



FAQ

What is...



What is the timeline/process for receiving a Fiesta Schoolyard?

This is likely our most frequently asked question! Fiesta Schoolyards works by mapping out specific geographic areas for each build season, such as the Lower Northeast, West Philly, or North Philly. The School District of Philadelphia (SDP) determines which schools within these areas are the best candidates for a Fiesta Schoolyard transformation. The entire process takes approximately 6-8 months and is outlined below. Steps marked with an asterisk require input from the principal or school, while Fiesta Schoolyards handles the rest.

*Step 1: A School District or Fiesta Schoolyards representative reaches out to Principal to inquire whether the principal is interested in receiving schoolyard improvements. One condition is that the schoolyard should remain open to the community during daylight hours, so that that the public can access the new amenities. If the principal agrees, Fiesta Schoolyards arranges an introductory meeting. About two weeks later, the principal selects their desired elements from a Menu of Options with a predetermined scope. The maximum size for a Fiesta Schoolyard is 2,000 square yards.

Step 2: After the principal's selection, our engineer creates a professional rendering of the proposed schoolyard improvements. This rendering is submitted to the SDP's Capital Program team for review. After receiving feedback, the final version of the rendering is completed. (This step takes approximately 1-2 months.)

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Step 3: Fiesta Schoolyards submits a request to the Capital Programs team to have the project included on the Board of Education's meeting agenda, with the goal of providing and donating the schoolyard improvements to the SDP. If the School Board approves the request, the SDP's legal department issues a Right of Entry license, granting the general contractor access to begin work on the schoolyard. (This step typically takes 1-2 months.)

*Step 4: The schoolyard surface, which is either asphalt or concrete, can vary significantly in condition. Depending on the condition of the surface within the designated Fiesta Schoolyard area, a range of conditions may be appropriate. We make every effort to notify the principal and school maintenance staff at least one week in advance of any surface preparation. This step will vary depending on a number of factors including, schedule of the pavers, the surface condition and weather.

*Step 5: The general contractor and subcontractors proceed with installing all selected play amenities. Depending on the specific amenities chosen, painters may also begin working on murals and surface designs. We aim to notify the principal and school maintenance staff at least one week before installation and painting start. This schedule may adjust based on contractor availability and weather conditions.

*Step 6: Once installation and painting are complete, a launch celebration event may be held, at the discretion of the Principal, to officially dedicate your brand-new Fiesta Schoolyard!

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How will schools/principals know that Fiesta Schoolyards has permission to be onsite?

We obtain a Right of Entry license for each school before starting any work.

Can students play on the schoolyard during installation?

For the most part, yes. In most cases, our contractor will cordon off the work area so that the rest of the schoolyard remains accessible. During installation, students can use the space once the materials have dried (usually within 24-48 hours). We ask that staff and students remain cautious of any equipment left on-site.

Is it possible that schools may receive a slightly different variation and/or color of a play element?

Yes. Materials and colors may vary based on the available inventory at the time of the order.

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Will Fiesta Schoolyards address the entire schoolyard?

No. Fiesta Schoolyards typically treats up to a 2,000 square yard area in a way that is deemed appropriate. We do not treat the schoolyard surface outside of the designated Fiesta Schoolyard area.

Why did the Fiesta Schoolyards team relocate an element from the spot that we originally chose?

This occurs when our engineers or the SDP adjust the placement of elements due to safety concerns, such as proximity to entry points, vehicle or truck traffic, or other requirements.

What happens after the schoolyard is renovated and the Dedication event takes place?

The schoolyard is yours! Fiesta Schoolyards contributes a Refurbishment Fund to cover repairs and maintenance for your new Fiesta Schoolyard. This fund is managed by the Fund for the School District of Philadelphia. For more details, please refer to the flow chart on the following page.

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You have a repair at your Fiesta Schoolyard over \$250, where tools and supplies are not available at your school.



Select and contact a District approved vendor or The Fund for the School District approved vendor for refurbishments.



Send by email the vendor's invoice, including a description and timeline of requested Refurbishments and, Vendor's W9 to Samantha Lee, [slee@thefundsdp.org] Manager of Administrative Operations at The Fund and cc Sheryl-Amber, [sedmondson@thefundsdp.org] Grants manager at The Fund



Upon completion of the Refurbishments, The Fund shall approve and issue payment to the Vendor. Should a selected vendor require an initial deposit, funds shall be released by The Fund to the Vendor. Photos of the completed work can be share with The Fund via email.

I have a question that was not answered above, or I would like an update on the status of the schoolyard renovation process. Who should I contact?

Feel free to reach out to any of us if you have any additional questions. Dr. Carletta Skipworth (Executive Director) can be contacted at cskipworth@fiestaschoolyards.org, Gwen Beuerle (Administrative Coordinator) can be contacted at gbeuerle@fiestaschoolyards.org or, Elaine Lindy (Founder/Trustee) can be contacted at elindy@fiestaschoolyards.org.