

Our Boston 2014

BPS kindergartners' ideas for making
our city fairer and a more interesting
place for children



CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS

MARTIN J. WALSH
MAYOR

February 10, 2014

Dear Boston Public School Kindergartners:

My name is Marty Walsh and I am the new Mayor of Boston. You live in Boston and are some of our youngest and most important residents. As Bostonians you have the right to share your opinions about our city.

I hear you are learning about structures as part of the construction unit. I have a question for you: **What suggestions do you have about constructions in our city to make Boston a fairer and more interesting place for children?** I am sure you know a lot about Boston. You know about the buildings you see near your homes and your schools. It is important that constructions, such as parks, buildings and roads, are fair and interesting. You will learn that *fair* has many meanings. What would make a construction project fair for children? *Interesting* can mean fun to look at, or something that makes you think. Of course, you are the experts about what could make Boston more interesting for children.

Did you know that people from all over the world live in our city? Some of your families may have come to Boston from other countries. The people of Boston speak many languages, and have different traditions and ideas. I think it would be fun to have your family, friends, and neighbors help you work on this project. You might also get ideas from other places you have lived or visited, or from books you have read.

This is a big question so take your time in answering it. Talk to your classmates, your teachers and your family. Do research to get ideas. Write your ideas and please make a model to help me understand your ideas better.

I look forward to learning about your ideas and seeing your model.

Sincerely,

Martin J. Walsh
Mayor

As part of the Focus on K2 curriculum, Boston Public School kindergartners received a letter from Mayor Walsh, inviting them to send him suggestions about constructions that would make, “Boston a fairer and more interesting place for children.”



Kelly O'Hearn's kindergartners in Room 104 at the Harvard Kent decided to make, "More buildings so parents can have jobs because it's not fair if they don't have jobs." They also designed playgrounds for kids.



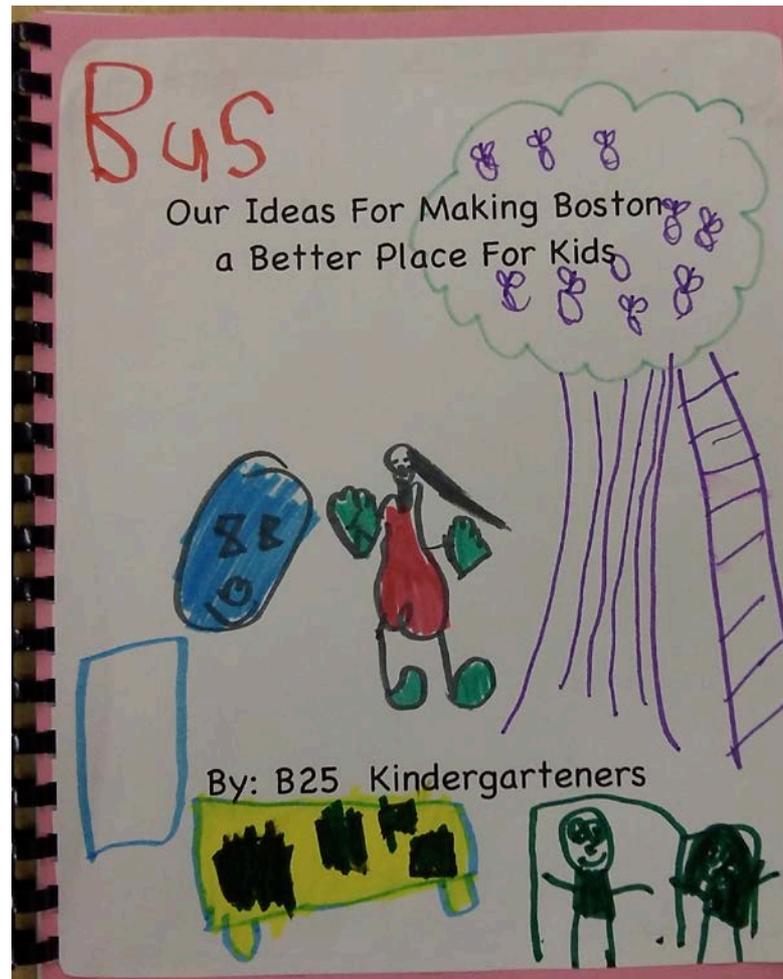
In Room A14 at the Blackstone, Sara Burn's kindergartners made models of their favorite parts of Boston.



Leticia Nieves' Tobin School students ideas for improving Boston include: a dragon fountain, a dinosaur museum, mountains, a park to walk cats, better roads and a flower garden.



