

# \$452,000 VIDEO SCOREBOARD TO BE INSTALLED

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Passing by Parkway North on a Friday night, the light from the brand-new sponsor-adorned video scoreboard hits drivers in the face. "It makes the games we have at North fun," Parkway North football player Devin Griffin said. "Being able to see yourself on the big screen makes you feel the same way as if you saw yourself at a Rams game."

Central will be installing the same high-tech video board in the near future as part of a January agreement with Kelly Sports Properties, yet many students, teachers -- and even coaches -- are unfamiliar of what this deal entails.

"I know we are getting a new scoreboard," junior football quarterback Mitchell Goldenberg said. "Other than that, I don't know too much about the situation."

The effects of a deal signed on Jan. 13 between the district and KSP are starting to be seen by the school community -- in a big way. All four high schools have, or will have, a \$452,000 video scoreboard (cost plus installation) like the one at North built by the end of the calendar year.

According to Mike Roth, district athletic and activities director, the contract signed with KSP has many intended goals: to create a more collegiate feel athletically through use of scoreboards, media guides and programs; to provide more equity in all activities and athletics; and to aid in the search financial partners.

"The scoreboards are being paid for by partnerships we develop out in the community," Roth said. "Presently, we're partners with title sponsors Maryville University, Mercy Hospitals, Signature Orthopedics and TJ's Pizza."

There are four different levels of advertisers, from sponsors donating \$40,000 a year for three to five years down to partners with smaller investments in the district. Each sponsor tier offers different advantages to a business.

"The top level of advertisements is a title sponsor," Roth said. "They will get a static sign on the scoreboard, we'll run video commercials, PA commercials. And the more they invest, the more visibility they'll get. Along with the scoreboard advertising and the commercials we also have print media that we hand out -- the game-day programs, the media guides for all the teams -- and all of our partners will be noted in those publications also."

For the fall season, these media guides have not materialized (as of press time), and only a few sports received game-day program cards. Roth attributes these missing items to logistical difficulties of starting a new agreement with a new company and not to a lack of district partnerships.

However, since only three businesses of the 10 allocated spaces for title sponsors have signed with the district at this time, the purchase of the scoreboards from Daktronics Inc. must come from a different source.

"Initially the student activities fund, a fund for capital projects, is fronting the money for the scoreboard," Patty Bedborough, district chief financial officer, said. "As the sponsorships are aligned and as they start paying, then that will actually pay for the scoreboard."

Despite the logistical challenges as the district's partnership with KSP gets rolling, in the mind of John Theobald, athletic and activities director, the deal with Kelly Sports was a no-brainer.

"Mostly the return that we will get, and obviously the scoreboards, I think will be a huge asset to the schools," Theobald said. "To have that in place, to have the money to be able to do that through this partnership was an easy sell; then couple that with the fact that it will continue to bring revenue in for us for years to come, and to develop good partnerships with local businesses, it made the decision easy."

Kim Carr, a business teacher and a mom, believes that the deal provides a unique opportunity for this public school district.

"One of my kids goes to Marquette and plays three sports," Carr said. "For football, there was over \$500 of fundraising needed so he could play, not to mention equipment that we needed to buy. If there is an opportunity for our school to drive prices down for things like that, I think it's great."

Contrary to Carr, student body president and three-sport varsity athlete Michael Rembold believes the deal is unnecessary.

"I am very strongly against the Kelly Sports marketing deal," Rembold said.

"While media guides and a scoreboard are cool things, I think there are better things that we can put our money toward."

Rembold notes several deficiencies in facilities he sees in his playing and spectating around campus.

"Our pool has pretty much been the same for the past 40 or 50 years -- it's easily the worst pool in Parkway," Rembold said. "We have showers that don't work. The only true acceptable locker room we have is the varsity basketball locker room."

Rembold also mentioned that, since part of the deal is advertisements being played during games, the marching band also will have less time to perform, which he sees as a detriment to the game-day experience.

Rembold, and other students who have knowledge of the agreement with KSP through some of their organizations, question the use of taxpayer money for the initial costs of the scoreboards.

Although the fund fronting this purchase is financed by taxpayers, Bedborough said she has full confidence in the district finding the remaining partnerships to reimburse the money being used.

"I know they are working diligently to gather more sponsorships," Bedborough said. "We are hopeful that we will have them funded by, at least paid for, by the end of the second year. Then revenue can start going back to the schools; but right now we are uncertain of that timeline."

The responsibility of finding advertisers lies on KSP, but district administrators have been in contact with businesses who have previously worked with the district and other corporate connections.

"We help Kelly Sports find the companies we want to partner with," Bedborough said. "Then Kelly Sports actually helps to provide the information on how the advertising will work, and then in the end they get paid a commission for that."

For the first \$1 million in sponsorships collected, 30 percent goes to Kelly Sports in commission, leaving Parkway with \$666,667 in revenue. If district revenue from sponsorships is between \$666,667 and \$1 million, then 15 percent commission goes to Kelly Sports. An increase in revenue above \$1 million leads to a bigger decrease in commission for KSP.

It will be necessary for the district to raise funds well above that \$1 million to repay the costs of the video scoreboards; two of the three remaining scoreboard installations will begin as football season ends.

"The plan is for Central High and West High to begin construction in the middle of November," Roth said. "So hopefully the video boards will be up working at Central and West by the spring seasons."

