



SCHOOL BOARD ACTION REPORT

DATE: April 24, 2017
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For Introduction: May 3, 2017
For Action: May 17, 2017

1. TITLE

Acceptance of Gift of Madrona Playground Improvement Project

2. PURPOSE

This Board Action Report details a Self Help Project playground improvement gift at Madrona K-8 (then starting fall 2017 will be Madrona Elementary) that may exceed \$250,000.

3. RECOMMENDED MOTION

I move that the School Board accept the gift of the Madrona Playground Improvement Project from the Madrona PTSA, as described in the Board Action Report.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

a. Background

The Self Help Projects Program, administered within the Facilities Department, has been a mechanism for volunteer initiated and implemented facility improvements at our District schools since the mid-1970s. Annually, approximately 450 projects are introduced, with 80% to 90% of the projects reaching fruition.

Over one year ago, the Madrona PTSA (PTSA) initiated an effort to plan, design, and construct a playground improvement project at Madrona School.

The Madrona's main playground is quite small. Currently, the playground has limited play value: three basketball hoops, two tether ball poles, some painted gamelines for four-square, and a play structure.

At nearly 20 years old, the current play structures is approaching the end of its useful life. Several broken components of the play structure have been replaced with pieces salvaged from other schools' demolished play structures.

In recent years, the PTSA has sponsored volunteer efforts to paint the gamelines. These have gradually faded.

Segment of the playground are off-limits due to unsuitability for play.

The goal of the PTSA’s playground project is to maximize every inch of the small playground for improved play opportunities.

Improvements are expected to be implemented in several phases. Phase 1A and 1B will include (see attached Site Plan):

- New play structure and safety surface with associated infrastructure.
- New west pedestrian entry gate to encourage community use of the playground outside of school hours. Improved welcoming east entry to recognize and facilitate connection to nearby Madrona Park.
- Activate spaces surrounding the existing play structure that are currently off-limits to play, by providing access and natural and imaginative play elements.
- New vibrantly painted gamelines to better direct play activities, and create a running/walking circuit.

Phase 2 improvements will be implemented as funds become available. This includes revision of the learning garden to increase play opportunities.

Once the Phase 1 project is complete – anticipated late fall 2017 – the improvements become the property of the Seattle School District. The improvements are considered a “gift” to the District. If a gift’s project value exceeds \$250,000, the “gift” is subject to School Board Approval.

The Madrona PTSA through its steering committee has been actively fundraising to implement their project. To date, \$252,000 in funds have been identified for the project, though not all funds are in hand yet. Since there is a possibility the PTSA will be successful in exceeding \$250,000 in fundraising, this project is being presented to the School Board now, rather than potentially delaying the project later.

Funding sources include:

\$25,000	Department of Neighborhood Matching Funds, used to develop Conceptual, Schematic and Construction plans, led by Johnson + Southerland design team.
\$75,000	King County Youth Sports Facilities Grant, for purchasing and installing a new play structure, together with associated site work including safety surface.
\$12,000	Madrona Community Council grant from the Krauss Fund, to be used toward construction to enhance the east entrance.
\$100,000	Request in June to Department of Neighborhood for Community Partnership Matching Fund, to be used toward construction. Notification whether Matching Funds will be awarded is expected in the fall.
\$10,000	School District contribution from the Self Help Projects Office’s capital funds, for bid advertising, temporary fencing, city permits, infrastructure.

\$30,000 Fundraising goal by Steering Committee.

\$252,000 **Anticipated Total Project Cost** (Value of volunteer hours and donated services, which count towards required Match for grants, is not included.)

b. Alternatives

An alternative is to not accept the playground improvements gift. This is not recommended, since Madrona’s playground and play structure are in need of renovation and improved play opportunities.

c. Research

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.

After raising funds to replace the broken slide on the play structure a few years ago, the PTSA spoke with the principal and parents/families at PTSA meetings to discuss the state of the playground. The PTSA representatives then reached out to Madrona students to ask what they wanted in the playground. The representatives also spoke with community members about the connection between the school and the neighborhood, and the benefit of opening the playground to the public. Everyone supported redesigning the playground to use all available space, including a larger, more engaging play structure.

5. FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE

The fiscal impact to this action:

Expenditures -- Staff support to review and facilitate the Madrona PTSA efforts to design and build the playground; a one-time contribution of up to \$10,000 Capital funds to Match other agencies’ grants, and to contribute towards the construction costs; and on-going maintenance costs from the Facilities Department budget, when routine maintenance is warranted.

Revenue – accepting a one-time gift of playground improvements from FHPE.

Expenditure: One-time (Capital) Annual (General Fund) Multi-Year N/A

Revenue: One-time (Gift) 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

The efforts by the Madrona PTSA to improve the school's playground was initiated before the inception of the District's Community Engagement tool, so the tool was not utilized.

