PLAYGROUND AND SCHOOLYARD REVITALIZATION: STANDARD GUIDELINES & OPERATING PROCEDURE

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Part I: Administrative Procedure

Step 1: Forming a Local Schoolyard Committee

Action for Principal (or school staff designate): Select members and form Committee

1.1 To begin an outdoor environment improvement initiative at your school, first, the school community must form a Local Schoolyard Committee (LSC).

1.2 The Principal will oversee the LSC and **act as the main point of contact** between the LSC and the TCDSB assigned staff. The LSC will include the Principal, parents, staff, Trustee, and students. The Principal may designate a school staff member as the Chair of the LSC.

1.3 In consultation with the Area Service Quality Supervisor (SQS), the LSC will determine the category of work as per Table 1 (found at the end of Appendix A).

Step 2: Completing the Project Request & Playground/Schoolyard Revitalization Fund Application Form (Appendix B)

Action for Principal (or school staff designate): Complete and submit Appendix B

2.1 The Principal and Area SQS will complete "Appendix B" and submit it to Sustainable Outdoor Environment (SOE) Team via digital link provided to Principals annually.

2.2 The completion and submission of Appendix B confirms a *request*. Requests will be logged by the SOE Team and processed in order by the date received. A Request Reference Identification number will be assigned at this point, as well as supervising staff.

2.3 The SOE Team will confirm receipt of the request and the category of work with the Principal and Area SQS.

2.4 **To apply for the Playground and Schoolyard Revitalization Fund, be sure to indicate this in application accordingly in *Appendix B, Section A: Playground and Schoolyard Revitalization Fund* as well as identifying the local trustee and ward of the school.**

2.5 Refer to Table 1 for project categories.

a. For Category 1 Projects, proceed directly to Step 6 – Category 1 Projects.
b. For Category 2 and 3 Projects, proceed to Step 3 through Step 6 – Category 2, 3 & 4 Projects.
c. For Category 4 Projects, proceed to Step 3 through Step 6 – Category 5 Projects.

Step 3: Completing the Project Request Details Form

(Appendix C) Action for Principal: Work with LSC to Complete and Submit Appendix C

3.1 The assigned TCDSB staff will contact the Principal to schedule a meeting with the school's LSC and provide resources to assist the school in preparing their project request. Resources to include:
   i. Tools for gathering data from the school community (Sample school community surveys, design 'charrette'/workshop outlines, etc.)
   ii. Basic Site Plan for analyzing the school ground and brainstorming for future elements
   iii. Examples of landscape elements or features from TCDSB approved vendors

3.2 The LSC will engage the school community to determine project themes and gain **consensus** on project focus (with the use of survey data, design charrettes, etc.), the results of which will be submitted with Appendix C as part of Section D: Supporting Documents.

3.3 The LSC, Area SQS, and Head Caretaker complete the Appendix C package with the assistance of the SOE Supervisor. This package outlines the details of the project, special considerations, maintenance, and curriculum and developmental objectives for the project.

3.4 Renewal Management and the SOE Supervisor: will review the completed Appendix C package, providing feedback and recommendations as required. *Note: Appendix C, Section D requires the submission of the following supporting documents:*
   *a. A detailed existing site plan (provided by staff) identifying areas where snow is piled*****
   b. A concept diagram, sketch or drawing
   c. Images or details of proposed structures or changes

d. *Photographs of the proposed site*
e. *The methods and school community survey results from school community engagement*
f. *Any additional documents in support of the school's proposed project*

Step 4: Design Development

Principal Action: Ensure all required CSPC, Donated Funds or Grants have been provided to the TCDSB Finance Department

4.1 All CSPC or other sources of project funding **must** be submitted to the TCDSB Finance Department prior to engaging a consultant.

4.2 When the project ***requires*** professional consulting services, for example, a Landscape Architect; the LSC will work with an external consultant on design development. A report will be written by the assigned Supervisor to the required governing bodies to approve the budget is required (and if an approved project is not pre-existing).

4.3 When required, an external consultant is **not** to be engaged directly by the school. TCDSB assigned staff will coordinate procurement of any vendor with the Materials Management and Finance Departments.

4.4 *Note: Category 5 projects (those with a projected project of cost over $100,000.00) will require an external Landscape Architect. The Area SQS and SOE Team will provide guidance on which category a project falls into as required.*

4.5 When the project ***does not require*** a Landscape Architect; the LSC will work with the Internal Landscape Consultant on design development as applicable.

