

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **CONTACT:**

Simca Horwitz

Co-Director

Massachusetts Farm to School

413-253-3844

### **Students, teachers, and families celebrate the opening of a new school garden.**

(Roxbury, MA) On a warm June morning, students, families and staff from Roxbury's Bridge Boston Charter school gathered to celebrate the opening of the school's newest learning space, the Jennifer Daly Outdoor Classroom and Laboratory. Named for the school's founder, a champion of garden based learning, the Outdoor Classroom is the latest manifestation of Bridge Boston's mission to cultivate the joy of learning. 8th grade orchestra students performed for attendees in the garden.

Lessons taught in Jen's Garden will transcend gardening to impact scholars, families, and the entire community for years to come. "Our vision is for this lot to be filled with fruits and vegetables that students can sample and to be a place where students can learn firsthand the connection between nature, their own food supply, and the pollinators and other creatures their school garden ecosystem attracts and supports," said Trustee Beth Kressley-Goldstein in her remarks during the event. The space is also home to the school's two beehives.

Bridge Boston was able to construct the space with support from the newly launched Massachusetts FRESH Grant (Farming Reinforces Education and Student Health) and in partnership with Green City Growers, a Boston-based company that transforms underutilized spaces into biodiverse food production landscapes. Bridge Boston Charter School is one of just seventeen K-12 schools and early education centers to receive the inaugural funds. This pilot grant program, administered by the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, was funded by the Massachusetts Legislature under the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

"After several years of organizing, we are delighted to see the first round of FRESH grants reach schools and early education centers around the state. We are so thankful to Massachusetts legislators for recognizing the importance of investing in our schools to provide students the meals and experiential education opportunities that enhance learning outcomes and support

our local farmers and food producers. Bridge Boston is offering the kind of farm to school programming we envision for every community in the Commonwealth,” stated Simca Horwitz, Co-Director of Massachusetts Farm to School.

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Massachusetts Farm to School strengthens local farms and fisheries and promotes healthy communities by increasing local food purchasing and education at schools. The organization, founded in 2004, provides training and technical assistance to school staff, coordinates local food outreach and promotion efforts, supports networking of farm to school practitioners and leads statewide advocacy efforts to expand farm to school activity. Massachusetts Farm to School is a contracted partner with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Office of Food and Nutrition Programs to support FRESH Grant implementation, technical assistance and outreach to school districts and childcare centers.

For more information about Mass. Farm to School, visit [www.massfarmtoschool.org](http://www.massfarmtoschool.org) or contact Simca Horwitz at [simca@massfarmtoschool.org](mailto:simca@massfarmtoschool.org) or call 413-253-3844.