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Board of Trustees  
Kalispell School District 5  
Kalispell, MT 59902

*Sent Electronically*

I read with interest the article in the Daily Inter Lake about renovation of the high school athletic field. Not surprisingly, the article focused on artificial turf as the new surface since the high schools' activities directors seem to favor that choice. I favor natural turf (grass). A number of alternates to grass have appeared the past 50 years; none have endured and each has been succeeded by something "better." While alternates appear and reappear, grass is still an installation often selected.

Whatever surface is selected should be accompanied by planning, and thoughtful, knowledgeable maintenance. Both require the input of experts (and they are available), followed by appropriate training. Maintenance plans, for instance, should set forth future care that must be adhered to. New equipment and processes will be required regardless of the surface selected - and all come at a cost.

The newspaper article mentioned that a "crown" has developed in the field. With due respect, that negative can be the result of improper maintenance, which highlights my earlier comment about following a proper maintenance plan.

Good luck. I encourage the District to use a tried and true field surface: grass. Borrowing the words of a former Major League Baseball outfielder: "If my horse cannot eat it, I don't want to play on it."

Sincerely,



Daniel D. Johns