



NATIONAL COVID-19
OUTDOOR LEARNING
INITIATIVE

CREATING
OUTDOOR SPACES

EMERGENCY
SCHOOLYARD
DESIGN VOLUNTEERS



PHINEAS BATES ELEMENTARY — ROSLINDALE, MASSACHUSETTS

This Boston Public School is located in a Boston neighborhood that is semi-urban. The school has approximately 240 students in grades PreK-5 and wishes to accommodate outdoor learning while balancing the need for outdoor recess and gym. Boston has variable spring and fall weather: cool, rainy/windy days as well as hot, sunny ones. The campus offers many opportunities for outdoor learning.

Site Analysis Considerations



Image Source:
Google Earth Pro

NOTE: These diagrams are intended to provide visual concepts to assist schools in planning. They are neither intended nor may be used for construction. Green Schoolyards America, Earth Island Institute, the Emergency Schoolyard Design Volunteers, and the partners of the National COVID-19 Outdoor Learning Initiative do not assume responsibility or liability for the technical accuracy of drawings or for any unauthorized use.

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Elementary School
Roslindale, MA

School Characteristics

Students

- Approx. 240 students in grades PreK-5
- Approx. 15 PreK-5 classes
- Classes could be broken into groups of 5-7 or 10-12

School Grounds

- Urban location, approx. 1.6 acres
- High levels of noise along Beech St from passing cars
- One existing outdoor storage container
- Asphalt area with play structure and adjacent trees is used nearly all day for recess and/or gym; classwork cannot happen in this area unless recess/gym is restricted to certain areas
- Parking lot extends to area with trees; street parking is limited but parking lot could be considered for emergency outdoor classroom use

Climate


- Variable spring with hot and cold days, frequent rain
- Windy conditions can make it too cold but can also offer cooling on hot days
- Building creates shade in western lawn area for most of the day; this may make it too cold on cooler days but pleasantly cool on warmer days





Potential Outdoor Classrooms


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 (8) Potential outdoor seating areas for up to 25 students

 (2) Potential outdoor seating area for up to 10-12 students

 Existing storage bin

 Proposed storage bin

Scenario #1

Climate Considerations

- Local climate varies seasonally
- Classes will require protection from sun and rain, and appropriate clothing to keep everyone warm and dry

Climate Adaptation Strategies

- Use outdoor classrooms as “Plan A” when the weather is nice; go inside or online when it is raining, too cold, or too hot
- Place low cost seating in areas where existing tree canopies or building provide shade, and away from street to reduce noise

Use and Augment Existing Infrastructure

- Add low cost seating (stadium seats, folding camp seats, or buckets)
- Add low cost teaching materials (outdoor tables for teachers, outdoor whiteboards, easels, clipboards)
- Provide storage for seating and teaching materials
- Provide sun protection (hats)
- Tent or other structure could provide protection from light rain in Area “H”

Outdoor Capacity

- Max: 200 students in 8 seating areas
- Capacity: 83% of enrolled students

Image Source:
Google Earth Pro

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A1 - Up to 25 students

- Lawn and pavement
- Level ground
- Wind exposure
- Shady until late afternoon
- Low noise levels
- Mostly fenced



A2 - Up to 10-12 students

- Lawn
- Level ground
- Wind exposure
- Shady until late afternoon
- Low noise levels
- Mostly fenced

Note that if A1 is in use, A2 and A3 cannot be used. A2 and A3 could be used simultaneously.



A3 - Up to 10-12 students

- Lawn and pavement
- Level ground
- Wind exposure
- Shady until late afternoon
- Low noise levels
- Mostly fenced



B - Up to 25 students

- Lawn and pavement
- Mostly level ground
- Wind exposure
- Shade under trees
- Traffic noise
- Mostly fenced
- Includes raised beds



C - Up to 25 students

- Pavement, steps, sloped lawn
- Level ground
- Wind exposure
- Full sun
- Traffic noise
- No fence
- Multiple options for small groups



D - Up to 25 students

- Lawn
- Sloped
- Wind exposure
- Mostly sunny
- Traffic noise
- Not fenced



E - Up to 25 students

- Pavement
- Level ground
- Protected from wind
- Full sun until late afternoon
- Traffic noise
- Mostly fenced
- Requires restricting parking



F - Up to 25 students

- Lawn/bare earth
- Level ground
- Protected from wind
- Shade
- Traffic noise
- Mostly fenced
- Requires restricting parking



G - Up to 25 students

- Bare earth, pavement, stepping stones
- Level ground
- Wind exposure
- Shade
- Lower noise levels if recess/gym is restricted to opposite side of yard
- Fenced



