

## **Guidelines for Tree and Shrub planting in the Davenport Community Schools**

Trees, shrubs, and flowers have the potential to improve the landscape of our schools. It is very important that prior to any sort of planting that the following considerations take place.

Prior to doing any plantings a plan needs to be developed. Plans takes into consideration fixed objects and mature height and width that must be understood prior to planting. In our district someone's great ideas (plantings) have been removed at a later date since there was little planning or commitment to long term needs. Plans should be sent to the operations center for review.

Custodial allocations for cleaning school buildings is based upon square footage. Taking care of flower beds and routine trimming or shaping shrubs cannot be done by custodial staff. We have found that though some schools have made a commitment to maintaining plants (such as teachers, students, or parents), personnel changes and future parents or staff might take less interest. Trees and shrubs have been removed when they fall into neglect and this can be a costly lesson for a school site budget.

### Characteristics of trees within the DCSD

- Must have an upright branching habit for maintenance (mowing) purposes. Examples of undesirable trees would be pin oak and willow.
- Must not bear fruit or thorns. Fruit is messy and can attract insects. Thorns can obviously harm students.
- No pine, spruce, or other types of evergreen trees. These trees are a visual barrier and obstruct view of school grounds. Safety concern.
- Must be native to Iowa and not susceptible to disease or insect damage.
- Only hardwoods are to be used. Soft wooded trees are susceptible to snow and ice damage. Example of undesirable tree would be soft or silver maple. A tree that is very fast growing is probably of soft wood.
- Need to make sure that the tree will not obstruct security camera views in the future.
- Will plantings limit or restrict exterior lighting in the future.
- Planting varieties of trees on individual school grounds is advisable to avoid any sort of blights to individual types of trees.

### Characteristics of shrubs in the DCSD

- Shrubs which need regular shaping or shearing should not be used.
- Only shrubs which do not exceed 2 ½ - 3 feet at maturity should be planted. This inhibits someone from hiding behind plants.
- No thorns.
- Native to our area.

### General information

- Should not be located near sidewalks, playgrounds, or other hard surfaced area which will require snow removal.
- Do not plant or dig holes without knowing locations of underground utilities.
- Plantings should be no closer to fixed objects than ½ of the mature spread.
- Make sure that lawnmower and trimmer damage is not inflicted on any tree. Maintaining mulch or some other barrier to protect trunk is important.
- Trees or shrubs should not obstruct visibility at sidewalks, drives, or streets.
- The City of Davenport must approve of tree planting in the street right of way.
- The right tree or shrub is acceptable on our school grounds. We just need to assure it works now and in the future.