



# **2011-2012 Lower School Handbook**

## **WWS MISSION STATEMENT**

*The Washington Waldorf School cultivates each student's capacity to think clearly, feel compassionately, and act purposefully in the world. We are committed to the educational movement inspired by the pioneering work of Rudolf Steiner and advanced by Waldorf teachers worldwide.*

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**Note to Parents:** There is a lot of important and interesting information within the pages of this handbook.

**Please pay careful attention to: Attendance and Expectations and Health and Safety**

Thank you and happy reading!

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Washington Waldorf School! You and your child are now part of an educational movement that includes close to a thousand Waldorf schools worldwide. The faculty, parents, students, and friends of our school together strive to create a caring, harmonious community to support the education and well being of each child. We hope this Lower School Handbook for WWS families will provide practical information and clarify our school's organization, policies, and procedures. We also hope that it will act as an invitation for you to explore your personal connection to the School, thereby deepening and enriching your life, the life of your family, and the life of the School.

### Waldorf Education

Waldorf education is based on the work and insights of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), an Austrian social philosopher, artist, scientist, and educator. Our school aspires to provide an education arising from knowledge of the path of human development, reflecting the full spiritual, intellectual, and physical development of the whole child. This understanding of human nature -- as developed and expressed by Rudolf Steiner -- is known as Anthroposophy (derived from the Greek words for human being (*anthropos*) and wisdom (*sophia*)). Anthroposophy is not taught to the students, but it forms the foundation out of which our school was founded and continues.

Waldorf education recognizes that human life proceeds in developmental stages during which different approaches to learning are appropriate. The curriculum, teaching methods, lesson structure, and the very essence of what is taught and when—which make up the pedagogy—reflect both the developmental stages and the needs of the individual child. The School helps children to:

- Live in a world of wonder and imitation in the Children's Garden
- Learn through imagination and their relationship with each other and with the loving authority of their teacher in the Lower School
- Move through purposeful activity and earnest involvement toward clear thinking and sound judgment in the High School.

Teachers provide a thorough academic training, uniting the humanities (history, art, and foreign languages) with mathematics and the sciences. Whatever the subject of a particular lesson, teachers seek to make it come vividly and dramatically alive. They also support the inner development of the child through imaginative, artistic, and reflective

lessons. The school day flows with a natural rhythm, alternating vigorous with quiet activities, and teachers strive to involve the head, heart, and hands in each day's work.

Overall, a Waldorf education prepares students to enter adulthood with clear thinking, a broad range of knowledge and experience, social awareness, self-discipline, and a wonder and reverence for the world. The School strives to help students develop a quiet, yet unshakable self-confidence based on ideas and ideals that foster their capacity to perceive clearly, judge fairly, act effectively, and create freely.

Parents often have questions about the role of religion in our school. WWS is not connected with a particular church and does not teach religion to the children. The curriculum does, however, address deep and profound questions about the history of civilization, which has a spiritual dimension.

Teachers strive to foster attitudes of wonder, awe, reverence, and gratitude, as well as a respect for nature and one's fellow human beings. These lay the foundation for spiritual feeling, and are common to all religions and great philosophies. This is done in part through developing a healthy relationship to the cycles of life as reflected in the changing seasons. The School marks the changing seasons of the year with special festivals and celebrations discussed in pages 28-33 of this Handbook. The School celebrates, in a non-denominational way, festivals drawn primarily from Christian and other Western spiritual-cultural traditions. The broad scope of the curriculum also recognizes and celebrates varied cultural and religious expressions. Waldorf schools in other parts of the world may feature Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu or other festivals. The School seeks to help children of all religious backgrounds feel included and valued, and encourages parents to share aspects of their religious traditions that might add to the richness of our experience of the seasons.

## **About Our School**

In September 1969, a dream long held in the hearts of a handful of people became a reality. The first class of the Washington Waldorf School, with eleven students, began in a sunny room of a church at the DC-Maryland line. A year later, the School moved to a building on the grounds of the National Cathedral, and eventually grew to two preschool classes and eight grades. In 1982, the School leased a building from Montgomery County with six acres of land, the former Brookmont Elementary School at 4800 Sangamore Road, its present location. The first High School class began its studies in 1984.

Today, WWS has several parent/child classes for children from infancy to when they enter the Children's Garden, two Children's Garden classes, with mixed ages from three up to seven years old, a Lower School with one class each from Grades 1 to 8, and a High School for Grades 9 to 12. Our school serves students from throughout the metropolitan Washington area, which includes many international families and children from various social, ethnic, religious, and economic backgrounds. The Washington Waldorf School is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization and a member of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA), Independent Education, the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), and the Washington Small Schools Association (WSSA). The Lower School and the High School are approved by the Maryland State Department of

Education and have received a joint accreditation from the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and AWSNA. The Maryland Department of Education licenses the Children's Garden as a childcare center.

## SCHEDULES

### Daily Schedules

#### **Grades 1-6**

8:30- 10:30 Main Lessons  
10:30-11:00 Morning Recess  
11:00-11:40 Period 2  
11:45-12:30 Period 3  
12:30-1:10 Lunch & Recess  
1:15-1:55 Period 4  
2:00-2:45 Period 5  
2:45-3:00 Dismissal

#### **Grades 7-8**

8:15-8:40 Movement or Music  
8:45-10:15 Main Lessons  
10:15-10:25 Break  
10:30-11:25 Period 1  
11:30-12:25 Period 2  
12:30-1:10 Lunch & Recess  
1:15-1:55 Period 3  
2:00-2:40 Period 4  
2:45-3:00 Dismissal

Grade 1 dismisses at 12:30 on Wednesdays.

An aftercare program is available in the classroom until 3:00.

Aftercare for Grades 1-6 is available from 3:00-6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

*Waldorf education addresses the child as no other education does. Learning, whether in chemistry, mathematics, history or geography, is imbued with life and so with joy, which is the only true basis for later study. The textures and colors of nature, the accomplishments and struggles of humankind fill the Waldorf students' imaginations and the pages of their beautiful books. Education grows into a union with life that serves them for decades. By the time they reach us at the college and university level, these students are grounded broadly and deeply and have a remarkable enthusiasm for learning. Such students possess the eye of the discoverer, and the compassionate heart of the reformer which, when joined to a task, can change the planet.*

Arthur Zajonc, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Physics, Amherst College

**See WWS Calendar  
(Shown Separately)**

## ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

### Daily Attendance & Hours

Students are expected to be on time. Lower School hours for Grades 1–6 are 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and for Grades 7–8 are 8:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Classes begin promptly. Students should arrive in the morning 10 or 15 minutes prior to the start of classes to ensure that they are settled and ready for the day. **The School cannot assume responsibility for students who arrive before 8:00 a.m.** Lower School students who are late should report to the Lower School office and sign in. Transportation to and from School is each family's responsibility, and we expect families to make and adjust transportation arrangements so that students will be present for the beginning of class each day.

All students should be picked up from school by 3:20 p.m., or within 20 minutes of dismissal, unless they are involved in an **adult-supervised** after-school activity. WWS cannot provide supervision or assume responsibility for students who remain after school, or past the conclusion of an after-school activity. Parents should also arrange transportation so that students can leave the school grounds promptly at the end of after-school activities. Once a child leaves campus at the end of the day, he or she should not return except for a specific WWS function.

### Absence due to Illness or Emergency

**Please call the Front Office by 8:30 a.m. if your child is in Grades 1–6, or by 8:15 for Grades 7-8, when your child is not coming to school because of illness or an emergency.** You may also email Stacey Kornegay, skornegay@washingtonwaldorf.org. If your child has a communicable disease, please notify the office of your child's illness so that for we can let other parents in the same class know that there is a particular illness in the class.

### Planned Absence

Please schedule routine dental and medical appointments after regular school hours (half days and vacation days are a good time for these appointments). Family vacations should be scheduled around the School Calendar. **Please discuss any planned absence with your child's class teacher and notify the Front Office at least two weeks prior to an absence.** Also discuss arrangements for making up missed work.

Tardiness is recorded when a student arrives after class has begun. Classes do not begin before their scheduled times.

A student who is tardy is expected to sign in at the front office before going to his or her classroom. This will ensure the student is marked "present" for the day and that the student is accounted for in the case of emergency and fire drills and real emergencies.

Students arriving late for a class should respect the classroom and recognize that entering late may be disruptive to the class. Teachers may, at their discretion, ask students who are late to wait outside to be admitted at a less disruptive time. The student should then wait quietly on the bench outside the classroom until the teacher opens the door and/or invites the student to enter.

**A pattern of unexcused absences or tardiness is disruptive to a child's relationship with the class and to learning and will need to be addressed.**

### **School Closures**

**If Montgomery County Public Schools announces a late opening (of any length of time) due to inclement weather**, then WWS will open its doors at 9:45 a.m. and LS classes will begin at 10:00 a.m. Please do not drop off your children before 9:45 a.m.

