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YIELD Students Work to Preserve Prairie Playground

MASON CITY, IA – Each year, the **YIELD** group (***Youth Investing Energy in Leadership Development***) completes a Community Impact Project as a graduation requirement. YIELD students are high school juniors from Mason City High School and Newman Catholic High School, who have been identified by school administrators and faculty as future leaders. This year’s class has decided to restore Mason City’s beloved Prairie Playground, located in East Park. They are passionate about restoring a place they grew up playing and want it to be available for future generations to enjoy.

To assess the condition of the playground, students completed a safety report card from the National Program for Playground Safety. With broken equipment, unsuitable fall surfacing, and other criteria identified as sub-par, Prairie Playground scored a C- on an A-F scale. In addition, the components need sanding in some areas and the entire structure is in dire need of staining.

Students met with city staff to address concerns and evaluate the status of the on-going project. They gathered estimates for engineered mulch (an approved material for fall surface) and students completed an inventory of equipment repairs to estimate the total cost of the project. Plans should be finalized by the end of December, and students will return in the spring to stain the playground structure, repair equipment, and potentially spread the new mulch (pending fundraising).

Monetary donations are being accepted through the end of December and students will complete the updates this spring. If you'd like to donate, please send donations to the Chamber of Commerce (9 N Federal Ave, Mason City) and note “YIELD project” in the memo.

YIELD, which originated in 2003, is program of the Chamber of Commerce to provide leadership training to local high school youth. The program now serves as a model for other communities.

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