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**2019 School Yard Initiative**

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), in partnership with Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), is requesting proposals for projects that seek to revitalize school playgrounds and outdoor learning environments across the state with an emphasis on opportunities for nature-based play and learning. The most competitive projects will be those that reflect a participatory design process led by the students and supported by the local community.

In addition to receiving GOCO funding for infrastructure improvements, elementary schools selected for the 2019 School Play Yard Initiative (SYI) may be eligible to become partner schools in [CPW’s Schools and Outdoor Learning Environments](https://www.cpwsole.org/) (SOLE) program which provides outdoor experiences, family events, and teacher training to help students and families connect with nature on-site, and through 4th grade field trips to nearby natural spaces. All selected schools will be eligible for on-site teacher professional development workshops to help incorporate the outdoor space into the existing curriculum.

Each school is eligible to apply for grants up to $110,000. GOCO believes there is great value in schools working with a professional design consultant who has experience engaging students and community members in a collaborative process to develop creative and innovative design solutions that are responsive to the constraints of the school site and that meet all applicable safety and accessibility requirements for school yards. A professional consultant will also be able to provide insight into what potential elements of a school yard project might cost and can assist with budgeting and phasing decisions. At the time of application, we require that each school has worked with a professional design consultant on a conceptual design for the school yard that is based on a student led process. If a GOCO grant is awarded, up to $10,000 of that award can be used to pay for the remaining costs associated with design. GOCO wants to ensure that at least $100,000 of a grant award is dedicated to components on the ground.

Applications for the SYI must be submitted by local governments in partnership with schools. You will learn more about that relationship in this application. Applications are due on **Tuesday, January 8, 2019.** GOCO receives applications via an online system. Instructions for online submission are included at the end of this document.

Please read this application in its entirety and then contact Erika Meyer at emeyer@goco.org or 303.226.4512 before you get started applying. We know the application process is a lot of work and so want to ensure your project will be competitive for funding in this grant cycle. We are eager to answer any questions you may have about the grant cycle.

**2019 School Yard Initiative Fact Sheet**

**Eligible Entities:** School Yard projects must be proposed through a partnership between a local government and a school or school district as local governments are the only entities eligible to receive GOCO grants for this purpose per the Constitutional Amendment that created GOCO.

**Property Ownership:** All property on which GOCO funded projects are located must be owned by or under control of the applicant for the useful life of the project. Considering these projects will be constructed on school grounds and therefore owned by the school/school district, an [Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA)](https://www.dropbox.com/s/l5aeikd3nyd9c8t/SAMPLE%20IGA.doc?dl=0) between the local government and the school district will be required if grant funding is awarded.

**School Yard Design:** The planning and design of all projects must be led by the students. The SYI is a competitive grant program and schools that demonstrate authentic youth engagement compete better. There are many resources on authentic youth engagement, click [here](https://www.dropbox.com/s/l1qivbqwzw3yrp7/Hart%27s%20Ladder%20of%20Participation.png?dl=0) for a good starting point. Schools are required to work with a professional design consultant to prepare conceptual design documents as part of the application process. Please click [here](https://www.dropbox.com/s/capylprm02bodt7/Design%20consultant%20list.docx?dl=0) for a list of professional design consultants interested in serving your school. Please note that some of the consultants on this list are commercial playground equipment providers who are able to provide proposals for play equipment replacement projects. For more extensive projects, we suggest that you work with a landscape architect who can address the design of your space holistically, taking into account the opportunities and constraints of the project site. If your grant is awarded, you’re eligible to use up to $10,000 of your GOCO grant to finalize design documents.

**Eligible Project Types:** Funding can be used to develop a new school yard and/or to enhance or improve existing school yards. Projects must include spaces for outdoor play and learning. Projects can include [green schoolyards](http://www.greenschoolyards.org/news/2018/4/11/announcing-gsas-new-expanded-activity-guide-for-schools), [natural playscapes](https://natureplayandlearningplaces.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Nature-Play-Learning-Places_v1.3_Oct15.pdf), age specific play equipment, outdoor classrooms, learning gardens, waterplay features, climbing walls, walking paths, environmental education signage, and shade. If you are proposing a garden as part of your project, please be sure to think about management and maintenance of your garden. Click [here](https://biggreen.org/managing-school-garden/) for a great resource on this topic. These project components are merely examples; we encourage students and schools to dream big! Projects that include natural components will likely be more competitive. All projects must be constructed on or adjacent to school grounds.

