



Risk Management Division

July 1, 2019

Ms. Marcia Stokes, Business Manager
Tuscarora School District
100 W Seminary St,
Mercersburg, PA 17236

Subject: Policy Numbers: PROP608-18, CAS608-18, & AUTO608-18

Dear Ms. Stokes:

On Tuesday, June 18th, 2019, I visited Tuscarora School District to conduct playground inspections of the playground equipment at Mercersburg, Montgomery, Mountain View and St. Thomas Elementary schools.

During my visit, a number of conditions were noted where improvement is needed to reduce the possibility of loss. These improvement needs are addressed in the attached recommendations.

Please let me know of the action taken or planned for each recommendation by August 1st, 2019.

I want to thank you, Mr. Stan Morgan, Director of Facilities, and the staff of the Tuscarora School District for the time and assistance provided during my visit.

Should you have any questions regarding the attached recommendations, or desire risk management assistance in the future, please call me at 717-790-2351.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jake Ruziecki".

Jake D. Ruziecki GSP, CPSI
Risk Control Consultant

Cc:

Stan Morgan, Tuscarora School District
Dereck Malzi, Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.
Dan Haas, CMRIC
John Tribble, CMRIC
Robert White, CMRIC



RECOMMENDATIONS:

Mercersburg Elementary – North Playground

OVERHEAD RUNGS – DAMAGED;

19-01 The yellow overhead rungs on the climbing unit are damaged and one rung has been torn off and covered with silver duct tape. This condition increases the risk of cut injuries caused by the sharp edges and fall injuries due to individuals having to reach further to access the overhead rungs. To reduce these risks the overhead rungs should be replaced.

REPLACE MISSING BOLT – FLEX STEP;

19-02 At the time of my visit one of the bolts on the yellow flex step attached to the climbing unit was missing. In addition, the equipment had moderate surface rust. These conditions increase the risk of injury caused by potential equipment failure. To reduce these risks the missing bolt should be replaced with a bolt that meets, or exceeds, the original equipment manufacturers specifications, and the equipment should be resurfaced to remove the rust.

Mercersburg Elementary School – South Playground

INADEQUATE SURFACING MATERIAL & USE ZONE – ARCH CLIMBER;

19-03 Adequate surfacing material and use zones are not provided for the “V” shaped arch climber on the south playground. The required use zone for the equipment is six (6) feet in all directions, which is obstructed by the asphalt play surface.

In order to reduce the severity of falls from the climber, approved surfacing material, of a depth recommended by the U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's Handbook For Public Playground Safety, should be provided under and within the designated use zone.

SPRING ROCKER –REPAIR SPRING;

19-04 One of the springs connected to the bottom of the three-person spring rocker is loose and no longer installed correctly on the spring perch. This condition creates a crush point under the rocker. To reduce the risk of injuries the spring should be properly reinstalled on the spring perch.

INADEQUATE SURFACING MATERIAL & USE ZONE – SPRING ROCKER;

19-05 Adequate surfacing material and use zones are not provided for the three-person spring rocker on the south playground. The required use zone for the equipment is six (6) feet in all directions. Currently, the use zone only extends to 4-feet.

Please note:

A survey of your premises, equipment and operations has been undertaken for the purpose of supporting the functions of risk underwriting. The information contained within this report is intended to assist you with your risk management efforts but should not be construed as an attempt to address all possible safety-related exposures within your school entity, nor is it intended as a substitute for advice from a safety expert or legal counsel you may retain for your own purposes. The recommendations stated are not intended to supplant any legal duty you may have to provide safe premises, workplace, product or operations.

In order to reduce the severity of falls from the equipment, approved surfacing material, of a depth recommended by the U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's Handbook For Public Playground Safety, should be provided under and within the designated use zone.

Montgomery Elementary School

INADEQUATE SURFACING MATERIAL & USE ZONES – VERTICAL CLIMBER:

19-06 Adequate surfacing material and use zones are not provided for the vertical bar climbers on the playground. The required use zone for the equipment is six (6) feet.

In order to reduce the severity of falls from the vertical climber, approved surfacing material, of a depth recommended by the U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's Handbook For Public Playground Safety, should be provided under and within the designated use zone.

REPAIR BARRIER BRACKET – PLAY UNIT:

19-07 The upper bracket that connects the red barrier to the support post at the top of the red spiral slide was observed to have broken. This hazard could catch loose hanging clothing, necklaces, or hoods and entangle an individual using the equipment, once entangled the individual would be suspended from the ground and could be seriously injured.

To reduce the risk of entanglement, the manufacturer should be contacted to provide a replacement bracket and bolt, and the equipment repaired.

