

# Emerald to the rescue

## Local contractor helps install new playground

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PLYMOUTH – A Cedarville contractor has come to the rescue of West Plymouth students.

The long-awaited playground project at West Elementary School seemed in danger of stalling indefinitely after a contractor backed out of the project on the eve of installation last week. Parents on the school's Playground Committee put out frantic calls for help and got a big assist from Emerald Excavating of Cedarville.

Sheamus Kelleher and a crew of workers removed the existing pea stone from the old playground site and dug a foot-deep base for the new equipment. The work cleared the way for the installation of new playground on schedule later this month.

Julie Whealan, a member of the school's Playground Committee, said West Elementary parents have been working for at least three years to install a new playground at the school. The new landscape structure will be similar to equipment at the Nelson Street playground.

The old playground was nearly 30-years-old and featured splintered wood and chipped metal. Parents raised money for the new equipment with a variety of fundraisers, includ-



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Emerald Excavating volunteered the labor and equipment for the playground project after another contractor cancelled on the eve of installation.

ing sales of the game Plymouthopoly.

The parents contracted to buy the new equipment after winning approval for the project from the School Committee earlier this year.

Whealan said the parents had lined up a contractor to do the site work associated with the installation. But when the project finally neared, the contractor cancelled.

Parents Mike Ford and Lenny Wiswell stepped up and volunteered to remove the old equipment. They also started clearing the old pea stone groundcover, but found their Bobcat too small for the job.

Kelleher brought in a small excavator, a Bobcat and a large dump truck, along with a four-man crew, to complete the work while students tackled MCAS tests last Wednesday.

The playground was to be installed by this week, with the pea stone replaced with a more forgiving synthetic groundcover.

Inge Kelleher, president of Emerald Excavating, said she was happy her company could help.

"It was a pretty sticky situation and we do like to contribute whenever possible. We like to do our part to give back to the community," Kelleher said.

"The kids are psyched. I can't wait, too," Whealan said. "I wish there was a big sheet and we could just unveil it. It's going to be pretty amazing to see them all playing on it."



The new playground, slated for installation in April, replaces a 30-year-old wooden structure.