
Calhoun School District 40
101 Calhoun Avenue
Hardin, IL 62047

November 10, 2024

Good Sports
515 Washington Street
Suite 300
Braintree, MA 02184

Hello Good Sports:

The attached proposal provides a detailed explanation of the mission/ background, existing need, project goals/objectives/implantation activities, budget for request, and applicant capability. Calhoun School District believes the following proposal meets the requirements of Good Sports and hopes to work with the organization to provide equitable opportunities for children with disabilities.

Calhoun School District 40 has diligently served Calhoun County for over 60 years. The school district has prioritized the safety, education, and physical health of the children who attend elementary and high school. Calhoun School District 40 seeks to provide accessible exercise spaces for children who are disabled to improve their mental and physical health by installing an accessible merry-go-round and swing, and ramp.

In doing so, Calhoun School District 40 hopes to achieve objectives. Firstly, thirty students who are disabled will participate in play for 15 minutes during recess by April 2026. Secondly, sixty students who are disabled will increase their social activity by 30% during recess by April 2026.

Calhoun School District 40 kindly requests funding for \$26,088.00.

Sincerely,

Amanda Lorsbach
Calhoun School District 40 Administrator

Enclosure: Accessible Spaces Grant Proposal

Accessible Spaces Grant Proposal

Organization: Calhoun School District 40

Address of Elementary School: 52 Poor Farm Hollow Road, Hardin, IL 62047

Website: <https://calhoun40.net>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Calhoun40?mibextid=LQQJ4d>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@hudl-ud4op>

Organization Type: School

Project Title: Equal Access on Calhoun Elementary School's Playground

Total Requested Amount: \$26,088.00

Contact Information

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Mission and Background

The mission of Calhoun School District 40 is to provide students with the best education possible that will create good habits in students, making them lifelong learners and valuable members of their community, while also promoting respect and active interaction among students, faculty, and staff.

The school district provides individualized education plans (IEPs), due to some form of disability, to 15.6 percent of the 522 students who attend Calhoun Elementary School and Calhoun High School from the towns: Hardin, Batchtown, Hamburg, Kampsville, Michael, and Mozier. Of this student population, 41.2 percent of students are classified as low income. The diversity metrics of the school district are as seen in the pie charts. All these statistics can be found on the www.illinoisreportcard.com or www.usnews.com.

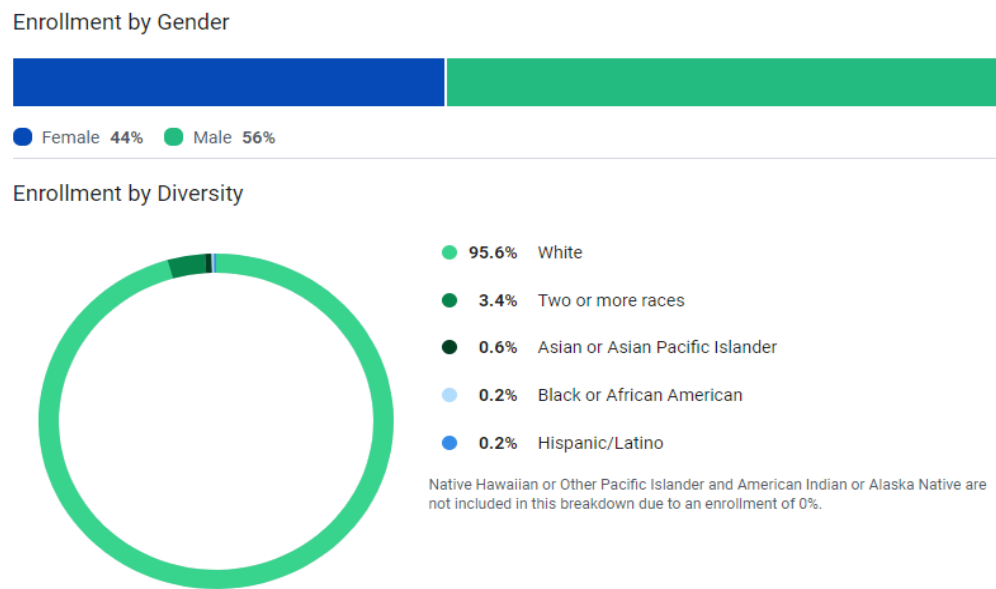


Figure 1: This pie chart is a screenshot from usnews.com.