**Note that this is different from Montgomery County Public Schools, which open at 10:30 when there is a delayed opening.**

**If Montgomery County Public Schools announces that schools will be closed due to inclement weather**, then WWS will be closed.

**If Montgomery County Public Schools announces early closing due to inclement weather**, then WWS will permit students to be picked up early by an authorized adult. **Aftercare will not be available after 3:00 p.m.**

**If Montgomery County Public Schools are operating on a regular schedule**, then please note that in the event of snow, ice or other emergency, parents may arrange for students to leave school early. However, students should not solicit early dismissal from their parents, and may not use school phones or cell phones to do so.

**In the event of an emergency or potential emergency related to impending severe weather or security issues (i.e. tornado or police event)**, WWS will follow our internal guidelines and notify students and parents as soon as possible of our plans for managing the specific situation. WWS has a flexible emergency response plan, with options including lockdown and evacuation that we will tailor to meet the demands of a particular situation as it evolves. If you would like more information about our emergency response plan, please contact the Facilities Director, John Cox.

#### ***Montgomery County Public Schools Announcements:***

Radio stations WETA 90.0 FM and WGMS 103.5 FM and WTOP 1500 AM  
www.schoolsout.com (also offers free email and cell phone notification service)  
www.mcps.k12.md.us (official Montgomery County website)

You can always call the School at (301) 299-6107 for a recorded message in regards to closing or late opening.

## Visitors

From time to time, students and/or adults will visit the Lower School during the regular school day. Most of these visitors will be prospective students, prospective parents or educators. Visitors are expected to sign-in at the front office.

## Other Visits

The school sees pure social visits during classes as an obstacle to the learning and therefore only allows such visits to take place during lunch recesses. All visits to classes by **former students** must be requested by parents well in advance of the requested date/s. They will be permitted if approved by class teacher and subject teachers and only for the latter part of any given week.

**Visits of former students from a distance** must essentially conform to these rules but may be slightly modified case by case and is decided by the LSAC (Lower School Administrative Circle) in conjunction with class teachers and subject teachers. As there is a difference between grades 1-5 and grades 6-8 in terms of academic load, schedules and nature of instruction, we permit of maximum three (3) days in grades 1-5 and two (2) days in grades 6-7. The parents must fill in and sign the LS VISIT PERMISSION form in advance and make sure that the student is well informed of the conditions for the visit.

**Extended visits** (beyond 2 or 3 days in respective groupings) must involve complete engagement in the curriculum, enrollment and all the necessary paperwork with the business office. Additional conditions may be established by separate class teachers for their classes due to specific circumstances, but may not abrogate this policy. Subject teachers have the privilege to refuse visits in their classes of visiting students because the nature of their subjects and to protect the integrity of their teaching.

This policy is separate from visits by prospective students.

## STUDENT LIFE, POLICIES, AND EXPECTATIONS

### Media Statement

**Washington Waldorf School is committed to fostering children's capacities for imagination, warm interaction, independent thinking, and healthy feeling. As we acknowledge the weakening effects that media, including television, video games, the Internet, and radio can have on the development of those capacities, we strongly discourage media exposure from the daily experience of our students. Children are deeply affected by images and they carry these images into their play and conversations, which then influences other children as well.**

**As students move into the high school, computers will be used, thus exposing them to computer programs and word processing as is appropriate and needed for their school work.**

**So, at the core of our philosophy stands our intention to provide education most fitting to the student's developmental stages. We strongly encourage you to learn more about effects of media. Below please find a list of good literature on the subject.**

### **Recommended Reading**

The following books, available in our school library, are suggested for those interested in pursuing this subject further:

- Alliance for Childhood. *Tech Tonic, Towards a New Literacy of Technology.*  
PC TEC
- Alison Armstrong. *The Child and the Machine.* TC 317.13 ARM
- Keith Buzzard. *The Children of Cyclops: the Influence of Television Viewing on the Developing Human Brain.* PC BUZ
- Jane Healy. *Failure to Connect: How Computers Affect our Children's Minds, for Better and Worse.* TC 371.33 HEA
- Jane Healy. *Endangered Minds.* PC HEA
- Frances Moore Lappe. *What to Do After You Turn Off the TV.* PC LAP
- Martin Large. *Who's Bringing Them Up: Television and Child Development.* PC LAR
- Jerry Mander. *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television.* PC MAN
- Marie McClendon. *Alternatives to TV Handbook.* PC MCC
- Steve Talbott. *Devices of the Soul: Battling for Ourselves in the Age of Machines.*  
PC TAL
- Steve Talbott. *The Future Does Not Compute: Transcending the Machines in Our Midst.* PC TAL
- Waldorf High School Research Project. *Colloquium on Computer and Information Technology.* TC 004 WAL
- Joan Wilkins. *Breaking the TV Habit.* PC WIL
- Marie Winn. *The Plug-in Drug.* PC WIN
- Marie Winn. *Unplugging the Plug-in Drug.* PC WIN

## **Keyboarding**

Keyboarding proficiency is a prerequisite for ninth grade in order that students will be able to participate fully in the ninth grade technology program, which includes word processing and preparing research papers using the computer. In addition, high school students are generally allowed and often encouraged to word process take-home assignments.

Keyboarding proficiency is best achieved by consistent practice. We suggest the home use of software such as Mavis Beacon for students to learn proper keyboarding technique and to develop proficiency.

## **Posting Photos and Videos on the Web**

Photos and videos of students on websites such as YouTube or Facebook may not be posted without the expressed permission of those persons involved. Any photos or videos of students that are posted should be kept in restricted access areas.

## **Cell Phones**

Students may have cell phones in school, as long as the phones are turned off and stored out of sight during the school day. Students must turn off cell phones before entering the building in the morning, and may not turn them on again (not to call, not to answer, not for voice mail, not for email, not to text message, etc.) until after 3:15 p.m. Lower School students must make their calls outside the building and away from the younger students. Parents may send urgent messages about transportation/carpools, appointments, and the like to students through the LS office during the school day, and can certainly instruct students to check cell phone messages after dismissal each day. Cell phones that ring, vibrate, flash, send/receive text messages, or are used in any way during the school day will be confiscated and stored in the LS Office until the end of the school day, at which time it will be the student's responsibility to pick up the phone again. A corresponding behavior report will be sent to parents, and repeated infractions will lead to disciplinary action.

While the School will make every reasonable effort to store confiscated items securely until safe return to the student or parent, WWS will not assume liability for any such item.

## **Personal Listening Devices (including iPods and other mp3 players)**

Students may not use personal listening devices of any kind on campus at any time unless otherwise instructed by a faculty member (for educational purposes); this includes

activities such as the Bazaar. If a personal listening device is brought to school, the student must turn the device off and put it away (including any headphones or earbuds) and must not turn it on again until he or she is off campus. Personal listening devices are also not allowed at extra-curricular activities, or on school trips. This includes sports. A student may not have a personal listening device (including headphones, or ear buds) out or on while he or she is under the supervision of a coach or other WWS faculty, even at an off-campus site.

Any device used in violation of this policy will be confiscated and stored in the safest possible location at the discretion of the faculty member or coach. While the School will make every reasonable effort to store confiscated items securely until safe return to the student or parent, WWS will not assume liability for any such item.

### **Other Electronics**

See the above policies with regard to cell phones and personal listening devices. Students may not use other electronic devices in school, on school trips, or at school-sponsored events without the specific, expressed permission of the faculty. "Electronic devices" includes cameras, televisions, video and DVD players, radios, laptops, PDA's, Bluetooth devices, game systems, and handheld gaming devices.

### **Code of Compassion Developed by the Student Social Action Committee**

- R**esponsibility for your actions
- E**verybody matters
- S**tand up and support each other
- P**lay fairly and with kindness
- E**very word counts
- C**alm reactions
- T**reat others the way they wish to be treated

## **Social Health: A Diverse and Inclusive Community**

*We celebrate our common humanity and strive to work harmoniously with one another in an inclusive, supportive, and diverse community. To that end, we cultivate generosity of spirit, kindness, and civility among students, parents, teachers, and staff. (WWS Strategic Plan 2009-2014)*

At the Washington Waldorf School, we are committed to actively creating a culture of courtesy, respect, and kindness. We understand that this is the work of the entire community, parents, students, and teachers alike. We also believe that in its healthy form, conflict can be the impetus for human growth and development, and that children cannot be expected to mature without learning how to work through conflict in a constructive way. This includes the ability to stand up to, transform, and reduce aggressive behavior. In order for a healthy social life to exist within which the students can feel safe and grow, we are establishing procedures to deal with teasing, bullying, and conflict amongst students. To that end, the faculty at WWS has embarked on the Social Inclusion School Community Training offered by Kim John Payne, through *The Child Today*. (see [www.thechildtoday.com](http://www.thechildtoday.com)) This year begins the third of the three year program.

The faculty has undertaken increased activities to support a positive social culture in the school. This includes working consciously with courtesy, such as friendly greetings and holding doors open for others. There are many pedagogical tools that the LS faculty is reviewing and deepening, including constructing classroom codes of conduct that encourage politeness and kindness. We ask that everyone regard and speak of other parents, students and teachers respectfully, particularly in front of children.

