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DEP Joins Local Leaders to Open New Student-designed "Green" Playground at JHS 189 and Flushing International School to Serve the Flushing Community



Album — JHS 189Q TPL Ribbon Cutting by NYC Water

JHS 189Q TPL Ribbon Cutting
by NYC Water

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New Green Infrastructure Will Capture 860,000 Gallons of Stormwater Annually and Improve Health of Flushing Creek

Playground Will Bring 36,000 Residents Within a 10-Minute Walk of a Park

Photos Available on [DEP's Flickr Page](#)

Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Vincent Sapienza joined Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, Council Member Peter Koo, representatives from MetLife Foundation, The Trust for Public Land, and students and faculty from JHS 189Q and the Flushing International School today to cut the ribbon on the schools' new, state-of-the-art, green playground to serve the students and surrounding community. The new \$1 million playground will bring 36,000 Flushing residents within a 10-minute walk of a park and includes an artificial turf field, running track, green roof gazebo, outdoor classroom, garden, tree grove, bleachers, benches and permeable pavement. Green infrastructure elements will capture 860,000 gallons of stormwater per year, vastly improving the health of Flushing Creek.

"DEP is so proud of our partnership with The Trust for Public Land and the Department of Education, which has resulted in the creation of more than a dozen new state-of-the-art playgrounds citywide," said DEP Commissioner Vincent Sapienza. "This reimagined schoolyard now provides a fun and safe place for

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NYC school students and the Flushing community, while also helping to improve the ecological health of Flushing Creek."

Green infrastructure design elements, made possible in part through a partnership with DEP, are a hallmark of The Trust for Public Land's playground work. These features reduce stormwater runoff that can flood streets and overwhelm sewer systems, allowing untreated water to end up in rivers and bays. Each playground absorbs hundreds of thousands of gallons of water annually and includes 20-30 new trees that bring shade and better air quality to their neighborhoods. Similar playgrounds are also being designed in the Bronx River and East River watersheds.

Queens Borough President Melinda Katz said "Queens is pleased to unveil the much anticipated upgrades to JHS189 and Flushing International School's new, state-of-the-art, student-designed green playground. Thanks to the partnership with Councilmember Peter Koo, the Trust for Public Land, DEP, and the Met Life Foundation, the growing families of Flushing will be able to thrive in this innovative playground."

Council Member Peter Koo said "As our community continues to grow, it is important that we seek out new ways to maximize our public spaces and create more livable, family-friendly neighborhoods. This green playground transforms a vacant lot into valuable community amenity that will serve both students and residents for generations to come while helping to reduce the sewage outfalls into the Flushing Creek. I was proud to contribute \$200,000 to this project, and I'd like to thank the Trust for Public Land, Borough President Katz, the DOE, SCA and DEP for collaborating so efficiently and completing this project in less than one year."

"For more than two decades, MetLife Foundation has partnered with The Trust for Public Land to bring student-designed playgrounds and parks to communities throughout New York City and the U.S.," said **MetLife Foundation Assistant Vice President April Hawkins**. "We are pleased to add the JHS 189-Flushing International School playground to the list of spaces contributing to the health of local communities, families and the environment."

"Both kids and adults need to be active and get outside in order to be happier, healthier, and perform better at school or work. With nearly 36,000 residents within a 10-minute walk of this brand new, state-of-the-art recreation space we are not only creating greater access to open space, but are providing the entire Flushing community with a quality, environmentally friendly park to enjoy for decades to come," said **Carter Strickland, New York State Director of The Trust for Public Land**. "We'd like to thank our partners in government, specifically Borough President Katz and Councilman Koo, and the MetLife Foundation for their support in helping to realize the vision of the students who created this beautiful new space."

JHS 189Q Principal Madelin Radovich and Flushing International School Principal Lara Evangelista said "Our new playground will support our campus community to better serve our children in both our day school and after school health and wellness programs. It will also support our efforts in building a stronger partnership with our greater Flushing community neighbors."

This park is open to the entire community after school hours and on the weekends, and includes features that can be enjoyed by all ages, from children to seniors. In addition to funding provided by DEP for green infrastructure, this playground was also made possible through funding from the Queens Borough President, New York City Councilman Peter Koo, MetLife Foundation, and supporters of The Trust for Public Land.

The opening of this playground is part of the Trust for Public Land's Playgrounds Program, which serves to create vibrant, educational and fun playgrounds for New York City's schoolchildren. All Trust for Public Land playgrounds include student participation in the design process, providing them with hands-on learning of the science, technology, engineering, architecture, and math that goes into physical

aspects of designing playgrounds, and also the survey, consensus-building, and budgetary steps that go into the social aspects of deciding what will be included in their school's playground.

Since 1996, working with the City, The Trust for Public Land's NYC Playgrounds Program has designed and/or built 196 school and community playgrounds across the five boroughs. In addition to serving students, all playgrounds in New York City are open to the public on weekends, after school and during school vacations, providing opportunities for both children and adults to be physically active. The program has added more than 150 acres of additional playground space, serving over 3.9 million people who live within a 10-minute walk of one of the sites.

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About New York City DEP

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than 1 billion gallons of water each day to more than 9.6 million residents, including 8.6 million in New York City. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 19 reservoirs and three controlled lakes.

Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 in the upstate watershed. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program, with a planned \$19.1 billion in investments over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. For more information, visit nyc.gov/dep, like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

About The Trust for Public Land

The Trust for Public Land creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come. Nearly ten million people live within a ten-minute walk of a Trust for Public Land park, garden, or natural area, and millions more visit these sites every year. To support The Trust for Public Land and share why nature matters to you, visit www.tpl.org.

 [All Press Releases](#)