

**Ithaca City School District
Caroline Elementary
Site Based Council Parent Representatives**

**RESULTS OF PLAYGROUND PLANNING SURVEY
HELP REDESIGN CAROLINE'S PLAYGROUND!**

On February 13, 2008 about 300 eleven-question surveys were sent home with all students in kindergarten through fifth grade via backpack mail with a deadline of Friday, February 15. A total of 34 paper surveys were received (18 on Thursday and 16 on Friday).

The survey was also made available online. The web address was provided in the paper survey and in two emails to the 126 members of the Carolinelistserve Yahoo group. A total of 35 online survey responses were received (21 on Wednesday, 4 on Thursday, and 10 on Friday).

A total of 69 survey responses were received for a response rate of ~25%. There were no significant differences between any demographic groups.

Respectfully submitted February 21, 2008

Chuck Lyons

Site Based Council Parent Representatives
Sarah Christen, Tonya Engst, Chuck Lyons, Gary Stewart and Sarah Tarrow

Question 1. How desirable would these play features be in the Caroline playground for kindergarten through 5th grade?

	Essential	Very Desirable	Somewhat Desirable	Undesirable	Doesn't Matter/No Opinion	Response Count
Swings	81.2% (56)	11.6% (8)	2.9% (2)	4.3% (3)	0.0% (0)	69
Overhead horizontal monkey bars	49.3% (33)	31.3% (21)	11.9% (8)	3.0% (2)	4.5% (3)	67
Chin-up bars	12.1% (8)	33.3% (22)	36.4% (24)	4.5% (3)	13.6% (9)	66
Slides	77.9% (53)	16.2% (11)	2.9% (2)	2.9% (2)	0.0% (0)	68
Seesaws	15.4% (10)	21.5% (14)	41.5% (27)	18.5% (12)	3.1% (2)	65
Structure with bridges & pathways	63.8% (44)	23.2% (16)	10.1% (7)	1.4% (1)	1.4% (1)	69
Climbing wall	30.4% (21)	47.8% (33)	18.8% (13)	2.9% (2)	0.0% (0)	69
Boulders/rocks for climbing	32.4% (22)	35.3% (24)	22.1% (15)	10.3% (7)	0.0% (0)	68
Equipment for spinning or twirling	25.0% (17)	20.6% (14)	30.9% (21)	22.1% (15)	1.5% (1)	68
Parallel bars	7.4% (5)	30.9% (21)	42.6% (29)	10.3% (7)	8.8% (6)	68
Balance beam	7.6% (5)	37.9% (25)	39.4% (26)	9.1% (6)	6.1% (4)	66
Chess/checker game tables	8.8% (6)	23.5% (16)	42.6% (29)	14.7% (10)	10.3% (7)	68
Tic-tac-toe boards	10.4% (7)	20.9% (14)	34.3% (23)	20.9% (14)	13.4% (9)	67
Open space	56.5% (39)	24.6% (17)	11.6% (8)	1.4% (1)	5.8% (4)	69
Hills	41.2% (28)	30.9% (21)	16.2% (11)	5.9% (4)	5.9% (4)	68
Garden or natural area	36.2% (25)	31.9% (22)	21.7% (15)	2.9% (2)	7.2% (5)	69
No response						0

Averaging responses (Essential = 4...Undesirable = 1) and sorting by desirability:

	Average	Count
Swings	3.70	69
Slides	3.69	68
Structure with bridges & pathways	3.51	68
Open space	3.45	65
Overhead horizontal monkey bars	3.33	64
Hills	3.14	64
Garden or natural area	3.09	64
Climbing wall	3.06	69
Boulders/rocks for climbing	2.90	68
Chin-up bars	2.61	57
Equipment for spinning or twirling	2.49	67
Balance beam	2.47	62
Parallel bars	2.39	62
Seesaws	2.35	63
Chess/checker game tables	2.30	61
Tic-tac-toe boards	2.24	58

Combining responses of Essential and Very Desirable and sorting by desirability:

