

Town of Sudbury

Community Preservation Committee

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OCT 07 2022

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PROJECT SUBMISSION FORM

Applicant: Sudbury Public Schools

Submission Date:

10/6/2022

Group or Committee Affiliation (if any): SPS School Committee

Applicant Address:

Sudbury Public Schools
40 Fairbank Road
Sudbury, MA 01776

Applicant Email & Phone Number:

brad_crozier@sudbury.k12.ma.us
(978) 443-1058

Purpose (please select all that apply):

- Open Space & Recreation
 Community Housing
 Historic Resource

Project Manager Email & Phone Number:

sandra_duran@sudbury.k12.ma.us (978) 440-5466

Project Name: Curtis Outdoor Health & Wellness Space

Project Description: In line with the recreation purpose, we are proposing to redesign the outdoor recreation area at the Curtis Middle School to enhance the outdoor opportunities for students and the general community while improving the areas to comply with ADA and Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB) regulations and Sudbury's ADA Self-Assessment and Transition Plan.

Costs:

| Fiscal Year | Total Project Cost | CPC Funds Requested | Other Funding Sources (Amount and Source) |
|--------------|--------------------|---------------------|--|
| 2024 | \$480,000 | \$480,000 | * Subject to change based on grants and fundraising. |
| 2025 | | | |
| 2026 | | | |
| 2027 | | | |
| 2028 | | | |
| Total | | | |

How does this project meet the General Criteria and Category Specific Criteria for Community Preservation Committee projects (see attached)?

- This project qualifies in the Recreation Category for CPC projects for the following criteria (additional details attached):
- Support multiple recreation uses;
 - Serve a significant number of residents
 - Expand the range of recreational opportunities available to Sudbury residents of all ages
 - Jointly benefit Conservation Commission and Park and Recreation Commission initiatives by promoting passive recreation
 - Maximize the utility of land already owned by Sudbury (e.g. school property)

Does this project fall within the jurisdiction or interest of other Town Boards, Committees, Commissions, or Departments? If so, please list the boards, committees, commissions, or departments, whether applications and/or presentations have been made, and what input or recommendations have been given.

SPS School Committee

For Community Preservation Committee Use:

Form Received On: 10-7-22

Project Presented to CPC On: _____

Reviewed By: R. Poteat

Determination: _____



CPC Application on Behalf of the Sudbury Public Schools: Curtis Outdoor Health and Wellness Space Proposal

October 3, 2022

The Need

This project aims to create an inclusive and enhanced outdoor space for the Curtis School and the greater community. This newly proposed safe and accessible outdoor space would promote social connection and address the emotional and physical needs of 850 middle school students, as well as the broader community.

The current outdoor space at Curtis Middle School does not serve the needs of all students. The space has basketball hoops, fields, and limited seating. We are proposing to enhance the space with equipment to provide opportunities for more student engagement and physical challenge.

The design will incorporate additional tables and benches to promote social connection and allow friends to gather. This project advances district and town equity goals and aligns with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as well as Sudbury's ADA Self-Assessment and Transition Plan.

Providing a safe, inclusive, and welcoming outdoor space to benefit the health and wellness of our community at Curtis Middle School is a priority of the Sudbury Public Schools (SPS). Over the past five years, the Sudbury Public Schools has provided these important, accessible opportunities and resources at the four elementary schools with its new playgrounds. This is an opportunity to bring equity and parity across the District for all students.

The Sudbury Public Schools are committed to supporting student growth, both academically and socially. This project provides ample opportunity for students and other community members to engage in activities that build relationships, relieve stress, and enhance physical skills. The project supports the district's commitment to physical and mental health and also represents progress toward goals identified in students' responses to the Connectedness Survey.

The middle school years are exciting and challenging. Many healthy behaviors and habits are established in adolescence and carry over into adult years. It is crucial to help our youth develop good mental health and promote a feeling of belonging. As we learned during the COVID-19 pandemic, schools are critical to supporting our children. Schools not only provide an academic education, but they also provide opportunities for youth to engage in physical and social activities that can relieve stress and help protect against negative outcomes.

