



**Waldorf Early Childhood
Association of North America**

**Membership Handbook
2011-2012**

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August 2011

Greetings from the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America!

This Membership Handbook is a guide to our work together in association as Waldorf early childhood member programs throughout North America. The Handbook describes the history, goals, and activities of our Association, our Shared Principles, and our Membership Path.

Our WECAN **Shared Principles** are the expression of our ideals and practices. They are ideals Developing Members are working to realize as they grow toward Full WECAN Membership. For Full Members the Shared Principles are an expression of practices that allow them to be seen as representatives of Waldorf early childhood education in North America and around the world.

Our WECAN **Membership Path** is intended to foster a culture of self-study, peer review, and collaboration that will strengthen and deepen our work on behalf of the young child here in North America out of the insights of Waldorf education. This Handbook outlines the criteria and benefits of membership, and the steps required to fulfill the responsibilities of organizational membership for our Developing and Full Member programs.

We have now completed a multi-year implementation process for our Membership Path, undertaken in collaboration with our sister organization, the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA). WECAN Developing and Full Members have completed their initial self-study and site visits and have expressed their appreciation for the process. These members are listed in our WECAN Directory, available on-line at www.waldorfearlychildhood.org and in the joint AWSNA/WECAN online and print directories.

The Membership Handbook and all relevant application forms and materials are also available on the WECAN website. Please contact your Regional Representative(s), listed on the website and in the Handbook, or our Membership Office at membership@waldorfearlychildhood.org if you have questions, concerns, or suggestions. We look forward to our work together in association!

With best wishes,

Susan Howard

Susan Howard
WECAN Coordinator

Nancy Foster

Nancy Foster
WECAN Membership Coordinator

Introduction: The Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America

The Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN) was founded in 1983, originally under the name of the Waldorf Kindergarten Association of North America. Its administrative office is in Spring Valley, New York.

WECAN's mission is to nurture a new cultural impulse for the work with the young child from pre-birth to age seven, based on an understanding of the healthy development of the child in body, soul and spirit, and on a commitment to protect and nurture childhood as the foundation for a truly human culture.

Its purposes as articulated in its Articles of Incorporation include but are not limited to the following:

- To educate the public and professionals working with young children regarding the educational philosophy of Rudolf Steiner, through conferences, lectures, seminars, publications and other means of communication
- To support the development of Waldorf early childhood centers, kindergartens, pre-schools, home programs, and training centers
- To provide a forum for the exchange of information and experience among those drawing their inspiration from the work of Rudolf Steiner in their work with young children
- To interact with other educational organizations representing a wide spectrum of ideas about early childhood education
- To encourage and support research regarding Waldorf early childhood education and the development of the young child, and to publish the results of such research.

Membership in the organization is open to individuals who support the work of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association, and to early childhood programs, kindergartens, child care centers, home programs, and teacher training centers committed to the ideals and practices of Waldorf early childhood education and anthroposophy, the philosophy developed by Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), and who wish to support and contribute to Waldorf early childhood education in North America.

There are 178 Waldorf early childhood programs listed in our Directory. This includes 110 Full Members and 68 Developing Members. WECAN also has 450 Individual Members. Our activities on behalf of our members include:

- Publication of a newsletter, *Gateways*, for Waldorf early childhood educators, which appears twice each year
- Electronic e-News Updates sent out several times a year, with news, upcoming events, announcements and links to press articles and research of interest to Waldorf early childhood educators
- Publication and distribution of study materials for early childhood educators and parents through WECAN Books
- Collaborative research and publication and workshops on the needs of the older child in the kindergarten and the transition to first grade
- Professional development retreats for early childhood teacher trainers
- Development and publication of guidelines on mentoring and early childhood teacher review
- Annual regional conferences and workshops for Waldorf early childhood educators, including a major conference in Spring Valley, NY, each February

- International conferences for Waldorf early childhood educators here in North America and around the world (The next world conference takes place April 1-5, 2012.)
- Collaborating with the Association for Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA) and participation on its Leadership Council
- Active membership in the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE), with two representatives on its Council, who share news and events from Waldorf early childhood education worldwide with our members
- Developing on-line resources for member organizations
- Fundraising for the development of early childhood projects throughout the world.

The Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America is a tax-exempt not-for-profit organization.

WECAN Shared Principles

The WECAN Shared Principles form the basis of our understanding of our work together in association, and are used in our self-study and membership application processes. As a living document, the Shared Principles will continue to be refined through the work of the Board, Regional Representatives, and Full Members.

