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BPS athletic complex to be named Sanford Sports Complex

BISMARCK, N.D. – Bismarck Public Schools announced today that Sanford Health has secured the naming rights to the school district’s athletic complex in northeast Bismarck. It will now be called the Sanford Sports Complex.

The Sanford Sports Complex, located west of Legacy High School, features turf and grass football fields, a soccer field, baseball diamonds and a track. When the final phase of the project is complete, the complex will also feature softball diamonds and tennis courts.

“Sanford Health is dedicated to youth development and the communities we serve, which is why we are excited to invest in the Sanford Sports Complex,” said Craig Lambrecht, M.D., executive vice president of Sanford Health in Bismarck. “For more than 30 years, Sanford has been partnering with Bismarck Public Schools by supporting student academics and performing arts and providing orthopedics and sports medicine to young athletes. By investing in facilities like this we are facilitating our youth through their transitions in life. These students are our future leaders and we are devoted to setting them up for success.”

Dakota Community Bank & Trust is another major donor to the school district’s athletic complex. The football and soccer fields are named after this business. Dale Pahlke, President and CEO of Dakota Community Bank & Trust, says, “Dakota Community Bank & Trust is proud to support the Bismarck Public School system students in developing and furthering their athletic skills. We also believe athletics, along with academics, are vital to the growth of our youth.”

The athletic complex is a public-private partnership that will provide more space for youth of all ages at all schools and colleges, as well as adult leagues, to run track and play football, soccer, baseball, softball and tennis year-round. The Bismarck School Board committed approximately \$10 million to the project initially, and a committee is working to raise the rest privately.

School Board President Karl Lembke stated, “This public-private partnership is good business; we want to be a good steward of taxpayer dollars.” BPS Activities Director Dave Zittleman says, “Bismarck Public Schools in extremely excited about the community support of this three-phase project. Later this fall, the final touches will be completed on this world class facility. Organizations like Sanford, Dakota Community Bank and Northwest Contracting have made this complex a possibility. All BPS students in

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will have the opportunity to use this multipurpose facility. We have already hosted events for elementary, middle and high school aged students in our district.”

In the past three years, Bismarck Public Schools has designed and completed Phases 1 and 2 of the project, thanks in part to an initial campaign kick-off donation from Northwest Contracting. Phase 1 was the main football field, main entrance and concessions building, a third of the grandstands, and a soccer practice field. Phase 2 was the baseball turfed field, second building for maintenance and bathrooms, rest of the grandstands, and football practice fields. The final phase is now starting, which includes grass baseball, grass softball and turfed softball fields, a second entrance and concessions, and tennis courts.

If businesses or organizations want to buy a fence sign for a field at the Sanford Sports Complex, contact BPS Foundation director Kayla Kleven, 701-595-1844; kayla_kleven@bismarckschools.org. To make an online donation to the ongoing development and maintenance of the facility, go to www.bpsfoundation.com/donate and scroll down to choose BPS Athletic Fields.

CONTACTS: Dave Zittleman, BPS, 323-4079, dave_zittleman@bismarckschools.org; and Jon Berg, Sanford, 323-6512, jon.berg@sanfordhealth.org. **Jon has visuals of the building signage/scoreboards.**

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About Bismarck Public Schools: We educate more than 12,700 students at 16 elementary schools, 3 middle schools, 4 high schools, 2 career and technical facilities, and a preschool services center. Mission: All students will have the academic, social, and personal skills to be college, career, and community ready. Vision: Together, we inspire a passion for learning, discovery, and excellence.