School as Community Center: Redefining the relationship between the community and the school in Minsk, Belarus

Kate Talkachova
Syracuse University

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SCHOOL AS COMMUNITY CENTER

REDEFINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND THE SCHOOL IN MINSK, BELARUS

Kate Talkachova

Terrance Goode
Jean-Francois Bedard

Syracuse University School of Architecture

December 2012
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**Image Credits**
The city of Minsk has a very unique history and presence. As it was almost completely destroyed during WWII, and rebuilt after the fact, most of the architecture in the city dates to around the same time period. Additionally, Minsk is a green city that takes pride in its vast open spaces. Most buildings that are not civic in function get de-emphasized and masked by the greenery, minimizing their impact on the green image of the city. While most of the major civic buildings in the center of the city receive proper attention and are displayed as icons in the public realm, the architecture of school buildings, even though they are also a major civic institution, remains overlooked. The buildings themselves remain largely unremarkable, most still following typological school plans from the Soviet era, and are placed in the centers of each residential neighborhood, remaining unseen by the larger community.

The typological plans of the buildings ensure that the schools are each supplied with a proper set of facilities, however, there is very little differentiation between the buildings.

Belarus places a lot of emphasis on the importance of education, teaching children to learn for the sake of learning from early on, and this is done in a very strict environment. However, the culture is changing and especially with the quest to find its own identity, an effort must be made to get away from the typological plan of the school and embrace a more open solution. In order to achieve its full potential, the school building needs to be able to provoke curiosity and invite people to enter and learn, embracing and integrating the full extent of the community, rather than putting on an imposing monotonous facade that keeps life away. I contend that an open and extroverted approach to the design of the school building will celebrate it as a truly public civil institution that it is meant to be and reinstate the school as the center for community life. The extroverted school will then become the symbol for both learning and community spirit.

Since the conception of the “modern” educational system in the USSR in the 1950s, “vospitanie”, literally meaning “upbringing” or moral education has been an integral and most important part of the system. It is believed that schools should do more than just teach core subjects, but rather teach children how to become good, productive citizens in a society. Children are taught to behave, to be competitive, to care about the appearance of the school facility as if it represents society at large. It is very rare to find graffiti or trash in or on the building as one might in Western schools. This attitude, however, taught, and some worry about the implications of allowing creative and free thinking on the appearance and treatment of the institutions, as well as national identity and pride. According to William Carr, “The school building is the tangible and visible evidence of the attitude of the public towards education”. If the building is an important representation of community values and attitude, as it is in the former countries of the USSR, then why isn’t more importance being placed on the planning of the building rather than just simply keeping it clean? And why does such a distinct separation of the school and the community exist? In a case study Davidson Elementary School in North Carolina, the building was designed in a manner that facilitated group activities and teaching, as well as communal integration.
In the follow-up evaluation, it was found that both teachers and students were more enthusiastic about the integrated methods of teaching, as well as felt more ownership of the school itself as opposed to the more traditional layout because of the ability to personalize the space.\textsuperscript{3}

If the learning styles are to change to encourage a slightly more independent frame of thinking, the facility planning has to change with it in order to augment the transition. The idea of a more communal school that allows a greater degree of interaction challenges the traditional rigid teaching methods of Belarus. In respect with school planning, the usual set up with rigid rows of desks centered on the teacher, and focused on the collective rather than individual students’ education is the prevalent model. This teaching method instills discipline and the idea of the importance of learning that is so vital to Belarus from an early age. However it is also ineffective with the new initiative, trying to acknowledge individualism and creative thought, in more recent school reformation.\textsuperscript{4} With respect to the neighborhood, most residential micro-districts are planned with housing on the outside, centered around educational facilities, which remain unused by anyone but students during the mandated school day, as well as afterward. This planning centralizes a neighborhood and creates an implicit division between the different parts of the community, fragmenting the city further, with the “center” of the neighborhood being a building that is only ever used by a fraction of the residents, while the center of the community ceases to exist.

The initial research focuses on understanding the culture of Belarus and the history of the city of Minsk, with specific emphasis placed on the architecture of the city and the cultural activities in general, and in the specific area of investigation. Alongside the history, the school system in Belarus and USSR will be investigated, including the curriculum taught to see possible influences on the design of the building. The next phase investigates at the school in relation to the community. This phase will include an in-depth analysis of the relevant neighborhood, looking at the life of the neighborhood, as well as important landmarks. This will provide the context for the design, as well as a physical location that might benefit from a new school. The location chosen is such that there is maximum interaction with the current conceptual heart of the community - the park, which is currently largely unused.

In the following phase, the school will be re-envisioned as the community center, rather than just the literal center of a distinct neighborhood. Since the separation from the USSR, Belarus has been fighting to regain its national identity. While that is an impossible goal to achieve through any architectural proposition, a communal school, acting as a social connector, would be a piece that aids and strengthens the sense of identity and community, at least on the local level. A study looking at the programs of community centers and existing schools will be performed to find potential for multipurpose space and additional programs, and interaction possibilities that could be helpful in unification of the two. This will promote greater interaction and integration between the educational system and the community, which is especially beneficial given the already broad age existing in the school buildings.

