



# **SCHOOL BOARD ACTION REPORT**

**DATE:** April 25, 2021  
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**For Introduction:** May 19, 2021  
**For Action:** June 2, 2021

## **1. TITLE**

Green Lake Elementary Acceptance of Playground Improvements Gift

## **2. PURPOSE**

School Board Policy No. 6114, Gifts, Grants, Donations & Fundraising Proceeds, stipulates that any gift to the district having a total value of \$250,000 or greater will be subject to School Board approval. The Green Lake Elementary Parent Teacher Association (PTA) has initiated a Self Help playground project at Green Lake Elementary that may exceed \$250,000. Upon completion, the project will become the property of the district, thus it is a “gift” to the district. This gift will benefit Green Lake students by reducing barriers to play for students of all abilities thereby enhancing connection to peers. This gift will increase the usable space on the site for increased access to play and leisure elements.

## **3. RECOMMENDED MOTION**

I move that the School Board accept Green Lake Elementary PTA’s gift of an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible playground ramp and hillside improvements, as described in the Board Action Report.

## **4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **a. Background**

The Self Help Projects Program has been a mechanism for volunteer-initiated facility improvements in the district since the mid-1970s.

More than 400 projects are introduced annually, with 80% to 90% of the projects reaching fruition. Some projects are completed in one day while others might take years from start to finish to allow for planning, design, and multiple phases of construction. The total value of all completed Self Help projects ranges between \$1,000,000 to \$3,000,000+ annually, including: (a) donated cash and grants, (b) donated time, (c) donated professional services, and (d) donated materials. The majority of project costs are covered by the projects’ sponsors, with occasional small amounts of funding or materials from district sources.

School Board Policy No. 6114 stipulates that a “gift” to the district exceeding \$250,000 in value is subject to School Board approval. For Self Help Projects, this has been interpreted to mean that any phase of a project where construction value exceeds \$250,000 is subject to this policy.

For purposes of this policy, the summary of cash and grants is used to calculate the value of a project. There are usually other contributions to a project that also add value, such as donated professional services, donated volunteer time, and donated materials. However, it is difficult to project the extent of these potential donations. Typically, those total values are not fully known until the completion of the project.

The Green Lake master plan was conceived in 2018 with funding from the Department of Neighborhoods and broad community input from school staff, students, families, and neighbors. More than 300 people participated in three community meetings and other forms of outreach. In the summer and fall of 2020, the district's Capital Department, through Building Excellence (BEX) V levy funding, addressed demolition of the nearly 30-year-old play structure and installed new play equipment with an ADA accessible playground turf and the PTA contributed funds to add a few supplementary components.

Since late 2018, the Green Lake PTA has been actively fundraising to complete Phase 1 of their master plan which includes (1) play feature improvements to the hillside, and (2) a substantial accessibility ramp connecting the upper school-level of the site to the lower playground level.

To date, the PTA has received the Jack Aherns Memorial Fund of \$22,797, Garneau Nikon Foundation Grant of \$18,340.35, Nesholm Family Foundation Grant of \$10,000, and the Harnish Foundation Grant of \$150,000. The Green Lake PTA also has raised funds through a direct ask campaign of \$91,427.65, a holiday tree sale of \$4,870, and a Go Fund Me campaign of \$19,766. They also have applied for the Department of Neighborhoods Matching Fund grant of \$50,000. The cost estimate for this phase of the PTA's Green Lake Playground Improvements project is between \$250,000 and \$355,000 dependent on the extent of fundraising. As mentioned, the project will construct a new ADA accessible ramp from the upper level of the school site down to the existing blacktop play surfacing. Green Lake Elementary houses a medically fragile program and many of its students use motorized wheelchairs or other mobility devices. The work also will utilize the existing slope to incorporate new slides and play component elements, as well as poured-in-place rubber safety surfacing. The project will vastly increase access to the playground for the medically fragile student population who attend Green Lake as well as increase play options for all students. Aspects of the plan include:

- A hillside based play structure components, complete with two ADA accessible slides with transfer platforms, and rope climbers set above a safety surface;
- A lengthy zigzag ADA pathway from the school to the playground;
- Natural areas for imaginative play and socializing;

- Donor paver installment;
- New tree plantings.

Construction will start following a robust invitation for bids process, including outreach to woman-owned businesses/businesses owned by economically disadvantaged individuals/small business enterprises (MWB/DBE/SBE) contractors, anticipated to occur in June, or when all funding is secured. Image of conceptual the PTA’s Phase 1:



**b. Alternatives**

Do not accept this gift. This is not recommended because of the opportunity to add a much-needed ADA connection between the building and playground, as well as added play components for children with physical challenges.