If a parent hears of an incident where his or her child has been hurt by the words or behavior of another child, we encourage the parent to remain calm and listen carefully to what their child has to say. Please bring to the attention of your child's class teacher anything that you believe is unresolved for your child. It is not always easy to find out what has happened in a particular situation, but the teacher will make every effort to find a resolution. The teacher will also keep a record of such instances in the front office, so that it will be possible to see if patterns emerge over time.

If a proper resolution has not been found or there appears to be a pattern of conflict between two children, the teacher, if other than the class teacher, will talk to the class teacher and will report to the Lower School Chair. Together they will consider next what steps can be taken to address a situation, in consultation with other teachers or members of the SHCG, the Social Health Coordinating Group.

In a situation where this intervention proves insufficient and there appears to be an entrenched pattern of conflict or meanness, the entire matter will be referred to the SHCG for action. **The Chair of the Social Health Coordinating Group is Dawn Fox.** The SHCG consists of the Faculty Chair, the Chairs of the CG, LS and HS, and where possible one additional faculty member of each of the departments.

In a situation that requires intervention or close monitoring the SHCG will bring together a team to address the specific issues. This will include such things as meeting, with the students in conflict and with their parents, developing strategies for school and at home, and following up with teachers and parents.

At any time, if a student does something that violates the Code of Conduct (See page 15), it becomes not just a social health issue but a disciplinary one as well. We also recognize, particularly in the younger grades that certain social difficulties may arise due to a child's need for therapeutic intervention. A student will then be referred to the Care Group (See page 21), which will also work with the parents to find ways to support and help a child so that he or she can more easily overcome behaviors that cause conflict.

The Student Social Action Committee (SAC), sponsored by Dawn Fox, Chair of the SHCG, is made up of representative students in the eighth through twelfth grades. These students each work closely with one class, grades one through seven to support positive social interactions among the students. They keep a friendly eye on their respective classes during lunch recess, bring issues through skits and other formats, and are there to help dispel situations of social tension. They have developed the above Code of Compassion, which will be shared with the lower grades.

### **Staying Connected: How Can I Stay Connected and When I Have an Issue, Where Do I Go?**

We are all responsible for the social health of our community. Knowing how to deal with concerns that come up in the course of your child's time at the School has an enormous effect on the atmosphere in which everyone in the community thrives: students, parents, and faculty. Communicating with your children's teachers is important. If your child is unhappy or if you have questions or concerns about what is happening in a particular class, please make every effort to speak to the teacher directly. If you would like support in sitting down and speaking with a teacher, you may speak to your child's class teacher or the Lower School Chair, Tove Elfstrom. If you do not feel that an issue has been resolved properly, you are always welcome to come and speak to the Faculty Chair, Natalie Adams, or if the issue is of a social nature, speak with the SHCG Chair, Dawn Fox. Over the years many issues have been resolved through this sort of communication. The Faculty Chair also works with the College of Teachers, which addresses issues through its procedures for mentoring and evaluations.

If you have questions about Waldorf pedagogy in general, we have an excellent selection of books for parents in the library. Susan Walsh, our librarian is more than willing to help you find a book or article that addresses your interests. We are also fortunate to have a foundations study course through Antioch College offered at WWS, which explores the basic insights of anthroposophy through art and study. If you are interested, please contact Cynthia Bennett at [bennettca@comcast.net](mailto:bennettca@comcast.net). Other study opportunities such as evening and daytime lectures or workshops are regularly announced in the Bulletin.

There are many ways you to stay in touch with the School. Volunteering through the Parent Organization is one excellent way to connect with the School community. Please fill

out the PO volunteer form to let them know your interests. If you have a particular area of expertise that could help on a committee of the Trustees Council, please, inform the Trustees Council Chair, through the Faculty Chair.

Reading the Bulletin is important to keeping current with what is happening at the School. You can also suggest topics for articles in the Bulletin to Maria Monteverde Jackson in the Development Office. The Faculty Chair hosts a monthly coffee in the library at drop-off. You are welcome to suggest topics for discussion at the monthly tea and coffee with the Faculty Chair.

Attending all class parent evenings is essential to forming a strong class parent body. If you wish to discuss a particular topic at a class parent evening, please let your child's class teacher know in advance of the meeting.

### **Standards of Conduct for Lower School Students**

In order to provide a safe, positive learning environment and to develop personal responsibility in age-appropriate ways, the Lower School has developed standards of conduct for our students.

We expect that students will:

- Engage in all classes in a positive manner. This includes their attentiveness, posture, attitude, and their participation.
- Be respectful, cooperative, and honest with faculty members and their fellow students
- Be punctual in attending classes
- Abide by the WWS dress code without reminder
- Show responsibility for their own property, that of others, and of the School's
- Not engage in, or encourage disruptive, vulgar, or dangerous behavior.

Disruptive behavior includes:

- Talking in class without faculty permission, passing notes, or distracting others with non-verbal communication or gestures.
- Running or engaging in loud behavior in the hallways without faculty permission
- Interrupting teachers or answering in an argumentative manner
- Throwing things in class without faculty permission
- Teasing or criticizing other students
- Use of electronic devices at school without faculty permission (see use of cell phones and other electronic devices on pages 11-12)
- Eating in class without faculty permission

Vulgar behavior includes:

- Use of profanity or other inappropriate language

- Name-calling, ethnic slurs, or sexual remarks
- Use of profane gestures or the commission of profane acts
- Spitting.

Dangerous behavior includes:

- Possession and/or use of weapons to include firearms, knives, matches, or lighters. Students may use knives when given permission by a faculty member
- Possession and/or use of tobacco, illegal drugs, or alcohol
- Fighting, pushing, or otherwise striking another person
- Improper use of fire extinguishers and fire alarms
- Intimidating, threatening, or bullying another person
- Use of windows as exits in other than an emergency or practice emergency situation
- Throwing rocks, sticks, or snowballs
- Climbing trees or onto the roofs of the School, trailers, or playhouse
- Sledding.

A student in violation of the above standards may face discipline. Supportive discipline will take place within the classroom to guide students toward positive behavior. Children needing to compose themselves may be sent to the hallway briefly. Students demonstrating inappropriate social or classroom conduct will be sent to the office and remain there until the end of the class period. If this is a recurring event, parents will be notified initially with a phone call.

When addressing student violations in standards of conduct, it is within a teacher's discretion to initiate a **Behavior Review Process** or write a **Behavior Report**. Parent communication is an important part of either process so that parents and teachers can work together.

### **Behavior Review Process**

This is relevant for students in the second half of Grade 5 through Grade 8. An initial phone call will be made to the parents regarding the situation. Nevin Bender, the Discipline Coordinator, will work with the student to form a positive goal statement for a particular offending behavior and set a time frame for the review process itself. During this time, each of the student's teachers will assess his/her daily progress in relation to the stated goal. If the student does not show reasonable and consistently improved behavior, a parent conference will be scheduled. At this time the next appropriate step will be determined. A Behavior Report may also be written.

### **Behavior Report**

This is relevant for students in Grades 3-8.

A phone call will be made to the parent(s) followed by a written report describing student's inappropriate behavior. These reports are reviewed by the teachers as needed, but they do not become a part of the student's permanent record, nor are they reported on a transcript.

The School may, at its discretion, place on probation, suspend or expel any student whose academic or social conduct is deemed below the standards required by the School. In addition to breaches of conduct, excessive absences or persistent neglect of assigned work may result in disciplinary action. All students are required to participate in the full program unless a written excuse is provided and accepted by the faculty.

**Probation:**

A class teacher or faculty department chairperson may place a student on probation in the following cases:

- A student has not lived up to the reasonable expectations of the teacher(s)
- A student's misbehavior breaks the standards of conduct for the School.

**Suspension:**

A teacher, in consultation with the class teacher and the faculty department chairperson may suspend a student (require him or her to stay home for a specific period of time) for any of the following reasons:

- A pattern of misbehavior in the classroom or social setting
- Disregard for the standards of conduct of the School
- To allow the faculty time to decide if expulsion is warranted or to plan strategies for the student's return.

Individual teachers or faculty may suspend students immediately in cases of field trips or other off-campus activities where immediate action is deemed to be in the best interest of the School and other students.

**Expulsion:**

A permanent and formal separation from the School may be a result of the following:

- A student has habitually disregarded the standards of conduct to such a degree that reconciliation is not within reach;
- A student's behavior reflects a negative attitude toward the expectations of the School to such a degree that fruitful learning and growth are not possible;
- The School is convinced that a student and/or his or her parents no longer share the ideals of the School;
- Conditions of academic or social probation are not met.

A decision of expulsion will be made by the college of teachers.

## **Lower School Dress Code**

Proper school attire promotes self-respect and a positive attitude. Students should wear clothing that is clean, neat, modest, and suitable for the activity and the season. Because clothing is part of the class environment, we expect our dress policy to help create an

atmosphere conducive to learning, focusing attention on the students and not their clothing.

