
HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION**Policy Code:**

JH

Policy Title:Playground Equipment
and Playfield Facilities**POLICY HANDBOOK****Cross Reference:****Legal Reference:****Adoption Date:**

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POLICY

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION RECOGNIZES THE NEED TO PROMOTE POSITIVE PLAY EXPERIENCES WITHIN A SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND THE INHERENT VALUE OF PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN. THE BOARD, AS A RESPONSIBLE COMMUNITY PARTNER, SUPPORTS THE PUBLIC USE OF SCHOOL PLAYGROUNDS, PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT, AND PLAYFIELD FACILITIES OUTSIDE OF REGULAR SCHOOL HOURS AND REGULAR SCHOOL DAYS. THE BOARD IS RESPONSIBLE TO ENSURE THAT SAFETY IS PARAMOUNT IN ALL DECISIONS REGARDING PLAYGROUNDS, PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT AND PLAYFIELD FACILITIES.

THE BOARD SUPPORTS THE SAFETY AND INSTALLATION OF SAFE PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT AND PLAYFIELD FACILITIES BY THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY PARENT COMMITTEES AND/OR OTHER COMMUNITY PARTNERS WITHIN THE GUIDELINES OF THIS POLICY WHERE THE SELECTED EQUIPMENT PROMOTES A WIDE VARIETY OF PLAYGROUND ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO PROMOTE LIFE-LONG PHYSICAL FITNESS.

DEFINITION

Playfield Facilities: School outdoor play areas that are outside of the playground equipment on school property (e.g. baseball diamond, soccer field, track, field pitches).

REGULATIONS**A. Playground****1. Newly Purchased or New Donated Playground Equipment**

- 1.1. All donated equipment must be new from the manufacturer. No used or 'homemade' equipment will be installed on Board property.
- 1.2. 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.
- 1.3. Manufacturers of playground equipment that have been in business for ten years or more shall be given preference over other manufacturers of playground equipment. Refer to Board Policy DJD – Purchasing Locally.
- 1.4. Play structures manufactured by companies that have, or will be going out of business will not be purchased due to future unavailability of parts and comprehensive liability insurance of that manufacturer.

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- 1.5. 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.
 - 1.6. For the purpose of insurance, all donated or purchased playground equipment becomes the sole property of the Board.
 - 1.7. The school, through the School Council or other parent or community group, is responsible for:
 - 1.7.1. Acquiring the funds to purchase new playground equipment;
 - 1.7.2. all costs of the installation including equipment, containment, protective surfacing material, and any excavation work required beyond the capacity of the Maintenance Department;
 - 1.7.3. developing a plan for replacement of playground equipment.
 - 1.8. The Board encourages schools, through its School Council or other community group, to establish a contingency fund of at least ten (10%) of the purchase price of playground equipment for ongoing maintenance and repairs.
 - 1.9. 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 Horizon Facilities Manager.
 - 1.10. The Horizon Facilities Manager is responsible for the final approval regarding standards of design, construction, and location of all playground equipment prior to purchase. Preference will be given to lower risk and lower maintenance structures. The Facilities Manager also oversees the installation of appropriate signage.
 - 1.11. Schools are encouraged to give consideration to alternative play areas such as naturalized areas, berms, trees, and pathways. All plans require prior approval of the Horizon Facilities Manager.
 - 1.12. Although the Board accepts design standards of reputable manufacturers, it has restricted certain design aspects. Please see *Policy Attachment A: Design Considerations*
2. Installation of Playground Equipment
- 2.1 The Principal, in consultation with the School Council is responsible for choosing a location on the property for the playground equipment with approval of Horizon’s Facilities Manager.
 - 2.2 Volunteer installations are not permitted unless supervised by a representative of the manufacturer.
 - 2.3 A qualified professional (e.g. manufacturer or vendor) must install all structures, equipment, materials and containment (as approved by Horizon’s Facilities Manager). 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.
 - 2.4 Horizon’s Facilities Manager 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.
 - 2.5 The installer is required to barricade equipment on a daily basis until all work is completed.

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- 2.6 All surface and ground preparation must be provided by qualified personnel in accordance with recommended CSA standards.
- 2.7 The Principal and Horizon's Facilities Manager 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 Horizon's Facilities Manager.
- 2.8 All playgrounds must have signage to identify manufacturer's information, the intended age of users (provided by manufacturer), and the manufacturer's contact number.
- 2.9 All playgrounds must have signage indicating that they are unsupervised outside of school hours. This signage will be provided by the Facilities Department.

