

HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PLAYGROUND SAFETY PROCEDURES

Playgrounds provide important opportunities for children learning to explore their environments, develop skills for play and gain confidence. In order to foster a safe environment for exploration and play, Hadley Public Schools (HPS) adheres to the following playground inspection procedures.

Annually, the Hadley Elementary School (HES) playground will be inspected by a certified playground safety inspector. The inspection shall follow the manufacturer's recommended inspection schedule and include a review of the following areas:

- **Surface:** Ensure surfaces around playground equipment have at least 12 inches of impact-absorbing material such as wood chips, mulch or safety-tested rubber. Protective ground surfacing should span 6 feet in all directions.
- **Maintenance:** Ensure spaces that could trap children, such as openings in guardrails or between ladder rungs, measure less than 3.5 inches or more than 9 inches.
- **Spacing:** Ensure children are able to move safely from one activity to another through proper spacing between equipment and other structures.

HES shall develop behavioral expectations for safe playground activities. Faculty will review behavioral expectations with students.

HPS will arrange a purchasing and replacement schedule that weighs equipment durability and safety with available funds.

School personnel will record playground injuries including the equipment involved to allow for assessing equipment or play behavior that is frequently associated with injuries, and develop a system for regular maintenance as well as a plan for equipment repair, replacement and/or removal.

Last reviewed: 10/23/2024