

# grass fields

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Wed 1/6/2021 3:41 PM

To: Alex Elvin <elvin@mvcommission.org>;

Cc: planningboard@oakbluffsma.gov <planningboard@oakbluffsma.gov>;

Hello all,

After a reminder about an upcoming MVC meeting came from a friend I thought it prudent to resubmit my letter from January 2019 "for the file" regarding the need for grass fields at MVRHS. After all this time has passed my thoughts haven't changed.

Grass is clearly the safest and best choice for our children, our community and the environment as a whole.

Respectfully,

Katie Carroll

Chilmark parent of an MVRHS senior and 2014 graduate

January 28, 2019

Dear MVRHS leaders,

How do you feel when you read this?

- Avoid use on very hot days
- Avoid use for passive activities (i.e. sitting, lounging, picnicking)
- Monitor young children to prevent accidental ingestion
- Always wear shoes on artificial turf
- Wash hands before eating, drinking, or adjusting mouth guard
- Clean cuts and abrasions immediately
- Brush hair thoroughly after play
- Remove and clean shoes and gear outside before getting in car
- At home, take off shoes and shake out children's equipment & clothes outside or over the garbage
- Shower immediately after playing on artificial turf

-Vacuum any infill that comes into your home

I'll be honest, I don't find this list very reassuring yet these are all tips for safer play on artificial turf as recommended by Mount Sinai's Children's Environmental Health Center, dated May, 2017. This list, among other noteworthy items, would need to be circulated among every community member that comes in contact with a synthetic turf field if you were to recommend moving forward with its installation.

After reading numerous articles about the pros and cons of grass vs. turf I cannot fathom why the idea of installing turf "fields" (quotes are used because I cannot see how something synthetic could every embody the qualities of a naturally grown sea of healthy green blades of grass) is even still on the table. Our kids should play on REAL GRASS fields; fields that are designed and maintained by trained groundskeepers. Maintenance seems to be the key downfall of the fields currently in use.

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We have a moral obligation to our children, aside from the numerous health related, environmental reasons and more, to act in their best interest and ensure the safety of their health and well-being and that of our community as a whole. When products with known risks of injuries from infection, high temperature and hardness are considered for installation we, as parents, community members, administrators and more, have an obligation to provide a safer alternative- GRASS.

Many have commented that the potential harm is minimal. The question we should be asking ourselves is how much harm is acceptable? With grass, most of this harm is avoidable.

As a parent of a current high school student, I urge you to support the installation of natural grass fields.

Thank you,  
Katie Carroll