Step 5: Final Project Approval & Tender Document Preparation

Principal Action (or staff designate): Communicate project updates from TCDSB staff to school community

5.1 The Senior Coordinator of Capital Development, Asset Management & Renewal (CDAMR) will approve Appendix C – Section J, providing sign off for the project. **Any changes to the plan after this point will require the school to start the process over again.**

5.2 The design is finalized by the external Landscape Architect or internal Landscape Consultant and construction documents are prepared.

Step 6.1 – Category 1 Projects: Project Award & Construction Completion

Principal Action (or staff designate): Communicate project updates from TCDSB staff to school community

6.1.1 Prior to acquiring final quotations from preapproved Board vendors for the project, the school must deposit the balance of project funds into the TCDSB account with the Finance Department via the Area SQS.

6.1.2 The Area SQS gathers quotations for the project as per TCDSB procurement guidelines.

*If the quotation is **within** the available budget:*

6.1.3 The required staff will approve the quote and the project awarded to the vendor with the lowest, compliant quotation.

6.1.4 Finance sets up budget and a Purchase Order is generated.

6.1.5 The Area SQS oversees the project as it moves through the construction and post construction phases with consultation from the **SOE Team** if/as required.

*If the quotation **exceeds** the available budget:*

6.1.6 The project may not proceed unless funding is available in the Renewal Contingency or additional CSPC funds/grants. A report requesting additional CDAMR funding must be written to the required governing bodies to approve a budget increase.

Step 6.2 – Category 2, 3 & 4 Projects: Project Award & Construction Completion

Principal Action (or staff designate): Communicate project updates from TCDSB staff to school community

6.2.1 Prior to tendering to preapproved Board vendors for quotations for the project, the school must deposit the balance of project funds into the TCDSB account with the Finance Department via the Internal Landscape Consultant.

6.2.2 The Internal Landscape Consultant **will submit** the construction tender package to Materials Management staff and it will be issued as per TCDSB procurement guidelines.

*If the project is **within** the available budget*:

6.2.3 A report is written to the required governing approval bodies, awarding the project to the lowest, compliant bidder.

6.2.4 Finance sets up budget and a Purchase Order is generated.

6.2.5 The Internal Landscape Consultant oversees the project as it moves through the construction and post construction phases.

*If the project **exceeds** the available budget:*

6.2.6 The project may not proceed unless funding is available in the Renewal Contingency Allowance or through additional CSPC funds/grants. A report requesting additional CDAMR funding must be written to the required governing bodies to provide a budget increase and be approved.

Step 6.3 – Category 5 Projects: Project Award & Construction Completion

Principal Action (or staff designate): Communicate project updates from TCDSB staff to school community

6.3.1 **Prior to tendering the project for construction, the school must deposit the balance of project funds into the TCDSB account with the Finance Department via the Landscape Supervisor.**

6.3.2 The Project Supervisor submits the construction tender package to Materials Management staff and it is issued as per TCDSB procurement guidelines.

*If the project is **within** the available budget:*

6.3.3 A report is written to the required governing approval bodies to award the contract to the lowest, compliant bidder and proceed with the project.

6.3.4 Finance sets up budget and a Purchase Order is generated.

6.3.5 The Landscape Architect supervises the contractor with support from the Project Supervisor as the project moves through the construction and post construction phases.

*If the project **exceeds** the available budget:*

6.3.6 The project may not proceed unless funding is available in the Renewal Contingency Allowance or additional CSPC funds/grants. A report requesting additional CDAMR funding must be written to the required governing bodies to provide a budget increase and be approved.

