

Statement of Concern

Four years ago the Irving community led a remarkable campaign to create a new playground and turf field. Since that time, new information has come to light, and a group of Irving parents have become aware of concerns about the turf field, specifically its rubber tire crumb in-fill. Over 55 parents have signed onto this Statement of Concern in support of replacing the tire crumbs with the less toxic Nike Grind material. We are proud of our schoolyard and athletic field and want to ensure that our children are playing on the safest material available at the present time.

Since May of 2016, leaders of this group have had productive conversations with Mr. Hodge, Superintendent Kelley, the District 97 Board Facilities Advisory Committee and the Irving PTO. At present, the D97 Board is in conversation with the Park District of Oak Park, (and local soccer organizations who helped fund the turf field), about this matter. We appreciate the action taken by D97 and want to encourage the immediate replacement of our in-fill. We invite others in the community to learn more through the links in this document and to sign on in support.

As Irving parents and Oak Park residents, we are concerned because:

The rubber tire crumb in-fill is made of toxic chemicals. There are 96 potential chemicals involved, many of which are known carcinogens.

There is growing concern about potential links between turf fields and cancer cases in child athletes. We first learned of this link after watching the ESPN E60 segment on turf fields. (see link on page 3)

We now know there are alternatives to rubber tire crumbs. Just last year when parents voiced concern about crumb rubber, Nike Grind in-fill was installed for new fields at Julian and Brooks Middle Schools. Additional communities throughout the country are now utilizing alternatives.

The existing body of knowledge on the safety of crumb rubber is incomplete. Last year the EPA changed its stance on rubber tire crumb in-fill, saying there were no studies broad enough to determine that they are safe.

The turf is our primary green space at Irving. Our children spend hours a day on it, with the crumb rubber now pervasive inside our school and homes. We would like the rubber tire crumb in-fill to be removed immediately and replaced with the Nike Grind in-fill.

Signed:

Haley Gross

Matt Gross
Tim Smyth
Thao Sutter
Jason Koerner
Ron Lubelcheck
Natasha Neal
Alex Sutter
Norma Lopez
Gaylee Morgan
Karen Rothstein
Denise Frank
Joanne Smyth
Aurora Pineda
Douglas Chien
Jordan Frank
Gail Kulick
Michele Gurgas
Sue Kehias
Hector Estrada
Maya Zelio
Stephen Ruszczyk
Stephanie Estrada
Robert Wozniak
Susan Raphael
Daniel Anello
Robert McFadden
Krista Mikes
Bob Zort
Hooi Lim
Jason Sugita
Chris Ferrigno
Stephanie A. Bailey
Michael Wieland
Lisa Wieland
Carla McKeand
Brendan Short
Gavin Kearney
Tasha Kohl
Jen Trudell
Ronald Pierre
Linda Pierre
Vanessa Izar-McFadden
Sherri Hope
Natalie Draper
Adam Coppelman
Allison Coppelman

Ryan Mayers
Leah Rubin Mayers
Brittany Howell
Nate Howell
Laura Brown
Mark Brown

Information links:

Environmental Health Effects Research
<http://www.ehhi.org/artificial-turf>

Washington Post Article from September 2015
https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/artificial-turf-is-getting-a-closer-look-after-a-report-raises-safety-concerns/2015/09/22/fcf6a0ee-5649-11e5-abe9-27d53f250b11_story.html

ESPN E60 Segment on Turf Fields
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91svvfuF7iY>

PRNewsWire Article from June 2015
<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/the-cancer-list-keeps-growing-among-athletes-on-synthetic-turf-300099336.html>

Chicago Tribune Article from April 2016
<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-artificial-turf-tires-met-20160413-story.html>

Chicago Tribune Article from June 2015
<http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/oak-park/news/ct-oak-turf-fields-tl-0625-20150622-story.html>

EPA Website Concerning Research Underway
<https://www.epa.gov/chemical-research/federal-research-recycled-tire-crumb-used-playing-fields>

Further reading...
<http://www.synturf.org/crumbrubber.html>

To learn more please contact:
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