



AVONDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOND COMMITTEE NOTES

General Meeting Summary

- **Playground Renovation Funding:** Significant budget allocated for renovating outdated playgrounds, addressing key concerns from families.
- **Phased Funding Approach:** Initial bond phase funds construction and tech; second phase dedicated to playground improvements.
- **Site-Specific Issues:** Each playground requires customized solutions; drainage issues at Woodland and Deerfield need separate attention.
- **Inclusive Design Principles:** Focus on diverse play activities and accessibility for all children, incorporating various development needs.
- **Flexible Equipment Budget:** Equal budget per school allows for tailored piece selection, ensuring user engagement and maintenance ease.
- **Timeline for Installation:** Playground equipment to be installed in summer 2027; early design input needed from community stakeholders.

Notes

Playground Renovation Funding and Scope

The bond includes a significant playground renovation budget addressing the top concern of elementary families, focusing on replacing outdated equipment and improving facilities.

- The first phase of bond funds prioritized new construction, HVAC, and tech upgrades, while the second phase opens funds specifically for playground improvements.
- Each school building has a unique playground profile, requiring tailored solutions; representatives from every building except Graham attended.
- All schools have flagged play equipment that will be replaced, separate from the budget allocated for new equipment.
- Drainage issues in some playgrounds like Woodland and Deerfield are longstanding and will be tackled separately from the playground equipment budget to ensure proper site conditions.

Playground Design Principles and Accessibility

The design will focus on a balanced playground approach, incorporating swinging, spinning, rocking, climbing, and balancing to engage various muscle groups and developmental needs.

- Equipment will be developmentally appropriate, differentiating between younger grades (K-2) and older elementary students (grades 3-5) due to varying needs.
- Accessibility extends beyond wheelchair access to include users with different developmental abilities and preferences for group or solo play, ensuring inclusive play environments.
- Surface materials will be upgraded from engineered wood fiber to a combination of wood chips and targeted rubberized mats for ADA compliance and safety, balancing cost and accessibility.

Playground Equipment Replacement and Expansion Strategy

A detailed inspection identified specific equipment needing replacement at Auburn, Deerfield, Graham, and Woodland, with no replacements required at GATE.

- The new playground budget is equal for each building, allowing flexible approaches: one large

- play structure, several smaller pieces, or a mix, depending on building needs and preferences.
- Large play structures consume the entire budget and offer limited flexibility, whereas smaller individual pieces allow phased replacement and variety, which is preferred for long-term maintenance and user engagement.
- Popular equipment like spinning climbers will be considered due to strong student demand and safety certification, with vendor representatives to present detailed options in follow-up meetings.

Site-Specific Considerations and Challenges

Each building faces unique constraints regarding space and shade, influencing playground expansion plans: Auburn and Deerfield likely will expand existing play areas, GATE has three potential spots with shade concerns, and Graham will split equipment between two play areas.

- Woodland faces severe drainage and flooding issues, making drainage correction critical before installing new equipment; cleaning and repairing existing drainage systems will enable full use of current play areas.
- Drainage problems often stem from clogged underground systems and external factors like blocked neighborhood detention ponds, requiring coordination with Oakland County for long-term resolution.
- Tree roots, overgrown trees, and deteriorating railroad ties at Deerfield create safety hazards and tripping risks, prompting consideration of tree removal and site resurfacing to improve safety and accessibility.

Timeline, Stakeholder Engagement, and Next Steps

The playground equipment installation is scheduled for summer 2027 due to long manufacturing lead times, emphasizing the need for early design decisions.

- After this initial group meeting, individual school meetings will be scheduled from mid to late January through mid-June to gather detailed input on equipment type and placement.
- Stakeholders are encouraged to engage PTOs and community members for feedback to ensure the final designs meet user needs and expectations.
- Digital materials, including this presentation and meeting notes, will be shared via the bond page and directly with committee members to aid ongoing discussions.
- Special considerations, such as preventing hair entanglement on equipment that has caused injuries, will be raised with the manufacturer's expert during equipment selection to ensure safety and inclusivity.

Action items:

Dan Jerome & Nick Owens

- Schedule and conduct individual meetings with each school after winter break to gather detailed playground needs and location preferences

Megan Molloy

- Distribute this PowerPoint presentation and notes to committee members and post on the bond page for broader community access

School Representatives

- Discuss playground equipment options and location ideas with school staff, PTO, and community members before January meetings

Playground Manufacturer Representative

- Present catalogs and equipment options to schools to assist selection after receiving initial

preferences

Dan Jerome & team

- Conduct additional site inspection at Deerfield and other affected schools for tree root and drainage issues; evaluate necessary tree removal and drainage remediation accordingly

District/Bond Committee

- Coordinate with Oakland County regarding clogged neighborhood detention ponds impacting playground drainage