Lastly, will be an investigation of school designs, looking at proposals that challenge the traditional system, in terms of the facility itself as well as the pedagogy. Specific emphasis will be placed on learning systems that promote interaction within the school itself, as well as ways to involve and promote the interaction of the school and the community. As part of this phase, will be an examination of the theories of pedagogy, such as Montessori, Reggio Emilio, Waldorf, and Open Classroom.

A society that values education should place emphasis on the facilities and incorporate in them the values and progress, not blindly stick to the traditional. For a country fighting to regain its identity, it is important that the divisions between the neighborhoods are blurred and a sense of a whole is created. With the school as community center, education remains the central focus, as well as provides the necessary link to the surrounding neighborhoods, becoming more than just a physical center, but an activity center as well.

\begin{itemize}
  \item C. Burke, I. Grosvenor, School (London, 2008), 7.
  \item Stephen L. Webber, School, Reform and Society in the New Russia (New York: St. Martin’s Press Inc., 2000)
\end{itemize}
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<th>Progressive Approach</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum and classes taken prescribed by district</td>
<td>Flexible curriculum influenced by student interest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers function is to introduce students to content knowledge and skills as prescribed</td>
<td>Teachers serve as facilitators of learning, providing a variety of activities through which students learn through discovery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Textbooks and workbooks primarily used, lately supplemented by PowerPoint presentations</td>
<td>Use of wide variety of activities and materials, often using community resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emphasis on learning as a class from the teacher</td>
<td>Emphasis on individual and group research</td>
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<td>Emphasis on academic areas with facts and skills</td>
<td>Learning from a variety of areas</td>
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<td>Use drills to practice at the skills</td>
<td>Use of interactive and discovery learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tend to enforce discipline and self-control</td>
<td>Character building relative to others, not mandated</td>
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BELARUS ON THE SCALE OF EDUCATION METHODOLOGY

Traditional Approach

Development is regulated
Certain level of conduct is expected
Self-expression is limited

Excellence is the motive for all work
Lessons through bookwork

Teacher as instructor
Use of practice in mastering concepts
Develop discipline and respect
Based on conclusive information

Quantitative student development
Objective reports on students only
Standardized testing for all students

Proven educational method
Facts more important than progressive research
Tradition-based learning

Progressive Approach

Freedom to develop naturally
Conduct based on the person not mandated
Opportunity for initiative and self-expression

Interest is the motive for all work
Contact with the world through activities

Teacher as a guide
Encourage the use of senses
Teach how to use sources of information
How to express conclusions reached

Scientific study of student development
Both subjective and objective reports on students
Characteristics that will effect future life

Leader in educational movements
New ideas encouraged
Discoveries are more important than tradition
The elementary school is very rare in Belarus. The most common type of school building is the secondary school, providing full education. The base school prepares students to continue on to a specialty school, a secondary school, or a more prestigious and specialized gymnasium or lyceum. The graduates of these programs have a higher chance to get into college. Night Schools a later shift from the regular schools, and are in some cases used as an interchangeable alternative. The schools for secondary education (grades 5-11) operate on a 6 day schedule, with the saturday spent on specialty classes and physical activities.
**STANDARD CURRICULUM**

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## Supporting Subjects to be Chosen by the Student

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(1) Russian Taught Schools
2/1 Typical/Allowed

The term “vospitanie” is often literally translated to “upbringing”, however it has its own distinct implications. It is most easily understood as moral education, although it is not a they are not synonyms. Another loose implication of the term is “good breeding”. The root of the concept, however lies in developing a personality, making one their own person, within a specific frame.

Its social aspect has to do with the transferring of experience from one generation to another, including knowledge, skills, different regulations, and frame of thinking. On a slightly different scale, it is an academic activity that aims to nurture an individual’s values and opinions, moral values and views, as well as serve as good preparation for later life. Through vospitanie, children get their personality and a sense of the social structure and norms that they have to live in.

In the context of schools and education, it refers to all education that is done other than actually teaching the class subjects, and this education was valued in the USSR, and is still very much valued in the Republic of Belarus, just as much, if not more than the actual learned material, therefore, cannot be overlooked in the consideration of a school.

Of course, this education teaches a certain frame of mind, and the curriculum had specific courses built into it that deal with mainly this issue, with only a small portion of the aim being actual classroom knowledge. Vospitanie teaches children how to view the world, how to act in society, how to behave, how to think, as well as a certain amount of admiration and respect for the nation, the school, and the value and importance of education, instilling from early on that achievement is important and nothing less is acceptable.

