



Published on *Boston Public Schools* (<http://www.bostonpublicschools.org>)

Carter School dedicates artistic new bus shelter

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Created *Sep 24 2009 - 10:39*

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Colorful South End project designed and built by graduate architecture students from the Massachusetts College of Art and Design

September 25, 2009



BOSTON – Mayor Thomas M. Menino joined school officials and partners today to dedicate an artistic new bus shelter at the William E. Carter

School in the South End. The colorful new structure, built to protect the school's students from harsh weather when boarding and exiting wheelchair buses, is the result of a collaboration between the Boston Public Schools and graduate architecture students from the Massachusetts College of Art and Design.

The Carter School serves students with severe disabilities. All 22 children are transported to and from school in eight wheelchair buses equipped with lifts. Inclement weather made arrival and dismissal at the school difficult for students and staff, with teachers and aides often having to hold umbrellas while attempting to guide wheelchairs. MassArt approached the school to offer their volunteer design and construction services for a school project, and Principal Marianne Kopaczynski identified the need for a bus shelter.

The result is a colorful bus shelter that protects students from the elements and includes design features to stimulate students' senses and capture their interest. The shelter consists of a roof that extends over the sidewalk the length of two school buses, featuring transparent panels in bright hues that produce colorful patterns below when the sun is shining and pattering sounds above during rainstorms. The structure also includes a water feature to direct rainfall to a rock bed at wheelchair level, as well as new landscaping and colorful seats for adults.

"This project is a great example of what can happen when the community comes together to support our schools," said Mayor Menino. "The Carter School serves some of our most vulnerable students, and thanks to this new shelter, their school day will begin and end in a much safer and more cheerful environment."



"We are so grateful to our partners from the Mass. College of Art and Design for their investment of time and resources in this exciting project," said Superintendent Carol R. Johnson, who also attended the dedication ceremony. "We are fortunate here in Boston to have colleges and universities that care about our kids, and today, we celebrate a remarkable partnership that will make a real difference in the lives of our students and staff."

Principal Kopaczynski added, "The commitment and hard work of the MassArt students were awe-inspiring, as was the generosity of the community in providing donations and assistance. These

tremendous contributions from so many varied sources have tremendously enhanced the educational experience for a very special group of Boston Public Schools students.”

The Carter School’s new bus shelter helps brighten a visible area of the South End, given that the school, located on Northampton Street, abuts the Massachusetts Avenue MBTA station. The project was featured recently on [dwell](#) magazine’s website.

The graduate students and their instructors from the Massachusetts College of Art and Design provided in-kind design services and secured additional private and corporate donations totaling \$27,000. Two instructors and 10 students worked full-time (more than 40 hours per week) for nearly three months – more than 5,000 volunteer hours. Teachers, neighbors and other members of the Carter community donated their time to help build the structure as well. Boston Public Schools invested approximately \$35,000 in the project, as well as engineering support and other permitting and construction services.

Last year, the Carter School won a national award for its innovative sensory garden and outdoor classroom. The American Horticultural Therapy Association recognized the garden with the Therapeutic Garden Design Award at its national conference in Lexington, Kentucky.

The Boston Public Schools serves more than 56,000 pre-kindergarten through grade 12 students in 135 schools, and in 2006 won the Broad Prize for Urban Education as the top city school district in the country. For more information, visit www.bostonpublicschools.org.
