

Dear Community Members,

Recently, there has been considerable interest in Durango High School's activities and athletic budget. More specifically, questions have been raised about the stadium renovation and related loan. Durango High School espouses lifelong values and principles, and promotes the development of the human spirit, mind, and body. DHS activities and athletics serve as a vehicle for developing these qualities, while fostering a safe, fun, and friendly environment for our students.

DHS is proud that a large percentage of our students participate in activities and athletics, with many of our students being recognized on and off the field for their academic and athletic accomplishments. Working with our outstanding faculty and coaching staff, our student athletes become well-rounded individuals, who benefit from a co-curricular and athletic philosophy that promotes fitness for life, personal and career exploration and healthy lifestyles.

Running an activities and athletics budget is a complex process. We're fortunate to provide a comprehensive set of co-curricular and extracurricular activities for our students. However, fundraising is an integral part of high school activities and athletics, especially for rural communities like Durango in which our teams regularly travel to the Front Range and across the western slope for competitions, events and activities. The district is committed to provide a high quality activities and athletics program, and we need joint support from parents, businesses and community sponsors to deliver on that vision.

To provide some background on the stadium renovation, when the Board of Education approved the DHS stadium loan in 2015, it was agreed upon that the District cover up to 50% of the stadium cost with the remaining amount coming from DHS-led fundraising efforts. To that end, during the 2018-2019 school year budgeting process in May 2018, it was communicated to the Athletic Director that the stadium payment would start being paid out of the athletic fund, with an additional \$100,000 coming in from the capital projects fund to offset the cost. Within the proposed budget, a \$100,000 goal for fundraising was budgeted. In January 2019 it was discussed that no fundraising had been deposited into the athletics fund and therefore the fundraising budget was reduced by \$50,000. The communication was made to the Athletics Director of this reduction and need for reduced spending. While the District has received generous support from outside donors during the current fiscal year, we have not fulfilled our stated obligation to the community of raising 50% of the stadium loan. For the 2018-2019 fiscal year, the district received approximately \$14,000 in advertising support for the stadium loan and \$0 from direct fundraising to assist with the repayment of the stadium renovation.

We are working together to ensure that the 2019-20 budget allocates funds to each program appropriately and equitably. We will be looking to policies to ensure that those items that should be covered by the athletics fund are - namely, coaching salaries/benefits, officials, game workers, some travel and lodging expenses. Moving ahead, we also are excited about continuing with some of the fundraising ideas that were discussed this past year. In hiring the new athletic director, the expectation of fundraising was a clear component of the job description, and we will be meeting with the new athletic director in early June to discuss fundraising initiatives that can be implemented as soon as

August 2019. At the same time, we appreciate the great support from our Booster Clubs and parents. As such, we look forward to increased engagement with our Booster Club partners on strategic, community-oriented and sustainable fundraising efforts that meet our Board of Education and community's expectation for the DHS stadium renovation loan repayment.

Presently, Durango High School has money available to cover any shortcomings with this year's activities and athletics budget. As a last resort, Durango High School may seek contributions from the 74 fund to cover any budgetary shortfall that the school cannot cover through other means. We do recognize that there were potential expenses mis-coded to the athletics fund that should have come from fundraising dollars and will be looking to reclassify those expenses. Communication will be made to the coaches if any such expenditures are found.

Sincerely,

Dan Snowberger  
Superintendent

Andy Burns  
Deputy Superintendent

Samantha Gallagher, CPA  
Director of Finance