CELEBRATION OF THE FIRST BELL

The Celebration of the First Bell, also known as Day of Knowledge, or simply September 1st, is an event that is widely celebrated in Russia and Belarus. The day is usually characterized by at least all of the first graders bringing their new teacher flowers, first steps inside the school, some form of celebration prepared by the older kids, and a shortened day in which the rules are established and the 1st grade children familiarize themselves with the school, and especially the classroom. It is not unusual for parents to come to school during this event and stand around the perimeter of the classroom and observe the student-teacher interaction. It is a day of celebration very central to the culture and a strong part of the educational tradition.
PART II - MINSK, BELARUS

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The Old Minsk 21
DISTRICTS OF MINSK
Minsk was first mentioned as “Mensk”, when it was in a feudal war. It was then overtaken and burned down by troops from Kiev.

City granted the Magdeburg Law, allowing mediaeval cities self-government.

Minsk became part of Russia.

During WWI, Minsk had a revolution and had a number of power changes. It was invaded by Soviet, German, and Polish troops, but left largely intact.

Between the two world wars, the population of Minsk doubled and the industrial output increased forty times.

Since the conception of the city, Minsk was invaded more than ten times.

Minsk became a centre of arts and trade as one of the cities of the Grand Principality of Lithuania.

The city was severely damaged by the Russo-Polish war.

Minsk was ruined during the Napoleon invasion of Russia.

Minsk became the capital of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic (BSSR).
Minsk is the capital of the Republic of Belarus, as well as the residence of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

- **1921**
  - Byelorussian State University inaugurated, including the first science library in Byelorussia.

- **1922**
  - Minsk became part of the Soviet Union.

- **1928**
  - The Academy of Sciences of the BSSR was organized, accompanied by the university library, retitled as the National Library at the time.

- **1934**
  - The first airport in Minsk - in Oktyabrski district - was built.

- **July 3, 1944**
  - Minsk liberated. This became known and celebrated as Independence Day.

- **1941-1944**
  - During WWII, Minsk was invaded by the Nazi. Even in the first few days in June, Minsk was severely bombed by the Germans. The city was then captured on the 6th day of the war. During the occupation, lasting three years, more than 400,000 people were killed in Minsk. In the process, more than 80% of all housing, as well as almost all plants, factories, scientific centers, and theatres were destroyed.

- **1947**
  - Minsk gets an international airport.

- **1950s-1980s**
  - After the war, Minsk was reconstructed according to Soviet planning principles, as it was essentially a clean slate. It was turned into a city that was the centre of machine building and technologies, as well as developed culture, healthcare, education, transport, and science.

- **1974**
  - Minsk granted the title of “City-Hero” for its citizens’ services during WWII.

- **1991-present**
  - Minsk is the capital of the Republic of Belarus, as well as the residence of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States.
DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY
DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY

1950

1965
DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY

2004

Major Roads & Railroads
FUNCTIONAL ZONING PLAN OF MINSK
DISTRICT 1 - CENTRALNI

Population - 111,235
Size - 22 sq km
Started in 1969
Contains 6 main squares

Main Attractions
- Historical Center of the City
- Park Gor’kogo
- National Display Center BelExpo

Jesuit Complex
Bernardinok Monastery
St. Joseph’s Church
Children’s Park Gor’kogo
National Display Center BelExpo
Petropavlovskaya Church
DISTRICT 2 - SOVETSKI

Population - 162315
Size - 13 sq km
Started in 1938

Main Attractions
Central Library of Yakub Kołoś
Main Building of Academy of Science

Central Library of Yakub Kolos
Memorial to Yakub Kolos

Main Building of Academy of Science
Belarussian National Technical University
Memorial to B.S. Okrestin
Komarovski Bazaar
DISTRICT 3 - PERVOMAISKI

Population - 213,985
Size - 26.4 sq km
Started in 1969

Main Attractions
- Belarussian National Library
- Children’s Railroad
- High Technology Park

Nezavisimost’ Avenue - Microregion Vostok mosaics

Belarusfilm Building  Children’s Railroad  High Technology Park  National Belarussian Library
DISTRICT 4 - PARTIZANSKI

Population - 97,592
Size - 24 sq km
Started in 1977
District specialized in production

Main Attractions
Slepyanskaya Water System
More than 20 huge factories

Slepyanskaya Water System
Belkomunash - electromachinery factory
Tractor Factory
Tractor Statue

Statue of Gor’ki
DISTRCT 5 - ZAVODSKOI

Population - 238,798
Size - 36 sq km
Started in 1938

Main Attractions
Special Economics Zone
Minsk Zoo

Minsk Automotive Factory
Partizanski Avenue
Minsk Zoo
DISTRICT 6 - LENINSKI

Population - 215,151
Size - 26 sq km
Started in 1951

Main Attractions
- Residence of the President
- Nine different Ministries

President’s Residence
River Svisloch

Yanka Kupala National Academic Theatre
National Art Museum
House of the Officers
Loshytsa Manor and Park
DISTRICT 7 - OKTYABRSKI

