



**DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD  
ONTARIO NORTH EAST**

## **Policy No. 2.1.29**

**Section: School Related Operations**

**Related References:**

**Appendices: A-D**

**Approved: April 17, 2007**

**Revised: May 17, 2016**

**Review Date:**

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### **TITLE: Playground Policy**

#### **1.0 Rationale:**

The Board recognizes the need to promote positive play experiences within a safe school environment. The Board supports the community use of school playgrounds. The playgrounds should, wherever possible, promote green areas and alternative methods of providing positive play experiences.

#### **2.0 Definitions:**

#### **3.0 Policy:**

District School Board Ontario North East supports the improvement and development of playgrounds by the school community forming Parent Committees to raise funds for the purpose of providing, installing, maintaining and repairing approved playground structures within the guidelines of this policy and the accompanying procedures, where the selected improvements promote a wide variety of playground activities designed to promote life-long physical fitness.

(Note: Nothing in the foregoing precludes the Board from at any time contributing to the improvement and development of school playgrounds.)

## PROCEDURES:

### ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

#### A. IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF PLAYGROUNDS TO PROMOTE SCHOOL GROUND GREENING AND THE PROVISION OF ALTERNATIVE POSITIVE PLAY EXPERIENCES

1. Schools are encouraged to first give consideration to alternative play areas such as naturalized areas, berms, trees, and pathways before purchasing a creative playground structure.
2. Research on green school grounds should be done by the school and parent community when planning playground upgrades. Such support documents include ***Outdoors: The Ultimate Playground*** by the Porcupine Health Unit.
3. All plans require approval of the Manager of Building Services.
4. Copies of the “School Ground Greening Guide” published by the Ontario EcoSchools program are available from our Board Offices or the Manager of Building Services.
5. Schools are also encouraged to consider the development of alternative play experiences as contained in the publication by the Porcupine Health Unit.
6. Copies of the “Outdoors: The Ultimate Playground” published by the Porcupine Health Unit are available from our Board Offices or the Manager of Building Services.
7. All plans require prior approval of the Manager of Building Services.

#### B. NEWLY PURCHASED OR NEW DONATED PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

1. All donated equipment must be new from the manufacturer. No used equipment will be installed on Board property.
2. All newly purchased or donated playground equipment must comply with Canadian Standards Association’s most current version of Children’s Play Spaces and Equipment. Letters of compliance with this standard from the equipment manufacturer must be retained with all other documents for the equipment.
3. The Principal, in consultation with the School Council, is the primary contact with the Board and is responsible for defining the needs of the school in considering the purchase of playground equipment.

4. All donated or purchased playground equipment becomes the sole property of the Board.
5. The school, through its School Council or other parent group, is responsible for:
  - a) acquiring the funds to purchase new playground equipment;
  - b) all costs of the installation including equipment, containment, protective surfacing material, signage, and any excavation work required;
  - c) ongoing maintenance, repairs, and upgrading of playground equipment.
6. The Board encourages schools, through its School Council or other parent group, to establish a contingency fund of at least ten percent (10%) of the purchase price of playground equipment for ongoing maintenance and repairs.
7. The Principal, in consultation with the School Council, is responsible for selecting a play structure from a manufacturer which must meet or exceed design and performance specifications as established by the Manager of Building Services.
8. The Manager of Building Services is responsible for the final approval regarding standards of design, construction and location of all playground equipment prior to purchase, donation or construction. Preference will be given to lower risk and lower maintenance structures.
9. Although the Board accepts design standards of reputable manufacturers, it has restricted certain design aspects. The following considerations shall be adhered to when purchasing or relocating any playground structure:

**Design:**

- a) Culverts, tire swings, sewer pipe, teeter-totters, merry go-rounds, pressure treated wood structural members, diggers and track rides shall not be installed.
- b) Maximum fall height of structures must be in accordance with current code.
- c) Pulleys and similar equipment hazardous to fingers, long hair and loose clothing shall not be installed.
- d) Pea stone, conforming to current Ontario Provincial Standards is to be used for the protective surface and must conform to the sizing requirements outlined in the current CAN/CSA standard.
- e) Play surface must conform to Ontario Regulation 191/11 **Integrated Accessibility Standards**, Sections 80.18, 80.19, 80.20. Protective standards are to meet or exceed current CAN/CSA. Annex H of the CSA Standard should be met.

**Location:**

- a) The equipment must be situated away from fire exits, fire routes, ploughing routes, potential portable sites, high traffic areas, underground and overhead

service gullies, waterways, rocky terrain, and hard surfaces, and must minimally affect the operations of grass cutting.