The mental, emotional, and behavioral health of middle school-aged students has been declining in recent years, and SPS is committed to addressing this. One approach is to provide opportunities for youth to engage in physical and social activities, which can help protect against negative outcomes. Compromised mental health in adolescence is more than just feeling sad, as it can impact many areas of life. Youth with poor mental health may struggle with decision-making and may demonstrate risky behaviors.

According to the [CDC](#), “regular physical activity in childhood and adolescence is important for promoting lifelong health and wellbeing and preventing a variety of health conditions.” Benefits include: improved attention, better mood and memory, improved bone health, healthier weight, better heart health, lower risk of depression, and better grades.

According to the 2021 MetroWest Youth Risk Survey, 20% of middle school youth report depressive symptoms in the past 12 months. Self-injury, which ranged from 7-9% in the past, was reported by 13% of students. And, after remaining steady at 11% since 2012, lifetime reports of seriously considering suicide increased to 17% in 2021.

The Curtis Middle School is centrally located in town and is a natural place for meeting, exploring, and exercising, not only for students but also for a wider community of all ages. Accessible surfaces are also impact friendly; a benefit for persons using mobility devices or mobility challenges. Tables provide both respites for children at play, a congregation point for caregivers, and an outdoor meeting place for all citizens.

In Sudbury, 32% of the population is under the age of 18. This is significantly higher than the average in Massachusetts, which is 21% (2010 US Census). This fact emphasizes the need to provide a selection of safe, modern play and gathering places for diverse ages. Updating the outdoor space at Curtis is one way to increase the Health and Wellness of our students and our community.

We are committed to supporting student growth, both academically, physically, and socially. This project provides opportunities for students and other community members to engage in activities that build relationships, relieve stress, and enhance physical skills.

CPC General Criteria

Are eligible for Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding according to the requirements described in the CPA legislation

The Curtis Outdoor Health and Wellness Outdoor Space Project falls under the Recreation category of CPA eligible projects.

In line with the recreation purpose, we are proposing to redesign the outdoor recreation area at the Curtis Middle School to enhance the outdoor opportunities for students and the general community while improving the areas to comply with ADA and Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB) regulations and Sudbury's ADA Self-Assessment and Transition Plan.

Save resources that would otherwise be threatened and/or serve a currently under-served population.

The current outdoor space at Curtis Middle School is limited in its ability to serve and engage all students. Additionally, as of March 2011, play areas need to be compliant with ADA standards. This project will enhance the outdoor space at Curtis to serve the needs of more students as well as remove barriers for children with disabilities so that they can better access the outdoor space and develop physically, socially, and emotionally alongside their peers. This project advances district and town equity goals and aligns with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as well as Sudbury's accessibility guidelines.

Demonstrate practicality, feasibility, urgency

There is an urgency to this project. Currently, there are very limited engagement opportunities in the outdoor space to promote connected social engagement and positive mental health for our middle school students. SPS is committed to providing these opportunities for youth to engage in physical and social activities which can relieve stress and help protect against negative outcomes.

This project request aims to provide safe, accessible, and updated outdoor space for all students while meeting the needs of 850 middle school students in our district each year for years to come.

This project is practical as it is relevant to all students as well as the greater community, and the current space is underutilized.

SPS has a proven track record of building outdoor structures such as the current proposal, which makes this project feasible to implement.

Demonstrate that the project can be implemented expeditiously and within budget

As stated above, over the past five years, SPS has demonstrated diligence and commitment to revitalizing four elementary school playgrounds in a timely manner and under budget. This Curtis Health and Wellness Outdoor Space is a very similar project, and SPS is once again committed to managing this responsibility with the same care and attention to detail in order to ensure a responsible plan, budget, and timeline for this project. The same project management strategies will be utilized for this project as were used for the previous four projects to mitigate any risks and fulfill this responsibility to our taxpayers.