However, the very nature of Self Help Projects – initiation and implementation of improvements projects by the community – is intended 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 a 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.

Some examples of outreach and engagement include:

- The PTSA formed a Steering Committee in April 2016, reaching out to local businesses, the Madrona Community Council, school parents/families, PTSA members, and neighbors.
- At Madrona Community Council's Winter Playfair on January 14, 2017, the Steering Committee staffed a table to talk about the Playground Project and conduct community outreach.
- The Steering Committee's first formal outreach for the Playground Project took place at Madrona School's Multicultural Night, January 19, 2017, where the Committee reached 450 community members to solicit input on the Playground Project.
- At Madrona School's Math Night, on February 28th, two drawings depicting design ideas were offered for input, and to gather ideas.
- The PTSA attends monthly Madrona Community Council (MCC) meetings to keep the Council updated on the Playground Project (October to present).
- Madrona (School) News – A monthly column provides updates on the Playground Project (October to present).
- In-school design input - The design team, Johnson + Southerland, conducted a design exercise with students on the playground during recess, creating chalk drawings and discussing play elements with kids.
- Madrona school staff – PTSA met with staff to discuss design ideas and solicit feedback (January 26).
- The Steering Committee and design team visited classrooms and art class to show students design proposals and invite input (February 13-16).

- “Open Madrona” is a Facebook page where people can post ideas for the playground and check out the latest design work by the design team.
- The Steering Committee staffed a table at Madrona Community Council’s Spring Fest (March 30, 2017) to present the latest design work and solicit input from the school community.
- The project graphics and its process to-date has been prominently posted in the school’s main hallway where families and visitors can see what’s happening.
- Students, staff, families, and neighbors will be invited to help select the playground equipment upon receipt of proposals from playground vendors.

7. EQUITY ANALYSIS

The efforts by the Madrona PTSA to improve the school’s playground was initiated before the inception of the District’s Racial Equity Analysis tool, so the tool was not utilized.

However, it is important to highlight that this project will benefit the racially diverse Madrona School students and surrounding community.

Early fall 2016 information indicates that Madrona’s enrollment is nearly 300 students; 58% receive free or reduced-price meals; 71% are students of color; 12% qualify for ELL services; and over 15% receive special education services. Because Madrona’s attendance boundary includes several shelters, 16% of students are McKinney-Vento qualified (homeless/unstable housing). There are ten predominant languages at the school.

The steering committee gave considerable thought to culturally relevant community engagement, though there is still a struggle to fully achieve this. The Steering Committee has worked with Madrona’s ELL teacher to conduct outreach to the families she serves.

8. STUDENT BENEFIT

As noted above, studies have shown that rigorous activity promotes important educational, social, emotional and physical aspects of child development. An improved Madrona School playground will provide opportunities for relevant and rigorous activities that will benefit all students at the school.

9. WHY BOARD ACTION IS NECESSARY

- Amount of contract initial value or contract amendment exceeds \$250,000 (Policy No. 6220)
- Amount of grant 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 No. 6114, Gift, Grants, Donations and Fundraising Proceeds, provides the Board shall approve this item

Other: _____

10. POLICY IMPLICATION

Board Policy No. 6114 -- Gift, Grants, Donations and Fundraising Proceeds – actively encourages cooperation with individuals and governmental and non-governmental organizations as well as from private and foundation sources desiring to provide resource assistance to the district. Any gift of any type having a total value (including both the contribution and any district resources required to be contributed) of \$250,000 or greater are subject to Board approval. This motion is consistent with School Board Policy 6114.

Board Policy No. 6807 -- Self Help Facilities Improvement Projects -- allows and encourages facilities improvements projects as a means to (1) strengthen school/neighborhood/community bonds; (2) augment Seattle School District resources; (3) instill pride among students, staff, and families; and (4) foster goodwill within the community. This playground improvement project is consistent with this policy. The motion is consistent with School Board Policy No. 6807.

11. BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

This item was reviewed by the Operations Committee at the April 20, 2017 meeting. The committee moved this item forward to the full board with a recommendation for approval.

12. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Upon approval of this motion, the Madrona PTSA will proceed with their playground improvement project for Madrona School. Fundraising is expected to continue through next fall. Competitive bidding will occur this spring for the play structure, with installation anticipated late summer through fall; upon sufficient fundraising, other Phase 1B improvements will be carried out beginning fall 2017, as feasible during school operations. Community engagement will continue in order to keep people informed and invite volunteer participation in implementation efforts where applicable.

13. ATTACHMENTS

- Diagram illustrating the Madrona PTA Playground Schematic Site Plan Improvements