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Uniondale High School breaks ground on new turf football field



Members of the Uniondale Schools administration along with members of the construction firm break ground on their new turf field on Thursday in Uniondale. Credit: Dawn McCormick

By **Carissa Kellman**

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Uniondale High School will become the latest recipient of a new artificial turf field and track.

Uniondale district officials and board members put shovel into dirt at a long-awaited groundbreaking ceremony Thursday afternoon that signaled the start of a facelift for the 74-year-old grass field.

"There has been a big push for this by the students and community members for a long time," Uniondale superintendent Monique Darrisaw-Akil said. "Athletes have used the same grassy field

since 1949. We are extremely excited to let the student-athletes know that their community supports and is rooting for them in all their athletic achievements.”

The \$3.85 million turf field and track is the last phase of a \$158 million bond that was approved by voters in 2018 that included expansion, renovation and upgrades around the district. The turf field construction is expected to be completed in December. The school's football team will play its home games at Cantiague Park in Hicksville this season while the boys and girls soccer teams will remain on-site at the school’s soccer field. The soccer teams will join the football team on the turf field next year.

“The students were overjoyed at the announcement of the new field,” athletic director Peter Cardone said. “This will only increase the excitement and participation levels in athletics here at Uniondale, which will have a positive impact on our students’ development. When you give students the facilities to excel, they will bring pride and positivity to the community. The effects of this will be monumental.”

The school also plans to update its locker and weight rooms by the end of 2024.

“This is a historic investment in the children of Uniondale,” Darrisaw-Akil said. “Every student deserves the best possible environment to grow and show their athletic abilities, and we are proud to deliver on that with this project.”

Three other Nassau high school football teams currently play their home games on grass fields - Glen Cove, Oyster Bay and Hempstead (Hempstead held a groundbreaking ceremony for its new artificial turf field and track on April 24). In Suffolk, there are nine teams: Amityville, Brentwood, Bellport, Glenn, Port Jefferson, Riverhead, Ward Melville, Wyandanch and Center Moriches.



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