**Award and Grant Amount:**Applicants are eligible to receive grants of up to $110,000. Up to $10,000 of that funding can be used to complete design documents.

**Access:** The proposed school yard must be open to the general public, daily, when school is not in session. The project budget must include funding for signage that informs the community of the days and hours the school yard is open to the public.

**SOLE Program Partnership:** As part of the 2019 SYI, schools awarded construction funding will also be invited to become partner schools with Colorado Parks and Wildlife's [Schools and Outdoor Learning Environments](https://www.cpwsole.org/) program. SOLE schools participate in field trips to nearby nature areas such as state parks, wildlife areas, or partner organizations such as nature centers and museums. SOLE also hosts Family Nature Nights on the school grounds and in-class presentations. Current SOLE programs provide 3 field trips to students in the 4th grade.

To encourage use of school grounds as outdoor learning environments, the SOLE program is piloting teacher training workshops to provide specific hands-on strategies and activities to inspire teachers from all subject areas to take learning outdoors. Schools will be asked to send several teacher and administrative representatives to a regional workshop, or to provide professional development time for SOLE to host an on-site teacher training.

For more information, see: <https://www.cpwsole.org/>

**Match Requirements:** GOCO will not fund more than 75% of the proposed project’s eligible costs up to $110,000. At least 25% of the total project cost must come from sources other than GOCO and this must include at least a 10% cash match from the applicant and/or partners. Matching funds can come from the school or district, the local government’s Conservation Trust Fund dollars, grants from other organizations, fundraisers, donations, etc.

For example, in order to receive the maximum grant amount of $110,000, your total project cost must be at least $147,000. Of that total project cost, the applicant and partners are required to contribute $37,000 in matching funds. Of that $37,000 match, at least $14,700 must be provided in cash. The remaining $22,300 of matching funds can be in-kind contributions or donations of services and materials.

Additional funds spent on planning and design services, beyond GOCO's initial contribution, can be applied as match.

**Financial Hardship:** If your school or local government is experiencing a financial hardship that is resulting in a barrier to applying for funds, please contact Erika Meyer at emeyer@goco.org to discuss options.

**Timeline:** Work on the proposed project may not begin until after the grant has been awarded (March 2019) and a contract is signed with GOCO. Grantees are allowed up to two years for construction.

**School Yard Initiative Grant Cycle Calendar:**

**Dec. 11, 2018** Draft applications due to Erika Meyer for review (optional)

**Jan. 8, 2019** Applications due via online submission

**Mar. 2019** Committee recommends projects to board (schools are notified of recommendations one week in advance of this meeting)

**Apr. 2019** GOCO Board makes final decisions on grant awards

**Local Government / School Partnership**

School Yard projects must be proposed through a partnership between a local government and school district or school. Article XXVII of the Colorado Constitution establishes that the only entities eligible to receive grants through this initiative are municipalities, counties, and title 32 special park and recreation districts. Those eligible entities may sponsor projects on behalf of entities that are not eligible for GOCO funding; allowing schools the opportunity to construct projects on school grounds. For the purposes of this initiative, the local government will serve as the applicant, and the school will serve as the partner. If a grant is awarded, the local government – as GOCO’s grantee – will be responsible for grant administration. This means that they will sign the GOCO grant agreement and will receive GOCO grant payments (to then be passed on to the school).

To bind the school as a third party, to the terms and obligations set forth in GOCO’s Grant Agreement, the two parties must enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA), Memo of Understanding, Special Use Agreement or similar contract. A draft contract must be in place at the time of application and the contract must be completed as part of the grant agreement process if a project is funded. Please reference the sample IGA in this application, which includes particular language GOCO needs to see in these contracts.

**Minimum Local Government Role as Grantee:**

**­**

* Designate a primary contact for the project
* Sign application document
* Pass a resolution supporting the project
* Work with school district to establish and execute IGA/MOU regarding school grounds
* Sign GOCO Grant Agreement­
* Participate in grant award orientation call
* Serve as fiscal agent:
	+ Accounting/financial department approves and signs progress and or final reports
	+ Receive grant funds from GOCO
	+ Distribute funds to school

**Resolution from Governing Body**

GOCO requires a signed resolution from the applicant’s governing body (e.g., city/town council, county commission, special district board of directors) to ensure that the applicant’s ultimate decision-makers are aware of and support the application and recognize the financial and other obligations the grant creates. Use the Sample Resolution at the end of this application as a guide.