A. Purpose, Goals, and Educational Philosophy

- A1** In our work with children from pre-birth to age seven (in nursery-kindergartens, home care programs, child care centers, parent-child programs, etc.) we are committed to the ideals and practices of Waldorf/Steiner early childhood education.
- A2** This education, developed by Rudolf Steiner and based on an anthroposophical understanding of the human individuality as a being of body, soul and spirit, offers protection and respect for the dignity of childhood.
- A3** The future development of each individual child and of humanity as a whole depends on health-giving experiences in the first seven years of life. An atmosphere of loving warmth and guidance that promote joy, wonder, and reverence supports such healthy development.
- A4** We recognize that free creative play, imitation, exploration of the social and natural world, practical and meaningful work, artistic activities, and nourishing sensory experiences are essential in the development of the young child. Through our programs and activities, we offer children a rhythmic experience of each day, week, and season of the year.
- A5** Our activities are based on the insights of Rudolf Steiner, and on the continuing research of Waldorf/Steiner educators, and other compatible pedagogical approaches.
- A6** We strive for diversity in the racial, cultural, religious and socio-economic backgrounds of children coming to our schools. We strive to meet the unique developmental needs, capacities and cultural background of each child.
- A7** We recognize that healthy child development takes place best in the context of a community based upon healthy social relationships among parents, teachers and children, and we strive to create such conscious, collaborative communities around our care for children.

B. Teacher Preparation and Professional Development

- B1** Our faculty and staff are qualified for their positions and responsibilities by education and/or experience. Teachers have a formal preparation, or the equivalent, for Waldorf/Steiner early childhood teaching, or are engaged in such preparation, as well as meeting state or provincial licensing requirements. [See “The Training of Waldorf Early Childhood Educators: WECAN Expectations” in the following section.]
- B2** Our faculty and staff are committed to ongoing self- and professional development as demonstrated by participation in conferences, courses, professional development workshops, etc.
- B3** We support teacher development through regular mentoring, peer partnerships, review and evaluation.

- B4** We recognize that developing artistic and practical abilities and capacities for observation and perception contributes to our ability to meet the needs of the children in our care. Our faculty and staff are actively engaged in deepening our understanding of Waldorf/Steiner indications for early childhood through collegial work, individual study, artistic activity and meditative practice.
- B5** Our faculty and staff demonstrate professionalism and respect in their interactions with children, parents, colleagues and other professionals.

C. Governance, Finances and Administration

- C1** Our program recognizes and complies with applicable legal and licensing requirements and meets health, fire, and safety standards.
- C2** Our program is typically not-for-profit, as an expression of the free cultural life, and is not based on self-interest or personal gain.

(Note: The form most suited for such activity is usually that of an incorporated, not-for-profit organization. There may be exceptions to this in certain situations such as home programs, and this WECAN membership criterion may be waived through a decision of the WECAN Board or board-designated committee.)

- C3** We have clearly stated processes for making administrative decisions, future planning, and review and development of programs, administrative and financial policies.
- C4** Our program has clearly defined employment, evaluation and review procedures for faculty and staff, including agreed-upon compensation, terms of employment, and principal duties and responsibilities. Procedures for non-renewal or termination of employment are clearly delineated.
- C5** Our program complies with all applicable laws regarding discrimination based on any and all protected categories, in all areas, including admissions, employment, and personnel.
- C6** We have demonstrated our ability to generate sufficient resources to maintain our educational programs and facilities, and to support our faculty and staff. We strive to cultivate socially responsible practices in the setting of tuitions, tuition assistance, and salaries and benefits.
- C7** Our organization engages in regular self-study/peer review process on an organizational, institutional basis, as well as with individual teachers.
- C8** In our administrative and financial practices, we work collaboratively rather than hierarchically, in an effort to be socially responsible in our work with colleagues, parents, the institution and the wider community.

D. Relations with the Wider Movement

- D1** We recognize ourselves as colleagues in a world movement on behalf of the young child. As such we are committed to collaborating with our colleagues on local, regional, North American and international levels as a fully established, healthy representative of Waldorf/Steiner early childhood education.

The Training of Waldorf Early Childhood Educators: WECAN Expectations

[The following section is an excerpt from the *WECAN Membership Handbook for Early Childhood Teacher Training Institutions, 2011-12*.]

