

# Southside shuts down sports fields

■ School searching for spots for its teams to practice.

**CONCERN** on the  
**SOUTHSIDE**

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Star-Gazette

Southside High School's athletic fields will be closed indefinitely until the state Department of Health can conduct more tests on the areas.

In a 7-2 vote, the Elmira school board decided that it was best to "err on the side of caution" and shut down the fields despite findings by the state thus far that indicate Southside is safe.

"The athletic programs will continue," said Walter M. Badeau, acting board president. "It's just a matter of finding fields for the teams to practice on."

Robert E. Donahue, who voted against the measure with Paul Vincent, said he felt comfortable with those findings and voiced his concern over interrupting fall sports.

But most board members felt they should suspend the use of the fields for now

because the state has not tested the athletic fields as extensively as the school building.

The school board also:

■ Voted to adopt policies against hazing, harassment and threats of violence.

■ Voted to merge the boys swimming teams of Elmira Free Academy and Southside High as well as the boys swimming teams of Broadway Middle School and Ernie Davis Middle School.

While debating whether to close the fields, Donahue pointed out that the football team spends more time at McNaught Field than it does on the Southside field. But board members Susan J. Skidmore and Cynthia J. Henbest countered that they did not know whether McNaught Field was safe either, because that site was never tested.

McNaught Field, which is between Maple Avenue and Moore Parkway along Miller Pond, also was closed. The board will ask the state to test McNaught Field.

See **SOUTHSIDE/4A**

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Sun, Apr 14, 2019