

INTRODUCTION

History of City of Lakes Waldorf School

City of Lakes Waldorf School was conceived and birthed in 1988 by a group of mothers who saw a need for a Waldorf school in a central urban area. The founding mothers enlisted the assistance of Rene Querido, a well-respected figure in the Waldorf movement and the founder of Rudolf Steiner College. Renee endorsed the project, and under his guidance the first incarnation of the school opened in September 1988 as the Waldorf City School. During the course of this first year, the status of a developing Waldorf School was sought and granted by AWSNA (Association of Waldorf Schools of North America). By the following fall, the school opened a pre-school, kindergarten, and combined first and second grade in a rented church basement. Over the following ten years, the school experienced rapid growth in the student population and rented three subsequent spaces before the purchase of a permanent home in 1999. The name of the school changed in 1993, from Waldorf City School to City of Lakes Waldorf School.

School Organization

The Waldorf School is a private, non-profit organization that is unique in its forms of governance and administration. Waldorf schools are typically “self-administered” and seek to involve teaching staff in the administration and governance of the school. We believe that educators themselves are best able to understand both the needs of the children and the forms that will best support the education of the children. In addition Waldorf schools strive to model collaborative leadership and to explore forms of governance that will meet the current and future needs of society. Our organizational structure is a reflection of the values we seek to embody. The organizational structure of our school contains a number of checks and balances including a non-hierarchical staff structure, the use of consensus decision-making, an extensive committee structure

and the rotation of membership on the Board and committees. Our choice to include three paid staff members on our Board is due to our belief that the health of our organization as well as our ability to fulfill our mission is dependent on the contributions of those who are involved in the daily work of the school. City of Lakes Waldorf School is accredited by the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America and accreditation is pending by North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement, an independent accreditor of over 8,500 schools in the region.

Anthroposophy

The term "Anthroposophy" comes from the Greek anthropos-sophia or "wisdom of man." Steiner once said this term should be introduced to mean, quite simply, "awareness of one's humanity." Steiner believed that through study, meditation and practiced observation, human beings can awaken to their inner nature and to the spiritual realities of our nature and the cosmos. The awareness of these relationships bring a greater reverence for all of life. This investigation, known as Spiritual Science, is a complement to the Natural Sciences.

Anthroposophy is not taught in the Waldorf schools; it is the guiding beacon which inspires educators and parents. Anthroposophy offers insight into the human condition and natural world out of which the Waldorf curriculum is built. Steiner's focus in his many books and more than 6,000 lectures is on the recovery of human dignity, freedom and wisdom.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

School Calendar

The school calendar provides an overview of the year, supplemented by monthly calendars and the At-a-Glance column in the Tuesday Updates. The calendar includes scheduled days off, holidays, changes in bus and dismissal times and festivals.

Drop-off and Pick-up

School begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 3:10 p.m. Grade classrooms open at 8:15 a.m. and the Early Childhood classrooms open at 8:20 a.m. Please do not leave your children before the designated times. If your child is late for school, please remind him/her to check in at the office. Pick-up and drop-off times can be busy in the parking lot. Please follow the school's drop-off and pick-up traffic pattern for ease and safety. Cars may only use the 24th Street entrance for morning drop-off. The Nicollet entrance must be used for the end of day pick-up.

Students should not leave the building unless accompanied by a teacher or adult. Students and parents should enter and exit through the front door. The back door may be used to exit the building at the end of the day.

Please do not allow your children to play in or around the parking lot during these hours, and do not leave your children unsupervised. The play yard is for Extended Day program use only until 5:15 p.m.

Absences, Late Arrivals and Tardiness

Regular attendance is very important for the academic and social life of the child; teachers encourage parents to help their children understand the importance of punctuality and good attendance. Children who arrive late to class miss the teacher's personal greeting which "officially" begins the day. Please be on time so that your child is included. If your child is going to be late or absent, please call the school office by

9 a.m. Late children need to check in at the office so we are assured of their safe arrival. Please be aware that attendance data is part of your student's permanent record. Parents of children with five or more unexcused absences may be requested to meet with their child's teacher.

Schedule Changes

Please communicate schedule changes to the office in writing or by phone. These include picking up your child early, having someone else pick up your child, and absences due to vacations, etc. We must receive notification of changes, otherwise we will maintain the child's regular schedule.

Extended-Day Program

City of Lakes Waldorf School provides an Extended Day for those families who are in need of a safe and supervised environment beyond the end of the school day. Registration and payment information must be complete before participation. Refunds/discounts are not available for absentees or early pick up. Please notify the office if your child is in school but is not attending the Extended Day program on a day when they are registered. You may send extra food for your child for a snack at the end of the day. Please be on time for pick-up to ensure the integrity of the program. The Extended Day program is not provided on the days when school is dismissed at noon. No students should be in the building after 3:15 p.m. unless they are in Extended Day or with a parent or parent supervisor (after school sports, play rehearsal, etc.) This does not include students whose ride is late at the regular 3:15 pick-up, who will be brought to the office by their teacher. Extended Day is available primarily for K-5 and will be limited in numbers to accommodate the ratio of care provider/student. Some extra-curricular classes offered as part of our Extended Day Program will be open to 7th and 8th graders. The school office will be staffed until 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Extended Day students will abide by the Expected Behavior and Attitudes as listed in the Parent Handbook: The students will be respectful to their teacher and other students. The students will not go out of the designated program space without permission from the teacher and will listen to oral or written instructions from the teacher.

The students will report to the designated Extended Day room(s) on time no later than 3:15 p.m. If your child's behavior has caused repeated disturbances and the staff feels it is detrimental to the overall program and not in line with the expected behaviors, we will request a conference with the parents. A reasonable time will be set for a cooperative effort between staff and family to solve the problem. If the behavior cannot be resolved, your child will not be able to participate in the program.

Drop-ins are not allowed unless under extreme circumstances.

