

# MONADNOCK WALDORF SCHOOL

*2015-2016*

## *EARLY CHILDHOOD & ELEMENTARY PARENT HANDBOOK*

*MWS from A to Z*

(Version August 29, 2016)

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Dear Parents,

We are happy that you have placed your student in Monadnock Waldorf School. Our highest goal is to assist you in helping students to reach their full academic and social potential and to develop a lifelong love of learning.

Welcome to a new version of the Monadnock Waldorf School Handbook for Parents. This is a work in progress that will continue to be improved over time – your suggestions are welcome!

What follows is practical information concerning schedules, policies, lines of communication, and parent involvement in Monadnock Waldorf School. We would like all elements of the school to be as clear and transparent as possible. Please take time to read this handbook carefully. It will help us to work together toward our common goal of an excellent, comprehensive and enjoyable education for the students of the school.

For parents who have children in our Early Childhood program or who have students in our High School, you also have a supplemental handbook especially for those programs.

If you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns, we depend on you to let us know. We are committed to working together for the good of each student and for the good of the school community.

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# A to Z

## ABSENCES

### ABSENCES AND TARDINESS

If your child is going to miss school, or is going to be late, it is very important that you notify his or her teacher through the appropriate office before 8:00am unless previous notification has been given. A child missing from class is a matter of serious concern and is cause for immediate attention by staff and teachers. Please help us to avoid unnecessary alarms by your attention to this request. At the elementary school, if a child is tardy, he or she must first check in at the office and be marked tardy, and receive a tardy slip to bring to their teacher.

*You may leave a message regarding absence 24 hours a day by calling: 357-8663 for Early Childhood absences; 357-4442, extension 101 for Elementary School absences; and 903-0064 for High School absences.*

### ABSENCES AND ILLNESS

**Illness:** Each day at Monadnock Waldorf School includes many different kinds of activities for all students. A child who is ill, or even over-tired, simply cannot be present in a strong enough way to benefit from all these opportunities. The faculty suggests that you ask yourself whether or not your child will be able to participate fully in the school day. If you are unsure, it probably means he or she isn't well enough and needs to rest at home. The school has no adequate facilities to care for a sick child. Children with contagious or infectious illnesses may not attend school unless given a doctor's written permission.

**See: ILLNESS**

### EXTENDED ABSENCES

The block teaching curriculum method and the nature of the Waldorf classroom as a learning community make extended absences a challenge for both the student and the class. MWS does not, in principle, support extended planned absences for family vacations that fall within the school calendar. In cases where parents take children out of school, class teachers cannot provide make-up work or home-study materials. There is no substitute for work covered by the teacher with the class as a whole; therefore, we encourage all families to make vacation plans based on our established school calendar.

**Seventh and Eighth Grade and High School:** Extended absences or repeated tardiness have a special impact on seventh and eighth graders and high school students. Chronic absences over the period of a block may result in a grade of "Incomplete," leaving students with academic gaps. Students are expected to maintain good attendance and to arrive at school on time. Chronic absence or tardiness will require a meeting with the student's parents.

### ABSENCES FROM EVENTS OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL HOURS

Please be aware that students are expected to attend events listed on the elementary school calendar that occur on weekends, unless prior arrangements are made with the class teacher. We strive to keep weekend events to an absolute minimum.

## ACCREDITATION

Monadnock Waldorf School is fully accredited by Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA), by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), and by Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN).

## ADMISSIONS

### New Students

Enrollment procedures are as follows:

- 1) For each child, complete an Application for Admission (available to download from [monadnockwaldorfschool.org](http://monadnockwaldorfschool.org) or from our Main Office) and submit with a non-refundable application fee of \$50.
- 2) If your child is transferring from another school, sign a **Consent to Release Educational Records** form (also available on our website).
- 3) After the Application for Admission, student records, and application fee are received, interviews with Enrollment staff and the Teacher will be arranged for parents and child(ren). Teachers may also arrange for a two-day class visit.
- 4) When acceptance has been determined, the family is contacted. A per student deposit of \$400 is made toward the year's tuition. (This is due 15 days after acceptance.)
- 5) A Payment Plan is chosen for the year's tuition, after which a Tuition Agreement is signed. (For families who are unable to pay the full tuition fee, tuition assistance may be requested through a formal application process. See **TUITION ASSISTANCE**.)
- 6) Confirmation of enrollment takes place upon signature of the tuition contract and completion of the above steps. The school reserves the right to review final acceptance following a two-month trial period in pre-k, kindergarten and first grade and a one-month trial period of attendance in grades 2 through 12, in consultation with parents.

### Continuing Students

A continuing enrollment application package consisting of an enrollment contract, continuing application, and deposit, is due for the coming year on or around February 15.

## REGISTRATION FORMS

Several forms must be completed when you register your child at Monadnock Waldorf School. Here is a list of the forms you should know about.

***Tuition Assistance Application Form:*** If you are applying for tuition assistance, these applications need to be completed and returned to the office, usually around February 15, for the family to be eligible for the next school year. Applications must include all requested information in order to be considered for a tuition assistance award. Applications for this online process can be found at [www.monadnockwaldorf.org](http://www.monadnockwaldorf.org), Admissions.

**Health Info:** All new students should have a health form completed by their doctor and returned to the office. For returning students, new health forms are required in Grades One and Six and Nine. There are also online forms to be completed on the BigSIS parent portal.

**Tuition Agreement:** You must have a Tuition Agreement filled out and signed by you and Monadnock Waldorf School by the beginning of the school year. This is a legally binding contract and is required before a child enters school.

**Master Information Forms:** Due before the school year begins. This important form gives the office up-to-date information about your child and how to reach you in case of an emergency. **Please keep the office staff informed of any changes during the year.**

**Parent Resource Information:** Due before the school year begins. Monadnock Waldorf School depends on the skills and energy of its parent group to make critical contributions to the successful operation of the school. Understanding the skills, interests and experiences of our parents enables us to make the best use of this valuable resource!

## **CONDITIONS OF ENROLLMENT**

Each new student who is accepted will undergo a period of conditional enrollment: two-months in pre-k, kindergarten, and grade 1 and one month in grades 2-12 period. During this evaluation period, the parents will have the opportunity to become familiar with the program and the teacher will be able to observe the student's needs and abilities. At the end of this period, either the parents or teacher may terminate the tuition agreement. In the unlikely event that this becomes necessary, tuition payment will be based on a pro-rated amount determined by time spent in the program.