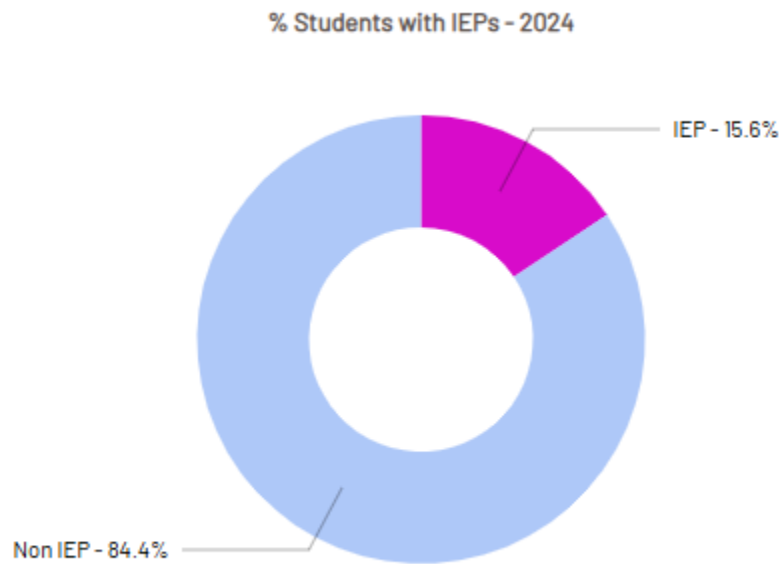


Figure 2: This is a screenshot from illinoisreportcard.com.

The school district serves Calhoun Elementary School and Calhoun High School. This service is a continuation of decades of work for both schools. The school district believes in the provision of opportunities for disadvantaged youth. As seen in the mission statement, the district uses its funding of \$12,966,195.30 from the State of Illinois, Grants, and Federal School Programs to give children at the high school and elementary school (with a focus on students from low-income homes and students with EIPs) opportunities to flourish within the community.

Need Statement

Extent of the Problem. According to the World Playground Research, around 3 million children have some form of a disability. For many of these children, play spaces are inaccessible. The institute states that 73% of schools in the U.S. were built before 1969. Some schools have been able to renovate the playgrounds; however, many playgrounds across the U.S. still do not meet guidelines for those with disabilities.

Factors Contributing to The Problem. The World Playground Research Institute states that there are two barriers that cause this problem. The first problem is lack of funding and the second is ignorance of the need. For this section, focus is placed on the second problem. In much of the United States, many

individuals do not realize inclusive play spaces are important and a need. This often results in accessibility being overlooked when public spaces are built in the community and in schools.

Impact of the Problem. As a result of inaccessible spaces, children who are disabled miss out on important development time for their social skills and physical health. Moreover, another problem that arises from exclusion is bullying. The National Bullying Prevention Center cites that “children with disabilities were two to three times more likely to be bullied than their nondisabled peers.” Thus, the inclusive play spaces will provide safer social environments for children with disabilities.

Improvements from Resolution. The results of safer social environments and improved mental health are seen at Glen Lake Elementary School. The school lacked inclusive playgrounds. Children who were disabled could not participate physically (and furthermore, socially) in playtime, affecting their sense of self and more. Thus, the school sought a grant and raised money for playground equipment. As a result, inclusive spaces were made that greatly impacted children from the school who were disabled. One of those children, who uses a wheelchair, said, "All of this equipment is big enough for my friends and I to play on. I just feel some sense of capability." This story can be found on www.npr.org.

Goals/Objectives and Evaluation Plan

Goal. Calhoun School District 40 seeks to provide accessible exercise spaces for children who are disabled to improve their mental and physical health.

Objectives. Once the equipment is installed, the school district seeks to fulfil two objectives: Firstly, thirty students who are disabled will participate in play for 15 minutes during recess by April 2026. Secondly, sixty students who are disabled will increase their social activity by 30% during recess by April 2026.

Implementation Activities. The implementation of activities and timeline can be found on the Scope of Worktable in more detail. In short, the school district plans to spread awareness of the new park equipment from teachers and staff to students and parents. Word of mouth, emails, and pamphlets about the new park equipment will be the primary delivery of information.

Moreover, the school seeks to raise awareness in the community of how inaccessible spaces impact children with the goal of unifying the student body. Giving knowledge to students and families who have no understanding of disabilities will help to break down the separation of students with disabilities. Information about the challenges and unique perspectives of those with disabilities will be in the pamphlets and on posters in schools.

Evaluation Plan. Observations of children who are disabled will take place before park equipment has been installed. Observations will take place for the school year following the summer of 2025 after the installation. These observations will be done by recess monitors and evaluated by administrative staff to determine whether the objectives were met. Along with observations, consent forms and surveys will be given to parents of children who are disabled. These surveys will ask questions pertaining to the social development of the children outside of school and at home. Lastly, a site visit for Good Sports will be made available in March of 2026 to see the equipment and the children’s interactions on it.

The evaluation results will be used to gain more understanding of the work needed from Calhoun School District 40 to create safe social and play places for children with disabilities.

