Schoolyards Count!

Audit Tool and Survey

An online version of this tool and survey is available at
www.ophea.net/schoolyardscount and in French at
www.ophea.net/fr/Prioritécoursdécole

WEATHER ❑ Sunny and Clear ❑ Overcast/Raining ❑ Snowing

NAME OF SCHOOL _____

NAME OF SCHOOL BOARD _____

CONTACT NAME _____

CONTACT EMAIL (optional) _____

DATE (dd/mm/yy) _____ / _____ / _____

Access to the school

1. Please locate each entrance to the school grounds, assign it a number, and record whether it is for pedestrians, cyclists (or other human-powered wheels), or cars (tick all that apply), and if there is roadside parking available.

	Pedestrians	Cyclists, etc.	Cars	Roadside parking
Entrance 1				
Entrance 2				
Entrance 3				
Entrance 4				
Entrance 5				

2. On the adjacent roads, are there any speed limits over 40 km/h? ❑ Yes ❑ No

The surrounding area

Are the following visible from **any** of the entrances:

3. A bus stop (school buses or public transit) ❑ Yes ❑ No

4. Cycle lanes:
   a) Separated from the road ❑ Yes ❑ No
   b) On the road ❑ Yes ❑ No

5. Sidewalks:
   a) On both sides ❑ Yes ❑ No
   b) On one side of the road only ❑ Yes ❑ No

6. A marked pedestrian crossing (e.g. zebra/pelican/ light controlled crossing) to assist access to the school ❑ Yes ❑ No

7. Traffic calming (e.g. speed bumps, width restrictions, traffic islands) ❑ Yes ❑ No

8. Signage:
   a) School warning signs for road users ❑ Yes ❑ No
   b) Road safety signs (e.g. "look both ways") ❑ Yes ❑ No
   c) Route signs for cyclists ❑ Yes ❑ No

9. How would you describe areas around the school where parents in cars might stop and drop their children off:

❏ **None** ❏ **Adequate** ❏ **Congested** ❏ **Very Congested**

10. How would you describe areas around the school where parents might legally park their cars:

❏ **None** ❏ **Adequate** ❏ **Congested**

The School Grounds

Please indicate how many of the following are present, and rate their quality:

	#	Good	Adequate	Poor
11. Bright or florescent markings on play surfaces (e.g. hopscotch, animals, foursquare)				
12. Single purpose playground equipment (e.g. slide, simple climber)				
13. Multi-component playground equipment (e.g. adventure playground or structure with slides, climbing areas, rungs)				
14. Fields (e.g. soccer, baseball, football)				
15. Athletics track (grass or hard-surface)				
16. Courts (e.g., basketball including half court, multicourt area)				
17. Benches or other seating				
18. Working drinking fountains				
19. Cycle parking (count number of bikes that could park)				
20. Wildlife/bio-diversity-promoting gardens (low maintenance — eg. pollinator gardens, no-mow areas)				
21. Theme gardens (higher maintenance, e.g. vegetables, indigenous healing, alphabet)				
22. Naturalized play spaces (areas with boulders, logs, forest)				
23. An enclosed outdoor classroom area				
24. Other:				
25. Other:				
26. Other:				

27. Is dog mess visible in the areas where children play? ❑ Yes ❑ No

28. Are the school grounds on a split site? (ie., a road crosses the schoolyard) ❑ Yes ❑ No

29. Are the school grounds predominantly flat? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Aesthetics

Please indicate whether the following are present:

	None	Some	A lot
30. Decorative planted beds containing flowers/shrubs/small trees			
31. Areas shaded by trees			
32. Ambient noise (e.g. traffic, trains, industry)			
33. Litter			
34. Murals/outdoor art			

Useage

Are the school grounds generally suitable for:

	Very	Somewhat	Not at all
35. Sports (organized or not)			
36. Informal games (kickball, frisbee, etc)			
37. General play			

Overall

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
38. The grounds are shielded from the surrounding area by hedges/trees/fences.					
39. The grounds are generally well maintained.					
40. The grounds are generally free of vandalism.					

41. Estimate the total percentage cover of different surfaces where children could play.

   a) Paving, tarmac or asphalt   _____%

   b) Grass   _____%

   c) Bark/rubber/other safety surface   _____%

   d) Other: _____%

   TOTAL   _____%

42. Is the area around the school predominantly ....? (tick one)
   - ❑ Residential
   - ❑ Open fields/parks/greenspace
   - ❑ Business/retail
   - ❑ A mixture of the above

The next part of the survey asks about how schoolyards are used at your school, and funding.

USE OF THE SCHOOLYARD

How many students attend your school?

How many minutes of outdoor recess/lunch time does your school provide per day?

Are there organized outdoor games and activities during recess or lunch at your school? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Are there balls and physical education equipment available during recess? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Is there an outdoor 'loose parts' kit (might include blocks, burlap, tires, tree-cookies, pinecones, sticks) available to students during recess? ❑ Yes ❑ No

How often are students at your school outside for learning activities during class time?

- ❏ **Seldom** (less than once per month)
- ❏ **Regularly** (2-4 times a month)
- ❏ **Frequently** (more than once a week)

Is your schoolyard shared with other organizations (childcare programs, municipal recreation departments, through private-public partnerships, community garden groups):   ❏ **Yes** ❏ **No**

If yes, please describe: _____

Is your schoolyard unlocked and open to the public outside of school hours?   ❏ **Yes** ❏ **No**

IMPROVEMENTS

In the last three years, which of the following improvements occurred in your schoolyard? (Select all that apply)

- ❏ Created a project to enhance biodiversity (e.g., pollinator garden, no mow zone…)
- ❏ Created a learning garden (e.g., vegetables, alphabet, indigenous healing…)
- ❏ Adding logs and/or boulders ❏ New play structure ❏ Renewal of fields/turf
- ❏ Improvements to physical accessibility of play areas ❏ Kindergarten yard
- ❏ Other_____
- ❏ No improvements

BUDGET

In THIS YEAR's school budget, how much is allocated for:

a) Schoolyard maintenance?

b) Schoolyard capital improvements?

Is regular landscaping maintenance paid for out of board or school budgets?

- ❏ School   ❏ Board

Has the school board funded schoolyard improvement work (beyond maintenance) at your school in the LAST THREE YEARS?   ❏ **Yes** ❏ **No**

FUNDRAISING

LAST YEAR, how much did your school fundraise, IN TOTAL?

EXTERNAL SOURCES

In the LAST THREE YEARS, has your school…

…had a fundraising drive within the school community focused on schoolyard improvements. ❏ Yes ❏ No

…received grants or project funding from organizations (e.g., Evergreen, TD Friends of the Environment, Jumpstart) to support schoolyard improvements. ❏ Yes ❏ No

…received donations from local businesses to support schoolyard improvements. ❏ Yes ❏ No

…received support from regional or municipal governments for schoolyard improvements (eg tree plantings, fencing, play structures). ❏ Yes ❏ No

…received support from regional or municipal governments to improve walkability (e.g. crosswalks, traffic calming, lights). ❏ Yes ❏ No

In the LAST THREE YEARS, how much would you estimate your school has received from external sources for schoolyard improvements?

YOUR SAY

Are there major challenges or success you have had with your schoolyard that you would like to share?

CONTACT

How, if at all, do you want us to contact you?

- ❏ Please don't contact me.
- ❏ Please send me a copy of the report by email when it is done.
- ❏ I consent to the research team contacting me by email if there is a question about my responses.
- ❏ I'm interested in doing more to publicly promote this initiative, please contact me by email.

If you have printed out the PDF form of this tool and want to submit by mail, please send the completed form to:

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