## **ADULT EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT**

We hope all community members, parents and teachers alike, will want to actively deepen their understanding of Waldorf education and the insights and philosophy that stand behind it. Many have an interest in learning more about child development, parenting, and family life. Others are interested in the crafts and arts offered in our curriculum and wish to broaden their experience in this way. Dance, music, and drama offerings build our community life together. Book groups and study groups offered by community members are opportunities to explore a subject area in depth and with others. Upcoming events and opportunities are publicized in the *Week Ahead* and in the calendar section of our website.

## **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL TIMES (See SCHEDULE)**

## **ASSOCIATION OF WALDORF SCHOOLS (AWSNA)**

The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America evolved out of meetings of the Waldorf schools and teacher training centers in the decade between 1960 and 1970. The purpose of the Association is to strengthen and nurture Waldorf education so that it can benefit more families and students throughout the world.

### **Activities of the Association**

- \* To develop and disseminate resources for parents, teachers, administrators, and trustees. These resources include *Renewal* (a bi-annual journal), the Science Newsletter, science kits, a wide array of books and pamphlets, and messaging/marketing guidelines.
- \* To provide advice to parents, teachers, administrators, schools, institutes, and school boards.

- \* To accredit schools & institutes through a process that includes a self-study and visits by an accreditation team.
- \* To promote professional and community development of teachers, administrators, parent organizations, and trustees through conferences & workshops.
- \* To advocate for independence in education and the preservation of childhood.
- \* Participate in educational and political forums.
- \* To promote and support teacher preparation and training through fundraising for teacher training institutes and teacher education loans.
- \* To support pedagogical and organizational research.

Our Association is led by an Executive Team, Leadership Council with representatives from 8 regions across the continent, and by the Board of Trustees. All questions can be addressed to the Association offices, by visiting [whywaldorfworks.org](http://whywaldorfworks.org), or through the delegate from our school: Kevin McGuigan and Jenn Strauss. We are members in the Northeast Region and our Northeast Leadership Council Representative is Stephen Bloomquist ([sbloomquist@awsna.org](mailto:sbloomquist@awsna.org)).

***BOARD OF TRUSTEES* – see GOVERNANCE**

**BULLYING**

Bullying is not tolerated at MWS. Respect for oneself and others are core elements of Waldorf education. Teachers at MWS are deeply committed to this principle and use every opportunity to bring an understanding of this to their students. Teachers observe the social fabric in their classrooms closely and make use of all community-building opportunities to help students resolve conflicts and support one another.

***CAMERAS* – see PHOTOGRAPHY**

***CELL PHONES* – see ITEMS NOT TO BRING TO SCHOOL**

Cell phones and all other electronic media are not allowed on campus during school hours. Students may bring cell phones to school if they are needed for afterschool activities or if they are needed for students who come and go to school independently. Parents are asked to support this school policy by not sending electronic devices and cell phones with their children to school. Do not try to communicate with your children during the school day on their cell phones or electronic devices.

**CONTACTS FOR PARENTS AT OUR SCHOOL**

At Monadnock Waldorf School we strive to be open and responsive in all dealings with community members. We hope that our educational ideal of respect and deep regard for each individual child is reflected in the way that we approach issues brought by parents or others. We are committed to bettering the school as an organization, and both the Faculty and Board welcome your interest and your questions about Monadnock Waldorf School.

When you need specific information or have a question not covered adequately by this handbook, you may find the following directory helpful.

## Names for Contacts

Lead Administrator – Lisa Mahar  
Admissions – Lori York  
Marketing– Ruby MacDougall  
Operations Manager – Kim Cassin

College Chair- Janet Gordon  
Board Co-Chairs – Steve Gryczka & Emily Schwerin-Whyte (Parents)  
Chair, Personnel Committee – Sandy Hunt (Parent)  
Section Leaders:  
    Early Childhood- Eliza Murphy  
    Elementary- Jenn Strauss  
    High School- Kristin Powers

Ambassador Program – Admissions

Annual Fund and other Gifts to the School – Development Leader

Bills from the School – Operations Manager

Board of Trustees ad hoc Committee Membership – Board of Directors

Complaints and Concerns Related to All School Issues – School Director

Complaints and Concerns Related to Classroom Issues

- Classroom Teacher
- Section Leader
- Faculty Leader

Enrollment in Early Childhood Programs through Grade 12- Admissions

Facilities Questions or Concerns – Operations Manager

- Concerns and questions around facilities
- Requests to use/rent buildings and spaces
- Questions about parking and driving at and around the three campuses
- Grounds keeping volunteers

Financial Aid – See *Tuition Assistance*

Fundraising Ideas/Suggestions (Whole School) - Development Director

Issues and Questions Related to All-School – School Director

Parking – See *Facilities*

Personnel – Questions/Comments/Concerns Relating to Non-Teaching Staff – School Director

Personnel – Questions/Comments/Concerns Relating to Teaching Staff – Faculty Leader

Personnel – All Other – Chair, Board of Trustees, Personnel Committee

Safety – Operations Manager

- Questions and concerns about safety issues
- Questions and concerns about emergency planning
- Questions about parking and driving at and around the three campuses

Tuition Assistance – Operations Manager

- Questions about process
- Feedback from parents

## DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDRAISING

In order to fulfill our mission, MWS relies upon the support and involvement of our entire community in a coordinated series of fundraising activities. Tuition alone does not cover the true cost of the outstanding education provided and therefore, funds are needed to fill the gap between tuition and expenses.

**The Annual Fund** is the cornerstone of our fundraising program. Every year, members of the community are asked to make a contribution to the Annual Fund, providing essential operating funds for the school. Gifts range from \$10 to \$10,000, and nearly 100% of MWS board and staff participate. Parents, grandparents, extended family members, and friends of the school have been critical to the success of the Annual Fund. In early fall you will receive a request to participate in this year's Annual Fund campaign. Please consider a gift.

**The Callie Hulbert Fund** was established in 2007 after the death of a beloved student, Callie Frances Hulbert. This fund provides tuition assistance to students as well as retirement benefits for long-serving teachers and staff. Donations may be made to this fund and can be specified to fund either tuition assistance or retirement benefits.

**The Greater Opportunity Fund (Go Fund)** was established in the fall of 2013 to be a source of tuition assistance funds to go to deserving and qualified high school students. Gifts and pledges to this fund are welcome and can be made at any time.

**The Development Committee** exists to oversee a development program designed to attract the maximum philanthropic support possible to MWS in order for the school to fulfill its mission. We strive to build a giving program that benefits everyone yet burdens no one. The committee creates and implements a comprehensive, diverse, and innovative plan to raise funds to support the school.

