



Press Release

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Commission approves \$4.5 million in stadium upgrades, loan program for county school lighting projects

The Washington County Commission approved significant stadium upgrades for both Daniel Boone and David Crockett High Schools and lighting upgrades that will impact all Washington County schools and most facilities.

Approximately \$4.5 million in earmarked Educational Capital Project Funds will cover the replacement of home bleachers and the installation of synthetic athletic turf on both high school football fields.

Both the Health, Education and Welfare Committee and the Budget Committee recommended consideration and approval of the request subject to funding for HVAC upgrades coming from ESSER 3 funds. Washington County Board of Education agreed to revise its Capital Improvement Plan to reflect that request.

Existing grandstands and press boxes at the high schools will be demolished and replaced with aluminum bench seating for 2,000 and molded seating for 400. The new grandstands include code-compliant guardrails, handrails, aisle treads and risers with wheelchair accessible spectator and companion seating. Press boxes with home and visitor coaching spaces are included. Cost for the grandstand and press boxes is estimated at \$1.5 million for each school. Synthetic athletic turf installation for both high schools is estimated at \$1.5 million.

The scope of the lighting upgrade project includes the replacement or retrofit of all fixture with LED lighting, including major cosmetic upgrades through the replacement of damaged fixtures, new LED lighting in all gymnasiums and new LED wall-packs, floodlights and pole lights for the exteriors. All areas with four or more fixtures will be controlled with lighting occupancy sensors. While the project does not include ballfield lighting, it will provide much improved lighting in school work areas and classrooms that will impact the overall learning environment.

According to information from the Washington County School System, this is a budget neutral expense for the General Purpose School Fund due to guaranteed cost savings related to reduced energy usage.

Excel Energy Group, Inc., will handle the project guarantees the schools system will save enough on its energy bills to pay 100% of the lighting upgrade payments. Washington County will secure a EESI loan to finance the project \$2,337,736 at 0.5% interest for seven years on behalf of the school system.