- b) The location must be clearly visible from the school and, wherever possible, within public view.
- c) The location must be a well-drained area.
- d) Play structure containments are not to be placed within fifteen (15) meters of an existing sand box.
- e) The Board reserves the right to restrict other design aspects as deemed appropriate.

### **C. INSTALLATION OF PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT**

1. The Principal, in consultation with the School Council is responsible for choosing a location on the property for the playground equipment with approval of the Board's Manager of Building Services.
2. Volunteer installations are not permitted.
3. A qualified professional (e.g. manufacturer or vendor) must install all structures, equipment, materials and containment (as approved by the Manager of Building Services). On completion, the manufacturer must provide the Board with a letter indicating that the equipment and installation conforms to the current CAN/CSA guidelines and standards, and the terms and conditions of the guarantee and warranty.
4. The Manager of Building Services shall ensure that all installers of playground equipment on Board property provide proof of liability insurance in the amount of not less than two million dollars (\$2,000,000.00) with the Board named as an additional insured. The installer must also provide a Certificate of Good Standing from the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board.
5. The installer is required to barricade equipment on a daily basis until all work is completed (e.g. snow fence).
6. All surface and ground preparation must be provided by qualified personnel in accordance with recommended CSA standards.
7. The Principal and Manager of Building Services shall ensure that all newly installed equipment and site preparation and ground cover is inspected prior to use by a certified playground inspector. The Principal will retain the inspector's checklist for future reference, and a copy will be sent to the Manager of Building Services.
8. All playgrounds must have signage to identify manufacturer's information, the intended age of users (provided by manufacturer), and the manufacturer's contact number.
9. All playgrounds must have signage indicating that they are unsupervised outside of school hours. Refer to Appendix 'A' for signage wording.

## **D. INSPECTIONS FOR NEW OR EXISTING EQUIPMENT**

### **1. Daily Inspections**

The Principal shall implement a daily visual inspection program to look for overnight vandalism to the play structures or harmful debris under the structures (e.g. broken glass). Simple documentation of such should be maintained for three years. (Please see attached Appendix 'B' for sample daily inspection form.)

### **2. Monthly Inspections**

The Principal shall implement a monthly inspection program. This shall entail checking for loose bolts, wearing of chains or swing seats, etc. and the general security of the structures. Monthly inspections shall be logged. (Please see attached Appendix 'C' for sample inspection form.)

### **3. Annual Inspections**

The Manager of Building Services shall implement an annual inspection program performed by a professionally certified Canadian playground Inspector. The annual inspection will be done in accordance with the manufacture's recommendations and the current CSA standards. The Principal should attend the annual inspection so that first-hand knowledge of potential problems can be gained. If during an inspection, a weakness is identified in a structure and it cannot be immediately repaired, the equipment shall be isolated or removed from service until repairs can be made. A copy of the annual inspection will be delivered to the Principal and School Council. (Please see attached Appendix 'D'.)

## **E. ON-GOING MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS**

1. The School Council or Parent Committee shall assume responsibility for maintaining the structures to required standards and will make repairs to play structures. The Manager of Building Services will provide a list of approved playground repair contractors, and all repairs will be completed by one of the pre-qualified contractors. If the equipment poses a safety hazard and the school funds are not available, the equipment shall be taken out of service and/or removed. The repairs shall be completed using the 10% contingency fund established by the School Council. The fund shall be returned to the minimum 10% within a reasonable length of time.
2. Some minor repairs may be performed by the Board's maintenance staff. The Principal is responsible for contacting the Manager Building Services to determine what work, if any can be accomplished in-house.
3. If the Manager of Building Services becomes aware of a maintenance issue when the Principal and/or School Council are not available (i.e. summer months) Board staff will take action to make the play structure safe.
4. The Board shall assume responsibility for maintaining the protective surfaces to required standards for each creative play structure.

## **F. PLAY STRUCTURE REMOVAL**

1. Once a Principal and School Council have received an inspection report that designates aspects of a play structure as unsafe and not conforming to the CSA guidelines, the equipment will immediately be taken out of service and the school will have a period of three (3) months to develop a plan to rectify the situation. If a playground action plan is not submitted to the Manager of Building Services, the structure can be removed from the site by Board staff.
2. If at any time, the Principal, in consultation with the School Council determines that their play structure is not worth repairing, the Manager of Building Services can be contacted to remove the structure.
3. Equipment taken out of permanent service shall be dismantled, destroyed and disposed of.