**The Parent Council** also conducts a number of fundraising activities. The PC also operates a school store at both the early childhood and elementary school. Funds raised are used to meet important school needs: teacher appreciation activities, Summer Garden tuition assistance, school equipment needs, class trip support, instrument rentals, and more.

The fall **Crafts Fair and Festival** is our largest and most successful fundraising event and is organized entirely by volunteers. This is a festive and fun occasion and a wonderful place to do holiday shopping. It takes place November 13 and 14 at the Elementary School. Look for lots more information in *the Week Ahead* and *The Monthly* newsletters.

Lisa Mahar is available to speak with you about our Annual Fund, The Callie Fund, The Go Fund, or any other aspect of development at the school.

## **DISCIPLINE**

All children are expected to observe standards of behavior based on an attitude of respect for themselves, their teachers, parents, fellow students, and their environment. Behavior that interferes with the education process is not tolerated.

Behavior that is considered to fall outside these standards may include, but is not limited to:

- rudeness or disrespect toward classmates, teachers, staff or parents
- physical aggression toward any individual
- mistreatment of property
- absence from classes or parts of classes without prior permission
- use of foul language
- leaving campus without permission

### ***Kindergarten through Grade 5***

Discipline will be handled in an age appropriate manner at the discretion of the class teacher, with support from the faculty. The class teacher will keep in close contact with parents of children with behavior problems. In the case of repeated behavior difficulties, a child may lose the privilege to be at school for a period of time.

### ***Grades 6 through 8***

In cases of repeated rule breaking, especially in the very rare case when physical or emotional aggression is involved, there will be a program of strict monitoring of the situation. The program will include a conference with parent, teacher, and administrator (and may include the child) to set clear and consistent guidelines and goals for behavior improvement. A time-frame to accomplish this improvement will be set. Dates will be set for the teacher and parents to meet to review the situation. There will be frequent communication between teacher and parents on the progress of the situation.

If all such measures fail and improvement in behavior is not significant in the specified time frame, the College of Teachers and the class teacher will meet to determine whether the child's permanent dismissal from the school is necessary.

Physical and verbal aggression are grounds for immediate suspension. Should a student show disrespect by using caustic or foul language to school staff or fellow students, or by physically endangering others, s/he may be immediately suspended. The class teacher, upon conferring with the administrator, will notify parents of such a situation. A plan for addressing the situation will include consideration of the severity of the behavior, the context of the incident, and the student's overall behavior. The student will not be allowed to return to school until a meeting of class teacher, school administrator, and parents takes place.

## **DRESS CODE**

Students at MWS are expected to wear clothing and footwear that is appropriate for a broad range of school activities, including physical education, games, eurythmy, walking field trips, and woodworking and art classes, depending on the grade level. Because outdoor time is a part of each school day, children

should come to school with outdoor clothing that protects them from the elements. Hooded rain jackets, rain pants, and waterproof rain boots, as well as snow jackets, snow pants and snow boots, depending on the season, are expected for all children in grades 1-5, and as needed for outdoor activities and field trips in grades 6-8.

Current clothing trends often carry connotations that are not appropriate for school. The dress code continues to develop as trends change, but the following basic principles remain fundamental to dress code guidelines:

Clothes worn at school or at school-sponsored events should be:

- clean and in good repair
- appropriately sized and fitted for full participation in movement
- modest
- non-distracting

When a student in grades 1-5 is out of compliance with the dress code, the teacher will speak with the parents. When a student in grades 6-8 is out of compliance, the teacher will speak directly to the student. Repeated violations of the dress code will require a conversation with the parents, as well.

### ***Event and Special Occasion Dress***

Certain occasions – festivals and special assemblies, for example – call for “best dress” to reflect the mood of the event. Students may choose from dress pants, dress shirts, polo shirts, skirts, and dresses, as appropriate. Students may wear simple dress shoes, or other clean, non-distracting footwear. All shoes should have flat heels and soles. High heeled shoes are not appropriate for school or school events. No denim, athletic wear or t-shirts may be worn on these dress-up occasions. For our dressiest occasions – Flower Ceremony and Rose Ceremony – tucked dress shirts are requested.

### ***Shoes***

Students should be ready to participate fully in the activities of their school day. Whether for outdoor or indoor use, please select shoes that protect and support the feet. Flat-soled, supportive shoes are required – platforms, high heels, backless clogs, flip flops and “croc” are not acceptable. Shoes that tie are preferred, especially in the younger grades. Rain boots should be waterproof, and snow boots should be adequately insulated to keep the feet dry and warm.

### ***Clothing Size & Condition***

While we recognize that clothing can be viewed as a form of personal expression, we prefer to see students express themselves through their good work and deeds. Clothing that is too tight or restrictive hinders healthy movement and promotes an inappropriate self-consciousness. Oversized and loose clothing and shoes not only hinder movement, but convey an inappropriately relaxed attitude and may lead to injury. Torn or ragged clothing is not appropriate for school. Warm-up pants, and other athletic wear are acceptable if they meet other criteria of the dress code.

### ***Graphics and Designs***

In school, we strive to create simple, beautiful environments. We request that parents choose school clothing with this in mind. Please keep clothing free of graphics, including sports team

logos, and other distracting patterns. Please also avoid neon colors, or highly stylized clothing and footwear. We understand that it is difficult to avoid small brand logos on clothing, especially outerwear and shoes – a small, subtle insignia (less than one inch in diameter) is permissible. While hats without graphics are preferred, a simple team logo is permissible. Sweatshirts, shirts, pants and jackets, however, should be completely free of writing.

### ***Modesty***

Skirts, dresses, and shorts should fall to mid-thigh, whether or not tights or leggings are worn underneath. Form fitting clothing, including jeggings and leggings, will be considered undergarments that need to be covered, as will tank tops, spaghetti straps, or other low cut neckline. Unless covered by another layer, straps for sleeveless tops and dresses should be at least two fingers in width. Clothing should cover a student's midriff and underwear, even when his or her arms are raised.

### ***Make-Up & Accessories***

We ask that students in grades 1-8 not alter their hair color, or wear make-up or nail polish at school. Permanent or temporary tattoos are not acceptable for students at this age, and drawing on oneself is not permitted.

Students in grades 5 and below may wear a simple, non-distracting pair of stud earrings.