Population - 155061
Size - 19 sq km
Started in 1938
Specialized in transport

Main Attractions
Main railway station

Minsk Meat Processing Factory
Academy of Management
Belarussian Institute of Culture
Stadium 'Lokomotiv'
DISTRICT 8 - MOSKOVSKI

Population - 270240
Size - 30 sq km
Started in 1977
Specialized in government and education

Main Attractions
- 99 Educational facilities of all types
- Three theatres
- Presidential Library

Church of Simon and Helena
Youth Theatre of Belarus
Minsk Musical Theatre
Minsk Drama Theatre

Independence Square
Government House and ‘Stolitsa’
DISTRICT 9 - PRUNZENSKI

Population - 372431
Size - 43 sq km
Started in 1951
Most Populated District - 20% of 1,889,100

Main Attractions

Houses (East of Prytytski Square)
NPO Center
Popular Street in Region

Dinamo - Yunai Stadium
MINSK - OLD

The old center of Minsk is composed of four parts. They are the Upper City, Minsk Fortress, Rakovskaya Town, and Troitskaya Town. The Minsk Fortress did not survive, and is planned for reconstruction, however parts of the other portions survived and have been restored. Troitskaya Town is the most widely known and popular historical town in Minsk, while Rakovskaya Town includes Petropavlovskaya Church, the oldest surviving building in Minsk dated to 1611.

Petropavlovskaya Church in Rakovskaya Town

Former Bernardine monastery.

Typical Rakovskaya Town
Upper City

Troitskoya Town

Troitskoya Town with current city center behind
PART III - OKTYABRSKI DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOOD

Oktyabrski District
Neighborhood Development
Parts and Boundaries of the Neighborhood
Transportation in the Neighborhood
Various Programs in the Neighborhood
School Types and Locations
Typological School Forms
Grade Schools in the Area
Town Center
Light Sports Complex “Orbita”
Integral Business Complex
Park Kurasovshina
Park Activities
Site Location
OKTYABRSKI DISTRICT

Population - 155061
Size - 19 sq km
Started in 1938
Specialized in transport
Specialized in high technology

Main Attractions
- Main railway station

Minsk Railway Station Square

Minsk Meat Processing Factory

Academy of Management

Belarussian Institute of Culture
NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

The region is first mentioned in 1580s as a small settlement village. By 1900, this settlement has reached the population of about 50 people. Before the Russian Revolution, this area used to be a popular place for people to come to rest. The area was finally included in the city bounds in 1965, with the construction of a new residential settlement beginning in 1967. The three original residential settlements were planned for 47,000 people.

Kurasovshina was never a prestigious place to live. A lot of people living in Minsk would never actually visit the area. It is mainly known for its electronic specialization - the Integral Complex, and most recently, the ski center and the park are getting more recognition. The major historical building in the area is the “White Dacha”, dating to the 1900s. It started as a hospital for veterans of the Russo-Japanese war, then was turned into a school, then a governing house, then served as a base for a soccer club, before being turned over for scientists.
The neighborhood is isolated from the rest of the city by the ring road in the south, the airport in the north, separating it from the city center, and the two railroads to the east and west.
The length of the road between the two major north-south roads is mostly used for public transportation, and accessing the business complex for the workers, with little other traffic. It is a manageable walk from one end of the road to the other, with only 22 minutes separating the two distinct neighborhood areas.

The southern area of the neighborhood is separated from the north, however the public transportation in the region is not lacking. The ending stop of the trolleybuses is within 3 minutes walking distance from the site. Similarly, the bus network reaches either the same ending stop or ends on the loop immediately adjacent to the site.
CULTURE AND RELIGION
RECREATION AND RELAXATION

- Swimming Pool
- Theatre
- Cafe
- Skiing Center
- Solarium/Tanning
OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

- Playground
- Track/Stadium
- Games Court
SCHOOL LOCATIONS

- Preschool
- Specialty School
- Middle School
- Afterschool Activities
The existing schools in the area are monotonous structures three stories high with clear gridding present and little differentiation apart from an entrance awning. A courtyard entrance space is important for school-wide gatherings.
TOWN CENTER

Kazintsa Square was supposed to be the compositional and activity center for the residential neighborhoods. The square was planned to have a commercial zone framing the center with a hotel up front, that would create a large public space. However, in the 1980s when this was being planned, the unrest in the country kept putting the project back, resulting in only the four residential buildings being built.
The old soccer stadium “Orbita” is in the process of getting reconstructed to be Light Sports Complex #7. It is due to be completed by Fall 2013. It will have a new open stadium with a seating capacity of 3000, as well as the light sports closed facilities, as well as all the sports management facilities necessary. The complex is planned to contain a mini-swimming pool for aqua-aerobics, a fitness room, a pool room, and a cafe-bar.

An improvement over the original “Orbita” is the quality of the facilities, as well as the fact that the new facility will be open to residents in the district as well as the original professional sports users.

The images show the design that is getting constructed. The general view of each is from the road looking deeper into the site.