For early childhood educators who carry responsibility for the care and education of the child from birth to school entrance, completion of a full Waldorf early childhood teacher-training program recognized by WECAN is necessary.

Recognized Waldorf early childhood teacher training programs offer a minimum of 400 class contact hours, plus mentored teaching or extensive practicum or internship experiences. The *Shared Principles for Early Childhood Teacher Training* describe the course content and criteria for recognized Waldorf early childhood teacher training programs.

This is the expectation for lead nursery, pre-school and kindergarten teachers, extended care providers, and parent-child class leaders in Waldorf schools and early childhood settings. This expectation is consistent with the guidelines of the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (see www.iaswece.org).

For assistants, extended care providers, and home care or center-based care providers, completion of a child care provider training course of a minimum of 200 class contact hours is sufficient to begin the work, with the understanding that further course work is expected and a full WECAN-recognized training is recommended for those who intend to continue in these positions.

Ongoing participation in mentoring, evaluation, conferences, deepening courses and workshops is an essential part of the continuing professional development of the Waldorf early childhood educator.

WECAN Membership Categories

The following section describes the WECAN Path to Membership for individuals and organizations.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

WECAN began as an individual membership organization – a grass-roots association of Waldorf early childhood colleagues – and individual memberships actually exceed the number of organizational memberships. We see this as a sign of healthy collegueship within our movement and encourage individuals to continue to join WECAN in order to receive their own membership services, including the twice-yearly *Gateways* newsletter, and to support the work of the Association.

Criteria: Interest in and support for Waldorf early childhood education

Benefits:

- Subscription to *Gateways* newsletter
- 10% discount on WECAN Books
- WECAN News Updates and other informational mailings
- Discounted registration fees for WECAN conferences
- Opportunity to subscribe to a WECAN list to receive research and articles of interest.

Responsibilities: Annual membership dues. The membership year is July 1 – June 30.

Dues: \$45/year in 2011-12

ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERSHIP

WECAN invites and encourages all early childhood programs, including home-based kindergartens and childcare programs, to become organizational WECAN members. The membership information below applies to home-based as well as school-based or freestanding early childhood programs. The WECAN organizational path to membership leads from Developing Member status to Full Membership. Early childhood programs in developing schools are expected to become WECAN Developing Members before the school applies for AWSNA Developing Membership, and to become WECAN Full Members before applying for Full Membership in AWSNA.

DEVELOPING MEMBERSHIP

Applying for Developing Membership:

A program aligned with WECAN's goals and purposes, with children in regular attendance, may apply for Developing Membership. Application instructions and documents are available on the WECAN website, www.waldorfearlychildhood.org (Click on Membership on the home page). WECAN Regional Representatives, listed in the *WECAN Membership Handbook*, available on the website, help guide the applicant through the process by offering information, advice, and referrals for site visitors.

Application Steps:

1. Download and read the instructions and documents for Developing Membership application.
2. Complete an application form and send it with the \$50 application fee and your local license to WECAN.
3. Complete the Self-Study.

4. Arrange for a WECAN Site Visit (consult the Regional Representative(s) for suggested visitors). The program or school is responsible for the honorarium, travel expenses, and, if needed, meals and accommodations for the site visitor by prior arrangement. WECAN recommends an honorarium of \$300 for a one-day Site Visit; this includes the writing of the report. For car travel, WECAN recommends a reimbursement of \$.55 per mile.
5. Submit the completed Self-Study and Site Visit Report according to the instructions.

Decisions regarding applications for WECAN Developing Membership are made by the WECAN Membership Committee in consultation with the Regional Representative(s).

Criteria for Developing Membership are as follows:

- Programs with children in regular attendance
- Commitment to the ideals and practices of Waldorf early childhood education and anthroposophy, the philosophy developed by Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925)
- In process of becoming aligned with the WECAN Shared Principles
- In compliance with the AWSNA Service Mark policy (see section on Use of the Name “Waldorf”)
- Legally licensed at the federal, state or provincial, or local level
- Intention to support and contribute to Waldorf early childhood education in North America.

Benefits:

- Listing in the WECAN online directory and AWSNA/WECAN Directory
- Permission to include in the school’s or program’s literature and on its website: “A Developing Member of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America”
- An annual subscription to *Gateways*
- A 10% discount on WECAN Publications
- Advice and support through WECAN’s Regional Representatives
- Invitations to regional WECAN gatherings
- WECAN News Updates and other informational mailings
- Group discounts on Individual Memberships for early childhood educators at your school
- Listing in the IASWECE World Directory of Waldorf Kindergartens and Early Childhood Programs
- E-newsletters from the International Association.

