



# **Nativity Elementary School Playground Renovation PHASE II Proposal**

**Presented to the Nativity PTO Board; 09.14.09**

**Written by Lee Hoedl, Nativity Playground Renovation Committee Chair**



## **PROPOSAL OVERVIEW**

Fueled by Nativity Elementary School's central mission [*Since 1961, Nativity Elementary School continues to provide its students and families with a rich blend of quality education and spiritual enhancement. It is this quality education that addresses the student's mental, social, spiritual, and physical well-being.*] and with permission from the Nativity PTO Board representatives on April 23, 2009, the original Nativity Playground Renovation Committee was given permission to further investigate the advancement of a Phase II process for the remainder of the Nativity playground area.

With regards to a Phase II process of the Nativity playground area, the Nativity Playground Renovation Committee was charged with the following three goals and initiatives:

1. Investigate all present and potential future needs for the recreation/exercise/fitness needs of our students;
2. Implement a tentative plan and timeline for realizing these needs within the given physical space that is present in the remaining portion of the Nativity playground;
3. Present that tentative plan, timeline and financial implications to the Nativity PTO by the first PTO meeting of the 2009-2010 academic year.

Present Nativity Playground Renovation Committee membership is comprised of the following:

- Lee Hoedl, Chair
- Cindy Hutchins, Nativity Elementary School Principal
- Chris Meier, Nativity PTO Representative
- Rita Visser, Parent Representative
- Margit Schmelka, Parent Representative
- Gretchen Noah, Parent Representative
- Neil Landstrom, Parent Representative
- Paul Kochmann, Parent Representative
- Ken Follman, Ex Officio Member – Dakota Fence
- Liz Mathison, Parent Representative
- Greg McCormick, Parent Representative
- Barry Anderson, Nativity Staff Representative
- Paul Savageau, Nativity Staff Representative

For the sake of new members to the present Nativity PTO Board, the Nativity Play Station Replacement Plan (presented to the PTO Board on 03.14.08) is also included. As well, images of the past, present and proposed playground space are included.

## **COMMITTEE INVESTIGATION/FINDINGS; SUMMER 2009**

Investigative work concerning present and unrealized playground space during the summer of 2009 revealed the following:

- Due to the need to stay within the initial \$40,000 play structure/playground renovation budget of 2008, the Nativity Playground Renovation developed a Phase II process – should personal/corporate donations exceed expectations.
- Photographs of the remaining playground space, following the play structure installation, showed extreme wear and deterioration (refer to *2008 Additional Playground Concerns*, p. 13).
- Due to the past Nativity PTO Boards' success in recent fundraising and fiscal management, the present FCSN loan will be paid in full in the fall of 2009.

- Relying on past communal input collected during the initial stages of play structure design and valued input from present Nativity physical education instructors, research into the feasibility of a sports court formation should be undertaken.
- The space between the present swing set area on the east side of the Nativity playground and the very eastern border of the present play structure area would be large enough to accommodate an all-season sports court.
- In measuring out the remaining unconnected area between the east and west wood-chipped areas of the playground (refer to *Proposed 2010 Playground Renovation Space*, p. 14), there would be sufficient room for a sports court, the Johansen Memorial Park area and a few remaining outdoor athletic stations.
- In investigating an initial price breakdown for a potential sports court, these amounts were developed:
  - Sports Court Concrete Foundation - \$40/sq yard (Total: \$10,700)
  - Sports Court Tiling - \$4.88 per tile (Total: \$11,520 - Self-installed)
  - 4 Basketball Hoops - (Total: \$7000)
  - Remaining Outdoor Athletic Stations (Total: \$10,000)

Based on the above committee investigation and findings, the following proposal below has been crafted to present to the Nativity PTO Board at their September 14, 2009 meeting, both as a springboard for further discussion and as a commitment to further advance the Nativity playground area.

Any and all inquiries concerning the Phase I and possible Phase II process can be directed to Lee Hoedl at [leehoedl@yahoo.com](mailto:leehoedl@yahoo.com) or 701.306.1266.

