

FAQ for artificial turf/synthetic grass fields

Why do we need an artificial turf/synthetic grass field?

The purpose of building a turf field is to provide a durable, low-maintenance, and versatile playing surface that can accommodate various sports, our band program, commencement celebrations.

In addition, it is the intent to house other school and community activities by promoting year-round sports and events while at the same time balancing the costs involved in maintain a quality field that benefits the school, students and community.

PIAA does not permit playoff games to be played at the home field unless it is a turf field in Field Hockey and in Soccer and Football the PIAA only permits first round playoff games at home to be played on grass however, the district must secure another rental of a turf field in case of inclement weather.

How will the district raise money for an artificial turf/synthetic grass field?

The objective for Upper Adams School district and its stakeholders is to raise money through a capital campaign to install an artificial turf field in Musselman Stadium

How much does an artificial turf/synthetic grass field cost?

Prices vary from region to region and from product to product. It also depends on the sports the field turf surface will be used for. Most of our artificial turf installations are for football, soccer and field hockey.

The general estimate of the initial cost of a synthetic turf field is approximately 1.3 million (\$1,300,000.00) dollars. A turf field provides a near-perfect surface for many years, with limited maintenance and no specific maintenance expertise needed.

The average annual maintenance costs for a turf field averages \$6,500 annually. Annual maintenance includes grooming, the addition of infill, cleaning, sanitizing and impact testing.

The estimated maintenance cost for the grass field in Musselman Stadium is approximately \$30,000. Annual maintenance includes (labor and materials) mowing, fertilization, seeding and lime, irrigation, game lining, equipment usage and fuel. This does not include water usage or equipment purchases.

Artificial turf represents a higher initial cost than natural grass, but this is recuperated due to the fact that turf fields do not require constant wet weather oversight. During inclement weather a grass field may not be usable causing the district to rent other field for events and practices.

A turf field could provide additional revenue from club sports or other external programs that could rent the facility for games, events and tournaments.

How does an artificial turf/synthetic grass field compare with a grass field?

During the summer months grass fields must have consistent watering which is critical to the sustainability and costs related to the field. In addition, grass fields require recovery time for the sod base or grass, rolling to level the field, downtime for seeding and chemical fertilization while none of these items effect a turf field and therefore have no delayed events or decreased playing time.

Turf fields will provide extended hours of student/athlete use of the fields due to inclement weather and provide longer practice time into different seasons.

Artificial turf can withstand heavy use and is less susceptible to wear and tear compared to natural grass. With turf, fields can be used for longer hours without concern of overuse. This durability is a huge advantage for high traffic sports fields that see frequent games, practices and events.

Artificial turf can be used in various weather conditions ensuring games, practices and events can proceed as scheduled. Since natural grass can be affected by weather conditions, (hot, cold, wet and/or dry) where artificial turf offers a uniform playing surface year-round.

Overuse of a natural grass field results in poor/damaged playing surfaces which affects the quality of play and increases risks for injury. Continuous usage on a turf field will not impact the playing surface.

How long does a turf field last?

The turf longevity depends upon usage however most turf fields are lasting 15+ years at a minimum. Which is well beyond the industry standard ten year warranty.

How safe is a turf field?

Many turf field companies have specialists that can test for player safety on its fields. The results of these tests can be compared and will indicate how safe or safer than natural grass in most areas of player safety. Recent research has shown that as the system infill weight increased, player-injuries decreased.

The costly and intricate maintenance of natural grass makes it difficult to keep fields in a playable condition which is safe enough for its players. In high usage areas such as sidelines, between the hash marks, frequent change in player direction, goal and net mouth areas. These areas are crucial for ensuring player safety and maintaining consistent playability and should remain consistent with the rest of the field as only a turf field can consistently provide.

Inclement weather (dry or wet) can cause the playing surface of a grass field to become bare and compacted after standing in one spot or clumped after sharp cuts and pivots in other spots.

What are other benefits of a turf field?

A turf field has the potential to enhance physical education programs. Turf would allow schools to diversify activities available in physical education due to the availability of an outside venue. It also enables physical education to continue outside during weather changes.

Marching band members need a smooth, consistent surface underfoot as they go through their choreography and hit their marks. Synthetic turf will make their marks easier to find giving them better alignment. The regularity of the surface will minimize the risk of someone stumbling, tripping, or slipping.

Schools can use turf fields for community events and activities, fostering a sense of community and pride. Enhanced facilities can improve or heighten the school's image and reputation which would foster a sense of pride among students and community. Furthermore, facility upgrades will become a venue for community events such as athletic contests, creating a stronger bond between the school and community.

What is the difference between the new generation turf and the astro turf of old days?

The newest generation of artificial turf fields, which are installed across the country are infilled, long pile artificial turf which contained polyethylene (plastic) fibers, with sand and rubber particles between these fibers acting as artificial earth, giving the athletes shock absorption and natural footing. This replaced the astro turf of old, which consisted of abrasive nylon turf fibers and no infill.

Where do our student/athletes already play on turf already?

Yes, our student athletes are playing on turf fields at other school districts on a regular basis.

What teams are we playing against now who have turf fields?

We play against 36 different schools of which 28 will require some or all of our teams, (Varsity, JV, JH, JHJV Football, Field Hockey, and/or B&G Soccer) to play on turf field at away events.

This is a list of the 28 schools, both in and out of league, we are scheduled to play during the current two year sports schedule that play or will play on turf fields:

Bermudian Springs, Central York, Dallastown, Dover, Eastern York, Hanover, Kennard Dale, Littlestown, New Oxford, Northeastern, Red Lion, South Western, Spring Grove, Susquehannock, William Penn, York Catholic, York Suburban, Camp Hill, Pequea Valley, Trinity, Middletown, West Perry, Big Spring, Greencastle, Gettysburg and Susquenita.
West York and Shippensburg are putting in turf fields.

What are some other local high schools saying about their turf fields?

We have experienced much more positive impacts than negative. Increased flexibility with scheduling is probably the biggest "pro", with non-athletic teams like Phys-Ed and Marching Band being able to utilize the fields much easier.

All sports can use it at any time, in any condition. My soccer field is grass and we have to replace the goal mouths every year with new sod and water.

We groom it every 2-weeks. A third party comes out comes out does two cleanings and provides a detailed report.

Aesthetics, Kids loved playing on it, and no real upkeep or issues due to weather

When you only get one, everyone wants on it at all times. Scheduling is a challenge. We are able to hold all of our competitions from baseball to lacrosse to football to soccer, etc. In the long run, we save on paint and wear and tear on the grass, especially when you play games in bad weather.

Everyone wants to be on it, finding time on the field can be hectic and giving equal time.

Turf fields have been a pleasure. I don't have exact numbers, but the cost of replacing infill and the time it takes to groom the turf are less than a natural grass field.

It has been a positive experience since the addition of the turf field. The most impactful was the fact the rescheduled games all but went away - Schedules stayed intact. Need to be creative when creating practice schedules but many of their sports use the field either for practice, open plays, etc.

They have not noticed any increase in injuries since the field went in.

Can get on the field all the time regardless of the weather. Fairly simple maintenance (fill in hot spots every now and then with more rubber and rake it once or twice a season).

Information collected from various sources