

Fall 2024

Marion Carson School
5225 Varsity Dr. NW
Calgary, AB T3A 1A7

On behalf of Variety - the Children's Charity of Alberta, I am writing to express our wholehearted support for the development of an inclusive playground at Marion Carson School. At Variety, our mission is to help children with disabilities and specialized needs and ensure that all children have access to opportunities that promote their well-being and development.

Inclusive playgrounds play a crucial role in fostering a sense of belonging among children of all abilities. They provide a space where children with and without disabilities can play together, learn from each other, and develop vital social, cognitive, and physical skills. Such environments are essential for the development of empathy, cooperation, and mutual respect.

We took on inclusive playgrounds as one of our initiatives in 2017, as playgrounds are the last public space that are built without consideration to the needs of persons living with disabilities. There is no legislation or policy in Alberta mandating playgrounds to be inclusive or accessible, and less than 10% of all playgrounds in our province are built to include children or community members who are living with a wide range of disabilities. Consequently, children and community members living with disabilities were excluded from using them, sending the message of who belongs in that space and who does not.

The Marion Carson Inclusive Playground project aligns with our values and the broader goals of promoting inclusivity and accessibility within our communities. Inclusive playgrounds not only benefit children with disabilities but also enhance the play experience for all children and their families, creating a more vibrant, connected, and supportive community.

Variety - the Children's Charity of Alberta has seen firsthand the positive impact that inclusive playgrounds can have. We have supported similar projects across the province, and the feedback from parents, educators, and children has been overwhelmingly positive. These playgrounds become cherished community hubs where everyone feels welcome and valued.

Our hope is to see more schools follow in the footsteps of Marion Carson and make sure that no child is left on the sidelines excluded from play.

Jana Hands MCS | Chief Executive Officer

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