**General:**

- Clothing should be reasonably free of holes and tears.
- Please label clothing, especially outerwear, with student’s name.

**Outerwear:**

- Students must wear weather-appropriate clothing. In wet weather, send a raincoat with a hood or hat, and boots. Shorts are not acceptable in cold weather.
- In warm sunny weather, hats and sunscreen are recommended.

**Indoor Clothing:**

- Shorts and skirts must reach at least halfway down the thigh.
- Midriffs, lower backs, and navels must be covered. The upper and lower garments must meet at all times.
- Undergarments (including bras, bra straps, boxers or underpants) may not be visible at any time.
- No spaghetti straps.
- Team members may wear WWS athletic uniforms on game days.
- WWS T-shirts and sweatshirts may be worn.

Grades 1-5	Grades 6-8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Text on clothing is not permitted, either on indoor wear, or on outerwear (coats, jackets, sweatshirts and hats) if worn indoors.</li> <li>• Clothing with solid colors, overall patterns, stripes, and soft images from nature are allowed.</li> <li>• Cartoon characters are not permitted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tight fitting clothing such as dance and exercise wear, leggings and “jeggings” are not allowed without an over-layer that extends down to the thigh.</li> <li>• Sweatpants and pajamas are not allowed (an exception will be made for WWS team members on game days).</li> <li>• Necklines must be modest (cleavage must not show).</li> <li>• <b>Grade 6:</b> Clothing with school-appropriate, inoffensive pictures or photographic images is permitted.</li> <li>• <b>Grades 7-8:</b> Clothing with pictures or photographic images and/or text is permitted, however it must be free of inappropriate or offensive references.</li> </ul>

**Shoes:**

- Shoes should be appropriate to the day’s activities (i.e., athletic shoes for movement /games class, close-toed shoes for woodwork class).
- Wheelies, shoes with flashing lights, flip-flops and crocs are not permitted.

Grades 1-5	Grades 6-8
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All shoes must have a full back or a fastened heel strap.</li> <li>• Heels above 1" are not permitted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heels up to 2" are permitted when they are appropriate for and don't interfere with the classes and activities of the day.</li> </ul>
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**Hair, Makeup, and Jewelry:**

- Hair should be neatly groomed, not cover the student's eyes or be a source of distraction to the student.
- Head coverings, including hats, unless for religious or pedagogical reasons, or to prevent catching head lice are not allowed in the classroom.
- Students may not wear sunglasses indoors.
- Temporary tattoos are not permitted on the face and a student may be asked to remove a temporary tattoo if the teacher deems it to be a distraction.
- Only modest jewelry is permitted.

<b>Grades 1-5</b>	<b>Grades 6-8</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cosmetics and nail polish are not permitted in school.</li> <li>• Hair coloring is not permitted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate cosmetics and nail polish are permitted.</li> <li>• "Natural" hair coloring is permitted.</li> <li>• No piercings other than earlobes are permitted.</li> </ul>

**Festival and Concert Dress:**

The Music Director and/or the LS office will tell students when concert dress is (or is not) required for performances and other events.

Concert Dress for Boys

- Black trousers (not jeans).
- White, collared shirt.
- Black dress shoes (no sneakers, no flip-flops) and black socks.

Concert Dress for Girls

- Black, loose fitting pants/slacks, or long skirt.
- White blouse.
- Black, low-heeled dress shoes (no sneakers, no flip-flops, no high platforms).

**The faculty reserves the right to decide if dress and appearance create an issue or constitute a distraction. If a student is not dressed appropriately, they may be asked to modify their appearance, or in extreme cases, parents may be called to bring a change of clothing before the student is permitted in the classroom. Dress code violations in Grades 6-8 are subject to the discipline code.**

## **Campus Use**

The members of our school community have a responsibility not only to each other, but also to the surrounding neighborhood. The following rules apply to activities on WWS grounds during school hours:

- Tree climbing, sledding, or playing on or with neighbors' fences are prohibited.
- Bicycles, scooters, and skateboards may not be ridden on school grounds during school hours. Unicycles are allowed only under the supervision of a teacher, and a helmet must be worn.
- Students are not permitted on the lower field without permission, no matter what the purpose. Football and soccer are permitted on the lower field only with adult supervision.
- Shirts and shoes must be worn at all times.
- Gum chewing is prohibited in school and on school grounds.
- Throwing of snowballs, pinecones, acorns, or other such items is not allowed.

No student may leave the school grounds at any time during the school day without written permission from parents, except when a parent telephones the School in the case of an emergency.

Students are expected to behave appropriately on the playground with respect to dress, language, property, and cooperation with others.

During the school day, the outside area of the campus that LS students may use is the blacktop area and the green areas directly adjacent to the blacktop. Unless given specific authorization by a faculty member, students in Grades 2-8 are not permitted on the first grade playground. Children are not permitted to roam the grounds unattended by a faculty member.

Unless specifically directed or accompanied by a faculty member, the following areas are off-limits to Lower School students during the school day:

- The front parking lot, the HS parking lot, all cars
- The woods bordering the school grounds, including the Grade 1 playground
- The tennis court, the lower field, and the lower portion of the hill leading to the lower field
- The sidewalk and grassy area between the Grade 7/8 end of the building and Sangamore Road

### **Animals at School**

Visits by animals to our grounds during school hours are discouraged and, per Maryland law, dogs must be leashed and under close control at all times. Drop-off and pick-up are times of the day with much activity, and we expect animals to be kept out of high traffic situations. Animals are not permitted inside the building without prior written approval. If you would like to seek approval, please send your request to the Lower School Chair.

### **Trash and Recycling**

All students and faculty must dispose of trash in the trash bins and use the appropriate recycling bins for bottles (plastic and glass), cans, paper, and cardboard. Conscientiousness regarding the disposal of trash and recycling is essential to an ecologically safe and sound school environment.

### **Nutrition Guidelines**

At the Washington Waldorf School, teachers see that when children are provided wholesome and hearty meals they are more able to maintain the strength and focus required to meet the demands of the school day. We encourage all parents to provide their children with balanced meals composed of nutrient dense foods, while keeping to a minimum anything processed that contains additives. A thermos can be a wonderful way to provide optimal warm meals each day. Many resources on nutrition and food preparation can be found in our library.

### **Snacks & Lunch**

For Grades 1-6, there is a break from classes from 10:30-11:00am. Students have time for a snack followed by outdoor recess. Students in Grades **1-5** should bring a snack from home; those in Grade **6, 7 and 8** will be allowed to buy snack from the Kitchen. For Grades 7-8, the morning snack break is 10:15-10:30am. For all Lower School grades, lunch is from 12:30-1:10 p.m. every day and includes outdoor recess. For the lunch program grades 7-12 will walk through the kitchen line for their food, while the lower school will have theirs delivered to them.

If you are notified that your child forgot his or her lunch, or if you realize this after the start of the school day, you may deliver a lunch to the Front Office or call to make arrangements for lunch from the kitchen.

## **The Educational Support Program and the Care Group**

The work of the ***Educational Support Program*** is based on a Waldorf picture of child development. The educational support teacher conducts student assessments and gives individual and small group lessons on a limited basis. In this assessment the educational support teacher leads the student in a series of artistic, developmental, and movement activities based on Waldorf pedagogy. The assessments are done one-on-one and also by making observations of the student in the classroom and on the playground. The process is usually initiated by the class teacher as needed with parent permission and includes parent and teacher consultations. The assessment uncovers areas of strength and difficulty, as well as balance and imbalance in the child's development. The educational support teacher also reviews any prior testing done and identifies possible needs for specialized help outside the school setting. Specific recommendations to the parents and teachers are made for home, classroom, or further educational support as needed.

The educational support teacher also works in concert with a group of faculty members called the ***Care Group***, which serves as a resource for teachers in situations where students have extra academic or developmental needs and are having difficulty in the class setting because of such needs. In addition to study and child observation, the Care Group also oversees the First Grade Readiness Committee.

Building an educational support community is another important focus for the Care Group. Currently, a reading and math tutoring program, lead by a reading and math specialists, are offered in the lower grades. This program is partially funded from the operating budget and partially through fees charged to participating families. Two unique, anthroposophic therapies (therapeutic eurythmy and therapeutic work through music) are available at WWS on a private basis for students of any age. As a further resource for the faculty, the Care Group oversees a twice-yearly visit by a medical doctor, trained in anthroposophic medicine and child observation in the classroom setting. In these week-long visits, the faculty deepens its understanding of child development and educational support.

