



**EVANSTON/SKOKIE**  
SCHOOL DISTRICT 65

Every Child, Every Day, Whatever it Takes

**TO:** Dr. Angel Turner, Superintendent  
**CC:** District 65 Cabinet Team  
**FROM:** Kirby Callam, Director of Strategic Project Management  
**DATE:** August 19, 2024  
**RE:** Foster School Update

**Objective:**      X   Information    \_\_\_ Discussion    \_\_\_ Follow-up    \_\_\_ Decision

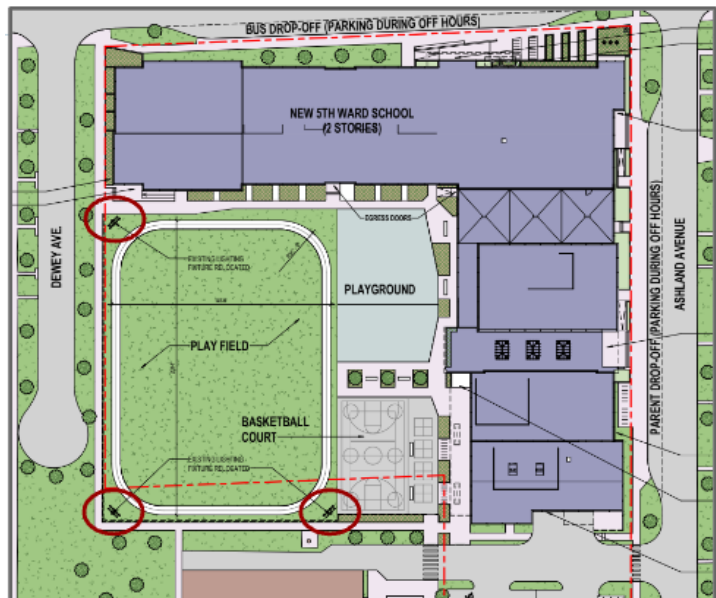
The Foster School project team is exploring two proposed additions to the scope of the project’s design plans, to enhance the school playfield in ways that serve Foster students, Foster families, and the 5th Ward community.

While several details have not been finalized, we want to keep the Board up-to-date on these plans as we move forward. **These additions, initiated by City of Evanston 5th Ward Council Member (CM) Bobby Burns, are not expected to impact the current construction schedule.**

### Reinstallation of Field Lights

The first proposed addition entails salvaging and re-installing three of the existing field lights to illuminate the school's playfield and basketball court, as seen in the site plan drawing below, with the lights circled in red. While no other District school currently has field lights, this enhancement would significantly improve the utility of the playfield, providing a space for the community to gather and engage in recreational activities after dark.

**The cost for re-installing the lights is estimated between \$50,000 and \$70,000.** The District, as a partner in this project, is prepared to support half of this cost, with the City of Evanston covering the remaining half. While the City has not yet agreed to any specific commitments, CM Burns will bring this issue to the City Council for consideration. We expect that an agreement can be reached to maintain the lights and provide electrical service via the adjacent Fleetwood-Jourdain Community Center, continuing the historical service connection that exists today.



This addition will not increase the overall budget of the Foster School project. We plan to allocate contingency funds for this purpose, which we are increasing through value engineering changes currently in development and scheduled for presentation to the Board in September.

### **Installation of Outdoor Track**

The second proposed addition is the installation of a rubberized, impermeable two-lane running/walking track around the school playfield (also shown on the site plan drawing above). This track will serve dual purposes: enhancing the school's physical education program and offering a recreational space for 5th Ward residents after school hours and on weekends.

**The track installation is expected to cost between \$110,000 and \$130,000. Under CM Burns' proposal, the City of Evanston would cover the cost of the track, using funds from the Five-Fifths TIF.** CM Burns is currently discussing this proposal with the Five-Fifths TIF Advisory Committee. According to CM Burns, this type of investment in public spaces aligns with the commitments outlined in the resolution agreement between the City of Evanston and District 65, titled **City of Evanston Commitments Concerning the Proposed Five-Fifths TIF District**. Section 6 of the agreement specifically mentions the importance of investments in "public facilities such as recreational spaces, community centers, and similar public amenities."

These additions enhance the recreation space at Foster School and promote a model of school/city partnership similar to existing collaborations at Washington School/Robert Crown Community Center and Dawes School/James Park. Importantly, these proposed additions will also be located on city property at the southern section of the field, where two of the three lights and the southern leg of the track will be located.

Furthermore, these improvements align with the City of Evanston's E-Plan by advancing health and racial equity for 5th Ward residents, contributing to their physical, mental, and emotional well-being. According to the E-Plan, 1 in 3 adults in the 8092 census tract reported no leisure-time physical activity. Additionally, residents of this tract have a life expectancy that is, on average, 15 years lower than those in neighboring census tracts. Continued investments in recreational spaces like this can encourage more active lifestyles and support healthier outcomes over time.

Our team is concerned that the extended and extensive use of the playfield area after school hours will require daily added Building & Grounds staff hours for maintenance and upkeep to ensure school readiness. However, these proposed enhancements to the Foster School playfield represent a valuable investment in both the school and the surrounding community, leveraging the school/city partnership to create a more inclusive and supportive recreational environment for our students and 5th Ward residents.