Discovery, journey, play; the world of exploration and creativity of children is best fostered in an environment that allows their imagination to roam freely. In order for children to understand the environment around them, they need the opportunity to discover their own individuality and their own physical relationship to spatial qualities of the environment. This statement formed the foundation for the master plan and has continued to inform the process down to the minutiae of the site.

Through the overarching theme of astronomy and observation, the details of specific areas within the site create comfortable, child-sized environments that encourage imagination, spark curiosity, and provide healthy outlets for pent-up energy. For this exercise, the main plaza area and outdoor performing center were the areas of focus.
Patterns

Engaging the shapes and forms of the sky and solar system without using the physical and literal pure forms of the planets. The patterns that informed this project are derived from natural processes and occurrences. Within this exploratory element, children are encouraged to use imagination and drama to form their own occurrences within each space.

Precedence

Children’s construction was driven through a series of images and projects that helped to establish the first steps through the patterns. Each study involved techniques or materials and led to exploration and development of the concepts necessary to assemble the spaces and elements within the plan.
Materials
Through precedence studies and comparison with the building materials found on the school building, a palette of materials and colors began to develop. It was important to blend materials with the building to create a transition in form and use, but also to accentuate the qualities of the materials. Each material has its own quality that can be promoted in use.

Plants
Plant material was selected based on durability, maintenance, and aesthetic. Plants have been used as decorative materials and elements in an artistic manner. The character of the plant beds may contribute to the quality of the plant material. Plants have also been selected for their educational value, providing opportunities for play and environmental sustainability.