

CSAC Subcommittee Meeting – Playground Renewal  
April 2, 2024  
5:00PM – 6:00PM

Invited Guests from WCDSB:  
Jeff Admans and Amanda Asher

CSAC Members:  
Jessica Tomasz  
Fidelia Otokhina  
Laurie Geschi  
Kendra Duench (Principal)

Regrets from Optional Invitees:  
Catherine Brindley  
Renita Dsouza  
Sara Szucs

The group posed questions of the invited WCDSB guests based on their expertise in the area of School Property Planning.

**Q1. There are varied criteria for different grant applications including whether the applicant must be a non-profit. Is there a charitable organization number that would be applicable?**

The board has a charitable organization number. Could depend on each Grant issuer or organization's definition of 'non-profit'. Grant applications could be from the charitable organization John Sweeney, a part of the WCDSB.

**Q2. Some grants require funds to be used within a specific timeline and our ability to utilize funds may be complicated by application for several grants to secure funds before any work can begin. Is there any advice or experience that can be shared?**

In other experiences, some have focused on applying to the larger grants to mitigate this risk and then once that funding is secured, apply to smaller grants.

**Q3. Other applicants have pursued sponsorship and then sponsors require a plaque or other acknowledgement. Are there any requirements from the board to be considered when contemplating this funding source?**

As long as we're not endorsing the organization and just acknowledging their contribution, it is OK to pursue sponsorship as it's been done before.

**Q4. One grant issuer, Love Your Hood, want to know if the playground would be limited to student use or also publicly available to the broader community. Are we able to agree to public use and what are some parameters for such an arrangement?**

JS School is considered to be on private land. Recommendation to pick one element of the playground and complete a grant application for that specific piece of the overall plan. We could apply for up to \$10,000 through the Love Your Hood grant though it's recommended we apply to other grants as well.

**Q5. Could the Board reps discuss “playground” options and costing so we can incorporate this into grant applications?**

There is a space that is clear and surrounded by trees so it may make sense to place the new playground in the same space as the previous one. The ground will need excavation and new drainage established. Locating the new elements in the same place as the previous playground would result in cost avoidance as there would not be a requirement for a new drainage layer.

A consideration to repurposing the previous location is accessibility to the public in that it's adjacent to the public park and asphalt.

If maintaining the previous location/footprint, would make sense to measure the square footage as part of the design/planning process, to ensure safety between the play elements.

60% of cost is likely to be in installation including things that are not visible like the drainage layer, excavation, mulch etc.

*Student Engagement*

From a design perspective, it will depend on the path chosen. Ideally, we'll engage students through the process. We might propose 20 play elements and each student vote on the items they want most and then we take the top 10 items and tell the vendor to include those in their plans and then return and ask them to include the next top five if there are funds remaining.

**Q6. Is there a spec list of design elements, with photos and costing so we can begin to cost this from a fundraising perspective?**

In terms of design elements, some school councils go for more "natural" elements vs a play structure that has limited use for some students (e.g., months of operation, age/development and accessibility considerations). An alternative example could include outdoor exercise equipment that is useable by a broader range of students, including older students who tend to be excluded from traditional playground structures.

Kendra reiterated that last year, council agreed we would focus on accessibility rather than a play structure; this would include more natural ground elements that could be in use year-round and to a broader range of students.

A playground would come with ongoing expenses for the school i.e. mulch.

\$80K range for a smaller plan installed at a school a couple of years ago. Logs can be more expensive than play panels because of the cost of materials and installation. We could do the work in phases, securing funding for various elements.

We have about \$20K saved currently.

**Q7. What is the role of the council at the procurement phase?**

Board likes to become involved in the project once about 70% of funds are secured and then they support the procurement and tendering process. One example of how council may be involved through the procurement process is the selection process (of bids/vendors) but board would manage the procurement process.

**Q8 What grants offer higher volume support and have been pursued by other schools?**

- Hallman Foundation is one of the largest grants available so we could consider prioritizing an application there
- Jump Start through Canadian Tire
- TD has been a supporter in the past
- Ontario Trillium grants is another

**Q9 Who was the selected vendor for the project at Rising Oaks, the attached child care centre?**

Beaman Stocks

**Q10 What are other Considerations for the subcommittee?**

*Stakeholder considerations/interests*

- Stakeholders may be interested in efforts to build on related projects. For instance, the city is trying to establish a wilderness meadow behind the school. We might include education items on a panel/sign for students about this.

*Overall Scheduling and Coordination*

- Installations are likely unavailable over the upcoming summer and fall season due to other bookings though with milder winters, install may be feasible over the winter.
- Board Facility Services will need to manage installation so we'll need to be sure this project is integrated with their availability as well. There is a form the principal will need to submit.

*School/Board/Foundation Charitable Number*

- The board and the Catholic Communities Foundation have their distinct Charitable Numbers. Jessica Diebel could share the board's Charitable Number.

*Managing Elements of Grant Applications*

- CSAC can't provide plans/costing/quotes as part of grant applications because we're part of a school board. Grant issuers often want quotes with costing and detailed plans. As a Broader Public Sector (BPS) Institution, our procurement requirements, including transparency and fairness must be followed. As such, to be compliant with the BPS Accountability Act, we are unable to obtain quotes at this time/stage of the project. This is something that grant issuers have accepted in the past.

*Landscape Planning*

- Could explore if any parents in our school community are involved in landscape architecture to help us with landscape planning. Hiring someone would be costly and use all or a significant portion of funds raised to date.
  - There may be professional code of ethics that prevent someone from assisting in this manner.
- A college student in this field might be another resource of consideration.

#### *Contact/Outreach*

Amanda Asher and Jeff Admans are available to us for reach out by email.

#### **Next Steps:**

- Jeff Admans and Amanda Asher to share via Kendra, design elements with images and costing to assist us in our engagement plan with students;
  - Kendra to share with subcommittee.
- Kendra to share next sub-committee meeting invite over TEAMS
- Laurie draft agenda for next meeting
- Laurie to share notes from today's meeting

#### **Goals of Next Planning meeting:**

- Set priority to include accessibility, safety, year-round use
- Establish our Vision
- Determine Engagement plan - student voice

#### **Follow Up Items:**

- Establish location for new play elements and reach out to Jeff Admans and Amanda Asher to schedule measurement of footprint as this will be key to determining types and numbers of design elements for the space, safety, budget etc.

*Next Subcommittee Planning Meeting set for Tuesday, April 9<sup>th</sup> at 5:15 PM on TEAMS.  
1 hour. Laurie to act as meeting facilitator*