



LEXINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

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Lexington Public Schools
146 Maple Street
Lexington, Ma 02420

Lexington Town Meeting
% Lexington Town Meeting Members
1625 Massachusetts Avenue
Lexington, MA 02420

To Whom It May Concern:

I want to first thank the members of the Lexington Recreation Committee and the Lexington Recreation Department Staff for including stakeholders from the Lexington Public Schools in the conversation and discussion about Article 10i which comes before Town Meeting this evening. Article 10i seeks support and funding from the Town of Lexington for critical field improvements and lighting at Lincoln Park in FY24.

In all honesty, Article 10i is imperative and essential to the continued daily operation of the Lexington Public Schools and our high school interscholastic athletic programming. Without the end-of-life replacement of the playing surface at Lincoln Park #1 and the installation of lights at Lincoln #1 and Lincoln #3, the Lexington High School athletic teams and programs will struggle with sustainability in the 2023-2024 academic year, and face possible collapse and elimination when the Town of Lexington begins construction for a new or renovated Lexington High School in the near future. The Town of Lexington is already facing a significant field deficiency based on interested users and available hours, without the support and funding for Article 10i, our interscholastic programming will quite literally not be possible at the current level.

The installation of lights at Lincoln #1 and Lincoln #3, as well as replacing the current playing surfaces over the next three years will ensure we can continue to provide healthy and safe opportunities for children and student-athletes in Lexington through both community based programming and educational athletics through the Lexington Public Schools. We know that physical and mental well being are essential to healthy youth and development.

The risk of losing or changing the current athletic opportunities available to our young people in the Lexington community is frightening but also real and significant should Article 10i NOT pass this evening. Over the past few years, with the global pandemic, and other factors significantly out of their control, our young people have paid a price relative to their physical, emotional and mental well being. It is incumbent on us as adults to ensure they do not pay an additional price due to lack of funding for fields and available playing surfaces in the Town of Lexington. We quite literally **owe** this to our current and future young people.

Over the years, it has become crystal clear that the Lincoln Park multi-purpose field complex is NOT just a school resource, but a community resource. The Lexington Public Schools understand and wholeheartedly support the requests for capital projects by the Recreation Committee. Their work is based on what meets the needs of the most stakeholders. LPS has felt heard and valued during the discussion process in the Lincoln Park lighting and field replacement project and without hesitation urges Town Meeting Members to support the Lexington Recreation Department's request for funding for Article 10i in FY24.

When looking through the lens of interscholastic athletic programming and physical education class use, it is undeniable that improved surfaces and lighting in this location will be beneficial to hundreds of students and student-athletes in the Lexington Public Schools. Allowing equity and access to more students and children in our community is at the forefront of our conversations in Lexington, and improving these highly trafficked facilities will safely meet the needs and demands of more Lexington students, student-athletes and community members as a whole now and in the future.

To reiterate, we appreciate all that the Recreation Committee and Department has done to include not only the Lexington school community but the entire Lexington community in their process and decision making and hope that we can be a stakeholder of continued value as you make a final decision about the improvements to both field surface and lighting at the Lincoln Park Complex.

Sincerely,

Naomi

Naomi Martin
Director of Athletics
Lexington Public Schools