

March 10, 2008

Sarasota County Commission, School Board kick off Soccer Complex

At most dedication ceremonies officials cut a ribbon or toss a shovel full of dirt. Members of the Sarasota County Commission and the School Board of Sarasota took a different approach to dedicating the county's latest recreational facility — they kicked soccer balls.

Sarasota County Commissioner Paul Mercier, Parks and Recreation General Manager John McCarthy, School Board Chair Kathy Kleinlein, School Board members Carol Todd and Caroline Zucker and student athletes kicked soccer balls into a net to officially open the Tatum Ridge Soccer Complex at Tatum Ridge Elementary School, 4100 Tatum Road, Sarasota.

The 9 a.m. dedication was the culmination of a process that officially began with a June 2005 interlocal agreement between Sarasota County Government and the School Board of Sarasota for the construction and use of the complex. At the ceremony, the school's Tatum Terrific Singers led the program with a rendition of "Bright Happy Day." Mercier and Kleinlein spoke about the project as an ideal example of how county-school board partnerships benefit students, families and the community. After the goal-kicking celebration moment, student soccer players took to the field to demonstrate their skills.

The 8-acre complex includes three youth soccer fields (two lighted), a recreation play area, a pavilion shelter, a concession building and restrooms, a lighted walking path and a new parking lot. The project team included BRPH Architects/Engineers; Jensen and Group, Engineering Consultants; and David W. Johnston Associates, Landscape Architects. Sarasota County Government departments involved in the project included Parks and Recreation, Facilities Construction and Facilities Services, in coordination with Sarasota County Schools Construction Services.

MEDIA NOTE-A photo of the dedication is attached to this release. (L to R): County Parks and Recreation General Manager John McCarthy, School Board members Carol Todd, Kathy Kleinlein and Caroline Zucker, County Commissioner Paul Mercier and student athletes kick soccer balls to dedicate the Tatum Ridge Soccer Complex. A hi-res version is available upon request.