



ARPA - Proposed Projects

Town of Westport - American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Proposals

Outdoor Classrooms

Rationale:

- Outdoor learning centers offer opportunities for safety, fresh air, and movement during the school day
- Solid evidence from organizations such as “American Institutes for Research” (AIR) demonstrate that outdoor learning opportunities lead to increased development of many social emotional capacities (i.e. independence, confidence, creativity, decision-making and problem-solving skills, etc)
- Evidence also suggests that outdoor learning and access to nature leads to decreased levels of stress in students and teachers
- Establishing outdoor learning centers at our elementary schools would make Westport the first in the state to offer outdoor learning centers at all of its elementary schools
- Outdoor learning centers would be available for community use outside of school hours

Cost:

- **Estimated cost for an outdoor classroom is between \$80,000 - \$120,000 per school**
- **Request is for \$50,000 for each school (total of \$250,000)**
- **Elementary PTAs have discussed fundraising to make up the difference**



Curricular Examples for Outdoor Learning Centers

Social/Emotional Learning

- Conduct the “morning meeting” or circle time outside

Language Arts

- Read alouds
- Write outside, or use outdoor or environmental-themed reading materials
- Writing pieces that use the outdoor environment as inspiration
- Facilitate a traditional Writers’ Workshop and offer journal reflection opportunities while outside.

Math

- Geometry/shape instruction:
 - Use sticks and math manipulatives to create regular and irregular shapes, and acute, obtuse and right angles
 - Kinesthetic based learning by making angles with your own body, observing in shadows from sunlight

