



ÉCOLE

St. Avila



The Greening of our Community

Enhancing Education and Outdoor Play



"The project is the first of its kind in the Pembina Trails School Division, and as far as I am aware unique to schools in the province.

Not only will it exemplify sustainable design practices in the way we handle water, but it will offer the students many excellent opportunities to engage with the processes of our natural world.

So many kids have lost touch with our place in the world of water, and plants, insects, and weather. This will help them reconnect with nature, and be a fun and very exciting school ground!"

Wendy Simonson
Evergreen School Grounds Design Consultant
Pembina Trails School Division

Ecole St. Avila Home & School Association
Agassiz Child Care Centre
Ecole St. Avila School Age Child Care Program



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In Fall, 2008, the School Ground Greening Committee, a sub committee of the Ecole St. Avila Home and School Association, initiated an investigation into potential 'School Ground Greening' projects.

School Ground Greening projects can involve many components. Taken literally, School Ground Greening increases the vegetated areas (tree plantings, flower gardens, etc.) but the term 'School Ground Greening' also address ways in which the school can reduce its environmental impact, increase overall sustainability, enhance educational opportunities and provide engaging play and recreational opportunities.

Teachers and students were asked to come up with a 'wish list' of things they would like to see in the school yard. A sample of some of the ideas which were suggested:

Shade structure	Climbing rocks
Additional seating areas	Hills / berms to climb on
More trees for shade areas	Swings – small child age and up
Mini Soccer Pitch	Upgraded asphalt / Basketball court
Covered Sandbox	Improved drainage
Butterfly / native plant gardens	Improved fitness trail

The Greening Committee is researching funding opportunities available for some of the projects on the 'wish list'. Throughout these investigations and consultations, two key points became prominent in the process:

- 1. Whatever is done on the school yard site, it needs to incorporate NATURE with PLAY and provide 'HANDS ON' learning opportunities for the students.**
- 2. Ecole St. Avila & Richmond King's Community Centre fields have severe drainage issues.**

Clearly, before any on site development occurs, the drainage issue had to be addressed.

Technical Expertise & Funding

Four Year Phased Approach

The School Ground Greening Committee is taking a four year phased approach to the project based on estimated time frames required to effectively address drainage, the 'wish list' and the ability to secure funding requirements.

School parent Derek Murray, of Scatliff + Millar + Murray Landscape Architects is volunteering to assist and provide expertise throughout the project. Through the Pembina Trails School Division, we have access to Wendy Simonson, a landscape architect who is Manitoba's 'Evergreen' school advisor. Evergreen is a national charitable organization with a focus on helping students, teachers and communities develop safe and creative outdoor learning environments. We are also very fortunate to have the support of the La Salle Redboine and Seine Rat River Conservation districts who have extensive expertise in water drainage / stewardship issues. School parent Janice Lukes is assisting in project funding and parent Douglas Little is 'photo documenting' the project.

YOUR Expertise

As you learn more about the project, you may see a fit with your areas of expertise. The more support we have the better the end result will be! Please contact Mr. Campbell, Principal or Mme. Denis, Vice Principal if you are interested in becoming involved.

Funding

So what will the project cost? Like anything, it depends on the 'options' selected, ie: the economy, the mid-size or the deluxe version. Our approach is to deal with drainage first, prioritize the 'wish list' shown on the opposite page, then research costs and funding opportunities. There will be ongoing dialogue with all stakeholders through school and community newsletters, flyers and websites. We have a four year commitment of grant writing services and fund development, and while the economy is having ups and downs, we are in an interesting 'economic stimulus' type of environment. Infrastructure upgrades are a core part of the project.

To date, we have secured just over \$63,000 towards the drainage solution, well over \$24,000 of in-kind support through Richmond Kings Community Centre, parent volunteers, LaSalle Redboine and Seine Rat River Conservations District and Rivers West. The City of Winnipeg had set aside \$50,000 towards the wooden play structure upgrade, and through Councillor Swandel's assistance, we've secured an additional \$25,000 for the play structure upgrade. A complete financial breakdown to date is available on request.

Partners

To date, the following partners have provided extensive expertise, guidance and/or funding towards the project. As the project evolves, we expect our list of partners to continue growing !

City of Winnipeg
Richmond Kings Community Centre
Scatliff + Millar + Murray Landscape Architects
Native Plant Solutions (a division of Ducks Unlimited)
Ecole St. Avila Home and School Association
Ecole St. Avila School Age Child Care Program
Agassiz Child Care Centre
Pembina Trails School Division
Green Schools Manitoba
Evergreen Foundation
Province of Manitoba
Marilyn Brick, MLA
LaSalle Redboine & Seine Rat River Conservation Districts
Rod Bruinooge, Member of Parliament
Rivers West
Manitoba Hydro
Winnipeg Trails Association
Councillor Justin Swandel
DouglasLittlePhotography.ca

REMINDER:

TREE PLANTING FESTIVAL

May 28, 29, 30th! Timeslots and more details will be send home with students shortly.

Volunteers needed to help prepare grounds and plant trees and shrubs with students. Contact Mme. Denis to volunteer. Idenis@pembinatrails.ca
269-5677

Watch the Website!

As more information becomes available, it will be posted to the Ecole St. Avila website: www.PembinaTrails.ca/StAvila