Field Trips

Children in the school occasionally take a field trip with their classes. Parents must have signed an annual travel authorization form in order for the child to participate. Parents may be asked to assist with driving. Parents who drive must fill out a release form in the office. Notice of field trips will be given in advance in the Tuesday Update or notification from the teacher or class representatives. Only students enrolled at CLWS may attend field trips. Class teachers may request that a student not participate in a field trip if there are extenuating circumstances such as illness or concerns about behavior.

Inclement Weather

There are days on which we must close school due to inclement weather. On those days, an announcement will be made on WCCO Radio—830 on the AM dial. You may also call the school voice mail for information at 612-767-1500.

Illness

Sick children are the parents' responsibility. A parent will be called if a child develops a fever or is too sick to participate. A place to rest quietly away from the group will be provided until a parent or alternate arrives.

Please be sure your child is well enough to participate in all activities (including outdoor play) before returning to school. Since we do not have the space or staff to supervise sick or recovering children, it is best to keep them home if they are not well enough for outdoor play. Remember to advise the office of any contagious or transmittable illnesses, such as strep, chicken pox, whooping cough or pink eye, so that the teacher and parents of exposed children can be notified.

School Nurse

A school nurse is provided through the Health Services Department of the Minneapolis Public Schools. The nurse visits the school office every two weeks to maintain health records, obtain immunization information and ensure compliance with state immunization laws. She also acts as a consultant and conducts annual vision/hearing screening for all children in kindergarten and grades, and scoliosis screening for the upper grades.

Medications

Neither prescription nor over-the-counter medicine can be dispensed without written permission from both physician and parent. Children taking medication during school hours must have a permission form on file. Please ask for the form in the office before going to the doctor. This includes homeopathic remedies.

Contagious Diseases

If a child contracts a contagious illness (chicken pox, strep throat, lice, pinworms, etc.), the school should be notified at once so that other parents may be made aware of the problem. A child must stay home until the illness is no longer

contagious. If it is discovered that a child has head lice, the parents will be called and the child must immediately be taken home. Any child who contracts lice or pinworms must be under effective medical treatment before returning to school. In the case of head lice, all nits (eggs) must be removed from the hair before the child can return to school. Guidelines for the treatment of lice are available from the office.

Emergency/Permission Forms

A completed Emergency and Permission Form for each child must be filed with the office each year. If a child has special dietary or health concerns, these should be clearly stated in writing on the emergency form. The information on this form is used to contact a parent and/or initiate medical care in the event of an emergency. Please notify the Front Desk Coordinator in the office immediately with updated insurance information, work phone numbers or emergency contacts if there are changes during the course of the school year.

Lost and Found

Lost clothing items may be located in the baskets near the back entry to the play yard. Other lost items may be claimed at the office. Unclaimed items are donated to a charity once a month. Labeling is essential to ensure against losing valuable items. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Use of School Space

There is much activity in our growing community and multiple demands on school space. To avoid double-booking our school calendar, all requests for school space must be arranged through the office (612-767-1550).

SCHOOL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

(These policies and guidelines are applicable to all students, but are written with grade level students in mind. A separate Early Childhood Handbook is available.)

Food, Snacks, and Lunches

Please help your child start the day with a wholesome breakfast and pack nutritious lunches and snacks. Snacks are provided in the early childhood classes, but grade students must provide their own lunch and snack. Do not send soda pop or sweets with your child and be mindful of the sugar content in processed foods.

Shoes and Clothing

Please dress your child according to weather conditions. Outdoor play is part of the daily routine for all children and will take place unless it is dangerously stormy or the temperature is below -10 degrees air or wind chill temperature. Make sure your child is dressed in warm, dry clothing in the classroom. A child who is uncomfortable may find it difficult to focus on school tasks. In general, all clothing should be comfortable and suitable for outdoor play.

With younger children, please send a complete, labeled change of clothes to be left in their backpack. All outdoor wear needs to be labeled. Backpacks or book bags are helpful for keeping belongings together and transporting items home.

We request that all students have a pair of indoor and outdoor shoes. Shoes in school are required by law and prevent injury. Indoor shoes keep socks dry in wet hallways and help feet stay warm. Parents may be called to bring shoes or slippers (with soles) if their child comes to school without them. Outdoor shoes should be safe for running and climbing and should not fall off during activity. Flip flops or high heels should not be worn.

Personal Dress and Appearance

Students are expected to be neat, clean, and appropriately dressed. Clothing should not limit movement, mobility or a student's participation in any class activity. Teachers will provide alternative clothing for students who do not meet the clothing guidelines. If a student chooses to remove a layer of clothing, the guidelines still apply.

- Shirts with inappropriate pictures or writing, or with media themes including rock bands and sports teams, are not permitted. Any logo image should not be larger than a half dollar.
- Hats or hoods are not to be worn in class.
- Body or facial piercing will not be permitted. If earrings are worn, they must be safe and appropriate for school activities.
- Extreme hairdos or dyeing of hair in highly unnatural colors are not allowed.
- Shoes should enable participation in all movement and recess activities. With the exception of festivals, high heeled shoes should not be worn.
- Shirts that expose the midriff, have spaghetti straps, are overly low cut, or too sheer are not permitted. Excessively short shorts or skirts are not permitted.
- Pants should fit around the waist and not sag. Undergarments, including boxer shorts, should remain covered.
- Clothes that are ripped and torn will not be allowed.

Electronic Devices

The increased use of cell phones and other electronic devices in our culture requires our attention. We choose to restrict student use of electronic devices in order to maintain and promote an environment that supports the pedagogical and social ideals of Waldorf education.

Students may not use electronic devices during the school day (8:15 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.) or on school grounds. This includes cell phones, walkmans and portable computer games. Any electronic devices that are seen or heard may be confiscated by any staff member. Students may use the courtesy phone located in the school office to make phone calls during the school day with permission of their teacher.