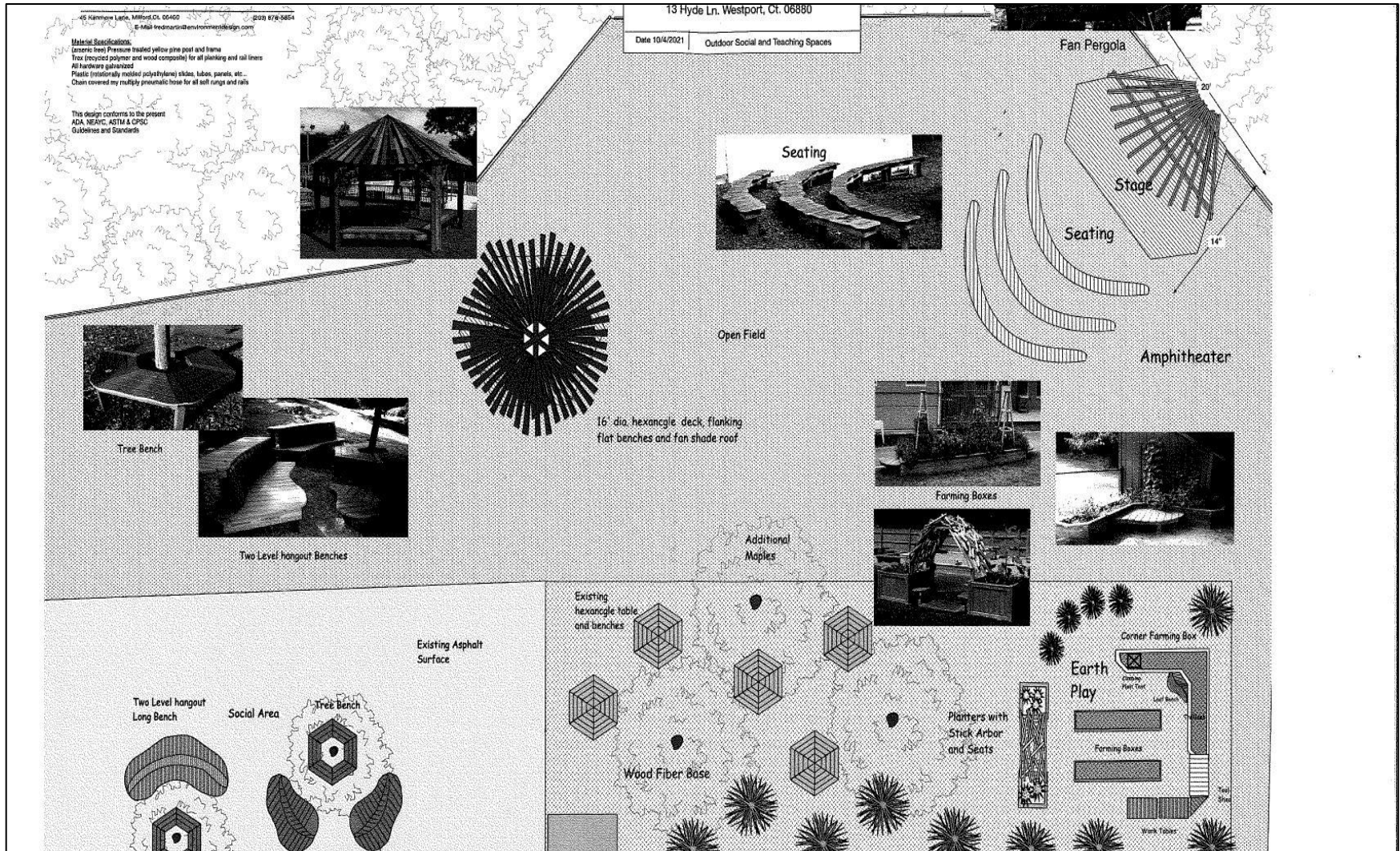
Science

- “Seed to plant”: plant seeds in the ground instead of in cups
- Natural erosion observation: use outside ground as lab instead of trays of soil or rock.
- Daily calendar/weather observations outside
- Conduct light and shadow experiments using the sun and shade outside
- Track the sun’s position in the sky daily throughout the seasons

Examples of Outdoor Classrooms



Outdoor Classroom Rendering for Long Lots



High 5 Adventure Learning Center

Rationale:

- Purposefully incorporate additional opportunities into our PE program at Staples High School for
 - Team development and collaboration skills - experiences for any group desiring to improve the way they learn and work together
 - Leadership development - understanding and development of leadership skills

This proposal includes high and low elements and the training necessary to initiate an adventure learning program at Staples High School.

Estimated Cost:

Equipment: \$56,000

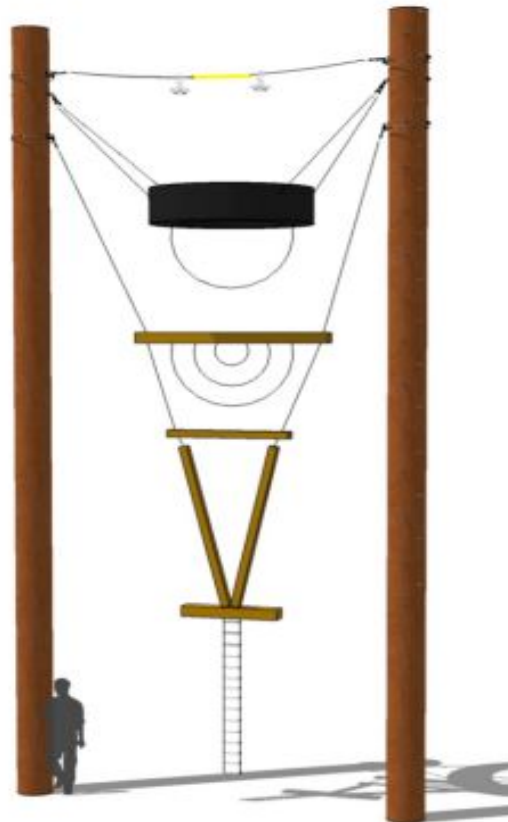
Training: \$7,200

Total: \$63,200



Vertical Playpen

Although Vertical Playpen designs may vary, most include a potpourri of vertical challenges, created from rope, wooden beams and different sized tires.