Need help? If you need to modify the language of the resolution and aren’t sure it will meet GOCO’s needs, please feel free to contact Erika Meyer for assistance.

**Letter of Support from School and School District**

GOCO requires a letter of support from the partnering school and school district to demonstrate support for the project and solidify their partnership with the local government. The letter must be co-signed by the district superintendent, the school principal, and the school’s facilities and risk department or comparable representative. The letter must:

* Confirm support for the project and the application to GOCO.
* Confirm district ownership of the project site for the project’s useful life.
* Confirm that the school yard will be open to the general public, daily, when school is not in session.
* Recognize the need to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the local government to bind the school to the terms and obligations of any grant awarded.
* Recognize the need to provide matching funds for project completion.
* Confirm that the school’s facilities and risk department or comparable representative endorse this project and will participate in the design process to ensure the viability of the proposed components **and its estimated maintenance costs.**
* Recognize the need to maintain the project in a high-quality condition for its useful life.
* Commit to providing teachers time to participate in teacher training and support SOLE efforts at their school if applicable

**Budget**

**Eligible and Ineligible Costs:** The following table provides sample eligible and ineligible costs for these projects. These are examples only - ***not all eligible and ineligible costs are listed here.*** Please note that while the components listed under Eligible Costs can be included on your project budget, some of them do not compete well when they are the only component of your project. For example, a project that is largely for infrastructure will not compete in this process. Schools should keep in mind that nature based play and learning opportunities will be highly competitive in this initiative.

|  **ELIGIBLE COSTS (including but not limited to)** | **INELIGIBLE COSTS (including but not limited to)** |
| --- | --- |
| Natural/wildzone playscapes  | Athletic fields/track and field facilities |
| Age specific playgrounds, climbing structures and safety surfacing | Athletic courts |
| Pavilions | Non-fixed assets (lawnmowers, snow blowers, etc.) |
| Outdoor classrooms | Outdoor amphitheaters for performing arts |
| Interpretive signs for environmental education  | Sculptures and artwork |
| Shade structures | Programmatic funding for recreational and/or environmental education purposes  |
| Walking paths | Administrative costs (photo copies, mileage, food and drinks, grant writing, publications, etc.)  |
| Educational gardens | Operations and maintenance, deferred maintenance, staff time for operations and maintenance |
| Informal recreation fields  | Work completed prior to grant award (except for design and engineering)  |
| Painting for games such as hop scotch and four square | Applicant and partner staff time that would have otherwise been paid |
| Amenities (basketball hoops, drinking fountains, benches, picnic tables, signage, etc.) |  |
| Infrastructure (Gateways, plaza/gathering areas, irrigation, etc.) |  |

**Matching Requirements:** All matching resources must be eligible costs (e.g. administrative costs, such as applicant and partner staff time or mileage, cannot be paid for by GOCO, or used as a match).

GOCO will not fund more than 75% of the proposed project’s eligible costs. In other words, of all the resources required to complete the proposed project, including the requested GOCO grant, **a minimum of 25%** must come from sources other than GOCO. Although total matching resources may be either cash or in-kind (see below for more information regarding in-kind match), **a minimum of 10%** of the total project costs must be a **cash match** from the applicant and/or partners.

**In-Kind:** In-kind contributions may include donated quantifiable professional services, materials and supplies, equipment, etc. Any cost that would be eligible for GOCO funding but that is donated or discounted can count as an in-kind contribution. To count as eligible in-kind, the applicant would have reasonably been expected to otherwise pay the provider for the goods or services. Examples of eligible in-kind contributions include a discounted rate from a contractor (for example, if the contractor typically charges $100 per hour but charges you only $90 per hour, the $10 per hour difference is an in-kind contribution); and donation of professional services such as site prep or playground installation.

Volunteer time or non-quantifiable, non-professional time **may not** be used as an in-kind contribution, but may be included as part of the Selection Criteria under question #8.

