



NATURAL PLAYGROUND PROJECT SCOPE

Natural Playground Project for St. Patrick School, Taber

Background

The idea of the natural playground is to make nature accessible, useful and enjoyable when it comes to learning and playing for SPT students. There is extensive research supporting the importance of school aged children getting outside to play and connecting with nature because it benefits their mental health and academic progress.

The idea of a natural playground originated when our old wooden playground was removed due to safety issues. Our students were upset that this play apparatus was gone, so they quickly wanted to fix the problem. In the midst of their problem solving, our students saw an opportunity for a Natural Playground to exist. And because we take pride in being a Green School that promotes healthy habits that are good for our environment this seemed like a logical solution. A Natural Playground is an outdoor area that is designed to provide a safe environment for play in a natural setting with nature-based features.

In June of 2019 our students and staff started to plan for a Natural Playground, with the support from our school council. With funds available for a field trip, we sent our young students on a day trip to explore Natural Playgrounds in our area. They played and took notes of all the fun features they experienced. Upon their return to our school each class made a list of their favourite parts of a Natural Playground. Their lists consisted of boulders, inclines, stumps, trees, mud kitchens and a wooden climbing apparatus'.

From here our school council hired Kirsten from Earthlings Inc. to design a natural playground that would fit in the space that is vacant. We shared our list of requested features and she drew up a plan that was approved by our students, staff and parents. Because we take pride in caring for our environment we found it fitting that most of our features are biodegradable and natural.



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The Plan





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Estimated Cost

The estimated cost to build the playground is \$50 705 before any in kind donations. Before COVID 19 we held one fund raiser and raised \$6300 dollars. We also have had small donations by community members and will continue to fundraise.

Here are the quotes provided by Earthlings Inc. to help us establish a baseline for cost:

The following budget includes all labour, equipment and materials - based from Aug. 27, 2020 layout plan

PLANT MATERIAL - \$21,975

Larger trees in basket - 11 tree @ \$525/tree = \$5, 775

Shrubs - 13 @ \$75/2-gal shrub = \$975

Sod - 10,500 sq.ft - soil (4"), grading, and sod = \$15,225

PLAY ELEMENTS - \$28,730

Mounds - \$18,850

Tunnel - 3' diameter 12' long - Not sure on cost

Slides - 5' tall 12' long (approx.) - \$15,000

Soil Large mound = 71 cu.yd. - \$2500

Small mound = 10 cu.yd - \$350

Bridge - 14' x 3'6" - \$1000

Stepping post - \$2,640

Excavation/hauling - \$ 340

Wood posts - usually this is donated from an arborist or someone who has a dead tree

Spray lakes wood carpet (playsafe) (12" deep for fall rating) = 20 cu.yd. - \$1700

Tar and house wrap for parts of post underground = \$600

Pea gravel area with Dock/Stage - \$ 2,180

Excavation/hauling - \$340

Pea gravel 12" deep - 9 cu.yd = \$675

Boulders x5 = \$625 Dock/ Stage = \$540

Climbing Boards - \$4,340 Excavation/hauling - \$340 Wood Structure - \$2300

Spray lakes wood carpet (playsafe) (12" deep for fall rating) =9 cu.yd. - \$1700

Posts for Creative use - \$720 6 - 23/8"metal posts in concrete 12' length (5' in ground and 7' above) = \$72



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Plan for Execution

The school's principal, Michelle Nevil, along with a school council representative will be attending our Town of Taber Council Meeting and the MD of Taber Reeve Meeting to present the project to inform the communities of our plans and to ask for in kind donations. We also will be sending letters to local organizations and businesses to ask for their support. As life in the school community resumes to normal over time we will continue our fundraising efforts. Upon approval we will also be seeking grants that will support this project.

We hope to execute this project in a maximum of three phases:

1. In the first phase we wish to build the incline, install the tunnel, build the bridge and plant some trees.
2. In the second phase we will purchase the slides and landscape the perimeter of the incline.
3. Then in the third we will complete plant work and implement the surrounding structures.