

Dear Mayor Wilson and city council,

We are 4th graders from the East Somerville Community School. ESCS is the biggest k-8 school in Somerville and we have a really great place to play with lots of play structures, a soccer field, and a basketball court. The ability to play is important for kids because being outside and exercising is healthy. It also helps them focus better for learning by helping them get out their energy. But there's a problem, the playgrounds can be too hot! Somerville is already hot and only going to get hotter. It's harder to enjoy playing when it's too hot and this affects a lot of people, mostly kids! This is why ESCS deserves cooling solutions for the playgrounds.

Somerville is an urban heat island. This means the city is hotter and everywhere around it is cooler. Somerville is the number 1 most densely populated city in New England and number 20 in the country. More people means more energy being used and this makes cities hot. Cities like Somerville have more concrete and less plants. This makes them hotter than towns. There are lots of buildings and machines. So more cooling solutions would help because Somerville already has more concrete, machines and people making it hotter than other places.

The playgrounds will get hotter in the future with global warming. According to the text The Greenhouse Effect, "The greenhouse effect is a warming of Earth's surface and the air above it". The more CO₂ you put in the atmosphere by driving cars, making things in factories and using electricity causes it to be hotter. For example, the Somerville playground is hot because the rubber gathers heat and so does the pavement and turf. With global warming the surfaces will get hotter. A good solution for this problem is having more shade and grass because it absorbs less heat than turf and pavement and will help keep our playground in the future when it's hotter.

The playground has different surfaces that absorb too much heat! And I say this because the basketball court was 94 degrees but the little bit of grass was only 64 degrees that shows we need more grass. Look on a 67 degree day the

basketball court was 94 degree so imagine what it would feel like on a 85 degree day, it would be even hotter .So if we had grass than it would cool down a lot faster. Oh yeah, and we can't forget about the turf. If you think the basketball court was hot, well the turf and rubber are even hotter. On a 65 degree day the turf was 115 degrees and the rubber was 117 degrees. It was 86 degrees outside last Thursday at recess and people were sweating and tired because it was so hot on these surfaces. But It's not only grass that we need to cool down, it's also trees. They provide shade and water for the air that makes wherever the place is cooler. And if we don't add any of this stuff then it will just feel hot.

Heat on the playgrounds is a problem because it can cause health problems. Heat can make you faint. It's dangerous when it gets over 95 degrees because it's hard for bodies to cool down. Kids can get dizzy and sick from too much heat. Older people and kids get sick faster by heat and then middle aged people. So it could be dangerous because it can cause heat exhaustion and people get dizzy and sick. Children get hurt more and might want to stay in shade because the playground is too hot. As you can see, this is why ESCS playgrounds need more shade and other cooling solutions.

Heat on the playgrounds affects a lot of people. This is because children from E.S.C.S don't just play here, the kids from the Winter Hill school also play here because they don't have a park. About seven hundred students from E.S.C.S plus about four hundred from Winter hill makes a total of one thousand one hundred students playing in the park. Some adults like to let their kids play after school, when it is especially hot out. Sometimes, the children's grandparents will come and let them play, and the elderly are also vulnerable to heat. So, E.S.C.S deserves cooling solutions because children especially use it to play.

The playgrounds at East Somerville Community School are hard to enjoy when it is too hot. If the playgrounds are too hot most people would stay in the shade. Children are especially vulnerable to heat and this is a school where children play everywhere. A wise 1st grader we interviewed once said that people

should be comfortable so they can have fun when they play. This is because when you're hot you won't want to play outside. In conclusion, kids work hard in school and deserve to enjoy recess on a cool playground here at ESCS.

We made a survey to see if other people who use the playground agree. 206 people responded to our survey. As you can see in the attached graphs, 90 people were k-4th graders, 98 were 5th-8th graders, 16 were teachers, and 2 were parents. Here you can see that 66% of survey respondents said the front playground was way too hot or a little too hot. And 60% of people said the side playground was way too hot or a little too hot. The places people said were too hot were the play structures, basketball courts, and soccer fields.

When we asked people what they wanted, lot of people said that there should be more trees or shade structures on the front playground because there is very little shade out front. Also, a lot of people were saying there needs to be more water fountains so they can take a drink and cool down. People said that the side playground also needs more water fountains and shade. A few people also said we needed more grass.

