

November 9, 2004

Vincent Thompson
#196-04

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA OPENS NORTHEAST ATHLETIC SUPER SITE
FOR FOOTBALL, BASEBALL, TRACK, SOCCER, TENNIS AND FIELD HOCKEY
COMPETITIONS**

New Facility Will Serve Area Schools and Communities

PHILADELPHIA -- The School District of Philadelphia today officially completed Phase I of the Northeast Athletic Super Site at the Charles Martin Stadium for Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, Inc. (PIAA) competition. The new \$2.2 million facility will host Football, Baseball, Track, Soccer, Tennis and Field Hockey competition for all of the District's schools.

"Our students have shown their successes in the classroom and on the athletic field," said James Nevels, Chairman of the School Reform Commission. "And the Charles Martin Super Site, which is an amazing facility, is the perfect venue for our student athletes to participate in PIAA competition."

The newly refurbished facility is being funded through the District's \$1.5 billion Capital Improvement Plan that is posed to significantly change the physical plant of the entire District and launch one of the largest public works project in Philadelphia's recent history. As part of the plan, the District is renovating a total of five super sites throughout the City so area teams can play evening and playoff games and communities can utilize the state of the art athletic facilities. In addition to this site at Northeast High School, the other four super sites will be located at Germantown, Gratz, Bartram and South Philadelphia/Bok High Schools. The District plans to spend about \$23 million on the Super Site Initiative and will begin renovations at the Germantown, Gratz, Bartram and South Philadelphia/Bok High Schools during the 2005-2006 school year.

"This is a great day in the District's rich athletic history, and not just because we are opening a state of the art facility," said Paul Vallas, CEO of the School District of Philadelphia. "Yes, Super Sites give our students a great place to play, but it also offers our communities something that they can use and something that they can be proud of."

The District is in the middle of a \$1.5 billion, 5 year capital improvement plan. To date the District has broken ground on the Feltonville K-8 Campus, completed major renovations at the Miller School and the Overbrook Education Center, planning to begin construction on a new elementary school at G Street and Hunting Park, breaking ground on the new Microsoft High School of the Future and making hundreds of repairs and renovations in most of the District's schools. The District's more than 550 sports teams this school year include varsity, junior varsity and cadet sports. The District is participating in PIAA sports that range from traditional sports like boys and girls basketball, football, baseball and volleyball to new sports like rowing, golf and bowling. The District has an estimated 13,000 student athletes who play in sports during the course of a school year.

The Germantown, Gratz, Bartram and South Philadelphia/Bok Super Sites were chosen to provide students and communities easy access from public transportation, the ability to support multiple sporting venues, existing parking and a location that could be utilized by five or more District high schools. Most of the Super Sites will include the following new or refurbished components:

- Artificial turf fields for football, soccer, field hockey and baseball;
- Reconstruction and seeding of play and practice fields;
- Proper irrigation and drainage;
- All weather running tracks;
- Resurfaced tennis courts;
- Reconditioned or new fencing;

- Upgraded parking facilities;
- Increased ADA accessibility;
- Security and stadium lighting for evening games, tournaments and community activities; and
- Upgraded or new locker or field house facilities.

The second phase of the Northeast Athletic Super Site calls for the renovation or construction of the site's restrooms, locker rooms, press box, ticket booth, concession area, bleachers, lighting and stadium entrance. The second phase is scheduled to begin in the Spring of 2005.

Philadelphia public and charter schools have been a member of the PIAA since July 2003 but this school year is the first year the District is competing in statewide championship competition. Philadelphia is known as PIAA District XII. Each of the approximately 39 Philadelphia public high schools and 10 charter high schools are playing a variety of sports this year.

###