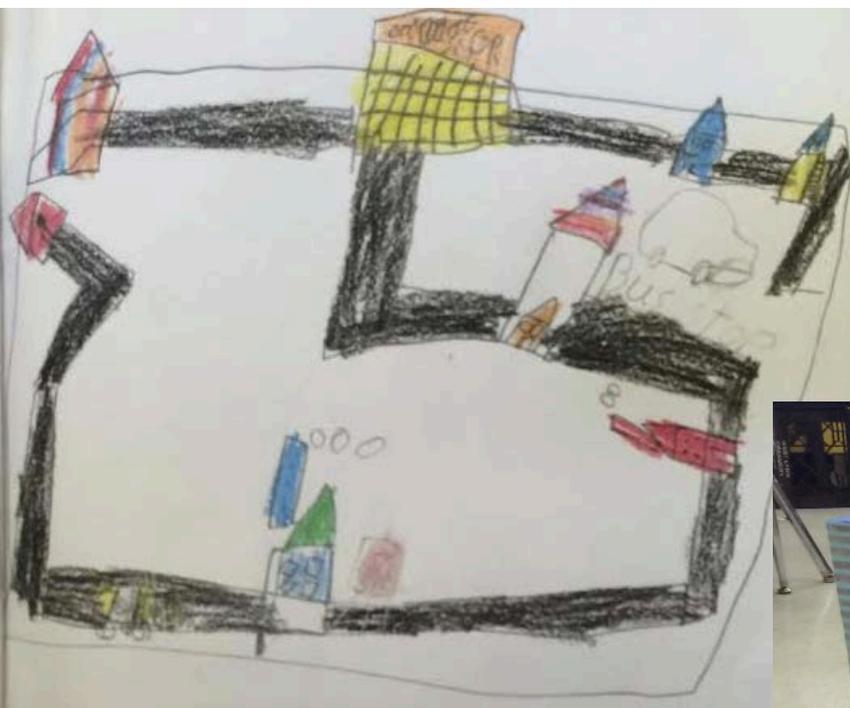
Regina Nunez's students in Room 102 at the Harvard Kent ideas for Boston include: kids toy cars in Boston that children can drive to school by themselves, a new park for kids with more flowers and more trees, a lot of new Boston toy shops for children and bouncing houses in the parks for Boston children.



Florence Yee's Blackstone School kindergartners made a book to share their ideas that include: more homes, more apple trees, games to play at bus stops, art posters in parks and having a Children's Day.



Maggie Hennessy's students at the Blackstone School wrote books about how to make Boston fairer and more interesting. Ideas include: More helpers, more bridges, candy and maps, ways to keep kids safe, more toys for kids so they will be happy and smarter, and a machine that makes food so no one will be hungry.



Agnes Wong's students at the Quincy School planned and built a model city that you can safely move through.



The Boston that Alanna Melendez's students at the Mattahunt School envision has houses for everyone because, "Some people live in cars, and everyone deserves a home." The city also includes: the Statue of liberty, 100 game rooms, shops and restaurants, and jobs for everyone.



Kathleen Brown's students at the Ellis School know that "children need exercise." So after this long winter, they designed and built a model of an indoor playground that Boston's children could use during the cold months. The playground includes a sandbox, swings, and track that children can run around. The playground is covered by a roof with solar panels.



At the Kilmer, Joan Cawley's children think there should be more playgrounds in Boston. They would like these playgrounds to include swings, skate board ramps, sand boxes, slides, rope ladders and rock walls.



Awilda Molina's students at the Sumner envisioned what the neighborhood around their school might look like.



Paula Mahoney's students at the Beethoven School has several ideas:

- **An all in one sports arena to play basketball, hockey, football and baseball ("Because some kids don't get to play a lot and this has everything all together").**
- **A national history museum for kids ("Because people don't know much about many dinosaurs. Most Natural History museums are far away from Boston and take a long time to get there so we need one closer").**
- **More trash and recycle cans in parks and city streets.**
- **More sports leagues/parks for kids, especially ones with special needs like autism.**



Kelly Stevens' children at the Eliot think an all in one sports center would make Boston more interesting. The All Boston Sports Stadium, a four story structure (one story for each team) has an elevator and, a retractable roof (allowing in fresh air and keeping out the rain). The children feel, "No other city has this and we think it is awesome and will make Boston even greater than it already is."



At the Baldwin, Tracey Vasselin's children think a new park (with slides, benches, swings, trees and tunnels) would make Boston more interesting. It would be a place where kids could run, and importantly, would be free so everyone could go.



