



Grant Park

Neighborhood Association

Dear Portland Public Schools and Portland Parks and Recreation:

The Grant Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA) is aware that PPS and PP&R are currently negotiating public access to the Upper Field at Grant Park/Grant High School. GPNA strongly encourages PPS and PP&R to allow casual community use of the Upper Field at Grant Park/Grant High School. The Association is thankful for this public asset and wants it to be available for free and casual (unscheduled) community use.

As you are aware, approximately 50% of the field is on public park property. Therefore, there is a long history of community use of this field. Unfortunately, since the addition of the softball field, the gates have been locked, eliminating unscheduled community access to an all-season space. We are asking that unscheduled public use be allowed during daytime hours (afternoon/early evenings, weekends, summers & Holidays) when the field is not in use by PPS students or other reserved use.

Casual (unscheduled) public access to the Upper Field is in line with PP&R's mission which states: *"...help Portlanders play - providing the safe places, facilities, and programs which promote physical, mental, and social activity."* However, the current scheduling system for use of this field does not fully support this mission as it is complex, cumbersome, cost prohibitive, and difficult to use. Also, the current situation with community members accessing the field by scaling the fence is unsafe and does not allow for equitable community use.

Concern has been voiced by PPS that vandalism is a primary concern of allowing more open access to the field. GPNA feels that having more community "eyes" on the field would act to reduce vandalism. Additionally, members of the neighborhood are willing and able to assist PPS and PP&R in promoting good stewardship of this valuable community asset. For example, calling the non-emergency line, Park Rangers, or PPS security when vandalism is occurring and publicizing public safety resources in the GPNA newsletter.

We are also hopeful that PPS, as a vital and valued component of our community, will work cooperatively with PP&R so that more robust healthy community access can be achieved. Please do not hesitate to ask if you would like more community input on this matter or if we could add helpful information to the current negotiations of public access.

Sincerely,

Grant Park Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 13102, Portland, OR 97