Cooling solutions are important to a lot of people. Many people from our survey said this was important because people don't overheat and playing will be more enjoyable. How can kids have fun on the playgrounds when it's too hot? If you stay out too long, you might get heat exhaustion, a sun burn, or dehydrated. This is why it's important to a lot of people.

Some quotes from our survey are:

"If I'm in a hot playground doing activities that make me sweat like running or soccer, it can get uncomfortable and make people not wanna play. Also some people don't like to take their sweater off and if it's too hot in the park a person could even have a heat stroke or pass out."

"Dehydration and heat-related illnesses can become severe and even life-threatening very quickly, especially for someone who is prone to heat-related

illnesses! Running and playing in very hot weather is dangerous when students don't have shade or water to rehydrate.”

“When students come to my class after recess, they are often very hot and sweaty and need time to cool down and drink water, which takes away from class time. If there were more cooling systems and water fountains, students could stay cool.”

In conclusion, these are the reasons why ESCS needs these cooling solutions for the playgrounds. The majority of our survey respondents agree and think that our playground should be cooler with more shade and water fountains. It's important so that kids have a cool, safe place to play and have fun. So please help us make this happen.

Sincerely,

Ms. Rae's 4th grade class

Shea A.

Sadiyah A.

Jacob A.

Alexis B.R.

Caleb B.

Faith D.

Nicholas F.

Christopher F.

Isabella L.

Charlotte L.

Sam M.

Sophia M.S.

Julyana P.R.

Levi P.

Ben S.

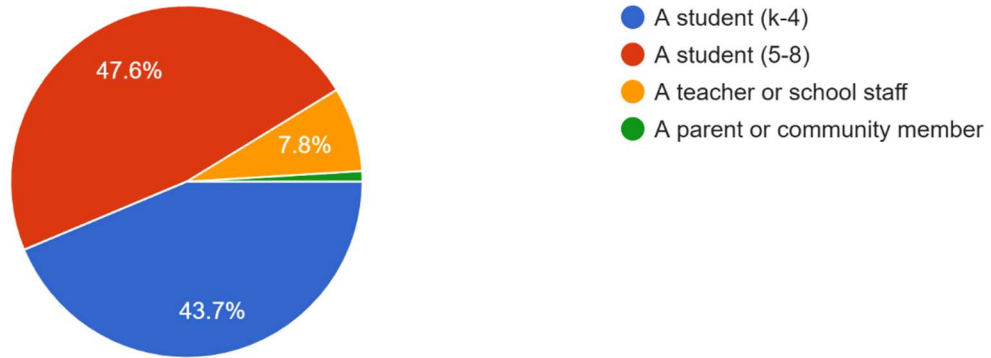
Jerry S.

Michael W.

APPENDIX

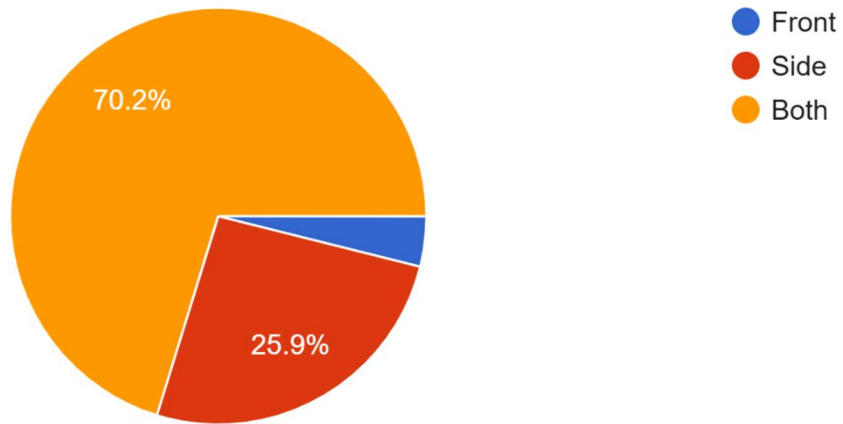
Are you...?