Responsibilities:

- Payment of WECAN dues (see below)
- Submission of annual updates of Contact Information for the Directory
- Completion of a Self-Study update and a Site Visit every two years. The Site Visit must be completed by February 1 of the renewal year.

WECAN Developing Members are engaged in a process of growth and development on their path to recognition as Full WECAN Members. They are encouraged to participate in regional WECAN activities, to develop a program of training, mentoring, and evaluation for their teachers, and to work to improve the health and vitality of the school organism.

Developing Members are also encouraged to begin to look beyond their regions to cultivate relationships with the wider Waldorf early childhood movement in North America and worldwide. They are listed as Developing Members on the online World Directory of the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE), and a portion of their dues supports the international activities.

Dues:

- Developing Membership dues are \$275/year.
- Small programs with 16 or fewer children pay annual dues of \$15/child.
- \$25 of the WECAN Developing Membership dues supports the activities of IASWECE.
- WECAN dues invoices are sent out in late August (together with AWSNA invoices for AWSNA-affiliated schools) with payment due on October 1.

AWSNA-Affiliated Developing Members

Some WECAN Developing Members are in schools that have joined the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America as Developing Members. The membership processes for the two organizations are closely linked.

Site Visits:

AWSNA Developing Schools receive AWSNA Support Visits. The honorarium for the visiting team is paid for through AWSNA dues. This AWSNA visit may be used to fulfill the requirement (every two years) for a WECAN Developing Member renewal Site Visit under the following conditions (*please note that application for WECAN Full Membership requires a separate WECAN Site Visit*):

- 1) An early childhood person must be part of the AWSNA Support Team, so that the visit can fulfill both the AWSNA support and WECAN Site Visit functions.
- 2) *Prior to the visit*, the early childhood person on the team must receive from the early childhood program a copy of the completed WECAN Self-Study Update and copies of the previous Self-Study and Site Visit Report, as well as the *WECAN Orientation for Site Visitors* and the Site Visit Report form, available on the WECAN website.
- 3) The early childhood visitor must complete a WECAN Site Visit Report, including commendations and recommendations and return it to the school within 30 days of the visit.
- 4) The school or program must then forward the report to the WECAN Regional Representative(s) in fulfillment of the WECAN Site Visit requirement.

If an early childhood person cannot be on the AWSNA Support Team, the school or program will need to arrange a separate WECAN Site Visit and will be responsible for the costs of honorarium and travel for the WECAN Site Visitor (for details see “Site Visit Guidelines for Renewal of Developing Membership” on the website). The Regional Representative(s) can suggest early childhood educators who might be available to do a Site Visit.

AWSNA Candidacy/Application for WECAN Full Membership:

If a program is in an AWSNA-affiliated school on the path to AWSNA Full Membership, it is expected to complete its WECAN Full Membership before moving to Candidacy in AWSNA.

A WECAN Developing Member applying for WECAN Full Membership must have a separate WECAN Site Visit.

Required Change of Status:

Developing Members who do not fulfill their membership responsibilities or no longer meet the criteria for Developing Membership will be required to change their membership status. The teachers or caregivers may continue as Individual Members.

FULL MEMBERSHIP

Applying for WECAN Full Membership:

Developing Members are encouraged to apply for Full WECAN Membership when they are sufficiently established to meet the criteria below. Note: AWSNA Developing Members are expected to become WECAN Full Members before moving to Candidacy in AWSNA. Full Membership applicants must have a separate WECAN Site Visit.

If the school or program has had a WECAN Site Visit within the past twelve months, an additional visit will not be required. A Self-Study Update, including information about how the Site Visit recommendations have been addressed, must be submitted.

Application instructions and documents are available on the WECAN website, www.waldorfearlychildhood.org (Click on Membership on the home page). WECAN Regional Representatives help guide the applicant through the process by offering information, advice, and suggestions for site visitors.

