
Facilities Department

Energy & Waste Management • Environmental Health & Safety
Furniture & Moves • Grounds • Maintenance • Planning

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Playground Equipment Acquisition Installation and Maintenance STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) supports the acquisition and installation, updating or relocation of playground equipment at various school sites. Through the application of these standards for the implementation and maintenance of these amenities, safe, responsible and entertaining playgrounds can be achieved.

Who can spearhead the effort to acquire and install a playground?

The process for acquisition and installation of a playground may be initiated by any interested group, such as a school parent-teacher organization. If the school determines that the playground meets the mission of the school, the school principal formally becomes the applicant for approval.

What is the process for getting approval to acquire and install a playground?

In order to create a playground, the following steps must be taken prior to planning a safe play environment for children;

- School leadership contacts the Manager of Facility Planning (Tom Parent, tom.parent@spps.org) to inform of interest in creating/updating a playground.
 - Facility Planning can provide a multitude of support services for the design and planning phase of a playground, including background site plan drawings, preliminary design services (at discretion of the Manager), information on satisfactory playground equipment installations at various school sites, and identification of potential site-specific pitfalls.
- The playground stakeholders (school leadership and the organizing body, if applicable) achieve consensus in the creation of:
 - A statement from the school principal supporting the proposal;
 - A description of the equipment proposed for acquisition and installation (should include sales brochures, specifications, etc. when possible);
 - A site plan, drawn to scale, showing location for equipment and equipment layout/drawing;
- The Facilities Department will review the proposal of the equipment and the installation plan. The following minimum criteria will be used in this review and evaluation:
 - How well the equipment meets durability, maintenance and play value standards;

- Suitability of proposed site location of installation;
- Handicapped accessibility;
- Whether or not the proposed method of installation meets the general criteria outlined herein.
- After review of the proposal, the Facility Planning Manager will notify the building administrator of approval of the equipment and installation or indicate the necessary adjustments to be made to secure approval.
- If the proposal includes installation by individual(s) other than an equipment vendor, a description of qualifications and background of installers is required. Any party installing equipment on school district property must provide insurance naming the district as additional insured or must indemnify and waive all liability on the part of the district. In addition, a performance bond and labor material payment bond is to be provided if a vendor or contractor is installing the equipment.
- The Facilities Department assumes responsibility for ongoing maintenance and repair (not to include replacement) of playground equipment located at school sites and reserves the right to approve all equipment and installation plans for new acquisitions, modifications, or equipment relocations.

What are the costs to acquire and install a playground?

- Costs for purchase and installation will vary tremendously based on the size and equipment installed. Planning groups assume responsibility for all costs for design, purchase and installation in their funding program.
- The group providing the playground equipment must formally transfer the equipment to the school district in the form of a gift. This is done by submitting a consent agenda item at the Board of Education meeting. The building administrator should contact their district Executive Director (Academics) to facilitate this process.

What are the district general guidelines for a playground installation?

- All designs shall comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Consumer Product Safety Commission Guidelines.
- The installation must comply with any other requirement deemed necessary by the Facilities Department to meet the specific needs of any particular site. The finished condition of the site is to be equal to or better than the preconstruction condition.
- All underground utilities must be marked prior to any work occurring on site. Call Gopher State One Call (651.454.0002) at least 48 hours prior to start of construction and they will mark the location of buried utilities for free.
- Depending on the location and existing conditions at the site, the proposed installation may be impractical or cost prohibitive due to site drainage, vegetation or other infrastructure that would require modification due to the installation. These improvements and/or corrections will be the responsibility of the site, and any costs associated with this work must be included in the funding for the installation. Under no circumstances should it be assumed that these costs will be borne by the District.
- Installation is to be done by qualified craftspeople.
- Installation of equipment should have necessary concrete footings for durability and safety.

- Playground components are to be made of steel with weather resistant coatings, including vinyl cladding.
- Installations are to include a suitable border around the perimeter of the equipment location. The top of the border should be minimum eight inches above adjacent grade level to contain the fill material. The border must be properly anchored into the soil for durability.
- Play area should be filled with an impact-absorbing material approved by the Facilities Department. Play area is to be filled to within four inches of the top of the border material, except as required by accessibility standards.
- A copy of all plans, specifications, warranties and playground equipment manuals is to be provided to the Facilities Department for permanent filing.
- After installation, the Facilities Department will provide inspection, maintenance and repair of the playground equipment at appropriate intervals.
- If, at any point, questions of safety or unforeseen conditions arise STOP THE WORK and contact Facility Planning. Safety is always the first priority.

Please feel free to call the Facilities Department One-Stop 651.744.1800 with any questions!