

# AVON MAITLAND DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

### NO. 530

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#### **SUBJECT: PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT**

Legal References: *Education Act: Section 265 Duties of Principal: Care of Pupils and Property; Section 286 Duties of Supervisory Officers: Supervise Buildings and Property; Ontario Regulation 298 Operation of Schools Section 11 (3) (l) Duties of Principals: Inspect School Premises at Least Weekly and Report Need for Repairs; National playground Standard of Canada for Children's Playspaces and Equipment, CAN-CSA Z614*

Related References: *Administrative Procedure 351 Code of Conduct; AP 520 Surplus Assets; AP516 Purchasing Procedures; AP 517 Purchasing Authority*

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#### **1. Safe Playground Equipment**

- 1.1 This administrative procedure is intended to prevent or reduce student injuries.
- 1.2 This procedure is provided to ensure playground equipment meets all requirements of the National playground Standard of Canada for Children's Playspaces and Equipment CAN-CSA-Z614.
- 1.3 The following procedures are established for the purchase, inspection and maintenance of playground equipment.

#### **2. Administrative Procedures**

##### **2.1 Purchasing Playground Equipment**

- 2.1.1 The principal shall notify the Custodial Services Officer about the school's intention to purchase playground equipment, and use the **Playground Equipment Purchasing Procedures and Specifications**, attached as Appendix A.
- 2.1.2 The principal must ensure that all staff members and students are aware of the safety rules applicable to the new playground equipment. The playground safety rules shall be communicated at the beginning of each year, and reinforced throughout the year as necessary, particularly with staff members new to the school.

##### **2.2 Inspections**

- 2.2.1 The principal shall notify the Custodial Services Officer the date of installation of the new equipment and have a thorough and complete inspection report, in writing, from a certified playground inspector prior to the equipment being used.
- 2.2.2 The principal or designate shall carry out a visual inspection of the playground equipment and schoolyard on a **daily** basis and record the results on the OSBIE *'Daily/Weekly Playground Inspection Checklist'* attached as *Appendix B*. These records shall be kept in a binder at the school for the duration of the school year.

- 2.2.3 The principal or designate shall carry out a detailed inspection of all equipment and surfaces every **month**, and the results and actions taken entered in the *Recommended Maintenance/Inspection List attached as Appendix C*. These records shall be kept at the school for a period of 7 years for examination as necessary.
  - 2.2.4 The facilities department shall make arrangements to have a certified third party vendor perform a comprehensive inspection of all playground equipment and impaction testing of the safety surfacing **annually**. The results shall be entered in a permanent record and provided to the facilities department. A copy of the inspection will be provided to the principal upon request.
- 2.3 Reporting Procedures**
- 2.3.1 All staff members shall immediately report to the principal any unsafe condition or equipment that needs repairs.
  - 2.3.2 If repairs are required on a particular playground equipment component or structure, the principal/custodial will submit an electronic Maintenance Request Form.
  - 2.3.3 If the principal or designate deems the equipment or a component of the equipment to be unsafe, the facilities department will be contacted immediately and appropriate action will be taken by removing the component or fencing off the equipment. All staff and students shall be made aware of defective playground equipment.
- 2.4 Maintenance**
- 2.4.1 **General Repairs/Maintenance/Retrofits**  
The facilities department will source all maintenance and repairs to equipment and the replacement of components shall be carried out in strict compliance with the manufacturer's recommendations and CAN-CSA Z614 entitled **National playground Standard of Canada for Children's Playspaces and Equipment**. Details of the defect or problem and remedial action shall be recorded by the facilities department. The expected life cycle of playground equipment is a 10-15 year period.
  - 2.4.2 **Removal**
    - 2.4.2.1 Once purchased and installed on Board site, playground equipment becomes the property of the Board, and as such the Board will determine through inspections and standards when the equipment is unsafe for usage.
    - 2.4.2.2 Playground equipment that is deemed unsafe beyond repair shall be dismantled, removed and disposed of by the facilities department.
    - 2.4.2.3 Due to liability concerns, playground equipment that is deemed to be unsafe for students is not safe for anyone. No third party is allowed to purchase or receive equipment or components that are identified for disposal.
    - 2.4.2.4 The Principal will communicate in a timely fashion regarding the disposal, dismantle and removal of equipment to staff, school council, parents, trustee representative(s) and students.
    - 2.4.2.5 The principal will take appropriate precautions and communicate to all staff and students if heavy equipment is on the school property during school hours.
    - 2.4.2.6 All exposed and submerged concrete in the area of the playground equipment must be removed and the grade levelled.