206 responses



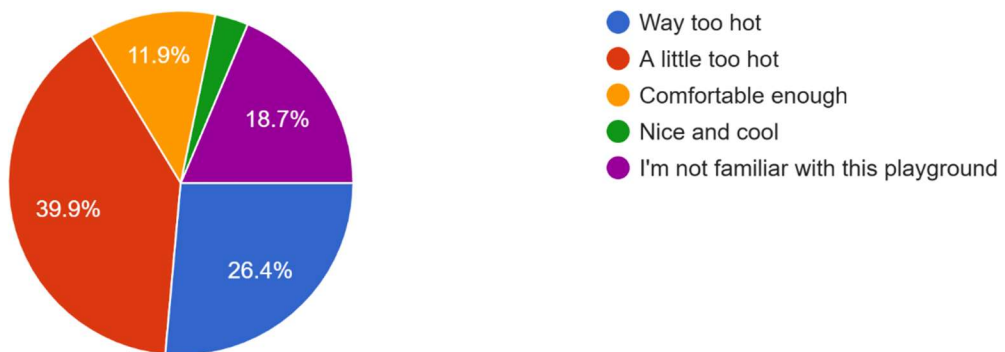
Are you familiar with the front playground, the side playground, or both?

205 responses



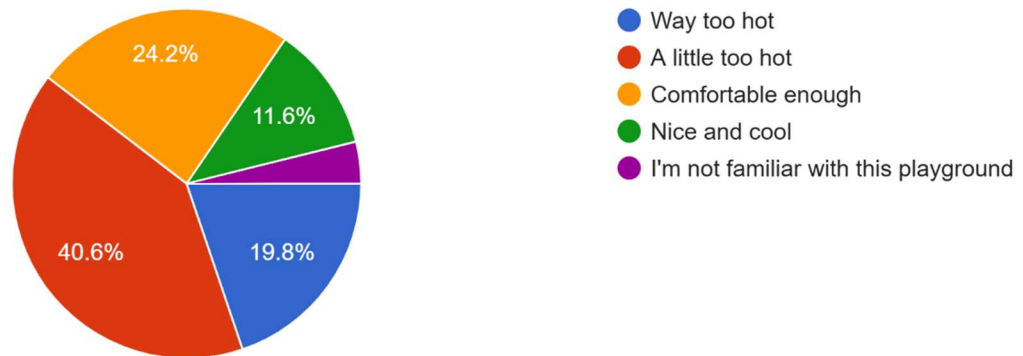
On a hot day, how would you describe the front playground? (the one with the soccer field and basketball court)

