

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

The Albemarle County School Board (“School Board”) recognizes the value of having appropriate playground equipment located in school playgrounds and recognizes the value of community participation in the development of these playgrounds. Playground equipment may be defined as any equipment to be installed on the playground site. All playground equipment must meet applicable ASTM standards.

Since the school playground is a part of the community, the development of the playground has to include community involvement. A playground planning committee may consist of parent representatives, teachers, and pupils who can contribute to the planning and development of an active, age-appropriate outdoor learning environment that is safe and fulfills the needs of both the community and the school. The playground must be developed in accordance with the procedures as noted in FE-AP established by the School Board and as amended from time to time. Consideration should be given to designing the outdoor learning environment to support the classroom learning environment.

Before installation, a building permit and subsequent inspections must be obtained from the Albemarle County Community Development Department for all new playground equipment. When equipment is installed on School Board property, the School Board assumes ownership of that equipment unless specifically stated otherwise by agreement. For this reason, the maintenance of the playground equipment installed by a School or Community Group will be the responsibility of the School Board.

Once equipment is installed on School Board property, the school principal/designee will have the responsibility to inspect the equipment on a regular basis, not less than monthly, and the authority, if such equipment is unsafe in any way, to order its repair or removal from the school property. The principal may also restrict or deny the use of such equipment until such time, that it is restored to safe condition.

The School Board, under the direction of the Director of Building Services, will perform or have performed an inspection of all playground equipment, not less than annually, to ensure the safe and proper condition of the equipment. If as a result of any such inspection(s) or as a result of items brought to the attention of the School Board, any repairs or removal of any equipment is deemed necessary in the sole opinion of the Director of Building Services, then the School Board will perform or have performed the necessary repairs or removal.

The School Board maintains the sole right to repair and maintain the equipment at a level which it deems acceptable. It also has the right to remove such equipment from operation at the playground if, in its opinion, the equipment is deemed unsafe and/or too expensive to maintain in operation.

Adopted: July 1, 1993
Amended: May 12, 2005; October 11, 2012; September 14, 2017; November 10, 2022
Equity Review: November 10, 2022

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-78, 22.1-79(3), 22.1-293(B)

Cross Refs: KH, *Public Gifts to Schools, School Board Members and Employees*
KG, *Community Use of School Facilities*

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Procedures

- I. The ACPS Capital Improvement Program will include playground funding as needed to maintain warranties on equipment and account for student growth. For designated capital playground improvements, the Building Services Department will manage the design and implementation with input from the school's playground planning committee.
- II. Where the school community expresses an interest in additional playground equipment, it is the responsibility of the school principal to notify the Director of Building Services of the school's interest. The principal/designee will act as the liaison with building services for the duration of the project.
 - A. The principal/designee will prepare a proposal in cooperation with the school community and a Physical Educator incorporating the following guidelines:
 - i. The structures must be closely related to the existing site.
 - ii. The structures will not interfere with the large open-space play areas.
 - iii. The structures are designed to elicit a wide variety of responses and appeal to the children's sense of creativity.
 - iv. The structures have a variable environment in terms of texture, levels, and heights as a means of providing for individual differences.
 - v. Opportunities exist for pupils to be self-testing and for self-initiated competition in the structures.
 - vi. Manipulation of equipment by children is possible.
 - vii. The structures provide for both individual and group activity.
 - B. The principal will be responsible for designating time limits within the context of the proposal leading to a proposed completion date and shall present initial drafts of the community plans to Director of Building Services.
 - C. The Director of Building Services will rule on the feasibility of the project following the principal's presentation. If the ruling is unfavorable, an appeal may be submitted to the Superintendent or his designee.

A proposal will show the following:

- A. a detailed building plan with a site plan;
- B. materials to be employed and sources;
- C. schedule of construction;
- D. labor arrangements; and
- E. full costing particulars, including community contributions and sources plus any proposed Board contribution.

The Director of Building Services will forward the proposal to the Superintendent/designee for approval of the School Board when satisfied that the proposal meets all School Board requirements.

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Amended: September 14, 2017; November 10, 2022
Reviewed: May 12, 2005
Equity Review: November 10, 2022