## **G. WINTER USE OF PLAYGROUNDS**

It is the position of the Board that all playground equipment cannot be safely operated during the following winter conditions:

- a) freezing temperatures,
- b) snow build-up,
- c) ice or freezing rain,
- d) frozen ground cover, and
- e) periods when students wear winter clothing.

All playground equipment is off limits when the above winter conditions occur. Notice of this will be posted with appropriate signage and communicated to parents.

## **H. SAFETY RULES**

Teachers, students and volunteer supervisors should be introduced to the following rules with periodic reminders – e.g. September and March:

1. No pushing.
2. Walk; do not run on or under play structures.
3. Take turns.
4. No fighting.
5. In case of injury – DO NOT MOVE THE PERSON. Stay with person and send someone to notify the Principal or the Teacher in Charge of the accident immediately.
6. No throwing sticks, stones, or other objects.
7. No eating while on playground equipment.
8. Playground equipment is off limits during rainy weather or when conditions such as freezing temperatures, frozen ground cover, snow build-up, ice or freezing rain, and periods when students wear winter clothing.
9. Skipping ropes, ropes or strings are not permitted on playground equipment.
10. No bicycle helmets, scarves or loose drawstrings are permitted on playground equipment.

11. Schools should set rules for specific pieces of play equipment, e.g., define maximum number of students and age levels permitted.

## **I. ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

Parents are to be notified by the school that the Board does not carry accident insurance for students. Student Accident Enrolment forms for coverage are available at the start of each school year.

**The Board reserves the right to remove or relocate any playground equipment for safety, accommodation or other reasonable concerns.**







**APPENDIX B**

**DAILY PLAYGROUND VISUAL CHECK**

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Items	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Swings					
Play Structure					
Climbers					
Slides					
Other					
Site Conditions					

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**PLAYGROUND INSPECTION ITEMS**

- 1) Check for and remove loose garbage, debris, broken glass, animal droppings, etc..., from the play area
- 2) Check play structure for obvious signs of damage, vandalism, or broken parts. (Advise Maintenance immediately if service is needed)
- 3) Check for and remove skipping ropes or any other roped or climbing devices which have been attached to but are not a permanent part of the structure
- 4) Rake protective play surface to replenish areas beneath swing bays , slide exists and fire poles
- 5) Empty garbage can(s) located in the playground area.



**APPENDIX D**

**Playground Annual Inspection Report  
 Public School**

-----General Site Information-----			
Agency Requesting Inspection	District School Board Ontario North East	Inspection Date Time	
Phone	705-360-1151	Weather	
School Location		Temperature	
Inspector		Qualification of Inspector	Canadian Certified Playground Inspector
Purpose	Maintenance Planning	Standard Used for Evaluation	CSA Z614-?

----- Site Plan and List Of Equipment-----
Insert site Plan HERE

<b>Composite Play structure</b>	<b>Composite Play structure</b>	<b>Composite Play structure</b>

Composite Play Structure- Insert Picture of Structure	Composite Play Structure- Insert Picture of Structure
Composite Play Structure- Insert Picture of Structure	Swing set: Insert Picture of Structure

**1. Playground area & Protective surfacing:**

Item	CSA Z614 Clause#	Description	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory (hazard class)	Approximate cost to repair
1.1	10.4.2	Pea gravel shall be contained within barriers. Barriers shall be free from damage and not posing a trip hazard.			
1.2	10.4.3	Pea gravel shall be free from extraneous materials that can cause injury or infection.			
1.3	10.4.4	Pea gravel shall be at least 12" deep. Check minimum 3 locations.			
1.4	10.4.5	Pea gravel shall be raked, loose and free from contamination.			
1.5	10.4.8	There shall be no standing or ponding water in play area. Proper drainage is provided.			
1.6	12.6.1	Check for suspended hazards. (No cable, wire or rope suspended between units)			
1.7	12.6.2	Check for looping hazard. Rope, cable and chain shall be fixed at both ends.			
1.8	14.1.2	There shall be a no-encroachment zone provided which is obstacle-free.			
1.9	16.1	District School Board contact information is permanently located in the play space			
1.10	16.1	Manufacturer identification & contact information shall be permanently attached.			
1.11	16.3	Labels shall cause no injury.			