3. Inspections for New or Existing Equipment

- 3.1 The Facilities Department shall conduct a quarterly inspection program performed by a certified playground inspector. The annual inspection will be done in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and the current CSA standards. The Principal will be notified of the inspection date and time and he/she or a designate should attend the inspection so that first hand knowledge of potential problems can be gained. If, during an inspection, a safety hazard is identified in a structure and it cannot be immediately repaired, the equipment shall be isolated or removed from service by the Facilities Department until repairs can be made. Copies of the inspection report will be delivered to the school for the Principal and School Council.

4. On-Going Maintenance and Repairs

- 4.1 The School shall, through the School Council, or other community groups, assume responsibility for maintaining the structures to required standards and will make repairs to play structures. The Facilities Manager will provide a list of approved playground repair contractors, and all repairs that are beyond the capability of the facilities department will be completed by one of the pre-qualified contractors. The repairs shall be completed using the 10% contingency fund established by the School Council. The fund shall be returned to the minimum of 10% within a reasonable length of time.
- 4.2 Some minor repairs may be performed by the Board's maintenance staff. The Principal is responsible for contacting the Facilities Manager to determine what work, if any, can be accomplished in-house.
- 4.3 If the Facilities Manager becomes aware of a maintenance issue when the Principal and/or School Council are not available (i.e. summer months) Board maintenance staff will take action to remove or make the play structure safe.
- 4.4 The Board maintenance staff shall assume responsibility for maintaining the protective surfaces to required standards for each creative play structure.

5. Play Structure Removal

- 5.1 Once a Principal and School Council have received an inspection report that designates aspects of a play structure/equipment 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 Facilities Manager the structure can be removed from the site by Board maintenance staff.
- 5.2 If at any time, the Principal, in consultation with the School Council, determines that their play structure is not worth repairing, the Facilities Manager can be contacted to remove the structure.

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- 5.3 Equipment taken out of permanent service shall be dismantled, destroyed and disposed of.
- 5.4 Notwithstanding the above, the Board recognizes that existing play structures/equipment may not conform to CSA guidelines. In such cases, the Principal, in conjunction with School Council shall submit a play structure/equipment replacement plan to the Facilities Manager delineating a timeline for replacement.
6. Schools shall develop a set of playground safety rules that promote safe use of the equipment. The safety rules shall be communicated to appropriate stakeholders (staff, parents, students).
7. Accident Insurance
Parents are to be notified by the school that the Board does not carry comprehensive accident insurance for students. Student Accident Enrolment forms for comprehensive coverage are available at the start of each school year for parents to obtain for their children.

B. Playfield Facilities

1. The school, through the School Council or other parent or community group is responsible for acquiring the funds to purchase and/or install and/or construct playfield facilities.
2. The Division’s Facilities Department will, to the extent possible, contribute toward playfield structure purchase or installation when funds may be available through Capital Project initiatives or Infrastructure Maintenance Renewal Project approvals. The Board will only contribute funds to such planning within the limits of its financial capability.
3. Acquisition and installation of playfield facilities is subject to this policy and may only proceed following approval by Horizon School Division Facilities Manager.
4. The Division, Schools and Parent Councils shall ensure that playfield facilities on school property conform, at minimum with CSA standard.
5. The Division’s Facilities Department shall implement, in compliance with the CSA Standard, a regular inspection and maintenance program conducted by certified inspectors.
6. The Division’s school playfield facilities maintenance program shall include minor maintenance and repairs that are conducted on an ongoing basis (e.g. irrigation repairs, grounds keeping, and minor repairs to playfield equipment within the capacity of the facilities department).

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Horizon School Division
Policy: Playground Equipment
Attachment A: Design Considerations

Although the Board accepts design standards of reputable manufacturers, it has restricted certain design aspects. The following considerations shall be adhered to when purchasing any playground structure:

Design:

- (a) Non CSA approved 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 Provincial Standards is to be used for the protective surface and must conform to the sizing regulations outlined in the current CAN/CSA standard.

Location:

- (a) The equipment must be situated away from fire exits, fire routes, plowing 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) The Board reserves the right to restrict other design aspects as deemed appropriate.