Demonstrate that project alternatives, and alternative funding mechanisms, have been fully explored

This project creates an equitable outdoor space in relation to the elementary schools, which were renovated between 2018-2022. These previous projects were awarded CPA funds and were awarded grants, along with Town funds. All of these projects came in under budget, and SPS will be asking to repurpose any unused funds for this particular project. SPS is grateful for the Town's partnership and shared ownership with the previous four projects, and once again, SPS is asking for this shared ownership to support our youth's development and our community's engagement.

Leverage additional public and/or private funds

Over the years, the PTOs, SERF, PlaySudbury, Cummings Foundation, and individual donors have graciously donated funds to enhance our schools' outdoor spaces. We hope to continue to work with these organizations to help supplement town funds, and we will continue to proactively apply for grant funding. Furthermore, the Facilities Department will also work with SPS to apply for any applicable grant opportunities.

Preserve or utilize currently owned town assets

We are utilizing and planning to maintain current elements at Curtis, which are newer and in good condition in our design. We are preserving the precious natural features (shade trees) and seating that already enhance the space, and we are considering any community requests for the design in relation to previously allocated funds.

CPC Category Specific Criteria

Support multiple recreation uses

- Outdoor Health and Wellness Space for use by
 - Sudbury Public School students during school hours during recess
 - Sudbury Public Schools students during physical education and health classes during the school day/year
 - Community during non-school hours (before and after school, on the weekends, during school vacations, and over the summer months)

Serve a significant number of residents

- Just under 50% of the households in Sudbury have children. All of these families will benefit from the enhancement of the Outdoor Space at Curtis Middle School.
- Currently, the accessible playgrounds in town are geared toward children under the age of 12. Creating this Health and Wellness Outdoor Space at Curtis will provide neighborhood recreation opportunities for community members over the age of 12.

Expand the range of recreational opportunities available to Sudbury residents of all ages

- The rubberized surfacing for the playground can serve an additional purpose as a forgiving walking/running/exercise area for the entire community.
- Tables and benches are another feature that can be used by all members of the community as a gathering place on weekends and other non-school hour times.

Jointly benefit Conservation Commission and Park and Recreation Commission initiatives by promoting passive recreation, such as hiking, biking, and cross-country skiing, on town owned property

The Curtis Outdoor Health and Wellness Space will provide a safe outdoor climbing/walking/strolling opportunity for all ages and abilities.

Maximize the utility of land already owned by Sudbury (e.g. school property)

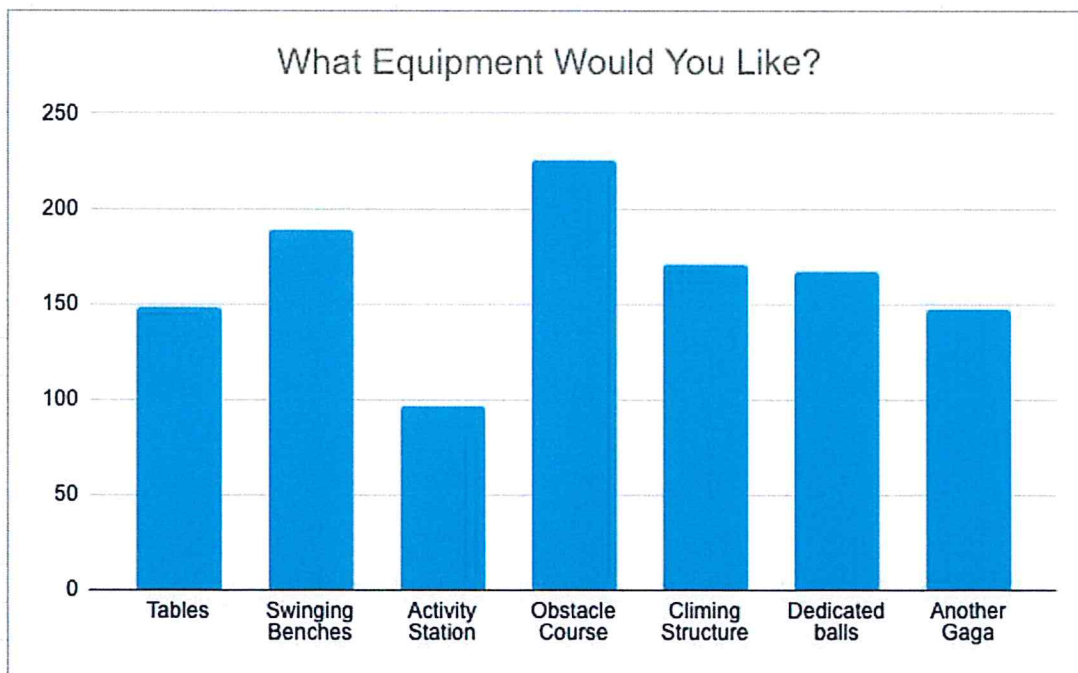
The Curtis Health and Wellness Outdoor Space will be a multigenerational recreational space. As a result, the entire community can utilize and enjoy our school grounds to the fullest.

