

Barry School



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Principal: Larry Bonds, Jr.

Barry School's Holistic Playground is an interactive playground that develops both children's bodies and minds. It allows the body to develop through psychomotor skills including locomotor and non-locomotor skills. These are fundamental movements in which learning on a sequentially laid out playground include a well developed curriculum of activities. The process adds degrees of difficulty to each activity. Children systematically develop the awareness's such as: body awareness, spatial awareness, rhythmic awareness, directional awareness, vestibular awareness, visual awareness, temporal awareness, auditory awareness, tactile awareness all necessary in brain development.

Holistic Playgrounds, Unlimited was developed by Jan Reale a former educator and Playground Consultant. The program was brought to Barry School through the efforts of Andrea Ickes-Dunbar and with the assistance of many donors, as well as volunteers, it came to fruition. There are a large number of schools who are using Holistic Playgrounds and reporting their success. These schools range from Preschools to K-8 schools. Every school is a little different, as each playground is tailor made with the school clientele in mind.

The Holistic Playground is designed so that children must decode and make problem solving decisions about their place in space; how hard and far must they project themselves. They have to find the rhythm in movement to successfully master the patterns painted on the ground. This all comes after teachers have taught and monitored the movement activity with a simple pre- test or post-test of skills. The teachers and staff all attended a workshop to learn or refresh themselves on these fundamental movements necessary for brain development. The playground allows both sides of the brain to develop as all centers work on training bilateral experiences through movement patterning or activity provided.

However, the Holistic Playground does much more! It has many cognitive activities that work on basic standards. There is a math facts game, an alphabet hop, decoding digraphs and phonographs on stepping stones throughout the pond. The United States map, World map and California map allows the experience of seeing and interacting with the maps on a large scale. It also provides a place to publish their work (i.e. mission placement, Indian settlement). The multiplication wheels, math facts flowers and Star Math allow the children to play and learn their basic facts.

Our custom playground depicts many skills, standardized learning items as well as a place to have fun, be creative and enjoy the students' environments. Our new playground also brings together the school community. Many volunteers have all come together to unite for the purpose of enhancing the education of our children. It is unlimited in scope and the staff as well as the parents can continue to contribute to the playground for many, many years to come.

Our behavior problems have narrowed, our school grounds are respected and children are proud to be part of a unique environment called Barry School.

Larry Bonds, Jr.
Principal