

RUSSELLVILLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

355 South Summer Street Russellville, Kentucky
42276

Telephone: (270) 726-8405

FAX: (270) 726-4036

Kyle Estes
Superintendent

James C. Milam
Board Chairman

April 21, 2026

E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation
Radnor Financial Center
150 N. Radnor-Chester Road, Suite A200
Radnor, PA 19087

Dear Members of the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation Grant Selection Committee,

Russellville Independent School District respectfully requests funding in the amount of \$109,205.24 to purchase and install new adaptive playground equipment at Stevenson Elementary School. This project will replace aging equipment that has not been updated in more than thirty years, address critical safety and capacity issues, and modernize the playground to better support student learning, physical development, and social interaction.

The critical need for adaptive playground equipment is clear. Our current playground was constructed more than 30 years ago for a significantly smaller student population. It no longer meets the needs of our K-5 students due to its age, deteriorating condition, limited variety, insufficient opportunities for gross motor development, and lack of adequate Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-accessible equipment. The proposed improvements will create a safer, more inclusive, and developmentally appropriate play environment for all learners, including those with disabilities.

This initiative directly supports our district mission: "Prioritizing all Panthers in an inclusive learning environment that is overflowing with pride and possibilities." A modern, adaptive playground is essential to fulfilling that mission because it provides the physical, social, and emotional foundations students need to thrive academically and personally.

As detailed in the enclosed project description, proposal information, and budget, the new equipment—including a 5-12 Mega Tower Playground Structure, Dome Climber with Orbs, certified safety surfacing, and ADA-compliant features—will ensure every student can participate fully and safely.

We are confident that the implementation of this proposal will significantly enhance the educational landscape within the Russellville Independent School District. The new adaptive playground equipment aligns with our mission of prioritizing all Panthers in an inclusive learning environment that is overflowing with pride and possibilities and fosters a culture of physical development, social interaction, and self-expression among our students. We appreciate your time and consideration of this proposal and look forward to the possibility of bringing this exciting initiative to fruition. If you require any additional information or have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at Kyle.Estes@russellville.kyschools.us.

Thank you for your dedication to advancing education in our community.

Sincerely,

Kyle Estes
Superintendent
Russellville Independent Schools

E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation Russellville Independent School District Proposal

Description:

Russellville Independent School District seeks to replace the outdated playground at R.E. Stevenson Elementary School with modern, safe, and inclusive equipment designed for students ages 5–12 (K-5). The project directly addresses safety concerns, capacity limitations, and the lack of developmentally appropriate play options that have existed for over 30 years.

The new playground will include:

- A 5–12 Mega Tower Playground Structure (Model 714-S703J) – a large, multi-level structure with elevated platforms, slides, climbing components, and interactive panels to promote physical activity, imaginative play, strength, coordination, and cooperative play.
- A Dome Climber with Orbs (Model 4551J) – a freestanding geometric climbing structure that builds upper-body strength, balance, coordination, and problem-solving skills, allowing multiple students to climb simultaneously.
- Certified Wood Playground Mulch (100 cubic yards) – safety-certified, impact-absorbing wood fiber surfacing that meets playground safety standards, provides proper drainage, and improves accessibility.
- Swing Mats (3 units) – durable safety mats placed beneath swings to reduce wear and enhance fall protection in high-traffic areas.
- Surface Timbers (44 units, 4' long, 12" tall) – border timbers to contain the safety surfacing, maintain proper mulch depth, and define the play area perimeter.

Professional installation is included. The project will create a safer, more engaging environment that supports gross and fine motor development, social-emotional growth, and inclusive play for all students, including those with disabilities.

Proposal Information

Brief History and the Purpose of Russellville Independent School District:

Russellville Independent School District (RISD), located in Russellville, Kentucky, serves a community with an estimated population of 7,538. As of August 20, 2025, RISD enrolls 1,044 students from preschool through 12th grade. This enrollment is distributed among three schools: R.E. Stevenson Elementary School (535 students in preschool through 5th grade), Russellville Middle School (211 students in 6th through 8th grade), and Russellville High School (290 students in 9th through 12th grade). R.E. Stevenson Elementary is a Title I school with a high free and reduced lunch rate. Economic disparities persist in the community, with a median household income of \$47,875 and 16.78% of the population living in poverty.