### **Educational Support Teacher – Mary Brauer**

**Care Group** – Mary Brauer, Barbara Buchman, Susan Walsh, Valerie Leblanc, Sheila Johns

### **Students with Learning Difficulties**

Waldorf education is artistic, interdisciplinary, multi-sensory, academic, practical, and social. Our curriculum unfolds according to the educational and emotional needs of the child's developmental stages. The foundations for working with a challenging curriculum in the middle and upper grades are laid in the Children's Garden, in the early grades, and in the home. Academics are strengthened and deepened in the middle grades. Social skills are expanded, and individual responsibility is encouraged. In the high school years the education builds on good work habits and emphasizes creative, independent thinking. Throughout, parental support of Waldorf education plays an essential role. The following points summarize our key policies and practices with respect to students with learning difficulties:

- A student's history and development, emotional and social well-being, health and sensory organization, intelligence, and academic stage are all part of our consideration in determining whether or not an individual student can be best served at the Washington Waldorf School.
- For students with learning difficulties, an actively supportive home environment is essential.
- Parents are required to provide the School with all reports and documentation of a student's learning difficulties or emotional difficulties, medical needs, and medications that may affect their child's ability to learn.
- Students are expected to fulfill their academic requirements. In order to do this, some students may need outside professional support, such as tutoring, at their parents' expense.
- In the upper grades, educational testing is needed for exemptions from academic requirements or other accommodations. Such exemptions may affect high school or college admissions.
- We may require, at the parents' expense, testing or assessments that will help the teachers better understand the student's particular learning challenges. Any changes in these assessments or subsequent testing must be provided as soon as available.

- Parents may seek additional professional advice and/or evaluation outside the school setting at any time.
- We will review and consider the results of any educational evaluations and determine if we can or cannot implement the recommendations.
- Our educational practices may not serve the needs of some students with learning difficulties.
- We cannot serve students who require a high level of individual instruction or personal attention.
- We cannot serve students who are unable to control their impulses or who present ongoing behavioral problems.
- We find that students who are unable to control their impulses or who present ongoing behavioral problems have difficulty with the social fabric and educational requirements of our classrooms. These students may be asked to find a different educational setting.
- We are not able to serve students whose needs conflict with our pedagogical approach or overextend our staff.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

### Health

Per State of Maryland law, **WWS must have a current Emergency Contact & Authorization for Emergency Treatment form and an immunization record for each student in order for the student to attend school.**

If a Lower School student is ill or injured during the school day, someone in the office or other faculty will provide very basic services consisting of cleaning, soothing, or icing to keep the child comfortable. When necessary, faculty will attempt to contact the student's parent(s) to inform or consult. We are not able to monitor and provide ongoing care for students who become ill during the school day, and parents will be expected to make arrangements for the student's transportation and care as appropriate. The School will call 911 if circumstances are questionable or require more care than we can provide. The School will make every attempt to contact and consult parents in cases of major injury or illness, and expects parents to make any arrangements necessary to meet the student and assume responsibility.

#### **Dispensing Medication at School**

WWS personnel can administer medication (over-the-counter, or prescription) to a student only when the student's physician and parent have authorized it. **We require the Medication Order Form to be filled in and on file before we will administer medication.** Children may not carry or self-administer any medication except an inhaler

or an epi-pen, for which the student must have authorization on file with the School from student's physician and parent.

The word "medication" is used in the most inclusive sense and refers to everything from readily available over-the-counter medications (such as aspirin and cough drops) to prescription drugs. If your child has a chronic medical condition (heart, asthma, diabetes, allergy to bee stings, etc.):

- Notify the School of these conditions upon enrollment.
- Bring medical forms and medication (if any) to School at the beginning of each school year.
- Update forms and replace medication as needed.

**Prescription medication must be provided in a container with the pharmacist's label and prescription information intact. Non-prescription medication must be brought to school unopened, with the manufacturer's original label and safety seal (if any) in place. Even non-prescription medications require a physician's authorization.**

Medications and notes must be delivered to the office by a parent or designated adult (car pool parent), and given **in person** to a member of the WWS faculty or staff in the Front Office. Delivery by a child is only acceptable in the case of children using public transportation. The school must have a confirming phone call by the parent or legal guardian for all medication delivered by a bus riding student.

Any changes in dosage, times, etc. must be made in writing with a date and signature by the parent and physician. If the parent does not pick up the medications upon completion of the prescription, the office staff will dispose of the medication.

All requests for the dispensing of medications must be renewed at the beginning of each school year.

Please note that a non-medical person would be administering medications (when authorized). If at all possible, please arrange the times of dosage so that medications will not have to be administered during class. In addition, no refrigeration is available for medication. Send an ice pack with medication, if necessary.

### **Absence Due to Illness**

Please call the School before 8:30 a.m. for Grades 1-6, and before 8:15 a.m. for Grades 7-8, if your child will be staying home due to illness. This gives the Front Office time to document and notify the class teacher before class begins.

### **Contagious Conditions**

We are required by the State of Maryland to track certain illnesses. If your child contracts a contagious condition, such as strep throat or chicken pox, please notify the Front Office as soon as possible. The School will send a fact sheet on the condition to the class parents, or sometimes the parents of the entire Lower School via email.

### **Emergency Contact and Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment Form**

Each child must have current Emergency Contact and Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment form on file in the School office. In case of a medical emergency, the School will first telephone a parent or guardian. If the family cannot be reached, the School will follow the instructions on this form. Please keep your child's medical information up to date with current doctors and phone numbers. Forms are mailed out each year in May, along with field trip permission slips, forms to update school records, and other important documents. Please complete and return them promptly. **Under Maryland law, we cannot permit your child to attend school if your child's Emergency Contact & Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment form is not up-to-date and on file in the School office.**

### **Immunization/Exemption Requirement**

WWS is subject to State of Maryland regulations regarding immunizations. Special exemptions from immunizations are possible. Please consult the Front Office with any questions. **Under Maryland law, we cannot permit your child to attend school if your child's immunization certification/exemption is not up-to-date and on file in the School office.**

### **Sleep**

Regularity in the lives of children is important. Regular bed times, regular mealtimes, and basic daily rhythms allow the child to get the most from each day and from Waldorf education. Please ensure that your child gets enough sleep. Speak to your class teacher if you have any questions.

## **Safety**

### **Drop-Off, Pickup and Parking**

Our school building and grounds were not designed with the challenges of commuter school drop off, pick up, and parking in mind. It is especially important to follow the plan below to insure safety and efficiency.

### **Flow of Traffic: Morning Drop-Off**

Morning traffic moves in two lanes: the inner lane closest to the building is for drop-off, both the middle and the outer lanes are for driving through and exiting. Pull up as far forward as possible when dropping off. Do not stop half way, or at the end of the seventh and eighth grade end of the building. If there is a long line of cars, please wait until you can pull farther forward before letting your child out of the car. Students being dropped off should exit the vehicle from the school side of their car not into the middle lane where cars drive through. Always drive slowly and attentively; not only are there school-age children present but often younger siblings as well. Please respect the stop sign. Do not leave your car unattended in the drop-off lane or where it blocks parked vehicles. Please do not park in the reserved spaces unless you won one of the spaces at the raffle.

### **Flow of Traffic: Afternoon Pickup**

Afternoon traffic moves in three lanes. The two outside lanes are for vehicles with drivers waiting to leave as soon as riders arrive. The center lane is for those passing through or exiting.

## **Parking**

### Guidelines for drivers

- Use the crosswalks at all times.
- Do not park on Sangamore Road in front of the School, as it is illegal during regular drop-off and pickup hours.
- Do not park in fire lanes at any time.
- Do not park in handicapped spaces without a handicap permit or in reserved parking.
- Parents, faculty, and students may be asked to not park on School grounds on certain occasions, such as election days or observation mornings.
- Do not pick up children by the driveway entrance.
- Note that on side streets, parking is often limited to two hours.

Please review the following guidelines with your children. Regardless of which door they use to leave School at dismissal, students should wait by the front entrance of the building until they see their rides. They should then walk cautiously to their cars -- using the crosswalk - with the help of the crossing guard, faculty on duty, and parents.

### Guidelines for students.

- Students should not wait under the trees for pickup.
- Student should not wait down by the driveway entrance for pickup.
- Students should not wait along the front of the building, along the classroom windows, for pickup.

All of these areas are unsupervised.

## **Safety and Emergency Drills**

Fire drills and other emergency drills are conducted throughout the school year. During drills, students must cooperate with instructions, and must remain quiet and orderly. If you are visiting the School during an emergency drill please exit the building and follow all directions given by the staff and faculty.

Any student who plays with, misuses, or tampers with any fire prevention equipment such as fire extinguishers may be subject to disciplinary action, or immediate dismissal from the School. Any student who possesses, claims to possess, or threatens to bring a firearm, explosive, knife, or other weapon to campus or to any School-sponsored event will be subject to disciplinary action and may be dismissed from the School.

## **Accident Insurance**

WWS has accident insurance with Independent School Management (ISM), which covers your child for any injury while he or she is under the care and direction of the School. To receive reimbursements following an accident, parents must first file all claims with their own insurance carrier and notify ISM within 90 days of the actual accident. Claim forms can be obtained by contacting the Business Office. In addition, the School provides a catastrophic supplement for athletic and non-athletic activities and offers an optional Parent's Voluntary Extension to provide for 24-hour extended coverage.

