successful?

A: Currently, OESJ's two fields, soccer and softball behind the Jr./Sr. High School, are in rough shape. This project would replace them with a turf field, which would require less maintenance and not require watering. The project would add a turf softball field with a 200-foot outfield and a 210-by-360-foot synthetic turf soccer field as well as a 500-seat grandstand with video platform, stadium lights and a 25-car parking area and access road to the field.

If the vote is successful, the district would submit paperwork to the state Education Department for approval in January. If SED approves it in the spring, work would be planned to begin in the summer.

Q: Will taxes go up because of this project?

A: No. The project would be financed using funds from the district's Capital Reserve Fund (see story, page 2). Money in this account can only be spent if approved by the community and to make improvements to district facilities.

Q: Why do we have to get rid of the grass fields? Why can't we just repair the grass fields?

A: The current grass soccer fields have a long history of draining issues leading to standing water on the fields, making them unplayable. We have moved many home soccer games to other school districts many times over the last several years due to the poor and unsafe playing conditions of our current fields, which also create costs to provide transportation to the other fields.

Q: What are the advantages of having a turf field?

A: A turf field would:

- offer student athletes a much longer season than the current grass fields – because the field can better withstand hard weather conditions.
- require less maintenance than a grass field, no need for watering, fertilizer or pesticides.
- also help with accommodating practices for spring sports while snow is still on the ground.
- provide value beyond just the high school athletics program. It would be used for physical education classes, marching band practices, graduations, assemblies, field days, youth programs, community events and so much more.

Q: Will OESJ get state reimbursement for this project?

A: No. The state does not provide building aid for athletic fields. However, the state must still approve the plans submitted by the architects since schools come under the state Education Department's jurisdiction.

Q: Will this project harm the environment?

A: No. All projects must undergo a strict State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEORA) review before approvals are granted.

The approval includes a negative SEORA, stating that the "proposed project does not involve, and therefore will not result in any substantial adverse change in existing air quality, ground or surface water quality or quantity, traffic or noise levels, or a substantial increase in solid waste production, or a substantial increase in potential for erosion, flooding, leaching, or drainage problems."

The project does call for relocating a half acre of wetlands. "Any increase in water usage, wastewater production, and/or solid waste production, as compared to existing levels, will be minimal and non-significant and can be adequately managed by existing municipal services," the statement declares.

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Produced by the Oppenheim-Ephratah-St. Johnsville
Central School District in cooperation with the
Capital Region BOCES Communications Service

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OESJ

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MORE CAPITAL PROJECT INFORMATION

Voter eligibility

To be eligible to vote, a resident must have lived in the school district for at least 30 days prior to the December 21 vote, be at least 18 years of age and be a U.S. citizen.

Voting locations - December 21, 2021

Community voting will be held from 12 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the:

- **OESJ Junior/Senior High School** auditorium, 44 Center St., St. Johnsville
- **OESJ Elementary School** auditorium, 6486 State Highway 29, St. Johnsville

If you are unsure where to vote, contact District Clerk Stephanie Bonk at stephanie.bonk@oesj.org or by calling (518) 568-7280.

Voter registration

If you are registered to vote in national, county and town elections through the county where you live, you do not have to do anything. You are already registered to vote in the school district election.

In-person voter registration will be in the elementary school lobby from 2 to 6 p.m. on December 14.

If you are not registered to vote, you may register just for the school district election or to request an absentee ballot application by contacting District Clerk Stephanie Bonk at stephanie.bonk@oesj.org or by calling (518) 568-7280.

Absentee ballot information

Residents who will not be in the area on December 21 or are otherwise unable to vote in person may apply for an absentee ballot at the District Office, 44 Center Street, St. Johnsville.

- If the absentee ballot is to be mailed to the voter, the application must be submitted at least seven days prior to the vote – by **December 14**.
- If the absentee ballot is to be picked up by the voter in person, applications will be accepted until **December 20**.
- Completed absentee ballots must be returned by 5 p.m. on **December 21**.



OESJ

Fall 2021

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