Application Steps:

1. Download and read the instructions and documents for Full Membership application.
2. Complete an application form and send it with the \$100 application fee and your local license to WECAN.
3. If a program is a first-time applicant to WECAN, it should complete a Self-Study and skip Steps 4 and 5. Otherwise:
4. Review the previous Self-Study and Site Visit Report.
5. Complete a Self-Study Update, including comments on how the early childhood program has addressed the recommendations made by the site visitor in the previous report.
6. Arrange for a WECAN Site Visit (consult the Regional Representative(s) for suggested visitors). The program or school is responsible for the honorarium, travel expenses, and, if needed, meals and accommodations for the site visitor, by prior arrangement. WECAN recommends an honorarium of \$300 for a one-day Site Visit; this includes the writing of the report. For car travel, WECAN recommends a reimbursement of \$.55 per mile.
7. Submit the Self-Study Update and the new Site Visit Report according to the instructions.

Decisions regarding applications for WECAN Full Membership are made by the WECAN Membership Committee in consultation with the Regional Representative(s).

Criteria for Full WECAN Membership:

- The program has functioned as a Waldorf program for at least three years with children in regular attendance.
- The program is working out of Waldorf education and anthroposophy as described in the WECAN Shared Principles and is committed to furthering among faculty and staff a deepening of an anthroposophical study of the human being.
- The program can stand as a representative of Waldorf early childhood education in the world through its alignment with the Shared Principles.
- The program meets legal licensing requirements at the federal, state or provincial, and local levels.
- The program has demonstrated viability in terms of finances, enrollment and personnel.

Benefits of WECAN Full Membership:

- Permission to use the name “Waldorf” in the school’s or program’s title or by-line (see section on Use of the Name “Waldorf”) and to include in its literature and on its website: “A Full Member of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America”
- Listing in the WECAN online directory and the AWSNA/WECAN Directory
- Two annual subscriptions to *Gateways*
- A 20% discount on WECAN Publications
- WECAN News Updates and other informational mailings
- Advice and support through WECAN’s Regional Representatives
- Invitations to regional WECAN gatherings
- Group discounts on individual memberships for early childhood educators at your school
- Listing in the IASWECE World Directory of Waldorf Kindergartens and Early Childhood Programs at www.iaswece.org
- E-newsletters and other mailings from the International Association (IASWECE).

Responsibilities of WECAN Full Members:

- Submission of annual updates of Contact Information for the Directory
- Payment of WECAN dues (see below)
- Renewal every five years by completion of a Self-Study Update and a Site Visit (AWSNA-affiliated WECAN Full Members may fulfill the WECAN renewal requirement in conjunction with their AWSNA accreditation or renewal rhythm, usually 7-10 years).

Full WECAN Members are encouraged to:

- Engage with their colleagues in the movement and with the wider world as fully established, healthy representatives of Waldorf early childhood education
- Participate in mentoring and advising new initiatives in their regions
- Host regional WECAN gatherings from time to time
- Participate in collaborative working groups and research groups sponsored by WECAN.

Dues:

- Full Membership dues are \$550/year.
- Small programs with 16 or fewer children pay annual dues of \$20/child.
- \$175 of the WECAN Full Membership Dues supports the activities of IASWECE.
- WECAN dues invoices are sent out in late August (together with AWSNA invoices for AWSNA-affiliated schools) with payment due on October 1.

AWSNA Accreditation and WECAN Full Member Renewal:

Schools preparing a self-study for AWSNA membership renewal may use this self-study to meet the WECAN Full Member Self-Study Update requirement. A separate WECAN Site Visit is required. Contact the Membership Coordinator for details.

Full Members who do not fulfill their membership responsibilities or no longer meet the criteria for Full Membership will be required to undergo a review by the Membership Committee.

Use of the Name “Waldorf”

[revised December 2010]

The use of the names "WALDORF" and "STEINER" in relation to early childhood programs is protected through a Service Mark held by the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA). **Use of these names to describe early childhood programs is permitted only for WECAN Full Members.**

Please see the full Position Statement from AWSNA below for details.

Guidelines for the WALDORF, RUDOLF STEINER, and STEINER Trademarks and Service Marks (Marks)

Background

WALDORF, RUDOLF STEINER and STEINER are internationally known Marks for a specific method of education. In the United States the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA) is the owner of the WALDORF, RUDOLF STEINER and STEINER Marks. The WALDORF Mark was first used in Germany in 1919 with the start of the first Waldorf School. The Mark has been used in the United States since 1928. As the work of Rudolf Steiner and WALDORF education spread, RUDOLF STEINER and STEINER became Marks associated with Waldorf education. The Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen (Bund) is the world-wide owner of the WALDORF, RUDOLF STEINER and STEINER Marks outside of the United States. The BUND and AWSNA, as stewards of the Marks, work closely together for the protection of the Marks and the precise methods of education and teacher training which the Marks have come to symbolize. AWSNA has agreements for membership and use with the trademark/service mark holders in Canada and Mexico.