### **Asbestos Hazard Emergency Act Report**

As part of the Federal Environmental Protection Agency regulations governing asbestos in schools under the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Act (AHERA), it is the responsibility of the School to annually keep you informed with regards to Asbestos Containing Material (ACM) in the building as well as the Management Plan provided by Montgomery County. The Management Plan is available in the Business Office upon request.

Under Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations for private and public schools, any ACM within a school building must be re-inspected every three years, in order to verify the integrity of the material, and to update the management plan.

As required under the AHERA Act, this notification must appear in an annual school publication as well as being posted in the faculty room.

Questions about Washington Waldorf School's management plan should be directed to John Cox, the School's Facilities Manager.

## **ADMINISTRATION AND ACTIVITIES**

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-Teacher Conferences are held in the fall, with follow-up conferences as needed in the winter in order to keep parents abreast of their child's progress. This is a good time to bring questions and concerns to the class and specialty teachers. Class teachers will be in touch with you to set these appointments. Specialty teachers may be in touch to set appointments as needed. Please feel free to contact specialty subject teachers should you wish to have a conference with them regarding your child.

### **Custody Matters**

WWS is legally obligated to communicate information or issues concerning students to all parents and/or legal guardians. WWS may not deny a parent who wishes to pick up his or her child or attend a class parent evening without a court order.

### **Reports**

Annual narrative reports, characterizing each child's individual development and detailing his or her academic and artistic work in all subjects, are sent home following the end of the school year. Teachers do not routinely give letter grades until eighth grade. These narratives are designed for the parent only and are not meant to be read by or to the student. If you would like advice on how to discuss the report with your child, please see your child's class teacher. Grades 6, 7, and 8 also send mid-year reports.

### **Attendance Records**

Each student's attendance record, reporting total times absent and tardy, will be included in the annual narrative report at the end of the school year.

### **Transcripts**

To request a copy of a student's transcript at any other time, please contact the Registrar (Marta Schley ext. 116). Likewise, if you have questions about the transcript or believe that there may be an error, please contact the Registrar. However, if you dispute the teacher's decision about a grade or the teacher's grading practices, you should address the Lower School Chair in writing (email, mail, or deliver to the LS Coordinator's office).

**Please note that a student's reports and transcript will be held if the family has outstanding accounts to settle with the business office, and may be held if the family has outstanding accounts (e.g. for books, uniforms, fees) to settle with the library, athletics department, or Lower School.**

### **Student ID Cards**

Student ID's are available by request and are valid for approximately one year. Requests can be made in person, by phone, or by email to the Business Office. Parents are responsible for seeing that an appropriate photo is affixed, and that ID's are not altered before being sealed. Students may use school ID's to board the Ride On bus for free between 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. More information is available at [www.dpwt.com/TransSvcDiv](http://www.dpwt.com/TransSvcDiv) and through Metro's website at [www.wmata.com](http://www.wmata.com).

Please note that most school-issued ID's, including ours, do not satisfy Transportation Safety Authority (TSA) and other official requirements, for which students may need government-issued identification such as a passport or driver's license.

### **Charitable Giving to WWS**

WWS, like virtually all independent schools, relies on the charitable gifts from its extended community to sustain the School. Annual giving, in particular, is part of the lifeblood of the School, and accounts for six to seven percent of our operating budget. Each year, we appeal to the entire WWS community to support our annual giving campaign. All current parents are expected to support the campaign, consistent with their financial means.

We recognize that some may wish to restrict their charitable support to specific projects. Although the School certainly appreciates restricted gifts, we ask that community members support the annual giving campaign first, as annual giving supports the operating budget of the School, which reflects the priorities of the Faculty and Trustees Council.

Most classes, especially Grades 3, 5, 7, 8, and 12, also must raise additional funds, primarily to support class trips. Our longer-term goal is to reduce the need for class-based fundraising, in part by building a robust annual giving campaign that will allow us to fund major class trips through the operating budget. We are not yet at that point, however,

and some class-based fundraising is still required. Class teachers and sponsors will work with parents to specify how much fundraising is needed and to identify fundraising projects that have a record of success at WWS. **Please discuss new ideas for any fundraising with the Development Office before deciding definitely on a plan with your child's class. The Development Office, in conjunction with the Development Committee, has oversight over all the fundraising activities in the School, and they may suggest alterations to scale and timing depending on what else the School has planned.**

### **Gifts to Teachers**

Before the winter break and at the end of the school year, some parents or students may wish to give gifts to their teachers. Sometimes classes pool money to purchase a gift or gift certificate for a teacher or teachers. Individual contributions for such items should not exceed \$20.00. Cash gifts to teachers are not appropriate. Simple, handmade gifts or cards from students are always warmly received. Parents or students are under no obligation to give gifts to the teachers, and there is no expectation that they will do so. Please be mindful of this and do not pressure parents when approaching them to pool donations for gifts.

When a teacher leaves the School, or a sponsor or class teacher leaves the particular group of students under his or her charge, it is acceptable for families to join together to give a somewhat nicer gift in appreciation for the teacher's work. Again, no parent is under any obligation to contribute.

### **Classroom, Program and Library Gifts**

Non-monetary gifts for the classroom, the library, or to a specific program are appreciated, particularly if, over time, a gift will benefit more than one class. The School prefers, however, that parents donate first to the Annual Giving Campaign before making restricted monetary gifts. Annual Giving supports the core activities of the School.

### **Messages for Students**

On rare occasions, you may find it necessary to get a message to your child during the school day. When this happens, call the Front Office as early as possible. It is not always possible to get deliver messages to students received after 2 pm.

### **Lost & Found**

The School is not responsible for lost clothing or personal items. There is a Lost and Found trunk in the hallway at the playground exit for personal belongings such as clothing, books, lunch boxes, hats, and mittens, etc. Several times each school year, usually at the end of each month, the trunk is cleaned out and unclaimed items are donated to charity. Labeling clothing and belongings with the child's name makes retrieval much easier. Small valuables such as glasses, jewelry, keys, etc. are kept in the Front Office.

## **Festivals, Events, Fundraising, & Field Trips**

Over the years, some WWS events have become part of the yearly rhythm. The following is a sampling of such celebrations, as observed in recent years. As living traditions, they are subject to change and new ones come into life. Some activities are suited only for older students and others may be enjoyed by all. The following descriptions indicate where events have been limited to certain classes. The School Calendar gives the planned dates of major events during the school year. The most current information is in the Bulletin.

### **Events Month by Month**

#### **AUGUST/SEPTEMBER**

**Welcome Back Potluck.** This is held during the week before School opens. It is an informal event, to which children and parents are invited as a way to reach out to new families to welcome them to our community.

**First Day of School (Half Day).** This is always an exciting time of transition for everyone. Teachers encourage parents to make quick farewells to smooth the beginning of school for the children.

**Opening Assembly and Rose Ceremony.** There is an opening assembly for Grades 1-8. This is a wonderful time of welcoming the new first graders. Each first grader brings a flower from home to the assembly and these all come together to form a bouquet to symbolize the coming together of the class. There is also a special Rose Ceremony, at which each first grader is given a rose by a twelfth grader, making a circle of those beginning and those ending their formal Waldorf education. Parents of first graders and, space permitting, parents of 12<sup>th</sup> graders are invited to the Rose Ceremony. **Please be mindful that this is not an assembly for children younger than first grade.**

**Michaelmas.** Traditionally, September 29 is Michaelmas Day, honoring the Archangel Michael, who according to tradition subdues a dragon to save the kingdom. We celebrate the powers within us to overcome darkness with the light that gives strength and purpose in life. In the afternoon, when we schedule our Michaelmas celebration, all families are welcomed to outdoor festivities that feature many activities and feats of strength and courage,. (Please note in the Bulletin the exact date and rain date for this festival.) For Grades 1-8 the festival begins in the morning with a play by the second graders. After lunch, the outdoor portion opens with Michael sounding his horn from the roof of the school, followed by a miming of the

subduing of the dragon by the ninth grade, and an intricate sword dance by the seventh graders. Families are welcome at this event.

**Bazaar Preparation.** Under the leadership of the Parent, Organization Steering Committee (POSC), parents begin intense work on preparations for the Fall Bazaar, a community fair, festival, and fundraiser held in November. Each class undertakes the planning and, organization of a certain aspect of the Bazaar. Typically, the Children's Garden classes work on the Magical Maze and Puppet Shows, while the Grades organize various crafts, games, the Children's shop and the Waldorf Store. In the past, activities have included candle making, stained glass, outdoor games, and copper lanterns.

Parents are also encouraged to participate in craft workshops held throughout the fall to make crafts to be offered at the Bazaar. Musical entertainment and culinary treats add to this important community event.