This is an important improvement of the neighborhood and a big step toward community development. This facility would be beneficial in conjunction with the proposed program.
“INTEGRAL” BUSINESS COMPLEX

“Open Joint Stock Company “INTEGRAL” is a designer, manufacturer and exporter of microelectronic components and electronic devices”

Microelectronics
Scientific and Technical Center “Belmikrosistemy”
“Semiconductor Factory”
“Transistor Plant”

Electronics
“SKB Nemiga”
Factory “Electronics”
Company “Integral-CARD”
SPU Enterprise “Integraltehnis”

Other
Scientific-Production Association “НПО” Integral Industrial Complex
“Integral Newspaper Revision”
Cafe’, bank, store
PARK “KURASOVSHINA”

The park, which is adjoining the site, is currently a large green space that is largely ignored. Lately, there has been a push to reintroduce activity into the park. It has become vastly more popular in the winter because of the introduction of the ski complex “Solnechnaya Dolina”, with the tabbogan open a bit longer than snow season, but the park overall is still unused in the summer.

In recent years, partially in preparation for the upcoming hockey tournament, there have been weekly concerts going on in the park, featuring a variety of singers primarily. There have also been an event in August of this year held at the park that featured a variety of challenges. This is the first such use of this park.

The lake is pure water and is largely unused, there has been sailing during the event going on, and presumably that is the future hope for the park. Also, people can occasionally be found fishing.

Usually, it is solely used for relaxation purposes. Residents of surrounding neighborhoods enjoy the peace of the park, and occasionally take a walk or a bike ride. Recently, there has been a push to get better bike trails.
Relaxation is the biggest reason people come to the park during summer, while the new ski center is the primary attraction during the winter, however, people attending the ski center come from all over the city, not local. Currently, the park is mostly an open grass field, with no planned activity areas, and generally gets very little usage.
EXISTING ACTIVITIES IN THE PARK

- Toboggan
- Ski Center
- Biking
- Relaxation
- Festivals

Local

Park Usage by Population
PROPOSED ACTIVITIES IN THE PARK

- Toboggan
- Ski Center
- Biking
- Relaxation
- Festivals
- Lake Usage
- Indoor Pool
- Community Center

Planned Activity Areas

Term I Term II Term III Term IV

Indoor Pool
Ski Center
Toboggan

Community Center

March April May June July August September October November December January February

Park Usage by Population

Total
Local
SITE LOCATION
# PART V - PEDAGOGIES AND CASE STUDIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Study</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open Classroom Movement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waldorf</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reggio Emilia</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria Montessori</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torpparinmaen School</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. B. Landry High School</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OPEN CLASSROOM

A student-centered classroom design format that was popular in the United States in the 1970s. The idealized form of this movement is schools built without any interior walls. This is a good idealization, allowing the flow of space throughout the school, however this resulted in spaces that were too disruptive, as noise pollution is high.

Due to this factor, there is a very large adjustment period to teaching and learning in the space, and children still frequently get distracted. Students are not divided by grade, but rather by skill level in a specific subject area.

The teaching in the school is optimized for small group activity and individual learning, encouraging self-directed active learning.
Waldorf education, also known as Steiner Education, is based on the anthroposophical ideas of Rudolf Steiner. According to his ideals, learning is conceptual and interdisciplinary, and for that reason Waldorf education emphasizes imagination.

This educational approach is also controversial, since students are not taught some basic skills, such as reading and computer skills as early as they would be elsewhere. It also has a very strong presence of spirituality, with the presence of many different religious traditions at the school. Another unique aspect is that the students are categorized according to four temperaments, and tries to balance them.

Throughout the school, learning is artistic and experimental, as well as sensory-based. A teacher would stay with the same class of students for a number of years, increasing personal commitment.

In terms of space, there is a heavy emphasis on space personalization by the students and the community. It uses the combination of traditional classroom and specialized classroom approach.
The Reggio Emilia Approach is a philosophy that is focused primarily on preschool and primary education. It was started by Loris Malaguzzi in Italy after WWII. It is based on the thought that especially in the early years, children need to form who they are as individuals. This philosophy heavily emphasizes the importance of the parent, who might often come to school. Children are viewed as a collective responsibility, not simply belonging to a specific family.

In this approach, the teacher is a facilitator to education, planning activities that would interest the child, but the teacher is also a co-collaborator and actively participates in the activities with the children. The children stay with the same teacher for three years.

The environment is seen as very important to the approach, focusing on integration of the classroom with the rest of the school, as well as the school with the community to exemplify the relationship that the approach hopes to create. Classrooms are often open to a central piazza, and classrooms are usually connected to the surrounding community through floor to ceiling windows and courtyards, as well as access outside from every classroom.

The classroom is organized with a large central atelier and a smaller one, to designate small and large group activities.

DIANA MUNICIPAL SCHOOL
Loris Malaguzzi
Built 1960s

The school is based on the principle of flexibility of space, where there are glazed screens blocking off areas of space that allow them to read as one. The thought is that children would dictate how to use those spaces.