1.12	16.5	Labels shall not be removable without use of tool.			
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Remarks:

## 2. Play structure Platforms and means of Access / Egress:

Composite Play Structure-1:	
Insert Picture of Structure	
Composite Play Structure-2:	
Insert Picture of Structure	

## 2. Play structure Platforms and means of Access / Egress:

Item	CSA Z614 Clause#	Description	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory (hazard class)	Approximate cost to repair
2.1	7.2	Metal components are free from rust, properly painted or galvanized.			
2.2	7.5	Plastic components are not damaged, cracked or decayed.			
2.3	7.8.1	Fasteners are not loose or removable without use of tools. Locking means are provided for all nuts and bolts			
2.4	9.1.1	Equipment is structurally sound & properly secured to the ground. Check all welds.			
2.5	12.2.2	Check all accessible openings, rigid & non-rigid, for head entrapment hazard.			
2.6	12.2.4	Check all partially bounded openings for neck entrapment hazard.			
2.7	12.3.1	There shall be no accessible sharp points or sharp edges. The exposed open ends of all tubing not resting on the ground shall be provided with caps or plugs.			
2.8	12.4.3	Any accessible exposed bolt ends shall not protrude beyond the face of the nut more than two threads.			
2.9	13.1.1	Steps and rungs are placed evenly $\pm 6\text{mm}$ and are horizontal $\pm 2^\circ$ .			
2.10	13.2.2	Steps and rungs shall not trap water and shall not encourage accumulation of debris.			
2.11	13.1.4	There shall be at least two continuous hand rails on each side of stairways and ramps. For steps higher than 1.2m, protective barriers are required. For stepladders, a single continuous handrail shall be provided on each side.			
2.12	13.2.2.2	The anchoring device used to secure flexible climbers shall be below the level of protective surfacing.			
2.13	13.2.2.3	Connection between ropes, cables, chains or tires used as access to other components shall be securely fixed.			
2.14	13.3.3	For rung ladders, flexible components and arch climbers the last stepping surface shall be below platform surface.			
2.15	13.4.1	Platform surfaces shall be horizontal within $\pm 2^\circ$ .			
2.16	13.4.2	Any surface intended for walking or standing shall not trap water.			
2.17	13.4.3	Guardrails or protective barriers shall be provided for elevated surfaces higher than 500mm. They shall contain no designated play surface and discourage climbing.			
2.18	13.4.4	Protective barriers shall completely surround the elevated surface except for access points. The top surface to be at least 950mm high from platform. Torso probe shall not pass through any opening in protective barriers or infill between platforms.			
2.19	13.4.5	Access component to be considered for adjacent platform with height difference $>450$			
2.20	15.16	Check platform fall height. (measured 2.85m from the top of guardrail)			
2.21	15.17	Platform shall not trap water.			
2.22	15.18	Equipment support post shall contain no designated play surface.			

Remarks:

**3. Upper body and other stationary equipment:**

Upper Body Equipment of Composite Play Structure-1:	
Insert Picture of Structure	
Upper Body Equipment of Composite Play Structure-2:	
Insert Picture of Structure	

**3. Upper body and other stationary equipment:**

Item	CSA Z614 Clause#	Description	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory (hazard class)	Approximate cost to repair
3.1	7.2	Metal components are free from rust, properly painted or galvanized.			
3.2	7.8.1	Fasteners are not loose or removable without use of tools. Locking means are provided for all nuts and bolts.			
3.3	9.1.1	Equipment is structurally sound & properly secured to the ground. Check all welds.			
3.4	12.2.2	Check all accessible openings, rigid & non-rigid, for head entrapment hazard.			
3.5	12.3.1	There shall be no accessible sharp points or sharp edges. The exposed open ends of all tubing not resting on the ground shall be provided with caps or plugs.			
3.6	12.4.3	Any accessible exposed bolt ends shall not protrude beyond the face of the nut more than two threads.			
3.7	14.8	Surfacing is extensive enough to cover the recommended area			
3.8	15.3.1	Center-to-center distance between rungs or fixed handholds is less than 375mm.			
3.9	15.3.3	Rigid handgrips shall not rotate or twist about their own axis.			
3.10	15.3.4	The horizontal distance from the leading edge of the take-off or landing structure to the first handhold is less than 250mm. (& more than 200mm for rungs)			
3.11	15.3.5	The height of grasping device shall be less than 2.1m. (measured 2.05m)			
3.12	15.3.6	The height of take-off / landing structure shall be less 900mm.			
3.13	15.18	Equipment support post shall contain no designated play surface.			

