

Buildings Special Projects: PlaNYC

Schoolyards to Playgrounds Program (a/k/a PlaNYC)

The *PlaNYC* initiative began in 2007 as a partnership between New York City Public Schools (NYCPS) and the [Department of Parks and Recreation](#) (DPR) to make schoolyards accessible to communities across all five boroughs.

This program is a cornerstone of the city's long-term sustainability program, helping to achieve the goal of ensuring that all New Yorkers live within a 10-minute (quarter-mile) walk of a park by 2030. Since its inception, [The Trust for Public Land](#) has supported this collaborative effort by helping to develop playgrounds on sites adjacent to NYCPS school buildings. These playgrounds serve the recreational needs of both schoolchildren and local community members as part of the PlaNYC 2030 Schoolyards to Playgrounds Initiative.

Schoolyard Operations

When school is not in session, custodial staff are responsible for opening and closing the schoolyard daily from 8:00 a.m. until dusk. This includes weekdays, weekends, and holidays. Playgrounds remain closed to the public during after-school programs. When open to the general public, these spaces are unsupervised. However, supervision is provided when a community-based organization (CBO) conducts an activity—such as an after-school program or a weekend event.

The city allocates funding to support playground maintenance and repair. This includes up to two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening for cleaning and opening/closing the yard, as well as up to three hours per week for general maintenance and repairs.

Jointly Operated Playgrounds (JOPs)

Jointly Operated Playgrounds (JOPs) are a collaborative initiative between NYCPS and DPR, designed to provide students and local communities with access to playgrounds located adjacent to public schools.

During school hours, JOPs are exclusively controlled and supervised by school staff for educational and recreational purposes. Once school is dismissed, and on weekends, holidays, and school vacations, DPR assumes responsibility for the operation of these playgrounds from 8:00 a.m. to dusk.

DPR is responsible for the maintenance of all JOP areas, including cleaning, repairs to structures, surfacing, fencing, recreational equipment, and general lawn, shrub, and tree care. DPR also handles snow removal for JOPs and adjacent sidewalks.