

Playgrounds FAQ

A number of questions have come in regarding the playground announcement that Premier Christy Clark made on September 2, 2011. We hope the FAQ below will provide you with some answers. If you have any other questions, please contact: John Woycheshin – email John.Woycheshin@gov.bc.ca – tel 250 356-2360

1. Which school received funding for new playgrounds?

Earlier this month the Premier announced funding for schools that needed playground equipment. Initially, 44 schools were identified by school districts as not having a playground. Following the announcement, a few districts discovered errors in their reporting. There are now 41 schools listed below, for which school districts will receive \$50,000 each for the purchase and installation of new adventure-style playground equipment.

School District 8 (Kootenay Lake)
Trafalgar Middle School

School District 20 (Kootenay-Columbia)
Rossland Secondary School

School District 23 (Central Okanagan)
Constable Neil Bruce Middle School
Glenrosa Middle School
KLO Middle School,
Springvalley Middle School
Dr. Knox Middle School
Rutland Middle School

School District 28 (Quesnel)
Narcosli Elementary School

School District 33 (Chilliwack)
Rosedale Traditional Community School
Vedder Middle School

School District 34 (Abbotsford)
Abbotsford School of Integrated Arts (ASIA) – Sumas Mountain Campus
Colleen and Gordie Howe Middle School
Eugene Reimer Middle School
WA Fraser Middle School
Abbotsford Middle School
Clayburn Middle School

School District 36 (Surrey)
Adams Road Elementary School
Hazelgrove Elementary School

School District 38 (Richmond)
Daniel Woodward Elementary School

School District 43 (Coquitlam)

Citadel Middle School
Como Lake Middle School
Kwayhquitlum Middle School,
Maillard Middle School

School District 46 (Sunshine Coast)

Pender Harbour Elementary-Secondary School

School District 49 (Central Coast)

Oweekeno Elementary School

School District 52 (Prince Rupert)

Prince Rupert Middle School

School District 60 (Peace River North)

Wonowon Elementary School

School District 63 (Saanich)

North Saanich Middle School

School District 64 (Gulf Islands)

Phoenix Alternative Elementary School

School District 67 (Okanagan Skaha)

McNicoll Park Middle School
Skaha Lake Middle School

School District 71 (Comox Valley)

Brooklyn Elementary School – Cape Lazo Campus

School District 72 (Campbell River)

Phoenix Middle School
Southgate Middle School

School District 79 (Cowichan Valley)

Mount Prevost Middle School

School District 82 (Coast Mountains)

Mount Elizabeth Middle School
Skeena Junior Secondary School

School District 83 (North Okanagan-Shuswap)

Silver Creek Elementary

School District 91 (Nechako Lakes)

Mapes Elementary School

School District 93 (Conseil scolaire francophone)

École des Navigateurs (Richmond)

This list includes a small number of new schools as their students did not have playground equipment on which to play, similar to the rest of the schools announced. The Ministry is making a policy change to ensure that no new elementary school – or middle school that should have a playground – will be built without a playground in the future.

2. Are there any limits on the funding?

School districts will receive \$50,000 from the Ministry of Education for the purchase and installation of playground equipment for each of the 41 recently-announced schools, which were identified as having students with no access to playground equipment. Where schools have been identified as acquiring playground equipment in 2011 (January 1st to September 1st) through contributions made by PACs, reimbursement of up to a maximum of \$50,000 will be available. Based on the priority set by school districts, schools may qualify for the replacement or upgrading of existing playground equipment. For a full playground replacement, districts will receive \$50,000 per qualifying school. In the case of playground upgrades, districts will receive \$25,000 per qualifying school.

The funding amount for new or replacement playground equipment is based on an independent expert's assessment of the costs to purchase and install a small to medium-sized adventure-style playground set. The funding amount for the upgrade or repair of existing playground is calculated at one-half of the new or replacement amount.

3. Will all schools get some of the playground money?

Not all elementary and middle schools will be eligible for playground equipment funding. The funding made available to address playground equipment needs is tiered, with the first category being schools that have students with no access to a playground; the next category is a reimbursement for district-identified playground equipment installations funded by PACs since January 1st, 2011; and the third category is schools identified and prioritized by districts as having minimal playground equipment or equipment that needs upgrading or replacement.

The \$8 million of capital funds available to school districts over the next two years allows for a minimum of 160 qualifying schools, based on the maximum allocation of \$50,000 for each school. With 41 schools already announced, the final number will depend on the actual amount allocated in recognition of contributions made by PACs for playground equipment (up to \$50,000 per school), and the number of schools that can be funded from the remaining funds for playground equipment upgrades or replacements (\$50,000 per school), and for playground equipment upgrades (\$25,000 per school).

4. What construction time frame can a school expect?

The Ministry is now finalizing the lists of schools eligible to receive funding under the three categories, based on information that has been provided by the school districts. The Ministry expects to be able to advise districts within a few weeks regarding the process and timing for accessing their capital fund allocation for each of the two years. School districts will then be responsible to work with the qualifying schools regarding the timing for the purchase and installation of new playground equipment, and the repair or replacement of existing playground equipment.

5. Can these funds be used on installation costs?

Unlike Gaming Funds, this capital funding may be used for installation costs. Arrangements for the installation of new or replacement equipment will be made between the school district with the qualifying school.

6. Is there an opportunity for any reimbursements for playgrounds installed prior to 2011?

The primary purpose of this funding is to ensure elementary-age students have access to adventure-style playground equipment. After that, the Premier wanted to acknowledge the work PACs and school districts are doing across the province regarding playground equipment at their schools. Lastly, any remaining funds are intended to address existing playground equipment that districts identify as needing the most work. To be able to reasonably address the second category, the reimbursement funding was targeted to playground equipment purchased and installed since January 1, 2011.

7. How does a PAC apply for a reimbursement?

Unlike previous playground equipment initiatives, this capital funding program does not involve applications being made by individual PACs. School districts have already identified which schools have purchased and installed playground equipment since January 1, 2011. All the schools on that list will be considered for reimbursement for the cost of equipment and installation, up to \$50,000. If a PAC has questions about whether their contribution for playground equipment was submitted to the Ministry, they should contact their school district.

8. Who is the contact for enquiries about funding for playground equipment?

Questions on which schools were identified in regards to access to playground equipment by elementary-aged students, PAC contributions, or the need for upgrade or replacement of existing playground equipment should be directed to your school district administration.

9. Can independent schools apply for playground equipment funding?

No. Unlike previous playground equipment initiatives, this Ministry of Education program is based only on capital (building construction) funding for public schools. Independent schools do not receive capital funding from the Ministry of Education.