Theobald, however, recognizes the chance for slight delay due to the amount of remodeling needed on the current scoreboard site. Also, the location of the scoreboard will require the road entering school to be shut down during construction.

"Towards the middle of November they're going to be working on the press box, which is the first phase," Theobald said. "The scoreboard itself will begin construction in December. We're going to have to shut down the main drive for a few days. We're going to try and schedule that over our winter break and have the scoreboard completely up and ready to use for all of our spring sports."

Once installed, the scoreboard may require the community to get adjusted. "My uncle who lives a mile and a half away can hear the scoreboard when games are being played," Parkway North student Caleb Rosen said.

As part of the agreement, KSP has also set up athletic websites for each high school for schedules, rosters, biographies of coaches and athletes, and space for sponsor advertisements.

Kelly Sports Properties refused multiple requests for comment.

Contributing reporting by ALEX LANSON, PIPER ROTHER and ROBERT SHIFRIN

**KEEPING SCORE: \$452,000 BOARD**

**\$431,000 FOR SCOREBOARD PLUS INSTALL**

**7** scoreboards is the same price as:

- 4,520 Pearson Biology Textbooks
- 1 teacher for 9 years
- 1,614 Chromebooks
- 3,930 Customized Nike Roshes
- 86 Yamaha golf carts
- 1,130 Nexus 9 Tablets
- 4.7 million Scantron Sheets
- 3 green buses
- 1 Hover boost for every student

COLTS 27 9:00 GUEST 14  
3 DOWN TO GO BALL ON 3 QTR 3  
3 T.O.L. T.O.L.

3 green buses 1 Hover boost for every student

Infographic by ALEX LANSON and PIPER ROTHER

# Does it ADD up?

## DISTRICT ENTERS EXCLUSIVE ADIDAS PARTNERSHIP

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The school board has recently approved a deal with Adidas, in collaboration with Winning Streak, that means most Parkway sports teams will be outfitted in Adidas uniforms for the next five years.

"I guess there's perks, because they're kicking back, getting money and giving lots of stuff to us because of the contract with them," fitness teacher and girls soccer coach Megan Meyer said. "But, even then, people are saying, 'I'd rather do what I want to do.'"

The deal, voted on by the Board of Education, will result in discounts of 40 percent off on uniforms and apparel, and 35 percent on footwear for all district athletic programs through the 2020 school year. Additionally, the four high schools will each benefit from a \$12,000 free product rebate annually.

The start-up costs for this endeavor are to come from district student activities funds, and teams will be put on a rotation to receive new uniforms. Specific information about this rotation or which teams will get new uniforms each season or year has yet to be decided.

The deal was introduced for approval by a committee of high school athletic directors and Mike Roth, district athletic and activities director, who received bids from several companies.

Among these were BSN Sports, Johnny Macs Sporting Goods, Fisher's Pro Line Sports, Winning Streak and The Graphic Edge. Winning Streak was rated 32 points higher on a 100-point rubric than all other companies who submitted bids based on numerous factors, including timeliness, level of service, and value.

John Theobald, athletic and activities director, said that the deal will have a cost-effective impact and will allow the district to purchase items at a considerably cheaper cost than before.

"I hope ultimately we will give families an opportunity to save money," Theobald said. "In the past, every team was on their own; we did not have enough money to really support teams in that regard."

While the deal does cover most school-sponsored athletics, for some, Adidas lacks product specific to the sports, such as swim, cheer and dance. However, in absence of suitable swimwear or dance outfits, Winning Streak will adequately outfit teams with hoodies, t-shirts, jackets and more, and leave those sports to decide their own brand for sportswear.

Other teams purchase their own personal uniforms rather than check them out each year to individual athletes.

"Certain sports, tennis for example, buy their own uniforms every year because they want to keep them every year," Theobald said. "We will highly encourage everyone to purchase Adidas uniforms."

These anomalies, for instance, are the reason why many are opposed to a brand-specific deal.

Phil Steele, a representative for Johnny Macs, a local sporting company who submitted an unsuccessful bid to the district, believes that the district locking itself into a brand-specific deal creates unnecessary challenges.

"When you lock every sport and every team into one supplier, it's generally not a great situation," Steele said. He adds that a "one uniform fits all" model doesn't work for such a diverse collection of sports.

Coaches and athletes alike have voiced similar concerns. Senior Isabel Mosley, the captain of the girls tennis team, says that a mandatory transition to Adidas would interfere with their plans for next year.

"I don't like it, because it limits the options for other teams," Mosley said. "I can see why it'd be nice to have a uniform look, but it'd be helpful to have more options."

Though there will be an effort to progress this winter with the purchase of new uniforms for some teams, the deal will not be fully in effect until spring, as orders for those uniforms will be placed during the winter months.

Winning Streak has partnerships throughout the country, including locally with Maryville University and Lindenwood University. According to Chris Braun, president of Winning Streak, the size of the district was part of the incentive to form a partnership.

"I think Parkway is an excellent school district," Braun said. "They have an excellent track record with their athletic department, and it's the type of situation that makes us feel really good to be partnered with them."

Contributing reporting by ALEX LANSON, PIPER ROTHER and ROBERT SHIFRIN

Winning Streak deal by the numbers

- 5 YEAR DEAL
- 40% DISCOUNT ON SPORTSWEAR
- 32 POINTS HIGHER IN RANKING THAN ANY OTHER BID
- \$262K IN ESTIMATED DISTRICT-WIDE SAVINGS