

Byrd School Outdoor Classroom Project - INFORMATION SHEET

Why do we want to blend the classroom curriculum with a schoolyard outdoor space?

Children learn best by doing. Our aim is to create a well-planned outdoor classroom at the side of our school. It will have a canopy, pavers, benches, trees and beautiful landscaping to create a fantastic outdoor environment that offers rich learning experiences not found indoors.

How much will this cost?

How will we get the money?

The total cost for this project is \$20,000.

The Byrd HSA is holding a [Casino Night fundraiser](#) on March 6, 2010. This is our sole "large fundraising" event for the year, and we are targeting income of \$8,000.

The balance of the funds will come from \$7,000 in our existing HSA savings account and a \$5,000 "[Toolbox for Education](#)" grant we have applied for and hope to receive from Lowe's.*

What is the mission of the project and what does it mean to the school?

In a well-planned outdoor environment, our children will notice the weather, insects, plants and everything going on around them. Outdoor learning centers offer specific learning opportunities, just as indoor classrooms do. We can cultivate writing or reading, or work on science — experimenting, discovering and exploring in unique and beneficial surroundings.

We have a strong vision of improving the outdoor environment of our school, which has been in need of a facelift for years. This project will bring parents and children in our small school together and build an even stronger community spirit by creating something very beautiful in a residential neighborhood.

Our neighborhood school, established in 1915, is on a plot of land that measures only 200 feet wide x 450 feet deep. The building covers more than 30% of the land. Many children walk to school and many more spend hours after school playing on the playground. We don't have room for a field or a ballfield, but the side of the school is perfect for a creative new outdoor classroom. To transform an under-utilized part of the schoolyard into a dynamic center for learning and community life would be a dream come true.

Volunteer Plan

Parents, students, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, teachers, town council members and school board members have already volunteered their time and sweat equity. We will recruit any other helpers needed to complete this job successfully and beautifully, and make it a project that the whole town can be proud of.

Project Schedule/Time Line:

February 2010	Submit grant application; preliminary work with landscape architect
March 2010	Major auction fundraiser for school (please RSVP by February 19)
April 2010	Work on plans, decide on pavers, benches, accessories, plants
May 2010	Notification about the Lowe's grant Finalize plans with landscape architect, order all furniture and materials
June 2010	Site work, purchase plants, complete the Outdoor Classroom
September 2010	Grand opening and dedication in time for start of new school year

Cost breakdown:

Item	Cost per item	Number of items	Total
Paver Walkway/Patio (materials and labor)	6,500.00	1	6500.00
Landscaping/Site Work (Trees, Bushes, Flowers and Privacy Hedge)	4,100.00		4100.00
Curved Benches	500.00	8	4000.00
Canopy	3,000.00	1	3000.00
Electrical and Plumbing	1,000.00		1000.00
Shed	600.00	1	600.00
Science and Discovery Cart	500.00	1	500.00
Bird Feeder and Bath	150.00	1	150.00
Weather Station	150.00	1	150.00
		TOTAL	\$20,000.00

* Next-step funding options (if we don't receive the Lowe's grant) will be discussed at the February 23 HSA meeting, where members are invited to ask questions and vote to approve a \$1,500 retainer for the landscape architect.