Table 1	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4	Category 5
Total Project Cost	**Up To $25,000**	**Up to $25,000**	**$25,000 - $50,000**	$50,000 - $100,000	$100,000 +
Timeline	Approx. 8 months - 1 year	Approx. 8 months - 1 year	Approx. 1-2 years	Approx. 2-3 years	Approx. 2-3 years
Examples	General, simple installations and small projects such as sports equipment, in-ground elements, and kindergarten elements	Site specific projects that **require design**: examples include habitat gardens, tree planting, outdoor classrooms, in-ground elements, and kindergarten elements	Play structures, shade structures, larger scale in-ground elements. These projects may require significant asphalt removal and/or **detailed design**	Medium scale projects with **multiple** elements such as play structures, shade structures, larger scale in-ground elements and require **detailed design**	Larger scale projects with multiple elements such as artificial turf fields, complete site redevelopment and require **professional design services**
Consultant	Consultation provided by the **Internal Landscape Consultant**				Consultation provided by an **external Landscape Consultant**
TCDSB Project Lead	**Area SQS/ SOE Supervisor**	**Sustainable Outdoor Environment Supervisor**			
Notes	Fundraising efforts may extend project timelines. Some larger projects may require or benefit from a master plan prepared by a Landscape Consultant to provide a unified vision and visual material for the LSC and school community to utilize for fundraising. The Area SQS or SOE Team will advise if this option is suitable for a school's project.				

Part II: Playground and Schoolyard Revitalization Fund

What is the Playground and Schoolyard Revitalization Fund ?

The Playground and Schoolyard Revitalization Fund is an internal fund made available from the annual School Renewal Plan, approved by the Board. The 2023-24 Playground and Schoolyard Revitalization Fund will allocate $125,000.00 of funding per ward for a total of $152 million.

How to Apply for the Playground and Schoolyard Revitalization Fund

1. To apply for Playground and Schoolyard Revitalization Fund, complete and submit Appendix B: Project Request & Playground and Schoolyard Revitalization Fund Application Form via digital link provided to Principals annually, as described in Part I, Step 2.

Selection Process

1. A Selection Committee will be formed for each ward with members consisting of the local trustee, a Business Supervisory Officer, an Academic Supervisory Officer and a parent council representative from a school that has not applied for the Playground and Schoolyard Revitalization Fund.
2. Decisions for awarding funds will be made by consensus. If a consensus cannot be reached, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will make the final decision.
3. The criteria shown in Table 1 will be used to evaluate and rank submissions.

TABLE 1	Primary Criteria	Points
1	Socio-Economic Data	10
2	Existing Site Conditions	10
3	Existing Site Elements	10
4	Local School Planning Preparedness	10

4. Depending on the number of submissions received and a determination by the selection committee on whether to distribute the available funding to one or more schools, secondary criteria (listed in Table 2) will be used to further rank similarly high scoring schools being considered for funding.

TABLE 2	Secondary Criteria
1	Existing comparable play structure, outdoor sports court, play element, or other landscape element adjacent to the site
2	Community green space adjacent to the site
3	Access to shade on site
4	Access to natural features/play surfaces on site
5	Percentage of yard space that is hardscape versus softscape
6	Availability of partnerships/external funding

5. Projects will follow the implementation process as described in Part I.
6. Surplus funds, that are less than the value to fund the least costly outdoor element available, will be returned
7. Implementation timeline for all Playground and Schoolyard Revitalization Fund projects will be reflective of current staff capacity.

Part III: Plaques

Donor Plaques

Donors can be recognized for their contribution to projects with the addition of a plaque. Approval from the Partnership Development Department is required.

Plaque Template

Size Requirements: 2" x 4" (5cm x 10cm)

Font Requirements: All plaques must follow TCDSB's Corporate Branding Guidelines, using only approved TCDSB fonts: Century Gothic and/or Garamond.

Layout Requirements:



TCDSB Logo Usage: All plaques must include the TCDSB logo, and be consistent with the Logo Use PolicyT.16. This includes approval for the use of the TCDSB corporate logo being made to the TCDSB Communications Department.

Installation Requirements:

- A recognition plaque may be installed on or near a play element or in-ground element, provided it does not interfere with the safety, purpose, use or function or the element.
- Alternatively, plaques may be installed in the school.

Memorial Plaques

All memorial plaques to be designed in consultation with Board staff and requires staff approval.

Part IV: Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

1. **How does TCDSB facilitate and manage locally funded playground projects?**
   The TCDSB's process of managing playground projects is outlined in the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) associated with the Improvements to Outdoor Play Environments Policy – B.G. 01. Click here for the Policy and click here for the SOP.

2. **What types of landscape projects must follow this procedure?**
   Any permanent installation on TCDSB property must follow this procedure, including but not limited to, benches, planters, gardens, play structures or elements, sports equipment, tree plantings, etc.