We ask that all parents turn off their cell phones during festivals and other all school gatherings. As models for our students, we ask that all adults be conscious of cell phone use at school and limit cell phone use in hallways, classrooms, and other common areas.

Television, Internet Use and Other Media

City of Lakes Waldorf teachers would prefer that children not be exposed to television, computers and internet use at an early age. The developing child is simply too young to cope with the physical effects of the medium, not to mention the narcotic impact on the child's own imaginative faculties, its inappropriate models for imitative learning, and its substitution of electronic for human interaction. By the mid to late teens, TV is much more easily handled, but interestingly, this is the age group with the least interest in the medium.

TV's prevalence is one of the major home life problems with which Waldorf teachers contend today. The differences in the classroom between the "TV" and "non-TV" children are becoming increasingly apparent. This includes video/computer games and DVD's.

Radio, movies, taped stories and comics are other media less often publicly addressed, but worthy of conscious consideration. Radio, for example, while without the visual impact of television, exposes children to accounts of news events which can be inappropriate for any but the much older child. The Waldorf school and curriculum strive to nurture and protect the warm adult human authority and interaction, which is important for the child's development. Parents are asked to assess seriously the value of the images and impressions created for the children by the various forms of modern-day media.

Teachers are sensitive to the fact that this may be a major lifestyle change for families and can offer assistance through this passage.

Internet use provides a unique set of modern challenges to today's youth. We caution parents to closely monitor the internet use of your children to support healthy use of this form of technology. Cyberbullying and risks posed by other internet users are serious matters that merit parental attention.

Recording Events

Performances by students are multifaceted events for them. The preparation and performance are very special, full, living inner experiences. Such experiences live vividly in the memory, if this is nurtured. Relatives and friends can help the performance live by engaging the students in conversation about the event. The memory of the event will remain rich over time.

A recording, such as an audiotape, DVD, or photograph, is a material rendering of an event, not well-suited to revealing its inner spirit. It is in the nature of performing that the performer only sees an exterior version of him or herself, a version that is only a slim portion of the experience. The presence of recording equipment makes the younger child, in particular, very self-conscious, and flashes are distracting. Even the highest quality tapes distort sound and color. Because of the discrepancy between the "reality" as recorded and the student's inner sense of the event, a recording is often disappointing.

In addition, a recording freezes the experience; this can run counter to the transformation that happens in the memory.

To help protect the quality of the experience, we ask that you speak with your child's teacher in advance about recording an event. It may be helpful to arrange one person from a class to take pictures and then make copies for others if there is a particular reason for recording.

Performances, lectures, workshops, presentations, etc. by adults are considered differently. Some presenters may welcome recording, others may find that it interferes with their work. One's participation can be enhanced by reliance on one's own memory, therefore, this is encouraged over making a recording. Presenters should grant prior permission for recording of events.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Reverence, Respect and Responsibility

*Receive the children in reverence,
Educate them with love,
Let them go forth in freedom.*

—Rudolf Steiner

In a Waldorf school, alongside the original "three R's" exists another set—reverence, respect, and responsibility—and all are intimately connected. With the cultivation of a sense of wonder and gratitude in the Early Childhood Program, a reverence for all of creation is fostered. Respect is a natural by-product of grade school years. Less "crisis intervention" is needed when the children and teacher have a mutual respect for others and their environment. This is the ideal which underlies our daily life and work together, as parents, teachers, and students.

In the Waldorf Schools discipline finds its place first and foremost with the teachers, who have as a foundation the meditative practice of focusing each day on the children under their care and guidance. Through this, a respect for the essential dignity and individuality of each child is fostered which transforms and elevates the relationship between teacher and child. It helps the teacher to remain centered and calm in the face of difficulties, and it builds a bond of trust on the part of the child. Out of this trust can grow the true authority of the teacher, based on a mutual sympathy between student and teacher. Such authority is exercised, not simply because it is convenient for the adult, but because it helps provide the child with the inner calm and security necessary for a free and independent adulthood.

Each teacher must, of course, take practical steps to assure the smooth flow of learning within the lesson, the school day, and the year, allowing for periods of expansion and contraction, for balance between concentrated quiet work and movement activities, for a blending of the artistic and the intellectual. Transitions between one class or activity must be planned and directions must be given in a clear and step-by-step manner. Each teacher must also communicate to the students the expected behavior for a class or a particular lesson.

Expected Behavior and Attitudes

Even while allowing for differences between classes, there remains some basic school wide agreement on what is acceptable behavior. Inherent in this agreement is the recognition of what powerful forces form, rhythm and habit are in the lives of students. The familiarity of understood rules creates a sense of security and clarity, within which, the freedom of the individual student is fostered. When form is strong in the school, the strength, energy, and time of adults can be better focused towards the authentic needs of students. If boundaries and form are clearly understood by all, a breathing space is created in which mutual respect and understanding can arise.

Students are expected to cultivate an attitude of respect toward their teachers, all staff, parents, fellow students, the school, and themselves.

- Respect should be given to all plants, trees, and all spaces of the school building.
- Respect must also be shown for the property of others and of the school. Graffiti, vandalism, and other abuse of property are unacceptable.
- This respect should also extend to food. Students are encouraged to be grateful for food. Wastefulness and messiness with food are unacceptable.
- Students are expected to show respect for classroom rules and limits whether established by their main lesson teacher, a subject teacher, or by a substitute teacher.
- Respect must also extend to personal privacy. In the bathroom, only one child may enter a stall at a time.
- Running in the hallways or classrooms is not permitted.
- It is neither safe nor acceptable to hang on, crawl on, or otherwise occupy the banisters or areas around the stairwells. It is also not permitted to throw objects down into the stairwell.
- Students are expected to be neat, clean, and appropriately dressed. For more detail, refer to the Personal Dress and Appearance section.
- All children are expected to wear indoor shoes while in the classroom.
- Neatness in the hallways and classrooms is of high importance. All coats, hats, boots, bags, and other personal items are to be hung on hooks or neatly stowed on shelves or in cubbies.