**c. Research**

Numerous studies indicate that playgrounds are an extension of a school’s learning environment, and support the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of children.

With the assistance of Site Workshop Landscape Architects, the Green Lake Elementary PTA solicited input from families, students, on-site childcare and neighbors as various options were developed. With a robust community engagement process, a final conceptual master plan was developed. The PTA’s Phase 1 represents the priorities of the community. BEX V demolished the old structure and added new play components which also was part of the PTA’s master plan intent.

**5. FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE**

Fiscal impact of this action will include: Self Help Projects staff time to oversee the project sponsors as they implement the project and routine on-going maintenance by Facilities staff.

The revenue source would be a one-time gift from the Green Lake Elementary PTA, which is expected to exceed \$250,000.

Expenditure:  One-time  Annual  Multi-Year  N/A

Revenue:  One-time  Annual  Multi-Year  N/A

**6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

With guidance from the District’s Community Engagement tool, this action was determined to merit the following tier of community engagement:

Not applicable

Tier 1: Inform

Tier 2: Consult/Involve

Tier 3: Collaborate

The Green Lake Elementary PTA was awarded City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods Matching Funds to hire a design team to assist with development of a conceptual master plan to improve the playground. The Department of Neighborhoods requires that projects involve the community during implementation (development of the plan) and benefit the community upon completion (playground improvements will benefit the community outside school hours). Community engagement meetings were organized to invite ideas and feedback from all participants and arrive at consensus through varying exercises.

**7. EQUITY ANALYSIS**

~~A race and equity analysis was not developed for this gift.~~

This gift that will improve accessibility to the Green Lake play area benefits a larger long-term improvement plan for the district’s playgrounds. The on-going effort to improve the district’s playgrounds is a coordinated effort between the Self Help Group and Capital Projects and Planning. -The district’s Racial Equity Analysis toolkit was utilized to guide the planning process for the BEX V Capital Levy, influencing community engagement methods, preparation of the 2018 update to the Facilities Master Plan, and ultimately the final proposed levy package. The board’s guiding principles stated that racial and educational equity should be an overarching principle for the BEX V Capital Levy planning efforts in accordance with Board Policy 0030, Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity. -In the development of the BEX V levy, Capital Planning worked with the Self Help group to review all district playgrounds, developed a list of

upgrades needed, and prioritized the needs of schools with higher needs (equity tiers 1 or 2) in developing the playground project list for the BEX V levy.

**8. STUDENT BENEFIT**

Playgrounds are an extension of the learning environment, and support the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of children. The playground at Green Lake has seen few playground improvements since the school was constructed in 1970. The renovation of the hillside section of the playground by Green Lake Elementary PTA will result in a wide variety of active play options for students of all abilities on a daily basis.

**9. WHY BOARD ACTION IS NECESSARY**

- Amount of contract initial value or contract amendment exceeds \$250,000 (Policy No. 6220)
- Amount of grant exceeds \$250,000 in a single fiscal year (Policy No. 6114)
- Adopting, amending, or repealing a Board policy
- Formally accepting the completion of a public works project and closing out the contract
- Legal requirement for the School Board to take action on this matter
- Board Policy No. 6114, [Gifts, Grants, Donations and Fundraising Proceeds, stipulates that a “gift” to the district exceeding \$250,000 in value is subject to School Board approval.]
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. POLICY IMPLICATION**

Per Board Policy No. 6114, Gifts, Grants, Donations and Fundraising Proceeds, “Any gift of any type having a total value (including both the contribution and any district resources required to be contributed) of \$250,000 or greater will be subject to Board approval.”

Policy 7115, Plaques, Name Plates and Donor Walls  
Policy 6807, Self-Help Projects

The Green Lake Elementary playground improvement project complies with each of these board policies.

**11. BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

This motion was discussed at the Operations Committee meeting on May 6, 2021. The Committee reviewed the motion and recommended it for approval.

**12. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

Upon approval of this motion, the Green Lake Elementary PTA will continue fundraising efforts, solicit bids, and proceed with construction of playground improvements during the summer, with oversight by Self Help Projects staff. Upon completion of the project in the fall of 2021, the district will inspect and formally accept the project, upon which it becomes district ownership.

**13. ATTACHMENTS**

- Not applicable