



Brian B. Brotschul, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
908-630-3011
bbrotschul@shsd.org

Coleen Gallagher Butler, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent
908-630-3014
cbutler@shsd.org

Jinnee DeMarco
*Business Administrator/
Board Secretary*
908-630-3018
jdemarco@shsd.org

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Dear Parents and Guardians:

On September 16, 2024, the Somerset Hills Board of Education held a special evening meeting to further discuss and examine the installation of Light Emitting Diode lights on Olcott Field following the feasibility study that was born from our district's current strategic plan. That study began in June 2023 and was delivered to the Board in July 2024. Throughout the year we organized multiple community forums and focus group meetings, as well as a community survey and an off-site visit; our goal was to encourage community engagement as we investigated the various components related to this type of facility modification.

On Monday, following executive session of the Board, its members gathered in public session where I presented, along with Frank Messineo from Solutions Architecture and Bob Zoeller from Musco Lighting. We provided historical context, an overview of conducting the feasibility study, and an update on fiscal matters. We also discussed the existing site, and various facets of sports lighting in relation to control, supply, and installation. Click this [presentation link](#), found on the district website within the Olcott Field Lights folder, to view it in its entirety.

Following our Sports Field Lighting presentation, the Board had an opportunity to ask clarifying questions on topics such as light evolution and differences in LED quality. Many on the Board were impressed with the technology offered through Musco since not all LED lights are the same; their luminaire system provides more targeted lighting with less light pollution to surrounding areas. Another point of interest during the Board's discussion was in reference to a slide detailing a cross section of the BHS site. As Zoeller explained, the combination of pitch from Olcott Avenue to Olcott Field, along with the height of numerous tall trees, will create a buffer between the light installation and the surrounding neighborhood. Board members also discussed the project budget before the meeting was opened to public comment. Of the 35+ residents who attended the meeting, about half came to the podium to speak. We were glad so many joined us as they articulated their compliments and concerns.

At the conclusion of the meeting the Board voted on a resolution to move forward with next steps. With a unanimous Board vote, it authorized attorney Tara St. Angelo from Gebhardt & Kiefer, in consultation with myself and Business Administrator Jinnee DeMarco, to submit a capital project review concerning athletic field lighting to the Bernardsville Planning Board. I will continue to keep you apprised during the coming months regarding these matters.

Sincerely,

Brian Brotschul, Ed.D.

Superintendent of Schools