### 2.4.3 **Safety Surface**

2.4.3.1 Safety surface can either be peastone or wood mulch-following the Boards specifications. Appendix D is a comparison of safety surfacing.

2.4.3.2 The principal or designate shall monitor protective surfacing regularly for displacement, compaction and reduced depth and ensure proper material depth and grade are maintained by contacting the facilities department to redistribute or add peastone. Peastone has a life expectancy of 5 years. Wood mulch has a life expectancy of 7 years, The cost of replacement will be shared by the school and facilities department.

2.4.3.3 The facilities department will have the safety surfaces of all playground sites tilled, added to and redistributed prior to the beginning of school in September and early spring.

### 2.5 **Winter Conditions**

Due to safety surfacing conditions it is strongly recommended that playgrounds will not be used during the winter season.

## PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT PURCHASING PROCEDURES AND SPECIFICATIONS

### Playground Equipment Purchasing & Installation

#### Guidelines Needs Identification

The principal is responsible for defining the needs of the school in considering the purchase of playground equipment. These include:

#### Equipment Height

The height from which a child falls plays a large part in the degree of injury he/she might sustain. How high is the highest point in which a child could climb on the adventure playground? Is it protected with railings? Should they be able to reach that part of the play structure? If not, is the access sufficiently blocked? Tip: The greater the fall height, the greater depth of peastone or wood mulch required - choose equipment designs that are close to the ground.

#### Equipment Users

What age of children will the equipment be purchased for? Playground equipment is age specific and should be identified by the manufacturer/dealer of the equipment. How many children can play on the structure at any given time safely? Some schools alternate the grade levels that are allowed on the equipment at each recess, possibly grouping the following together: Kindergarten, Grades 1-3, and Grades 4-6.

#### Equipment Layout

Equipment must be sited to ensure proper safety zones, traffic flow and play circulation. Moving equipment and slides require a no-encroachment and safety zones. When choosing a location look for nearby trip, impact and overhead hazards. For example, sewer grates, fence, trees, tree branches and hydro wires. Overcrowding of equipment and poor play circulation is not acceptable.

#### Protrusion & Entanglement

Clothing and drawstrings such as those found around the neck on jackets and sweaters can catch on playground equipment and are the most frequent cause of playground fatalities. This applies to climbing and sliding equipment. Bicycle helmets should never be worn on play equipment.

#### Pinch & Crush Points

Moving and rotating equipment have areas that can entrap fingers and puncture skin.

## Purchasing

1. The principal is responsible for selecting a company and acquiring the funds, i.e. fundraising, to purchase new playground equipment. Suggested playground equipment manufacturers/dealers are as follows:

Name	Telephone	Fax
ABC Recreation Ltd. Paris, Ontario N3L 3K0	800-267-5753	519-442-7378
Henderson Recreation Equipment Ltd. 11 Gilbertson Drive Simcoe, Ontario N3Y 4K8	1-800-265-5462	519-426-1132
Little Tikes 21 Scott Avenue Paris, Ontario N3L 3E7	800-256-9953	519-442-8200
Play Scope Recreation Hamilton, Ontario	905-521-8150	905-521-0160
Active Playground Equipment 186 Brunswick Avenue London, Ontario N6G 3K9	800-463-2361	519-657-2097

