



# BURKE HIGH SCHOOL

## HOME OF THE BULLDOGS



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A small group of Burke High School Alumni has embarked on an endeavor to help the Omaha Public Schools renovate the Burke High School Stadium and other outdoor athletic facilities. The Burke stadium is extensively used by numerous groups within Omaha and across the state of Nebraska, but the upkeep of the facilities has not kept pace with the demands placed on its infrastructure. When you compare stadiums across the city of Omaha, there is a large discrepancy between the Burke facility and other facilities and yet Burke's facility is used far more than other stadiums. This stadium is also the face of the Omaha Public Schools during the state track meet and for many Nebraska families, time spent at the Burke Stadium will be their only experience with the Omaha Public Schools. A major renovation to this stadium will not only bring Burke's facilities in line with other schools, but it will greatly enhance the experience of all students and athletes who utilize this stadium.

The stadium at Burke has been a special place to celebrate a variety of accomplishments for student athletes throughout the state of Nebraska. "Burke Bound" is now a term used by many athletes as they compete to make their way to the Burke Stadium in May for the iconic Nebraska State Track Meet. For 30 years, the Burke Stadium has hosted bands from across the region at the OMI Band Competition. The stadium has also been used in the past to host the national JR Olympics track meet which is a 10 day event. Because of these high profile events, the stadium at Burke brings a considerable amount of commerce to the Metro Area. The Nebraska State High School Track and Field Championships bring 30,000+ paying spectators to Omaha for 2 days and the Friday of State Track continues to be the second highest sales day at the Westroads Mall. Local food establishments, hotels, and other businesses benefit tremendously from these large-scale events held at Burke.

While the Omaha Public Schools has done a wonderful job maintaining the playing surfaces and keeping the track up to the highest standards for the student athletes, the stadium was originally designed in the 1960s to hold only 3,500 spectators. At the time the stadium was constructed, the designers never envisioned the current usage which can exceed 22,000 spectators during the state track meet. While the playing surfaces and the track have been updated, the support facilities have never undergone renovations. In order to keep large-scale events or attract other events in the future, the support facilities need to be updated to include more restrooms, better concession stands, and more locker rooms that are ADA compliant.

The objective of this renovation is to bring the outdoor athletic and activity facilities at Burke High School up to current standards and building codes as well as increase their functionality for high profile events such as the State Track Meet. Increasing seating, making seating and restrooms handicapped accessible, adding safety features like hand rails to the stadium, adding restrooms and concession areas to both the east and west stadiums, adding a designated press box as well as updating the electrical components of all buildings, and adding a field house/multi-purpose building are necessary to keep the State Track Meet in Omaha. This event generates revenue for the businesses in Omaha and without these updates it is possible that Omaha will lose the contract when it is renegotiated in 2020. With the updates proposed in this plan, the school district will

also be in a good position to make a bid to hold the state football championships at the stadium which would bring additional revenue to the city.

Another objective of this renovation project is to provide additional spaces for our athletic teams and activities that utilize a field. By renovating the soccer complex to include concessions, restrooms, lights, and field turf, we are expanding the available space for our students to play and practice as well as providing spaces that can be used by the greater Omaha community. The renovated soccer field will be regulation size for soccer, but it will also be marked for football and lacrosse. Adding these updates to the Burke soccer complex will provide flexibility and usage for various purposes and bring the soccer field up to current standards in order to maximize its utilization.

The Omaha Public Schools has committed \$2,000,000 to replace the playing surfaces within the stadium. We are looking to raise about \$2,000,000 from alumni with the rest of the funds coming from local businesses and local foundations that are interested in keeping the State Track Meet in Omaha. All donations to this project will be placed in an account with the Omaha Schools Foundation and are tax deductible. 100% of the money donated to this project will go toward the project and if we do not raise enough money to complete this renovation, all money will be returned. Alumni giving kicked off in February 2017 with a goal of fundraising \$500,000 by June of 2017. The remaining \$1.5 million of alumni giving will need to be raised by March of 2018 in order to keep the project on track. Businesses and foundations will be approached for funding throughout 2017.

The full renovation plan will cost \$10,855,000 and will consist of 5 zones with a completion goal of 2020. The total cost includes a \$2 million endowment for upkeep and maintenance. This does not include the \$2 million that OPS will provide for the new track and football turf. A breakdown of each zone and the associated costs is as follows:

- I. \$804,000: Complete northeast stairs, construct columns and iron fencing, install iron arc over the scoreboard, and complete landscaping renovation around the stadium. Goal is to complete this work in the summer of 2017 in coordination with the track resurfacing. If this amount is raised by the alumni football players, they will receive recognition and naming rights for the football field.
- II. \$1,041,000: Complete an Indoor Baseball Training Facility (8,320 SF). Work can begin on this project as soon as the funds are raised. If these funds can be raised by alumni baseball and basketball players, they will receive recognition on the structure as well as dedication rights to the new gymnasium that is being built at Burke.
- III. \$3,696,000: Renovation of the East and West Stadiums and pave and reconfigure the west parking lot. This work will be done between November 2017 and March of 2019 with work being halted to allow for the State Track Meet and Football Season.
- IV. \$1,314,000: Construction of 5,680 SF Field House and multi-purpose building. This structure can be completed at any time along the way once the funding is available.
- V. \$2,000,000 (rough estimate): Replace grass field on soccer field with artificial turf. This surface will allow the band to practice in the fall and will also provide a second football field for practices, games, or Lacrosse games when needed. Renovation will also include new structures for concessions and storage as well as lighting for the field. Ideally, this renovation would be completed within the same time frame as the stadium renovation (2017 – 2019)
- VI. \$2,000,000 - \$4,000,000: Endowment for a Burke Foundation that will provide funding to maintain the renovations and protect the investment that was made by alumni and other donors. This foundation could also be used for on-going alumni giving, and depending on the donors, this money could be used to finance a pool renovation in the near future.