- Gum chewing is not permitted in the school.
- In general, all toys are to be left at home, with exceptions left to the discretion of the teacher.
- Knives or other sharp objects should not be brought to school.
- Foul language is not acceptable, nor are terms such as “shut up,” “stupid,” or other demeaning expressions permitted.
- Hitting, biting, kicking, choking, or any violent behavior is not tolerated.
- Written or verbal threats made to other students, staff, community members, or the school are not tolerated and will be taken seriously.

Disciplinary Procedures

In a Waldorf school maintaining discipline is primarily the responsibility of the class teacher. Most discipline problems are therefore handled between the teacher and student, bringing in the child’s parents or other faculty for support when needed.

Students may need to be given “time-outs”, lose privileges or recess time, or be removed from the class for a period of time if these procedures seem to be useful in helping the student regain self-control. The main point of any discipline imposed on a child is to help awaken the child to the error of his/her actions and to help them return to appropriate behavior.

In the case of on-going problems, teachers are expected to seek the cooperation of the child’s parents and work with them to reach a satisfactory solution to these problems. Teachers will also enlist the council of a mentor, or other faculty members, or the Discipline Committee.

When faced with a severe and immediate disciplinary problem, the class teacher may suspend a student for up to one day. Longer suspensions of up to three days may be imposed only after consultation with the Discipline Committee, which consists of the Faculty Chair, the student’s teacher, the College Chair and the Administrator. Prior to returning to class a conference will be held between the parents and the child’s teacher. Parents can appeal suspensions of more than one day to the Discipline Committee.

Expulsion is an extreme step which will only be considered after all other measures have been exhausted or behavior occurs of an unusually extreme nature. The final responsibility for this action rests with the College of Teachers. Parents have the right to appeal expulsions to the Discipline Committee and the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees.

Suspension and Expulsion

A child may be suspended or expelled for behavior deemed to be dangerous or destructive. This may occur in a physical sense but is not limited thereto. Actions which inflict emotional or psychological damage are also grounds for suspension or expulsion. Written or verbal threats made to other students, staff or community members, or the school will not be tolerated and may be cause for suspension or expulsion. Only under certain circumstances is suspension a first resort. In non-emergency situations it may be used when efforts to address the situation according to the Social Inclusion Approach and the Discipline Policy have proven to be unsuccessful.

A notice of suspension may be issued by the class teacher or administrator. In circumstances, where immediate action is deemed imperative, such a notice may be issued immediately for one to three days. The parents will be notified at once, and every attempt will be made to arrange a meeting between parents, the teacher and members of the Discipline Committee. The purpose of this meeting is to assure that all perspectives have been considered before the suspension goes into effect. In cases where a mutual understanding can not be reached, the Discipline Committee shall determine whether or not the suspension should stand. If a child is suspended, there must be a parent/teacher conference before the child can return to school.

Whenever possible the College is to be made aware of the situation and informed of the reasons for suspension, of any and all attempts to deal with the situation short of suspension, and of the results of those attempts.

All instances of suspension must be reported to the chair of the Board of Trustees. If the chair is unavailable, it must be made to another officer or member of the Board. The chair (or officer or member) of the Board may ask that a full account of the situation be given to a group of Board members.

A notice of expulsion can only be issued by a group of all available College members. The chair, or if the chair is unavailable, another officer or member of the Board of Trustees must be notified before the expulsion is enacted. The student and parents are to be informed of the reasons for expulsion, of any and all attempts to deal with the situation short of expulsion, and of the results of those attempts. The College of Teachers reserves the right to make a decision about a student's status in the school based on the best interest of the student and the class.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Students found to be using, in the possession of, or distributing illicit drugs, including inhalants and non-prescribed medications, or alcohol on the school premises, or at a school event on or off the premises, will be subject to the following consequences.

1st Offense: 1) Student will serve a three-day suspension to commence immediately. Student will not be allowed to attend any school events, on or off the school premises, for the duration of the suspension. 2) Student will complete a community service project to be determined by the parents and student, and approved by the class teacher and Discipline Committee. 3) Student will be encouraged to attend drug/alcohol counseling.

2nd Offense: The student will be expelled from school.

GOVERNANCE AND SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

Our self-administered school depends on the participation of many different bodies to inform the overall governance of our school:

Coworker and Faculty Circles

All teachers and staff are members of the Coworkers Circle. This circle strives to develop and maintain collegial relationships through study, sharing, and artistic work. The Administrator and the Faculty Chair co-chair the Coworkers Circle. The Coworkers Circle meets one Thursday each month at 3:45 p.m. The Faculty Chair this year is Jeannine Ouellette. The Faculty Circle is dedicated to study, sharing and tasks related to structuring and deepening the pedagogical work of the school. The Faculty Circle meets the remaining Thursdays each month at 3:45 p.m.

College of Teachers

The College of Teachers is the decision-making body responsible for the pedagogical and spiritual life of the school. It is comprised of coworkers who are willing and able to take on a deeper commitment to the school. All members have worked in the school for at least one year. The tasks of the College are to oversee curriculum, pedagogy and programs. This group hires, supports and oversees the evaluation of faculty. Gregory Beech is the College Chair. The College meets weekly on Tuesday afternoons. See page 11 for a list of College members.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is the decision-making body responsible for the financial and legal realms. Harold Brandt and Madonna Palladino are the Board Co-Chairs this year. The Board has several committees that support the work of the Board. See page 12 for a list of Board members and committee chairs and how to reach them. The Board generally meets on the first Tuesday of each month.

Parent Association

The Parent Association represents all school parents. It seeks to promote a sense of community within the school, while supporting one another and all our children. The Parent Association warmly embraces all City of Lakes Waldorf School families and encourages families to take an active role in our school and the education of our children. The Parent Association helps to welcome and orient new families through the New Family Mentoring Program, where existing CLWS families provide guidance and a social connection to the school through individual pairings with new families.

