

For Immediate Release  
Monday, April 7, 2025  
Contact: Mary Whitrock, Superintendent  
Ripon Area School District  
whitrockm@ripon.k12.wi.us  
(920) 748-4600

### Ingalls Field Enters New Era

Ripon, WI – Ingalls Field will enter a new era as Ripon College’s new Hopp Stadium spurs an official end to the long-standing agreement between the District and College. The agreement, which dates back to 1967, created an option for both organizations to use and maintain the field. With the opening of Hopp Stadium, Ripon College made their final payment under the agreement and notified the District to officially release its reversionary interest in Ingalls Field. This marks an important historic moment for both schools.

A meeting was held on January 10, 2025, to review reciprocal use of facilities and consider options moving forward. Though nothing was formalized with regards to future use of other’s facilities such as the tennis courts and track, the two main options discussed included: using each other's facility rental agreements when necessary rather than a more formal cost sharing approach as outlined in the previous agreement; or entering a new agreement for continued reciprocal use of each other’s facilities with no fees being exchanged. The discussion is timely as Ripon College continues to invest in its facilities and the Ripon Area School District looks ahead to consider needed repairs to Ingalls Field.

In 2020, the District and the College, under the agreement which divided costs with two-thirds being the District’s responsibility and one-third being the College's responsibility, upgraded the turf field by replacing the surface and installing a shock pad layer, with the next turf replacement projected for sometime around 2035. In the near future, the track surface will

need to be replaced. The track went from cinders to seal flex in 1984 and it has been refurbished numerous times. With the close of the Ingalls Field Agreement, the District will look to fund the project through its the Long-Term Capital Improvement Trust Fund (Fund 46), ensuring the District's athletic facilities remain safe and attractive. At the end of every school year, the District is allowed to put any remaining funds into this Fund 46 for future capital projects.

Ingalls Field, formerly known as Ingalls Park, retains a prominent history in the City of Ripon. For decades, it has hosted both Ripon High School and Ripon College student athletic events, particularly football, track, and, more recently, soccer. The land was donated to Ripon College in 1889 and sold to the City of Ripon in 1939 with the understanding that the property would be maintained and kept usable and that the College would still have rights to use it for athletic competitions. In January of 1967, the City of Ripon transferred the deed to the Joint Common School District No.1, now known as the Ripon Area School District, with the same stipulation until such a time when the College might have its own stadium. In 2001, a formal agreement between Ripon College and the Ripon Area School District provided that the costs of improvements, once approved, would be borne one-third by Ripon College and two-thirds by the Ripon Area School District.

In 1980, Ingalls Field was in disrepair and a group of volunteers called the "7:00 a.m. Booster Club," led by Warren Sherman, Bill Manzer and Art Muenster, announced their intention of raising \$175,000 to build a new locker room, a new press box, new bleachers and add lights. Since then, the group has completed over 41 projects including bleachers, lights, sprinkler systems, football field excavation, a new entrance, a storage garage, a scoreboard, college and high school signs, a security system, and the Voysey Building updates. Community

members have donated over 4,000 hours to work on the projects and well over three million dollars in materials and equipment.

“Ingalls Field, the Ripon Area School District and Ripon High School have been part of the College's shared history for the last 85+ years," said President Folsie, President of Ripon College. "We have valued this partnership and remain steadfast in our commitment to supporting the athletic and recreational needs of our community,”

Ripon Area School District Athletic Director Vince Propson shared “as the District moves forward into a new chapter for Ripon athletics, we want to honor the legacy of Ingalls Field and the countless memories it has provided for our student-athletes, coaches, and community members. The District is excited for the opportunities ahead and remains committed to providing top-tier facilities for students to train and compete. Ingalls Field will continue to be a cornerstone of the District’s athletic programs and we look forward to preserving its rich history while embracing the future of Ripon sports.”

“This change signals wonderful growth for Ripon College and that is always very good for the District and the Ripon community. The historical partnership served a wonderful purpose for many years. The District looks forward to refreshing Ingalls Field in the years to come which will likely include more tiger logos and additional black and orange branding,” noted Ripon High School Principal Bill Kinziger.

Any comments or questions, please contact Mary Whitrock at (920) 748-4600 and Elizabeth Taft at [tafte@ripon.edu](mailto:tafte@ripon.edu) or 748-8365.

###