Indoor	X
Outdoor	X
High	X
Low	

Dangle Duo (shown), Trio and Quad

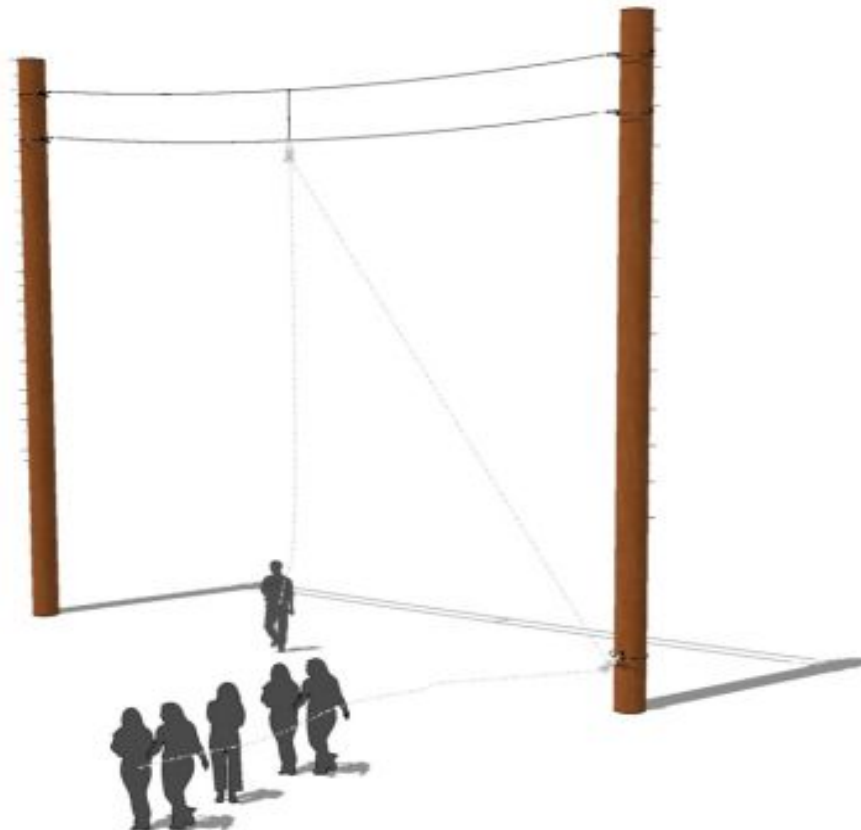
A vertical hung, oversized ladder suspended from an overhead cable or clipped directly into support trees or poles. The rungs are usually 4x4x8 treated lumber or larger. Red cedar is used for indoors. A separate belay cable is suspended above the uppermost log.



Indoor	X
Outdoor	X
High	X
Low	

Flying Squirrel

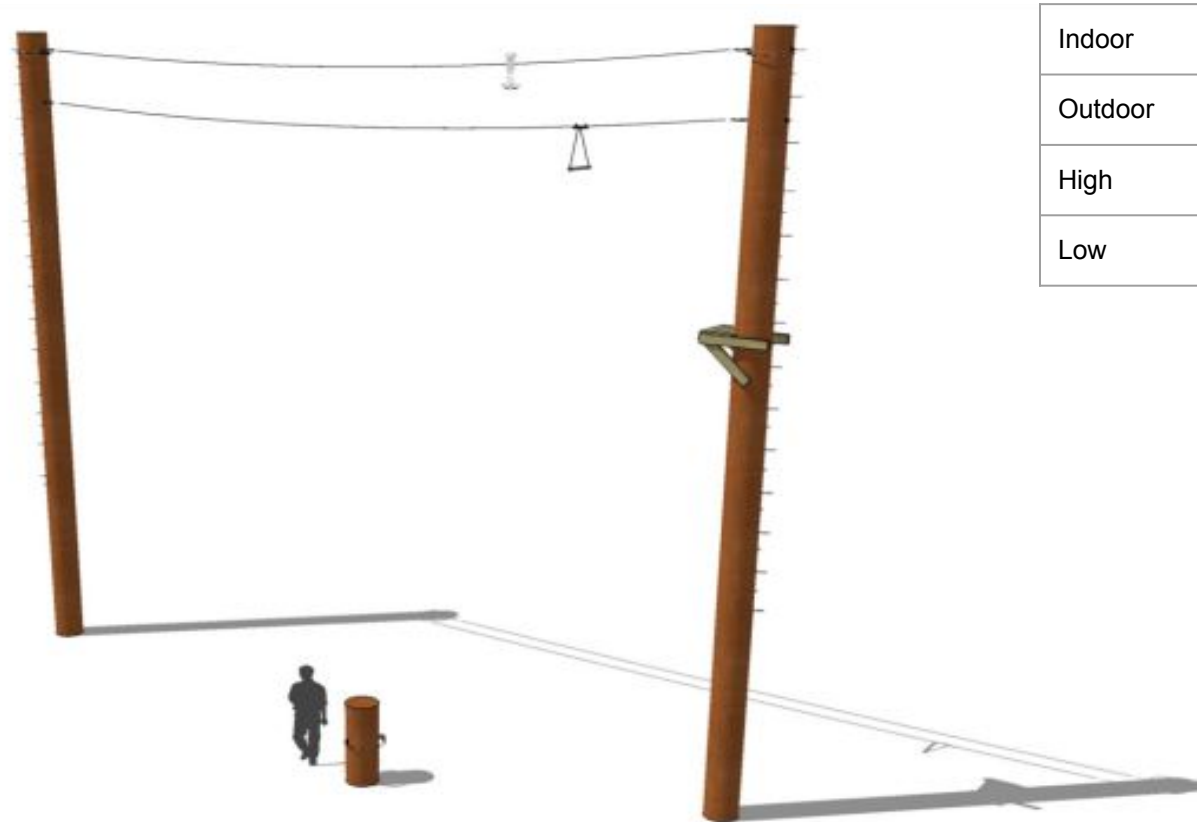
The Flying Squirrel is an element that gives a participant an opportunity to be lifted in the air on a static line by members of the group. The lift can be either a straight vertical raise or a swinging motion if the participant takes a short run as he or she is being pulled into the air.



