



# MINNESOTA VIKINGS

## NEWS RELEASE

9520 Viking Drive • Eden Prairie MN 55344 • [www.vikings.com](http://www.vikings.com)

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CONTACTS:

Brad Madson (Minnesota Vikings)

(952) 828-6590

[madsonb@vikings.nfl.net](mailto:madsonb@vikings.nfl.net)

Libby Turner-Opanga (LISC)

(651) 265-2285

[eturner@lisc.ort](mailto:eturner@lisc.ort)

## **VIKINGS, TWIN CITIES LISC HELP SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL GET A NEW FIELD HOUSE**

*Urban athletic complex goes from "Worst" to "World Class"*

**MINNEAPOLIS** - Minneapolis' South High School is celebrating the renewal of their much-maligned athletic facilities. After suffering the notoriety of being deemed the "worst athletic field in the city," in 2007 by the Minneapolis Star Tribune, they can now boast a world-class complex thanks in part to generous support from Twin Cities Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and the Minnesota Vikings through the NFL's "Grass Roots" organization.

**Youth athletes, community leaders, the Minnesota Vikings and Twin Cities LISC will recognize the completion of the new building with a Community Celebration Kick-Off on Tuesday, September 29, from 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Noteworthy names scheduled to attend the celebration at South High School's Les Barnard Field (3131 - 19th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN) include District 62A's Representative Jim Davnie, and Vikings rookie standouts WR Percy Harvin, DB Asher Allen and LB Jasper Brinkley.**

The need for a field house at South High has been on the radar of local high school sports enthusiasts for some time. Over the years, the field has been heavily used to support practices and games for four football teams, two soccer teams, two track teams, and serves as the location for daily physical education classes. The field was also made available to local community groups for use, but the lack of running water and with no rest rooms it was an unappealing option for most. South's fans and athletes alike were suffering. The "Friends of South High School" Foundation worked to raise money for four years, and came up with half of the dollar amount needed for the project. The NFL Grass Roots program, Twin Cities LISC and the Minnesota Vikings arrived just in time with the balance, and there will undoubtedly be a lot to cheer about at the South High Homecoming on October 9.

LISC and the NFL contributed \$50,000 toward the total cost of \$100,000 for the new facility. The LISC/NFL Grass Roots partnership has supported the development six sports fields across Minnesota including Duluth, Minneapolis and St. Paul in the past several years.

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"We are so happy to be a part of this terrific program," said Twin Cities LISC Executive Director Andriana Abariotes, "Our organization is committed to helping build and sustain strong communities. Bringing this project to fruition fits right in with our mission. This facility will help hundreds of students and staff to enjoy a state of the art sports complex for many generations to come. It's a tremendous boost to the school and entire surrounding community."

"To make this happen requires a lot of people to pitch in," stated Lester Bagley, Minnesota Vikings' Vice President of Public Affairs / Stadium Development. "This is our sixth venture with LISC and the NFL's Grass Roots program to improve fields and facilities to give children an improved place to play. The "Friends of South High School" are such a committed group of volunteers who care about the youth of the neighborhood and have been terrific to work with."

At 1,176 square feet, the new field house is an impressive new addition. Featuring ceramic tile throughout, new restrooms, polished concrete in the new concession area, ample storage for field maintenance and athletic equipment, and plenty of running water, South's athletes, friends and fans of the "Gallant Tigers" will enjoy these first-class amenities for many years ahead.

### **About The NFL Youth Football Fund / Grassroots Program**

The NFL Grassroots Program is part of the NFL Charities Youth Football Fund (YFF), a \$150 million effort of the NFL and its teams in partnership with the NFL Players Association, to ensure youth across the country have the opportunity to enjoy the game of football. Since 1998, the NFL Grassroots Program has provided \$25 million to help community organizations build, or rebuild, more than 200 youth fields in 60 cities nationwide.

Through the YFF, many NFL youth programs such as NFLHS.com and Coach of the Week have been developed, providing youth with opportunities to learn the game of football, get physically fit and stay involved in productive after-school activities with adult mentors.

Innovative and effective youth football programs have resulted from teaming with organizations like LISC on the NFL Grassroots program. The league's National Youth Football Partners also include the Amateur Athletic Union, American Youth Football, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Jewish Community Centers Association, National Police Athletic League, National Recreation & Park Association, Pop Warner Little Scholars and YMCA of the USA.

### **About LISC**

Since its founding in 1980, LISC has invested over \$9 billion nationally in grants, loans and equity, leveraging \$27.7 billion in total development. This has translated into 243,660 affordable homes and apartments, 35.7 million square feet of retail and community space, 154 child care centers for over 16,000 children, 113 schools financed for 46,805 students, and 205 playing fields renovated for 410,000 youth across the country.

In the Twin Cities, LISC has supported the creation of over 8,700 affordable homes and apartments, 1.3 million square feet of commercial and community facilities, and a strong industry of nearly 50 community-based development organizations serving neighborhoods and communities across the seven-county metropolitan region. To date, over \$370 million has been invested by LISC through grants, loans and equity to community-based partners. In turn, these investments have leveraged over \$1.2 billion in total development locally. For more information, visit [www.tclisc.org](http://www.tclisc.org).

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