WHAT IF the school were more like a playground, a laboratory for exploration and discovery? What if the place itself actually inspired the students within it?

The concept behind the design is based on the idea of “growth.” Children spend a significant amount of their childhood at school; it is where they do a lot of growing up (academically, socially, mentally and physically). How can the architecture of the school cater to all of the changes that a child will go through during their time there? From the flexibility needed day to day to the big changes that occur through the years, the school will reflect the constant need for shifting and transformation. The idea of growth can be extended to other aspects of the project such as the school's relationship with the community. By allowing the community to become a big part of the school through volunteer opportunities and shared resources (gym, outdoor spaces, community gathering spaces), there is a growth or strengthening of relationships within the neighborhood. The more literal manifestation of growth is seen in the outdoor program elements. A combination of teaching and community garden space brings fresh, healthy foods to the students and the neighborhood.
EXTENDING THE CLASSROOM

arrange: classrooms are arranged on opposite sides of the hallway within each bar.

transform: the hallways are an extension of the classroom.

engage: each classroom space engages an outdoor learning area.

permeate: sliding panels make it easy to open up the classrooms to the activity filled hallways and outdoor learning areas.

CROSS LAMINATED TIMBER is made by laminating dimensional lumber at right angles, similar to plywood. The result is a material that is dimensionally stable, capable of spanning large distances, reduces construction waste, increases airtightness and can be rapidly erected. The panels can be used for all assemblies; floors, walls and roofs. Using a massive wood structure — from a carbon cycle perspective — not only produces far lower emissions during the manufacture of the material, but the wood also sequesters carbon for its life span.

TEACHING WALL

integrated technology
tactile panels
smart boards
hidden storage space
movable divider wall

47th St is the busiest of the four surrounding streets. It is best to avoid situating the school along this edge for safety reasons.

Depending on the needs of the community, this might become a performing arts pavillion, a fully equipped fitness center, or even a plaza of health focused local businesses.

So not to compete with the new k-8 school, the current Hearst Elementary will be adapted to become a new vocational high school which prepares students for careers in the health professions.