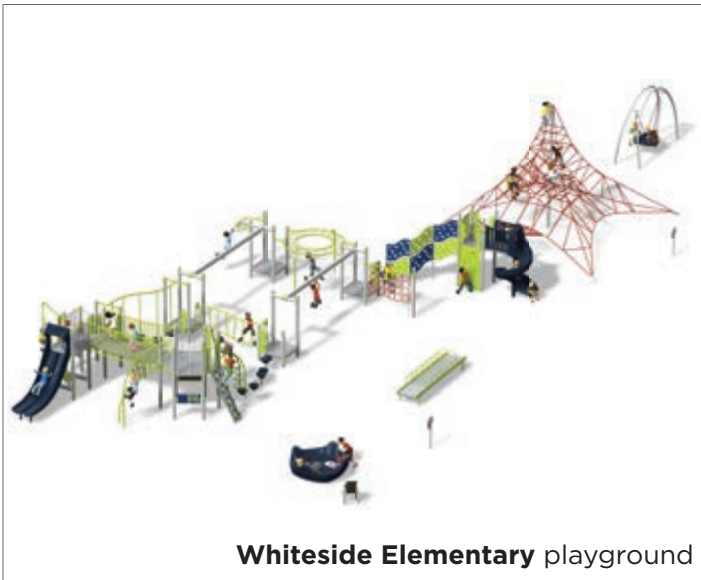


# interview with:

## IRENE MELANDIS & WHITESIDE ELEMENTARY



Whiteside Elementary playground

**How did you hear about the Scratch Card Program?** We were interviewing three playground companies to become our playground supplier. It was during one of our initial playground tours that Habitat Systems mentioned the scratch card fundraiser to us.

**Why did you choose to use the Scratch Card Program?** It was the end of the year and we were looking to do something quickly to raise funds. The Scratch Card Program was not much work, did not involve a lot of time and it was something we could do right away. Everything was provided for us and it was ready to go.

**How did you learn about how the program works?** During one of our first meetings, Habitat Systems was able to help us out with fundraising. Once we decided that Habitat Systems would be our playground supplier, they met with us and explained the scratch card program.

### How did you decide how many booklets to order?

We came up with 430 booklets based on the number of students at the school. We figured the grade 7 students might not be interested in getting involved since they were leaving. We ordered booklets for students from kindergarten through to grade 6, and some extra booklets. It was basically 1 booklet per child, with some extra booklets available in case they were needed.

### Once the booklets arrived to you, how did you distribute them?

One of the parents in the playground committee drew up a letter explaining our plans for the playground, how much money we had, how much we were looking to raise, etc... This letter along with an additional letter explaining the scratch card fundraiser were included in the envelope containing the booklet. Each student was given a booklet with the student's name and we had the teachers distribute them. We numbered each booklet and created excel spreadsheets to keep track of them.



### How did you communicate the program to the students, teachers and parents?

3 to 4 parents went to each classroom and informed the students of the Scratch Card Program. The parents mentioned incentive prizes such as gift bags and prizes for students, and a pizza party for the primary and intermediate class that raised the most funds. For each completed booklet, the student's name was entered into a draw for First Prize: an iPad 3, Second Prize: a \$100 gift certificate to Richmond Centre and Third Prize: Night out at the movies for a family of four. Parents were informed of the Scratch Card Program in a letter, and the Principal also provided information about the program in the school newsletter. Parents were told that a booklet would be coming home with each student.





**What was the average amount raised per booklet?** The average amount raised per student was \$33.

**How long did it take to raise the funds?** It took 10 days to raise \$14,000.



reverse view of the  
**Whiteside Elementary** playground

**Who was responsible for collecting the funds?** Each class was given an 11" x 14" envelope. Parents from the playground committee collected the envelopes from each class on the due date. Early and late deposits were delivered straight to the office.

**What was most challenging about administering this program?** It was actually easy. It's a good idea to have 10 to 15 people to count the money because it can take a very long time. Setting up an excel spreadsheet to track our progress was a big help, especially when it came to keeping track of class totals.



**What advice would you give to other schools?** The scratch card program proved to me that sometimes you just have to go for it. Did we think we would raise \$14,000? No we didn't, so we were extremely happy with our results. My advice would be to try to create as much excitement as you can about the playground. We had set up a display in our main hallway with the playground drawings, and Habitat Systems had designed a fundraising chart in the form of our school mascot, a wolf. We also had a banner that Habitat Systems created for us across the entrance way that said "Help Make Our Dream A Reality". You need to create excitement about the new playground. Our signs are all still up and will remain there until our playground is done. It's one of the first things people walking into our school see. I think it's also important to have prizes as an incentive. We had so many eager students who completed 2 booklets and one kindergarten student who completed 3 booklets because they wanted more entries for the prizes. In addition to the three prizes, we also had a pizza for the primary and intermediate classes with the most money raised. In order to encourage students to return their booklets (completed or not), we entered them in a draw for the gift bags. Keep parents informed on the playground project and what you are fundraising for. If you are offering incentive prizes, it is important that you have a detailed tracking system.