3. **Where is the information about Project Category? How does the LSC determine the accurate Project Category?**

   The project scale and available budget define the Project category. The categories are defined in Part I, Table 1 of the Standard Guidelines & Operating Procedure. The SOE Team or Area SQS can advise on a project category. Note a Project Category may change due to available budget, fundraising efforts, or project costs

4. **Do all projects require the use of a Landscape Architect?**
   No, not all projects require the use of an external Landscape Architect. The Landscape Supervisor or Area Service Quality Supervisor can provide guidance on specific requirements for the project at your school.

5. **Who retains vendors for the project?**
   The TCDSB retains all vendors (consultants, contractors and suppliers) for the project. Schools cannot procure items or services directly and forward invoices for

payment through the Playground and Schoolyard Revitalization Fund. These invoices will not be reimbursed.

6. **Who at the board can assist with other outdoor improvement grant applications?**
   The Landscape Supervisors can assist with grant applications related to landscape improvements as his/her schedule permits. Please email play.ground@tcdsb.org for assistance.

7. **How do we engage our school community? Why do we have to?**
   As per the Community Engagement Policy T.7 (which can be found here), "The TCDSB will commit to ensuring that meaningful input from our community members is considered to ensure initiatives, policies, and practices reflect our mission and meet the expectations of the communities served by the TCDSB." Commensurate with the size or budget of the proposed project, the Landscape Supervisor and/or consultants can help schools engage their communities through suggested methods including but not limited to:
   - Online or Offline Surveys
   - Dot-mocracy surveys
   - Design Charrettes
   - Design Committee Meetings

   Community engagement is also necessary to meet the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requirements to ensure holistic planning and inclusivity in site design.

Fundraising & Financial Questions

1. **Who collects the funds raised for the project?**

   The school or CSPC has the option to keep the funds at their bank account until the project begins. Any funds transferred with the Board will be earmarked for the school's specific project. It is recommended that schools keep track of all funds

deposited. Finance can provide expenditure totals or balances as requested through the Principal or Capital Supervisor.

2. **Who invoices payment to vendors (e.g. Architect, suppliers etc.)?**
   The TCDSB administrative staff pays invoices issued to TCDSB by vendors.

3. **What are the TCDSB policies that speak to local fundraising? What can the funds raised by the parents/CSPC be utilized for? What can the funds not be utilized for?**
   According to TCDSB Policy, all fundraising shall be carried out under the jurisdiction and supervision of the principal and may be a joint project with the local Catholic School Advisory Council and/or Student Council. Funds raised under this policy shall not be used to purchase textbooks, learning materials and resources for regular classrooms which would normally be funded through Board and school-based budgets. With that, according to the Ministry of Education, fundraising should reflect the values and expectations of the school community, including those of parents, students, staff, and school boards will use the proceeds of their fundraising activities. It is important to consider the purposes and principles of public education, including diversity, accessibility, and inclusivity. It is also important that fundraising has a designated purpose and that the proceeds be used for the intended purpose. (TCDSB policies S.M.04 Fundraising in Schools can be found here and F.P.01 Purchasing and can be found here.)

4. **At what point do funds raised by schools need to be deposited to the TCDSB?**
   All funds raised must be deposited to the TCDSB at the time the project is ready to be tendered to a consultant, supplier or contractor. Projects will not be tendered until all required funding is received.

5. **Will the TCDSB keep the school's CSPC money for any reason and not return it to school's CSPC?**
   No, the only funds that would not be returned are those spent on the project.

6. **Can a school recognize donors in any way for a contribution to a project?**
   Yes, a school can recognize a donor with a plaque (as detailed in Part III) that can be displayed on or near a new element, or within the school.

Playground and Schoolyard Revitalization Application Questions

1. **Are secondary schools eligible for the Playground and Schoolyard Revitalization (PSR) Fund?**
   Yes, all schools within the TCDSB are eligible to apply for the PSR fund.

2. **Where can applicants find pricing for the various types of equipment that can be included in PSR?**
   Please refer to the TCDSB Outdoor Play and Sports Equipment Unit Price Elements Catalog available on the webpage. Please note that the prices and information shown in this catalog are valid SPRING 2022 until APRIL 2024 and should be used as a reference only. The Catalog pricing will be updated once the 2024-26 tender for unit price elements had been awarded.

