

Proposed Plan Descriptions for the
Upper School, Lower School & School Forest
at
EAGLE RIDGE ACADEMY
1111 Bren Rd W, Minnetonka, MN 55343

Whole-Site Vision

A learning community's outdoor spaces are vital for the children, teachers and staff it serves. As many studies show, being outside and being in nature is beneficial to all – lower stress and anxiety, increased focus, more physical activity, higher levels of creativity and problem solving, a better sense of self-assessment of risk, and more! While Eagle Ridge Academy is rich in acreage devoted to recess, physical education, and outdoor learning, much of it is currently underutilized for children's play and learning. 3 Owls' design process aims to create a thoughtful environment with a variety of experiences for a diverse school community, defining and connecting the Upper School, Lower School and School Forest through concept, visual cue, and invitation.

Plan A Description ... natural + invented

Plan A melds the natural experiences with those that have been shaped by creative, inventive minds, featuring...

- ...creative movement, curiosity, and collaboration with
 - dynamic seating that invites maturing bodies to navigate choices of movement and social connection,
 - a plaza with moveable furniture that encourages ownership of the place,
 - a wetland lab that provides experiential learning opportunities, and
 - a reading circle and fountain that offers a restful place to focus deeply.
- ...observe and perform with
 - open turf, dedicated sport courts & gaga pits for competitive activities,
 - an amphitheater and outdoor classrooms that celebrate learning, and
 - access to the school forest & stream for science inquiry & open-ended play.
- ...rest and balance with
 - swings and hammocks canopied by mature trees,
 - agility courses made of natural materials that challenge all abilities,
 - additional post-and-platform metal playground elements, and
 - hidey spaces that are safe escapes from excess stimulation.
- ...gather, explore and share with
 - centering visuals of a paved compass & CIPHER pillars reaching to the sky,
 - outdoor classrooms for groups of any size that encourage participation, &
 - trails that spark curiosity and beckon students to a forest adventure.
- ...challenge, enliven and restore
 - all who enter and stay,
 - playing, learning and growing along the way.

Plan B Description ... wonder, awe & inspiration

Let's take a tour of Plan B, weaving our way along the newly activated school grounds of our imaginations for the wonder, beauty, and awe in nature...

...beauty and scale

found along pathways lined with flowers,
in a cove of mint,
within a child-sized tunnel of snap peas lined with strawberries,
on a bridge that goes over a pollinator garden, and
among gathering spaces within perennial herbs.

...wander and wonder

along the nature playscape challenge course,
in a living willow hut,
while making fairy houses, and
in a fort made of loose parts.

...gather and learn, explore and discover

in the magic of the woods,
at the outdoor stump circle classroom, and
amongst the wise old oak trees.

...healthy risk

when learning how to climb trees,
balancing on fallen logs, and
leaping from rock to rock across the creek.

...let it shine

at the outdoor amphitheater with singing, dancing, poetry readings, etc.

...identify and connect

with the natural flow of water,
with the relationship between water and plants, and
with each other as peers.

...balance and center

on the slacklines and
in the high ropes course.

...open and free to

play ball,
somersault and cartwheel, or
lay in the grass.

...relax and rejuvenate

on the spider hammock and
on the bench swings.

Imagine all the children engaged and inspired; discovering and de-stressing; actively engaging their bodies, minds, and spirits; and flourishing in the wonder, beauty, and awe of nature.