The Parent Association Steering Committee carries out the work of the Parent Association, helping to plan and host parent education, social events, all school meetings, volunteer coordination and other activities. The Parent Association Steering Committee is made up of a group of volunteers representing early childhood, parent education, social events, governance and communication. Melanie Ueland, the governance representative, serves as a member of the school's Coordinating Committee.

The school administrator is the staff advisor to the Steering Committee. Volunteer leaders involved with the School Store, Parent Handwork, Community Partnership, the Library, and Class Representatives are all considered part of the Parent Association. See page 14 for Steering Committee members.

Administrative Staff

The Administrative Staff include the Administrator, Business and Property Director, Facilities Supervisor, Development Director, Events Coordinator, School Store Coordinator, Enrollment Coordinator, Front Desk Coordinator, Administrative Assistant and Accounting Assistant. They manage the day-to-day operations of the school and support the governing bodies.

Coordinating Committee

The Coordinating Committee consists of the Administrator, College Chair, Board of Trustees Chair, Faculty Chair and Parent Association Chair. They meet bi-monthly to monitor the progress of school work and to funnel questions or concerns to the appropriate governing body.

COMMUNICATION

All School Meetings/Class Meetings

All school meetings and class meetings are an essential part of parent participation in school life. These meetings are designed to familiarize parents with our school and the education we provide. We require attendance of at least one parent and encourage the attendance of both parents at each all school meeting. A portion of the evening is usually dedicated to class meetings. Class teachers may hold additional meetings as needed. The evenings start at 6:00 with light food and an opportunity to socialize. The meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. and ends at 8:30 p.m. Please reserve these dates: Nov. 14, January 15, March 12.

Tuesday Update

The *Tuesday Update*—our informational newsletter—is sent home with the oldest child in your family every Tuesday during the school year, except during holiday breaks. W-F pre-kindergarten children receive their Updates on Wednesdays.

Read your *Tuesday Update* carefully; it contains important information about school events, schedule changes, etc. The Tuesday Update is also available electronically. If you would like to receive the newsletter electronically each week, please stop by the office and provide your preferred email address.

If you have an item to contribute, you may bring it to the Front Desk Coordinator in the school office, where submission forms are available, or e-mail to update@clws.org. The deadline for submissions is Fridays at noon. Late submissions will be included in the following week's Update. Submissions may be edited.

Conferences

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled twice per year in preschool, kindergarten and in the grades (fall and spring). These conferences are important for maintaining open communication about each child's progress and development. Parents are expected to attend. Extra conferences can be requested by either the teacher or parent if needed.

Communicating with Teachers

At the beginning of the school year, each teacher will inform parents of when and where they can be reached. Please refer to page 10 of this Handbook for staff voicemail extensions. Further communication with teachers will occur during class meetings to be held at least three times per year. Teachers provide written communication via letter or e-mail at least once per month throughout the school year. This communication will inform parents of what is happening in the classroom, from curriculum to class activities, such as field trips.

Please check with your child's teacher as to the times most convenient for school-related phone conversations. Any personal concerns that require a lengthy discussion can be addressed in a prearranged conference. Let's keep the communication open and flowing while helping to maintain a healthy balance for the teachers.

PARENT QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Procedures for bringing concerns

Questions and concerns related to the classroom or subject classes should first be directed to the class teacher. Pedagogical or school program questions may be addressed to the College Chair or the College of Teachers as a whole. Financial questions (e.g., billings, payments) should be directed to the Business and Property Manager. Other non-classroom concerns, such as questions involving the building, safety or school procedures may be directed to the Administrator. Questions regarding the work of the Board of Trustees and school committees may be directed to the trustees and the committee chairs as listed in our directory.

Non-classroom issues may be referred in writing to the Administrator who will register your concern and forward it to the appropriate governing body. Confidential and sensitive issues will be handled carefully. Please submit written items for the Administrator to the office and include your name and the date of your request.

Please note: Because more than one group may be involved in complex issues, resolution of questions or concerns sometimes requires patience and a basic understanding of the roles of the governing bodies of the school. Administrative staff and the governance representative of the Parent Association are happy to help direct and facilitate communication as needed.

Philosophy

CLWS values and seeks to cultivate healthy communication in all aspects of school life. Healthy communication can both prevent problems from arising and provide a means for resolving concerns or problems when they do occur. City of Lakes Waldorf School seeks to create and maintain a culture within our community that fosters mutual respect and trust and encourages individual responsibility and self-development.

We recognize that conflicts and concerns provide opportunities for learning. We encourage all persons involved in the resolution of a concern to consider the process an opportunity to be open to self-review and to the viewpoints of others. We request that you first speak directly with the party involved when you have a question or concern.

We request that all persons speak honestly, respectfully and directly about concerns and assume all parties involved are interested in the best interests of the children. We genuinely seek to create an environment that supports the growth of all the members of our community. However, we are committed first and foremost to what is best for the students, and the school as a whole.

Parent/Teacher Concerns: Procedure for Concerns About a Specific Classroom or Student

The following are the procedures to be used when a parent or teacher has concerns specific to a particular classroom or individual child. Either a parent or a teacher may initiate these procedures. It is hoped that most issues concerning the classroom and individual children will be resolved in the first step, in a parent-teacher meeting. The additional procedures are intended to be used, sequentially, when necessary.

1. **Parent-Teacher Meeting**

The first step a parent or teacher should take is to initiate a meeting to share the question or concern. Parents contact their child's class teacher directly, and meet to discuss issues specifically related to their child. The teacher may request that all of the child's parents be present during these conversations. The teacher or parent(s) may request that another member of the staff join the conversation to add a broader perspective. The parent(s) will be informed of this plan.

