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RE: JACK STUART SCHOOL – PLAYGROUND STRUCTURE

At Jack Stuart School, everyday our students recite our school promise:

“Today I promise to take care of myself, take care of others and take care of this place. I won’t forget my promise.”

In keeping with our school promise, we would like to take care of our place by building a new playground that will take care of the students at our school and the children in our community of Camrose.

An existing wooden playground structure on the school grounds has reached the end of its lifespan and our school division has informed us that it needs to be removed. When this information was shared with our parent council, our council chair came up with an innovative proposal: to replace the old playground with a fully inclusive and accessible playground. An inclusive playground design will help us to *take care of our place* by providing new opportunities for:

- **The students in the EXCEL program at our school.** These students have complex needs, with some in wheelchairs and some using walkers for transportation. An inclusive playground would give these students access to playground equipment and the opportunity to experience wheeling up and down the ramps, crossing a raised span, as well as the joy of being on a swing.

- **All students at our school.** While the inclusive playground will support students with complex needs, all other students will benefit from the play structure and have the opportunity to play with our EXCEL students, keeping our promise to “take care of others”. Our school has a Circle of Friends program, where we pair students from our regular classes with students from the EXCEL class at recess. An inclusive playground would give the Circle of Friends a space where these peers could build relationships through play.
- **All children in our community (and beyond!)** Our playground is open to the public and is regularly used by families in our community. This fully inclusive and accessible playground would be the first of its kind in the city of Camrose and its surrounding area. The community has many young members that face a variety of physical, mental and social challenges. Families who are looking for a playground where their children with special needs can have a space to play, interact and be active will now have that with this inclusive playground. This playground would provide a space for positive interactions and physical activity, allowing these individuals to build strength, confidence and self-esteem and for many it will be the first time they are able to actually “play” and have fun at a playground, not just watch from the sidelines.

This inclusive playground is an investment in our students, our school and the community of Camrose. By helping to support the construction of this new inclusive playground, you can join our school promise by working with us to take care of each other and this place.

With sincere gratitude,

Zenovia Lazaruik, Principal

D. Todd Sikorski, Assistant Principal