Scope of Work

Goal: To provide accessible spaces for children who are disabled.

Objective	Implementation activity	Timeline	Method of Evaluation
1. Thirty students who are disabled will participate in play for 15 minutes during recess by April 2026.	1A. Recess monitors will be given observation sheets that will be filled out after recess for them to write down observations of play time.	01/2025 to 04/2025	1. Children who are disabled will be observed by recess monitors and observations will be compiled to compare from the previous year.
	1B. Park Equipment will be installed.	06/2025 to 08/2025	
	1C. Meetings will be held with teachers to encourage them to spread awareness of new park equipment to students who are disabled. Emails will be sent out about the equipment and disability awareness to student body families.	07/2025 to 08/2025	

	1D. Parents of students who are disabled will be told of the new equipment at parent/teacher conference. Pamphlets on the equipment and disability awareness will be given to families across the school. 1E. Recess monitors will be given observation sheets that will be filled out after recess for them to write down observations of playtime.	09/2025 to 10/2025 08/2025 to 04/2026	
2. Sixty students who are disabled will increase their social activity by 30% during recess by April 2026.	2A. The steps for 1A to 1E are the same for positive social interaction observations. 2B. Disability awareness posters will be displayed in classrooms at schools. 2B. Cite visit for the funder.	Timeline is the same for 1A and 1E. 01/22025 03/2026	2. Along with recess observation, parents of children who are disabled will be given a survey form to answer questions about social skill improvement at home and outside of school along with a consent form at the end of the school year.

Project Description

As described in the section, Factors Contributing to the Problem, lack of funding effects Calhoun's elementary school. Currently, the school district struggles with lack of funding from local taxes. There are also multiple policy changes that are not backed by funding on a federal and state level. These issues leave no money for the school district to allocate to other important needs, coupled with a playground that was built without disabilities in mind. Thus, many children with disabilities are unable to access the playground.

Calhoun School District 40 believes and works to accommodate students of all backgrounds as seen in the section, Applicant Capability. Thus, to resolve this need, the district seeks a swing, ramp, and merry-go-round that are accessible for children who are physically and cognitively disabled at Calhoun Elementary School. The following playground items requested would provide children who are disabled access on the playground. Moreover, the swing and merry-go-round are high traffic areas. Thus, this would give children ample time for socialization. See the budget in the following section.

Budget Request

Item	Reasoning	Price
Merry-go-round	High traffic area for children to play together.	\$21,933.00
Swing	High traffic area for children to play together.	\$ 2,155.00
Ramp	Provides access to the playground.	\$ 1,100.00
Installation	Ensure items are properly installed.	\$ 900.00

The total requested amount for funding is \$26,088.00. The price points in the table are based on the average quoted price from companies in Illinois that build durable, accessible playground equipment. As seen in the table and the Project Description section, the merry-go-round and swing are high traffic areas on the current playground at Calhoun Elementary School. Thus, replacing these parts of the playground will give students with disabilities an ample opportunity to socialize with other students.

Moreover, a ramp will be installed to allow students to access the merry-go-round and swing onto the playground. Lastly, the installation of this equipment is included. The pricing for both ramp and installation was also quoted from the same companies, mentioned in the first paragraph of this section, Budget Request.

The upkeep of this playground equipment will be overseen by the maintenance staff. This is to ensure that the equipment lasts for a long time and is well maintained for students to enjoy.

Applicant Capability

Calhoun School District 40 has diligently served Calhoun County for over 60 years. The school district has prioritized the safety, education, and physical health of the children who attend elementary and high school. This section will focus primarily on Calhoun's elementary school.

The school district employs teachers with ample experience (at least 3 years). and all are licensed. Teacher demographics are seen on the table.

