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A Welcome Upgrade

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The home of the Dayton Flyers football team is set to receive a $2.6-million upgrade. Renovations to Welcome Stadium will begin in June with funding from the state of Ohio and Kettering Medical Center, Dayton Public Schools announced today.

The University of Dayton, as owner of UD Arena, and Dayton Public Schools, as owner of Welcome Stadium, have each made their facilities available to the other through agreements that allow for mutual facility access.

"This is a great opportunity to continue UD's strong collaboration with the Dayton Public Schools," said UD President Daniel J. Curran. "We have served the Dayton community with exceptional sports facilities. The district's Welcome Stadium, with completion of these final renovations and upgrades, will be second to none. We're proud to call it home for the Dayton Flyers football team."

For nearly 60 years, Welcome Stadium has served as the sports gateway to the city of Dayton. The 12,000-seat facility has been home to University of Dayton football, Dayton Public Schools football and track, the Ohio High School Athletic Association track and field championships, regional and state semifinal football playoffs and other community events.

The state of Ohio has awarded a $1.6-million grant to Dayton Public Schools primarily for exterior repairs and renovations to the stadium. This 2008 grant is the second state grant in two years for stadium upgrades. The school district received $1 million in 2006 for safety improvements, painting and upgraded seating.

Kettering Medical Center and its partner physicians, the school district's long-established sports medicine partner, have pledged an additional $1 million to replace the 11-year-old field with state-of-the-art turf and to purchase other needed equipment.

"The schools' budget crisis dictates creative solutions to tough problems, and this announcement today shows what we can do in Dayton if people get together and pull in the same direction," said Dayton Public Schools Superintendent Percy Mack.

"This funding will ensure that Welcome Stadium will serve future generations of athletes and fans. It's a great opportunity for the Dayton community. Welcome Stadium is an important asset that belongs to the citizens of Dayton through their school system," he said.

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