

## Field opening marks new era for Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School



The storied history of Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School began a new chapter on October 1 as the Town, York Region District School Board, and community came together to mark the opening of a new artificial turf field at the school's new location.

This is the first academic year for students at the new Williams building, located on Spring Farm Road at Bayview Avenue, and they had plenty of reasons to celebrate as Mayor Tom Mrakas and school board officials formally dedicated the new sports facility.

?This new field is a testament to what we can achieve through strong partnerships and shared community vision,? said Mayor Tom Mrakas. ?It's more than just a place to stay, it's a space that brings people together, promotes active living, and supports the future of sport in Aurora.?

Ron Lynn, Chair of the York Region School Board, also highlighted the partnership between different levels of government in making the field a reality.

?We thank the Ministry for their funding support and are grateful to the Town of Aurora for their investment,? said Lynn. ?This partnership has made it possible to create a space that benefits our students and aligns with the goals of our Multiyear Strategic Plan and District Action Plan.?

The multiuse, multisport field is the latest such facility to open in the Town of Aurora, following the opening of another multi-sport artificial turf opened last month by St. Anne's School, York Region's only independent girls' school, and the Town of Aurora.

This newest field, however, is the first artificial turf field with permanent lining for lacrosse, making it ?a milestone for the sport locally,? said the Town.

?This multi-use field is a major addition to Aurora's recreation infrastructure, designed to support a wide range of sports, including senior soccer, football, and both men's and women's field lacrosse,? said the Town in a statement. ?It features bleachers, a scoreboard, and public washrooms, creating a welcoming and fully-equipped venue for athletes and spectators.

?The field will also serve as the primary home field for the Redbirds Lacrosse Club, further embedding lacrosse and other field sports into the community's athletic culture.?

This enthusiasm was shared by Paul Wilson, President of the Redbirds Lacrosse Club, who added, ?[The Redbirds are] pleased to partner with the Town of Aurora to increase awareness of the sport of lacrosse in Aurora and to help us grow Women's Lacrosse in the community. These new fields provide us with more places to play, allowing us to expand programming and host exhibition games. We're excited about the future of lacrosse in Aurora and beyond.?

Joining Mayor Mrakas at the opening ceremony were Newmarket-Aurora MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy, Ward 1 Councillor Ron Weese, Ward 4 Councillor Michael Thompson, and Ward 6 Councillor Harold Kim.

?This incredible facility will support a variety of sports, including soccer, football, and men's and women's field lacrosse,? said Gallagher Murphy. ?Congratulations to the Town of Aurora and the York Region District School Board on this exciting partnership that will give students, athletes, and our community a state-of-the-art space to enjoy for years to come.?

By Brock WeirEditorLocal Journalism Initiative Reporter