

NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS



These students are among the first to enjoy the new Carlos Pacheco Elementary School playground which was officially opened for use today. [ PETER PEREIRA/THE STANDARD-TIMES/SCMG ]

# New playground opens at Pacheco School

By **Jennette Barnes**  
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NEW BEDFORD — Recess got a whole lot better for the 380 children of New Bedford’s Carlos Pacheco Elementary School on Wednesday, as a new playground opened to replace one that was partially boarded up.

The colorful new playground includes slides, a tunnel, a rock wall, a music station, swings, and climbing bars.

“It looks cool,” kindergartner Vy Van Ta said.

Bridgewater State University donated some of the

equipment from the university day care center, which is closing. Other items were purchased by the city.

Children stood patiently outside a ring of yellow tape as officials from the city, school district, and university gave their remarks Wednesday morning, but everyone was conscious that the kids were waiting to play.

Mayor Jon Mitchell opened his remarks by addressing the children.

“How long have you been staring at that playground and haven’t been able to jump on it? How long?” he said.

Various responses, including “forever,” came from the crowd of students.

“Way too long,” Mitchell said.

Principal Celeste Hoag said in an interview that part of the old playground was unsafe and had been boarded up since she arrived two years ago.

Bridgewater State University’s College of Education and Allied Studies has an ongoing relationship with the Pacheco School in which representatives from the college meet regularly with Hoag and teachers to cooperate on projects. Recently, a professor wrote a

grant that will provide 10 iPads to the elementary school, and another BSU-written grant will fund the painting of a mural on the front door, according to Lisa Battaglino, dean of the College of Education.

The College of Education works with several schools in Brockton. It began working with the Pacheco School at the request of Hoeg, a former school administrator in Brockton who knew about the college’s partnerships with local schools, Battaglino said in an interview.

The city spent \$66,500 on its share of the playground, paid with funds appropriated by the City Council for infrastructure upgrades across New Bedford, according to city spokesman Jonathan Carvalho. The Department of Public Infrastructure did the installation.

—Follow Jennette Barnes @jbarnesnews.



Mayor Jon Mitchell officially opens the new Carlos Pacheco Elementary School playground in New Bedford. [ PETER PEREIRA/THE STANDARD-TIMES/SCMG ]



Kindergartners try to take a look at their new playground from a distance as the new Carlos Pacheco Elementary School playground was officially opened to students today in New Bedford. [ PETER PEREIRA/THE STANDARD-TIMES/SCMG ]