**A majority of the match must be secured upon submission of the application.**

**Budget Form:**

You are required to use the [budget template](https://www.dropbox.com/s/ek3jeeyn7s6czmr/School%20Yard%20Initiative%20Budget%20Form.xls?dl=0) provided to you by GOCO.Complete and submit theBudget Form**,** using the [Sample Budget](https://www.dropbox.com/s/8dw5k359nzjjg5n/School%20Yard%20Project%20-%20Sample%20Budget.pdf?dl=0) as a guide. Be sure to double check that the calculations presented in the budget are accurate and mirror the figures presented in the narrative. Make sure that the total Sources of Funds matches the total Use of Funds. Here are some tips for completing the budget form:

Source of Funds:

Cash: List each funding source on separate rows within the Excel sheet. Indicate the individual contribution amounts, either under the applicant column or the partner column, whichever applies. Be sure to include the GOCO grant request under the appropriate column. Remember, the local government is considered the applicant and the school is considered a partner.

In-kind: List each in-kind contributor on separate rows within the Excel sheet. Indicate the in-kind contribution amount under the appropriate column (applicant or partner).

Use of Funds:

Cash: Organize your project into budget categories. The number and types of categories will vary from project to project and do not have to mirror those categories represented on the Sample Budget. Once the budget categories have been determined, provide a breakdown of each category by detailing the work required and the vendor or service provider associated with that work. When applicable, each line item should include the number of units for purchase, and the cost per unit.

Estimated values of services, materials and equipment may be derived from pay scales, standard prices, standard rental rates, etc. Applicants may be asked to provide additional information to support the valuation listed.

**In-kind:** Documentation from in-kind providers stating the value/cost of their service/equipment/materials through letters, invoices, etc. is recommended.

**Need help?** We know that budgeting, determining eligible/ineligible costs, determining and documenting in-kind, and customizing Excel spreadsheets can get a bit complicated. We’re here to help, so if you have any questions about GOCO’s budget policies, requirements, or the budget form, please contact Erika Meyer.

**If you are awarded a grant:** Once a grant is awarded, the grant amount cannot be increased, so any increases in the project cost must be covered with matching funds. If the cost of the project goes down, or if the project scope is reduced, the grant may be reduced proportionately.

**Planning and Design Process**

**Student Participation:** Youth engagement is one of the driving principles of the SYI, and GOCO's overall work to connect Colorado's kids to the outdoors. Applicants are required to meaningfully engage youth in the planning and design process by forming a youth taskforce. The youth taskforce takes a leadership role interacting with the design consultant, and by engaging other students through activities such as photo-surveys of desired project components, collecting student ideas and drawings of potential project components, and fundraising matching funds. The task force also plays a public speaking role by sharing project plans and progress with stakeholders such as town councils, school boards, and at community meetings. This emphasis on youth engagement is not only meant to ensure that project components are relevant to students, but to provide empowering experiences with civic engagement and leadership.

When the school year begins, we encourage you to assemble your Youth Task Force (YTF). As a very general guideline, the YTF should be comprised of 8-12 students of various ages and represent your student body. Please feel free to engage your YTF in any other ways you feel are meaningful and fit your school's schedule and needs. We encourage you to take photos throughout the process and save youth drawings or letters as these create rich records to include with the application or fund-raising materials.

**Staff and Community Engagement:** Throughout the planning and design process, project teams should work to provide opportunities for community feedback and participation, this process should include teachers and school staff as well. While students may be seen as the school ground's primary users, school staff and members of the surrounding community are important stakeholders for your project. One of the ultimate goals of requiring open public access to project sites outside of school hours is leveraging school grounds as nearby park space for communities. At a minimum, some form of community outreach efforts, such as mailings or an open-house to share design plans, should be made to the community-at-large, beyond school families, in order to engage them in the process. For many projects, these efforts have led to significant financial support from the surrounding business community and individuals that see the greater value of improving school grounds.

**First Steps:** For the sake of timeliness, we recommend that schools work with their building and facilities departments to obtain the following documents as your design consultant will need them to get working:

* Architectural floor plan
* Site plan for school
* Irrigation system information
* Architectural additions plans
* Site engineered survey
* Soils report
* Aerial photo

**SAMPLE RESOLUTION**

Supporting the Grant Application for a School Yard Grant from the State Board of the Great Outdoors Colorado Trust Fund and the completion of (Name of Project).

WHEREAS, the (Name of Local Government) supports the Great Outdoors Colorado grant application for the (Name of Project). And if the grant is awarded, the (Name of Local Government) supports the completion of the project.

WHEREAS, the (Name of Local Government) has partnered with the (Name of School) to request (Amount of Grant) from Great Outdoors Colorado to (Indicate Nature of Project).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE (Governing Body of Local Government) OF THE (Name of Local Government) THAT:

Section 1: The (Governing Body of Local Government) of the (Name of Local Government) strongly supports the application to Great Outdoors Colorado.

