

Waldorf Goethean Place Study

PlaceLab Report

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There are no unsacred places; there are only sacred places and desecrated places.

-- Wendell Berry, *Given*

Places we want to *live* in must both function materially *and* nurture the soul, sustain *us* spiritually as well as being materially and biologically sustainable.

-- Christopher Day, *Spirit & Place*

The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh invited Duquesne University's PlaceLab to facilitate a study of the school grounds in order to develop a plan for enhancing the green spaces surrounding the historic school building, which sits on a city block in the Bloomfield area of Pittsburgh. While much work has been done on the building since the Waldorf School bought it in 2003, the school community decided that after 10 years it was time to give attention and thought to developing the natural places that the children live with for extended periods every day. Waldorf honors and respects the natural world, and the students spend much time outside in play and work activities that are a part of the Waldorf curriculum.

I. Philosophy and Guidelines

Human Beings have a powerful relationship with nature: nature carries, supports, and nourishes us, but we also have the ability, through our thinking and willing, to intervene in the natural processes and alter their course. Human activity can dominate, distort, and destroy natural environments – and we end up with places that are ugly, inhospitable, or even make us sick. But human activity can also respect, understand, and enhance natural places. After intense conversations with the “green leadership team” of the school we developed the following guidelines and goals for the place study:

- 1) **The outdoor place should reflect the educational philosophy of the Waldorf School**
 - a) Outdoor spaces should provide children from pre-K to grade 8 with age appropriate experiences as suggested by Waldorf pedagogy.
 - b) A healing quality should be brought to the place in order to make it whole.
 - c) A healing quality should emanate from places that children encounter every day.
- 2) **We will respect the shared destiny of humans and nature**

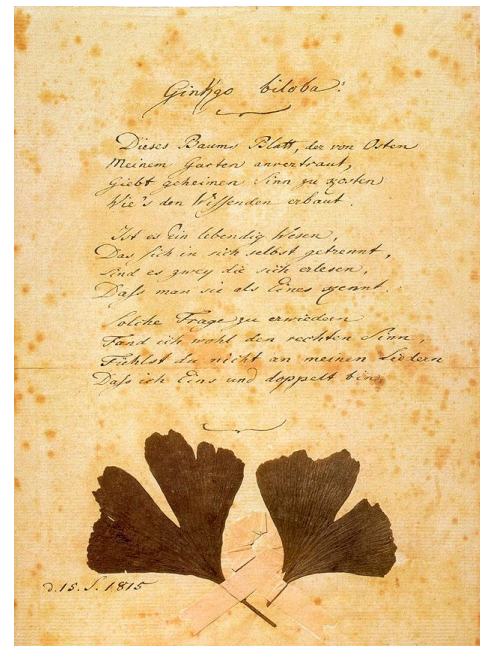
- a) Nature is honored and respected as the ground of all human activities. As adults, we want to model a respectful and harmonious insertion into the natural environment for the next generation.
 - b) The natural place has its own integrity and intentionality.
 - c) We want to look at the outdoor place as a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.
 - d) The best landscape development practices respect and enhance the qualities of the place itself. We want to give the place itself a voice and discover its potential.
 - e) We want to listen to what is there and what wishes to be there in the future.
- 3) **The place study should involve the school community as a whole and gather the voices of adults and children, as well as outside experts and friends.**

II. Framework

The Waldorf Place Study was designed to set up two processes that gather information about the school's green spaces from adults and from children. A selected group of adults participated in the *Goethean Place Study*, and all the families in the school were invited to participate in the *Child Map Project*. In the Child Map Project the eighth grade class created a 4'x3' map of the school grounds, which was displayed in the foyer of the school. Children from the nursery to grade 4 took their parents on a tour of the schoolyard and showed them the places they liked and/or disliked. The parents recorded the children's narratives (or pictures) on a sheet of paper and together they placed color-coded pins onto the child map, indicating the places the children at different ages liked and disliked. The students in grades 5-8 went on a tour of the grounds with their teachers and filled out their own sheets and placed their pins on the map. The preliminary findings about what the children liked and disliked about the school's surrounding spaces were taken into account in the adult Goethean Place Study.

The framework for the adult Goethean Place Study arose from the practice of Goethean Science, which was originally developed for the observation of plant life by the German poet and naturalist Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, but has been adapted to the study of landscape and architecture as well as other complex forms organic, artistic, and social forms that change in time.

The teachers of the Waldorf School engage in a form of Goethean Science in their "child study", which is a three step process by which the teachers work with a particular child in order to understand her or his pedagogical needs. The child study became an inspiration and guideline for the place study since it matched the essential steps of the



Poem by Goethe, 1815

Goethean Science procedure. Goethean Science is a phenomenological method and its procedure is the following (Bortoft, 1996; Brook, 1998; Holdrege, 2005):

- 1) **Observation:** Even though human beings live within their natural environments all the time, much of the world we are inserted in goes by habitually and unnoticed. Goethean science asks the researcher to “look again”, to attend to what is actually there, and to focus one’s attention on noticing the details and complexity of the place. “Describe – don’t explain” is the first step, and it asks the practitioners to set aside their prejudices and habitual ways of knowing and interpreting and focus on direct sensory experience.
 - a) Participants are instructed to notice their *first impressions* (Apercu), which are global and undifferentiated personal perceptions, often tinged with like and dislike, which provide an individual guidepost and a way into the phenomenon for different individuals.
 - b) The place is attentively observed and carefully described in an *exact sensory perception*. Things have to be looked at clearly and without prejudice, and the facts have to speak for themselves. In this phase it is useful to draw or note details in order to maintain attention and remain mindful of the perceived world. All senses are involved and contribute to a fuller experience of the phenomenon. The psychological result of this phase is a sharper and more directed attentiveness and an interruption of automatic intellectual prejudices.
- 2) **Imagination:** The elements of the observation are taken up into the imagination and are pictured and varied in relation to each other, are moved and are imagined as changing in time. Goethe calls this *the exact sensory imagination*. The whole lifecycle of a plant, for example, can never be seen at the same time, but the exact sensory imagination can create a sequence and picture the complete metamorphosis of a buttercup from seed to blossom. The invisible gestures and qualities that are expressed by the visible parts become imaginable. The whole, the unity and coherence of all parts, can be intuited. The psychological result of this phase is that consciousness becomes an organ of perception for the complex whole, which is always more than what is present to the senses.
- 3) **Inspiration:** In this step the observer exchanges place with the observed element and lets go of the anthropocentric perspective: what is the intentionality of the place itself as it silently reveals itself in spatial structures and gestures? what does *it want to be*? The psychological result of this step is an opening and quieting of consciousness so that the otherness and intentionality of the phenomenon can appear. Consciousness is de-centered and experiences the deeper connection and oneness between subject and object.
- 4) **Intuition:** Through deepened and intensified perception, imagination, and inspiration by the thing itself the type, idea, essence, or *Urphänomen* (archetypal phenomenon) appears as a creative potential that realizes itself through all appearances. Goethe called this *Contemplative judgment and appearance of the pure phenomenon*. The psychological result of this phase is a greater awareness of the principles and laws that govern appearances.

