

PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF ADVENTURE PLAYGROUNDS AND OUTDOOR CLASSROOMS

Background

Adventure playgrounds and outdoor classrooms enhance the learning and recreation experience for students and staff. The cost of site preparation, installation, and equipment for these areas is typically borne by the school. The Maintenance Department will complete site preparation on a cost recovery basis.

Site preparation normally consists of stripping the turf, excavating and levelling the site, providing drainage, installing retaining curbs and filling with wood fiber fall protection or other safety surfacing. Depending on the setting and the intent of the installation, other influences may also need to be considered such as, but not limited to, arboricultural assessment for tree hazard mitigation, tree and stump removal, access for construction and ongoing maintenance, security, etc.

The approval of the Facilities Department is required prior to installation of any equipment on school sites regardless of the funding source. This will ensure that the equipment meets District safety requirements, is properly installed, is added to the preventive maintenance schedules, does not conflict with underground utilities and is recorded on site record drawings. Once the site preparation and installation is complete, the school will be invoiced.

There may be potential for schools to apply for grants through outside sources. Municipalities may have grants to assist the school with site preparation, installation and/or purchase costs. Application for the grant should be submitted to the applicable department of the municipality, with a copy to the School District Facilities Department. If the school receives a grant from the municipality, a copy of approved grant letter should be forwarded to the Facilities Department. There may also be a provincial grant the district can apply for when adventure playgrounds need replacement.

Procedures

1. Schools should contact the Maintenance Department to discuss location, layout and recommended suppliers prior to submitting a Service Request.
2. Principals are to submit requests for playground installations using the Playground Installation Request Form. The link to this form can be found within the Facilities section of the Admin Handbook. This form can also be used for requesting an outdoor classroom.
3. The Request Form and a site sketch of the proposed layout should be attached to a new Service Request in Asset Planner. See Instructions for School-Funded Projects in the Admin Handbook – Facilities Section. Information required to purchase the equipment, once approved by Maintenance Operations should be forwarded to the

- Purchasing Department by the Principal or designate. Information regarding natural play elements, irrespective of source, must be shared with Maintenance and Facilities Departments for approval in advance of ordering or acquisition.
4. Facilities and Maintenance will assess the proposal and if there are any concerns with respect to the proposed siting, safety, materials, equipment, or ongoing maintenance, they will consult with the Principal.
 5. If approved, the Maintenance Department will coordinate site preparation with the Principal and if applicable, the Parent Advisory Council.
 6. Installation of equipment or materials may only be done by either the preapproved equipment supply company or the Maintenance Department. Prior approval through the District Contracting Out Committee is required for all contracted work. If this is an install by the Maintenance Department, this should be indicated on the request on the understanding that the cost of installation of equipment will be invoiced to the school for payment from school funds.
 7. Playgrounds and outdoor classrooms must be fully inspected and approved by Maintenance staff prior to the playground or outdoor classroom being opened to students.
 8. Schools wishing to investigate or provide natural elements play spaces must contact the Assistant Director, Maintenance Operations or designate before proceeding with any related activity. The Assistant Director, Maintenance Operations or designate will discuss / review your proposal and provide guidelines for consideration.
 9. Donated or grant money amounts used towards the cost of the outdoor play space equipment needs to be provided to the Finance Department as this expense will be captured and capitalized on the School District financial records.

Reference: Section 65, 85, School Act
Form 565-1 Approval Request – Adventure Playground
Form 565-2 Technical Approval of Proposed Adventure Playground Equipment Installation
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