

**State College Area School District
Office of Physical Plant
Ed Poprik, Director**

To: Board of School Directors, Facilities and Grounds Committee

From: Ed Poprik

RE: Elementary School projects

Date: May 2, 2018

Information shared on April 11 regarding Playgrounds and Outdoor Areas:

While some funding was accounted for in the FFE budgets (about \$50,000.00 for each school), no specific plans were bid as part of each project.

In the past, the Physical Plant office has worked with each building to purchase and install equipment at each site. In most instances, these purchases have been bolstered by donations from the school PTO/PTA groups.

Moving forward, administration is suggesting a more holistic approach to playgrounds at the project schools, as well as all elementary schools in the district. That approach would include at minimum:

- Developing a Process
- Determining Goals and Outcomes
- Identifying Funding

New information regarding Process:

Three potential avenues exist for engaging in the planning and potential design process:

- A. Use In-house staff only
- B. Contract with a Design Professional
- C. Use the services of a Vendor

In the past, a hybrid of option A (in-house staff) and C (Vendor), has been used. This process was more heavily weighted towards the use of in-house staff, with a vendor being used for final graphics and cost projections.

In the 2000-2001 year, Ed Poprik completed course work in playground safety and design. At the completion of this work, he passed the Certified Playground Safety Inspector exam. Information regarding this program is below:

“The National Recreation and Park Association offers the industry leading certification program in playground safety, the Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) certification program. The CPSI certification program provides the most comprehensive and up-to-date training on playground safety issues including hazard identification, equipment specifications, surfacing requirements and risk management methods.”

Pros and Cons of each approach are detailed below:

A. Use In-house staff only

Pros:

Limited costs for design and installation
Local knowledge
Continuity across district

Cons:

Limited Internal capacity
Less exposure to new trends and issues

B. Contract with a Design Professional

Pros:

Least in-house involvement
Unbiased
Familiarity with codes
Familiarity with new trends

Cons:

Highest Total Cost
Larger learning curve for district desires/goals

C. Use the services of a Vendor

Pros:

No design cost
Familiarity with new trends
Capacity for advanced graphics

Cons:

Generally limited manufacturers
Larger learning curve for district desires/goals
Perception of bias

Recommendations:

Based on the above information administration is recommending the following:

- Use a vendor for playground design
- Purchase materials through "State Contract"
- Bid the installation of equipment and related site work