



The Story of the Natural Playground

Have you noticed the section of playground at the end of the drop-off loop where kids hop from log to log and rock to rock...did you know these elements were once part of the old school?

In 2010, former Peter Kirk Principal Sandy Dennehy and two involved parents proposed that a Natural Playground be added to the campus. “Kids enjoy digging in the dirt, finding fallen sticks and branches and creating their own playscapes and games using natural materials, and there was a population of students not being served by the traditional equipment and hardscape on the playground,” says Amy Rice, one of those parents and now substitute teacher at Peter Kirk. For two years Principal Dennehy, Amy Rice and Bobbi Ostrum worked with PTSA, Lake Washington School District, and City of Kirkland to create and fund this project. A digging playground with boulders and hidden gems was added to the back of campus where the trail leads out from the forest, and logs and boulders were added to the wiggle playground outside of the Kindergarten classrooms near where cars now enter the drop-off loop. Both Natural Playgrounds were an instant success, and became beloved places for the kids to dig, find gems, pretend play, and hop on boulders and logs. The Natural Playground elements were saved for the new school, and are now a reminder of the memories of years past, and a chance for future generations of Eagles to play and climb on again!