

2007-08

BA #5

Date Issued 8/07

TO: PRINCIPALS and DIRECTORS

**FROM: Dennis Van Horn, Associate Superintendent for Business Affairs
Scott Wieskamp, Director of Facilities and Maintenance**

SUBJECT: PLAYGROUND AND OUTDOOR ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT

In order to facilitate the design of playgrounds and outdoor athletic equipment which meet the guidelines from the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Lincoln Public Schools has developed a procedure which will assist parent groups and school staff in this endeavor.

Well-designed play areas help to develop gross motor skills, fine motor skills, social interaction, and fantasy play. It can accommodate a relatively large number of children in a small area, reducing the potential for conflict and accidents. It also reduces the amount of area needed for protective surfacing—a benefit that could mean significant cost savings.

In order to facilitate the process, the Lincoln Public Schools has developed guidelines, which will assist you as you undertake this endeavor.

1. **The building administrator** will be involved in the process from the "idea" stage. A playground equipment catalog(s) detailing approved equipment is available through the Purchasing Office. A representative from the equipment vendor(s) is also available to assist you in the design development process. **However, prior to contacting an equipment vendor or beginning the process, the physical education curriculum specialist (extension 1812) and the Director of Facilities and Maintenance (extension 1072X82004) should be contacted regarding design, ADA, and equipment requirements.**
2. **Assemble a design team:** The team should include school personnel, parents, neighborhood representatives, students, the representative from the equipment vendor, the physical education curriculum specialist, and a FM drafting representative as designated by the Director of Facilities.

Appropriate school personnel might be the physical education instructor, a special education representative, and an administrator. You could also include parents (especially architects or engineers), neighbors living directly adjacent to the play area, and students representing various grade levels. Representatives from purchasing, maintenance, facilities, instruction, and risk management should also be involved in the planning.

3. **Analyze the site:** The team needs to analyze the site for the following:
- Size – Is the area big enough to safely accommodate the equipment?
 - Location – Where is the equipment best placed?
 - Soil, Surface Drainage, and Utility Locations – The soil must be stable and well drained. No water should flow into the play area. There should be no telephone or electrical power lines near the play area and should be away from dumpsters and parking lots.
 - Irrigation Systems – Are there lawn irrigation systems located within the proposed site location? (Be sure to allow funding to modify this system.)
 - ADA – Is this equipment required to be ADA accessible? Is funding available for surfacing and sidewalk access to the play area?

NOTE: The Director of Facilities and Maintenance (extension 1072X82004) MUST be consulted during this portion of the process.

4. **Assess your needs:** This should be done early in the process. Some issues to be considered are:
- Age, number, and capabilities of users
 - Available space
 - Protective surfacing
 - Colors
 - Which activities need to be included
 - Budget for the TOTAL project including installation by the vendor, site modifications, and surface under the structure (to conform to ADA standards) – will the equipment be phased in rather than purchased all at once?

NOTE: The Facilities Department specialist (extension 1072X82812) MUST be consulted during this part of the process.

A facilities drafting representative (extension 1072X82100) should assist with projected cost figures. If the order is placed through Purchasing during the annual ordering process or by one of our order consolidation deadlines, the school will be able to take advantage of the maximum discount offered by the prime vendor. The school may be responsible for the materials and installation costs of the soft matting installed under the playground equipment.

5. **Design:** You are now ready to design your play environment incorporating all the information you have collected. At this point, you should work with the playground equipment vendor representative and a Facilities Department Specialist on formal design, District guidelines, and quote.

Also at this time, if the parent group is donating money to cover the cost of the equipment, including installation by the manufacturer and ground cover installation and tile if necessary, a Gift Reporting Form must be completed and submitted according to BA Bulletin #14.

6. **Place the order for the equipment:** The Purchasing Department will assist with completing the order forms. Contact FM regarding the appropriate TMA work request necessary to automate the project.
7. **Project installation** and final inspection time lines need to be established and implemented.