

Good afternoon St. John School,

I have some sad news that will lead into a major, awesome announcement.

Within the next week or so, we will be removing the huge pine tree behind the school. This tree has had an amazing life, providing enjoyment, shade, and pinecones for thousands of SJS students over many years. Canton Tree Service (Rocco Cammarata) will be doing the removal which will also include stump grinding.

We are removing this tree because St. John School is going to install an artificial turf field behind the school! The plan is for the turf field to run lengthwise from the side of the gym to the end of the grassy area near the sidewalk to the school. The field's width will go from the small playground to the end of the gym. Our hope is to create an approximately 20 yard by 40 yard field (with some additional space), which is just about 7500 square feet. This requires the removal of the tree, a massive amount of dirt, adding in a retaining wall (up to 3-4 feet in some parts) and a fence, and losing a bit of the parking lot.

We are excited that Joe Butler will serve as the General Contractor and his company, JMC Contracting, will do much of the work. 78 Sports and our main contact Keith Burke will install the actual field. Mr. Hall has done some design work and helped move this project forward along with Meg Butler and Jen Millington. These individuals' names are so familiar to all of us – they give and give and give because they are generous, and they have a love of St. John School. Thank you to Joe, Keith, Mr. Hall, Meg, Jen, and so many others.

We are excited for this field to be installed over the coming months. It will add so much to St. John School. As many of you know, that grassy area (if you can call it that) turns into a massive mud puddle many times throughout the year. This new field will open many possibilities to St. John School and continues our investment into the infrastructure of the school. While this project will be paid for out of the Capital Endowment of St. John School, we always appreciate donations to offset these costs. We will also be announcing some donation opportunities soon.

So, please join me in offering a prayer for the amazing tree (let's call it The Giving Tree) that has served St. John School for so many years as well as a prayer for the safety of this project.

Please let me know if you have any thoughts.

Chris