



Playground Standards Ad Hoc Committee

Meeting Minutes #4

May 4, 2021

Co-Chairs: Curtis Lawyer, director, capital projects and Jessica Sankey, executive director, operations

Members present:

Alisson Bonner, Corbin Anderson, Corey Ayers, Mylo Allen, Amy Berreth, Micah Smith, Margaret Gude, Ali Bonner, Nic Castona, Rodolfo Riviere, Meredith Gant, Sarah Catudio, Jenny Brice, Cindy Pearson, Jen Mallet, Kristine Wilson, Patty Yunge, Kristi Wyandt-Varela, Gina Austin, Jonathan Schilk, Trevor Aeschliman, Joshua Cloud, Debbie Haney, Angie Ritchey

Welcome

1. Jessica reminded the group that the goal is not to make specific choices for specific playgrounds, but to articulate values for decision making when designing playgrounds.
2. The group decided to add an additional meeting on May 18 at 3:30.
3. Rodolfo led the group in a game “would you rather” as an icebreaker.

Playground surfacing

1. Josh and Jessica shared a grid that they created with values to use to define what surface works best.
 - a. First cost
 - b. Site prep requirements
 - c. Ease of maintenance
 - d. Ease of repair
 - e. Environmental/sustainability
 - f. Accessibility
 - g. Developmentally appropriate
 - h. Safety – meets fall protection standards
 - i. Encouraging of social connection
 - j. Sensory friendly
 - k. Encourages physical activity and fun
 - l. Performs well in pacific northwest winters, wet and cold
 - m. Aesthetics/color options
2. Jessica asked if these are the values we should be using to evaluate the decision of which surface to choose. Is this a useful tool?
 - a. The group discussed the values matrix and suggested additions such as using the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) lens.
3. Jessica asked the group who should be involved in evaluating these values; Trevor, landscape architect, vendors, COB.... Who else?
 - a. The group suggested that teachers and physical therapists should be part of the evaluation process.

Draft Value Statement:

Jessica shared the following draft value statement with the group:

In the Bellingham Promise we, as a community, make a collective commitment to Bellingham's children. We will empower every child to discover and develop their passions, contribute to their community, and achieve a fulfilling and productive life.

Key outcomes in the Promise include developing students who are leaders, collaborators and team players; confident individuals who continuously challenge themselves; healthy, active individuals; and well-rounded community members engaged with the broader world.

To meet those outcomes, we understand that all our school spaces are learning spaces, and our playgrounds are outdoor classrooms providing critical learning opportunities through play.

In order to meet the collective commitment of the Bellingham Promise, we build playgrounds that are:

Fun, engaging, challenging

Inspiring, encouraging adventure and imaginative use

Inclusive, with something for everyone

Built to encourage social connections through play

Developmentally appropriate

Sensory friendly

Safe welcoming play spaces

Community-friendly

Connected to nature

Full of swings & spinners

Discussion questions:

1. What is missing?
 - a. The word accessible should be added behind the word inclusive.
 - b. It was suggested that "diverse sensory needs" be used instead of "sensory friendly".
 - c. An addendum that defines UDL would be helpful.

Inclusion in learning spaces—playground equipment

Sarah Catudio and Jen Mallet shared a video about playgrounds.

1. The video highlighted the following:
 - a. Needs assessment- the who and why
 - b. Universal design
 - c. Interviewed children about what they liked about playgrounds and what barriers and challenges prevented them from being included.
2. The slide deck included resources with UDL playgrounds
 - a. Seattle Children's Playgarden
 - b. "Say 'Yes!' To Kids with Disabilities: Stories and Strategies for Including ALL Kids."
 - c. Kaboom
 - d. www.bcburke.com
 - e. www.miracle-equipment.com
 - f. www.carolinaparksandplay.com
 - g. www.aaastateofplay.com
3. Cindy shared with the group that the vestibular system is stimulated by spinning and swinging. Vestibular stimulation helps students with balance control, handwriting, computer use, PE, spatial orientation, math, writing, alertness, eye movements, tracking and reading.

Adjourn

Next meeting: Tuesday, May 4 3:30

Resources

- [The Bellingham Promise](#)
- [Policy & Procedure 3440](#)
- CASEL [SEL: What Are the Core Competence Areas and Where are they Promoted? \(casel.org\)](#)