



BOSTON SCHOOLYARD INITIATIVE

Transforming schoolyards into dynamic centers for recreation, learning, and community life.

Pediatricians Say Recess is Good for Kids



Photo by Julio Cedano

Principal Mary Driscoll ensures that her students at the Edison K-8 School in Brighton enjoy some time each day to play and unwind. The Edison, whose schoolyard was renovated by BSI in 2011, is one of

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UPCOMING SCIENCE IN THE SCHOOLYARD COURSES

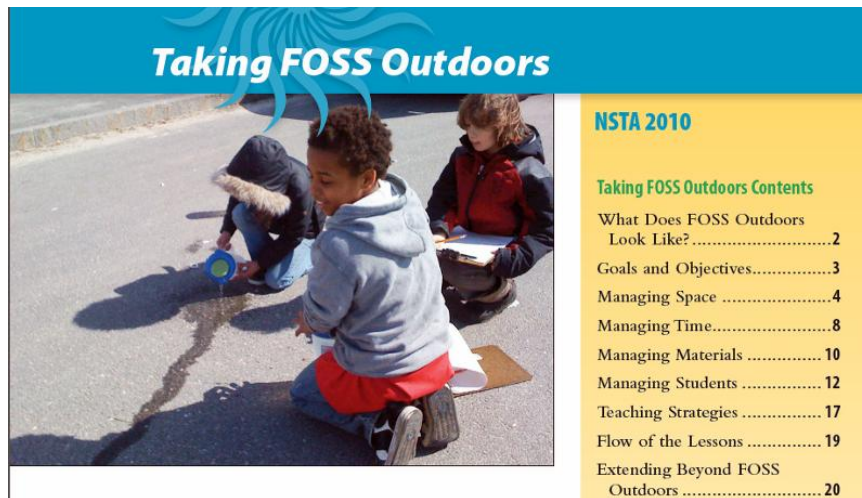
Teachers, be sure to check our our two upcoming SSY

few in Boston that offers recess for middle school students. Driscoll maintains that teachers will gladly swap 15 minutes of instructional time for 15 minutes of recess due to the positive effects it has on students- including increased performance in the classroom.

It turns out the Edison is on to something. The American Academy of Pediatrics recently released a [policy statement](#) stressing the significant role of recess in contributing to the healthy growth and development of school-aged children. The statement asserts that by dedicating a small amount of time each day for physical activities and playtime (separate from physical education classes), students benefit in innumerable ways, from better health to positive social, emotional, and cognitive development. Recess is shown to increase [keep reading...](#)

BSI and BPS Inspire FOSS Curriculum to Take Science Outdoors

Teachers across the country using the latest third edition of the FOSS science curriculum will notice an exciting new feature: Taking FOSS Outdoors. This new component, which got its start with Boston Public School teachers, extends classroom learning into the schoolyard to bring science concepts to life.



The inspiration for Taking FOSS Outdoors began with the Boston Schoolyard Initiative and the BPS Science Department. In 2006, BSI began developing Science in the Schoolyard guides to complement the FOSS science curriculum. These guides, which were piloted by sixteen BPS science teachers, provide step-by-step information on when and how to take students outside for each of the units taught in Boston. The guides also provide activities that teachers and out-of-school time staff can use to integrate science into their teaching. Happily, the creators of FOSS decided to further develop the guides and fully embed outdoor learning into the new third edition.

"The integration of outdoor investigations into FOSS' new edition is a testament to the hard and pioneering work of the BPS Science Department, BPS teachers and BSI," said Myrna Johnson, Executive

courses: **Developing Life Science Ideas Using the Schoolyard** and **Developing Energy Concepts Using the Schoolyard**. Classes begin in April. For more information visit our website.

REGISTER FOR THE BPS HEALTH AND WELLNESS SUMMIT

Join members of the Boston Public School community as we come together on **Thursday, April 25** to share knowledge and build connections to create sustainable, healthy, whole-school environments. Visit the [Health & Wellness website](#) to register to attend.

VOLUNTEERS AVAILABLE FOR SCHOOLYARD PROJECTS

Rebuilding Together Boston is seeking schools that need repairs or renovations to apply to be a site for its **National Rebuilding Day on Saturday, April 27**. If your school has a project that could use volunteers, contact Simone Auster at (617)971-0058 or visit www.rtboston.org.

FREE TREES!

Looking to green your schoolyard? Grow Boston Greener is a competitive mini-grant program administered by Boston Natural Areas Network in partnership with the City of Boston that provides **funding up to \$2,500 for tree plantings** in neighborhoods throughout the City of Boston. The deadline is March 22. For more information, contact the Boston Natural Areas Network at 617-542-7686 or visit www.growbostongreener.org

Director of the Boston Schoolyard Initiative. "I offer deep thanks to the current and past leadership at the BPS Science Department, the 16 teachers who piloted the BSI Science in the Schoolyard guides, and the BSI education team for this meaningful and innovative body of work."

"Going outside is now part of the FOSS program as a direct result of the groundbreaking work by BPS educators," says Erica Beck Spencer, FOSS Curriculum Developer. "The entire FOSS staff has embraced this new initiative and we [keep reading...](#)

Outdoor Learning All Year Long!

Even as the final weeks of winter keep a chill in the air, there are still plenty of opportunities for learning outdoors. While adults might be hesitant to brave the elements, most students welcome the chance to bundle up and head outside for a lesson any time of year. Check out our [blog](#) for some ideas of wintertime [science](#) and [writing](#) activities in the schoolyard.



Coming Soon to City Hall: BSI In Photos

MASS AG IN THE CLASSROOM CONFERENCE

Mass Agriculture in the Classroom is hosting their annual **winter conference on Saturday, March 9** in Ludlow, MA. Several workshops on schoolyard gardening will be offered. For more information visit their [website](#).

SHARE YOUR SUCCESS STORIES

Is your school using your schoolyard or outdoor classroom in interesting ways? Is outdoor play or learning part of your school's recipe for success? If so we want to hear about it! To be part of our Good Idea Showcase, send your schoolyard success story to Maureen White maureenwhite@schoolyards.org



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Be sure to stop by our upcoming photo exhibit "Learn, Play, Grow: Reclaiming Boston's Schoolyards" at City Hall. The exhibit will run from April 1-May 15 in the 2nd floor Mayor's Neighborhood Gallery. It will showcase and celebrate the impact of BSI's pioneering work to revitalize and green the city's schoolyards. Learn more about the unique public-private partnership that has reclaimed 88 BPS schoolyards for learning and play and made a significant mark on Boston's neighborhoods. We look forward to seeing you there!

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