



Administrative Procedures

<p>AP-902</p> <p>SCHOOL GROUNDS AND PLAYGROUNDS – IMPROVEMENTS AND ASSESSMENTS</p>	<p>Date of implementation: Fall 2019 Date of update: February 3, 2026</p>
	<p>Related Administrative Procedures: AP-710 Purchasing AP-715 Charitable Donations AP-717 Fundraising Projects in Schools AP-719 Loans to School Community Councils AP-901 Facilities Planning, Operations and Maintenance AP-905 Naming of Division-Owned Buildings and Grounds</p>

Purpose: To provide guidance on existing grounds and playground improvements and maintenance. Research outlines that school grounds and playgrounds are an important outdoor extension of a student’s learning environment and development. Playgrounds provide positive academic, social, and health-related results for children. The safety of our students is a top priority. Division-owned shared outdoor spaces must be developed and maintained to provide a safe and functional outdoor space for our students and communities.

Procedures

- 1) School Grounds Improvement Planning Process
 - a) Schools will annually develop and/or update a Grounds Improvement Plan that:
 - i) Addresses current deficiencies in terms of safety and functionality.
 - ii) Prioritizes requested enhancements or repairs for budget planning and scheduling.
 - iii) Articulates school council or community contributions of funding, equipment, supplies and/or volunteer labour.
 - b) School Grounds and Playgrounds Audit and Improvements will occur on a yearly basis led by the Caretaking Facilitator in collaboration with the school principal.
 - c) Audits will consider:
 - i) Safety (based on regular grounds assessment/audit reports).
 - ii) School priorities, such as enrollment, equity across the Division, and outdoor education.
 - iii) Local funding initiatives as per five-year (5-year) plan.

- d) New structures, equipment or changes to Division-owned grounds or playgrounds require the prior approval of the Facilities Manager or designate in order to ensure compliance with all safety regulations regardless of funding source.
- e) Facilities will support school administrators in the tendering, purchasing and contracted professional services associated with grounds and playground improvements.
- f) Under the direct supervision of a qualified installation supervisor, local community resources may be used to complete a project. In consultation and collaboration with the principal, Facilities may approve a qualified outside service provider to oversee the project.
- g) Playground equipment will have fall protection in accordance with the Canadian Standards Association (CSA).

2) Playground Improvement Funding

- a) Local school or community involvement and contributions are valued. Partners may choose to support the Division through the construction and ongoing maintenance of school grounds and playgrounds through a variety of contributions. All donations and contributions must adhere to Division policy, procedures, building codes and safety standards. They must also be incorporated into the overall School Grounds Improvement Plan as described in Section 1(a).
- b) All structures and equipment, regardless of funding sources, are the property of the Division. Structures and equipment on leased school property is maintained by the owner of the equipment.
- c) Division Preventative Maintenance and Renewal (PMR) funding shall not be used for the purchasing or installing of playground equipment.

3) Assessment and Maintenance of Grounds and Playgrounds

- a) The Division and school are responsible for the maintenance of outdoor playground equipment and school grounds in collaboration with the principal or designate. The exception to this is where the property is owned by a third party.
- b) The principal, with support of the caretaker, will establish procedures to monitor the state of the grounds, playgrounds and equipment on a monthly basis. Records of such assessments will be entered into the appropriate facilities management software.
- c) An assessment of the grounds and playgrounds of every school in the Division will be undertaken on a rotational basis, with a minimum of each school inspected once in three (3) years, by Facilities staff in consultation with the school-based administrator and Division staff. Records of these assessments will be entered in the facilities management software and used for future maintenance and renewal.

References:

[*PSSD Caretaker's Handbook*](#) (internal document)