### **NATIVITY PTO PROPOSAL; 09.14.09**

The Nativity Playground Renovation Committee presents the following proposal for consideration:

It is proposed that the Nativity Playground Renovation Committee be given the authority to pursue the following immediate initiatives:

1. Initiate discussions so as to provide a final design to the Nativity PTO Board for the Phase II process of the Nativity Playground (refer to *Proposed 2010 Playground Renovation Space*, p. 14), not to exceed \$40,000. Should the final design exceed this stated amount, the Committee must forward all recommendations to the Nativity PTO Board for final revision and approval before the project can continue;
2. Upon approval of a final design by the Nativity PTO Board and the ability of Sports Court of Fargo (Deckmaster) and Dakota Fence to work within the given timeline, the Committee will work to complete installation of the new playground play station by the beginning of the 2010-2011 academic year;
3. Involve the Nativity community for the remainder of the academic year and through the summer of 2010 so as to secure volunteers for the installation phase of the new playground area, so as to reduce overall labor costs;
4. Develop a communal celebration so as to unveil the new playground area to the Nativity community at the beginning of the 2010-2011 academic year;
5. Due to the initiation of a potential Phase II process of the Nativity playground renovation, the remaining balance of the current FCSN loan be paid in full no later than the end of September 2009.
6. A new proposed FCSN repayment plan (based on a \$40,000 loan amount) be developed between the FCSN Superintendent, Nativity School Principal, Nativity PTO President and Treasurers and Nativity Playground Renovation Committee Chair. This repayment plan

would go into effect on May 1<sup>st</sup> of the year following the completion of Phase II installation and be paid in full by May 31, 2015.

7. It is proposed that the Playground Renovation Committee and the Nativity PTO work with the FCSN Development Staff in the identification of potential donor(s) toward a smaller portion of the Phase II process, as well as identifying and securing potential donors for materials such as concrete, pea rock, wood chips, etc. needed to complete the Phase II process.

The following website has been designed and will be updated to continually inform the Nativity community as to the progress of the play station replacement and fundraising efforts:

<http://www.hoedlshaven.com/NATIVITYPLAYGROUND>

This website will remain current until the project has reached its conclusion and all financial responsibility for payment has been realized.

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## **Nativity Playground Play Station Replacement Plan;**

### **Submitted to the Nativity PTO Board - 03.14.08**

#### **HISTORICAL OVERVIEW**

Since 1961, Nativity Elementary School continues to provide its students and families with a rich blend of quality education and spiritual enhancement. It is this quality education that addresses the student's mental, social, spiritual, and physical well-being.

Affirming this education within its mission statement and following an initial examination of the present 20+-year old outdoor play station structure in the spring of 2007, the Nativity Parent-Teacher Organization formally decided to address the replacement of the present playground structure. This initiative had been identified and placed on the Nativity PTO Board's on-going wish list since 2005.

Within the context of the 2007-2008 Nativity Budget development, Nativity Principal Cindy Hutchins presented the Nativity PTO with preliminary research (in cooperation with Dakota Fence) that estimated initial costs for the replacement of the present play station structure (excluding the stand-alone playground equipment). These initial costs were estimated over \$50,000.

Because of the amount of funding needed and the need to replace the present play station structure, the Nativity PTO Board was asked to consider the development of a completely separate multi-year fundraising effort to address this project.

On May 20, 2007, the Nativity PTO unanimously approved a motion presented by Lee Hoedl to form the Nativity Playground Renovation Committee. This committee will be assigned the responsibility of:

1. Further investigating the present condition of the play station structure and expenses for the

full replacement of that structure. The reporting of these initial expenses to the Nativity PTO Board will occur before proceeding with any fundraising process or efforts;

2. Serving as a separate fundraising entity from the Nativity PTO Fundraising Committee, but to work closely with this standing committee;
3. Serving as a representative committee of the larger Nativity Elementary community;
4. Providing the Nativity community with adequate information as to the project's process and progress.

As well as the committee formation on May 20, 2007, the Nativity PTO Board appointed Lee Hoedl as Chair of the Nativity Playground Renovation project.

Following this appointment, it was Lee Hoedl's intention to accomplish the following initiatives prior to or at the beginning of the 2007-2008 academic year:

1. Identify initial members to the Nativity Playground Renovation Committee so as to begin addressing the committee's responsibility addressed in #1 in the previous paragraph;
2. Meet with Todd Mickelson, Development Director of the Fargo Catholic Schools Network, to notify him of the potential fundraising aspect of this particular project;
3. Meet with personnel of Dakota Fence to revisit the estimates initially gathered by Cindy Hutchins and to receive additional clarification of the play station structure's present condition;
4. Host an initial meeting of the Nativity Playground Renovation Committee so as to provide them with a general overview of this project and all information gathered as to the present date.

As of the authoring of this historical overview on October 1, 2007, the first three items listed as Lee Hoedl's intentions have been addressed. Information provided in the section Present Playground Renovation Progress addresses Initiative #3 above. Initiative #4 remains open-ended and hinged on the Nativity PTO Board's decision with the enclosed proposal.