3. **Where can applicants find quotes or estimates for various surfaces that could be included in their PSR proposals?**
   Please see the list below for **Budget Unit Rates** that can be used to determine an estimated costs for various landscape surface treatments. *Note: These prices are for grant estimation purposes **only**, actual costs will vary depending on existing site conditions, required grading, additional required drainage, area of new surface, etc.*

Surface Treatment	Cost per Square Metre
Asphalt	$85.00
Tub Ground Mulch	$20.00
Engineered Wood Fibre	$65.00
Rubberized Safety Surface	$670.00
Artificial Turf	$540.00

4. **What are the timelines for completion of 2023-24 PSR funded projects**

   Please refer to the timeline by category in Part 1, Table 1 of the Standard Guidelines & Operating Procedure.

   Projects awarded 2023-24 PSR funding are scheduled for installation and construction during spring and summer of 2025 or 2026 for larger projects. Projects will not be completed in 2024. Consultations with each school awarded 2023-24 PSR funding will begin in Fall 2024.

5. **How can we obtain a current site plan or aerial image of school site?**
   School Principals should email play.ground@tcdsb.org to request a simple site plan of their school. Aerial images of school sites can be saved from Google maps or other mapping applications.

6. **How can we obtain assistance in the development of our PSR Application?**
   Two online sessions will be held during the open application period to review the application requirements, answer questions and provide guidance in development of the proposed project. School principals will be provided with the meeting links and can share with committee members as required.

Part V: Glossary of Terms

- CDAMR: Capital Development, Asset Management & Renewal
- Charette: A design brainstorming activity with a group of stakeholders.
- Community Consultation: The process of engaging the local school community to determine the wants and needs of the group.
- Community Green Space: Publicly accessible, open land that is entirely or partially covered in grass, trees, shrubs and/or other vegetation including parks and conservation areas.
- Concept Diagram/Drawing: A visual representation of a physical space that utilizes shapes, colours, lines, symbols and words to convey an idea.
- ESS: Environmental Support Services
- Existing Site Condition: This information will be provided through the Ministry building condition database. Existing site conditions in question (for example, hardscapes and softscapes) will be based on the percentage of the element's lifespan.
- Existing Site Elements: Site elements include play structures, outdoor sports courts, outdoor classrooms and play elements. These elements will be evaluated based on their presence (lower score) or lack thereof (higher score) and condition.
- Hardscape: Asphalt, concrete, unit pavers, gravel, limestone screening, or other hard, man-made surface material.
- In-Ground Elements: Individual play elements that require a footing and/or hard surface removal for installation (for example, basketball nets or shade umbrellas).
- Indigenous Connection: An effort made by LSC to learn more about the history of the land their project will occupy. For example, learning the Treaty Number that the school site occupies, recognizing Indigenous ways of knowing, or more about Indigenous Nations that reside or resided on the land.
- Kindergarten Elements: Play elements designed for early education curriculum support, including benches, sand boxes or shade umbrellas.
- Local School Planning Preparedness: This criterion refers to the thoroughness of a school's application and supporting documents provided). Thorough applications will be awarded up to 10 points toward the total score.
- LSC: Local Schoolyard Committee

- Play Element: A singular structure that is designed for children to climb, run, play, balance, slide, swing, etc. on. These elements may be arranged in a group; for example, to create an obstacle course or larger play structure. Many play elements require a safety surface underneath and surrounding the structure to prevent injury from falls.
- Play Structure: A multi-element structure that is designed for children to climb, run, play, balance, slide, swing, etc. on. Play structures require a safety surface underneath and surrounding the structure to prevent injuries from falls. Typically, these structures are designed for a defined age group.
- Outdoor Sports Court: An outdoor facility with surface treatment (hard or soft surface) and equipment requirements for specific sports activities. For example, a paved surface and basketball nets constitutes a basketball court while a grass field with soccer goal posts constitutes a soccer field. In a school setting, often these facilities could be permitted for use by outside agencies.
- SOE: Sustainable Outdoor Environment
- Socio-Economic Data: The Board utilizes data from various factors (government transfer payments, low family income, single parent families, born outside of Canada, second language at home, parent unemployment, housing (rent versus own), and parent education) to create an *N-Tile Score* for assessment of local socio-economic status of school communities. *N-Tile Scores* range from 1-9 and 1 point will be added for schools that are part of the E-PAN (Equity-Poverty Action Network) initiative for a total of up to 10 points.
- Softscape: Grass, planting beds, mulch areas within a landscape. Typically, these surfaces are not accessible, except for engineered wood fibre (EWF) and mulch with a binder.