

Parents plan playground overhaul

Jonathon Naylor
Editor

Recess could be getting a lot more exciting for Ecole McIsaac School students.

A hockey rink, amphitheatre, hill slide and climber are among the planned additions to the school's playground in the coming years.

"There's too many kids and not enough equipment to play on," says Kara Plamondon, chair of the school's parent advisory council, which is spearheading the project.

"There's so much empty space and so much space we can use."

The upgrades would cost an estimated \$50,000 and be completed in three phases over the next three years.

"It's a work in prog-

ress and it's going to depend on what funds we have available," says Plamondon.

More than \$16,000 has already come through grants, donations and fundraisers, with McIsaac students doing their part to generate dollars.

At Plamondon's request, the Flin Flon School Board is now debating whether to contribute \$10,000 toward the first phase of the overhaul.

The spacious playground already includes a jungle gym, swings, seesaws, soccer nets and an asphalt basketball court.

Upgrades

The upgrades would add a hockey rink at the northeastern corner of the property, near the fenced-in bus stop area. Placed nearby would be a series of large rocks.

The current make-

shift soccer field would be replaced with two side-by-side soccer pitches between the existing jungle gym and the fenced-in staff parking lot.

A climber play structure would go up on the western half of the playground, not far from the entrance doors for the younger students. Nearby, a set of 12 new swings would be installed.

At the far north end would be a large hill slide on the existing hill as well as an amphitheatre. Both additions would require permission from City Hall since they would be on municipal property.

Parent council also had plans for a massive sandbox near the younger children's entrance doors, but it turns out the rules prohibit it.

The goal is to have



Kara Plamondon and daughter Annika, 3, and McIsaac student Maddy Jones at the school's playground.

the climber and swings up this year, the soccer pitches and hockey rink next year and the large rocks, amphitheatre and hill slide in 2014-15.

Plamondon says the current situation leads to disagreements and difficulties on the playground as children lack sufficient play options.

She recently presented the plan to the school board, with Trustee Tim Davis commending her and her fellow volunteers for their work.

The board then referred Plamondon's request for a \$10,000 contribution to the Finance Committee for further review.

With 419 students, McIsaac is by far Flin Flon's largest school.

Flawless talent highlights performance

Jonathon Naylor
Editor

If you closed your eyes, you swore you were listening to a 20-piece string orchestra.

Open them and you realized that what the musicians on stage lacked in numbers, they made up for in flawless talent.

Six members of the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra brought to life the works of Bach, Vivaldi and more Tuesday evening at the R.H. Channing Auditorium.

"We're all very experienced at playing in ensemble, so we are able to learn a new piece of music and play it together very quickly," said bassist Paul Nagelberg. "But this particular group has an added advantage because we've all been playing together for years."

That cohesion was evident throughout the 90-minute concert as the musicians, seated on chairs on the dimly lit stage, filled the auditorium with music spanning the centuries.

Not only was the sound classical, but so too were the instruments. One of the violins dated back to 1757, and the most modern of the string instruments was approaching its 100th



Members of the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra performed in Flin Flon on Tuesday. Left to right are Mary Lawton, Boyd MacKenzie, Paul Nagelberg, Rodrigo Muñoz, Carolyn Nagelberg and Suzanne McKegney.

birthday.

The performance reminded Nagelberg of why, as a younger man, he decided to become a professional musician.

"I didn't want to work for a living. I was kind of naive," he said. "It actually is work, it's hard work, but at the time I thought I just wanted to be surrounded by the joy of music. And I'm always reminding myself that I'm very lucky to be working professionally as a musician. People are paying to come out to hear what we're doing and I have the best seat in the house."

Perhaps Nagelberg did have the best seat in the house, but one thing's for sure: none of his audience members had complaints about their vantage point.

The performance was part of the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra's Outreach Ensemble program.



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