Applying a Goethean phenomenology to the study of children, the teachers’ child study consists of a three-week process, which follows van Dam’s method (van Dam, 1986-98) of

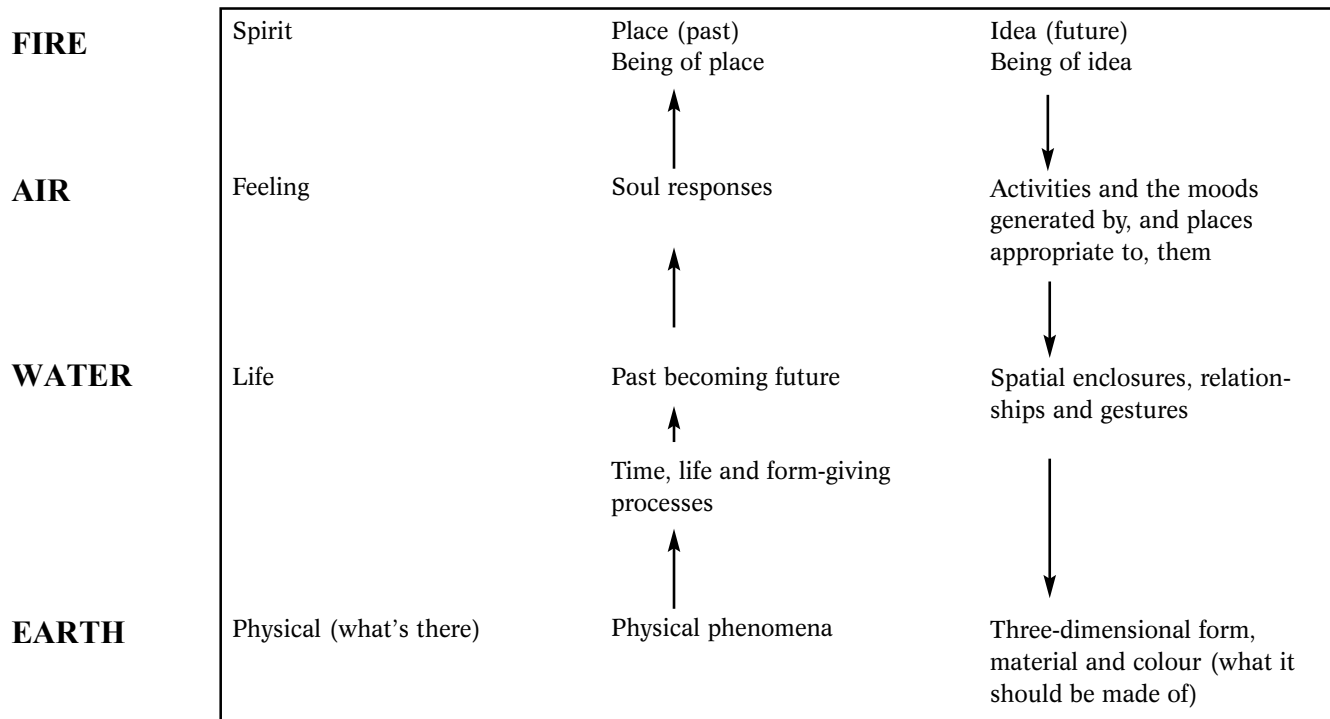
clinical observation, which he developed initially for observing and diagnosing medical patients. In the hands of the teachers the Goethean observational study has become an important tool for understanding the psychological and pedagogical needs of a particular child.

1. **Observation:** The teachers observe the child in terms of the four elements, earth, water, air, and fire:
 - a. the earth element can be found in the child's physical characteristics,
 - b. the water element in the child's gestures and movement,
 - c. the air element in the child's relationships with others,
 - d. the fire element in the child's sense of who they are as a whole (which is often announced -- but not recognized -- in the first impression the teachers have of the child).
2. **Imagination:** In week 2 the observations are shared, and the teachers are asked to work with these observations meditatively for three consecutive night by forming images of the child physically, in movement, and as a mood or quality which already appeared in the first impression
3. **Inspiration and Intuition:** In week three the teachers share their experiences and work with the child as a whole being (inspiration) and try to develop pedagogical ways to support and/or heal the child (intuition).

A further application of Goethean science helpful to the study of place is the work of architect Christopher Day (Day, 2002, 2004), who has designed nature-responsive Eco-villages and Waldorf Schools throughout the world. Day advocates for a strong community process in the design of schools and has developed a method for studying the qualitative and experiential dimensions of people's interaction with place. For our Goethean place study, we appropriated Day's work with the elements earth, water, air, and fire because it linked the method of Goethean science with the Waldorf child study and introduced a practical planning step important for the physical transformation of the school grounds. In the study of place,

- 1) **earth** designates the physical place, the "what is there" and its three-dimensional form, material, and color;
- 2) **water** designates the life and form-giving forces, which are found in spatial enclosures, relationships, and gestures of places;
- 3) **air** designates moods and feelings, the atmosphere that is generated by a place and the activity that is invited by it;
- 4) **fire** designates the ideas that live in a place and that inspire human beings

In the end, Day's take on the elements provided a bridge between the Waldorf child study and a phenomenological study of place and gave us a shared language and concepts. It also proved to be a very useful tool, and the following chart became a guideline for the place study process with the community.



Day's chart should be read from the bottom left, following the arrows up, with the Goethean observation process on the left proceeding through description of physical phenomena, imagination of gestures and forms, intuition of moods and activities, and inspiration by the being and potential of the place as a whole. The right column provides the process for transforming the place and developing landscape (or architectural) features which grow out of the identity of the place: we begin with the future potential, the "what this place wants to be" and the "idea" that lives here, proceed through identifying the moods and activities that would be best supported by the landscape (or its regions), articulate landscape gestures, enclosures and relational flow which would support this, and finally determine the material, physical forms that could accomplish this.

III. The Process of the Adult Place Study

The Goethean Place Study consisted of one Saturday morning and two Wednesday evening workshops held at the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh. 22 adults (plus the PlaceLab team) participated in the Goethean Place Study process, with half of the participants attending all the 3 workshops and some providing verbal or written feedback to the facilitators. The participants had received a brief description of the project and what would be asked of them beforehand, as well as a set of optional readings (Brook, 1998; Day, 2002; Holdrege, 2005).

Workshop 1

The first workshop consisted of an introduction to the Goethean place study, an outdoor observation activity, a conversation about participants' initial experiences and observations, and a presentation of maps and images about the historical use of the grounds by the school's

facilities manager. The participants were provided with a blank journal and received the following instructions:

“Our Goethean Study of the Waldorf School grounds is an attempt to attune our minds to the qualities of place, allow our senses to explore, and connect our interest and care to the natural areas that surround the school building. The goals are

- ❖ To listen to what is there and what wishes to be there in the future
- ❖ To discover how we can enhance the natural features of the landscape
- ❖ To bring a healing quality to the places that the children encounter every day
- ❖ To respect the shared destiny of humans and nature
- ❖ To develop a vision and guidelines for the development of the grounds

Places affect us in ways that we are often not aware of: they speak a subliminal language.

We would like you to set aside your expertise and attune yourself to what the place says to your senses, to your limbs, to your heart, and finally to your mind, and approach the grounds with the openness of a child’s wonder.”

Step I: Walking the School Grounds

First Impression (15 min): Approach the school in your normal way, walk around the property, and note your first impressions in the journal. This reveals something about the essence of place before details confuse us.

Deepened Perception and Description (25 min): Follow your first impression and explore an element of the place that stood out to you either positively or negatively. This can be anything from a *quality* of the place as a whole, a *specific location* that speaks to you, a *question or problem* the place poses for you. Try to attend to all the features of the place through your senses:

- ✓ What do you see, hear, smell, touch?
- ✓ What kind of movement of your body is made possible by the place?
- ✓ What do you notice about the structure of the place?
- ✓ How does it shape your perception and attention?
- ✓ How do you feel? What mood do you encounter?

Use your journal to describe and explore your experience of the place. You can use drawings and even photographs to clarify and illustrate your perceptions.

Step II: Attention to the Elements

Visit “your” place again and this time observe the elemental forces of place at play (20 min):

- **Earth** as the material element that supports life, its substance: how does the ground anchor and support human structures and activities? What is the material structure of the place? --- Can you imagine an enhancement?

