



Outdoor Learning Project Business Plan Fall 2019

Chicopee Hills Public School is a vibrant and enthusiastic JK-8 school that services approximately 750 kids. Chicopee Hills is home to a hearing services program, French Immersion Program, and a Walking School Bus Program. Chicopee is proud to be a HERO/GEM School where we focus on key traits that prepare our students for the future in any profession. Our HERO and GEM traits include: Hope, Efficacy, Resilience, Optimism, Gratitude, Empathy and Mindfulness. We also focus on problem solving skills through the WITS strategies which include: Walk Away, Ignore, Talk it Out and Seek Help. We believe that these traits and strategies prepare our students to be respectful citizens.

Chicopee Hills officially opened its doors to students on September 3, 2017. As a brand new school we have an amazing opportunity to create a unique and educational outdoor learning space for our students. The following document will outline our goals and objectives, fun and educational opportunities for the space, design ideas, timelines and phases, fundraising plans and budget for this new space. We hope you will enjoy learning about our project and we hope you will consider supporting us in this exciting endeavour.

Outdoor learning spaces must be funded by the parent and wider community. Funding for this project will be sourced through donations, fundraising projects and possible grants. This project will be created by the Chicopee Hills School Council in consultation with students, school staff, school board staff, parents, school council and the landscape company.

Mission of the Project: To create an outdoor space for learning, play & innovation where students will connect with each other and nature.

Key Facts

Enrollment	750 students JK - Gr. 9 Ages 3-14 includes French Immersion & Hearing Services
Natural Outdoor Learning Environment	Shade, natural shade, integration of gardens and trees, seating, active elements for walking, running, climbing, jumping, & obstacles and opportunities for innovation and creation.
Inclusive & Accessible	Usage by students with wheelchairs, lower to the ground elements which allow accessibility in all seasons.
School Mission Statement	We are creative. We are connected. We are community. We are Chicopee.



Mission of the Project: To create an outdoor space for learning, play & innovation where students will connect with each other and nature.

Goals and objectives: *Our goals and objectives for our outdoor learning project are to:*

- create a fun interactive natural outdoor space that can be used in all 4 seasons without closing it in the winter by a range of students ages (4 to 14)
- create an outdoor learning environment that can be integrated into classroom curriculum
- expose children to natural earthscapes that can help connect them to our natural environment (plants, insects, trees, etc.)
- create opportunities for large motor play on natural landscaping (running, climbing a big tree stump, imaginative play)
- create experiences with nature which are essential for a child's development
- create a space that is designed based on ideas and suggestions from our stakeholders
- create a space that is inclusive & accessible to staff, students and community members

Educational Benefits:

Early Years Development: Benefits for Kindergarten children

From the Kindergarten Program, 2016, Ontario Ministry of Education, p. 34

"For many reasons, including the prevalence of electronic media, children today spend relatively little time in natural environments. This "nature deficit" has been linked to disturbing trends such as childhood obesity, attention disorders, and depression. Outdoor spaces offer valuable learning opportunities, and natural settings can inspire the kind of thinking, learning, leadership, and innovation that may be inhibited in children in the classroom but that, once revealed, can be incorporated back into the classroom environment.

In the Kindergarten program, learning in the outdoors is included as part of the instructional day, and the educators play an active role, engaging with children in an inquiry stance as they play, explore, and learn together outside the classroom."



Arts-Ontario Arts Curriculum requires students to explore different visual arts techniques and one element is texture. In the outdoor learning area, students will explore textures in their environment when creating works of art. (Textures of rocks, grass, plants, sand, gravel, etc.