H - Up to 25 students

- Pavement
- Level ground
- Wind exposure
- Full shade
- Low noise levels if recess/gym is restricted to opposite side of yard
- Fenced
- Could place tent here to protect from light rain

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Scenario #1



Potential Outdoor Classrooms

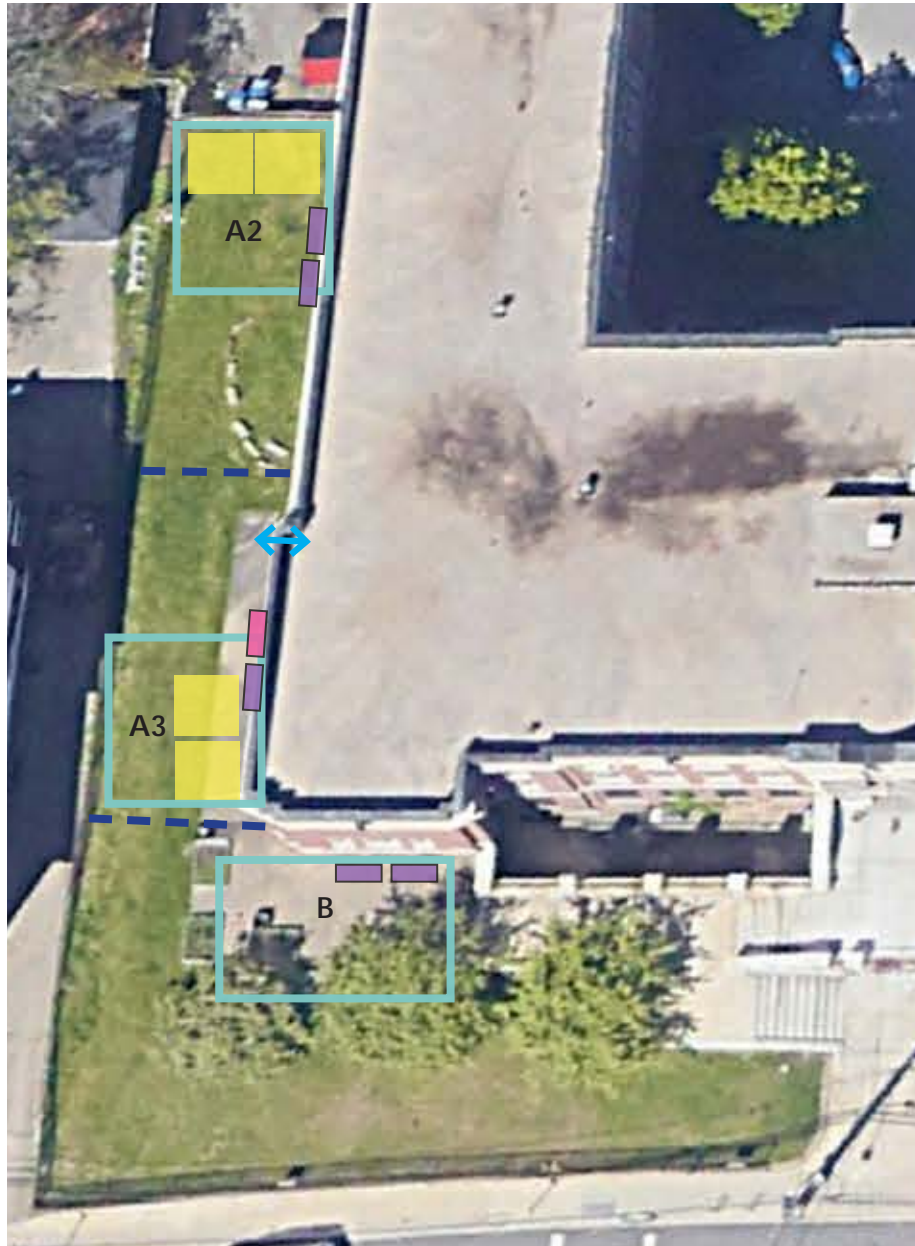






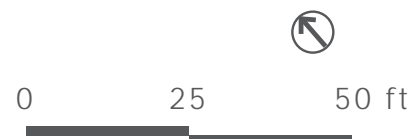


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-  Entry
-  (3) Potential outdoor seating areas for up to 20 students each
-  10'x10' tent
-  Existing storage bin
-  Proposed storage bin
-  Temporary fencing



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Scenario #2

Strategies

- Use infrastructure listed in Scenario #1, focusing on areas "A" and "B" to avoid conflicts with playground space
- Add temporary fencing to create two contained areas
- Add temporary seating at far ends of areas "A2" and "A3" to minimize distraction between groups
- Add 10'x10' tents for groups of 5-6 students in light rain or hot weather (8-10 students if using 3' distancing)
- Use area "B" for gardening and/or small group activities