193 responses



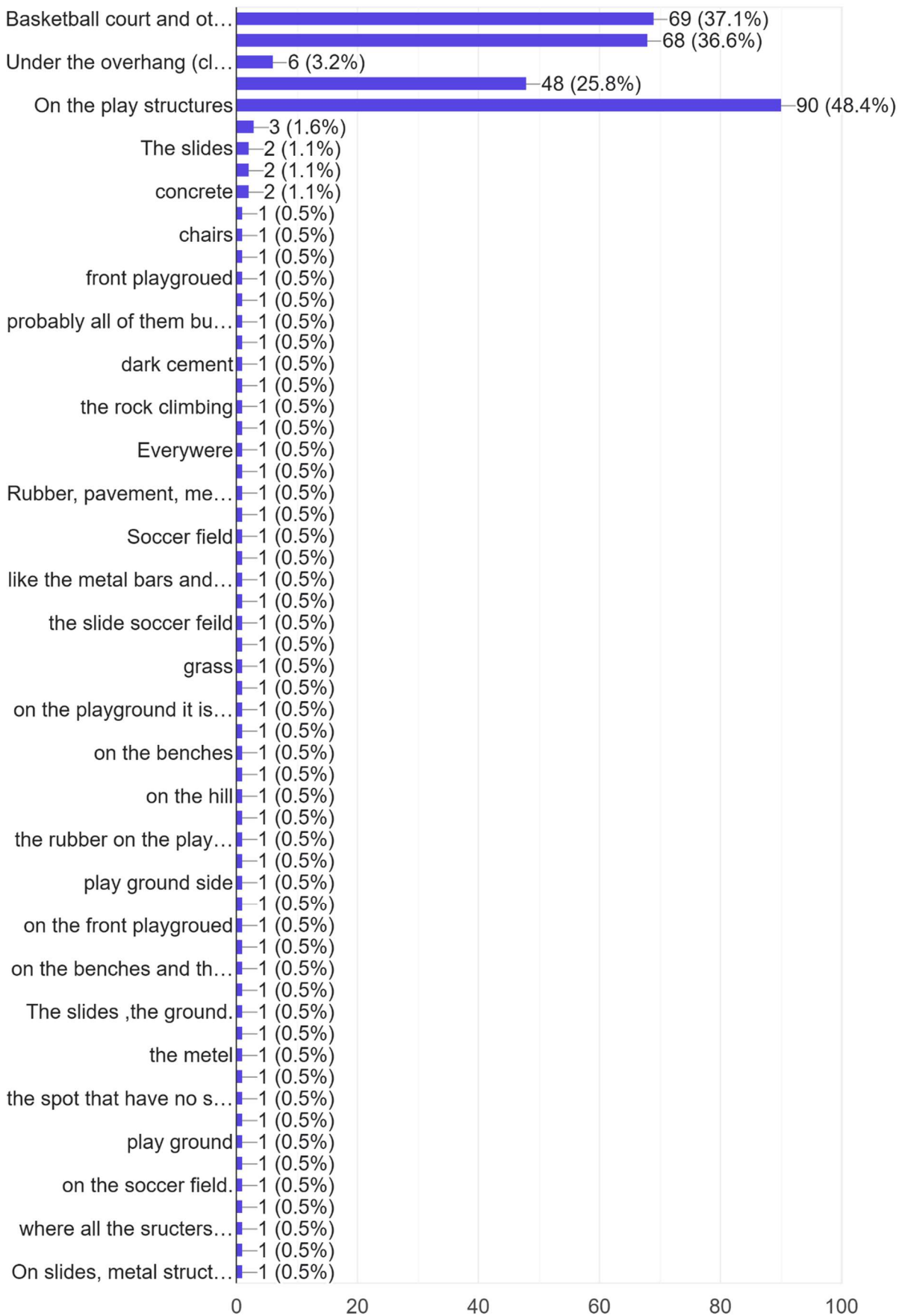
On a hot day, how would you describe the side playground?

207 responses



Where on the playgrounds does it feel too hot? (check all that apply)

186 responses



What kinds of cooling solutions would you like to see on the front playground? (for example: more grass, more trees, a shade structure, water fountain, ect)

More shade, more grass.

more trees

water fountain and trees

more grass

more water

A water fountain and shade structure

by putting AC somewhere on the playground

structure

shade structure

water fountain and more trees

shade structure

More shade structures.

more water fountains and more trees.

shade structure

some more shade structures

more shade structures and more water fountains frequently

more water fountain

water fountain

more grass and more trees.

more shade structure and water fountains

shade structure

so more water fountains and more shade on the structure.

Shade structures.

more shade structure and water fountains.

Shade structure

more trees and a spray fountain

Mist sprinkler

More shade structures and a water fountain would be wonderful!

My solution is to add a shade structure.

A shade structure, something sturdy, inexpensive, and inorganic with a misting system.

shade, grass, water fountain, trees, sprinklers on the grass

a water fountain

Water fountains.

more shade and a water fountain

shade or water fountains

I would like a fountain and more trees because as its getting hoter you will need more water and trees because that provides shade and can cool down the front

Maybe a water fountain shade structures and trees could help:)

Maybe instead more trees and grass instead of concrete because concrete can heat up very fast and it could burn your feet.

but in the water fountain

A shade structure and a water fountain.

I would want to see a shade structure and a water fountain.

Add more grass, add a water fountain, and add another shade structure.

A solution of what you can do to make it cooler is use a sprinkler to water the grass to make it less hot

I think a sprikler

What they can put is a water fountain because some people don't have a water bottles.

I think a cooling solutions will be very good is a sprinkler the water very nice cold and fresh.

i would like to see more water fountains and shade

more trees

much more trees and water fountain

a shade structure and also a water foutain.

more trees

a shade structure

a shade of structure but where we can still play and a water fountain.

more shade structure and more grass

more grass

Maybe a water fountain and more trees.