Science-Ontario Science Curriculum topics in all grade levels include Earth and Space Systems & Life Systems. Classes will have the opportunity to be outdoors to explore the topics as provided in the curriculum

- Gr. 1 Daily and Seasonal Changes
- Gr. 2 Growth and Changes in Animals
- Gr. 3 Soils in the Environment
- Gr. 4 Habitats and Communities, Rocks & Minerals
- Gr. 5 Conservation of Energy and Resources
- Gr. 6 Flight
- Gr. 7 Interactions in the Environment
- Gr. 8 Cells



Health & Physical Education: Well-Being & Mental Health - the outdoor learning area will provide an area for students to relax, chat and avoid stressful situations

From the Ontario Health and Physical Education Curriculum, p. 5

“What happens at school can have a significant influence on a student’s well-being. With a broader awareness of mental health, educators can plan instructional strategies that contribute to a supportive classroom climate for learning in all subject areas, build awareness of mental health, and reduce stigma associated with mental illness. Taking students’ wellbeing, including their mental health, into account when planning instructional approaches helps establish a strong foundation for learning.”

From: <https://outdoorclassroomday.com/2018/03/19/five-reasons-going-outdoors-improve-s-childrens-mental-health-and-wellbeing/>

THE OUTDOORS RELIEVES STRESS AND ANXIETY

Time spent playing outdoors is thought to help relieve stress and anxiety for children by reducing levels of the hormone cortisol in the brain. A recent study in the UK found that even just five minutes of exercise in a natural outdoor environment can rapidly improve self-esteem and mental health and wellbeing in young people,

Social Studies:

The Ontario Social Studies Curriculum has expectations in Gr. 1-8 that specifically relate to learning through an inquiry process by collecting information from maps, as well as using mapping skills to explain their thinking. Opportunities for representing the outdoor learning area through mapping would be very educational.

Mathematics: Data Management Strand - Ontario Mathematics Curriculum

Primary data can be collected in the natural environment of the outdoor learning classroom for bird sightings, butterflies, weather patterns, precipitation amounts, seasonal changes and much more. Students can connect to the natural environment mathematically by analysing data that is transferred, created and presented in charts and graphs. This opportunity would be relevant at all grade levels in Mathematics.

Design Elements:

- Must be accessible
- Must include shade - sun safe designs
- Must have all natural elements (trees, boulders, wooden items)
- Plants/seeding/ground cover - natural species for this area
- Ground Cover that withstands high traffic
- Must be designed to leave space for portables by parking lot
- Meets the needs of children from 3 to 14 years old
- Must remain open in all seasons
- Low maintenance requirements
- Elements that include obstacle courses
- Small group areas



- Pathways connecting to different phases of the project
- Connect in existing outdoor amphitheatre
- Installation of large trees
- Be mindful that irrigation systems exist in area
- Seating areas
- Plantings to attract butterflies
- Gross Motor Opportunities for students to physically move
- Integrate existing landscape with a theme. Theme information: : Chicopee Chargers, Bolt the Buck is our mascot, Grand River Conservation owns the forested area beside and behind the school

Outdoor Learning Project Committee

Membership of the Committee

1. Executive Team: Lindsay Taylor, David Linnerth, Dave Cameron, Lee Anne Andriessen
2. Larger Team for Sign Up: Fundraising Projects, Design Phase, Grant Research and Writing, Donation Management

Timeline Detail

INPUT PHASE

Stakeholder: Students

- October - school will work on makerspace, and gain input with deadlines for Nov. 11
- Survey students and charts for students
- If a child's idea is selected, they will pitch the idea to the company.
- This team of kids who wins this, get first peak of the construction.

Stakeholder: School Council

- Ongoing sharing and input
- Committee Involvement
- Input opportunities

Stakeholder: Parents/Community

- Information Meeting for the community January/February

Landscape Design Plan

Next Steps:

- Meet with Laven & Associates PLUS Earthscapes
- Set date for visit to the school
- Provide input with ideas to draw up a plan
- Provide timelines, scope and goals



RESEARCH

- Ask the company for what an investment of \$50,000 looks like....\$100,000 etc.
- Share this information at November 2019 meeting for discussion at School Council.

Financial Information

Budget

- Project estimated at \$300,000
- Phased in over 8-10 years
- Overall goal is to do a minimum \$30,000 installation each year over a 10 year period
- Main goal is to fundraise \$100,000 by Summer of 2020.