The piazza is central to the building. It acts as a sort of pinwheel, with the classrooms located around it. It is largely an open space without defined function, but with delineated areas in it. With the two courtyards framing the piazza, it acts as an indoor/outdoor space, with nature penetrating the building.

The classroom, or atelier, spaces are laid out as studios, rather than the traditional teacher focused approach.
For very young children
Teacher participation in activities
Community based approach
Classrooms around piazza

Classroom Spaces

Relationship to Piazza

Space Overlap

Classroom Components
Maria Montessori, who created the “Montessori Method of Education” based this approach on her observations of children’s behavior. She started working with mentally handicapped children in her “Children’s House”, and upon seeing the success in her methods, expanded the system to apply to “normal” children as well. Her approach to education focuses on the child, specifically tailoring activities that promote physical, as well as social growth. It is based on self-directed learning, and for that reason, the whole environment including the classroom and materials, have to be appropriate. Having engaging activity areas is key so that the child can experience the joy of learning.

As Montessori grew up with a strict teacher-student relationship, with dictating being key, her approach is reversed, where the teacher is only there to facilitate the learning and provide the necessary materials. For this reason, the teachers are specifically trained in the method for the specific age group, either 3-6, 6-9, or 9-12, as all children are placed in one of the three-year age spans. The older children teach the younger, creating a sense of community.

Usually, the Montessori classrooms are designed with the child in mind, including furniture at the child’s level, which is one of the main features. Another feature is that children are able to move around the classroom, rather than staying at an assigned desk.

**DELT MONTESSORI SCHOOL**

Herman Hertzberger
Built 1966-1981

The school was built in three stages, starting with only six classrooms and space for circulation and non-programmed activities. The six classrooms are arranged along a hall, with two classrooms on the front, and four opening out to the back garden area. The L-shaped classrooms are diagonally staggered, which allows for an articulated zone for the entrance of each. The windows are all placed at child size. The central hall, also the common room, has a variety of small spaces that allow for individual and group activities.

The L-shaped classroom establishes two different zones for activities, with the main area for focused work that has high ceilings, and an alcove for projects and small group activities, which is lower than the rest of the classroom and has low ceilings for spatial separation. Outside, the play area is paved, and the entrance is framed by low walls also used for sitting. The courtyard faces the community to encourage participation.
3 year age range
Individualized learning
Hands-on approach
Teacher as facilitator
Child-sized environment
The school is a comprehensive school that provides general education for students of a wide age range. The school building is a learning centre, activity center, and cultural center for people in the community. It encompasses a school, youth club and adult club in one.

The driving ideas of the building are openness and transparency, as well as a sense of community achieved through these. The main building is a flexible learning centre, while the basic design is centered around the Agora. This is the central space in the building physically, as well as the activity hub. It is a two-story atrium space that functions as a lunch room and assembly hall, as well as for community events. The classrooms and labs surround this central space, with glass used as a barrier between them and the wide corridor preceding the agora, to allow for a visual connection. The architecture of the school proudly displays structure as a design element. The building is made of reinforced concrete with an exterior wood finish.
Classrooms Circling the Agora

Light Penetration

Images:
Interiors of Specialized and Regular Classrooms. Photographs.
The school creates its own zone, separating itself from the residential district through the usage of greenery (mainly trees), and a bicycle rack/bench wall, giving it a distinct school yard without the use of fencing.

Separation from Residential

There are two separate types of circulation around the building - vehicular traffic on two sides, and pedestrian on the other two. This allows the school to be a little more open on the residential side.

Circulation Types

The line of bushes on one side creates a space between the school and the residential, and the corner is completed with the transparent bicycle rack structure that separates the space from traffic and allows visual transparency.

Creation of Public Space

Public space in front of the school blocked from the traffic by a bicycle rack.
Relationship to Courtyard

The open corner of the school creates a connection to the exterior plaza, while the continuous structure allows the building to read as one uninterrupted whole.

Public Invades the Pure Form of the School

The open corner of the school creates a connection to the exterior plaza, while the continuous structure allows the building to read as one uninterrupted whole.
The design of the school is such that the community is able to use some of its resources, like the gymnasium and the laboratories throughout the day, including when school is in session. Also, specific rooms, such as the science, art, craft, home science, and music rooms, are outfitted to accommodate community usage, rather than providing basic facilities necessary.
Spaces Allowing Community Use

Communal Gathering Spaces

Images:
L. B. LANDRY HIGH SCHOOL

New Orleans, Louisiana
Eskew + Dumez + Ripple, 2010
900 students

The school was part of a post-‘Katrina’ quick construction program, as an effort to replace the damaged schools in the area. It had to be designed in 6 months and built in 20 months.

The design of the school establishes ‘houses’ for each grade level, located in one of the two academic classroom wings of the building. The positioning of these wings creates a central courtyard that is essential as the outdoor gathering space. The courtyard is centered on an old tree that existed from the previous school.