Additional Information for the CPC:

Survey

The Curtis Community participated in a survey to assess the response and needs of the community regarding the outdoor recreational space at Curtis. With over 200 survey participants, there was an overwhelmingly positive interest in this project to move forward as soon as possible in order to promote opportunities for the social connection and physical activity of our middle school youth. This graph shares some of the elements of the outdoor space which the students would find to be most interesting.

Survey Results - Curtis Community



The Curtis community shared very positive responses to this idea. With over 200 responses, we heard voices of students and families

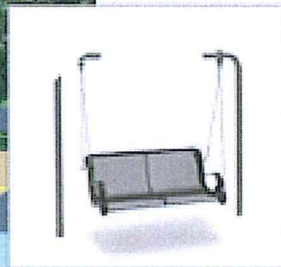
Comparable Projects

- Haynes Elementary -
 - 371 Students
 - Preserved several large structures
- Noyes Elementary -
 - 571 Students
 - Includes an area for the Pre-School
- Nixon Elementary -
 - 326 Students
 - Preserved a large structure
- Loring Elementary -
 - 425 Students
 - Two separate play areas



Draft Conceptual Designs and Elements

Curtis Proposal - \$480,000



- Accessible Pathway
- Obstacle Course
- Climber
- Spinner
- Swinging Benches
- Tables (Including Chess)
- Flexible Features





Sudbury Public Schools

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Stephanie M. Juriansz
Director of Student Services
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September 27, 2022

To: The Sudbury Community Preservation Committee

RE: Curtis Outdoor Health and Wellness Space Proposal

As the Director of Student Services for the Sudbury Public Schools, it is an honor to write a letter of support for the Curtis Outdoor Health and Wellness Space Project Proposal. This project would create an inclusive and enhanced outdoor space for the Curtis School community which has been an aspiration of the Sudbury Public Schools for many years. By providing a welcoming outdoor space for our community, Sudbury Public Schools (SPS) and Town, would partner to support the health and wellness of the entire community.

This proposed plan will promote student engagement, connection and inclusivity. The current space at Curtis has limited variety and is void of structures that support socialization and accessibility for a diverse student body. The Sudbury Public Schools have been working in many capacities to support the emotional wellbeing of our students which has been significantly impacted over the past years, and this project invites the community to reconnect and engage in positive social and physical health.

Recent survey results from the Curtis community shared in the wide support to provide our youth with additional opportunities with this space, and for years, the community of Curtis has been advocating for more activity options, structures and spaces to promote school connection. I have participated in each playground modernization project over the past five years, and this idea to enhance the Curtis space has been a conversation of each working group. The Town and School partnership has generously provided our four accessible playgrounds at each of the elementary schools, and this project is now an opportunity to bring equity and parity across all of the district's schools for all students.

Furthermore, this Curtis Outdoor Health and Wellness Space project would advance the district and town equity goals as well as Sudbury's accessibility and transition plan. Access to outdoor recreational spaces is critical for the physical and mental health of the entire community, and this project would prove to make Curtis a central and positive gathering place for our entire community.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Juriansz
Director of Student Services