



SCHOOL BOARD ACTION REPORT

DATE: December 11, 2017
FROM: Dr. Larry Nyland, Superintendent
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For Introduction: January 3, 2018
For Action: January 17, 2018

1. TITLE

Acceptance of Gift of Playground Improvements at John Hay Elementary

2. PURPOSE

The John Hay Partners Board in partnership with the John Hay Elementary Foundation has initiated a Self Help playground project at John Hay Elementary that may exceed \$250,000, and therefore requires Board approval. Upon completion, the project will become the property of the District, thus it is a “gift” to the District.

3. RECOMMENDED MOTION

I move that the School Board accept the gift of playground improvements from the John Hay Partners Board and John Hay Elementary Foundation, as described in the Board Action Report.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

a. Background

The Self Help Projects Program has been a mechanism for volunteer-initiated facility improvements in the District since the mid-1970s.

Annually, over 400 projects are introduced, with 80% to 90% of the projects reaching fruition. Some projects are completed in one day while others might require four to six years or more from start to finish, including planning, design and multiple phases of construction. The total value of all completed Self Help projects ranges between \$1,000,000 to \$3,000,000+ annually, including: (a) donated cash and grants, (b) donated time, (c) donated professional services, and (d) donated materials. The majority of project costs are covered by the projects’ sponsors, with occasional small amounts of funding or materials from District sources.

School Board Policy No. 6114 stipulates that a “gift” to the District exceeding \$250,000 in value is subject to Board approval. For Self Help Projects, this has been interpreted to mean that any Phase of a project whose construction value exceeds \$250,000 is subject to this policy.

For purposes of this policy, the summary of cash and monetary grants is used to calculate the value of a project. There are usually other contributions to a project that also add value, such as donated professional services, donated volunteer time, and donated materials. However, it is difficult to project the extent of these potential donations and, typically, those total values are not fully known until completion of the project.

To date, John Hay Partners Board in partnership with the John Hay Elementary Foundation (Partners Board) have been awarded two City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods Matching Funds grants totaling \$50,000 to develop a conceptual master plan design and construction documents. The Partners Board has applied for a King County Youth and Amateur Sports Grant. Also, the Partners Board intends to apply for city of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods Matching Funds for a Community Partnership Grant, and a number of other grants. Currently, the Partners Board is selling donor pavers, boulders and benches, which will be incorporated into the project. Other methods of fundraising are occurring, including a lemonade stand by one industrious student.

The cost estimate for Phase 1 of the John Hay Playground Improvements project is between \$250,000 and \$340,000, dependent on the extent of fundraising before intended start of construction. The project will reconfigure the expansive grass play field, which currently encompasses the east half of the John Hay playground. The project will vastly increase Physical Education and play options, as shown in the Attachment depicting Phase 1 improvements, and described as follows:

- A second play structure, intended for older students, including the site work required to create edging, safety surfacing, and access ramp;
- A meandering running/walking/bicycle/wheelchair path, encircling topographic features, plus 50-meter dash section;
- Natural areas for imaginative play and socializing;
- Refurbishment of a portion of grass to establish a smaller, more sustainable field;
- Sport court;
- Benches;
- Donor paver installment; and
- Asphalt repairs

The Partners Board proposed project has been coordinated with staff from the District Capital department to ensure improvements do not conflict with future expansion or renovation of the school building. All Partners Board improvements will occur over the current grass play field, under which is the site's geo-thermal well field. A building cannot be constructed over the well field. Thus, playground improvements are an appropriate use of this area of the site.

Construction will start immediately after the end of school in June 2018, or when all funding is secured.

- b. **Alternatives** Do not accept this gift. This is not recommended because John Hay’s playground is reduced due to the placement of two double-portables, and the grass field offers limited play options for the current student population of nearly 500 students.
- c. **Research** Playgrounds are an extension of a school’s learning environment. Numerous studies show the value of active play to support the physical, social, emotional and cognitive development of children. A growing body of scientific literature has documented a link between rigorous activity and enhanced learning and improved test scores. Children engaged in active play strengthen bones and muscles; combat childhood obesity; and develop life-long habits for an active lifestyle. Active play can also contribute to decreased stress.

With the assistance of SiteWorkshop Landscape Architects, the John Hay Elementary Partners Foundation solicited input from families, students, on-site childcare and neighbors as various options were developed. With engagement from over 500 participants, a final conceptual master plan was developed. Phase 1 represents the priorities of the community.

5. FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE

Fiscal impact of this action will include: Self Help Projects staff time to oversee the project sponsors as they implement the project; up to \$5,000 of matching funds from the Self Help Projects capital allowance; and routine on-going maintenance by Facilities staff.