I believe a shading area in the back playground will be useful because there is not much shading there unlike the front park that has the roof. I also believe a water fountain in both parks can help the students

Water fountain would be amazing and helpful

vollyball net

More shade on open areas and a water fontain.

more trees because they provide shade that keeps you cool

maybe a shade structure

more trees amd a shade structure.

More water fountains that are actually easy to drink out of.

more shade

more trees since it gives us more shade in places

A shade structure.

they could put in more of a shaded place not just the overhang

more trees and small shade structures like seating area .

more shade structure and water fountain

More shade

More shade would be nice

A water fountain to fill your water bottle and a shade for kids to sit under.

a shade structure and maybe more trees for shade.

the turf is to hot

yo we need more shade for the football field its mad hot there

leave it how it is it gives summer vibes which we need a lot

I would like to see a water fountain.

I would like to see water fountains and shade structure because on a hot day people get dehydrated easily and sometimes don't have water to drink, so more water fountains would be good. Also when it's hot some people want to stay cool by being in the shade but there is too little of it. So instead of going under trees or the climbing structure. people could go under shade structures.

A cooling solution that we could use is a roof above the soccer field or the basketball court.

We need more tree or shade structure so that we can play on structure .

add water fountains outside so people with no water bottles can drink from them

Water fountains in soccer field or some thing close to soccer field

add a gazebo for shade

I would like to see some water fountains or some more shade.

more water fountains, a lot of shade structure.

to add more water fountain

more trees for shade

I would definitely like a well maintained water fountain and more shade trees and maybe some grass.

The shade and a water fountain.

i think a water fountain would be good because if kids are really hot they can cool down there

I would like to see more trees and like a shade structure and a water fountain.

i would like to see a shade structure in the front playground and more trees because sometimes it gets hot and you want to play outside of the shade area in front of the office.

more shade

water fountins, a shade structure

a solution is that you can ad more trees a shade structure and a water fountain.

more water fountia. and shade

A shade structure over the playground and a water fountain.

Shade structures and water fountains

More grass

more trees and shade structure.

more trees.

drinking fountain

more trees more grass

shade

Drinking fountain Shade structure

Grass or native plants where there is dirt; a shade structure near the playground; a water fountain!!!

Shade and water fountains

More trees, and shady places to play.

water fountains, and shade structure

more trees and/or shade options

A shade structure and water fountain

A shade structure - i.e., more trees. A water fountain would be a great help, as students often need water but can't go inside.

more trees and shade structure

I would like more shade structures because that also covers from snow and rain so that would also be a plus side.

trees maybe a shade structure

trees maybe or a shade structure

more water fountains more shade areas and maybe a mist area

i would like to see a water fountain.

more shaaaaadeeeeeee

more trees and water fountains

More trees

More grass, and, a water fountain, because other than that, its fine

More trees/shade

water park

nose

i dont know

more shade and water

I think it doesn't need help.

Definitely more trees and plants and maybe more water fountains for students.

non

More trees and shade and water fountains

Shade structure or more tree

mas arboles

more shade structure or more trees

mas arboles

Maybe add more shade.

shade structure

more trees.

What kinds of cooling solutions would you like to see on the side playground? (for example: more grass, more trees, a shade structure, water fountain, ect)

Shade

more trees

water fountain

shade stucter

more grass

Water fountain

more grass and more structure

noting

grass

more trees

shade structure

More shade.

more water fountains and less rubber.

more trees

more water fouantiaon

more shade over the structures

more water fountain

a shade struture

a water fountain.

more shade structure, water fountain and trees

water fountain

More water fountains and play ground.

Shade and water fountains.

less rubber and more grass, water fountain

shade structure

water fountain

More trees or shade structure

Vegetation

water fountain more shade and more trees

A misting system

more trees and a water fountain, cooler monkey bars

nothing

Water fountains.

more shade structures and a water fountain

shade and water fountain.

I think more grass and a sprankeler because we only have terf and not that much grass then the sprankelers would water it and keep it alive

just water fountain is enough for me

A shade structure just like the overhang in the front playground because the side playground doesn't have an overhang.

more shand

water fountain.

A water fountain and a shade structure because it's hot.

More trees, a shade structure, and water fountain.