- **Water** as the flowing, changing principle, the fluidity of its living relationships: How does the energy of the place flow? How does it enliven our energies and dissolve our rigidities? --- Can you imagine an enhancement?
- **Air** and the scents and sounds that evoke feelings: what moods do you encounter? How does it change with the seasons and time? --- Can you imagine an enhancement?
- **Fire** and warmth that inspire and transform places: how does the place nurture social life and the soul? How does it touch, protect, and inspire children? --- Can you imagine an enhancement?

At the end of the observation process the group came back to the auditorium and participants were paired in small groups (2-3) in order to talk about their observations and experiences. Participants were asked to mark on a 4'x3' ordinance map of the Waldorf School property (matching the size of the Child Map) where their observation had taken place. The workshop concluded with a presentation of historical maps and photographs to create a larger image of how the place fits into the natural landscape between the Monongahela and Allegheny rivers, the larger city of Pittsburgh, and the surrounding neighborhoods of Bloomfield, Friendship, and Garfield.

Interlude between Workshops

Before the second meeting (10 days after workshop I) the participants were asked to work with their observations in a deepened and imaginative way. They received the following instructions:

Step III. Meditative Exercises at Home

Imagination. Over the next few weeks you are asked to meditate on and explore the features of the place you perceived and notice changes in your awareness. We call this process meditative because it asks you to use your imagination and intuition to explore the place.

For a few evenings, picture “your” place in your imagination:

- (Earth) Meditate on the physical place—let it go
- (Water) Meditate on the place in movement—let it go
- (Air) Meditate on the first impression or mood of the place—let it go
- (Fire) Meditate on the possibilities of transformation – let it go

Keep noting in your journal:

- What forms and phenomena have appeared through the observational process above?
- Are there guiding principles that apply to the place as a whole?
- How does your place section/feature fit into the whole?
- How does it stream in time (for organic phenomena)?

- How does it connect with other places and events?
- Can you imagine it change through an enhancement?

At the end of this “meditative” process the participants were asked to create a symbol or “mandala” and a sentence that summarized and expressed their sense of what the place communicated to them:

Step IV: Artistic Activity

Inspiration: At the end of the meditative process we ask you to think the place from the perspective of the place itself (listen to the spirit of the place) and see its potential.

- Please use the included piece of paper, which is in the shape of a circle, to create a symbol of the spirit of the place. Choose any artistic media or materials you feel drawn to--pencil, crayons, pastels, paint, watercolors, collage. Evoke the intuitive quality and identity of the place in your mind and create an image in the circle (it can be a symbolic picture, a flowing gesture, colors etc.) that symbolizes the spirit of the place for you. Please bring your circle and pin it to the Adult Place Map.
- Can you put into a sentence what the place is saying?

Workshop 2

The second workshop (2 hrs) gave all participants the opportunity to report the findings from their Goethean study process. The workshop brought together all participants’ individual research observations and allowed them to weave together into a picture of the whole that is greater than the sum of the parts.

The participants took turns placing their mandalas on the adult map and told the group about their observations, imaginations, and inspirations. They were instructed to:

- report their observations and insights
- try to give voice to the place itself
- offer their research to the group and work together to discern what the place as a whole is and how it can be transformed



Sample of two Place-Mandalas from Adult participants

The Child Map with the “like and dislike” pins (see below) was displayed next to the adult map, and the PlaceLab team gave a brief preliminary report on what the children had said about the different places on the grounds. The voices of the children provided an important element in the tableau of observations and ideas about the natural places surrounding the school (for a full report see below).

After the second workshop, the PlaceLab team analyzed the rich data generated by the adult participants with respect to the various places they had meditated upon, and their conversation about the themes, ideas, and preliminary suggestions that emerged from the whole. The data were collapsed across participants in over-arching **themes**, which were organized by place:

- Grades Play Yard: **‘Open to Imagination and Definition’**
 - The adult participants who focused on this area felt that it was characterized by a sense of openness, especially upward, toward the sky. One participant felt that the openness of the space rendered it “undefined”, perhaps making it an invitation of sorts for the children to define it themselves.
- The Courtyard With the Water Pump and Entrance to the Auditorium/Back of School: **‘Hear me out!’**
 - Only one adult participant meditated on this place and the emerging theme was one of sound and being heard, given that this otherwise dark and uninviting corner tends to amplify the sound of the wind and of the children at play. A suggestion was made to give the accessibility ramp a sculptural form and to add a sculpture to this courtyard that could capture the wind and sing.

- The Secret Garden: **‘Welcome, Be Yourself and Make Yourself at Home!’**
 - Overall, adult participants tended to view the Secret Garden as a space of welcoming, wholeness, and intimacy. In the words of one participant, it affords “a place where I can be me”. However, one participant did report feeling frustrated and disregarded when attempting to get to the Secret Garden and expressed the need to be better guided there.
- The “Parking Lot”, Pergola, Morning Garden and Least Favorite Play Yard: **‘Let Me Breathe!’**
 - The adult participants who focused on these areas mostly felt them to be characterized by hardness, compactness, and rigidity. The image of children “hacking” at the hard compacted ground led to a distinction between merely being *on* the earth vs. actually being *in* it. There was a shared sense that what this overall area is asking for is: “let me *breathe*”. In keeping with this, one participant reported that the children often felt *inspired* by the puddles in the parking lot, only to be *restrained* in their élan by teachers who feel the area to be unsafe. In sum, participants felt that this place needed to breathe and to offer some containment or soft holding for the children, allowing them to breathe more freely in turn.
- Fences and Boundaries: **‘Soft Cues for Witnessing’**
 - Although not a specific place on the grounds, fences and boundaries were meditated upon by a few of the adult participants. The consensus was that some of these fences are foreboding and of the ‘keep out!’ sort. Participants expressed the need to change these into soft, porous boundaries that invite looking in and witnessing. A distinction was made between administrative and organic boundaries, with participants clearly favoring the latter.
- The whole: **‘Create connections’**
 - The participants agreed that the different areas of the school grounds were fragmented and disconnected, and that attention to visual connections between different areas (as in Japanese garden design) as well as guiding paths and plantings could accomplish this and create a sense of the whole and give flow to the landscape.

Workshop 3

Step V: Envisioning the Future

The third and final workshop consisted of a report by the teachers about the pedagogical needs from the place, a fuller report on the Child Map Project, and a report about the themes discerned in the adult study process during the previous session. This allowed the group to approach the final task of envisioning the transformation of the place with a full picture of the needs of the community and the needs and potential of the natural place.

1. Child development and nature: Nature places as learning places

1. Pedagogical guidelines

The teachers drew up a list of developmentally appropriate child outdoor activities that support and enhance what the children learn in school. *The teachers were instructed not to ask for equipment, but to list the kinds of experiences that the children needed at different ages, which the outdoor places should provide.* This list revealed great sensitivity to how and what children need to encounter in the outdoors at different ages. It also helped the group to keep in mind that the outdoor spaces are as much a part of the Waldorf curriculum as the indoor spaces, since the children spend at least 1-2 hours outside every day, rain or shine. The Waldorf outdoor classroom should be set up to provide children of all ages with nature experiences that speak to the hands, hearts, and heads (body, emotion, thinking).