If the concern relates to a subject class or teacher (not the child's class teacher), the parent(s) should first contact the subject teacher. The subject teacher can then notify the class teacher and arrange a meeting with the parent, subject teacher and class teacher as needed.

2. **Parent-Teacher Meeting with Colleague or Mediator**

If either the parent(s) or teacher, after meeting directly, do not feel that their concern has been resolved, they will go to the College Chair who will appoint a colleague or mediator (agreeable to both parties) to meet with the parent(s) and teacher.

3. **Written Summary and Recommendation**

If the colleague or mediator cannot help the parties to reach agreement the colleague or mediator may be asked to draft a summary of the concerns and to prepare a written recommendation for a solution that will be provided to all parties.

4. **College of Teachers**

If the written recommendation for a solution is not accepted by the parent(s) or the teacher then the College of Teachers will review the situation and make the final determination as to a solution.

Parent/School Concerns: Procedure for Concerns About the School as a Whole

The following is the procedure to be used when a parent has concerns they wish to address to the school as a whole, generally regarding matters not specific to a particular classroom or individual child. Any parent having a concern may initiate these procedures. It is hoped that most issues concerning the school will be resolved in a meeting with the administrator or Board representative. The additional procedures are intended to be used, sequentially, when necessary.

1. **Parent-Administrator Meeting**

The first step a parent may take is to initiate a meeting to share the question or concern. Parent(s) are invited to contact the administrator directly and meet to discuss issues of concern.

The administrator will listen and gain clarity about the nature of the concern. The administrator may request that all parents be present during these conversations. The administrator will work with the parent(s) to clarify questions and to establish an action plan to resolve concerns if necessary.

2. **Parent-Administrator Meeting with Colleague**

If either the parent(s) or administrator, after meeting directly, does not feel that the concern has been resolved, the administrator or parent(s) may request that another member of the staff or Board of Trustees join the conversation to add a broader perspective. All parties will be in agreement regarding this plan.

3. **Written Summary and Recommendation**

If either the parent(s) or governance representative(s) (administrator or member of the Board of Trustees) do not feel the concern has been resolved, a third party or mediator may be asked to

draft a summary of the concerns and to prepare a written recommendation for a solution that will be provided to all parties.

4. **Board of Trustees/College of Teachers**

If the written recommendation for a solution is not accepted by the parent(s) or the governance representatives then the Board of Trustees and the College of Teachers will review the situation and make the final determination as to a solution.

Adult Communication

City of Lakes Waldorf School is committed to positive adult communication that models a civil society for our students. E-mail, voicemail, and a fast-paced life style present new challenges to effective and civil communication. All communication will foster mutual respect and a climate in which different perspectives are heard and valued. While it is natural for concerns to arise within any school system, such concerns may be communicated in a productive and constructive manner. In addressing such issues, an important starting point is the recognition that the best interest of the students is the first priority.

Communication - Basic Principles

- Demonstrate respect, in both what is said and how it is said
- Focus on issues, not individuals
- Keep an open mind. Be positive and flexible. Ask questions first.

Guidelines

- Raise concerns with the appropriate person(s). See "Parent Questions and Concerns" above for more information.
- Use good judgement about the amount of contact that is appropriate. Be mindful of the amount of time an individual concern may take.

- Demonstrate public support for one another. Convey the message that parents and teachers are on the same team.
- Schedule appointments if a discussion is needed instead of dropping in or raising concerns in public settings, especially before school or when teachers are outside on recess duty.
- Keep in mind that voice mail and e-mail are public documents that may be read to others. Do not say or write anything that could not be printed in the newspaper.
- Understand that conversations may be documented and that a third person may be present.
- Verbal, physical or sexual harassment will not be condoned or tolerated.

City of Lakes Waldorf School is committed to an atmosphere of respect and reverence. One of the twelve senses described by Rudolf Steiner is the sense of ego. This is not a sense of self, but a cultivation of sensitivity to others. All interactions, large and small, should build a healthy environment for student learning and serve as role models of adult behavior.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Tuition

Each year, the Finance Committee recommends a tuition level based on the needs for the coming school year and the prospective enrollment. The Board of Trustees sets the final figure and notifies current and new families as soon as possible by letter.

The school has annual, biannual and monthly payment plans with an interest charge incorporated into the monthly and semiannual plans.

Past due payments will be subject to an interest charge on the outstanding balance at the rate of \$15 per month. Interest charges assessed in any month will be added to the outstanding balance for purposes of calculating interest in succeeding months. All reports, transcripts, and other information regarding the students will be withheld by the school until all amounts due have been paid.

If any amounts are not paid after 60 days from the original date due, the student will not be allowed to attend school. Re-enrollment will be at the sole discretion of the school, after payment in full has been made or an alternative payment plan has been arranged with the school.

Besides tuition, there is a supply fee to cover classroom supplies, main lesson books, and laboratory materials.

Tuition Assistance

Families unable to afford full tuition may apply for tuition assistance.

Those who have requested tuition assistance information on their reenrollment form will have a tuition assistance form mailed to them. Forms are also available in the office.

The Tuition Assistance Committee will keep parents abreast of the guidelines for qualifications and deadlines.

Annual Fund

Traditionally, tuition covers the majority of an independent school's budget. The "gap" or difference between tuition and full cost to educate a student is funded primarily through individual gifts to the Annual Fund.

The Annual Fund fosters greater community participation in the financial life of the school, and we encourage each and every family to participate at the level they are able.

Parents, staff, alumni parents, grandparents, and friends of the school are invited to make an annual charitable gift. When added to other sources of income, the Annual Fund helps to balance the budget and supports programs and staff development. Look online at the many ways you can support CLWS. An Annual Fund giving form can be picked up in the office or downloaded from our website.