Students in grades 6-8 may wear a single pair of stud earrings, or modestly-sized dangling earrings. Dangling accessories, including earrings, bracelets and necklaces can be a significant safety hazard during certain school activities and students should be prepared to remove and stow jewelry and other accessories as requested by a teacher. We ask that parents use discretion when allowing their child to wear jewelry to school.

No sunglasses will be permitted inside at school, unless required for medical reasons. Sunglasses may be worn outside. Parents should expect to provide a note from their child's physician in the case that an exception is being requested. Hats may only be worn outside, as needed for the purpose of warmth or protection from the sun.

### ***Suggestions for the Dress Code are Welcome!***

Please bring your suggestions, concerns, questions, or requests about the dress code to your student's class teacher or to Lisa Mahar, our school Administrator. We recognize the value of school wide consistency around our dress guidelines and we welcome feedback from parents and students.

### ***ENROLLMENT – see ADMISSIONS***

### ***EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT – FACULTY AND STAFF***

The school has developed and implemented a comprehensive policy and procedure for evaluating faculty and staff, with the goal of providing the highest quality educational experience for our families through the appropriate development of our administrative and teaching team. These processes are available for review at the Main Office of the Elementary School.

## EVENTS

Through the school year there will be assemblies and other scheduled events. We encourage parents to join us on these occasions when we can share the children's accomplishments and their ongoing work. Please watch the *Week Ahead* for announcements of upcoming events.

We recognize that events outside of the school day, such as the Crafts Fair and school plays are exciting and special, yet they still demand the same guidelines for behavior that we would expect at school, particularly concerning personal safety and respect for the property of others. At events outside of the school day, **parents are fully responsible for the care and supervision of their children.**

At events such as the Crafts Fair, children also must be guided clearly by the sensible behavioral expectations of their parents. Our children behaving with consideration, respect, and courtesy toward others are a strong recommendation of our school as a whole, and a true reflection of the core values we share as a school community.

## FESTIVALS

Throughout the year, we celebrate festivals to connect us with the cycles of nature, establish a yearly rhythm for the children, and strengthen our community. Festivals help us to nourish our souls through the sharing of stories, food, songs and activities linked to the seasons and expressed with beauty and reverence. In addition to the community-wide festivals, teachers celebrate other festivals in the classroom, including those connected to different cultures being studied or the religious traditions of the students in the class.

## FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an important part of our educational program. To make them possible takes cooperation on the part of parents and teachers. Over the years we have developed a few simple guidelines to make them as safe and as enjoyable as possible, whether it involves a day trip to Camp Glen Brook or an extended trip.

1. Individual permission slips for class trips involving driving will be sent home prior to each class trip. We do not require written parental/guardian permission for students to be taken on school field trips that involve walking in the neighborhood.

State law (RSA 508:17) requires that school volunteers, including drivers, be 'approved' by the school to act on behalf of the school. A form, signed by a representative of the school and the volunteer, must be on file in order to provide immunity from liability. Drivers must have a clean driving record and adequate insurance.

In addition, all volunteers working with students, including chaperones and drivers on trips, must undergo fingerprinting and a criminal background check. With safety in mind, we owe it to our parents and our students to make sure that any adult volunteer, driver or chaperone accompanying them does not have a criminal background. All volunteers should call our Business Office to make arrangements to receive the proper paperwork and instructions on completing the one-time background check process.

2. State law requires that all children under age 18 wear seat belts.
  - a. All children must ride in an appropriate child safety seat until they are seven years old or 57 inches tall (4'9"), whichever is reached first.
  - b. On field trips, an appropriate child safety seat should be provided by the parent.
  - c. Additionally, no student under the age of 12 may ride in the front seat of a vehicle.
  - d. Students over the age of 12 may ride in the front passenger seat only with parental permission.
3. The effects of alcoholic beverages are of serious concern to many individuals and families. The consumption of alcohol by a chaperone or any adult on any school sponsored trip is prohibited.
4. All school rules for appropriate behavior are in effect during field trips. Drivers/chaperones must be fully prepared to support and enforce school rules as communicated by class teachers. Driver are asked not to play music and to be sure conversations are appropriate. Students are encouraged to express their thanks to the driver.
5. Parent chaperones should not take siblings out of school to join a class trip.
6. Parent chaperones must stay with their student groups at all times during class trips.

***FINANCIAL AID*** – see **TUITION ASSISTANCE**

### **FUNDRAISING – BY STUDENT CLASSES**

Students in grades six and above will enjoy the entrepreneurial spirit and sense of satisfaction of raising money to support class and school projects. The appropriate level of student fundraising continues to be a topic of conversation within the school. Current guidelines for each grade are available from the class teachers in grades 6-8 and from the class advisors in grades 9-12. Your input is welcome!

### **GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION and PARENT GROUPS**

Monadnock Waldorf School is an independent school which exists through the special efforts of a large and increasingly diverse community of people. Coordinating and directing these efforts is the work of three groups in the school – the Administrative Staff, the parent-led Board of Trustees, and the Faculty. These groups strive to maintain open and clear channels of communication with parents.

Our leadership and administrative structures strive to support our students and their families. They work to approach their duties with goodwill, respect, active engagement, and a positive attitude.

#### **Board of Trustees**

The Board is responsible, working in collaboration with other elements of the school, for the stewardship of the school's mission, reputation and resources. In addition, the Board and its committees have primary responsibility for the financial and legal health of the school. The Board of Trustees meets every month; each of its five committees (Finance, Development, Personnel, Marketing and Enrollment, and Governance) meets an average of once a month.

The Board is led by school parents and the majority of Trustees are school parents, with two Trustees coming from the faculty. Trustees may also come from the community outside the school. The Governance Committee of the Board is responsible for identifying prospective Trustees who bring specific experience and expertise to the Board. Trustees are nominated and elected by the Board to meet specific needs of the board and the school, and serve three-year terms, with eligibility for a second term.

### **Finance Committee**

This committee ensures that there is adequate short-term and long-term financial planning for the school, including oversight of:

- Annual budget
- Capital planning
- Financial legalities (including audit oversight)
- Tuition planning (including recommendation on setting tuition, works in collaboration with Tuition Assistance Committee)
- Salary setting on an annual basis (works in collaboration with Personnel Committee)
- Long-term financial issues

Membership:

- Board members: Richard French, Jeff Miller
- Outside Professional: Jennie Gryczka
- Faculty: Monica Marshall
- Staff: Kim Cassin

This committee meets monthly.

### **Investment Sub-Committee**

This committee manages the school's financial investments and endowment. It meets on a quarterly basis.

