The Whitman Elementary student-centered design studio is a Learning Landscape–based outdoor learning landscape that re-invents the playground as an outdoor learning environment. A Learning Landscape is a place where people can learn about the world around them through physical activity, exploration, and discovery. The Learning Landscape at Whitman Elementary has been designed to promote children’s physical, social, and emotional development while also providing opportunities for academic growth.

**Program Elements**

- **Stewardship**
- **Butterfly Garden**
- **Grass Garden**
- **A Sense of Place in the World**
  - **Swings**
  - **Basketball Court**
  - **Outdoor Classroom**

**Physical Developing**

- **Four Square**
- **Tetherball**
- **Hoop**
- **Field Games**

**Potential Outcomes**

- Improved test scores
- Improved community connection and social support
- Decreased incidence of bullying
- Introduction of new curriculums

**Goals**

- To expand the idea of a learning landscape that is not only a place for learning but also a place for play, exploration, and discovery.
- To promote children’s physical, social, and emotional development while also providing opportunities for academic growth.
- To foster a sense of community and belonging.
- To educate children about the environment and sustainability.

**What is a Learning Landscape?**

- Participatory Landscapes
- Outdoor Learning
- Site of Outdoor Recreation and Play Opportunities

**What Components Are Needed to Create a Successful Outdoor Public Education Arena?**

- **Collaborative Design Process**
- **Significant Community Input**
- **Private/Public Funding Partnership**

**Potential Outcomes:**

- Improved test scores
- Improved community connection and social support
- Decreased incidence of bullying
- Introduction of new curriculums

Playgrounds are much more than places to blow off steam. They should engage the creative and expressive minds of children, providing them with opportunities for learning and growth.