2. If the cost of new playground equipment exceeds \$5,000, the board will acquire the services of an outside playground consultant to assist with the selection, purchase, installation and inspection of the new equipment. Three quotes are required for any playground purchase totaling more than \$5,000.
3. The principal is responsible for choosing a location on the property for the new playground equipment. If the equipment is to be installed in a location where equipment did not already exist, then it is the principal's responsibility to find all service locates (i.e. Telephone, Natural Gas, Sewer etc.) before installation. A plot plan may be available from the facilities department. Any new locations for playground equipment must be approved by the Custodial Services Officer.
4. The attached document "*Playground Equipment Purchase Specifications*" (Exhibit 1) must be sent to the manufacturer/dealer when requesting a proposal for new playground equipment.
5. Once a decision is made on what equipment to purchase, a copy of the site plans/sketches must be approved by the facilities Custodial Services Officer.
6. All new playground equipment shall be installed by the manufacturer or supplier. The principal is responsible for organizing the installation of the playground equipment including acquiring heavy equipment and building material.
7. The principal is responsible for purchasing the safety surface, which will consist of approved peastone or wood mulch. The attached document "*Playground Surface Specifications*" (Exhibit 2 and Exhibit 3) must be sent to the company that will be providing the peastone or wood mulch. The depth of the peastone or wood mulch is determined by the manufacturer's/designer's recommendations.

8. All playground equipment will be purchased centrally through the purchasing department. The cost of purchasing playground equipment, including shipping charges, safety surface, building materials, etc. is the responsibility of the school. The cost of playground consultant fees and manufacturer's installation fees will be paid for by the facilities department of the board.

### **Installation**

9. Installation procedures shall follow those listed in the "Playground Equipment Purchase Specifications" (Exhibit 1) and in accordance with the manufacturer's/designer's instructions and procedures. All contractors must work in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations including wearing appropriate protective equipment.
10. During construction, the site and all material on it shall be secured when unattended to prevent children from playing on the site. The equipment must not be used until the safety surface is installed and the equipment has been inspected. If necessary, a snow fence may be required to barricade the equipment.

## EXHIBIT 1

Board Letterhead

(DATE)

(Company and Address)

Dear (Company Name):

Avon Maitland District School Board is accepting proposals for the purchase of new playground equipment at (School Name).

The playground equipment that a proposal is requested for is: (Name of Equipment and Product Code).

In order to ensure compliance with the National playground Standard of Canada for Children's Playspaces and Equipment CAN-CSA Z614, and reduce student injuries, Avon Maitland District School Board has developed and enclosed Playground Equipment Purchase Specifications that must be met prior to acceptance of your proposal.

Please forward your proposal to (School Contact's Name) by (Date). The mailing address is:

(School Mailing Address)

Thank you for your proposal

Kindest regards

(Contact's Name)

Dear Manufacturer/Dealer

To ensure that new equipment and surfaces are compliant with current Standards and to maximize the safety of play sites the Avon Maitland District School Board has developed Playground Equipment and Surfacing Specifications for inclusion in buying specifications:

**1) Standards**

CSA Standard Z614 as a minimum. Where the Standard is unclear or the issue unaddressed, current ASTM and United States Consumer Product Safety Commission Standards and Guidelines will be referenced and considered. Other recommendations that enhance user safety and eliminate potential hazards will be considered.