Who is allowed to use the Marks?

Only members of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America or early childhood programs that are members of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN) are authorized to use the Marks. For example:

- Only an AWSNA or WECAN member may use the Marks in its name such as:
 - The Waldorf School of Mendocino County
 - Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor
 - Eugene Waldorf Teacher Education
- Only an AWSNA or WECAN member may describe its school or curriculum as a Waldorf School, e.g.:
 - Spindlewood is a Waldorf early childhood program.
 - Rudolf Steiner College is a Waldorf teacher education institute.

What references can be made to Waldorf and Rudolf Steiner and Steiner by those who are not members of AWSNA or WECAN?

AWSNA and its members appreciate and encourage the adoption of aspects of the methodology and pedagogy of WALDORF education into other methods of education and school settings, both public and private.

- Non-members of AWSNA may only use the Marks *in text to make factual statements* about their methods of education or their teachers. For example, a non-member may say, in text:

- ABC School’s curriculum is inspired by Waldorf education.
 - ABC School follows many of the teachings of Rudolf Steiner.
 - 12 of our teachers at ABC School have received training from member institutes of AWSNA.
- Non-members of AWSNA may not use the Marks to describe the school or program, including in ads and directories. For example but not limited to:
 - may not describe part of a program of the school as a Waldorf program
 - may not use the marks in the name of the school
 - may not use the marks as part of a domain name
 - may not use the marks in a tag line to the name of the school, such as “ABC School, A Waldorf-Inspired School”.

There are some common phrases that are likely to lead to confusion. For instance, "Waldorf teacher" is ambiguous. The phrase could refer to a teacher who is fully certified from a Waldorf teacher education institute. But it could have a variety of other possible meanings, such as a teacher who had merely read some of the writings of Rudolf Steiner or who had taught in a Waldorf school. Because of the different possible meanings of "Waldorf teacher," it is preferable to use "Class teacher" or "Handwork teacher", or other such specific descriptions.

Why is protection of the mark “Waldorf” important?

The purpose of protecting a mark is to ensure clarity of the meaning for the “public”. The intention of stewarding the marks “Waldorf”, ”Steiner” and “Rudolf Steiner” is to keep the meaning clear on behalf of this education.

If we have questions, whom should we contact?

If there is any question about whether the Mark usage is correct, please contact Frances Kane, Leader of Association Administration at fkane@awsna.org.

Note:

These guidelines are just guidelines and not a definitive statement of all possible misuses of the terms WALDORF and RUDOLF STEINER. The Association will continue to develop these guidelines and may modify them from time to time as necessary.

**Association of Waldorf Schools
Of North America**
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Minneapolis, MN 55404

**Waldorf Early Childhood Association
of North America**
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Chestnut Ridge, NY 10977

WECAN Activity and Collegueship within Regions

WECAN members have many opportunities for leadership and collegueship within our Association and in collaboration with AWSNA here in North America and as members of the International Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Association (IASWECE) worldwide.

Regional gatherings and conferences offer important opportunities for colleagues to meet one another, share questions and experiences, and participate in deepening their work. In some regions, colleagues meet very informally in small gatherings; in other regions, these meetings have evolved into large regional conferences.

The WECAN Board has invited experienced Waldorf early childhood educators in each region to act as WECAN Regional Representatives. In most large geographic regions, there are teams of WECAN Regional Representatives. These Representatives, who serve the Waldorf early childhood movement as volunteers, act as speaking partners, supporting each other in meeting the regional responsibilities described below in the manner that best supports the needs of their particular region (or sub-region).

The responsibilities of the WECAN Regional Representatives are as follows:

- Welcome new initiatives through offering support and collegueship within the region
- Assist members on their steps on the membership path
- Contact members to explore activities and shared issues of concern
- Facilitate collaboration within the region, including a regional gathering of early childhood colleagues
- Act as a speaking partner to the AWSNA Regional Representative as needed
- Attend or help plan AWSNA regional meetings and/or conferences, helping to make sure that early childhood discussions or workshops are included
- Review Self-Studies and Site Visit reports, and make recommendations to the WECAN Membership Committee regarding applications for membership
- Help the WECAN Board in developing Membership criteria, Shared Principles, and guidelines for Site Visits, to be included in the WECAN Membership Handbook and as online resources.