Fundraising Plan

- Corporate donations (Winter 2020-Summer 2020)
- Community donations (WEFI Campaign Fall 2019 & Winter 2020)
- Golf tournament fundraising event (May 30, 2020)

Donations

- Door to door donations
 - Sharing business plan
 - Community foundations and other organizations
 - Corporate donations

Donation Sponsorship Incentives

- Recognition on Outdoor Sign by the Road
- Chicopee Website Blog Posting
- Listing on Website Page
- Tax Receipts if Money directed through WEFI
- Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Involvement Tied into Meet the Teacher Event
- Plaque Program for the Donor to be displayed at their business

Costs

- Sign Rental
- Landscape Plan
- Permit from the Region (Sign company gets the permit)
- Printing Costs for Brochures
- Sponsorship Plaque



Chicopee Hills Outdoor Learning Project Timelines 2019-20

Design	Materials	Donations	Events	Installation Goal
Nov. 11, 2019 ✓ Deadline for students to provide input about design and prepare a pitch.		2019 November to December School WEFI Campaign for 2019 Donations		
By Dec. 1, 2019 Company to come to the school and meet with student groups to gather design info.	By Dec. 1, 2019 Fundraising Printed Packages sent for printing.			
By Jan. 10, 2020 Company to provide draft design.				
By Jan. 30, 2020 Design finalized.				
	Feb. 1, 2020 One page design sent for printing.	Feb. 10, 2020 Corporate Donation Campaign	Feb. ??, 2020 Parent/Community Information Session	
	Get plaques designed.	Feb. 20 School Community WEFI Campaign for 2020 Donations		
Ongoing work with contractors and WRDSB facility managers to prepare for construction.	March 2020 Rent Sign and Install it by the road.	ongoing	May ??, 2020 Golf Tournament Fundraiser	
April to August Ongoing review of installation & construction	April to June Presentation of Plaques as appropriate	ongoing		Summer, 2020 Phase 1 and 2 installed
Prepare for Phase 2 and 3 for Summer of 2021	ongoing	ongoing	Official Opening of Phase 1 & 2 & Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at Meet the Teacher Event	



Sponsorship Recognition Levels

Sponsorship Recognition Levels	WEFI Tax Receipt (\$20 & above directed through WEFI)	Website and Blog Posting	Plaque to be displayed in your business, organization or home	Donor Recognition Roadside Sign (2 week timeframe)	Participate & featured in Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at a Fall Celebration
HERO Level Donation Range = \$25,000 and up	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
GEM Level Donation Range = \$5000 - \$24,999	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Charger Level Donation Range = \$1000 - \$4999	✓	✓	✓		
Hope Level Donation Range = \$20 - \$999	✓				

Fundraising Process

We will be seeking donations through the Waterloo Education Foundation Inc. which is the charity connected with the Waterloo Region District School Board. The process is outlined below.



HOW DO I DONATE TO THE CHICOPEE HILLS OUTDOOR LEARNING PROJECT?

1. Go to our website at <http://chi.wrdsb.ca>
2. On the left sidebar menu, click on WATERLOO EDUCATION FOUNDATION INC.
3. On the right sidebar click on Donate Online.
4. Enter the amount.
5. Under Fund, click the drop down arrow and choose CHICOPEE HILLS PS - 0159
6. In the Message Box... type in OUTDOOR LEARNING PROJECT.
7. Then, complete the rest of your personal information.
8. Payment can be done by Credit Card or PayPal.

Thank you for your financial assistance and support of this worthwhile project.
From the Chicopee Hills Outdoor Learning Project Team and the School Council Executive.





**Letter of Support from School Principal:
Lee Anne Andriessen**

Dear Parents, Community Members, Staff, Students, and Community Donors:

Chicopee Hills Public School is a new school community in the Waterloo Region District School Board where we opened our doors for the first time in September of 2017. The backdrop of the school is a small woodlot and protected environmental area which belongs to Grand River Conservation area. It is a lovely setting for students to grow, learn and play.

