

Sample Surveys

Teacher Survey

Demand Chart for Teachers

Parent Survey

Skills Identification Survey

Children's Schoolyard Survey

School Grounds Survey

Teacher Survey

A. Formal Curriculum

1. Which areas on the grounds do you use to meet demands of the formal curriculum?
2. If you do not use any parts of the grounds, why not?
3. Which curriculum subjects do you see being reinforced by the development of the grounds?
4. When the grounds are developed following criteria set by you and the other teachers, will you be more likely to use the grounds as an outdoor classroom for a variety of subjects?
5. What are your recommendations (ie. changes, additions, deletions) in order to improve the grounds so that they may be used more fully to meet the demands of the formal curriculum?
6. How could you integrate butterfly gardens, plantings of native berry bushes, vegetable and herb plots and wildlife-friendly gardening into the curriculum?
7. How could you use outdoor spaces in the winter?

B. Play

1. Are you satisfied with the layout of the grounds for the purpose of children's play?
2. Can you identify problem areas on the grounds and explain why they are a problem? (please mark locations on the map provided)
3. What would you like to see included for the development of the site that would enhance the opportunity for motor play, social play, cognitive play, and quiet or solitary play?

C. Environmental Ethos

1. What do you find aesthetically pleasing about the present site?
2. What improvements would you like to see in the future?
3. Would you be willing to devote class time to the development of the grounds if outdoor classroom development and use were integrated into the curriculum?
4. What subjects do you think are best suited to the greening process?

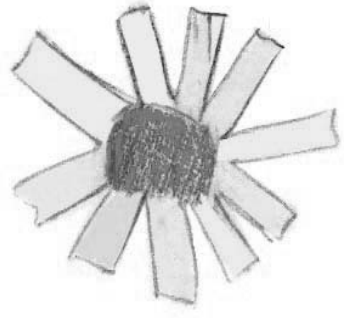
A. The Grounds

1. Where are the children's favourite places on the grounds?
2. Are active play spaces separated from passive play areas?
3. Is there a place on the grounds where children can sit and engage in quiet pursuits such as reading, board games, knitting, chatting, etc.?
4. Where is the noisiest place?
5. Where do children go when it is a) hot and sunny b) rainy?
6. Where do children play their most active games?
7. Where is it a) windiest b) wettest c) warmest d) coldest e) shadiest and f) sunniest on the grounds?
8. Which place(s) is/are used the most in the a) summer b) winter c) throughout the year?
9. Are there any places that are out-of-bounds seasonally or year-round, and why?

DEMAND CHART FOR TEACHERS

Cast votes here →

When you have completed all of the people surveys, list everyone's ideas, make a demand chart for the teachers, and ask them to vote on the projects they would like to use for outdoor learning activities.



This chart was created by a teacher at McMaster Catholic School in Ottawa, Ontario.

✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	Outdoor classroom Shaded- benches - tables
✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	Asphalt games
✓✓✓✓	100 square
✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	checkered board painted on tables
✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	quiet areas
	Soccer (exists now)
✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	butterfly garden
✓✓✓✓	geology/boulder garden
✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	solution to water drainage problem *
✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	flora for fauna garden
✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	Suggestions or other ideas
✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	Amphitheatre, pond, animals, wired-cement sculptures
✓✓✓✓	A "Vegetation" Corner for Games