Revenue source will be one-time gift of playground improvements from the Partners Board, with a value anticipated to exceed \$250,000.

The revenue source for this motion are general fund and capital.

Expenditure: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

Revenue: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

With guidance from the District’s Community Engagement tool, this action was determined to merit the following tier of community engagement:

Not applicable

Tier 1: Inform

Tier 2: Consult/Involve

Tier 3: Collaborate

A principal goal of Self Help Projects – improvement projects initiated and implemented by the community – is to strengthen school/neighborhood/community bonds, and foster goodwill within the community. The project’s activities, together with the high expectations by grantors for rigorous community engagement as part of their matching grant requirements, has achieved robust community outreach and engagement for this project. The engagement strategies were used (1) to inform the school’s staff, students, families, and neighbors about the project, (2) to invite ideas from each of these groups regarding desired improvements, in order to incorporate them into the design, and (3) to ask for, and consider feedback from each of these groups regarding the plans as they were developed. Various avenues to seek input ensured participation from diverse audiences.

Some examples of outreach and engagement to date have included:

- The steering committee, comprised of representatives of school families, staff and neighbors, has convened routinely for the last year to keep the project in a forward trajectory and ensure community involvement.
- During conceptual planning and construction documents phases:
 - First community meeting: Fliers were posted at school and distributed to all school families, and volunteers distributed fliers door-to-door to homes surrounding the school to invite staff, families and neighbors to the first community meeting. Dinner was provided, which tends to result in attracting large attendance. Every participant was encouraged to contribute their ideas for improving the playground. Well over 100 adults and children attended. The design team consultants led a brainstorming graphics exercise, after which people shared their thoughts with each other.
 - The second community meeting was advertised similarly to the first, plus invitations were sent via Evite to those who had attended the first meeting. Well over 100 participants reviewed option plans and provided feedback.
 - The third community engagement was a collaboration with the school’s Health and Fitness night. Well over 100 participants stopped by the playground project’s table to engage in an activity which invited input on the proposed final plan.
 - A back-to-school event in September was an opportunity to remind people about the playground progress, and begin fundraising in earnest. Over 230 participants attended.
- An early-success project entailed painting a mural on the playground’s south retaining wall to bring attention to the playground project, which involved 25 volunteers.
- The Partners Board web site includes a full range of information about the project.

7. EQUITY ANALYSIS

The Racial Equity Analysis tool was not utilized for this project. John Hay’s enrollment includes approximately 42% students of color. Through community engagement activities, the Partners Board diligently reached out to all members of the school community to hear all voices and all ideas.

8. STUDENT BENEFIT

Playgrounds are an extension of the school’s learning environment, and support the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of children. The playground at John Hay has seen few improvements since the school was constructed in 1989. The renovation of the east section

of the playground by the Partners Board will result in a wide variety of active play options for students on a daily basis.

9. WHY BOARD ACTION IS NECESSARY

- Amount of contract initial value or contract amendment exceeds \$250,000 (Policy No. 6220)
- Amount of gift exceeds \$250,000 in a single fiscal year (Policy No. 6114)
- Adopting, amending, or repealing a Board policy
- Formally accepting the completion of a public works project and closing out the contract
- Legal requirement for the School Board to take action on this matter
- Board Policy _____, [TITLE] provides the Board shall approve this item
- Other: _____

10. POLICY IMPLICATION

The following School Board policies are relevant to this Self Help project:

- 6114 Gifts, Grants, Donations and Fundraising Proceeds
- 7115 Plaques, Name Plates and Donor Walls
- 6807 Self-Help Projects

The John Hay Elementary playground improvement project complies with each of these Board policies.

11. BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

This motion was discussed at the Operations Committee meeting on December 7, 2017. The Committee reviewed the motion and moved this item forward to the full board with a recommendation for consideration.

12. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Upon approval of this motion, the John Hay Elementary Partners Foundation will continue fundraising efforts, solicit bids, and proceed with construction of playground improvements during summer 2018, with oversight by Self Help Projects staff. Upon completion of the project late summer or early fall 2018, the District will inspect and formally accept the project, upon which it becomes District ownership.

13. ATTACHMENT

- Conceptual site plan depicting Phase 1 improvements



John Hay Elementary Acceptance of Gift of Playground Improvements

Conceptual site plan depicting Phase 1 improvements

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For questions and more information about this document, please contact the following:

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This document is a drawing conceptually depicting the planned Phase 1 construction improvements at John Hay Elementary School, as proposed by and being carried out by the John Hay Partners Board.

Attachment: Conceptual site plan depicting Phase 1 improvements

John Hay Elementary Playground Renovation Phase One Plan Summer 2018 Construction