A shade structure to make it block out the sun and also to sit down

I think a waterfuntain

one thing the can use for the side playground is a shade structure.

maybe a water fountain and the sprikler with the water very fresh.

more grass and a water fountain

shade structure

more trees and water foutain

shade structure

water fountain

water fountain

water fountain

more shade structure and also more grasses

shade structure

More grass.

More trees

A shady area would also be helpful

steper hill and a slide that goes down the hill

A water fountain.

shade structures and more water fountains

shade stucture

More trees

It's perfect there, nothing new would be fine.

more trees

more trees since its more bigger over at the side playground and more grass cause their lots of dirt over their and it will look better if their was grass over their

More trees.

also more shaded places because there are nun

more benches or more covers for shade like a small overhead.

add a water fountain and trees

we should plant more trees and have a shade structure for the play areas that are way too hot.

Outside water fountains

More shade and a water fountain.

Shade and some trees.

a shade structure, more trees and maybe a water fountain.

the turf is too hot

lowkey havnt

none

I would like to see a shade structure near that part of the area.

Same thing as the last question. Water fountains to be hydrated, and shade structures to remain cool.

A cooling solution on the side playground that we could use are places that give more shade, like maybe add more trees that block or expand the roof to block the sun.

shade structure because we were going to get burned.

a like plastic layer of like ceiling above the soccer field so people can play without being too hot

Water fountain and more grass

it's not too hot

I would like to see more trees and some tents or something.

we should put a high blanket kinda blocking the sun that gives us shade.

more shade and water fountain

more trees or a overhang

Dr. Pepper.

I would like to see a water fountain and a gazebo with regular or hanging chairs/benches.

more trees, Water fountain.

they can add a shade structure for people to cool down

Water fountain and shade structure,

a shade structure and a water fountain i mainly want a water fountain because sometimes the teachers don't let you inside and if you go inside you miss recess time. i think that the school should fix the broken one right where you turn to the baby park from the front of the school where the soccer field is.

plant more trees

shade structure

a solution is that you can put more grass and a water fountain.

more water fountain for shade

A shade structure over the playground and a water fountain.

Shade structures and water fountains

Water fountain

drinking fountain

More grass, more shade structures.

Drinking fountain and a shady structure

more trees and a water fountain

more grass drinking fountain

A drinking fountain, shade structures.

more trees and shade structure

Drinking fountain.

drinking fountain more trees

more grass and more trees

shade structure

Drinking fountain.

more trees

More trees and a drinking fountain

drinking fountain and shade structure

drinking fountain

drinking fountain and shade structure.

water fountain

trees

More trees and a drinking fountain.

drinking fountain and shade structure

shade structure

more trees more drinking fountains

Drinking fountain and shade structures.

more grass and more trees

drinking fountain and shade structure.

drinking fountain

drinking fountain shade structure

i more

More trees, more grass, water fountain, and shade structure

more trees

drinking fountain and shade structure

More grass

drinking fountain

more trees, drinking fountain, shade structure

drinking fountain

drinking fountain more trees

shade,

drinking fountains shade structure

water fountain

shade structure

water fountain

more trees shade structures

more trees and grass and a water fountain

Drinking fountain and a shady structure

trees shade structure

more trees and a shade structure.

water fountain and shade shade structure

Water fountain

Grass or native plants where there is dirt; a shade structure near the playground; a water fountain!!!

Water fountains

A shade structure or water fountain

water fountains, and shade structure

Same

More trees and a water fountain

more benches and shade

I would think that ore trees would be a better option a water fountain because many kids do get thirsty, and that would also help cool you down.

idrc

grass and water fountain

more shade areas and water fountains

more shade structure

more shade a water fountin we could go to

water fountain

A water fountain.

more grass, and , a water fountain, we got more trees, which is nice,and

More trees/More shade

swimming pool

idk

trees and shade

shade and water

I don't think this one needs help either.

More or bigger trees and plants and a small structure for shade.

idk

More trees and shade and water fountains

Water fountain or more tree

mas sombra

more shade structure or more trees

mas sombra

Planting more trees would help with the shade.

more trees more shade

more trees.

Why is it important to you that our playground is cool?