- Tom Frazier, who manages the investments, makes a quarterly report to the committee, which includes evaluation of how the investments have performed. The committee then agrees on investment strategy.
- The committee also makes recommendations to the Board on annual disbursements from the funds where discretion is allowed.

Membership:

- Board members: Tom Frazier (former Board member), Jeff Miller
- Community members: Dick Hill and Kathy Gross
- Staff: Kim Cassin

### **Personnel Committee**

This committee is responsible for ensuring that the school has adopted and follows through on personnel policies that meet legal requirements and help to keep the school functioning in a healthy way. Specifically, the committee:

- Determines teacher and administrative salary structure
- Reviews and recommends benefit packages
- Maintains Employee Handbook
- Ensures school compliance with state and federal HR policies
- Reviews all personnel related policies
- Provides input on the teacher review process and professional development program
- Participates in interviewing director level positions and other staff positions as appropriate
- Conducts exit interviews

#### Membership:

- Board members: Sandy Hunt (Chair)
- Staff: Kim Cassin
- College/Faculty: Alison Henry, Kevin McGuigan
- Christine Kivisto (parent)

#### **Governance Committee**

This is a committee exclusively made up of Board members. Its role is to ensure the healthy development and functioning of the Board. This includes:

- Recommending and engaging new Board members in a timely fashion
- Orienting new Board members
- Recommending membership on committees and ensuring that committees are working effectively
- Building and maintaining a climate that promotes effective work and morale within the Board

#### Membership:

- Board members: Steve Gryczka (Chair), Emily Schwerin-Whyte, Jeff Miller, Jan Maes
- Staff: Lisa Mahar

#### **Development Committee**

The purpose of this committee is to ensure that there is a viable, comprehensive development plan in place and that appropriate steps are taken to meet the fund-raising goals for each year. This committee also helps to organize Board members and parents to play key roles in the fund-raising efforts.

The responsibilities of this committee are:

- To be involved in the setting of an annual fund-raising goal for the school and goals for any current special campaigns.
- To ensure that there is a viable development plan in place before the start of each year and that appropriate steps are taken to meet the fund-raising goals.
- To ensure that available administrative support for development is appropriately focused.
- To ensure that professional consulting advice is sought when needed.
- To engage directly in fund-raising asks when necessary.
- When necessary, to collaborate with the Director of Development to organize Board members and parents to play key roles in the fund-raising efforts.

Membership:

- Board: Jan Maes (Chair)
- Parents: Carol Spindler, Beth Newbold, Maryann Kristiansen
- The staff member primarily responsible for fundraising: Lisa Mahar

### **Enrollment Committee**

The purpose of this committee is to ensure that there is a viable enrollment plan for all parts of the school and that the plan is producing appropriate results. This should be both a long-range plan and an annual plan, including specific targets and activities designed to reach them. For the short term, at least, this committee will provide direct oversight for the Director of Marketing and Enrollment.

Membership:

- Board members: Emily Schwerin-Whyte (Chair), Graham Rigby, Dan York
- Staff members: Ruby MacDougall and Lori York
- Parents: Gabrielle Schuerman, Rebecca Podniesinski and Mary Gannon

### **Marketing Committee**

Membership:

- Board members: Dan York (Chair), Graham Rigby
- Staff members: Ruby MacDougall

### **Faculty**

#### **College of Teachers**

The College of Teachers is made up of teachers who have made a long-term commitment to the school, whose teaching work is in good standing and who are willing to contribute additional time to the work of the College.

The College decision-making authority covers:

- Recruitment, hiring, training, supervision, and, if necessary, termination of teachers
- Evaluation of teachers
- Mentoring of teachers
- Pedagogical matters brought to it by the Pedagogical Committee
- Program and curriculum development

The College offers consultative input on budgetary, legal and personnel issues to the Board and to the Operations Manager. It also offers consultative input and oversight on student admissions and dismissals.

The College meets on a weekly basis throughout the school year and less frequently during the summer. It is led by the Faculty Leader (currently Janet Gordon). There are at the moment nine faculty members of the College; Lisa Mahar as Administrator is also a College member.

Current members of the College of Teachers:

Janet Gordon, Chair

Daniel O'Connors

Lisa Mahar

Monica Marshall

Karl Schurman

Jacqueline Bellamy

Sondra Nelson

Jennifer Butler

Nell Wiener

### **Faculties of the Three Sections of the School**

Faculties are responsible for decisions concerning festivals, assemblies and other events, curriculum development, child studies and scheduling. This work is often done primarily in small groups, which then present to the larger faculty and gather consultative input. Faculty members also engage in pedagogical study together.

Each section of the school (early childhood, elementary, and high school) is led by a section chair, whose role includes organizing and leading faculty meetings. Current section chairs are: Jennifer Strauss for Elementary School; Eliza Murphy and Sondra Nelson for Early Childhood and High School is chaired by Kristin Powers. Faculty section meetings occur every week; all sections meet together once a month for a full faculty meeting.

### **The Pedagogical Committee**

This committee is made up of seasoned members of the College of Teachers. Its primary responsibilities are to oversee mentoring, evaluations, tutoring programs, visiting specialists, and to work closely with teachers and parents when special issues arise with students, a class or teachers.

### **Administration**

The administration of the school is responsible for all non-teaching functions which keep the school operating smoothly. These tasks include office administration, fund raising, financial management, enrollment, outreach and facilities upkeep. Administrative staff members have authority for certain decisions, but they coordinate closely with other groups and individuals in the school—including faculty, students, parents and board members—on much of their work. The Administrative Team meets bi-weekly to cover updates, plan, and address shared issues.

The administrative structure is designed to:

- support the care of the buildings and grounds
- streamline oversight of our financial life
- provide needed clerical support to teachers and staff
- integrate our outreach and fundraising
- support home/school communication
- recruit new and retain current students

This structure includes the following staff positions:

- School Director
- Outreach and Enrollment Coordinator
- Director of Marketing and Outreach
- Operations Manager
- Development Director
- Business Office
- Office Coordination at the three campuses

### **Executive Committee**

This is the central group for moving information through appropriate channels. Each leadership group of the school administration is represented: College of Teachers, Board of Trustees, and Administration. This group meets weekly.

### **Parent Council**

The Parent Council focuses primarily on serving the school by supporting and facilitating school activities, celebrations, fund-raising and special events in an effort to foster a strong school community. Each class has at least one representative on the Parent Council. The Parent Council meets once a month and meetings are open to all parents who wish to attend.

Please also see section titled PARENT COUNCIL.