Section 2: If the grant is awarded, the (Governing Body of Local Government) of the (Name of Local Government) strongly supports the completion of the project.

Section 3: The (Governing Body of Local Government) of the (Name of Local Government) has entered into an intergovernmental agreement with (Name of School) to confirm the funding necessary to meet the terms and obligations of any Grant awarded.

Section 4: The (The Governing Body of Local Government) of the (Name of Local Government) has entered into an intergovernmental agreement with (Name of School District) to ensure the maintenance of the (Project Title) project in a high-quality condition for its useful life. As stated in the Intergovernmental Agreement, the (Name of Local Government *and/or* Name ofSchool District) will appropriate funds for maintenance in its annual budget.

Section 6: If the grant is awarded, the (Governing Body of Local Government) hereby authorizes the (Designated Official Title) to sign the grant agreement with Great Outdoors Colorado.

Section 7: Resolution to be in full force and effect from and after its passage and approval

PASSED AND APPROVED ON: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED BY:

Name and Title:

SAMPLE INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT

(Sample between a County and School District)

 This Agreement is made this \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_ between [County] and [School District] (“District”); Witnesseth:

# I. Recitals

1. [County] has applied for and received a grant from Great Outdoors Colorado, (GOCO) for [type of project and location];

2. The District is an ineligible recipient of the grant and the parties intend by this agreement for the County to be the conduit through which the District will receive the benefit of the grant;

3. The Grant Agreement is attached to this agreement as exhibit “A”;

4. The District intends to bind itself to the County for all of the County’s obligations stated in the Grant Agreement;

5. The District intends to convey to the County a limited interest in the real property described in Exhibit “B” which limited property interest shall be for the purposes of satisfying the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement;

Therefore, in consideration of the mutual promises stated below and other valuable consideration, the parties agree:

## II. Agreement

6. The County shall use its best efforts to fulfill all the conditions precedent to obtain the grant stated in the Grant Agreement. The District will cooperate with the County and provide all documents necessary for the County to fulfill the conditions precedent. The District further assumes all other County liabilities, and binds itself to the County for all the County’s obligations to GOCO, contained in the Grant Agreement.

7. The County does not assume any obligation to the District to construct, operate, or maintain the improvements contemplated by the grant.

8. Unless a claim by GOCO arises out of the negligence or other wrongful act of the County, the District shall be responsible to the County for any claim under the Grant Agreement, in the same manner and extent as the County may be responsible to GOCO.

9. The District shall operate and maintain the improvements contemplated by the Grant Agreement, in accordance with established District policy for playground maintenance. Should any claim for personal injuries, property damage or wrongful death be asserted as a result of the construction, operation, maintenance, or use of the improvements contemplated by the Grant Agreement, the parties shall be responsible for such claim in the manner provided by the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act and the Colorado law concerning pro-rata liability. The parties shall not be jointly and severally liable for such claims.

10. By executing this agreement the parties do not waive any immunity or limit liability contained in the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act; do not create a multi-year fiscal obligation; and do not create any other financial obligation not supported by a current appropriation.

11. This agreement does not create any rights in any individual not a party to this agreement.

1. This document, and exhibits, shall constitute the entire agreement of the parties.

13. The District hereby grants to the County a limited license in, and right of entry to, the property described in Ex. “B” for the purposes stated in the Grant Agreement, Ex. “A”, and for no other purpose. Such license and right of entry shall be exercised only in the event the District has failed to comply with the requirements of the Grant Agreement and shall include all rights reasonably necessary, as determined by the County, for the County to enter upon the property and perform its obligations to GOCO under the Grant Agreement. This right includes the ability of the County to use its employees, agents or outside contractors. This license and right of entry further includes the right to enter upon the property with any equipment or vehicles.

14. This agreement, including the limited right of entry and license, shall terminate simultaneously with the termination of all County obligations under the Grant Agreement.