Our school serves 750 students from JK to Gr. 8 with an age range of students from 3 years old to 14 years old. We are proud to be the home of our board's Hearing Services Program where we service children who travel across the region for our amazing programming and support. We embrace technology and students in grades 7-8 have one to one laptop technology and other grades in the school are close to having one piece of technology per 2 students. We also have a Green Screen Room for filming purposes!. We are a HERO/GEM school where we embrace the citizenship traits of Hope, Efficacy, Resilience, Optimism (HERO) and Gratitude, Empathy and Mindfulness (GEM). Our school mission is:

We are creative. We are connected. We are community. We are Chicopee.

As a HERO school, we hope to create an outdoor learning area with the following mission: ***To create an outdoor space for learning, play & innovation where students will connect with each other and nature.***

This outdoor learning project will be an amazing addition to our school and will enhance opportunities to teach the curriculum and will provide opportunities for students to engage in active play, connect with others, and connect with nature. This is a great cause and I want to express our gratitude in advance to School Council for their vision and organization with this amazing opportunity. If you are contributing or donating to this project, thank you! It will benefit students and be appreciated for years to come!

With gratitude,
Lee Anne Andriessen, Principal

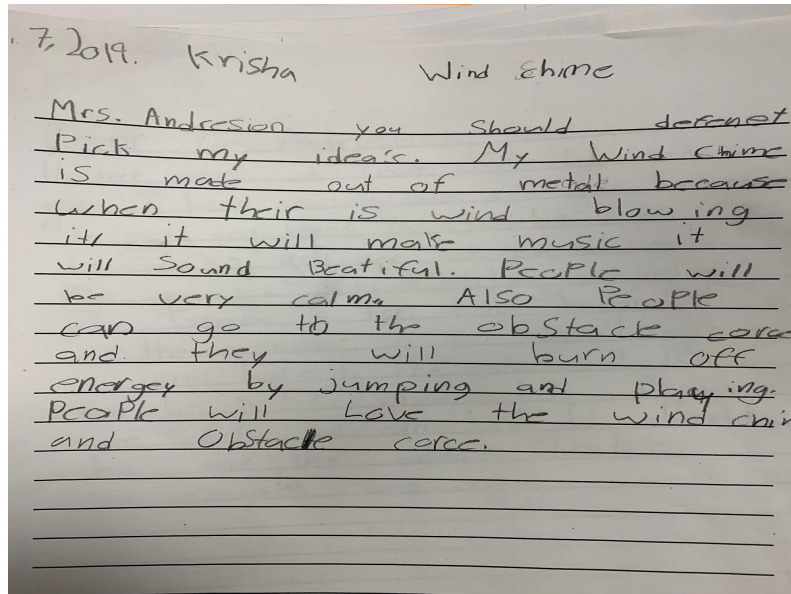


Appendices:

