

Designing Schoolyards and Building Community the Lindy Way

Every day in Philadelphia, thousands of school children spend their recess on desolate lots of cracked pavement with no play area in sight. The Lindy Family Charitable Foundation hopes to change that.

While attending a National Liberty Museum Young Heroes program last year, Elaine, Alan and Frank Lindy, the third generation of Lindys to work in the family real estate business, discovered a link between a lack of playgrounds and an increase in bullying among students. After some research, they found that about 100 Philadelphia schools had only an asphalt or cement surface to serve as a playground.



Volunteers are jubilant at the conclusion of the day's work, knowing that they have made a difference for both students, staff and the entire community



selection of play elements from painted games, climbing tunnels and performance stages to council rings, fence decorations, gardening spots and more, so children of all stripes can find a play element to exercise their bodies, hearts & minds.

The pre-approved menu of options offers an easy way for schools to customize their playgrounds based on space available and age ranges of the children who will be using the area by utilizing a unique points system. But a key piece of a Fiesta Playground is the price tag. It costs

\$100,000 including a \$10,000 refurbishment budget, a significant difference from a standard playground's cost.



The always energetic Lindy Communities team is ready to volunteer for any project and efforts offered by the philanthropic and community oriented company

Acting with their foundation, they spoke with experts in different areas of the nonprofit sector and found that the main reason playgrounds are not prevalent in the city is cost. Adding this feature to a school could amount to between \$500,000 and up to \$2 million depending on the equipment. Factors such as grass

maintenance, surface area and different requirements depending on the type of play equipment that is used (structures higher than 18 inches, for instance, require soft ground) greatly raise the costs.



Ellwood Elementary School is located in the Oak Lane section of Philadelphia and is now part of the Fiesta Schoolyards program created by Lindy Communities

The first Fiesta Playground opened at Eleanor C. Emlen Elementary School, much to students' excitement. The once-bare schoolyard is now bursting with color through painted murals, games and bright maps of the United States and Philadelphia. A grassy structure in a dome configuration allows kids to climb and play. A basketball court gives kids the chance to shoot some hoops and get some exercise.



Lindy was also joined by PPG staff during the day which included a major clean-up on the perimeter of the school

The Lindys brainstormed ideas that could provide the kids with an adequate play area while also bypassing all the hurdles such as building a structure that does not need footings, drilling, storm water management, climbing structures over 18 inches, and other deterring features. Enter the

"Fiesta Playground" and its motto: "Quick, easy and fun."

Quick, because each play element has already been approved by the School District of Philadelphia. **Easy**, because using a unique points system, schools can select from a menu of play elements they prefer. **Fun**, because a Fiesta Playground offers children a wide



Bob Freitag from PPG presents a check to the Lindy Foundation accepted by Ellwood principal Marilyn Quarterman and Elaine Lindy

The foundation set up the playground over the summer in about three and a half months. The staff, parents, students and community were involved every step of the way and were thrilled with how it turned out.

As they plan with the school district and the school board for more playgrounds in the future, the foundation is seeking funding partners to contribute through various sponsorship levels. Any businesses interested in helping their cause can email elindy@comehometolindy.com.