## OCTOBER

**Parent-Teacher Conferences.** The Lower School is closed for two days so parents can come to the School and meet with their child's class and specialty teachers (optional). Conferences are scheduled ahead of time via e-mail. Parents will receive a scheduling notice ahead of time. Please be in touch with specialty teachers should you desire a conference with any of them. **This year conferences are being held November 10-11.**

## NOVEMBER

**Fall Festival.** Held on a Saturday afternoon from 4 to 6pm, the Fall Festival is a gift to the parents in which Lower School classes present some aspect of their classroom work. At times, High School students also perform. **Parents are requested to stay for the entire performance, knowing that their children and their classmates are well cared for and busy in their classrooms until the entire performance is over.** The classes all see each other's performances at the dress rehearsal, some of which is also attended by the Children's Garden.

Special dress requirements for the students are discussed in the section on the Dress Code of this Handbook. Please be mindful of the need of the students and teachers for attention to the presentations, and keep very young children, who can have difficulty sitting for long periods, at home. Recording or photographing this event is not permitted, except by the School's "official" photographer. The sound and sight of cameras, recorders, flashbulbs, and people moving around in the audience distracts the children and diminishes the enjoyment of others in the audience. (See the School's "Policy on Recording and Photographing School Events" at the end of this chapter.) The picture made in your heart will last!

**Fall Bazaar.** Our first Fall Bazaar was held in 1970 and it has become a grand event for the entire School and the larger community. Friends, alumni, former parents, and current families all relish this opportunity to connect or reconnect with the School.

Festive decorations transform the hallways. There are beautiful handmade crafts made by our parents as well as a fine selection of vendors, toys, and children's books for sale. Activities include craft workshops for children of all ages, story telling, and often a puppet show. There are delicious snacks and treats, and a healthy, affordable lunch is offered.

The Bazaar gives us an opportunity to strengthen the community and reach out to the wider community, while also raising necessary funds for the School. Many hands make this a unique event. Parents plan, organize, and make many of the crafts for the Bazaar. Every parent is asked to work a minimum of one two-hour shift. Faculty and students are involved as well, cleaning and setting up classrooms and working the day of the Bazaar. It is an enriching and satisfying way to get to know other parents and faculty members, learn about Waldorf education, and participate in the life of the School. Often classes contribute special projects. At the Bazaar itself, we seek to draw in as many people as possible from the wider community to see and learn about our School. There is a substantial display on Waldorf education, including a sale of books and other materials on Waldorf education of interest to parents and visitors alike.

**Thanksgiving.** On the day before Thanksgiving, we recognize the traditional American holiday with an assembly and a collection of nonperishable food for donation to a local charity.

## **DECEMBER**

December is a time of celebration in the midst of the deepest darkness of the year. While many cultures celebrate spiritual renewal and light overcoming darkness at this time, we keep in mind that Buddhist, Jewish, Hindu, Moslem, Sikh, and other families in the School do not celebrate Christmas. The School welcomes families to share other traditions. If you have traditions you would like to share with your child's class, please contact the class teacher or the Festival Committee.

In the growing darkness of December, we gradually create an inner light in our school and community. The School fills with warmth and light as more candles are lit on the Winter Garden wreaths and in the Winter Garden, described below. There is caroling in the hallways, an exchange of gifts in some classes, St. Nicholas Day, the Community Carol sing, and the Oberufer Christmas Plays.

**Winter Garden.** From a single candle, in a darkened room, each child lights his or her own candle, and places it on a spiral of greenery laid out on the whole floor until a magical spiral of light illuminates what began as a dimly lit space. The Children's Garden teachers prepare the eurythmy room as a gift to the whole school. Each class has an opportunity to walk this beautiful spiral. Parents walk together with their children in the Children's Garden years; other parents may participate at a specially designated time if requested.

**St. Nicholas Day** (December 6). St. Nicholas was a bishop who by legend on dark winter nights wandered the streets leaving apples, nuts, and golden coins at the houses of poor children. St. Nicholas may visit the School on his birthday, December 6. Unseen, he leaves a special message for the class and each child from his golden book of ways they could improve some of their behavior. He usually leaves golden nuts and Clementines. (In some families, children leave their shoes outside their bedroom door on this night and receive a small gift, often of fruits and nuts, or a poem.)

**Community Carol Sing.** This is a family celebration, a time to sing both new and old favorites of the season, accompanied by an orchestra of community members.

**Oberufer Christmas Plays.** It is tradition among many Waldorf schools around the world to present one, two or all three of these medieval mystery dramas. They were performed for more than 300 years on Oberufer Island in the Danube River, little altered throughout the ages. They were rediscovered in the 1890s and written down for the first time by a German professor of literature in Vienna, who entrusted them to Rudolf Steiner. In the first Waldorf School, in Stuttgart, the three plays were performed as a gift from the faculty to the students. Many Waldorf schools have continued the tradition of these plays because of their humor, artistry, and earthiness. The Paradise Play (appropriate only for Grades 3 and up) presents the story of the creation of Adam and Eve and the expulsion from Paradise; The Shepherd's Play tells the story of the Christmas birth through the hearts of simple shepherds; and the Three Kings Play tells the story of the coming of the three kings to visit the Christ child. In our school, typically, a cast of faculty, parents, and sometime students perform both the Paradise Play and the Shepherds Play or simply the Shepherds Play as a gift to the students during the day and again in the evening for the community.

**Last Day Before Winter Vacation (Half Day).** There is an Oberufer Play performance, followed by a holiday party in some classes. Some classes also have a holiday gift exchange. Please check with your child's class teacher for details.

## **JANUARY**

**Three Kings Day (January 6).** At the close of Christmas vacation, Three Kings Day is celebrated in different ways, which may include an assembly for some grades.

**Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday.** Grades 5-8, along with the High School, participate in an assembly to honor Dr. King's birthday. Other classes may mark this day in their own classrooms. Grades 1-4 often celebrate together with a story from Dr. King's childhood. The school is closed for the Monday federal holiday.

## **FEBRUARY**

**Valentine's Day.** Each class celebrates this day in its own way. If you send valentines from home, please send tasteful, handmade valentines and have your child make one for each child in the class. Please do not send candy to school. Please check with your child's class teacher.

**Mid-Winter Vacation.** President's Day is usually a long weekend.

## **MARCH**

**Grade 8 Play.** Grade 8 presents a play for the School and community. Donations support the class trip. (The time of year may vary.)

## **APRIL**

### **Spring Break**

**Spring Festival.** This spring counterpart to the Fall Festival is typically scheduled on the weekend before Grandparents and Special Friends Day.

## **MAY**

**Grandparents' and Special Friends Day (Half Day).** Grandparents and Special Friends receive an invitation to spend a Friday morning at the School, usually the Friday closest to May 1. A talk on Waldorf education (which gives grandparents and friends some insight into your choice of a Waldorf education), festive presentations by students, and classroom visits make this a lovely and informative occasion for these honored guests. A maypole dance may be performed.

**Grade 3 Farm Trip.** Grade 3 takes a five-day trip to Hawthorne Valley Farm in Ghent, New York. This is a very exciting part of the third grade studies of gardening and farms and requires more extensive parent fundraising.

**Senior Play.** The Senior Class performs a play for the school and community.

**Grade 8 Class Trip.** Grade 8 takes a specially planned class trip.

**Field Day.** Usually held in late May or early June, this is an afternoon of athletic events for students in Grades 2-8. The students are divided into two teams -- red and white -- to compete in various games and races. Parents often gather on the hill overlooking the lower field to watch the festivities.

## **JUNE**

**Rose Ceremony.** A full school assembly ceremony takes place in which each twelfth grader is given a red rose by a first grader in a special Rose Ceremony, making a circle of those beginning and those ending their formal Waldorf education.

**Last Day of School (Half Day).** The last day of school is traditionally a half day followed by a picnic for all families and teachers. The Parent Organization plans this event.

**Grade 8 Commencement and Grade 12 Graduation.**

## **Photographing and Recording at School Events**

To protect the quality of the experience for the performers and the audience, WWS prohibits the recording of the performances of students. Still photographs may be taken by the official School photographer; usually these are taken during dress rehearsals or before or after the actual performances.

You may ask your child's teacher about "photo opportunities" before or after performances.

Performances, lectures, workshops, presentations, etc. given by adults may not be recorded unless expressed permission is obtained from the presenters.

## **Extracurricular Activities**

Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities. However, if a class teacher feels that a student's work is suffering, the student may be asked to forego these activities until his or her schoolwork improves.

## **Sports**

WWS has several competitive sports teams, and opportunities to join will be announced throughout the year. Team membership is open to all LS students who are willing to commit to the schedule of practices and games/events, be positive representatives of the School, and participate to the best of their abilities. Additional fees and permission forms are required. More information about permissions and fees, equipment, game and practice schedules (and updates), and directions are available from the Athletics Office.

## **Aftercare Program**

WWS currently offers an aftercare program that runs from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. on school days, and on select half-days. There is an extra charge for this program and it is open to enrolled students from Grades 1-6. At 3:20, any students in Grades 2-6 still in the building or on the grounds without direct adult supervision will be signed in for the aftercare program. The daily capacity is 20 students. The program includes a light snack and a variety of activities that meet the interests of the children. If you are interested in using the aftercare program, please pick up a packet of forms (one packet for each child) from the Front Office.