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY LIFE

Community Events

Parents play an important role in supporting the social fabric of our School community. There are many opportunities throughout the year to gather in small groups, with individual classes, and with the entire School community to learn and deepen our understanding of Waldorf education. Please refer to the School Calendar for a complete list of our All-School events. Participating in other aspects of school life, such as committees, class events, performances, and meetings, strengthens the community and your child's educational journey.

Parent Coffees

The Parent Association Steering Committee hosts two parent coffees a month to provide opportunities for social connection and discussion. These are held from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. on the 2nd Tuesday and 4th Wednesday of each month in the Fireplace Room at the school.

Parent Volunteers

Due to the independent, self-administrated structure of our school, faculty and families share the tasks and joys that comprise the ongoing functions of the school. Volunteers are an essential part of life at City of Lakes Waldorf School.

We invite every family to consider how they might offer their gifts to the school. It is a personally rewarding experience, and allows everyone the opportunity to participate in the children's education and solidify connections as a community. Your time is as vital to the school's well being as tuition. Whether you prefer working with children, with adults in large or small groups, or on your own, there is a place for you. For further information, please contact Judy Weber, our Development Director.

School Committees

Important community work could not take place without the many committees and the hard-working parents and friends of the school who take up this important effort. The school is strengthened by the deeds of each individual making a contribution to the community.

If you are interested in serving on one or more committees, please see page 13 for the names of the current chairs of the committees that interest you so you can find out more about the committees work.

The School Store

The School Store, located just off the front lobby, is a small retail shop run by Sheila Weidendorf, our part-time the School Store Coordinator, and staffed by parent volunteers. The primary mission of the store is to provide school families with easy access to Waldorf-inspired products (art supplies, books, handwork supplies, toys and seasonal gift items for the home), helping them bring Waldorf ideals into their homes. School Store profits are donated to support school programs. The School Store is also a community center at City of Lakes Waldorf School, a conduit for families wanting to learn more about Waldorf education, and a place to connect with other parents. Parent Handwork and Book Studies are also facilitated through the School Store.

The School Store hours of operation are: 8:30 - 9:00 a.m., 11:30 - 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Sheila's office hours are from 8:30 - 12:30 on Tuesdays. Contact Sheila Weidendorf at 612-377-1534 if you are interested in volunteering in the School Store.

Festivals

Festivals occur throughout the years and are a vital part of Waldorf education. Their purpose is to provide nourishment for the soul of each individual as well as to bring the community together. The Festivals also provide a time for the children to share a small piece of their classroom work. We hope you are able to attend our seasonal festivals and enjoy the sharing of the gifts of our children. To honor these special days, we ask that all the children wear their best attire. See calendar for dates and times.

Families are invited to attend these wonderful community events. We understand the excitement these festivals can create for children and adults alike. However, we request that all who attend watch the performances respectfully—without talking until the festival is over. Please keep children seated with you at all times. It can be difficult for young children to “stay with” a festival the entire time. When your younger children have reached their capacity for quiet attendance, we ask that they be accompanied to an area away from the festival.

Rose Ceremony—The Rose Ceremony takes place on the first day of school as a part of an opening day assembly. The Rose Ceremony is a memorable occasion in which we honor the new first grade students as they cross the threshold from Early Childhood into the Grade School. The children hear a special story from the First Grade Teacher and each new first grader receives a rose from an eighth grade student as a welcome to the year ahead.

Michaelmas—The first festival celebrated during the school year is Michaelmas, celebrated on or near September 29th. Michaelmas is a festival little known in North America. The festival takes place near the autumnal equinox when day light grows shorter. The festival is named for St. Michael, known as the protector of humanity, who inspires qualities of courage, initiative and steadfastness. The grades students participate in activities that reflect the values connected to these qualities. Each year includes a parade to Fair Oaks Park where classes share poems, songs or pageantry.

In nursery and kindergarten, the primary emphasis is on the celebration of the harvest. The children are engaged in classroom activities such as grinding of grain, planting of bulbs, dying wool and making harvest soup. Mother Earth pays a visit to the children during the Early Childhood festival.

Martinmas—The Festival of Lanterns is celebrated on or near November 11 and recognizes the beginning of the time of deep darkness and winter. The children make lanterns in an effort to bring their inner light to this darkest time of the year ahead. The lanterns are often decorated with moons and stars, motifs which are heard in their songs and represent the heavenly forces which want to live in the souls of human beings on earth. Early Childhood students parade through the main floor of the school with their classes bringing light and joy to all they meet.

Grade students gather in a park to make an evening lantern walk and to hear the story of the historical Martin. St. Martin turned from Roman soldier to Saint when he sought to share his light with others.

Advent—Advent is a festival of the present and the future. It starts quietly with a season of preparation, of waiting, of listening for what is to come.

There are four weeks of Advent, celebrated by the lighting of a candle each week. During the first week, the mineral kingdom is the focus of our gratitude and in the classroom, children may present small shells, crystals, and minerals to place around the Advent wreath as the first candle is lit. The second week is the celebration of the plant kingdom, the realm of life and growth. Children bring bits of bark, plants, nuts, and dried flowers and light the second candle.

The third candle is lit with sympathy and recognition for the animal kingdom as a way of acknowledging the more unconscious forces of nature. The children offer small animals made of stone, wood, clay or wax.

Finally, in the fourth week, the last candle is lit in recognition of the human spirit.

The Advent festival at school involves the children walking through a spiral garden as a way of presenting a visual picture of the inner journey the soul makes at this time of year. As each child spirals inward along the advent wreath, towards the central flame, so must each of us turn within if we are to find the source of our inner light.

Chanukah—The Jewish festival of light commemorates the victory of the Maccabees over the Syrians in 165 B.C. and the rededication of the temple in Jerusalem. The eight days of Chanukah are in memory of the eight days that a holy lamp stayed lit even though it only held enough oil for one day. In school, the children may celebrate by lighting the menorah and making potato pancakes and playing a special game with a spinning top called a dreidel.