Indoor	X
Outdoor	X
High	X
Low	

Pamper Plank

A leap to a suspended trapeze or target from a platform.



Indoor	
Outdoor	X
High	X
Low	

Voyageur's Crossing

A series of disks hung from a single rope high in the trees. Each disk has four ropes that hang from the bottom of the disk to the ground. These ropes are used to steady the disks for the climber.



Indoor	
Outdoor	X
High	X
Low	

Middle School Playground Equipment

Rationale:

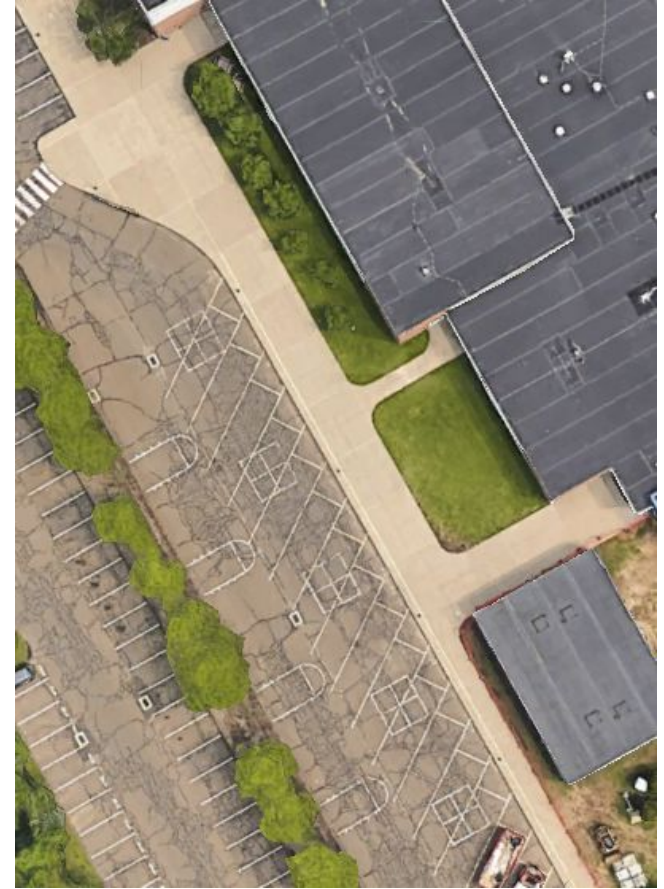
- BMS and CMS both currently offer a daily recess period which is not standard across the state
- Middle school students benefit physically, mentally, and emotionally from unstructured downtime, yet there can be missed opportunities when there is limited equipment and/or structures.
- By providing play structures that are physically and mentally challenging, schools can offer a space that encourages middle school students to stay active and have fun with their peers during learning breaks.

Cost:

- **Estimated cost for both middle schools: \$200,000 - \$400,000**



Current CMS and BMS Outdoor Play Areas



Example of Middle School Playground Equipment - Saxe Middle School