Remarks:

**4. Slides:**

Slides on Play Structure-1:	Insert Picture here
Slides on Play Structure-3:	
Slides on Play Structure-2:	

4. Slides:

Item	CSA Z614 Clause#	Description	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory (hazard class)	Approximate cost to repair
4.1	7.2	Metal components are free from rust, properly painted or galvanized.			
4.2	7.5	Plastic components are not damaged, cracked or decayed.			
4.3	7.8.1	Fasteners are not loose or removable without use of tools. Locking means are provided for all nuts and bolts			
4.4	9.1.1	Equipment is structurally sound & properly secured to the ground. Check all welds.			
4.5	12.3.1	There shall be no accessible sharp points or sharp edges (Min R6mm). The exposed open ends of all tubing not resting on the ground shall be provided with caps or plugs.			
4.6	12.3.4	No surface intended for sliding shall contain rough textures or joints capable of abrading human skin. Minimum radius of curvature to be 6mm.			
4.7	12.4.2	There shall be no projection adjacent to slide that project upward from horizontal plane more than 3mm and any of protrusion gauges passes over it.			
4.8	12.4.3	There shall be no accessible bolt end adjacent to slide which projects more than two full threads beyond the face of nut.			
4.9	12.4.4	There shall be no projection adjacent to slide that increases in size and fits within any of three protrusion gauges.			
4.10	12.4.6	Check for entanglement hazard on all surfaces close to the start point of slide.			
4.11	14.5	Surfacing is extensive enough to cover the recommended area			
4.12	15.5.2.3	The depth of the starting platform on independent slides shall be more than 550mm and for slides on composite structure shall be more than 350mm.			
4.13	15.5.3.2	The slope of the sitting section shall be <5° from horizontal.			
4.14	15.5.4	Handrails or other means of hand support is provided at the sliding section entrance. All slides shall have protection to prevent lateral discharge at the beginning and extending partly into the sliding section.			
4.15	15.5.5.1	The height/length of sliding surface shall be <0.577			
4.16	15.5.5.2	No span of sliding surface shall have a slope >50°			
4.17	15.5.5.5	The slide chute inside width shall be >400mm.			
4.18	15.5.6	The exit section shall not trap water, minimum 275mm long and less than 275mm high from surfacing if platform is <1.2m. (Height to be <380mm for higher platforms)			
4.19	15.5.7	A clear area, free of equipment, shall surround the slide chute. (1.5m above, 525mm on each side)			

Remarks:

Insert Pic here

**5. To-Fro Swing sets:**

Item	CSA Z614 Clause#	Description	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory (hazard class)	Approximate cost to repair
5.1	7.2	Metal components are free from rust, properly painted or galvanized.			
5.2	7.5	Seats are not cracked, decayed or damaged.			
5.3	7.8.1	Fasteners are not loose or removable without use of tools. Locking means are provided for all nuts and bolts			
5.4	9.1.1	Equipment is structurally sound & properly secured to the ground. Check all welds.			
5.5	12.3.1	There shall be no accessible sharp points or sharp edges. The exposed open ends of all tubing not resting on the ground shall be provided with caps or plugs.			
5.6	12.3.3	There shall be no protrusion in the potential impact region of the front and rear surfaces of suspended members of swings			
5.7	12.3.4	No surface intended for seating shall contain rough textures or joints capable of abrading human skin			
5.8	12.4.5	Check S-hooks, C-hooks and other fastening devices for entanglement hazard. Device shall be closed with gaps<1mm.			
5.9	14.4.1	Surfacing is extensive enough to cover the recommended area			
5.10	15.6.1	Check Fall height (pivot point height is measured 2.6m above surfacing).			
5.11	15.6.2.1	Swings shall be located away from other equipment and circulation area and not be attached to a composite play structure.			
5.12	15.6.2.2	The support structure shall discourage climbing and have no designated play surface.			
5.13	15.6.2.3	No more than two seats within a bay. One user per seat. Seats are smoothly finished. Seats are Min. 300mm long and 100mm wide.			
5.14	15.6.2.4	Hangers shall have bearings or bushing which are in good shape and not worn out.			
5.15	15.6.2.5	Underside of occupied seat shall be at least 300mm above protective surfacing			
5.16	15.6.2.5	The horizontal distance between adjacent seats is >600mm and distance between seat and supporting structure is >750mm (1.5m above surface).			
5.17	15.6.2.5	Distance between hangers is greater than the width of seats and >500mm.			

Remarks: see next page.

<b>Overall Compliance Rating:</b>
Total number of class A hazards:
Total number of class B hazards:
Total number of class C hazards:

-----Recommendations & Conclusions-----

-----Basketball Field Condition report (not covered by CSA Z614)-----