All ages need:

- Connection to surrounding community
- Space to run, march, skip, crawl, walk
- Swinging and spinning options
- Sun and shade
- Storage for equipment
- Safe spaces (no environmental hazards)
- Private spaces that are still visible to teachers
- Capacity to watch and experiences all seasons

Early Childhood

- Rolling down hills
- Wild/"unkempt" areas
- Ability to have tactile experiences (sand, dirt, water, grass, logs)
- Uneven surfaces and soft dirt
- Meaningful work that is connected to the earth (digging/plant related)
- Full body climbing

K – 2nd and 3rd Grades

- Natural spaces available for imaginative play
- Ability to pick and eat plants
- Environment that has healthy natural wildlife and is wildlife friendly (worms, slugs, birds)
- Gross motor options
- Fine motor options
- Need to be able to build spaces using natural materials

3rd Grade

- Place for annual 3rd grade building (temporary structures?)
- Space for farming experience

5th Grade

Spaces for plant and tree observations (tied to Botany studies)
Area to practice for Pentathlon (throw javelin and discus, long jump)

7th Grade

Safe, protective place for limekiln to be fired for 24 hours

4th/5th – 8th Grades

Sports and games to play together

Hard and flat surfaces

Places to sit and “hang out”

2. The Child Map Project: How children experience the school grounds:

Children engage natural places in intuitive, pathic ways through their play and in their daily activities. As with the adult Goethean Place Study, the children have first impressions of the place that are often experienced as attraction of repulsion. In our Child Map Project we wanted to give children and parents a voice in the place study process and to find out what places on the grounds meant to them and what their existing emotional connections to the place were (PlaceLab received clearance for collecting data from the Duquesne University IRB). In early winter, the 8th graders created a map of the grounds that was then mounted and placed in the front hall of the school. All parents of children from Little Friends through the 4th grade were invited to ask their children to take them on a tour around the grounds and show them their liked and disliked places. Parents were asked to observe and document what their children do there, any stories related to the place that the children may have offered, and include any drawings or other descriptors of relevance. Parents and their children were then asked to mark the map with special pins coded by age that indicated their favorite and least favorite places. Children in grades 5-8 visited and then wrote and drew about their liked and disliked places as part of a class exercise, and then marked their places on the map using their own pins. Parents of these children were sent information about what their children were doing and were encouraged to talk to their children about the places they identified. All parents were asked to provide voluntary feedback about the process and their own impressions of the grounds.

Parents of 30 children in Little Friends through 4th grade participated, and all the children in grade 5-8 participated in marking the map and providing qualitative narratives that provided insight into their choices. All of the papers that parents consented to allow the school to archive will be bound into a book that will remain in the library for the community to access.

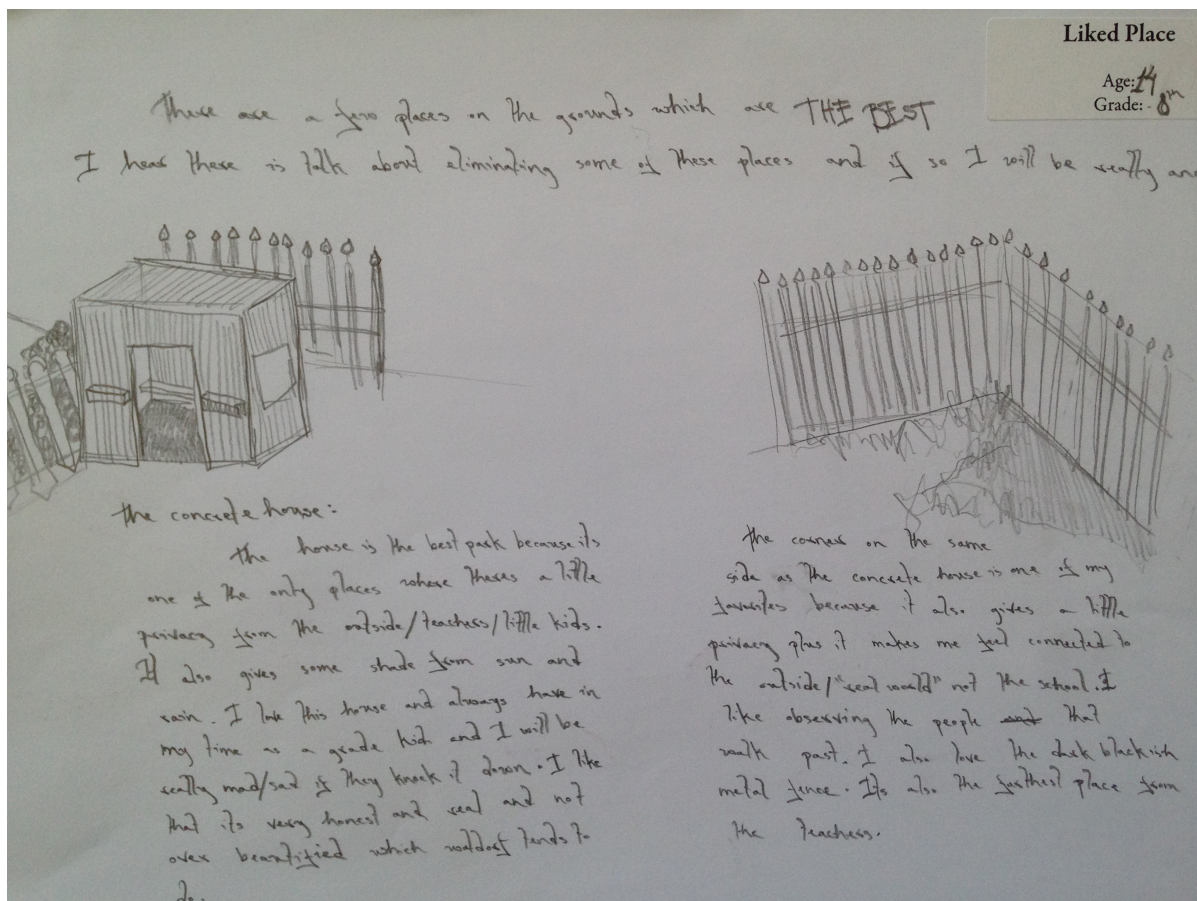


Child Map created by the 8th grade with like and dislike pins, color coded by grade

We learned many vital things from the children through this process about which places and qualities of places they were asking to be enhanced and which needed protection. The following provides a thematic synopsis, organized by places the children identified.

a) Grades Play Yard

This place emerged overwhelmingly as a favorite place for Kindergarten children and early grades children (1st and 2nd), as well as some nursery children, who focused favorably on the available structures for climbing, jumping and swinging, along with opportunities to be up high, closer to the sky. Some indicated a wish for another swing that would go back and forth rather than spin, touching upon the differences amongst children who need distinct kinds of motion (i.e., some children benefit greatly from spinning, while others get sick). For the older children, 5th-8th grade, this play yard overwhelmingly does not suit their needs as they find it “boring,” lacking equipment suitable for them, and far too muddy when it rains. It also became very clear that the type of play that this place is conducive to is very loud, and the more introverted children seek out the northeast corner under the trees or (especially for the older middle school children) feel annoyed by not having a quiet place to go.