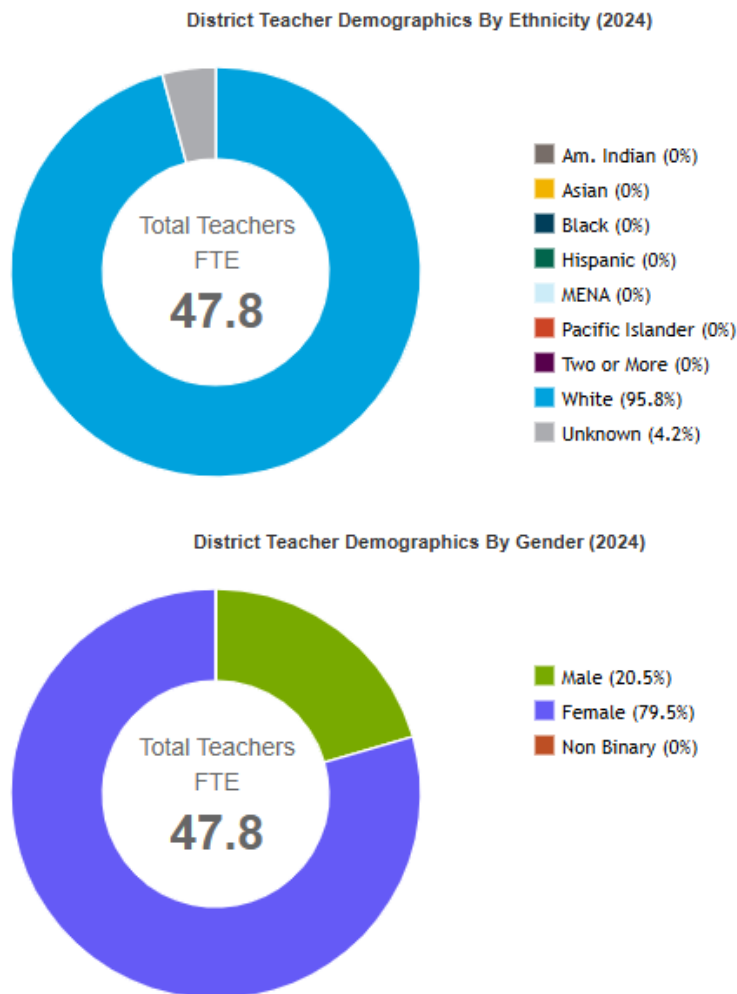


Figure 3: This is a screenshot taken from the www.illinoisreportcard.com.

Calhoun School District 40 provides several programs, including:

- Title I: The district supports the Title I program with funding and resources, such as training opportunities and extra classroom aid.
- Calhoun Smart Start: This early childhood program serves families and children from prenatal to age three.
- The district offers a program called Accelerated Placement (a student is placed in a curriculum that is usually for older or higher-grade students).

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- The district offers a summer school lunch program (41 percent are eligible for free or reduced lunches)

The school district is not currently seeking any new programs. Right now, the district aims to improve the facilities for students. The school currently has recess at the elementary school for 30 minutes a day. The schools also provide a physical education (PE) period that lasts 40 minutes a day. Recess and PE are available 5 days a week for the whole school year. The school also prioritizes providing sports leagues for boys and girls. The following sports have separate leagues for boys and girls:

- Basketball
- Volleyball
- Baseball/Softball

Each sport lasts for the duration of 8 to 12 weeks. Two hours for 3 days a week are provided for athletic practice of sports. Fees for each sport are \$60.00 dollars. Equipment such as apparel is provided by the school. The equipment such as volleyball, baseballs, basketballs, etc. is in fair condition and is maintained by the school's facilities management. The yearly cost for liability insurance is \$150,000, or \$167 per student. An average of 30 to 40 students plays in each sport while in session.

Students with disabilities are given equal opportunity to play sports when deemed safe by the Illinois Board of Education. Each season there are 2 to 3 students with disabilities, playing in these extra circulars. Physical education is available to those students, and accommodations are regularly made to ensure these students have access to some form of physical activity throughout the day. Calhoun School District also lends a classroom for families with students who are disabled to host monthly gatherings for community with one another.

The educational, food, and athletic programs/extra circular activities available for the district's elementary school showcase Calhoun School District 40's commitment to providing opportunities to give children of all backgrounds healthy outlets to play and socialize. This coincides with our mission, project goals/objectives, and Good Sports' commitment to equitable access to adolescent athletics and physical activity, enabling children to reach their full potential in life. Additionally, the project to provide accessible park equipment will forward Good Sports and Calhoun School District 40's commitments. See Appendix for reference materials.

Appendix

Bullying of Students with Disabilities. (n.d.).

<https://www.pacer.org/bullying/info/students-with-disabilities/>

CALHOUN CUSD 40 | Overall. (n.d.).

<https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/District.aspx?source=studentcharacteristics&source2=iep&Districtid=40007040026>

Mehta, J. (2023, March 3). These students raised hundreds of thousands to make their playground accessible. *NPR*.

<https://www.npr.org/2023/03/03/1158958194/these-students-raised-thousands-to-make-their-playground-wheelchair-friendly>

Movahed, M., Martial, L., Poldma, T., Slanik, M., & Shikako, K. (2023). Promoting Health through Accessible Public Playgrounds. *Children*, 10(8), 1308.

<https://doi.org/10.3390/children10081308>

Schulke, M. (2024, October 17). *Supporting School Children with Disabilities: Addressing Gaps in Playground Accessibility and Inclusion*. World Playground Research Institute.

<https://playgroundresearch.org/supporting-school-children-with-disabilities-addressing-gaps-in-playground-accessibility-and-inclusion/>

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