ATTEST: SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION

[Title] [Title]

### ATTEST: BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

 OF THE COUNTY

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

[Title] [Title]

## **About the applicant/ LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

|  |
| --- |
| Name of Local Government:  |
| Mailing Address: |
| Applicant Contact Name:  | Title:  |
| Telephone:  | Email:  | Are you the primary contact for this grant: YES NO |

## **About the Partner / SCHOOL**

|  |
| --- |
| Name of School:  |
| Mailing Address: |
| Partner Contact Name:  | Title:  |
| Telephone:  | Email:  | Are you the primary contact for this grant: YES NO |

## **ABOUT THE PROJECT**

|  |
| --- |
| Project Title:  |

## **APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

|  |
| --- |
| Verify that the application contains all the following required documents in this order: * Responses to Application Questions (9 pages or less)
* Budget
* Signed resolution from Local Government
* Draft IGA
* Signed Letter of Support from School District, School, and Facilities and Risk Department
* Attachments:
* Map(s) identifying the project location (Using Google Earth or Google Maps)
* Photos of existing amenities to be replaced
* Conceptual Drawings
 |

**Authorized Local Government Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name and Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

By signing below, the School District certifies that it owns, leases, or otherwise has control over the property on which this project will be completed (collectively, “Control”) and will do so for the useful life of the project. School District has on file documentation evidencing its
control of the property and will provide such documentation to GOCO on request.

**Authorized School Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name and Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Application Questions**

All applicants must respond to the following questions in seven to nine pages. Responses more than nine pages will not be accepted. The nine-page limit does not include attachments, photographs, maps, letters, etc. Please answer every question and start by paraphrasing the question that you are answering.

1. **Community background:**

Describe the school the project will serve. Where in the state is it located? Include school enrollment numbers, and the percent of students that qualify for the free or reduced lunch program. What is unique about the student body? Also, describe the greater community/neighborhood the project will serve. Include population and income data. What role does the school play in providing outdoor education and recreation opportunities for the community/neighborhood?

1. **Access:**

Describe how users travel to and access the school yard from their homes. Discuss non-motorized access via trails and/or sidewalks and describe associated crosswalks. What is the distance between the school and the neighborhoods/communities it will serve? Are there obstacles to getting to the project site; if so, how do you intend to overcome them? Provide a map, as an attachment, detailing where the project is located and what surrounds it. If there is an adjacent park please make note of it in your response and how it is accessed by students, if it is.

1. **Need:**
Why does this school need a new/improved play yard that includes opportunities for outdoor learning and free play? Is there currently an opportunity for outdoor learning at the school, i.e. an outdoor classroom? If so, please describe the current outdoor learning space and how teachers and staff are using it now. Describe the current play yard experience for kids. If the project is intended to enhance or replace existing facilities, describe the state of the existing facilities including their age, why the facilities are no longer acceptable or usable, and how they got into the condition they’re in. Include photographs of amenities to be replaced or improved.
2. **Youth engagement:**

How was youth engagement used as the driving element of your planning process? Please outline how students contributed to determining project components and needs, and any other ways they were involved in the design, engagement, or fundraising process. Provide photographs, survey results, student work samples or other artifacts that were collected from the process. Please feel free to include these within the flow of the narrative text, or as attachments/appendices at the end.

1. **Community engagement:**

One of the main criteria for this grant is the potential value your school grounds pose to the surrounding community as a neighborhood or community asset. Accordingly, we ask that your community also be seen as stakeholders in the project design process. Please provide specifics on the opportunities provided for the community to give feedback and comments, whether open houses, outreach surveys, focus group meetings or otherwise. Remember that your students can take a lead in community engagement, and that your parent and teacher organizations can provide great feedback on designs. Again, feel free to include photographs or other artifacts in this section or as attachments.

1. **Project scope:**

What, exactly, will be built? Be specific, explaining preparatory work, quantities, materials, etc. for each individual project component.Discuss how your project aims to bring nature to school grounds whether through gardens, native landscaping zones, nature/free play areas, outdoor classroom facilities, or other nature-based components. If you are proposing a garden, how will the school organize their efforts around the garden? What is the proposed space for your garden? Be sure your project components tie back to the youth and community engagement. Include your conceptual design/drawings as attachments.

1. **Ongoing use:**

Discuss specific curriculum that may be tied to the outdoor space and how teachers may use it for class sessions. (Please engage teachers in this question early in the process-- it may provide guidance for outdoor learning opportunity designs that support their yearly curriculum needs!) How will your school support teachers and staff in taking learning outdoors? What trainings or partnerships might your school participate in around outdoor learning? Are there additional groups that will bring youth, families and community members to the school yard for programming? If proposing a garden, who will maintain the garden in the summer? Will this be a teacher or parent/community led garden, and if parent led, how will they take care of the garden once those parents move on? How do you plan on watering if irrigation isn't available? Who will be responsible for weeding and keeping the space clean? How can the community use this space in the future and how will you encourage them to do so?