### **PRESENT PLAYGROUND RENOVATION PROGRESS**

Following a conversation with Todd Mickelson, FCSN Development Director, on Wednesday, September 19, 2007, the following suggestions/recommendations were jointly agreed upon:

1. Work with Dakota Fence to prioritize the playground renovation process, based on safety first and then need. What absolutely needs to be replaced in the coming year and what can be replaced in a tiered fashion?
2. Rather than design a fundraising proposal from the perspective of a one-time fundraising expense, look at developing a cyclical process of replacing out portions of the playground equipment over several years - this will also alleviate a similar financial responsibility in 20+ years from now.
3. Assess preliminary costs for a cyclical process of playground equipment and suggesting a possible ratio-ed financial responsibility for the playground equipment renovation (i.e. as an

arbitrary example: 60% - Nativity PTO; 30% - FCSN; 10% - Nativity Church). When this process is suggested, perhaps the ratio allotted to Nativity Church could be built into their present plan for expansion/advancement.

In a meeting on Friday, September 28, 2007 with Dakota Fence personnel Ken Follman (Certified Playground Safety Supervisor), the following information was provided to Lee Hoedl:

1. Ken Follman shared a copy of the same document provided to Cindy Hutchins on April 12, 2007. It outlines the estimated costs for a suggested play structure, its installation and additional surfacing. Estimated costs are over \$50,000. A copy of this document is attached to this report.
2. The dome climber and the stand-alone playground equipment in the present Nativity playground were replaced as recent as 2003 and do not need to be replaced, nor are they included in the estimated costs in #1 above.
3. A sample sketch and overhead view of the proposed play structure replacement was provided. A copy of these documents is attached to this report.
4. Follman reported that the new codes for playground equipment were reestablished in 1992 and the present equipment does not satisfy these new codes, allowing the school to be susceptible to increased liability.
5. Follman's states that the play structure can be replaced in phases (three), but while it is being replaced, the new structure cannot be attached in any way to the existing structure. His recommendation is to remove all portions of the present play structure and begin replacing sections. This will obviously remove the option of using the entire structure and displace those students who are normally playing on this structure (approximately 33% of those playing on a playground at any given time).
6. If the project is "phased" in, section by section, there will be a 5-6% increase in cost over each year – to address inflation.
7. Dakota Fence does not bill its clients over a multi-year basis; Follman stated that a banking loan might be considered to cover the costs, while the Nativity community fundraises each year to cover the cost of the loan payments.

## **FINANCIAL ISSUES**

On October 17, 2007, a meeting of the following individuals was held to discuss the potentiality for concrete funding of the Nativity playground play station:

- Lee Hoedl, Nativity Playground Renovation Committee
- Kevin Wolf, Nativity Church Parish Council Representative
- Todd Mickelson, FCSN Development Director

Cindy Hutchins and Kyle Edgerton were unable to attend this meeting due to previous commitments.

After an overview of the history and present condition of the Nativity playground equipment, there was group consensus of the following:

1. The playground stand-alone equipment is in satisfactory condition and does not need to be replaced.
2. The play station is not in critical condition at present but a plan needs to be addressed so as to replace the equipment in the next 2-3 years. It was suggested that a target date for the play station to be replaced is during 2008.
3. The best choice for raising the necessary funds for a project of this size (approximately \$50,000) is from diverse sources (see NEXT STEP below).

## **NEXT STEP**

The possibility of using Nativity Elementary as a beta site for the Script Program was discussed; a program in which families purchase gift cards at face value for area major retailers and service providers through the school. A percentage of the sales would be kicked back to the school for programs and projects. Existing programs in other schools would need to be looked into so as to identify challenges, obstacles and benefits. At the conclusion of our meeting, the following seemed to be consensual points:

1. The funding of this playground project would be best served by coming from diverse sources: PTO funding, FCSN funding, Memorial/Donation funding and potential Script Program.
2. Todd Mickelson would look further into the Script Program (and existing programs) and provide Cindy and Lee with more concrete information as to start-up issues and challenges. I'm assuming Todd would also look into FCSN funding toward this project as well.
3. Lee will speak with the present PTO Board to see what financial commitment they might be able to make over the next few years toward this project.
4. Kevin Wolf would look into the memorial/donation funding potentiality through the school and church.