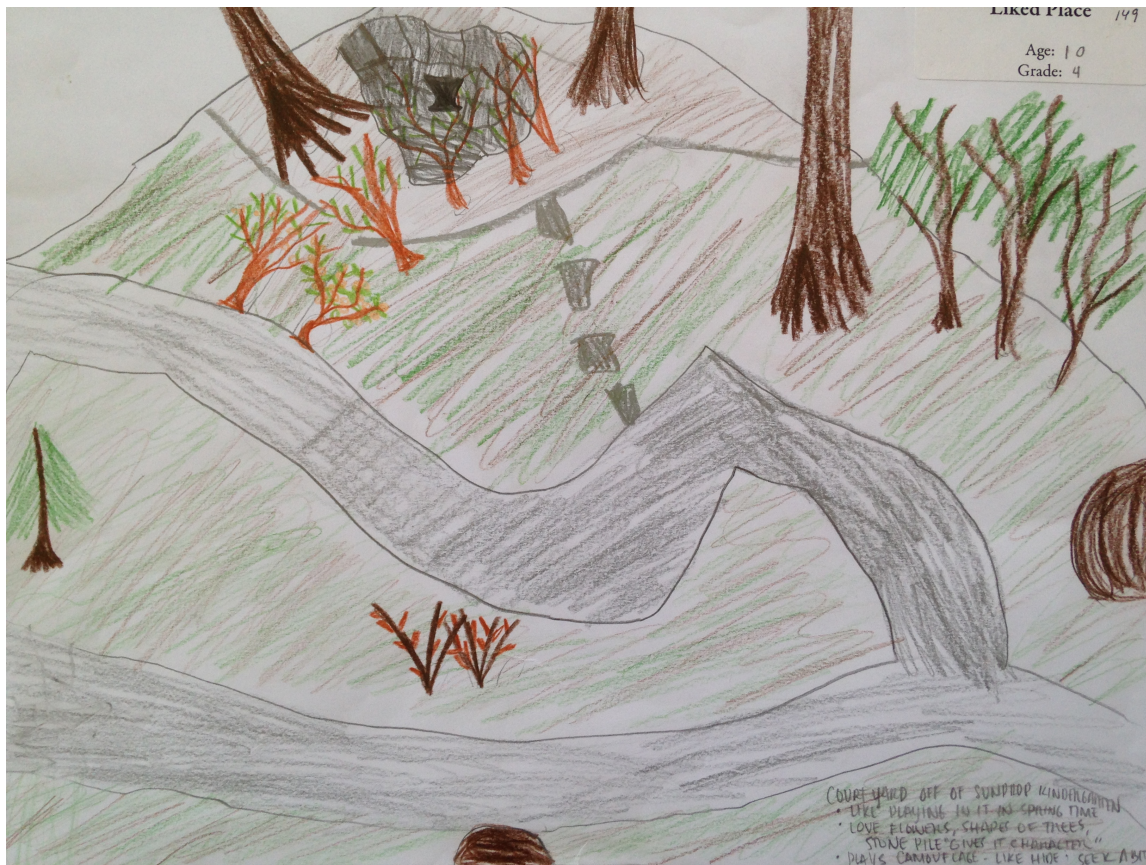


Sample drawing of the play yard and writing from an 8th grader

A very interesting thing occurred in the children's feedback about the little yellow concrete house in the play yard. The younger children who participated identified this structure as a disliked place because it is seen as dirty and claustrophobic, and it is problematic because teachers cannot see them in and behind it. When the 7th and 8th graders saw all the red pins going up on this yellow house, they responded strongly with their own very different perspective: the little yellow house provides one of the few places where they can go with friends during recess to gain some privacy from the younger children and teachers. It also provides cover from the elements as these children are not interested in playing in the snow and rain during outside time. They expressed very clearly their need for a place of their own, and in the absence of one now, said they would be very angry if the yellow house was taken away!

b) The Courtyard with the water pump and entrance to the auditorium/back of school

Early middle school children identified this place as ugly, boring, and needing to be more friendly and welcoming. At the same time, the catwalk above it was identified as a favorite place because of the point of view and the feeling of height that the space evokes.



4th grader drawing of the Secret Garden

c) The Secret Garden

Children from nursery through the 8th grade overwhelmingly identified the courtyard behind the Sundrop Classroom as a favorite place. This “little world” with its pathways, flowers, large trees and understory, favorite rock pile, and old fountain feels already whole to children and adults alike. Lately the children have been secretly building small fairy houses there, which is consistent with the mood of the place. This “magical land” provides some children with “a sense of security under the smaller trees” and a sense that “I can be just who I want to be there” (quotes from the documentation sheets).

d) The Wishing Tree (to the left of the main front drive)

Very similar in description to the Secret Garden, this particular tree and its surroundings was identified by children from 1st-8th grades as a favorite place to feel

calm and relaxed, to just sit in and be with the flowers there, and also as a perfect tree to climb.



Angel at the Wishing Tree, 1st grade

e) The Morning Garden Play yard (Fenced Southeast corner)

For the younger morning garden children however, this place is very loved because of its tools, its sandbox, and its sitting tree. Other nursery, kindergarten, 1st, and 3rd grade children talked about the sandbox there, the tree that is easy to climb and the climbing dome. Two first graders and a 6th grader named the pines at the back of the play yard there as their favorite place because of its mood as a “haunted forest,” how it was good for climbing and feeling one could hide in the forest there, and the sense one could “feel like a tree there.” Several 6th graders named this play yard as their favorite place on the grounds because of the memories they had playing there as younger children, especially playing in the sandy corner and playing restaurant in the little house. While the older children look back on this place with fondness and nostalgia, two of the younger children dislike this place: as kindergarteners, the place seems too small to them, and they have outgrown the confinement of its landscape.

Kindergarteners seem to want a more expansive place for running and play in larger groups.

f) The “Parking Lot”

5th and 6th grade children identified the compost pile, dumpsters and the southwest corner of the property as all being dirty or ugly. Some younger children talked about the gravel pile as being a favorite place because of the kind of play (digging, shoveling, collecting, etc.) that the gravel afforded. Two 5th graders said they loved the wood shed because of the activities they do there and because it is separate from the main school building, and feels like it is both indoors and outdoors.

g) The Pergola Area Connecting to the Side of the Yellow House

Similar in descriptors used for the secret garden and the wishing tree, this area was identified by middle school children as a “peaceful and relaxing” place that “makes me feel comfortable,” as well as a place with “aesthetic splendor and serenity” where the child could envision seeing more flowers, fruit trees and berry bushes.

h) The Grey House

This house received no “likes”, and was identified by a 4th, 6th and 8th grader as a place that doesn’t seem to go with the school and even “offends my eyes.”

i) The Yellow House Play Yard

This play yard was identified as very loved by Morning Garden, Little Friend, Nursery, Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd and 6th grade children, weighted more toward the younger children. These children named repeatedly the mulch pile, or “mulch mountain,” as their favorite aspect, along with the “river” flowing through it that the children make bridges on top of. The 6th graders associated the place with good memories from the past and felt a strong connection to it for that reason. The children who disliked this area talked about the “gushy sand” there (because of the water flow in the area), the sense by an older child that it was more for younger children, and the feeling of a Morning Garden child that the cellar door on the yellow house was a bit scary—“I don’t like this secret passage.”

j) The Front Play Yard

Several children disliked the Ginko trees because of the smell of the berries, and noted the sense that it feels like “nothing is there” in this play yard—for younger children, this seemed related to the lack of shovels and tools, while older children expressed a sense of lack of care there. One 6th grader noted that the fence changed the space from feeling open and free, and expressed annoyance that some of the lower branches of the pine trees were cut so no one would climb them, taking away “the best part.” Morning Garden, Nursery, and Kindergarten children love the beehive, but one noted it is too scary to get down from.

Parent Perspectives from the feedback forms

21 parents completed the feedback form and shared several very important insights of their own about the grounds and their observations of the children during this process. The following is a synopsis of parent perspectives:

- Many parents were surprised that their children showed them places parents had either not been aware of before or were not “designated” play areas, challenging parental expectations. Examples include the corners in the grades play yard, the courtyard (secret garden) area, the wishing tree along the front drive, the pines in the MG play yard, and small details such as one child showing his mom the rocks in the yellow house play-yard that are his favorite because he always can find bugs underneath them.
- Parents often expressed their own reaction to, or shared their child’s perception of, certain places as “ugly,” especially the parking lot area, the garages, and the grey house. Parents also noted that the play areas didn’t feel connected to each other, and there was a general problem with inhibited flow across the grounds as a whole. On the other hand, one parent expressed comfort with the feeling that the whole campus was held/enclosed by the surrounding fence.
- Many parents noted that “liked” and “disliked” had much to do with the kinds of activities that certain places afforded or did not offer. (For kids who love to climb, for example, all the favorite places were places that afforded this opportunity). Disliked places sometimes had less to do with the physical place than the fact that negative social interactions had happened in certain places (For example children disliked the sandpit in the Morning Garden play yard because some boys in their class create fairy traps).
- Parents expressed their own emotional connection to certain places, particularly the MG play-yard where they had spent many mornings with their child. One parent noted how her child had seemed to move on to the grades play yard and had sadly seemed to “forget” the MG one. As we saw with the older children, often nostalgia and love for those earlier places re-emerges strongly around 6th grade. As well, places like the grades play-yard that allow a space for parents to congregate after pick-up was seen as very positive and nurturing of parent relationships with each other.
- Parents expressed the sense that asking children about their places was an empowering experience for them, and parents were grateful for this.
- Some expressed a strong wish for grass and more gardens, and lamented the mud as well as the ginkgo berries.
- The process allowed some parents to enjoy spending time on the grounds again, and to notice the positive changes in the grounds over the past 3 years. Parents saw the grounds as both well loved and as needing more attention, with one parent being very inspired to look at examples of natural and Waldorf play yards and could really envision our grounds transforming.