There is a health clinic and a media center/library on the first floor of the building that is considered community resources, which is designed to provide access to the public outside of regular school hours.

Also included in the design are a 1000 seat gymnasium, along with a smaller 250 seat gymnasium, as well as a 650 seat auditorium.
Public vs. Private
## School Program (Grades 1-9)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Square Feet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classrooms (1 per 25 students)</strong> (18)</td>
<td>900-950 sq ft each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Library</strong></td>
<td>1200-1800 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Storage</strong></td>
<td>200-250 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Auditorium (50% enrol. = 225 min)</strong></td>
<td>1800-2200 sq ft (8/p)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage</strong></td>
<td>1200-1800 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lobby</strong></td>
<td>1500-2000 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gymnasium (Full Size)</strong></td>
<td>5600-7000 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Storage</strong></td>
<td>800-900 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Corrective Room</strong></td>
<td>600-900 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coach Office</strong></td>
<td>250-300 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lobby</strong></td>
<td>800-1000 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cafeteria (33% enrol. = 150)</strong></td>
<td>1800-2400 sq ft (12-15/p)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kitchen</strong></td>
<td>700 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food Storage</strong></td>
<td>225 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Serving Area</strong></td>
<td>900-1400 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Principal’s Office</strong></td>
<td>400-450 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Suite</strong></td>
<td>500-550 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teachers Workroom/Lounge (2)</strong></td>
<td>500-600 sq ft each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maintenance</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Custodial Space</strong></td>
<td>500-550 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outdoor Equipment Storage</strong></td>
<td>400 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central Storage</strong></td>
<td>800 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Book Storage</strong></td>
<td>80-100 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recieving</strong></td>
<td>800 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Art Rooms (2)</strong></td>
<td>1000-1200 sq ft each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arts and Crafts</strong></td>
<td>1100-1400 sq ft</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Arts Storage</strong></td>
<td>400-500 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wood Shop</strong></td>
<td>1500 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metal Shop</strong></td>
<td>1600 sq ft</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shops Storage</strong></td>
<td>1000 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chorus Room</strong></td>
<td>1400 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Band Room</strong></td>
<td>1500 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practice Rooms (4)</strong></td>
<td>700-800 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Homemaking - Clothes</strong></td>
<td>100 sq ft each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Homemaking - Food</strong></td>
<td>900-1000 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Combined Storage</strong></td>
<td>100-150 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guidance Center</strong></td>
<td>700-900 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Computer Room/Stations</strong></td>
<td>1000-1200 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Activity Room</strong></td>
<td>450-600 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>52100-60575 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Circulation/Mechanical (20%)</strong></td>
<td>10420-12115 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approximate Total</strong></td>
<td>62520-72690 sq ft (5808-6753 sq m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outdoor</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stadium (280’x110’)</strong></td>
<td>30800 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Playgrounds</strong></td>
<td>3000 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parking</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space Configuration Desirability</td>
<td>Exterior Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classrooms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditorium</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gymnasium</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cafeteria</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Art Center</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wood/Metal Shops</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Music Center</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Homemaking Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Activity Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Suite</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s Lounge/Workrooms</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Office/Administration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Room</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Guidance Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Additional Program of Community Center

## Beneficial Program to Include in a Community Center
- Techno Lab
- Town Meeting Rooms
- Banquet Hall
- Job/Counseling Services
- Sports Leagues/Recreation Areas
- Community Kitchen
- Community Library
- Bookstore
- Movie Theatre
- Health Center
- Art Lessons/Space
- Adult Education Programs
- Cooking Classes
- Fitness Facilities
- Home Improvement Equipment
- Resource Center
- Ice Rink/Rollerblading Rink
- Community Garden
- Swimming Pool
- Child Care
- Senior Citizens Center
- Art Gallery
- Picnic Areas
- Outdoor Activities

## Separate Spaces Required
- Notariat
- Pool (75’x56’): 4200 sq ft
- Lobby: 800-1200 sq ft
- Locker Rooms
- Child Care Center: 10000 sq ft
- Meeting Rooms (2-3): 900 sq ft each
- Art Gallery: 500-1000 sq ft
- Senior Center
- Banquet Hall
- Community Garden: 1000-2000 sq ft
- Ice Skating Rink
- Public Facilities
- Picnic Spaces
- Communal Kitchen
## Possibility of Multipurpose Space

