



State College Area School District

Mike Fisher

Director of Physical Plant

240 VILLA CREST DRIVE • STATE COLLEGE, PENNSYLVANIA • 16801

TELEPHONE: 814-231-1026

To: Curtis Johnson

From: Mike Fisher

RE: District Playgrounds Update

Date: November 3, 2025

As part of the most recent District Wide Facilities Master Plan (DWFMP), playground assessments were conducted by ELA Group. Utilizing this data, along with data from the 2019 Playground Master Plan, as well as past and current feedback from stakeholders. Physical Plant is creating a comprehensive plan to provide recommendations in playground refurbishment, equipment replacement, base design for play surfaces, and phased timeline recommendations. The preliminary budgetary earmark for each playground location for design purposes has been set at \$500,000

Stakeholder engagement process for each school:

- Conceptual Design
- Feedback from Principals district wide
 - Principals garner feedback from teachers, paras, PTO, CEEL
- DWFMP Steering committee
- Community feedback meeting focused on playgrounds only
- Feedback from Board of Directors
- Design adjustments
- Reengagement with schools/steering committee
- Final design presented
- Board approval

Information from community input provided in 2019 summarized below:

- The need for all-weather access and play areas which avoid wet and muddy areas of natural elements
- Questions concerning maintenance of the natural areas
- A lack of traditional playground elements
- A desire for more climbing equipment
- The need for a continuous walkway or track for school events
- A need to be aware of sight lines for supervision
- Dedicated open space for games including soccer, kickball, tag, and football
- Concerns about the tunnels
- Ensuring basketball hoops are included
- Concerns about the high cost of the initial concepts from Metcalfe

Lessons learned comparing 2019 new playgrounds to previous existing playgrounds:

This information is still being compiled and analyzed. The list of topics below represent known issues that school and Physical Plant personnel have encountered in the past.

- Increase in physical hazards
- Challenges with animal and insect infestation
- Lifecycle of equipment, difficulty and cost of replacement parts
- Challenges with natural elements with regard to decay, splinters, etc

Common themes from building surveys during DWFMP 2025:

- Desire for more open area
- Desire for more climbing equipment
- Increased security via fencing/limit blind spots/cameras

Common themes for construction moving forward:

- Utilizing “nature play” concepts
- Adaptive play equipment for special education students
- Some form of poured in place rubber surface
- Significant open area
- Bright colors
- More climbing equipment
- Integrated basketball hoops
- Sitelines for supervision

Preliminary Phased schedule:

2026 - FT, MNE - partial

2027 - EP

2028 - GW

2029 - PFE

2030 - RP

2031 - CS

2032 - SC

2033 - MNE

Note: Timing and needs for playground facilities at the Delta/North Building including Virtual Academy are being evaluated and will be added to this schedule.