

Trees for Tomorrow Application

Project Description

Grand Forks Secondary School Student Advisory: Student Shade Park

Purpose: The Student Advisory Committee (SAC) is represented by students in grade 8-12 that meet with the principal on a monthly basis to provide guidance on issues as well as act as a leadership group in specific areas. The Student Advisory Committee has been talking for the past six months about developing a green initiative for the school that involves a number of students, helps decrease our carbon footprint, and provides an area youth can use to avoid the sun and enjoy the school grounds. This is the second step in our efforts to become more environmentally friendly. Last year, the SAC initiated a school wide recycling program and re-planted the school courtyard (complete with new benches made from recyclable materials)

The idea is to create a shade park area behind the school on one corner of the property. The park would include a chip trail leading out from the school, lined with trees and seating benches, culminating in a small grove adjacent to the athletic field where students could sit within a stand of shade trees. The area would also serve as a location for gym classes to meet and discuss class activities away from the glare of the sun. Grand Forks has a very sunny climate and currently, the school lacks areas of shade for students to access while outside of the school. (Please see attached map)

The specifics of the plan include planting between 30-40 trees along a path and in a circular route adjacent to the athletic field creating a shade grove with seating areas. A series of four concrete pads will be poured as an area to secure benches. The school will sponsor a weekend volunteer activity to encourage students, parents, and staff to come out and help dig the holes and plant the trees. A senior construction class will facilitate the pouring of the cement pads and the placement of benches (4 in total). The school will raise the costs associated with the benches, while the grant will help cover the costs of the tree purchase.

Goals:

1. Educate students on the value of planting trees (related to reducing our carbon footprint as well as the reduction of the impact of UV exposure.)
2. Involve students in a school based green initiative focused on becoming more environmentally sensitive
3. To create an area for use by students and the community
4. To partner with our local nursery to help establish an ongoing relationship for future school projects

Communication: The project will be communicated to students and parents through our school newsletter as well as the school website and local paper. A sign will be created by our construction class that will sit at the start of the trail and acknowledge the contributors.

Project Sustainability: The project will be maintained by School District maintenance as well as the Student Advisory Committee. Trees will be wrapped to prevent damage due to deer and other pests. Tree placement will be coordinated with the maintenance department to ensure suitable access to irrigation and to prevent bark damage from sprinklers.

Evaluation: The main indicator of success for this program will be the volume of users. As students have few areas to go during times of good weather, we are hoping this will become a popular place for visitors. The number of volunteers will be another indicator. Outside our SAC, we are hoping to entice other students and staff to volunteer for the planting phase. Overall involvement in the planting phase will be a strong determinant of success.