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Westgate Elementary Awarded GOCO Grant to Rebuild Outdoor Play Area

Lakewood, Colo. (April 16, 2015) – Today, Westgate Elementary, a Jeffco Public School, was awarded a grant of \$114,000 from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) to help rebuild their outdoor play area. The grant is part of GOCO’s School Play Yard Initiative, which provides much-needed funds to schools to redesign outdated play areas to encourage more active play outdoors.

This project has been a year-in-the-making for the Westgate Elementary community. GOCO provided initial funds last fall for Westgate to work with a design team to help the school create the plan for their new playground. Westgate then designated a Student Task Force Committee to gather support from the community. The Lakewood Department of Community Resources partnered with Westgate, providing funding and architectural landscape design services to support the students’ project.

All Westgate students were involved in the design process, a requirement of the grant, so that the new play area would be a reflection of the students’ ideas and creativity. Aside from the GOCO grant, students also received a proclamation, signed by Governor Hickenlooper, declaring the May as “Go Play Outside, Kids” month.

Westgate will use the GOCO grant to replace the school’s 26-year-old playground, as well as the adjoining Westgate Neighborhood Park. The plan includes a new outdoor classroom, a rain garden and butterfly garden, a shade structure, and raised planting beds for a vegetable garden. The existing concrete will be replaced by bio swale landscaping. The current playground area will be expanded with new nature-inspired play equipment, including climbing rocks and balance beams made of natural materials.

Principal David Weiss commented: “This process has been such an amazing experience for our Westgate community. Our students truly stepped up as leaders and our staff and parent community rallied around them. I am very proud of team Westgate today. We are also grateful to the city of Lakewood and the Great Outdoors Colorado Board and the Westgate Improvement Association for their generosity.”

About Jeffco Public Schools



Building Bright Futures

Jeffco Public Schools has been providing educational excellence for more than 60 years. Approximately nine percent of all the K-12 students in Colorado attend a Jeffco School. Our mission is to provide a quality education that prepares all children for a successful future. The district has 155 schools on 168 campuses. Additional information about Jeffco Public Schools can be found at JeffcoPublicSchools.org.

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