### **Class Parents**

A parent from each class will be asked by the class teacher to help in organizing class trips, plays, and social activities throughout the school year. These Class Parents will notify other parents of their class about special events and also act as liaisons between busy teachers and busy parents.

**GRADING – see PARENT CONFERENCES/STUDENT REPORTS/ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

### **HEAD LICE POLICIES AND PREVENTION**

In the charming children's tale *Little Louse and Little Flea*, overly quick judgment leads to an hysterical reaction that results in the mixing bowl jerking itself off the shelf, the door lifting itself off its hinges, and the tree pulling its roots right out of the ground to totter along behind this whole unhappy parade before the objective facts reassert themselves and allow all to come back to order. Many of us who have received the call informing us that lice or nits have taken up residence in our lives have experienced a bit of this same disorienting need to react without clear direction or accurate knowledge.

Lice are a common nuisance and can be upsetting and frustrating for families. Head lice do not carry diseases and they are not related to poor hygiene; they are fragile creatures that require a human host to survive, and they will eventually die of inbreeding and are thus self-limiting.

## **Lice Policy at Monadnock Waldorf School**

### **If your child is found to have lice or nits at school:**

1. You will be called immediately. Early dismissal to begin treatment is a requirement for an active case of head lice. Early dismissal is an option—although not a requirement—if nits are seen but no live lice are detected. In either case, parents are expected to begin treatment that day.
2. Children who are found to have lice or nits may return to school only after they have begun treatment, including daily head checks, nit-combing, and manual removal of all lice and nits.
3. Parents and care-givers must commit to a full course of treatment.
4. The Office Coordinator will follow up with children and parents for three weeks after lice/nits are found to ensure that treatment is on-going and effective and to offer support and education.
5. If a child is not clear of lice/nits after three weeks of treatment and combing, the school will require that the child be seen by a professional and certified free of nits before returning to school.

**If you become aware that your child has lice or nits, but the school is not yet aware, please notify the Office Coordinator of the appropriate campus immediately.**

### **Treatment and Preventative Advice for Head Lice and Nits**

As members of a community, we all share responsibility for controlling the spread of communicable conditions such as head lice. What follows are tested and recommended treatment and prevention measures.

#### ***Treatment Measures***

Toxic treatment for lice, including any sort of fumigation of your home, is not recommended. Lice are becoming increasingly resistant to chemical pediculicides; systematically smothering them with oil may be a far more effective treatment.

- The website [headlicetodeadlice.com](http://headlicetodeadlice.com) is excellent resource. It is comprehensive and calming, and provides a “5-Step Battle Plan” calendar developed with the help of entomologists, which will give form and direction for treatment steps to take without overreacting to the situation. Although the site is presented in a cartoonish way and does offer certain products for sale, it also provides succinct and thorough information.
- The Centers for Disease Control website also has a lot of information, some of which you may find useful: [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov)
- Hylands *Quit Nits* is a non-toxic complete treatment and offers a preventative spray, also.
- Cover the hair with coconut or olive oil for several days. Cover with a scarf during the day and a conditioning cap at night. For best results, consider following a treatment calendar such as the one outlined in [headlicetodeadlice.com](http://headlicetodeadlice.com). (For easy application of olive oil to the head, consider purchasing an inexpensive applicator bottle, available for under \$3 at a beauty supply store. Also, consider having on hand conditioning caps, which are thinner and more comfortable to wear than shower caps, and are available in inexpensive multi-packs at drugstore.)
- Check all family members and treat any affected members at the same time.

- It is very important to become nit-picky! Check for nits and lice. This is a wonderful opportunity to develop the habit of spending time each day—or, at minimum, as a weekly routine when lice/nit-free—touching and grooming your child. If you need help in knowing how to check for nits, view this video clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=deqxz6G1RnE>. You may notice that many of the viewer comments about the clip attest to how relaxing and therapeutic undergoing a nit-check can be. It is a wonderful time to nurture the human connection, converse calmly, have your child look at or read a book, or add a neck massage to the head-check ritual.
- If you are conducting head checks because you have discovered nits or lice, remember that nits can continue to appear after successful treatment; regular nit-checks are paramount to successfully overcoming a lice problem. Ten days after the initial treatment is a common time for recurrence. Nits can also hatch from a hair that has fallen or been pulled out of the head, and the hatched louse will seek a host.
- A bright light, magnifying craft glasses (which can be worn over eyeglasses), a wooden knitting needle for parting hair, and clips to hold back hair are helpful tools when nit checking. Remove each nit by snipping or tweezing out its host hair shaft, or by pulling the nit down and off the hair shaft. Place any nit you find in a Ziploc baggie and place the baggie in your freezer for two days, then dispose of the sealed baggie.
- Wash bedding and recently worn clothing in hot water and dry in a hot dryer. Soft toys and other items that you cannot or choose not to wash can be sealed in a plastic bag. Advice on the timing of this varies from two days to two weeks, but very cold porches are believed to speed this process. Head lice require a live host and frequent feedings to survive.
- Vacuum frequently and store/dispose of used vacuum bags in a sealed plastic bag. Pay special attention to sleeping and sitting areas. Vacuum your car, especially the seats and head rests. You may also use a lint roller for frequent preventive nit nabbing.
- Head lice need a human host. There is no need to check or treat family pets.

### *Preventative Measures*

- Regular, thorough head checks of children and other family members!
- Tec Labs Licefree Spray – reported to be non-toxic, easy, and effective.
- Fairy Tales Rosemary Repel Conditioning Spray
- Babo Botanicals Lice Repel Conditioning Spray
- Hylands Quit Nits products
- Please remember that essential oils, while natural, can be very strong for a young child, so it is best not to make your own remedies unless you have expertise in this area. Use common sense. Avoid huddling together; do not share hats, hair ties, pillows, combs/brushes, neck scarves, etc.
- If your child has long hair, pull it back and cover it with a scarf or hat. Tidy hair and adult bodily care of children can have positive effects beyond the management of lice!

**HEALTH INSURANCE – see INSURANCE - HEALTH AND ACCIDENT**

## **HEALTH RECORDS AND IMMUNIZATIONS**

In accordance with the requirements of the New Hampshire State Department of Education and the New Hampshire State Department of Public Health, a cumulative health record is maintained on each child in pre-k through grade twelve. This includes a record of the required physical examinations as well as documentation of state mandated immunizations. A complete listing of immunization requirements can be obtained from your child's primary care provider. All families must comply with State of New Hampshire statutes related to physicals and immunizations including RSA Section 141-C:20-c and RSA 200:38.