2. Adult Workshop Outdoor Activity and Envisioning Enhancements

After the reports on the child map and a review of the participant themes and discussion from workshop 2, the participants were divided into three groups and visited the main areas of the grounds: **south side field, play yard/secret Garden/ear, front yard and fence/surround.** They received the following instructions sheet with room to take notes:

Please go to this place, walk around together for a while, and find a place to sit and talk. Have a conversation about the following list of considerations **and keep notes of your conversation on this sheet**:

1. What *did* the place say to the participants?
2. What *should* it say? (this is an exercise that tries to listen to what the place itself suggest for future development)
3. What changes are possible and appropriate in order to *enhance* this section of the grounds?

The questions below do not have to follow an exact sequence (sometimes an idea is pretty clear, sometimes a gesture comes first). Try to stay open to the flow of the conversation and don't get lost in planning details:

- A. -- **Which ideas want to live here?** What is needed to enhance and balance the fire element?
- B. -- **What moods and activities are appropriate here?** What is needed to enhance and balance the air element?
- C. -- **What kind of spatial enclosures, relationships, and gestures can achieve this?** What is needed to enhance and balance the water element?
- D. -- **What material changes would achieve this?** What is needed to enhance and balance the earth element?

Please keep notes of your conversation on this sheet and report back to the group at large at 7:30 pm.

This process, adapted from Christopher Day's chart (see above), recapitulates the process of the Goethean method and it presupposes that the participants, through the Goethean process, have been attuned to the Gestalt of the landscape and intuitively understand its potential because they have moved from observation, to imagination, to intuition, to inspiration. Now the process is reversed and we move from the inspiration by the landscape's essential idea "downward": we try to articulate the essential ideas (fire) that try to come through in a place (its potential), the moods and activities that support these ideas (air), the gestures (through enclosures and spatial relationships, flow) that make them visible (water), and finally the physical structures and materials that can be built in alignment with the gestures, moods, and ideas of a particular place (earth). The enhancement of a place is achieved when this alignment of idea, mood, gesture, and material structure is actualized.

3. Envisioning exercise on the future of the grounds

After the outdoor activity, all three groups reconvened and each reported on their respective areas. Below is a summary of their insights, observations, recommendations and ongoing concerns.

Group 1: South Side Field

The South Side Field was described as a “no man’s land” that needs the freedom to breathe. The adult participants expressed the need to balance *separation* (i.e., kids of different ages need their *own* space to be themselves and differentiate) and *union* (i.e., some common ground where kids of different ages, as well as parents and the wider community, can interact and be together).

More specifically, it was suggested that:

- (1) A space (tree house or loft) be created for the upper grades on top of the garage, allowing them privacy and elevation;
- (2) The parking lot be transformed into a ‘commons’ with markers and stopping/pausing points, allowing for different possibilities and relationships to emerge; there should be an amphitheater-like sitting area for outdoor performances and festivals. The theme of the spiral featured prominently in a number of mandalas for this area
- (3) An applied arts studio/woodworking shop be built on the driveway next to the yellow house, with a dye garden adjacent to it; this could be an open, glass fronted building that showcases Waldorf education to the community.
- (4) The pergola be enhanced, made more accessible and/or connected to other places on the grounds with green paths and green boundaries.
- (5) An ongoing concern was expressed about how to remove the cars from the center of the campus because they provide a danger to children and occupy too much of the valuable southern sunlight exposure, which is essential for gardening and farming. However, it also should be kept in mind that families with toddlers might be allowed to park closer to the building and to provide access to emergency vehicles (one participant gave the example of the parking lot at Phipps, suggesting that a surface can be dedicated both to parking and to other things as well).

Group 2: Play Yard/Secret Garden/Ear

Adult participants in group 2 made the following suggestions:

- (1) Turning the ‘ear’ space into a “real” courtyard, with roses, flower boxes in the windows, tables, chairs, making it a place for the upper grades and parents to gather; install a work of art that plays with the sound quality of the courtyard
- (2) Making finishing touches to the shelter near the brick oven;
- (3) Changing the accessibility ramp into something “more lovely”: treating the ramp as a piece of sculpture that enhances the place
- (4) Repaving the basketball court;

- (5) Ensuring that the open space, which is the main play yard, receives an “undulating topography”: wave-like or rolling hills and big boulder trees to enhance and soften its openness and created different experiential regions
- (6) Secret Garden: participants expressed wanting to restore the fountain and add more ferns and benches, making it an ideal, “no cells allowed”, contemplation space for introverts; check for poisonous plants (lily of the valley)
- (7) Mini-courtyard: participants believed it could be put to better use and that the benches therein are “too awkward”;
- (8) Side yard passage to the wishing tree: it was suggested to remove the black top pathway and have plants that line the walk, which allows for connection between the two very intimate and personal places
- (9) Front Yard: It was suggested that it could be used for parking (with the proviso that the trees be kept). Participants in group 3 also made this suggestion.

Group 3: Front Yard and Fence/Surround

Participants in group 3 paid close attention to the current fencing arrangements, which they felt closed things in, thus running counter to their wish that fences would “showcase what we do”. They suggested the following:

- (1) That a vine fence with non-invasive plants might be more inviting;
- (2) That the parking lot be moved to the front play yard, given that it is quite muddy and not currently being used very much. A parking lot in this area should be well designed with trees and plantings.
- (3) To create an activity space (e.g., outdoor classroom, kindergarten puppet show, or outdoor sitting arrangement) near the wishing tree, where Waldorf activities can be showcased to the neighborhood (one participant added that a flowerbed could be repurposed for that activity space);
- (4) To identify all passageways with portals or archways in fenced areas, giving children the solemn pleasure of entering or exiting a space;
- (5) The small courtyard next to the exit from the chapel/8th grade classroom should be re-structured as a gathering place for the eighth graders as a courtyard with benches and plantings. The wooden access ramp to the chapel should be removed, and the angular building should be softened with artwork and greenery;

- (6) The yellow house playground is too big and needs to be crafted into a space for “smaller activities”, perhaps with groves, bushes and pathways. The children love the boat, and some suggestions for enhancement would be a bridge over a dry (planted) moat, “hills,” and plantings such as bushes and grasses which give children a sense of secret spaces but are still visible by the teachers.
- (7) The sunny area between the chapel and the yellow house is large enough for the third grade farming and building activities because it captures the sunlight and naturally leads to the chicken coop. The third graders can be involved in helping build things for the younger kids (e.g., bridges, moats);

After each group reported on their respective areas, a general discussion about the “next steps” took place. The group suggested that an evaluation of the concrete steps of creating a parking lot in the front of the building is the first step and if feasible will lead to major changes in the layout of the grounds. Many other alterations can be done in smaller increments over the years.

The PlaceLab team suggests that a master implementation plan be developed by the schools green team, which creates a 5-year-timeline and priority list for proposed changes with a list of financial resources and expert skills needed for completion.

PlaceLab is creating a master book to document the adult and child place study materials, which could also serve as grant application material.

