

Hello Township Council,

I want to thank you for allowing me to attend this evening.

A little background on St. Joseph's School- The school is the only school in the small and close knit community of Douro. The school is the location of a before and after school program facilitated by Compass Early Learning Centre, a not for profit organization. During the Covid 19 school lockdowns CELC has also provided emergency child care to front line workers under the direction of the provincial government. SJCES is a school that supports a diverse group of students with varying special needs. The school has welcomed these students with a focus on being inclusive and accessible.

St. Joseph's school Douro is looking to replace the current inaccessible and broken playground with playground equipment that can be used by all student and community members. Several of the students who have special needs are no longer able to interact on the playground equipment due physical restrictions and limitations. SJCES students diagnosis include Down Syndrome, Cornelia de Lange Syndrome, Sturge Weber Syndrome, and Cerebral Palsey. The physical limitations include lack of physical coordination, paralysis of limbs, upper limb differences, cognitive impairment resulting in lack of awareness regarding dangerous situations as well as receptive language processing delays.

The goal of this project is to create an inclusive playground with equipment that children of all abilities can access and enjoy. The total cost will be around \$200,000 with \$78,100 dollars raised through a grant and fundraising. The climber does need to be completed within 2 years or we are required to pay that grant back.

I am hear to ask for:

- A reimbursement of the \$300 rental fee for the Garage Sale event St. Joseph's School held at the Douro Arena May 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>

- The Douro Fire Department often does a yearly charity and if they would be interested in donating the money this year to the Douro School

- The Township put in 2023s budget donating funds toward this project that will benefit all members of the Douro Community.

I want to thank you for taking the time this evening. The volunteer committee with the Douro School understands that COVID has put extra strain on local businesses and the financial support of many communities but something that it has not impacted is Douro's strong support for each other. We hope that you each understand the need for the playground and the inclusivity that Douro is.

Thank you,