A list of Regional Representatives for 2011-12 follows. Please contact them with questions or ideas for regional collaboration.

WECAN Regional Representatives 2011-12

NORTHEAST/QUEBEC

Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Rhode Island, and Vermont

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SOUTHEAST

Alabama, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia

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GREAT LAKES

Ontario and Western New York

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The International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education

WECAN is a Full Member Association in the International Association for Steiner/ Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE), based in Järna, Sweden. IASWECE was founded in 1967 as the International Waldorf Kindergarten Association and was re-founded in 2006, moving its legal location from Germany to Sweden.

Member Associations include those of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, North America, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russia, Spain, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom. Each of these Member Associations has a representative on the IASWECE Council.

The activities of the International Association include the following:

- Cooperation among colleagues throughout the world through meetings, conferences, working groups, etc., such as the World Early Childhood Conference in Wilton, NH, in August 2008
- Deepening and renewing the work with the young child out of the sources of Waldorf education and support for its quality
- Fostering training and continuing development of caregivers and early childhood educators
- Undertaking and supporting collaborative research on contemporary questions about the care and education of the young child
- Supporting collaboration with parents, other educators and the wider society on the needs of the young child
- Protecting the name of Steiner/Waldorf early childhood education
- Providing resources, information and publications on Waldorf early childhood education and its programs worldwide
- Offering support – pedagogical and financial – for projects in countries around the world.

WECAN Developing and Full Member programs and training centers are listed in the World Directory. WECAN Members provide a membership contribution each year as part of their WECAN dues, to support the activities of the International Association.

Susan Howard and Louise deForest represent North America in the Council of the International Association, which meets twice each year in various member countries. They share a picture of the work in North America with the wider international circle, and report to WECAN Members on the activities of the International Association. Susan Howard is also a member of the two-person IASWECE Coordinating Group responsible for facilitating the activities of the International Association.

Further information on IASWECE can be found at www.iaswece.org.

Collaboration with the Association of Waldorf Schools (AWSNA)

Although not all WECAN Members are affiliated with AWSNA, the AWSNA membership path provides a context for the WECAN procedures described in this WECAN Membership Handbook.

AWSNA recognizes the importance of early childhood work as a basis for healthy school development, and has invited WECAN to take an active role in advising new and developing early childhood initiatives in a collaborative effort to support the growth and development of Waldorf education.

WECAN and AWSNA have established a cooperative process for integrating membership processes for WECAN Full Membership renewal and AWSNA accreditation. For details, please contact the WECAN Membership Coordinator.

For further information on AWSNA and its Membership Handbook, visit www.awsna.org or call the AWSNA Administrative Office in Minneapolis, MN, at 612-870-8310.

Contacting us at WECAN: Board and Staff Members

THE WECAN BOARD

The WECAN Board comprises experienced early childhood educators from throughout North America. The Board has a four-day annual meeting each November and an additional meeting in the spring. Its various committees – Finance, Personnel, Board Development, Conference Planning, Development/Fundraising, Membership, and Publications – are active throughout the year in a number of ways.

Board members and other WECAN colleagues participate in our WECAN Working Groups to deepen aspects of our educational work and prepare the results for publication in WECAN Books and *Gateways*. The Board also acts as an organ of perception for the needs of the Waldorf early childhood movement and takes initiative in hosting conferences, publishing WECAN Books, and collaborating with AWSNA.

The current members of the Board are Susan Howard (Chair), Nancy Blanning, Louise deForest (Secretary), Andrea Gambardella (Treasurer), Annie Gross, Ruth Ker, and Patricia Lambert.

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THE WECAN STAFF

WECAN Coordinator Susan Howard has a home office in Amherst, Massachusetts, where she works on a half-time basis for WECAN, and half-time for the International Association (IASWECE).

WECAN Administrator Melissa Lyons works in the WECAN Office in Spring Valley, NY, on a full-time basis.

WECAN Membership Coordinator Nancy Foster works on a part-time basis in her home office in Washington, DC.

WECAN Membership Administrator Susan Wallendorf works on a part-time basis in her home office in Baltimore, MD.

WECAN Publications Manager Lory Widmer works part-time for WECAN in Spring Valley, NY. She assists Nancy Blanning, editor of *Gateways*, and prepares our WECAN Books for publication.

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