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Design Principles and Guidelines for the WSP Green Spaces

Principle	How	Where
Create a sense of wholeness	Link diverse regions through paths and visual/auditory corridors Use corresponding materials throughout	Throughout, but protect and enhance the places that already model wholeness (Secret Garden)
Provide a sense of guidance through the grounds	Paths, enclosures, walls, plantings	Throughout
Create a sense of flow (Water)	Water elements, undulating topography, curved paths	Throughout
Provide elements for attention	Points of sensory interest such as scents from plantings and visual, textual, and auditory surprises	Throughout: Provide a pre-view of the next region
Provide resting places	Benches, walls, arched gates over all fenced entrances	Intensify where they already exist: Secret Garden, Wishing Tree, Pergola
Create a center for social activity (Fire)	Build a “plaza” that can function as community culture and gathering space as well as a place for athletics and play	Back “Parking Lot”
Respect the air-upward dimension (Air)	Maintain openness to the sky and upward and outward movement in some parts	Back play yard, upward play structures, musical features, roofs as usable outdoor spaces
Respect the earth dimension (Earth)	Create breathing, living earth spaces, Loosen up the hard-packed soil	Play yard: plantings in and around playgrounds Farm and garden plots

Design Principles and Guidelines for the WSP Green Spaces

Design Principles and Guidelines for the WSP Green Spaces

Principle	How	Where
Japanese garden design	Be mindful of the relationship and correspondence between parts and whole	Throughout
Leave some places undetermined	Allow for “wild” areas that the children can shape themselves; Water features, sand/dirt places, logs and stones	Plant low bushes and trees at perimeters to create “secret” places that can still be seen by teachers; have temporary mulch piles;
Create developmentally appropriate places for different age groups	Follow the pedagogical needs lists that the teachers drew up	Shape individual areas to different age group needs: smallness and intimate play spaces for pre-k, open running/climbing places k-2, farming, building, nature observation, athletics places 3-5, privacy and social gathering places 6-8
Beauty	Soften concrete floors and brick facades with art and plantings Design a sculptural/artistic handicapped ramp (maybe have a design contest?)	Front and back courtyards
Safe traffic flow	Change traffic flow away from play areas; Make a conscious decision where cars ought to be	Move the parking lot to the front Reroute traffic away from the back playgrounds
Safe play	Design play places which intuitively direct children into safe activities and areas.	Use landscape features/topography to direct child appropriate activities. Beautify and soften/modify fences

Design Principles and Guidelines for the WSP Green Spaces

Design Principles and Guidelines for the WSP Green Spaces

Principle	How	Where
Safe ground	Determine if there is a) toxic soil: Remediation b) Degraded soil: biodynamic practice c) Toxic/undesirable plants: remove poison ivy, gingko etc.	Throughout
Reintegrate neglected and forgotten areas	Determine overlooked and neglected spaces and re-purpose and re-design	Make a decision about the use of the gray house and beautify Re-purpose front and back courtyards
Enhance and protect beloved, whole, magical places	Plantings, resting places, Recover features already present (seclusion, water feature) Connect with each other and to the whole	Fairy Garden, Wishing Tree
Think of the outdoors as an extension of the classroom	Follow pedagogical needs list Structure outdoor Waldorf classroom spaces as carefully as indoor classrooms	Throughout

Qualities of Place Regions (from the Adult Place Study)

The whole: <i>'Create connections'</i>	<p>The participants agreed that the different areas of the school grounds were fragmented and disconnected, and that attention to visual connections between different areas (as in Japanese garden design) as well as guiding paths and plantings could accomplish this and create a sense of the whole and give flow to the landscape</p>
Grades Play Yard: <i>'Open to Imagination and Definition'</i>	<p>The adult participants who focused on this area felt that it was characterized by a sense of openness, especially upward, toward the sky. One participant felt that the openness of the space rendered it “undefined”, perhaps making it an invitation of sorts for the children to define it themselves.</p>
The Courtyard With the Water Pump and Entrance to the Auditorium/Back of School: <i>'Hear me out!'</i>	<p>Only one adult participant meditated on this place and the emerging theme was one of sound and being heard, given that this otherwise dark and uninviting corner tends to amplify the sound of the wind and of the children at play. A suggestion was made to give the accessibility ramp a sculptural form and to add a sculpture to this courtyard that could capture the wind and sing.</p>
The Secret Garden: <i>'Welcome, Be Yourself and Make Yourself at Home!'</i>	<p>Overall, adult participants tended to view the Secret Garden as a space of welcoming, wholeness, and intimacy. In the words of one participant, it affords “a place where I can be me”. However, one participant did report feeling frustrated and disregarded when attempting to get to the Secret Garden and expressed the need to be better guided there.</p>
The “Parking Lot”, Pergola, Morning Garden and Least Favorite Play Yard: <i>'Let Me Breathe!'</i>	<p>The adult participants who focused on these areas mostly felt them to be characterized by hardness, compactness, and rigidity. The image of children “hacking” at the hard compacted ground led to a distinction between merely being on the earth vs. actually being in it. There was a shared sense that what this overall area is asking for is: “let me breathe”. In keeping with this, one participant reported that the children often felt inspired by the puddles in the parking lot, only to be restrained in their élan by teachers who feel the area to be unsafe. In sum, participants felt that this place needed to breathe and to offer some containment or soft holding for the children, allowing them to breathe more freely in turn.</p>
Fences and Boundaries: <i>'Soft Cues for Witnessing'</i>	<p>Fences and boundaries were meditated upon by a few of the adult participants. The consensus was that some of these fences are foreboding and of the ‘keep out!’ sort. Participants expressed the need to change these into soft, porous boundaries that invite looking in and witnessing. A distinction was made between administrative and organic boundaries, with participants clearly favoring the latter.</p>

Suggested Enhancements from the Goethean Place Study (workshop results)

South Side Field	<p>The South Side Field was described as a “no man’s land” that needs the freedom to breathe. The adult participants expressed the need to balance <i>separation</i> (i.e., kids of different ages need their <i>own</i> space to be themselves and differentiate) and <i>union</i> (i.e., some common ground where kids of different ages, as well as parents and the wider community, can interact and be together).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) A space (tree house or loft) be created for the upper grades on top of the garage, allowing them privacy and elevation; (2) The parking lot be transformed into a ‘commons’ with markers and stopping/pausing points, allowing for different possibilities and relationships to emerge; there should be an amphitheater-like sitting area for outdoor performances and festivals. The theme of the spiral featured prominently in a number of mandalas for this area (3) An applied arts studio/woodworking shop be built on the driveway next to the yellow house, with a dye garden adjacent to it; this could be an open, glass fronted building that showcases Waldorf education to the community. (4) The pergola be enhanced, made more accessible and/or connected to other places on the grounds with green paths and green boundaries. (5) An ongoing concern was expressed about how to remove the cars from the center of the campus because they provide a danger to children and occupy too much of the valuable southern sunlight exposure, which is essential for gardening and farming. However, it also should be kept in mind that families with toddlers might be allowed to park closer to the building and to provide access to emergency vehicles (one participant gave the example of the parking lot at Phipps, suggesting that a surface can be dedicated both to parking and to other things as well).
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Suggested Enhancements from the Goethean Place Study (workshop results)