Outdoor Capacity

- Max: 60 students in 3 areas
- Capacity: 25% of enrolled students



Potential Outdoor Classrooms

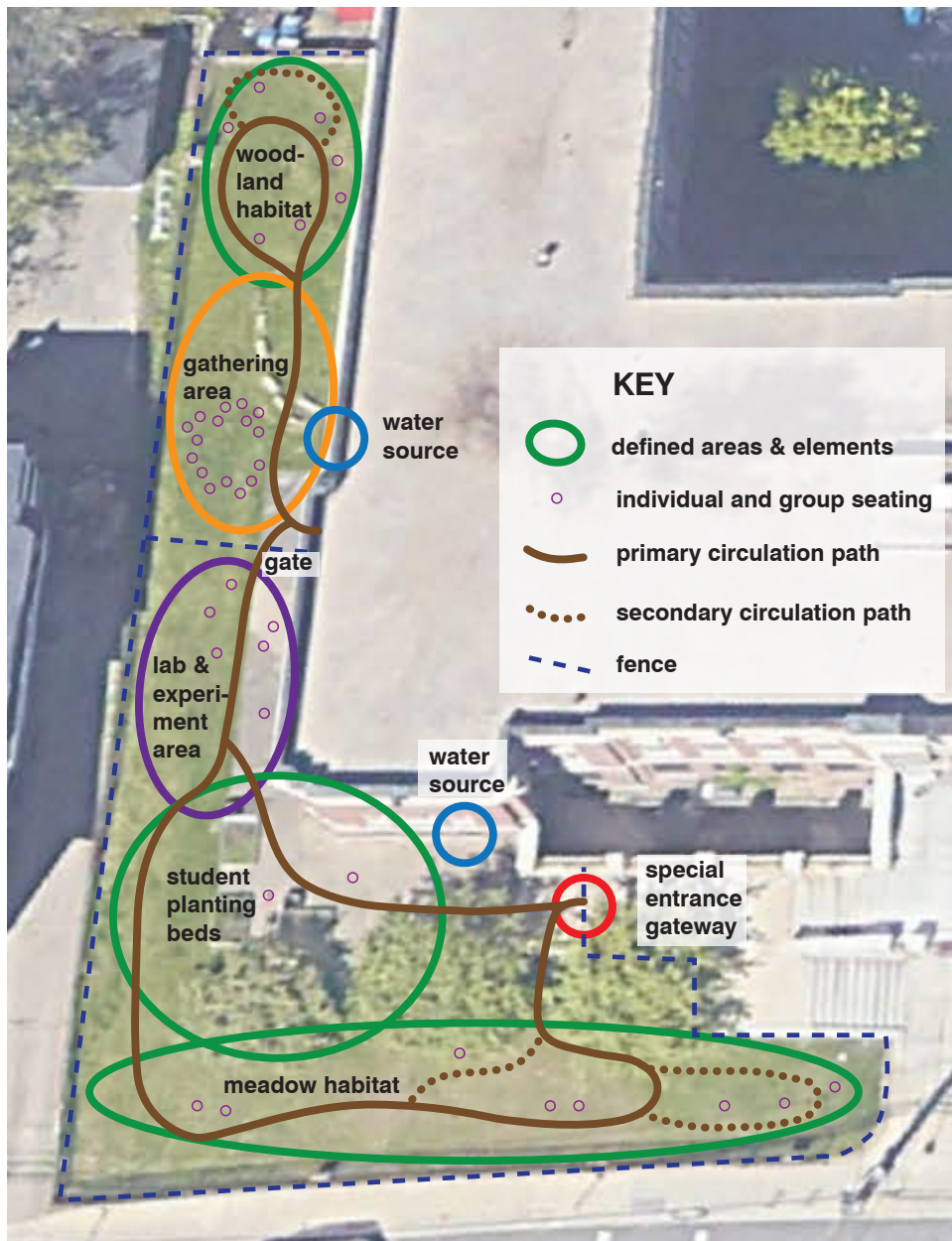


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Scenario #3

Strategies

- Focus on areas "A" and "B" to avoid conflicts with playground space
- Continue momentum from outdoor learning during the pandemic to plan long-term improvements using a community-driven process
- Add fencing to create two contained areas: one with a gathering area and woodland habitat, and the other with a lab area, student planting beds, and meadow habitat
- Provide flexible seating that can be moved into sun or shade as needed
- Consider shelter in gathering area to protect from wind and rain

Outdoor Capacity

- Max: 60 students in 5 areas
- Capacity: 25% of enrolled students

0 25 50 ft