Teachers School ground Survey
 * Each teacher has 5 votes

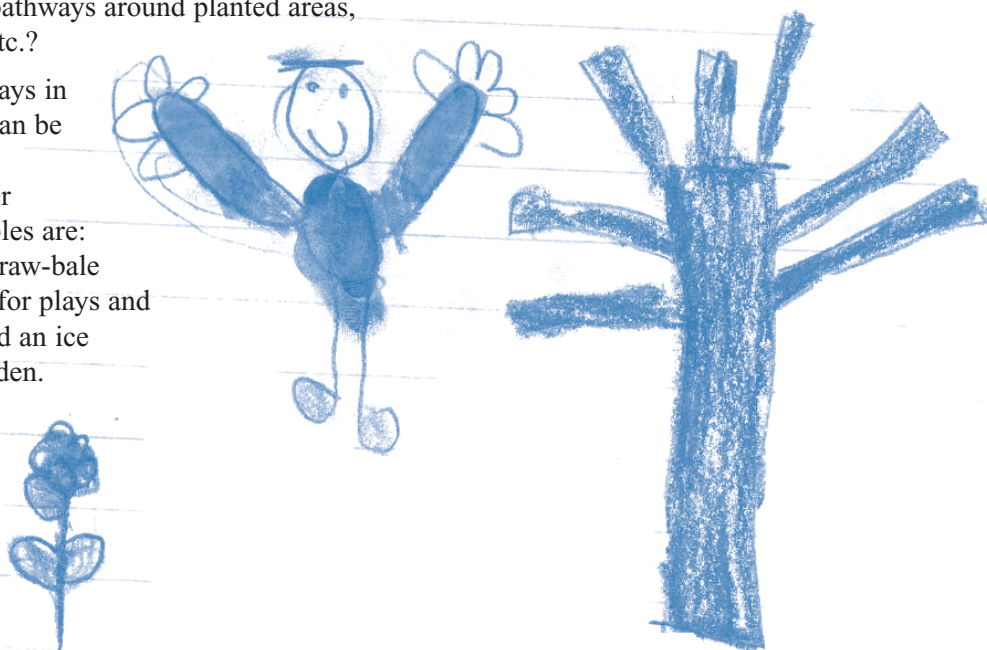
Parent Survey

A. Play

1. Are you satisfied with the present layout of the grounds in terms of supplying adequate incentive for creative play?
2. Can you identify problem areas on the grounds and explain why they are a problem?
3. What kinds of play equipment would you like to see added to the grounds?
4. Is there anything you can think of which you believe should be considered in a site plan to enhance children's play opportunities? (use your imagination!)
5. Do you think that children should be given the opportunity to provide their own input regarding their play needs?

B. Environmental Ethos or Attitude

1. What do you find aesthetically pleasing about the present site?
2. What improvements would you like to see in the future?
3. Would you be willing to volunteer time and effort to help in planting trees or erecting structures?
4. Which aspects of environmental education should be considered when developing the landscaping plans?
5. Do you know of any source(s) of plants or trees that would be free or low-cost?
6. Do you have a skill that would be useful in the development of the site plan, or in the implementation of the projects? (ie. surveying, research, drawing, bio-planning, architecture, carpentry, gardening, horticulture, communications, organization, fundraising, etc.)
7. What kinds of plantings would you like to see on the grounds?
8. Have you any ideas regarding how the school might employ "creative salvaging" techniques to avoid using new materials for building raised planters, defining the edges of plant beds, making pathways around planted areas, building bird feeders, etc.?
9. Can you think of any ways in which outdoor spaces can be designed to provide for both summer and winter activities? Some examples are: a vegetable garden, a straw-bale maze, an amphitheatre for plays and music, a snow slide, and an ice and snow sculpture garden.
10. Have you asked your children for their ideas and opinions about their outdoor school environment, and what changes they would like to make?



A grade three student's vision for their yard

Skills Identification Survey

Skills in the School Community

Many people do not immediately see how they can assist with building outdoor spaces and their use and maintenance unless they have an interest in gardening. Go on the assumption that everyone has a valuable skill to contribute. Some work will need to be done to show people how their particular skills can fit in with the project.

To help find out how many skills your school community has, a “skills identification” survey can be designed by the older students for all children in the school to take home to interview their parents to identify their skills and expertise. Parents can also be asked whether they can contribute labour, materials and equipment. As the responses are returned, students can start creating a database of skills. The database will facilitate targetting people for specific projects such as those with woodworking skills for building seating or planters. The survey can be repeated at the start of each school year for new parents and students can update the database annually.

Some of the skills useful to school grounds transformation projects and activities are:

carpentry	designing	biology
gardening	masonry	botany
painting	ceramic work	mural-making
soil / water analyzing	ecology	conservation
field naturalist work	horticulture	entomology
composting	weeding, watering, and harvesting fruits and vegetables	music and dance
research	data banking	permaculture design
computer programming	landscape architecture	bird-watching
organic growing	fundraising	nature study
celebrations / events	native studies	natural food cooking
building	sculpture and art	costume-making
parks planning	accounting	surveying
health and safety	meditation and Tai Chi	herbal medicine

Skills Identification Survey (cont.)

outdoor education	farming	forestry
communications	journalism	writing
sign-making	presenting	filming
photography	weaving	various crafts
geography	science	public relations

Materials and Equipment

Include in the survey the materials and equipment you are likely to need. For example:

gardening tools	top soil
woodworking tools	plants, seeds, cuttings
paint, brushes, rollers	fabric
garden hose, pails	clay, kiln
flower pots	back hoe, Bob Cat
lumber, spikes	tree stumps
mulch	tree guards
composters	push mower
resource books	wheelbarrow
concrete	patio stones
cobblestones	plywood for murals
large planters	loader and tractor tires

Children's Schoolyard Survey

To start involving children in the school grounds transformation process, have students walk around the schoolyard and write down their feelings about different aspects of the yard and describe any problems and possible solutions. Ask them to note any areas they would like to change and give their reasons.

Play equipment	What do you think of your play equipment? Is it adequate for your age group? Is there enough for everyone to use?
Use of equipment	How many times a week can you use the equipment?
Seating	Is there anywhere to sit? Is there anything to sit on? Where?
Shade	Is there any shade? Where? How much shade is there?
Fences and gates	What do you think of the fences?
Noise	How does the noise make you feel?
Colour	Is it colourful in the yard?
Quiet places	Are there any quiet places? Are you allowed to go there?
Sports areas	What do you think of the sports areas? Are they divided equally between the big kids and the little kids?

