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## Durango High School begins upgrade on stadium

DHS needs to raise \$1.6 million by May for the track and field

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Photo by: Jerry McBride/Durango Herald

Dan Losee, with Losee Architects, describes the artificial turf that will be used on the Durango High School multiuse field on Tuesday during a groundbreaking and fundraising kickoff for the remodel the high school's stadium, track and field.

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By [Ann Butler](#) Herald staff writer

Durango School District 9-R held the official groundbreaking ceremony Tuesday for the multiuse stadium upgrade at Durango High School.

The current upgrade will include artificial turf for the football field and a urethane track base as well as designated spaces for track events such as the long jump and triple jump, discus throw and shot put. The safety of the athletes is one of the drivers for the upgrade, 9-R Superintendent Dan Snowberger said. The field has become compacted and uneven, and the track is in such poor shape that the high school has to host its home meet elsewhere.

The attendees took a lap as a tour for the project.

“We’re landlocked here, so we have to use every inch,” said DHS Activities Director Dave Prezler. “We have to make a usable track and field that uses space wisely and in a fiscally prudent manner.”

In addition to being safer, the artificial turf will provide ongoing savings, Dan Losee of Losee

Architects said.

“If you add up maintenance, repainting lines, watering and mowing the grass, there’s a lot of money involved,” he said. “We determined this campus spends \$44,000 a year on water, so this will pay for itself in a short time. The track is in such bad shape, we can’t do any more for it.”

Phase 1 of the project, much of the preparation site work, is already underway. It is being paid for with \$900,000 approved by the 9-R school board from funds restricted for capital projects, Snowberger said. The rest of the funding will need to be raised from the community.

“This is an outdoor classroom,” he said. “This is where students learn teamwork, how to collaborate and work toward a common goal.”

Phase 2 will include the track and field to the tune of \$1.67 million. All the funds for this phase need to be raised by the spring.

“Graduation is sacred, and graduation will be held here in May,” Preszler said. “But we hope to be already staging, with work starting the day after, and the field ready to go by the time practices start (in August).”

Phase 3 includes the bells and whistles, including creating a separate entrance, bathrooms and concession stands for the stadium so event attendees don’t have to access the high school. Also included in this phase is a workout and training center and an up-to-date scoreboard with light-emitting diode lights and messaging center. The price tag for Phase 3 will be about \$2 million.

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Photo by: Jerry McBride/Durango Herald

A groundbreaking ceremony and fundraising kickoff takes place Tuesday for the new multi-use field and stadium upgrades at Durango High School. The current upgrade will include artificial turf for the football field and a urethane track base.



Photo by: Jerry McBride/Durango Herald

A groundbreaking ceremony and fundraising kickoff takes place Tuesday for stadium upgrades and a new multiuse field at Durango High School.

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