	Percent	Count
Slides	94.1%	64
Swings	92.8%	64
Structure with bridges & pathways	87.0%	60
Open space	81.2%	56
Overhead horizontal monkey bars	80.6%	54
Climbing wall	78.3%	54
Hills	72.1%	49
Garden or natural area	68.1%	47
Boulders/rocks for climbing	67.6%	46
Equipment for spinning or twirling	45.6%	31
Chin-up bars	45.5%	30
Balance beam	45.5%	30
Parallel bars	38.2%	26
Seesaws	36.9%	24
Chess/checker game tables	32.4%	22
Tic-tac-toe boards	31.3%	21

Question 2. What other play features, if any, do you think the playground should include? [open-ended question]

1. community play
2. Pathways through the woods, with meeting places. Design done by parents and teachers not a firm.
3. A quiet place to sit with friends or alone to read or be by themselves.
4. spaces to climb/crawl on/slide down
5. seesaws--only if safely designed. It would be really great if the playground was built to be wheelchair accessible--at least in part, on pathways, bridges, thru garden areas...Handicap accessible equipment would be nice, but I realize this is an expense, but at least the areas around the equipment should be accessible.
6. obstacle course around open field for gym classes and recess time (4-6 stations)
7. Clear lines of sight for aides for safety. No nooks and crannies for bullies to hang out in.
8. sandbox
9. zip line on rails
10. Water features, for summer use. Let the kids get wet.
11. no pressure treated wood; spaces that allow for creative play such as wheel to pretend being captain of a ship...different elevations
12. ladders or other climbing structures
13. semi-enclosed spaces, quiet spots to huddle
14. Things to build with and to dig into. Stuff that's so engaging, the kids won't mill around and pick on each other.
15. Comment from #3 Water fountain: "high maintenance"
16. I love the idea of a hill for sledding in the winter!
17. Area for chalk games such as hopscotch or four-square; as well as jump rope. Preferably not in competition with basketball. Also, possibly a wall for "wall-ball"
18. Cargo ropes and knotted climbing rope. Things that encourage balance and upper body strengthening.
19. VERY resilient ground surfaces, Drinking fountain, Handicapped accessibility
20. rope ladder/climbing net?

21. tunnels, ropes, a swinging bridge or the like (out of tires, etc)
22. bar that kids could use to do flips or hang upside down from
23. Hills would be great for sledding! I think children do best in natural environments. We should definitely make the wooded areas and trails available for child's play. Fort building with sticks, etc. is another great activity for children. How about just some hay bales for the children to climb, and jump from one to the next? My children love this activity! Of the structures listed in the catalogue, I like the "natural" climbing structures ("boulders") the best. I would look at the new BJM playground for ideas.
24. I think the most important thing to consider would be choosing structures that encourage cooperative play and good socio-emotional situations and decrease the problems that tend to occur on playgrounds
25. Extremely well-padded area at the end of a runway, for run-and-jump type play.
26. make sure there is accessible structures for differently abled
27. Spider web. Opportunities to build and dig.

Question 3. How desirable would these amenities be at the Caroline playground?

	Essential	Very Desirable	Somewhat Desirable	Undesirable	Doesn't Matter/No Opinion	Response Count
Water fountain	53.6% (37)	27.5% (19)	8.7% (6)	5.8% (4)	4.3% (3)	69
Bike rack	9.1% (6)	22.7% (15)	31.8% (21)	13.6% (9)	22.7% (15)	66
Sign with playground rules	29.4% (20)	36.8% (25)	11.8% (8)	11.8% (8)	10.3% (7)	68
Benches or other places to sit	52.9% (36)	39.7% (27)	5.9% (4)	1.5% (1)	0.0% (0)	68
Garbage cans & recycling bins	46.4% (32)	34.8% (24)	13.0% (9)	2.9% (2)	2.9% (2)	69
Picnic tables	23.5% (16)	55.9% (38)	16.2% (11)	1.5% (1)	2.9% (2)	68
Shade trees	63.8% (44)	27.5% (19)	8.7% (6)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	69
Night-time lighting	18.8% (13)	21.7% (15)	26.1% (18)	13.0% (9)	20.3% (14)	69
Bulletin board	4.4% (3)	26.5% (18)	30.9% (21)	17.6% (12)	20.6% (14)	68
No response						0