It is important because when you sit on places, you feel hot, or you can't play because of the heat.

to not get sunburned

so we don't get dehydrated

a water fountain

so we don't get hot

It's important to stay hydrated

so that we don't have to burn ourselves

because if there's people playing in the sun it can be bad for them

so they could play without getting too tired.

so I'm not sweaty

Because there's not much shade to cool down.

so everyone can have fun and not be hot.

because if you stay out too long you might get heatstroke

because some times it's really hot

so that we don't get that dehydrated

no burning

grass

so there is more shade.

to stay safe and hydrated.

because if there's people playing in the heat they can get a headache

More cool solutions because you can't get burned or faint.

Because children are vulnerable to heat.

it's helpful for the kids

because children get hot easier.

To stay hydrated and your blood can't handle the heat for that long

So we can feel healthy as we play

Safety first but also comfort

I often worry about students playing and not having a way to get away from the heat and what long term exposure to the sun is doing to their skin.

It's important to me because when it's hot it's too hot to play.

Avoiding dehydration and heat stroke.

it hurts and I don't eat as much if I'm hot and I am uncomfortable

it will be better to play

Because if it is too hot somebody can overheat and that would be bad and uncomfortable.

so that way it's not too hot and people can stay cool

for then everyone could feel good outside while playing or doing their activity

So every one can enjoy it

Because sometimes it becomes too hot and students will get exhausted from running around and students will sweat a lot and be tired but that's what I think.

Because it is starting to get hot and if it gets too hot people will be too heated and tired and very sweaty.

you can pass out

because my body can cool down.

The playground is important to me because it has shade and it's cool sometimes.

I think it is important for the playground to be cool so it can be comfortable on hot days.

It's important to me because the playground is always hot in hot days so you get burnt each time you touch it

I think that some kids be not too bored

Because if there are no things to be cool then people won't play and it is important that kids play.

maybe in the hot weather will be very bad maybe passed out.

because we can avoid kids getting burned on structures

so people don't overheat

so that it's more enjoyable.

so people can't be sweaty and burning when sitting on a bench

so we don't get tired more easily and because when it's too hot it's a little harder to play

it feels good being there

so we do not overheat

Because how are we gonna be able to have fun if it's so hot

because every kid in this school should enjoy the playground but sometimes they can't because of the hot surfaces or because there is no shade in either playground as well

so everyone can be comfortable

It's important to me because people could get affected by the heat, so if the playgrounds are cool, that wouldn't happen.

It's important to be because everyone in this school deserves a place to cool off and not be so impacted by the heat

So students, adults, and teachers can be comfortable outside on a hot day. Also overall it would just be very useful.

because we don't want people to die from the heat not having fun

It's important to me so students can be safe and cool in the hot weather.

so the kids can have a good time when it's hot out

it's good how it is but it's important to be cool so that we don't get strokes

Cause if it's too hot outside some people can have a heat stroke

Because it keeps us cool when playing in the hot temperatures.

so people do not overheat

so people dont get burned when they touch the ground

Its imporant so everybody can feel comforble outside, becuae the weahter can get annoying, and to hot.

so i be so hot when i come back in side

it is important because we can't enjoy our parks if we are getting burned on the slides and swings or even just sitting on the floor.

it can keep us from having heat strokes and overall its better to have shade cover

its important because students will feel cooler and prevent less heat waves.

It is important to me because playgrounds are a place to have fun and if it's so hot to play then they have no use.

So kids don't accidentally get burned by the hot structures(I had once in the side playground the slide was wayyy too hot)

It is important because people and younger kids to feel safe and not feel like they are over heating.

if im in a hot hot playground doing activities that make you sweat like running or soccer etc its can get too uncomfortable and make people not wanna play. Also some people dont like to take their sweater off and if its too hot in the park a person could even have a heat stroke or pass out.

is fut play but in the same time is to hot

so i can play footy

nothing

It's important to me becuae if the playground is not cool some kids might burn their hands or their legs trying to climb a structure that is too hot.

When it's hot you get tired easily due to the heat and some people don't really enjoy it and prefer to stay cool. So when the playground is cool you could have more fun, without worrying about the heat.

It's important that our playground is cool so we don't come back into school all sweaty and uncomfortable.

