

BOARD BRIEF

Date: July 26,2019

For ACTION _____

For INFORMATION X_____

Board Agenda: Yes ___

No X_____

FROM: Mignon R. Anthony, Chief Operating Officer
Anita Cordova, Acting Director, Educational Facilities

THROUGH: Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Cindy Anderson, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Mount Vernon Playground

SUMMARY: The Mount Vernon Community School (MVCS) playground project is finally nearing completion after more than a year. The protracted process to complete a modernization of the MVCS playground was a challenge in many aspects and resulted from multiple, and at times, overlapping and conflicting issues including project and design management-related, community involvement-related, acts of nature, and unforeseen conditions.

BACKGROUND: The MVCS playground project was jointly conceived and planned in 2017 with close parent and community-group partners who raised and contributed over \$100,000. The design procurement, construction procurement and city permit process took place during early 2018 and the modernization activity mobilized in August 2018.

MVCS parents and some members of the community have expressed strong sentiments about the project's delays due to a combination of issues:

1. The playground project was indirectly impacted by the many crippling conditions under which MVCS had to operate and educate during the past school year, including the driving and relentless rains that caused general water intrusion and environmental problems, the roof replacement project, the temporary but lengthy shuttering of the auditorium and several classrooms;
2. ACPS' too-close involvement of the MVCS playground committee into the official design and procurement aspects of the project proved to have problematic consequences to efficient and accurate design engineering and to project management coordination;
3. The contractor was over committed on several city projects and had a hard time providing adequate and consistent oversight to the work, especially as complex situations and schedule adjustment needs arose;
4. MVCS site problems, unforeseen conditions and poor city documentation of permit

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plans required the work to endure change orders, extra oversight and management by Facilities and Procurement in order to keep things moving and resolved.

The new Mount Vernon Community School 'Play Garden' will be completed on July 31. Final safety inspections will take place between July 31 and August 9. In order to ensure that safety and instructional signage is installed, exterior paving and fencing is repaired, where needed, and the site perimeter is cleaned up around the roof demobilization as well, Facilities and Principal Burrell will be opening the Play Garden to families on August 30 during the MVCS Open House. The official opening ceremony will take place on September 6 during the school's Ice Cream Social.

Large and colorful signage thanking the community for their patience and announcing the openings will be mounted completely around the Play Garden fencing on Wednesday, July 31, 2019.

RECOMMENDATION: The Superintendent recommends the School Board review summary for the Mount Vernon Playground Project.

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