**2) Equipment Specifications**

- a) Guarantee from manufacturer/dealer/installer that they have physically measured the proposed site and used actual measurements in the submitted design/site plan for the site.
- b) Site plans/sketches must accompany all proposals and must clearly indicate all equipment dimensions including platform heights and heights from tops of guardrails and barrier panels to surface material fencing and retaining wall detail drainage provisions and detail safety zone/no-encroachment zone clearances.
- c) Statement and guarantee that all equipment layout surfacing and drainage provisions meet the Standards as set out in Clause 1 of this Specification.
- d) Vendors must acknowledge and agree in writing that proposals will be evaluated for compliance with the Buying Specification.
- e) Vendor/manufacturer/dealer/installer to provide a written statement outlining and defining the suitability of the equipment for the intended user age group.
- f) Vendor/manufacturer/dealer/installer must guarantee in writing that if required safety and no-encroachment zones, equipment, equipment installation, surface material, surface material installation or surface impact attenuation performance are found to not comply with the Buying Specification, that all deficiencies will be corrected at their entire expense within 10 working days from the date of notification of non-compliance.
- g) Following the post-installation inspection, the manufacturer/dealer/installer to guarantee in writing that the equipment complies with the purchasing specification and is acceptable for use.
- h) Vendor/manufacturer/dealer/installer must guarantee in writing that if required safety and no-encroachment zones, equipment, equipment installation, surface material, surface material installation or surface impact attenuation performance are found to not comply with the Buying Specification, that all deficiencies will be corrected at their entire expense within 10 working days from the date of notification of non-compliance.
- i) Manufacturer to provide a specific list of components to be inspected, procedures and required inspection frequencies as well as detailed maintenance procedures and requirements.
- j) Manufacturer/dealer/installer to provide, in writing, the maximum number of occupants permitted on equipment at one time and other recommended safety rules specific to the new equipment.



- k) All equipment must be designed and attached to the structure in such a manner as to eliminate the potential for user's scarves, toggles or drawstrings from clothing to become entangled or entrapped in or between components of the equipment. Actual, typical drawstrings found on children's clothing will be used to determine compliance with this requirement.
- l) No protrusions capable of entangling a user's clothing will be allowed. Protrusion gauges as described in CSA Standard Z614 will be used to determine protrusions on playground equipment.

### **3) Installation and Drainage**

#### **In-ground Installations**

Play site area to be excavated to a minimum depth as required by the manufacturer/designer. Play structure to be installed on concrete piers (sonotubes) of not less than 20 cm. (8") diameter at a depth of not less than 90 cm (36") below grade of excavation.

All footing to be installed in such a manner as to eliminate the potential for frost heaving, with the tops of all footings to be at least 38 cm (15") below the surface of the uncompacted protective surface in the case of natural surfaces.

All play structures with three or fewer adjacent platforms, swing frames and stationary play equipment, including spring toys and teeter totters shall be installed in compliance with this in-ground installation procedure.

#### **On-ground Installations**

Play site area to be excavated to a depth of not less than 60 cm (24") below finished grade. Stringers to be placed at a depth so that the top of the stringers are not less than 60 cm (24") below the finished grade.

All play structures with four or more adjacent platforms shall be installed in compliance with this on-ground installation procedure.

#### **Drainage**

10 cm (4") flexible perforated plastic drainpipe or 10 cm (4") perforated vinyl drainpipe shall be installed within all play sites. This drainpipe shall be installed in such manner to prevent the accumulation of any water within the surface and play site area.

2 cm (3/4") washed stone shall be placed on and around drainpipe to filter all run-off into the drainpipe.

A geo-textile or filter cloth shall be installed over the 2 cm (3/4") filter stone and placed at a depth of not less than 40 cm (16") below top of the protective surfacing.

Other drainage arrangements will be considered when accompanied by specifications and supplier/manufacturer guarantee that satisfactory drainage will be provided and maintained.

**4) Structural Integrity**

Playground equipment manufacturer/dealer/ installer shall provide all structural integrity testing data for the play equipment purchased and installed upon request and guarantee that the play equipment installed meets or exceeds the structural integrity requirements of CAN-CSA-Z614 **National playground Standard of Canada for Children’s Playspaces and Equipment.**

**5) Protective Coatings and Finishes**

Playground equipment manufacturer/dealer/installer shall guarantee the play equipment free of corrosion, rust, pitting and peeling of paint or protective finishes and structural degradation for a period of not less than 10 years from the date of installation.

**6) Warranty**

Vendors shall clearly indicate the specifics of the warranty offered with their product and the length for time for which the warranty is offered.