Averaging responses (Essential = 4...Undesirable = 1) and sorting by desirability:

	Average	Count
Shade trees	3.55	69
Benches or other places to sit	3.44	68
Water fountain	3.35	66
Garbage cans & recycling bins	3.28	67
Picnic tables	3.05	66
Sign with playground rules	2.93	61
Night-time lighting	2.58	55
Bike rack	2.35	51
Bulletin board	2.22	54

Combining responses of Essential and Very Desirable and sorting by desirability:

	Percent	Count
Benches or other places to sit	92.6%	63
Shade trees	91.3%	63
Water fountain	81.1%	56
Garbage cans & recycling bins	81.1%	56
Picnic tables	79.4%	54
Sign with playground rules	66.2%	45
Night-time lighting	40.5%	28
Bike rack	31.8%	21
Bulletin board	30.8%	21

Question 4. How likely would you be to join other Caroline families and community members in building the Caroline playground in May? (Please assume it would fit in with your schedule and your preferences for what type of work you'd do.)

	Percent	Count
Definitely	32.3%	21
Likely	43.1%	28
Unlikely	23.1%	15
Definitely not	1.5%	1
No response		4

Combining responses of Definitely and Likely:

	Percent	Count
Definitely <i>or</i> Likely	75.4%	49

Of the 12 that expressed interest in being involved in planning the new playground (see question 11):

	Percent	Count
Definitely	66.7%	8
Likely	33.3%	4

Question 5. What would be the best way for the playground committee to update you on progress, decisions, etc.? (Please select all that apply.)

	Percent	Count
Backpack mail	56.9%	37
The Caroline email list	73.8%	48
The monthly PTA meetings	10.8%	7
The school bulletin board	1.5	1
The monthly Caroline newsletter	30.8%	20
Other (please specify)		0
No response		4

Question 6. How many of your children currently attend Caroline?

	Percent	Count
1	68.1%	47
2	26.1%	18
3 or more	5.8%	4

Question 7. What are their ages? (Please select all that apply.)

	Percent	Count
3–4 years old	4.6%	3
5–6 years old	29.2%	19
7–8 years old	53.8%	35
9–10 years old	38.5%	25
11–12 years old	7.7%	5
Other (please specify)		0
No response		4

Thirteen of the 35 with a 7–8 year old child at Caroline also had a child at Caroline in another age group.

Question 8. Do those children ever play at the Caroline playground when they're NOT in school?

	Percent	Count
Yes	85.9%	55
No	14.1%	9
No response		5

Question 9. In which part of the year do they visit the playground most often? (Please select all that apply.)

	Percent	Count
Summer (June–August)	76.4%	42
School Year (September–June)	54.5	30
No response		14

Seventeen responders picked both answers.

Question 10. During the time you picked, how often do they usually visit the playground outside of school hours?

	Percent	Count
1–2 times a week (or more often)	21.8%	12
2–3 times a month	45.5%	25
Once a month	18.2%	10
Every 2–3 months	7.3%	4
A few times a year (or less often)	7.3%	4
No response		14

Question 11. If you'd like to get more involved in planning the new Caroline playground, please provide your name and the best way to contact you:

Responses: 17.4% (12)

1. Tim Martin or Amy Martin 539-1173
2. Michele Colbert 277-6008 or backpack mail
3. Erika and Mauricio Medina 657-2504
4. Jeremy Richards jeremity@yahoo.com
5. Noah Dardano 280-0832
6. Lisa Sahasrabudhe and Barry Derfel sahasderf@twcny.rr.com or 272-8742
7. Dave Korb 539-7486
8. Lilly Westbrook lwestbrook@ithaca.edu
9. Laurie Cuomo Lcuomo@frontiernet.net
10. Sue Funicelli sfunicelli@twcny.rr.com
11. Linda Crispell LRCrispy@frontiernet.net
12. Robin Tilton robin@guttmanandwallace.com