In the past three years, the district has experienced a slight population increase alongside a more pronounced transient student population. Families, often living in low-income housing, frequently relocate within the community, and there has been a regular influx of out-of-state students attracted by affordable housing. Limited local employment opportunities contribute to these economic challenges. The district's diverse and transient student population presents academic and instructional demands, including support for English language learners and strategies to promote inclusivity while addressing the needs of students from families living in poverty.

RISD embodies its purpose through its program offerings by focusing on four pillars of the District Strategic Plan, adopted in Summer 2024 as a five-year commitment:

- **Rooted in Community:** Strengthening connections to heritage, fostering relationships among students, families, and partners, telling our story of honoring the past while building the future, and enhancing pride and safety on campuses.

E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation Russellville Independent School District Proposal

- **Innovative Mindset:** Creating a culture of authentic learning in a safe environment by equipping staff with tools and support, providing diverse opportunities for students to overcome barriers, and preparing resilient learners who meet academic standards.
- **Student-Centered Experiences:** Prioritizing student-centered approaches, giving students an active role in their education, tailoring teaching to individual needs, and supporting a culture of belonging and connection.
- **District of Choice:** Distinguishing RISD as the preferred destination for students, staff, and families by creating a culture of shared responsibility, high expectations, a positive working and learning environment, and targeted communication.

While instructional classroom time is critical, high-quality play spaces are equally essential to students' social, emotional, and physical development. Given the district's growing and increasingly diverse elementary population at Stevenson Elementary, there is a critical and urgent need for ADA-compliant and adaptive playground equipment. The current playground, constructed more than 30 years ago, lacks adequate Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-accessible features and fails to meet the needs of our diverse learners. RISD is committed to ensuring that every student—regardless of ability, background, or mobility—is equipped socially, emotionally, and academically through safe, modern, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate learning environments both inside and outside the classroom. The proposed adaptive playground will directly address these gaps, promoting full participation and belonging for all Panthers.

**E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation
Russellville Independent School District Proposal**

Detailed budget for the project, including any charges for general administrative overhead:

The following itemized budget is based on the quotation dated January 28, 2026 (Quote # 26/0128-21) from Miracle Recreation of KY & TN. The total requested amount of \$109,205.24 covers all equipment, materials, and installation costs.

- **5-12 Mega Tower Playground Structure (Model 714-S7031)**
 - A large, multi-level playground structure designed for children ages 5-12 that promotes physical activity, imaginative play, climbing, and social interaction. The tower configuration typically includes elevated platforms, slides, climbing components, and interactive panels to support strength, coordination, and cooperative play.
- **Dome Climber with Orbs (Model 45511)**
 - A freestanding geometric climbing structure that encourages upper-body strength, balance, coordination, and problem-solving. The orb-style climbing elements provide multiple grip points and pathways, allowing several students to climb and explore simultaneously.
- **Certified Wood Playground Mulch (100 cubic yards)**
 - Safety-certified wood fiber surfacing designed to cushion falls and reduce playground injuries. This impact-absorbing material meets playground safety standards and provides proper drainage and accessibility when installed at recommended depths.
- **Swing Mats (APS)**
 - Durable safety mats placed beneath swings to reduce surface wear and improve fall protection in high-traffic areas. These mats help maintain consistent surfacing depth and improve playground safety compliance.
- **Surface Timbers - 4' Long, 12" Tall (APS)**
 - Playground border timbers used to contain safety surfacing material and define the play area perimeter. These timbers help maintain proper mulch depth and prevent material displacement.

Detailed Budget for R.E. Stevenson Elementary School Playground Update

Qty	Model #	Description	Price Total
1	714-S703J	5-12 Mega Tower	\$72,049.00
1	4551J	Dome Climber with Orbs	\$8,589.00
100 yds	AM	Certified Wood Playground Mulch	\$2,600.00
3	APS	Swing Mats	\$450.00
44	APS	4' Long, 12" Tall Surface Timbers	\$1,880.00
–	–	Installation	\$25,250.00

**E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation
Russellville Independent School District Proposal**

Qty	Model #	Description	Price Total
-	-	2% Cash in Advance Equipment Discount	-\$1,612.76
Total			\$109,205.24

Notes:

- Dumpster to be provided by the district (no cost included in request).
- The full \$109,205.24 is allocated directly to equipment, materials, and installation.
- Tax Exemption Certificate will be provided.