St. Nicholas Day—St. Lucia Day—Near the beginning of Advent comes a celebration of St. Nicholas on December 6th. At school, St. Nicholas visits the younger children, who put out their shoes for him overnight and return to school to find bags of nuts and fruit. His visit gives the children a chance to reflect on their past year's behavior and to make resolves for the coming year!

Light is also the image for the feast of St. Lucia on December 13th. In many northern European countries, it is celebrated by a girl wearing a crown of lighted candles. She symbolizes a young girl who was killed by Romans fifteen hundred years ago for refusing to give up her religion. There is also a legend that during a time of great hunger in Sweden, with her head surrounded by a halo of light, she miraculously appeared and provided food for the country.

Winter Festival—The Winter Festival takes place on the last day of school before the Winter Break. The theme of light shining within each individual in the midst of the darkness of the season is at the heart of these winter festivals.

Spring Festival—The Spring Festival takes place on the last day of school before the Spring Break. This festival celebrates the themes of nature's breathing out, the rebirth and growth of new plant life, the lengthening of the day light hours and the strengthening force of the sun.

Summer Festival—The Summer Festival takes place on the closing day of the school year. This celebration culminates in the Flag Ceremony that involves the seventh and eighth grade students. Graduating eighth grade students receive their diplomas and good bye roses from the first grade students who they welcomed in the fall Rose Ceremony. In addition, individual classes share songs, dances and verses to celebrate the year and welcome the summer.

Adjusting to School—A Note for New Families

In nursery, kindergarten, and into the early grades, it is sometimes difficult for children and parents to make the transition from their home life together into the child's school life. School is where a child's world expands to include peers, academics, and the discovery of personal independence. A period of adjustment may be needed to ease the process of change and separation.

The next step is for the young student to become more aware of the role that school plays in his/her life: that school is an important and special experience that doesn't always include the parents. In fact, the presence of parents in the classroom sometimes inhibits free participation by the child and may encourage "acting out."

Once the initial adjustment to school has taken place it is most helpful to the teachers and beneficial to the children if visiting parents would consider the following:

Please visit your child's classroom only at times prearranged with the teacher such as your child's birthday celebration, class field trips, or special projects and events.

Even though children sometimes want to bring toys to school from home, problems with sharing often result. Also, some toys do not support the Waldorf curriculum. A special doll or teddy for children at rest time is acceptable, with the teacher's approval.

The faculty will continue to work with parents to create the best possible school experience for the children. Your most effective communication links with the school are attendance at class and all-school meetings, reading all written communications from the school, and becoming more involved through volunteer opportunities. Parent/teacher conferences are held twice a year for the grades and once a year for early childhood. If you wish to have additional private meetings with your child's teacher, please feel free to call your teacher directly.

City of Lakes Waldorf School Affiliations

City of Lakes Waldorf School is affiliated with a number of groups and organizations locally and nationally. It is a full and accredited member of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America. Novalis Institute is a local adult education and teacher training center established in 1998. A listing of other related initiatives is included in the school directory.

LEARNING MORE ABOUT WALDORF EDUCATION

Our school and faculty try to provide various ways for interested parents and friends to learn about the Waldorf school curriculum and the thinking that lies behind it.

Information events are held several times a year. They provide a helpful introduction and are intended to inform interested families already connected with the school as well as new parents.

In class meetings, teachers describe the progress of a class, provide an opportunity to learn about the grade's curriculum and the approach taken during that year to the challenges of the developmental stage of the children.

Numerous books on Waldorf education can be ordered directly from Rudolf Steiner College Bookstore or Sunbridge College Bookstore.

SUGGESTED READING

Between Form and Freedom, *Betty Staley*

—A practical guide to the teenage years.

Children at Play: Preparation for Life, *Heidi Britz-Creclius*

—An insightful exploration into the world of children's play. A great support for parents, playgroup leaders, teachers, and caregivers.

Creativity in Education, *Rene Querido*

—An overview of the purposes, philosophy and methods of the Waldorf approach to education, delivered in vigorous style.

Encountering the Self, *Hermann Koepke*

—A Waldorf teacher reveals the processes of the nine-year old change.

The Hurried Child, *David Elkind*

—Discusses stress among modern children and how they are being robbed of a cherished childhood.

The Kingdom of Childhood, *Rudolf Steiner*

—Considered one of the best introductions to the Waldorf approach to education.

The Magical Child, *Joseph Chilton Pearce*

—Challenges many trends in modern child-rearing which he believes are leading us to a disturbing rise in child abuse, functional illiteracy and general malaise.

On the Threshold of Adolescence, *Hermann Koepke*

—The struggle for independence in the twelfth year.

Rhythms of Learning, *Rudolf Steiner*

—Steiner's most important lectures on teaching and child development, with explanations of the concepts and how they work in the contemporary Waldorf classroom.

School as a Journey, *Torin Finser*

—A lively account of a teacher's journey with his class from first through eighth grade.

School Renewal, *Torin Finser*

—Looks at the problems and challenges of a school community and a whole new way of thinking about education and personal growth.

Teaching as a Lively Art, *Marjorie Spock*

—The most detailed and engaging grade-by-grade description of the curriculum available.

Waldorf Education: A Family Guide, *edited by Pamela Johnson Fenner and Karen L. Rivers*

—A wonderful resource for parents new to the Waldorf school movement.

Waldorf Parenting Handbook, *Lois Cusick*

—Useful information on child development and education from anthroposophical sources.

Waldorf Schools Volume 1: Kindergarten and the Early Grades

—A collection of articles.

Waldorf Schools Volume 2: The Upper Grades and High School

—A collection of articles.

You are Your Child's First Teacher, *Rahima Baldwin*

—An excellent practical introduction to early childhood development for parents.

Understanding Waldorf Education, *Jack Petrash*

—Conveys the fundamentals of Waldorf education in a simple and engaging manner.

Why Waldorf Works, website

www.whywaldorfworks.org