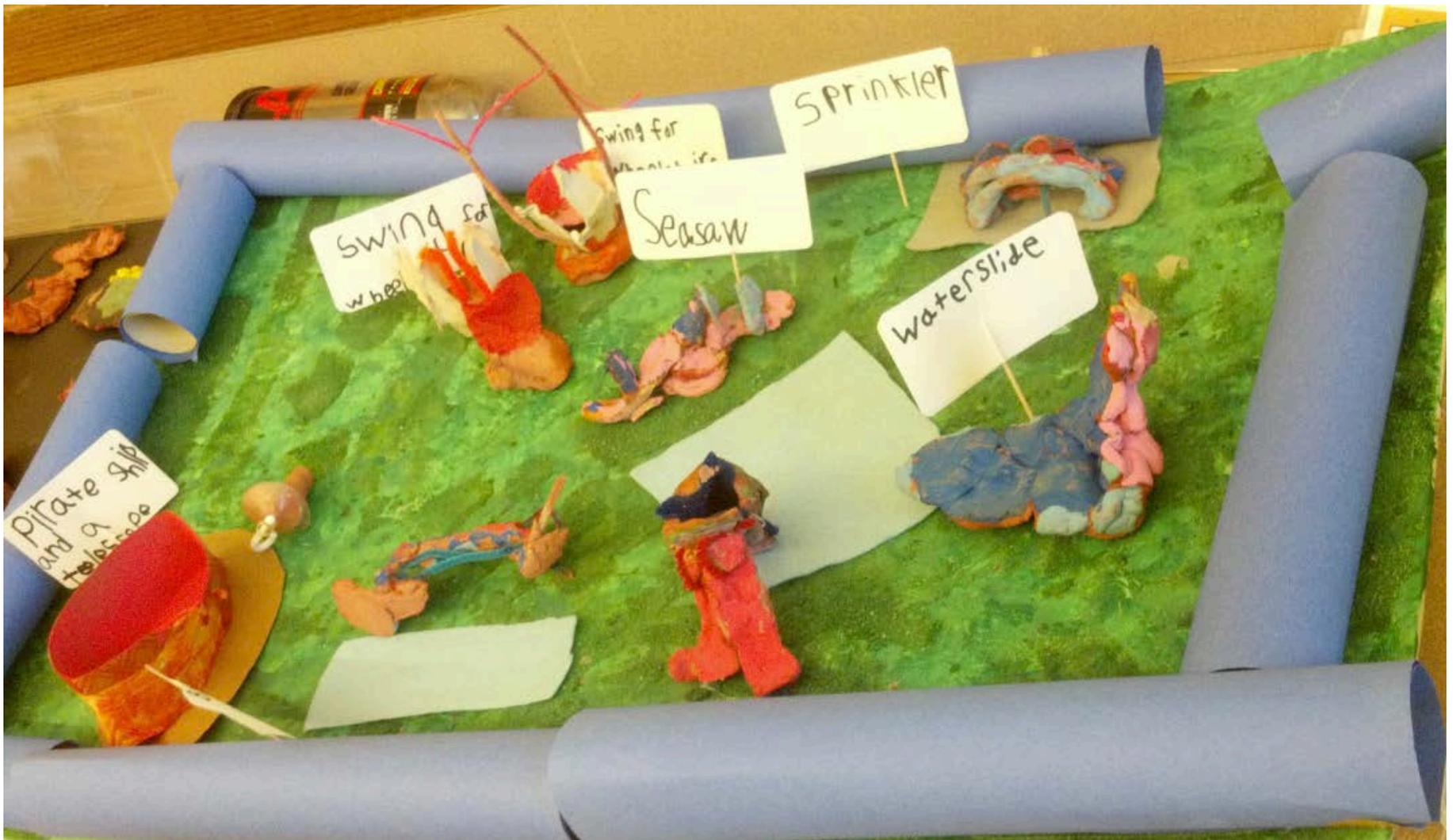
Because Boston is so cold and wet during the winter and kids need places to play, the children in Layla Hijab Cable's class at the Curley School created an indoor park with a spooky house. The park and house include a slide, yoga room, spider area, ghosts area and the trampoline room.



Marisol Gomez-Arroyo's children at the Ellis School designed improvements to their school, including ideas for a gym, computer and music classrooms, garden and swimming pool.



Maureen Cullen's class at the Curley decided that they wanted to make a place that had all the places they wanted to go in one location so that everyone could get there and enjoy them. So they created a Water Travel World with a zoo, park, aquarium and pool. You arrive at all locations by boat, so there is also a parking lot with a walkway to get to the boat launch.



At the Roosevelt, Michelle Pless-Jospeh and Andrea Wong-Peterson children designed improvements for Meigs Park, which is near the school. The improvements include handicapped accessible play equipment and a pond with a pirate ship.



Maria Valarezo's Ellis kindergartners decided that, to be fair, all of Boston's neighborhoods should be beautiful. Their model includes gardens, a park, 5 pools and a pizzeria shaped like a pizza.



At the Sumner, Carmen Guerrios-Doherty, Fleming Akers, Judith Reid and Wanda Rodriguez's children decided, "We want all the children in our classroom to live in the same neighborhood as our school. All of us would be able to play together in the tennis area, skating area, have ice cream, go to the video center and have fun everyday."

To learn about how the children created their model, including a song they composed about their construction process, go to:

<https://vimeo.com/92289471>



At the Sumner School, Lelia Snow's students had ideas about the neighborhood around their school.



Helenai Minaya students at the Curley School created a water park with slides that had made twists and turns, a wave pool and restaurants. To make sure that all the children in Boston could get to the park they included parking lots, a bus stop and a train station.



Marvella Alexandra's children at the Sumner School envision a Boston Children's Art Museum.



Motivated by concern for a classmate who had become homeless, Elaine Cronin's children at the Curley School created a community around a natural pool that had housing, food and cars for all. They call their community Bostonville.