1. **Letters of support:**
Include up to ten support letters (can be copies of emails) from individuals and/or groups who are in support of this project but are not providing cash or in-kind services. Letters of support can be from students, teachers, members of the community, volunteers, local organizations, etc. The letters should demonstrate the need, demand and urgency for the project. Support letters/emails must be included with the application and **will not** be accepted if mailed to the GOCO office. Also, please describe any opposition to the project and what has been done to address the concerns of the opposing.
2. **Financials:**
What is compelling about your school and community’s need for GOCO funds? Will the project (or components of it) get done if GOCO funds are not available? What percentage of your planned cash match is secured? How much of it is yet to be raised and what are your plans for raising those additional funds? What is your “Plan B” if you are unable to raise those funds? Describe the fundraising efforts associated with this project and the cash and/or in kind partnerships established. Will applicant or partner funds dedicated to the project be lost if GOCO doesn’t award a grant now?
3. **Maintenance:**
Estimate the annual costs to maintain the project. How did you derive those numbers; how do you intend to fund maintenance; and who is responsible for maintenance?

 **Online Application Instructions for SYI Grants:**

GOCO now accepts all grant applications online. We hope you’ll find this method of applying for GOCO grants to be easy and efficient. You’ll still complete the application you’ve become accustomed to, but instead of printing it out several times and mailing it in, you’ll simply answer a few questions online and upload the finished product as one PDF.

Here’s how to submit an online grant application:

1. As in the past, download the application form and other relevant documents from the “[Apply for a Grant” section of the GOCO website](http://www.goco.org/grants/apply).
2. Complete the application and gather all supporting materials. Assemble application in this order; application summary page, responses to questions, budget, resolution, IGA, signed letter of support from school district, and attachments (pictures, maps, conceptual drawings, etc.).
3. Use the link in the grant application to access GOCO’s grantee portal…that link is the only way to start a new application. (If you haven’t yet done so, you’ll need to register for the GOCO Grantee Portal after you click the link.)
4. Complete the portal application:
	* Fill in all fields in the “Details” tab. (This is general information like contact information, the project title, amount requested, etc.) Unless otherwise noted, all fields are required.
		+ The main contact in the portal should be the local government contact.
	* You can save and come back to your application at any time. To save the application, you need only fill in the Project Title field. When you’re ready to work on your application again, use [this link](https://goco.foundationconnect.org/GrantsManager/Pages/V3/Portal/Login/Login.aspx?OrgID=00Do0000000Y65x&ReturnUrl=%2fgrantsmanager%2fPages%2fV3%2fPortal%2fgrantapplication.aspx%3fOrgID%3d00Do0000000Y65x%26RequestRT%3d012o0000000bR95%26CampaignId%3d701o0000000SQII%26IsDirect%3dtrue) to access the portal login page
	* Upload your application in the “Attachments” tab.
		+ Refer to the application instructions on the number and content of attachments you’ll need to include in your application.
		+ Each document must be smaller than 25MB.
		+ To upload, click the “Select” button to locate the document. You’ll need to then click “Upload” to attach it to the application.
	* When you’re all done and ready to submit, go to the “Review & Submit” tab and click the Submit button. (The grant application instructions will include a particular timeframe during which you are able to Submit the application. Please make sure you’re within this timeframe.)
5. Once you’ve *submitted* your application, you will not be able to edit it. (Once submitted, you can still view the application. If GOCO staff finds something you need to change in the application, they’ll give you instructions on how to do that.)

**Other useful information:**

* You can register for the portal and start your application at any time during the process, but please keep in mind that there may be a particular timeframe during which you may *submit* your application.
* If you forget your portal username or password, please don’t create a new portal account. Instead:
	+ To recover your username, send an e-mail from the address you used during registration to portal@goco.org. Include the first name, last name, and organization you used when you registered for the portal.
	+ If you forget your password, re-set it using the “Can’t access your account?” link on the [portal login page](https://goco.foundationconnect.org/grantsmanager/Pages/V3/Portal/login/login.aspx?OrgID=00Do0000000Y65x&lang=en).
* A grant application started on or submitted through the portal is visible only to the individual who created it; no one else at your organization will be able to access it without being granted permission to do so. If someone else needs to be able to access the online application, have them establish a portal account. Then, you can e-mail portal@goco.org and ask that the application be shared with the other person.