Following this meeting and in subsequent follow-up conversations with Kyle Edgerton and Todd Mickelson between November and December 2007, the following avenues were explored and clarified:

- It will not be feasible for Nativity Elementary School to take out an independent banking loan to fund the playground play station.
- At present, the opportunity for this particular project to serve as a Shanley Auction item does not seem possible.
- Nativity Church does not have a tradition and/or practice of memorial funding of parish items.
- At present, the Nativity Church capital campaign does not lend itself to being a funding source for the Nativity playground play station.
- The Script Program, addressed above, does not seem to be a feasible and immediate funding source for the playground play station replacement, due to what would seem to be an extensive and time-exhaustive phase with starting the program.

In mid-December 2007, Kyle Edgerton informed Cindy Hutchins and Lee Hoedl that the Fargo Catholic Schools Network would provide initial financial support for the new playground play station, with the stipulation that Nativity Elementary School pay back the amount, in full, within a specific timeline (refer to the timeline with Proposal Point D below). The meeting of these three individuals on March 10, 2008, was called to clarify the willingness of the FCSN to provide initial financial support and Nativity Elementary School's responsibility for financial restitution within a specific timeline (refer to section Nativity PTO Proposal).

## **STANDING QUESTIONS/CONSIDERATIONS**

No initiative of this magnitude can be undertaken without also expressing the standing questions that have arisen throughout the discussions to the present date. Each of these questions remain "standing" as there is not present answer and the questions themselves warrant possible further discussion by the Nativity Playground Renovation Committee and the Nativity PTO Board.

- How will ongoing (multi-year) and separate fundraising efforts for the playground play station affect the overall fundraising efforts of the Nativity PTO?
- Due to its multi-year nature of fundraising, how will the present Nativity Playground Renovation Committee remain focused on their fundraising efforts while also addressing the natural attrition and indoctrination of committee members?
- How will the Nativity Playground Renovation Committee go about specifically working with Todd Mickelson and other FCSN/school administration to identify potential donors for this project?

These standing questions are not intended to be an exhaustive list, as other questions will most likely emerge when the Nativity PTO Budget Committee, Nativity PTO Board and Nativity Playground Renovation Committee meet to discuss the present proposal and advancement of the playground play station.

## **NATIVITY PTO PROPOSAL**

Based on the information presented above and following a meeting between FCSN Superintendent Kyle Edgerton, Nativity School Principal Cindy Hutchins and I on Monday, March 10, 2008, I am submitting the following proposal:

A. It is proposed that the Nativity Playground Renovation Committee be given the authority to pursue the following immediate initiatives:

- Initiate discussions so as to provide a final design to the Nativity PTO Board for the new playground play station, not to exceed \$50,000. Should the final design exceed this stated amount, the Committee must forward all recommendations to the Nativity PTO Board before the project can continue;
- Initiate discussions so as to provide a financial plan to address Proposal Point D below, both in terms of reaching fundraising projections and within the projected timeline;
- Upon approval of a final design by the Nativity PTO Board and the ability of Dakota Fence to work within the given timeline, the Committee will work to complete installation of the new playground play station by the beginning of the 2008-09 academic year;
- Involve the Nativity community for the remainder of the academic year and through the summer of 2008 so as to secure volunteers for the installation phase of the new

- playground play station, so as to reduce overall labor costs;
- Develop a communal celebration so as to unveil the new playground play station to the Nativity community in the late summer of 2008;
- Develop a plan for committee member recruitment and transition over the entire timeline outlined in Proposal Point D below.

B. Due to transitory nature of an elementary school, the overall FCSN loan be paid in full no later than the end of the 2012-1013 academic school year. The proposed FCSN repayment plan (based on a \$50,000 loan amount) is projected on the following page.

C. It is proposed that the Playground Renovation Committee and the Nativity PTO work with the FCSN Development Staff in the identification of potential donor(s) toward a smaller portion of the playground renovation project's cost.

D. It is proposed that the Playground Renovation Committee work with the Nativity PTO in additional fundraising efforts to address the remaining balance of the FCSN loan.

The following website has been designed and will be updated to continually inform the Nativity community as to the progress of the play station replacement and fundraising efforts:

<http://www.hoedlshaven.com/NATIVITYPLAYGROUND>

This website will remain current until the project has reached its conclusion and all financial responsibility for payment has been realized.

# Pre-2008 Nativity Playground Space Images



# Pre-Construction Nativity Playground Space Images



## 2008 Constructed Nativity Playground Space Images



# 2008 Additional Playground Concerns



# Proposed 2010 Playground Renovation Space



SPACE A – Proposed Area for Sports Court (2394 sq. ft)

SPACE B – Proposed Area for Outdoor Athletic Stations and Memorial Park (1966 sq. ft)

# 2009 Present Proposed Playground Space

