



To:

Faribault School Board
Jamie Bente, Superintendent, Faribault School District;
Scott Gerdes, Director of Finance and Operations, Faribault School District;
Kain Smith, Buildings and Grounds, Faribault School District;
Nick Jurrens, Principal, Jefferson Elementary School;

From: Eric Weiss, Community Powered Parks Program Director, Trust for Public Land

Date: October 21, 2022

Subject: Community Schoolyard Project at Jefferson Elementary School

Background Information

Trust for Public Land (TPL) creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come. TPL's Minnesota office – based in St. Paul – works to protect the places people in Minnesota care about. Trust for Public Land works with communities large and small to ensure everyone has a high-quality park, trail, or natural area within a 10-minute walk of home. The Community Powered Parks program partners with those living in urban, suburban, and rural cities. Community Schoolyards is an initiative of the Community Powered Parks program.

A Community Schoolyard is an outdoor school space reimagined to address health, equity, and climate issues, designed through a place-based community-led participatory design process, and open and welcoming to the public. TPL has partnered with schools on over 280 schoolyard projects.

Collaboration with Jefferson Elementary School

In the fall of 2021, Jefferson Elementary School staff applied to TPL's schoolyard support program. The school's front playground has reached its useful lifespan and requires replacement. Opportunities exist to improve the design, programming, and maintenance of the schoolyard to include community preferences better; address health, equity, and climate; and continue to serve as a recreational and education hub of the community.

Nine schools applied to the program, and Jefferson Elementary was selected. The competitive program, funded by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF), will support the advancement of a Community Schoolyard pilot project at Jefferson.

In the spring of 2022, TPL will work with the 3rd-grade class at Jefferson to identify site issues and opportunities, learn about the design process, and create a vision for the schoolyard.

Funding

TPL proposes to re-grant a total of \$150,000 in ENRTF funds to Faribault Public School District to cover the design, approvals, and construction of the first phase of schoolyard improvements.



While the total schoolyard renovation budget is unknown, we do know the current budget will not cover the complete renovation and upgrade of the front playground. For this reason, we intend to phase improvements. The focus of ENRTF is on advancing the state's natural resources and outdoor education; therefore, the first phase of the schoolyard project will focus on tree canopy enhancement, outdoor learning, and natural improvements and play. These improvements will take place on the eastern edge of the front playground, leaving space for future phased improvement on the western half of the front playground when additional funds are secured.

Next Steps and Timeline

TPL and school staff request board authorization to seek a design-build vendor, through a formal Request for Proposal process, capable of providing professional services, including schematic design, design development, construction documents, and turn-key construction of a nature-based, park-like schoolyard improvement project at Jefferson Elementary School in Faribault, MN. A review committee consisting of TPL and school staff would review proposals and bring forth a recommended vendor sometime this winter. Schoolyard designs would be finalized this spring and construction would take place over the summer.

In addition to authorization to release the RFP, the school board is asked to take other administrative actions needed to accept re-grant dollars and amend the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Trust for Public Land.