It's important that our playground is cool so that no one will burn themselves or when there in structure they might jump off or get burned. Then we have to go to the nurse and get an ice pack .

so people dont get as tired or get a heat stroke

So we can feel hydrated when we run around

het gesousen

It is important to me that our playground is cool because it makes it more fun to be outside.

because people actually die of too much heat. also we should put a lot of water fountains.

I dont know

to be comfortable and not burn under the scorching hot sun.

i like bananas

It is important to me that our playground is cool because then you can do more with the short recess time and you do not have to go back inside all sweaty and hot.

For you don't get a heat stroke and that you cool down if it get to cold.

for kids not to get hurt

so we don't burn ourselves when we play.

so it can be comfortable to play on.

when it is more cool we can be more comfortable

because its uncomfertabol. its too hot

this is important because you can not get burn.

to not get sun burn

I notice on hot days that all my students are either hiding in what little shade they can fine or are completely exhausted from the heat. It takes us a while to settle down after coming in because everyone needs water and have a hard time focusing.

To keep kids outside longer.

So kids don't get over heated

It is important because you don't burn

So we can play with our friends.

So it is safe to have recess

so that you do not overheat

you could feel hot and your eyes could burn

Because you can have more fun when you're not hot.

so you do not get to hot

So the kids can play in the park.

because you can get burnt on the slide

because sometimes it gets too hot.

beacuse we want to run and have fun

So we can have more fun and not get dizzy from the heat.

so a lots of kids have more fun

because it can't be to warm

so kids can have fun and so it is not to hot

your skin could

so we can run and use are energy

because people should be comfortable so they can have fun.

it feels merr colerr in the in the the wherdrr

So the children don't feel too hot.

so you cant over heat

so u dont get sun burned and when u play on the structures your legs will get stuck to the structure.

because it can help you learn and play

playing

so we can play in the shade

so we dont burn and get hurt

You can get a sunburn

because it feels cool and nice

because when anywhere that's can sit hot hot

because i can be sad

because it's always hot. So you can be hydrated.

to be comfortable outside

so we can have more recess

when it's too hot it's important to have shade because it might get too hot.

If it's hot too hot or cold

so kids don't get hot.

it is too hot to play

having a cool playground is good because if not it will burn you

so we don't feel too hot

because she doesn't want to overheat

so kids can have fun !

Kids need a place to comfortably move around outside so they can be happy, healthy, and focused on learning.

Having a cool playground makes people comfortable to play outside.

so we can enjoy the playground

so I don't get overheated

so no body gets too hot or melt

When students come to my class after recess, they are often very hot and sweaty and need time to cool down and drink water, which takes away from class time. If there were more cooling systems and water fountains, students could stay cooler

Students get so hot and there is no water fountain, so sometimes they get overheated. It's also hard to find places in the shade to talk or relax.

It is important our students don't get too hot and are hydrated

It is important to be able to play outside, and we want to keep it safe. People can get heat stroke if they get overwhelmed by the heat

children can spend longer time at the park if caretakers can have a comfortable place to cool off

It is important that our playground is cool so that everyone can safely enjoy them and take care of themselves.

Dehydration and heat-related illness can become severe and even life-threatening very quickly, especially for someone who is prone to heat-related illnesses! Running and playing in very hot weather is dangerous when students don't have shade or water to rehydrate.

so people aren't always burning hot

Because it makes the entire recess experience much better, and much more fun if you're not burning to death in heat stroke.

so I don't overheat

heat makes everyone sweat

so we don't overheat

because I like playing volleyball and soccer and I don't like being too hot.

Its important because we are tiered after all of our classes then going out and get hit with the heat just is too much

so your not burning up

Because it is important that our playground is cool because it can causes heat strokes.

so that tiny children dont over heat

Because I dont like the heat

because its more comfortable and safe

It... isn't? I don't like it cool. I like it warm / hot.

So that students don't overheat during recess and don't get sick or suffer from heatstroke or sunburn.

probably so people dont have heat strokes

So the kids are happy and comfortable. Happy, comfortable kids are able to learn more.

Because the amount of heat that is used can be dangerous for our body, we might not even have enough energy due to the heat energy.

mas diversion

so we don't pass out because it is too hot

mas diversion

So that kids can have fun and not overheated when playing.

so we can play with less heat

for safete