

Booster Stadium Planned Renovations

The Arcanum-Butler Schools has a long tradition of excellence on the football gridiron and on the track. Over the years, our football games have been a destination on Friday nights and have featured memorable teams, games and conference champions. Our track & field teams have featured conference, district, regional and state qualifiers as well as State Champs and individual champions. That tradition has been largely supported by our fan base and in collaboration with an active Arcanum Athletic Boosters. The stadium bears the name "Booster Stadium" to recognize the many parents, community members, fans and supporters who have contributed to building the strong foundation of Trojan Pride in our programs and facilities. Through the years, the Arcanum Athletic Boosters and volunteers have been hands-on in their efforts. All of the buildings located at the complex were funded and built by the Boosters and its volunteers. From the concession stand to the locker rooms to the press boxes, many volunteers contributed their time and efforts to complete general construction, plumbing, electrical work, roofing, and whatever it took to complete the projects. Fundraising efforts provided the original track that lasted 20+ years before a recent replacement. Even the original light poles were brought in and installed with the help of volunteers and a group eager to help bring football back to Arcanum. It is because of those contributions that Trojan Pride is alive and well today!

The Arcanum-Butler Local School Board and its Administration with the help from the Athletic Boosters has worked diligently to maintain Booster Stadium and within the last dozen years has upgraded the stadium lighting, retrofitted the bleachers for safety purposes, and most recently installed new track surfacing. In an effort to not only maintain Booster Stadium and its facilities, the Board of Education has approved some needed upgrades to provide safe and accessible facilities for our students and fans. The upgrades will be completed over several phases in order to allow our student athletes to continue to compete and to appropriate funds for the project over time. The district will once again partner with Garmann-Miller Architects, who designed the Ag & Athletic Addition, to design the upgrades to the stadium.

Phase 1: Parking

The district was fortunate for years to be able to use private property located to the west of the field for additional parking, but now without that parking, fans are challenged to find parking for events. Accessibility for handicapped parking is also at a minimum. In order to address insufficient parking, the district will be installing additional parking lots. The parking lot at the Field House will be doubled, with approximately 65 more spaces being added to the west of the existing park lot. The preschool playground will be moved closer to the building, which will allow for the parking lot to be added. This lot will also include additional handicapped parking spaces with close proximity to the field. Additionally, the unofficial grass parking lot to the east of the stadium will be upgraded. The lot will have parking for visiting buses, event and coaching staff, and will also include handicapped parking. This lot will also provide a designated entrance for EMS in order to have a safe and efficient entrance into the stadium.

While the parking lots will be the main focus of Phase 1, there will be other work taking place to address other issues. The current scoreboard is dated and has had some technical issues in recent years. All of the sponsorships have run out as well, so now is an opportune time to replace the scoreboard. The new scoreboard will be paid for through the use of new sponsorships and advertising.

The existing high jump, long jump and pole vault pits will be relocated. Currently, the three areas are all relatively close together. Moving them will provide for a better competitive set up for athletes and will also allow for the future upgrades to take place.

Finally, the current locker rooms will be upgraded. Within the last year, Athletic Director Abbey Moore and Coach Matt Macy have completed work mainly through donations and contributions. The Arcanum Football Locker Legacy Project has allowed for new lockers to be installed on the home locker room side. Flooring has been updated and walls have been painted. With the ceiling having issues with cracks, Coach Moore had the visiting locker room and wrestling room ceilings covered with metal panels. Repairs coming this spring and summer include finishing the ceiling in the home locker room area, painting the visitor locker room walls and lockers, and updating the restroom area to allow for additional restroom stalls and privacy.

Phase 1 upgrades will be funded through the use of capital set-aside funds with the exception of the scoreboard that again will be paid for through the sponsorships. The parking lot improvements will be part of a bid package that will be advertised in the near future. The district is also working with Mote & Associates and the Village of Arcanum to address the necessary services for proper grading and drainage.

Phase 2: Structures

The second phase of the project will primarily focus on updating/upgrading our structures. For years the board has been monitoring the structural integrity and safety of the pedestrian bridge. While it currently remains safe, it needs to be replaced sooner rather than later. A new, wider, bridge will replace the existing bridge. The new bridge will be installed approximately twenty yards to the north of the current bridge. It will then lead to a new path and entrance into the stadium with one new ticket booth and decorative fencing. The ticket booth will allow fans to enter/exit on either side of the building.

The most significant change in the project will be constructing a new concession stand. A new concession stand will allow for the upgrading and updating of restrooms that includes increasing the number of stalls available for all patrons as well as a separate family designated restroom. The Arcanum Athletic Boosters, who operate our concessions, will be heavily involved in the interior design and set up of the building. Additionally, the Boosters will continue their financial support of our athletic programs and facilities by helping fund the new concession stand. The building will be moved a bit further to the west and further back from the track surface. In addition to restrooms and a concession area, there will be storage on the back side of the building.

Near the location of the current concession building, a covered pavilion will be constructed which will have several picnic tables to allow fans to enjoy the game and food items. The area will also be used by our cross country, track & field, football teams and marching band for team meetings, meals and gatherings. The three main buildings - concession, current locker rooms, and pavilion will be tied together in a "plaza" area that would also include our victory bell, flag pole, and memorials. The plaza area and accompanying sidewalks will allow for easier travel in and around the buildings, track and stadium.

Phase 3: Bleachers & Fencing

The bleachers were upgraded in 2016 to address safety concerns presented by the district's liability insurance provider, which included closing gaps on the underside of the bleachers and adding a ramp to the home side bleachers to make them ADA compliant and more accessible. The design of the visiting bleachers did not allow for the addition of a ramp. In order to provide accessibility for all fans, the current homeside bleachers would replace the existing visitor bleachers. New stadium bleachers that would seat 1,000 fans would be installed on the home side, eliminating the need to piece together separate seating like we have now to accommodate our band, students, and fans. In addition to the new bleachers, a coach's box would be located at the top of the stadium. This would allow our football coaches to be on our sidelines, but more importantly give the track officials space for the timing system used at track meets.

One of the most challenging aspects of the project includes adding fencing around the track. It has long been a tradition for our fans to be able to be seated near the action. While entertaining and personable, it does create a safety liability issue that is often questioned by the insurance provider and OHSAA officials. The fencing adds a safety feature for our fans, eliminates the potential for unruly spectators to access the field and players, and also drastically reduces the amount of wear and tear on the newer installed track surface. Fans would still be able to sit or stand on the eight foot wide sidewalk that will run alongside the track while still allowing the movement of fans.

The district will also consider any necessary fixes to the outer fencing. There are areas that have been patched in recent years due to normal wear and tear. Other possible improvements include replacing the original field sprinkler system that has required increased maintenance in recent years, general landscaping throughout the facility, and upgrade/replace the sound system features as needed.

Trojan Tradition & Pride

The Arcanum-Butler School community has a proud tradition of supporting our students and student athletes. The Board of Education and Administration value the efforts of our Athletic Boosters of the past, present and future, and collaboratively seek to maintain our facilities with pride. In addressing the needs of our athletes, programs and fans, the district schedules capital improvement projects through planning and budgeting. Over the course of the next few years, the Booster Stadium Project will address safety concerns, accessibility improvements, and the overall functionality of buildings and grounds, thus keeping with the Tradition of Excellence and Trojan Pride. In the near future, the district will release renderings of the plans so all of our fans

can visualize the improvements and share in the excitement! A special thank you to all of our past and present Arcanum Athletic Boosters for continued support of our student athletes and athletic programs.

Loyal & True,
John N. Stephens