## **HIRING PROCESS/PROCEDURES**

The school has worked with professional consultants to develop a comprehensive procedure for filling vacancies within the school administration and faculty. These documents are available for review in the Main Office at 98 South Lincoln Street.

## **ILLNESS**

If your child is going to miss school, or is going to be late, it is very important that you notify his or her teacher through the appropriate office before 8:00 a.m. unless previous notification has been given. A child missing from class is a matter of serious concern and is cause for immediate attention by staff and teachers. Please help us to avoid unnecessary alarms by your attention to this request. At the elementary school, if a child is tardy, he or she must first check in at the office and be marked tardy, and receive a tardy slip to bring to their teacher.

***You may leave a message regarding absence 24 hours a day by calling: 357-8663 for Early Childhood absences; 357-4442, extension 101 for Elementary School absences; and 903-0064 for High School absences.***

Each day at Monadnock Waldorf School includes many different kinds of activities for all students. A child who is ill, or even over-tired, simply cannot be present in a strong enough way to benefit from all these opportunities. The faculty suggests that you ask yourself whether or not your child will be able to participate fully in the school day. If you are unsure, it probably means he or she isn't well enough and needs to rest at home. The school has no adequate facilities to care for a sick child. Children with contagious or infectious illnesses may not attend school unless given a doctor's written permission.

### ***Fever Policy***

If, during the school day, a child is experiencing a fever (99.5 degrees Fahrenheit or higher) or signs of a fever (chills, flushed skin, sweating), we will call parents/guardians to come to pick up the students, allowing him or her to be cared for at home.

A student experiencing any of the fever symptoms mentioned above should stay at home until fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine.

## **INSURANCE - HEALTH AND ACCIDENT**

Carrying health and accident insurance for students is the responsibility of parents. Parents accept all medical expenses arising from injuries or other emergency medical treatment.

## **INTERNET – see MEDIA**

## **ITEMS NOT TO BRING TO SCHOOL**

Candy, toy weapons, radios, cell phones, iPods, video games, music players, and role playing games (Magic cards, or any type of trading cards, for example) should not be brought to school. Matches, lighters, jack knives, and other potentially dangerous objects also have no place in school and will be confiscated.

Sexually explicit material has no place in our school and will be immediately confiscated if found. If a parent becomes aware at any time that this type of material has been present at school, we ask that the class teacher or the school administrator be notified.

## **JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

The school has developed comprehensive job descriptions for faculty leaders and administrative staff. These job descriptions are available for review in the Main Office at the Elementary School.

## **KEENE LIBRARY CARDS**

Even if you don't live in Keene, your family can check out books from both Keene Public Library and Keene State College. (KSC has a great collection of children's books, particularly the "good old" ones.) On request, KPL provides a free library card to every student who goes to school in Keene; and your KPL card entitles you to six books at a time from KSC. See the MWS Main Office for a form letter to take to KPL. See the MWS Library for booklists.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Unidentified clothing and other items left at the elementary school will be placed in a box and kept outside the Woodworking room. Items lost at Early Childhood will be found in the Early Childhood office. Items left at the high school will be left in the Main Office. If your child is missing clothing, please check there. The school will donate unclaimed clothing to local charities. *PLEASE LABEL ALL CLOTHING WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME!*

## **LUNCH/SNACKS**

Students in grades Early Childhood through 12 bring their own lunches and beverages. Water is available at the school. Since mealtimes are essentially social, we request that children do not bring lunch boxes bearing pictures of super heroes, violent characters, comics, movies, etc., as they often distract the children and change the nature of their conversation and interaction with their peers. Early Childhood students have a mid-morning snack provided by the school. Elementary children need to bring a mid-morning snack that is wholesome and nutritious, preferably without refined sugar or additives. Please do not include candy, cookies, etc.

During the school year in Grades 1-8, on some days of the week there is usually a lunch item that is offered as a class or school fundraiser, e.g. "pizza day" on Thursdays. These opportunities are publicized well in advance and offer a respite to home lunch preparation!

In the Early Childhood, the ritual of preparation and sharing of snack is an important part of the morning. The cost of providing the snack is included in the Supply/Material Fee.

***MAKE-UP*** – See **DRESS CODE: Make-Up & Accessories**

## **MEDIA**

Media of all kinds fill our world these days. From radios and TVs to smartphones and tablets, children swim in a media ocean. We are concerned about the amount and types of media exposure children experience. In general we strive to create a media-free environment while students are in our educational care.

More and more parents carry these same concerns about over-exposure to media and the consequent decline of direct, un-mediated experiences for young people.

What children bring to school after a weekend of unsupervised video watching or unsupervised radio listening affects the class and its work. Observation of the children by their teachers leaves us with serious concerns about excessive exposure to the media. A reliance on ready-made pictures reduces the child's ability to visualize both the written and the spoken word. Students who are accustomed to passively receiving have difficulty making the inner effort necessary to sustain an imaginative train of thought. There is a growing body of research supporting this position.

Essential to the Waldorf approach to education is the daily activity by students of reviewing the previous day's work. As the children sleep, the stories, subject material, and experiences of the day are transformed and become their own. This process sparks the individual development of thinking. When a child is exposed to strong, fixed impressions, such as the media presents, this overnight process of taking in is compromised to a point where we know it cannot work at all as it is intended.

To support the work we do at the Waldorf School, we ask that parents eliminate media use during the week and strongly monitor or eliminate its use over the weekend. We strive to create a media-free zone during the school day.

In the event that a child's media experiences are affecting his or her ability to benefit from the curriculum and thereby causing disruption to the daily life of the class, the teacher will request a meeting with the parents of the student. A child whose media experiences are disruptive to the class, classroom activities, or educational process is of serious concern to the faculty and may lead to a request to withdraw a student.

## **MEDICATIONS BROUGHT TO SCHOOL**

If your child requires medication during the school day, the following steps must be followed:

1. Medication must be handed from an adult to a teacher to be dispensed by the teacher.
2. All medication must be in its original packaging and fully labeled.
3. If necessary your physician must provide a note describing when and how the medication should be administered and for how long.
4. This policy pertains to all medicines, including homeopathic, naturopathic, anthroposophic, and allopathic, as well as asthma inhalers.

## **MUSIC**

Music is an integral component of our educational program. Children who study a musical instrument are more likely to excel in all of their studies, work better in teams, have enhanced critical thinking skills, stay in school, and pursue further education. A study from Columbia University revealed that students who study arts are more cooperative with their teachers and peers, have higher levels self-confidence, and are more equipped to express themselves and their ideas.