SAMPLE SURVEYS

Trees and other vegetation	Do you have any trees or other plants?
Comfort, shelter from wind and sun	Is your yard comfortable? Can you find any shelter from the sun and wind?
Visual appeal	What do you think of the overall appearance of your school buildings and the schoolyard?
Views from the yard	What do you see when you look out from the yard?
Paving	What do you think of the paving? Is there enough? Is there too much?
Garbage, litter	Do you ever see any garbage in the yard? Where does it come from?
Wildlife	Do you ever see any wildlife in the yard? What kinds?
Social places	Do the intermediate grades have anything to do? Are there any social spaces for them?
Feelings	How does the look of the yard make you feel?
Interesting things to look at and do	Is the yard interesting? Why? Why not?
School buildings	What do you think of the school building? Could it made more welcoming (more colourful, more vegetation, etc.)?
Other comments	

School Grounds Survey

What are the major land uses in the area immediately surrounding the school?

Land use	North	South	East	West
Cropland				
Pasture				
Forest				
Housing				
Light industrial				
Heavy industrial				
Market gardens				
Railway lands				
Waterway				
City park				
Roads / parking lots				
Commercial				

Land Use on the Grounds

Area of the grounds in metres² occupied by:

Asphalt	Grass	Bare soil	School building	Portable classrooms	Play structure	Other

Shade

Where is there shade on the school grounds?

Item	Location	Time of day when shaded			Available to children?
		AM	NOON	PM	
Play structure					
Sports field					
Seating area					
Kindergarten yard					
Primary yard					
Junior yard					
Outdoor classroom area					
Front of school					
Shade from school building					
Shade from sheds, portables					
Other					

Trees

				Type of planting		
Species	Nº.	Height	Spread	Single	Row	Woodland

Footpaths and Access

Where are the footpaths on your site and what materials are used?

Surfaces	Footpaths leading to these areas			
	Playgrounds	Sports areas	Portable classrooms	Wildlife areas
Paving stones				
Concrete				
Interlocking bricks				
Crazy paving				
Mowed grass				
Bare soil				
Asphalt				
Wood chips				
Other				

Seating

What do children sit on in the schoolyard?

	Wood	Concrete	Metal	Plastic	Shaded
Benches					
Chairs					
Curbs					
Logs					
Low walls					
Steps					
Picnic tables					
Ground					
Other					

Soils

How would you describe the soil in the different areas of your site?

	Clay	Silt	Loam	Sandy	Stoney	Peaty	Average	Acidic	Alkaline
Garden									
Around trees									
Woodland									
Raised beds									
Sports fields									
Wetland									
Other									

Features for Attracting Wildlife

Enter details on what features you have for attracting wildlife to your school grounds.

Feature	Bird bath	Insect garden	Bird nesting box	Butterfly roosting box	Caterpillar garden	Pond / wetland
Number						
Feature	Bird feeder	Bat roosting box	Wildlife food plants	Butterfly garden	Shelters for hibernation	Toad habitat
Number						
Other						
Number						

Wildlife on the Grounds

Species	Where sighted	Time of year			
		Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter

Wildflowers

				Type of planting		
Species	Nº.	Height	Spread	Single	Row	Woodland

Woodlands

If there are any areas of woodland or small copses of trees on or adjacent to your school grounds, find out the approximate age of the trees, the area of the land occupied by the woods, and who owns and manages the woodland.

	Hectares	Square metres
Size of woodland		
Ownership of woodland		
Management of woodland		

Wetlands

	Ditch	Marsh / Bog	Pond	River	Stream
Area					
Length					
Width					
Depth					
Free access					
Limited access					
No access					

Wildlife Areas

**If there are any natural areas adjacent to your school grounds,
who owns the land and what access are you permitted?**

Name and address of landowners	Contact person
Name: Address:	Name: Phone: Fax: E-mail:

Type of access		Describe
	Check	
Free access		
Limited access, such as seasonal		
Accompanied access		
No access		
Other		

Gardening

**Do you have any gardens on your school grounds? Are the plants native or non-native?
Are any plants invasive? Are the children involved in tending the plants?**

Type of planting	Yes	No	Native - are any invasive?	Non-native - are any invasive?	How are children involved?
Annual flowering plants					
Perennial flowering plants					
Wildflower meadow					
Grasses					
Vegetables					
Orchard fruits					
Nut trees					
Berry bushes					
Herbs					
Medicinal plants					
Tree nursery					
Other					

Weather Monitoring

Do the students do any weather monitoring activities? What is monitored?

	When?	Where? How?
Daily		
Weekly		
Monthly		
When needed for a project		
Never		

Feature monitored	Frequency monitored	Feature monitored	Frequency monitored
Rainfall		Pollution - Air	
Hours of sunshine		Pollution - Water	
Temperature		Pollution - Snow	
Snowfall		Pollution - Rain	
Windspeed		Pollution - Other	
Wind direction		UV Index	
Other		Other	