REPAIR CRAWL TUBE – PLAY UNIT:

19-08 The red crawl tube connected to the play unit was observed to have a large crack running half the length of the tube. This condition increases the risk of injuries resulting from entanglement and equipment failure. To reduce these risks, the manufacturer should be contacted to provide a replacement crawl tube, and the equipment replaced.

Mountain View Elementary School

REINSTALL BLUE SLIDE SUPPORT – PLAY UNIT:

19-09 At the time of my visit it was observed that the support under the blue “J” shaped slide was not installed with a bolt. This condition could allow the two sections to separate, which increases the risk of injuries. To reduce this risk the support should be reinstalled correctly.

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PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SURFACING MATERIAL;

- 19-10 Although surfacing material has been provided under and around the playground equipment, additional surfacing material is needed. Studies by the U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission indicate that approximately 75% of playground injuries result from falls.

To reduce the severity of falls from playground equipment, approved surfacing material, of a depth and use zone recommended by the U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's Handbook For Public Playground Safety, should be provided under and around all playground equipment located at this playground.

WHITE RAILING - REPAIR;

- 19-11 One of the white railings leading to the top of the “J” shaped slide on the play unit was observed to have burst from frozen water inside the pipe. In order to reduce the risk of injury from cuts/lacerations on the metal, the railing should be repaired or replaced.

St. Thomas Elementary School – South Playground

HEAD ENTRAPMENT HAZARDS – PLAY UNIT;

- 19-12 The yellow barrier at the top of the slide on the play unit has an opening that presents a head entrapment hazard between the barrier and platform. Openings in playground equipment must be smaller than 3.5 inches or greater than 9-inches. This opening is approximately 4.5-inches.

In order to reduce the potential for head entrapment, which could result in death, the barrier should be adjusted to reduce the opening to 3.5 inches or less and re-fastened.

MODIFY NUMBER OF SWINGS PER BAY;

- 19-13 The swing set on the playground has three (3) swings per bay. To minimize the likelihood of individuals being struck by a moving swing, and to minimize collisions between swings and the support structure, the swing set should be modified to limit two (2) swings per bay.

When modifying, a minimum clearance of 24 inches should be maintained between the swings, and a minimum clearance of 30 inches maintained between the swing and the supporting structure of the swing set.

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St. Thomas Elementary School – North Playground

MODIFY NUMBER OF SWINGS PER BAY;

19-14 The swing set on the playground has three (3) swings per bay. To minimize the likelihood of individuals being struck by a moving swing, and to minimize collisions between swings and the support structure, the swing set should be modified to limit two (2) swings per bay.

When modifying, a minimum clearance of 24 inches should be maintained between the swings, and a minimum clearance of 30 inches maintained between the swing and the supporting structure of the swing set.

SURFACING MATERIAL - SLIDE DISCHARGE;

19-15 Adequate surfacing material is not provided for the use zone at the discharge area for the orange slide facing away from the school. The use zone for the slide discharge area should extend a minimum distance of 6 feet from the end of the slide, or for a distance equal to the height of the slide plus 4 feet, whichever is greater.

In order to reduce the severity of falls from the slide, approved surfacing material, of a depth recommended by the U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's Handbook For Public Playground Safety, should be provided for the slide.

PARTIALLY BOUND HEAD ENTRAPMENT HAZARD – STAIR ACCESS HANDRAIL;

19-16 The partially bound opening between the maroon support post and the metal hand rail, on the left of the stairs connected to the play unit, presents a head and general entrapment hazard to individuals playing on the structure. Partially bound openings in playground equipment must be smaller than 1.875 inches. This opening is approximately 3-inches.

In order to reduce the potential for head entrapment, which could result in death, the opening should be modified to reduce the top opening to 1.875-inches or less.

PARTIALLY BOUND HEAD ENTRAPMENT HAZARD – YELLOW BARRIER;

19-17 The partially bound opening between the maroon support post and the yellow railing, on the bridge connected to the top of the spiral slide, presents a head and general entrapment hazard to individuals playing on the structure. Partially bound openings in playground equipment must be smaller than 1.875 inches. This opening is approximately 3-inches.

In order to reduce the potential for head entrapment, which could result in death, the opening should be modified to reduce the top opening to 1.875-inches or less.

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INADEQUATE SURFACING MATERIAL & USE ZONES – BALANCE BEAM;

19-18 Adequate surfacing material and use zones are not provided for the balance beam on the playground. The required use zone for the equipment is six (6) feet.

In order to reduce the severity of falls from the balance beam, approved surfacing material, of a depth recommended by the U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's Handbook For Public Playground Safety, should be provided under and within the designated use zone.

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