

To: City Council and School Board
From: Tony McManus

I would like to offer some comments regarding the proposed rehab of the athletic fields. I wonder if you have given any thought to do away with lights.

When I attended DHS back in the Middle Ages we had afternoon games on Saturday---and maybe Sunday---and then some school district somewhere decided to have night games and expensive lighting, and it seemed as if everyone else...without much thought...decided they had to follow suit.

My thoughts, I hope, are something more than just nostalgia for "the good old days". I think there are some definite benefits involved.

One: more likely than not daytime temperatures will be warmer, more comfortable for spectators and players than the no-heat, no-sun night games, a more genuine outdoor experience.

Two: chances are the turf...natural or artificial...will be softer during the day than 3-6 hours after daylight, potentially reducing to some degree the chance of injuries.

Three: a small item maybe, but daytime games might encourage more full-family attendance; small children might not be kept up and out for potentially long-lasting (and chilly) night games.

Four: driving to and from a day game is potentially safer for many people than driving at night.

And several more practical considerations:

Five: you avoid the cost of installing lights

Six: you avoid the cost of maintaining/replacing lights

Seven: you avoid the cost of electricity, not just for the field lights, but possibly for concession stands, any building usage, parking lots. The accumulated savings over a number of years could be substantial.

It would not be a bad idea for every school district to step back and consider this possibility, and the positive financial impact state-wide would be of great benefit to already strained budgets. Maybe Dover could be the first to make a meaningful change.