Funding concept leads to lighting installation

When someone has a good idea, it is sometimes referred to as a light going on in his or her head. A good idea by one high school parent booster was enough to light up an entire football field.

There are five high schools in Illinois School District 211. Three of the district's schools have lighting systems that were purchased with money raised by parent booster clubs. According to Steven East, director of purchasing and facilities for District 211, when the district looked into the possibility of getting lights for its Hoffman Estates High School, one of the boosters came to East with an idea. The booster does engineering work with Sprint, a global communications provider, and made the recommendation about a possible deal between Sprint and the school district.

East contacted Sprint about the concept and District 211 was able to strike a 10-year agreement with Sprint in which Sprint paid for four light towers as well as any electric bills associated with the use of those towers. The contract also includes two 5-year options. As part of the contract, Sprint also handles all maintenance on the light towers. In exchange, District 211 allowed Sprint to place a cellular antenna at the top of one of the light towers.

According to East, the cellular antenna still had to comply with village zoning laws and construction regulations. In other words, Sprint did not circumvent any state or local rules by getting permission to use Illinois School District 211 was able to strike a 10-year agreement with Sprint in which Sprint paid for four light towers as well as any electric bills associated with the use of those towers.

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