

Playgrounds are a fundamental part of the childhood experience. A playground should allow children to develop progressively and test their skills by providing a series of graduated challenges. The challenges presented should be appropriate for age-related abilities and should be ones that children can perceive and choose to undertake. Preschool and school age children differ dramatically, not only in physical size and ability, but also in their cognitive and social skills. Therefore, age-appropriate playground designs should accommodate these differences with regard to the type, scale, and the layout of equipment.

To ensure safe playgrounds, schools must provide continuous safety training for teachers, develop safety management programs, and prepare children to identify potential hazards and manage acceptable levels of risk.

In order ensure the safety of children for whom these facilities are intended, the Newport School Department issues this policy to guarantee that all playgrounds are properly constructed and maintained. We expect that adherence to specific federal requirements for accessibility to playgrounds will be observed.

- a. The safety of each individual piece of playground equipment as well as the layout of the entire play area must be considered.
- b. The installation of equipment must have spacing no less that 3 % above the minimum requirements of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) guidelines for playgrounds.
- c. All playgrounds present some challenges and because children can be expected to use equipment in unintended and unanticipated ways, there must adult supervision at all times when the playground is in use during school hours.
- d. Historically, the initiation of playground construction has been the project of the PTO/PTSO organizations of the school. The school principal must be involved in the discussion and in agreement with the proposal.
- e. Upon organization of a playground committee, under supervision of the school principal, tentative approval of the Newport School Committee must be obtained.

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- f. The playground committee shall make selection of the site for the playground with agreement of the school department's Director of Property Services and the City Director of Parks and Recreation.
- g. The playground committee shall make selection of the company/manufacturer and playground equipment with agreement of the school department's Director of Property Services and the City Director of Parks and Recreation.
- h. Schematization of the playground, with the schedule for construction, must be presented to and gained approval from the:
 - 1. City Planning & zoning office for building Permit
 - 2. Newport School Department, Director of Property Services
 - 3. City of Newport Director of Parks and Recreation
 - 4. Newport School Department Superintendent
- i. Submit proposal to the Newport School Committee for final approval
- j. Obtain signed agreement from company/manufacturer

Playgrounds must be consistent with The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability.

In order to gain school committee approval, construction must follow the recommendations of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission must be followed, and provisions of the ADA, Title III must be heeded.

2010 Playground standards (9-14-2010)

Reference

Handbook for Public Playground Safety, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 1990, Title III

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