Develop Facility Standards for Playgrounds at Elementary - Special Education Cluster Sites

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose of Report: To receive School Board authorization for the modification of the current Elementary Facility Standards to include the recommended elementary cluster site playground standards.

The Sioux Falls School District is working to make playgrounds at cluster sites more accessible and enjoyable for students with varied cognitive and physical disabilities. Last fall, a playground review committee toured the District’s three elementary cluster site playgrounds at John F. Kennedy, Terry Redlin, and Susan B. Anthony Elementary Schools. The committee established three priorities for elementary cluster site playground standards: accessible surfacing, safety fencing, and a variety of equipment options. Recommendations for the JFK site include replacing some of the equipment and installing new accessible surfacing under the existing playground structure. At Terry Redlin, new surfacing and equipment will be added to the existing playground. The recommendation at SBA includes replacing or relocating equipment and installing new surfacing under other existing structures.

The projects will be phased in over multiple years in the District’s upcoming Capital Outlay Budgets.

Administrative Recommendation to School Board: Authorize the modification of the current Elementary Facility Standards, to include the recommended cluster site playground standards, for accessible surfacing, playground fencing and equipment. Instruct the administration to develop a multi-year plan to phase the recommended projects into the upcoming Capital Outlay Budgets.
Develop Facility Standards for playgrounds at the District’s Elementary - Special Education Cluster Sites

**Purpose of Report:** To receive School Board authorization for the modification of the current Elementary Facility Standards, to include the recommended elementary cluster site playground standards.

**District Priority Area:** F2: Operate and maintain efficient and secure facilities.

**Goal/Strategy:** F2.2: Study play-structure and surface alternatives at the elementary cluster sites, to set standards to meet the needs of these specialized students.

**Explanation:**
This past fall a playground review committee was formed to develop facility standards for Elementary School playgrounds that house the District’s elementary cluster program.

The committee discussed what playground opportunities should be available for students with cognitive and multiple disabilities, reviewed published design guidelines developed for inclusive play areas and toured the three District cluster playground sites. The committee then established the following priorities for elementary cluster site playground standards:

**Priority 1: Accessible surfacing;**
The committee recommends modifying the current engineered wood fiber surfacing under both standard and accessible play-structures on site to a poured in-place rubberized surface. Upgrading the surfacing of a standard play structures on site would allow cluster students access to the structure, enhancing the opportunity for them to interact with their non-disabled peers.

**Priority 2: Playground safety fencing;**
The committee recommends playground fencing around the playground site, to assure safety. They also felt that latch/locks on gates need to be in place.

**Priority 3: Equipment options;**
The committee recommends providing individuals with significant disabilities the following list of experiences. The list is in prioritized order:

- swing movement (variety of swing options)
- gliding/swaying motion
- rotary/spinning motion
- Access to various sensory stimuli devices

The committee reviewed the District’s three (3) elementary cluster site playgrounds at John F. Kennedy, Terry Redlin and Susan B. Anthony Elementary Schools, and have the following recommendations for each site to meet the new standards.
John F. Kennedy Elementary:
- Replace the current equipment with the exception of the swings in the cluster playground area with prioritized movements and install new accessible surfacing. (cost estimate $125,000)
- Install new accessible surfacing under the existing play structure on the north side of the playground. Update swings in this area when work is completed. (cost estimate $160,000)

Terry Redlin Elementary:
- Replace the current equipment in the cluster/south playground area with prioritized movements and install new accessible surfacing. (cost estimate $200,000)
- Install new accessible surfacing under the existing play structure on the north side of the playground. (cost estimate $65,000)

Susan B. Anthony Elementary:
- Replace/relocate the current equipment in the east playground area with prioritized movements and install new accessible surfacing. (cost estimate $125,000)
- Install new accessible surfacing under the existing play structure and swings on the west side of the playground. (cost estimate $120,000)

The committee recognizes that the projects will need to be phased in over a multiple years if approved.

Costs: See above

Committee Participation: 3-Principals at cluster sites, 4-cluster teachers, 1-Speech Language Therapist, 1-Occupational Therapist, 1-Physical Therapist, Purchasing Supervisor, Special Services Supervisor, Director of Special Services and Director of Operational Services

Summary: NA

Administrative Recommendation to School Board:
Authorize the modification of the current Elementary Facility Standards, to include the recommended cluster site playground standards, for accessible surfacing, playground fencing and equipment. Instruct the administration to develop a multi-year plan to phase the recommended projects into upcoming Capital Outlay Budgets.