| Classrooms | Meeting Rooms | Banquet Hall | Job/Counseling | Sports Leagues | Community Kitchen | Library | Book Store | Movie Theatre | Health Center | Art Lessons | Adult Education | Cooking Classes | Fitness Centre | House Projects | Resource Center | Ice Rink | Community Garden | Notarium | Child Care Center | Senior Center | Art Gallery | Picnic Areas |
|------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|------------------|---------|------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------|-----------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|------------|
| Library... |               |              |                |               |                  |         |            |             |              |             |                |                |                |               |                |         |                |           |              |             |            |
| Auditorium |               |              |                |               |                  |         |            |             |              |             |                |                |                |               |                |         |                |           |              |             |            |
| Gymnasium  |               |              |                |               |                  |         |            |             |              |             |                |                |                |               |                |         |                |           |              |             |            |
| Cafeteria  |               |              |                |               |                  |         |            |             |              |             |                |                |                |               |                |         |                |           |              |             |            |
| Art Center |               |              |                |               |                  |         |            |             |              |             |                |                |                |               |                |         |                |           |              |             |            |
| Wood/Metal Shops |   |              |                |               |                  |         |            |             |              |             |                |                |                |               |                |         |                |           |              |             |            |
| Homemaking Center |     |              |                |               |                  |         |            |             |              |             |                |                |                |               |                |         |                |           |              |             |            |
| Student Activity Center | |              |                |               |                  |         |            |             |              |             |                |                |                |               |                |         |                |           |              |             |            |
| Health Suite |               |              |                |               |                  |         |            |             |              |             |                |                |                |               |                |         |                |           |              |             |            |
| Computer Room |               |              |                |               |                  |         |            |             |              |             |                |                |                |               |                |         |                |           |              |             |            |
| Guidance Center |               |              |                |               |                  |         |            |             |              |             |                |                |                |               |                |         |                |           |              |             |            |
SCHOOL PROGRAM ADJACENCIES

Classrooms
Library
Auditorium
Gymnasium
Cafeteria
Art Center
Wood/Metal Shops
Music Center
Homemaking
Student Activity Center
Health Suite
Teachers Lounge
Office/Admin
Computer Room
Guidance Center
Maintenance
Stadium
Playgrounds
Park/Forest
Ice Rink
Community Garden
Notarrium
Child Care Center
Senior Center
Art Gallery
TEMPORAL RELATIONSHIPS

Morning (6am-12pm)
Afternoon (12pm-3pm)
Day (3pm-6pm)
Evening (6pm-9pm)
Night (9pm-2am)

Monday-Friday
Saturday
Sunday
Spring
Summer
Fall
Winter

Classrooms
Library
Auditorium
Gymnasium
Cafeteria
Art Center
Wood/Metal Shops
Music Center
Homemaking
Student Activity
Health Suite
Teachers Lounge
Office/Admin
Computer Room
Guidance Center
Maintenance
Stadium
Playgrounds
Park/Forest
Ice Rink
Community Garden
Notarium
Child Care Center
Senior Center
Art Gallery

School Use
Community Use
NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION
CREATION OF A LARGER COMMUNITY

Central focus of activity

Newly reactivated zone

Central focus of activity

Newly reactivated zone
SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PROGRAM INTERACTION

Community as Central

School as Central

Common Central Area

Campus Buildings

[Diagrams showing different interactions between school and community programs]

Legend:
- Gray: School Specific Program
- Orange: Community Center Specific Program
PROGRAM-SITE FIT

Traditional School Program
1 floor
(6400 sq m)

Community Center Addition
1 floor
(2230 sq m)

Ice Rink
1 floor
(3710 sq m)

Stadium and Play
1 floor
(2885 sq m)

CIII №97 - 3 story building
Grade 1-11
737 enrollment

Traditional School Program

Community Center Addition

Ice Rink

Stadium and Play

30 m
25 m
20 m
15 m
10 m
5 m

3390 sq m footprint
(approximately 10410 sq m total)
PROGRAMATIC CONFIGURATIONS
Books


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Image Credits

I. Education System


II. Minsk, Belarus

pg. 1  Map of Belarus.  JPG, http://www.topnews.in/files/Belarus-Map.jpg


pg. 12  St. Joseph’s church.  JPG, http://img.ashkimsin.ru/forums/monthly_05_2010/user159/post56111_img1_1.jpg


Petropavlovskaya Church.  http://www.turinfo.ru/images/content/1_501b2478e55638438d908320eb4cecf.jpg

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III. Oktyabrski District Neighborhood

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pg. 12 СИИ №71, Minsk, Belarus. Personal Photograph.
СИИ №89, Minsk, Belarus. http://sch89.minsk.edu.by/
СИИ №97, Minsk, Belarus. http://sch97.minsk.edu.by/
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pg. 16  Panorama of Integral Side. Separate images from http://maps.yandex.ru/
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    Summer Celebration. http://minsknews.by/news/2012/08/17/prazdnik -
pg. 20  Park Kurasovshina. Personal photographs.
pg. 24  Photostitch of Site. Separate images from http://maps.yandex.ru/
    Site Photos. Personal photographs.

IV. Pedagogies and Case Studies

pg. 3  The Atelier at the Diana School. JPG, http://myidealearlylearningenvironment.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/atelier_400.jpg
    Classroom. JPG, http://www.imagineschooldesign.org/typo3temp/pics/dc5a4d9e2c.jpg