## EXHIBIT 2

Board Letterhead

Dear Manufacturer/Dealer:

To ensure that safety surfaces are compliant with current CSA Standards and to maximize the safety of play sites, the following specifications are required:

- All Suppliers of Natural Surfaces shall provide a written guarantee that the surface that they supply meets the requirements of that type of surface as specified in CAN-CSA-Z614 **National playground Standard of Canada for Children's Playspaces and Equipment.**
- Peastone shall meet ASTM C136-84a requirements. Particles must be rounded, washed stone with:
  - a) 100% to pass through 12 mm. (1/2") screen
  - b) 80% to pass through 9 mm. (3/8") screen
  - c) 58% to pass through 7 mm. (5/16") screen
  - d) 20% to pass through Num. 3 1/2 screen
  - e) 8% to pass through Num. 4 screen
  - f) 3% to pass through Num. 16 screen

Closing and Signature

## EXHIBIT 3

Board Letterhead

Dear Manufacturer/Dealer:

To ensure that safety surfaces are compliant with current CSA Standards and to maximize the safety of play sites, the following specifications are required:

- All Suppliers of Natural Surfaces shall provide a written guarantee that the surface that they supply meets the requirements of that type of surface as specified in CAN-CSA-Z614 **National playground Standard of Canada for Children's Playspaces and Equipment.**
- Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) shall meet U.S. Standard ASTM F2075. This standard includes minimum characteristics for the factors that determine particle size, consistency, purity and ability to drain. Standard ASTM F1292 is suggested for the impact-attenuation properties within a playspace environment. These Standards provide for a higher level of quality, greater durability and positive drainage properties. Wood sources should be checked for toxins or allergens prior to installation.

Closing and Signature

## Checklist for Purchasing Playground Equipment

#	Things to do	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	Determine a budget for purchasing new equipment. Remember to include the cost of hiring heavy equipment for excavation, safety surface and building materials, shipping etc. If the budgeted amount exceeds \$5,000, three quotes are required. Contact the Custodial Services Officer if the costs exceed \$5,000.	
2	Determine the age group that the equipment is to be purchased for.	
3	Consult other schools and/or the attached list <i>"Playground Equipment Manufacturers/Dealers"</i> and contact companies for a catalogue of playground equipment.	
4	Determine the location to install the new playground equipment. If the equipment is to be installed in a location where equipment did not already exist, then it is the school's responsibility to find all service locates (i.e. telephone, natural gas, sewer etc.) before installation. The Custodial Services Officer will provide a plot plan and must approve of the new location.	
5	Once a decision has been made on a few playground structures, contact the manufacturer/dealer to request a written proposal and/or presentation. Provide a copy of <i>"Playground Equipment Specifications"</i> to the manufacturer/dealer at the time of your request.	
6	Make the decision on what equipment to purchase. Ensure that manufacturer/dealer complies with all specifications, written in the <i>"Playground Equipment Specifications."</i> Provide a copy of the site plans/sketches to the Custodial Services Officer for approval.	
7	Once approval is granted by the Custodial Services Officer to purchase the equipment, set a date for installation and make arrangements for heavy equipment, building materials (including sonotubes, concrete) and any other material required by the manufacturer/dealer.	
8	Contact suppliers of safety surface and provide the dimensions and depth of the required safety surface and a copy of <i>"Safety Surfacing Specifications."</i> Make arrangements to have safety surface delivered to site on the day of installation. Take a copy of the contractor's ticket and ensure specifications are complied with.	
9	Have the manufacturer/dealer install the equipment.	
10	Once installation of equipment and safety surface is completed, notify the Custodial Services Officer who will contact the playground consultant to do an inspection. A copy of the inspection and all warranty information shall be forwarded to the environmental health and safety officer. Until the inspection and safety surface installation is completed, the equipment is off limits. Arrangements may be required to barricade equipment until work is completed. i.e. snow fence	
11	Ensure that training is provided to school personnel including what and how often to inspect and maintain equipment, as well as specific safety rules for using the equipment.	
12	Contact the purchasing department to make arrangements for payment of new playground equipment.	
13	Keep on file at the school the date of installation, manufacturer/dealer name, phone numbers, inspection report, warranty information, etc.	