



Mayor Gavin Newsom
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*** Press Release ***

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Field Sharing Program Extended

Partnership Between Rec and Park and Public Schools Benefits All

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SAN FRANCISCO— A successful pilot program that allows San Francisco kids increased access to public school athletic fields was extended yesterday when the San Francisco Recreation and Park Commission approved an additional three months of a field sharing program between the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) and the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department.

The city's Board of Education approved the extension on May 11.

"Time and time again, we've heard from San Francisco families about their need for more access to athletic fields. During these tough economic times, we need creative solutions like the pilot program to allow our children to play, grow and learn important life skills," said Supervisor David Campos. Earlier this year, Supervisor Campos called for a hearing about shared use of the athletic fields before the Joint Committee of the Board of Supervisors and School District.

The program, implemented on a trial basis last fall at Lowell, O'Connell and Mission high schools, allows Recreation and Parks to assign athletic fields to community groups for a season-long rental. By incorporating public school fields into Recreation and Parks' permit system, the city is better able to meet the overwhelming demand for sports fields. The fields are only made available on the weekends and SFUSD retains nearly all the rental revenue, just under \$19,000 in three months last fall.

The City Fields Foundation proposed and facilitated the unique joint-use program as part of their efforts with the Recreation and Parks Department to eliminate the deficit of athletic fields for youth sports in San Francisco. For the past four years, City Fields and Recreation and Parks have created more than 60,000 hours of new playtime by renovating athletic fields with synthetic turf and lights, reorganizing Recreation and Parks permit and reservations system, and promoting increased public access to city athletic facilities.



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Last fall, the Recreation and Parks/SFUSD field sharing program provided 475 hours public playtime on public school athletic fields, allowing at least one youth league to play a complete season.

"This is a huge win all the way around," said Phil Ginsburg, general manger of the Recreation and Park Department. "The schools benefit from some additional permit income and our park users have additional venues available to them to get out and play."

The field sharing program will begin in September and last through November, after which, agency representatives will meet to jointly determine whether the pilot program was again successful and if there is potential to continue or expand the program on a long-term basis.

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