## **Parent Organization**

The successful operation of the School relies largely on the time and energy given by parent volunteers. There is a need for parent volunteers on both an individual class level and a school-wide level. A sense of community, new friendships, and a genuine sense of pride can be gained by involving oneself in working together toward a common goal. An understanding of what is expected of parents throughout the school year is essential in allowing parents to participate in a way that works for them.

The Parent Organization Steering Committee (POSC) is composed of members of the parent body who represent the Children's Garden, Lower School, and High School, and provides leadership to the Parent Organization (PO). In general, its purpose is to inspire, inform, and organize the parent community and to enhance the School's social life through communication and involvement.

### **Mission Statement**

The Parent Organization Steering Committee (POSC) will work to foster healthy relationships throughout the Washington Waldorf School community while deepening parent understanding of and commitment to Waldorf education.

### **Mandate**

1. To create a conscious and coordinated volunteer program guided by the needs of the Children's Garden faculty, Lower School faculty, High School faculty, Administrative faculty and Trustees Council
2. Within the context of creating and executing the volunteer program, to communicate appropriately with designated Faculty as needed
3. To communicate and meet regularly with WWS leadership in order to manage the volunteer program, as well as to handle other POSC business (Make-up of group and regularity of meetings/communication to be determined by leadership.)
4. To provide documentation to WWS community with regard to volunteer program
5. To provide a nonvoting member to the Trustee's Council (One POSC member will attend meetings on a regular basis.)
6. To work closely with WWS leadership towards developing an effective parent education program.

One of the primary goals of the Parent Organization (PO) at WWS is to encourage and support involvement of the parent body in the life of the School through community-building and fundraising activities and special events. While all parents with students enrolled at the school are automatically members of the Parent Organization, the Parent Organization can best accomplish its important work through a system of class representatives -- parents from each Children's Garden class and each grade -- who provide a direct conduit for communication to and from the class to the leadership of the Parent Organization. Parents can have a more direct involvement in building a sense of community in their class and in the School as a whole by volunteering as class representative, or as a class parent. Both of these roles are important ones and are intended to facilitate parent involvement in the School and to promote a sense of community.

The Parent Organization meets on a regular basis throughout the school year. Meetings are open for all parents. Parents should contact their class representative or a POSC member if they wish to have an item included on the meeting agenda.

### **Class Representative**

Many parents are not aware of all the opportunities to participate in events that make a big difference in the life of the school--things that often require a very small time commitment. The Parent Organization can best disseminate information about and engage volunteers for school-wide events through the class representatives.

The role of a class representative is to represent their class in the Parent Organization and to serve as a conduit for information from the POSC to parents regarding certain school-wide activities.

Class representatives are asked to attend Parent Organization meetings on a regular basis and to report back to their classes on work of the Parent Organization. In addition, the class representatives are charged with encouraging volunteers from their respective classes to carry out the very important work of the Parent Organization and the School, such as coordinating parent participation in festivals, fundraising events (such as the Fall Bazaar and spring gala), workshops and work parties as well as sharing information through email communication, phone trees, and meetings. Finally, class representatives are encouraged to solicit ideas from their classes and bring those to Parent Organization meetings.

Class representatives are selected based on recommendations of the faculty and their ability and commitment to serve as a representative. The class representative ideally volunteers his or her time from September of one year to September of the next, and in some cases, may serve for more than one school year.

### **Annual Giving Committee Members**

The Annual Giving Committee is composed of parents who have agreed to represent the annual giving campaign to other parents. They play a vital role in the success of the campaign by conveying information (through email, in class meetings, and phone-a-thons) to parents about the need for annual giving and the status of the campaign. The Development Committee generally recruits committee members; anyone who might be interested in serving the School as a member of the Annual Giving Committee is encouraged to contact the Development Director or a member of the Development Committee (listed on the *Giving* page of our website).

### **Class Parent**

Class teachers often ask that one or two parents act as class parents. These parents assist in arranging social gatherings for adults and families of the class, in coordinating volunteer efforts in support of the class, and often in helping with communications among parents and between the class teacher and the parents.

*Our highest endeavor must be to develop free human beings, who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives. Rudolf Steiner*

## Frequently Asked Questions

***My child is ill today and won't be at school.***

Call the School by 8:30 a.m. to report the absence. Also report any contagious illness.

***My child is (a few minutes, an hour, or any amount of time) late.***

Send your child to the Front Office to check in. He or she may then go to class.

***My child forgot his or her lunch (or instrument, or homework, etc).***

You may deliver it to the Front Office and we will make sure it gets to your child.

***I need to pick up my child early.***

Go to the Front Office. We will get your child and record the early departure at the entrance counter.

### **Whom Do I Contact?**

***I'd like to help in my child's class.***

Contact your child's class teacher or class parent.

***I'd like to make an appointment with my child's class teacher.***

Contact your child's teacher directly.

***I'd like to make an appointment with the Lower School Chair.***

Contact Tove Elfstrom at ext. 102

***I'd like to make an appointment with the Faculty Chair.***

Contact Stacey Kornegay, Administrative Assistant ext. 121 or Natalie Adams, Faculty Chair ext. 128.

***I'd like to place an ad in the Bulletin.***

Contact Maria Monteverde Jackson, Development Associate ext. 125.

***I need more information about a class trip or a festival.***

Contact Stacey Kornegay, LS Contact Person ext. 121 or the class teacher.

***I'd like to help in a specific area of the School;***

***I'd like to help in the School, but am not sure where.***

Contact the Parent Organization Steering Committee, ([posc910@washingtonwaldorf.org](mailto:posc910@washingtonwaldorf.org))

***I have an issue that I think the Trustees Council should consider;***

***I want to ascertain whether the Trustees Council is looking at a particular issue.***

Contact Trustees Council Chair, Daniel Wacker, through the Administrative Assistant, Stacey Kornegay at x121

***I have questions about how my child is doing in class, or about my child's work;***

***I don't understand a classroom assignment;***

***I want to know why or how a subject is being covered in class.***

Contact the relevant teacher.

***I need information on a foreign language, handwork, music, or other special subject.***

Contact the specific subject teacher.

***I am having trouble communicating with my child's teacher;***

***My child's teacher is not dealing with a situation as I think it should be handled;***

***I am dissatisfied with the classroom curriculum or special subject.***

Contact Tove Elfstrom, Lower School Chair ext. 102.

***I have questions about an off-site facility;***

***I want to know more about our current building design or safety issues;***

***I have a concern about, or suggestion for, improving the campus design, parking, traffic, or other physical aspects.***

Contact John Cox, Facilities Manager ext. 126.

***I have general questions about off-site activities or human resources practices.***

Contact Marie Maurer, Business Office, ext. 122.

***I have a personal question about a Trustee Council policy or decision;***

***I want to suggest a potential candidate for Trustees Council membership.***

Contact the Trustees Council Chair, Daniel Wacker, through the Administrative Assistant, Stacey Kornegay at ext. 121

***I want to know more about the Waldorf pedagogy;***

***I want to learn more about the WWS mission, vision, and strategic plan;***

***I have an idea about expanding one of our pedagogical programs off-campus;***

***I have a pedagogical issue that I feel is not being addressed by my child's teacher, the department chair, or WWS.***

Contact Natalie Adams, Faculty Chair ext. 128.

***I need to change my tuition payment schedule;***

***I need to check on or make a payment;***

***I want to learn more about the refundable deposit.***

Contact Marcia Leonard, Business Manager ext. 112.

***I need information on tuition assistance;  
I need help filling out the online application or other tuition assistance  
paperwork;  
I am having some financial difficulties and need to apply for emergency  
assistance.***

Contact the Financial Aid Committee via Stacey Kornegay, Administrative Assistant to the Faculty Chair ext. 121.

**WWS Contact Directory  
(Main number 301-229-6107)**

**Faculty Chair**

Natalie Adams ext. 128

**Administrative Assistant to the Faculty  
Chair & CG/LS Contact Person**

Stacey Kornegay ext 121

**Bulletin**

Maria M. Jackson, Dev. Associate ext. 125

**Business Office**

Marcia Leonard, Manager ext. 112

Marie Maurer, Associate ext. 122

**Enrollment Director**

Lezlie Lawson ext 154

**Department Chairs**

Jennifer Saloma, Ch. Garden ext, 145

Tove Elfstrom, Lower School ext. 102

Taisto Saloma, High School ext. 124

**Development Office**

Steve Smith, Director ext. 123

Maria M. Jackson, Associate ext. 125

**Facilities Manager**

John Cox ext. 126

**High School Coordinator**

Bonnie McClelland ext. 115

**Parent Organization**

301-229-6107, ext. 101

posc910@washingtonwaldorf.org

**Trustees Council Chair**

Dan Wacker

contact Stacey Kornegay, ext. 121

**Financial Aid**

Stacey Kornegay ext. 121

**Athletics Director**

Taisto Saloma ext. 124