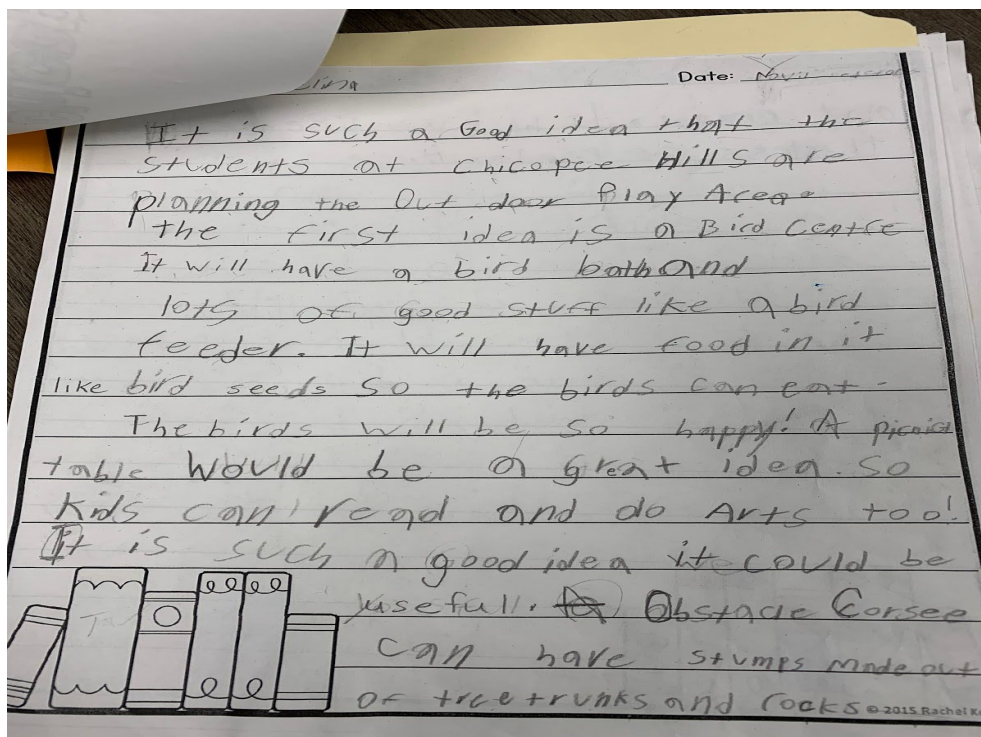
Student Ideas

(each image represents a different student's ideas)

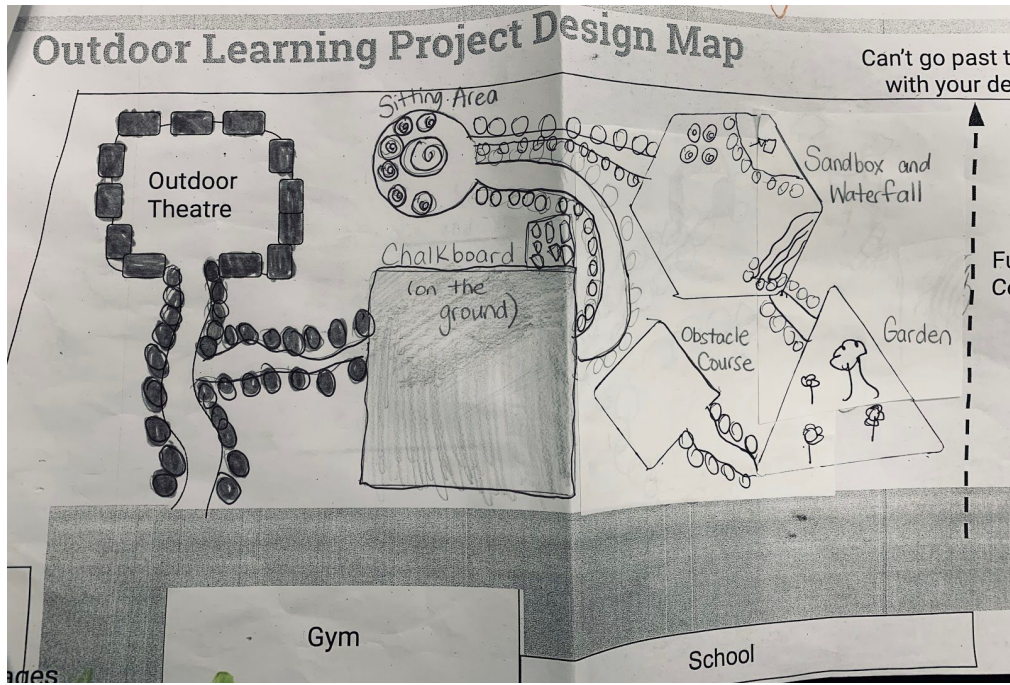
Stay tuned for more ideas that will be shared as supporting documents.



From Gr. 3 student



Submitted by
Gr. 3 student



Submitted by
Gr. 2-3 student



Obstacle course Inspiration



Obstacle Course

The obstacle course would be a fun and interactive place for the students at Chicopee hills. There would be a low and safe wooden balance beam in the space of the obstacle course area, also some fun stepping logs but different heights to make it more challenging, as well as a huge log that has a huge opening so children can crawl their way through, and lastly have a low podium not to make places, just to jump onto all of them.

Submitted by a Grade 5-6 Student in Rm. 17