<p>Front Yard and Fence/Surround</p>	<p>Participants in group 3 paid close attention to the current fencing arrangements, which they felt closed things in, thus running counter to their wish that fences would “showcase what we do”. They suggested the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) That a vine fence with non-invasive plants might be more inviting; (2) That the parking lot be moved to the front play yard, given that it is quite muddy and not currently being used very much. A parking lot in this area should be well designed with trees and plantings. (3) To create an activity space (e.g., outdoor classroom, kindergarten puppet show, or outdoor sitting arrangement) near the wishing tree, where Waldorf activities can be showcased to the neighborhood (one participant added that a flowerbed could be repurposed for that activity space); (4) To identify all passageways with portals or archways in fenced areas, giving children the solemn pleasure of entering or exiting a space; (5) The small courtyard next to the exit from the chapel/8th grade classroom should be re-structured as a gathering place for the eighth graders as a courtyard with benches and plantings. The wooden access ramp to the chapel should be removed, and the angular building should be softened with artwork and greenery; (6) The yellow house playground is too big and needs to be crafted into a space for “smaller activities”, perhaps with groves, bushes and pathways. The children love the boat, and some suggestions for enhancement would be a bridge over a dry (planted) moat, “hills,” and plantings such as bushes and grasses which give children a sense of secret spaces but are still visible by the teachers. (7) The sunny area between the chapel and the yellow house is large enough for the third grade farming and building activities because it captures the sunlight and naturally leads to the chicken coop. The third graders can be involved in helping build things for the younger kids (e.g., bridges, moats);
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Responses from the Child Map Study (ca. 30 children, nursery-grade 8)

Grades Play Yard	This place emerged overwhelmingly as a favorite place for Kindergarten children and early grades children (1 st and 2 nd), as well as some nursery children, who focused favorably on the available structures for climbing, jumping and swinging, along with opportunities to be up high, closer to the sky. Some indicated a wish for another swing that would go back and forth rather than spin, touching upon the differences amongst children who need distinct kinds of motion (i.e., some children benefit greatly from spinning, while others get sick). For the older children, 5 th -8 th grade, this play yard overwhelmingly does not suit their needs as they find it “boring,” lacking equipment suitable for them, and far too muddy when it rains. It also became very clear that the type of play that this place is conducive to is very loud, and the more introverted children seek out the northeast corner under the trees or (especially for the older middle school children) feel annoyed by not having a quiet place to go.
Yellow Concrete House	A very interesting thing occurred in the children’s feedback about the little yellow concrete house in the play yard. The younger children who participated identified this structure as a disliked place because it is seen as dirty and claustrophobic, and it is problematic because teachers cannot see them in and behind it. When the 7 th and 8 th graders saw all the red pins going up on this yellow house, they responded strongly with their own very different perspective: the little yellow house provides one of the few places where they can go with friends during recess to gain some privacy from the younger children and teachers. It also provides cover from the elements as these children are not interested in playing in the snow and rain during outside time. They expressed very clearly their need for a place of their own, and in the absence of one now, said they would be very angry if the yellow house was taken away
The Courtyard and entrance to the auditorium/back of school	Early middle school children identified this place as ugly, boring, and needing to be more friendly and welcoming. At the same time, the catwalk above it was identified as a favorite place because of the point of view and the feeling of height that the space evokes.
The Secret Garden	Children from nursery through the 8th grade overwhelmingly identified the courtyard behind the Sundrop Classroom as a favorite place. This “little world” with its pathways, flowers, large trees and understory, favorite rock pile, and old fountain feels already whole to children and adults alike. Lately the children have been secretly building small fairy houses there, which is consistent with the mood of the place. This “magical land” provides some children with “a sense of security under the smaller trees” and a sense that “I can be just who I want to be there” (quotes from the documentation sheets).

Responses from the Child Map Study (ca. 30 children, nursery-grade 8)

The Wishing Tree (to the left of the main front drive)	Very similar in description to the Secret Garden, this particular tree and its surroundings was identified by children from 1 st -8 th grades as a favorite place to feel calm and relaxed, to just sit in and be with the flowers there, and also as a perfect tree to climb.
The Morning Garden Play yard (Fenced Southeast corner)	For the younger morning garden children however, this place is very loved because of its tools, its sandbox, and its sitting tree. Other nursery, kindergarten, 1 st , and 3 rd grade children talked about the sandbox there, the tree that is easy to climb and the climbing dome. Two first graders and a 6 th grader named the pines at the back of the play yard there as their favorite place because of its mood as a “haunted forest,” how it was good for climbing and feeling one could hide in the forest there, and the sense one could “feel like a tree there.” Several 6 th graders named this play yard as their favorite place on the grounds because of the memories they had playing there as younger children, especially playing in the sandy corner and playing restaurant in the little house. While the older children look back on this place with fondness and nostalgia, two of the younger children dislike this place: as kindergarteners, the place seems too small to them, and they have outgrown the confinement of its landscape. Kindergarteners seem to want a more expansive place for running and play in larger groups.
The “Parking Lot”	5 th and 6 th grade children identified the compost pile, dumpsters and the southwest corner of the property as all being dirty or ugly. Some younger children talked about the gravel pile as being a favorite place because of the kind of play (digging, shoveling, collecting, etc.) that the gravel afforded. Two 5 th graders said they loved the wood shed because of the activities they do there and because it is separate from the main school building, and feels like it is both indoors and outdoors.
The Pergola Area Connecting to the Side of the Yellow House	Similar in descriptors used for the secret garden and the wishing tree, this area was identified by middle school children as a “peaceful and relaxing” place that “makes me feel comfortable,” as well as a place with “aesthetic splendor and serenity” where the child could envision seeing more flowers, fruit trees and berry bushes.
The Grey House	This house received no “likes”, and was identified by a 4 th , 6 th and 8 th grader as a place that doesn’t seem to go with the school and even “offends my eyes.”

Responses from the Child Map Study (ca. 30 children, nursery-grade 8)

The Yellow House Play Yard	This play yard was identified as very loved by Morning Garden, Little Friend, Nursery, Kindergarten, 1 st , 2 nd and 6 th grade children, weighted more toward the younger children. These children named repeatedly the mulch pile, or “mulch mountain,” as their favorite aspect, along with the “river” flowing through it that the children make bridges on top of. The 6 th graders associated the place with good memories from the past and felt a strong connection to it for that reason. The children who disliked this area talked about the “gushy sand” there (because of the water flow in the area), the sense by an older child that it was more for younger children, and the feeling of a Morning Garden child that the cellar door on the yellow house was a bit scary — “I don’t like this secret passage.”
The Front Play Yard	Several children disliked the Ginko trees because of the smell of the berries, and noted the sense that it feels like “nothing is there” in this play yard — for younger children, this seemed related to the lack of shovels and tools, while older children expressed a sense of lack of care there. One 6 th grader noted that the fence changed the space from feeling open and free, and expressed annoyance that some of the lower branches of the pine trees were cut so no one would climb them, taking away “the best part.” Morning Garden, Nursery, and Kindergarten children love the beehive, but one noted it is too scary to get down from.

Pedagogical Guidelines (drafted by the teachers)

All Ages Need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Connection to surrounding community ▪ Space to run, march, skip, crawl, walk ▪ Swinging and spinning options ▪ Sun and shade ▪ Storage for equipment ▪ Safe spaces (no environmental hazards) ▪ Private spaces that are still visible to teachers ▪ Capacity to watch and experiences all seasons
Early Childhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rolling down hills ▪ Wild/"unkempt" areas ▪ Ability to have tactile experiences (sand, dirt, water, grass, logs) ▪ Uneven surfaces and soft dirt ▪ Meaningful work that is connected to the earth (digging/plant related) ▪ Full body climbing
K – 2nd and 3rd Grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Natural spaces available for imaginative play ▪ Ability to pick and eat plants ▪ Environment that has healthy natural wildlife and is wildlife friendly (worms, slugs, birds) ▪ Gross motor options ▪ Fine motor options ▪ Need to be able to build spaces using natural materials
3rd Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Place for annual 3rd grade building (temporary structures?) ▪ Space for farming experience

Pedagogical Guidelines (drafted by the teachers)

5 th Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Spaces for plant and tree observations (tied to Botany studies)▪ Area to practice for Pentathlon (throw javelin and discus, long jump)
7 th Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Safe, protective place for limekiln to be fired for 24 hours
4 th /5 th – 8 th Grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Sports and games to play together▪ Hard and flat surfaces▪ Places to sit and “hang out”