In addition to preparing students for a lifetime of creating and enjoying music, the study of music helps students unfold their capacities for thinking, feeling, and willing in a unique and powerful way. The music program we offer in the school depends on support from the students' families to work most effectively. Students in grades five and up are expected to play an instrument, take regular lessons, and practice at home. In addition to the school choruses, all students in grades five and up participate in either band or orchestra during the school week. Interested students may also take advantage of afterschool musical groups led by our music teachers.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Children of any race, gender, creed and social or economic status will be given an equal educational experience.

## **OFFICE HOURS:**

**Main Office:** Monday-Thursday 7:30am - 3:30pm Friday 7:30am -2:30pm

Lisa Mahar, Lead Administrator	603-357-4442 x104
Kim Cassin, Operations Manager	603-357-4442 x107
Lori York, Admissions	603-357-4442 x105
Carol Renzelman, HS Office Coordinator	603-903-0064
Mary Veerkamp, Elementary Office Coordinator	603-357-4442 x101
Kristen Moody, Elementary Office Assistant	603-357-4442 x102
Ruby MacDougall, Marketing	603-357-4442 x109

## **OUTDOOR PLAY**

Outdoor play is a big part of our school day and our vacation and holiday programs. Teachers and staff monitor outdoor temperatures, heat index, and wind chill factors and we adjust our time outdoors accordingly.

When the temperature with wind chill is a factor, children will be required to have all necessary clothing including hats, gloves and warm layers to protect them from the cold, and time outside will be limited. Children without the necessary layers will not be permitted to go outside.

In extreme heat, teachers and staff will monitor the heat index and will adjust the activities accordingly.

## **OUTREACH AND MARKETING**

Monadnock Waldorf School thrives when parents tell other parents about their children's positive experiences. Please consider joining our Ambassador Program and work with other parents who have made a commitment to support the outreach and marketing efforts of the school. Please help us by hanging posters about upcoming events, liking us on Facebook and encouraging your friends to do the same, bringing neighbors and friends to school events, and identifying yourself as a Waldorf parent to co-workers and others. Lori York, Admissions, or Ruby MacDougall, Marketing, can tell you more.

## **PARENT CONFERENCES/STUDENT REPORTS/ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

Each class in our school is considered a community in which each member has strengths and talents to share with all. Children are not compared or encouraged to compete with one another. High individual standards will be expected and demonstrated in many areas. Evaluation of a child's progress will be shared with parents through meetings with the teacher and through written reports.

Parents of pre-k and kindergarten children will receive a year-end report in June, and there will be at least one parent-teacher conference during the year. **For grades 1 through 6**, parents will receive course descriptions in September and a year-end report in June that describes both academic and social development. Individual conferences with parents will also be scheduled during the fall and mid-winter. **For grades 7 and 8**, reports will be written after each Main Lesson block which include individual progress notes for the block and also for math and language arts. Comprehensive tests are given at the end of many blocks and regular assessment work serves to strengthen academic skills. Grades and narrative feedback support the students in developing a true sense of their own effort and capabilities. In the autumn and in the winter class teachers meet with parents for evaluative conferences. Reports are written at the end of the year based on the information gathered through the year on the block reports.

Children in the 3rd grade will be checked during the year to determine reading level and math skills. Children of grade 7 and/or 8 will be given an overall academic assessment and the results will be shared with the parents. Results of these level and skills checks of the students are for assessment purposes only; the scores do not follow the student in his/her permanent records.

Monadnock Waldorf School has experience and expertise in successfully communicating students' academic performance and potential to other educational institutions.

Please refer to the High School Handbook for high school grading and report information.

## **PARENT COUNCIL**

### **PARENT COUNCIL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

**April 1, 2015**

Monadnock Waldorf School has an active Parent Council, whose mission is to promote better communication and greater involvement within the MWS community.

The Council is a way for parents to get engaged in the life of the school, giving them an opportunity to help advance the social atmosphere and culture. The Parent Council work is one of partnership and collaboration.

This statement of purpose serves to organize and focus the work of the Council, and to clarify the important ways in which parents are encouraged to participate in the life of the school.

The Parent Council consists of one or two parent representatives from each class, plus a representative from both the school administration and the faculty. The class representatives join by suggestion of the class teacher and/or their own display of interest. The expectation is that each class is represented at the monthly Parent Council meetings.

The purpose of the Council includes the following:

1. Supporting community building by organizing events and services for parents and families.
2. Support of school-wide activities and festivals and teacher appreciation events.

3. Enhancing parent involvement by promoting volunteer opportunities.
4. Conducting fundraising activities in order to support various school programs such as violin rentals or class trips.
5. The Parent Council meeting presents a unique opportunity for the school administration to get a sounding of parent sentiment and thinking on a particular topic.

The Parent Council has a budget that it applies to its work. Sources of the budget include sales from the school store and annual yard sale as well as other fundraising activities. The budget is both fully raised as well as overseen by the Council. The group makes decisions about how the dollars raised through its fundraising activities will be given back to the school.

Operational structure: the Council is led by two co-chairs, who are selected by the Council members each spring for the upcoming school year. One person fills the role of treasurer.

The Parent Council is open to all parents at Monadnock Waldorf School. The group is meeting on the first Tuesday of each month from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. All parents and guardians are welcome to attend. Meetings are held in the faculty room on the lower level of the elementary school.

## PARENT NOTICES

Once a week we distribute the *Week Ahead* through email and on our website. Don't miss it! It's the place to look for calendar reminders, notices, parent-to-parent communications, and more.

By supplying your email address to Mary at [mveerkamp@monadnockwaldorfschool.org](mailto:mveerkamp@monadnockwaldorfschool.org), it will insure that you will receive your *Week Ahead* electronically.

We welcome your contributions; email [nwiener@monadnockwaldorfschool.org](mailto:nwiener@monadnockwaldorfschool.org) your articles. ***Copy deadline is 12 noon on Thursday.***

## PARKING AND DRIVING TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

We have an overall traffic plan for the school based on city requirements. It is important that we adhere to the plan for reasons of safety, efficiency, and good neighborhood relations.

- 1) Morning drop-off is in front of the Wilber Street entrance. Please pull forward so we can accommodate two cars in the drop-off area. When leaving, **continue up Wilber Street** to Water Street. **DO NOT MAKE U-TURNS BACK TO SOUTH LINCOLN STREET.**
- 2) **There is no parking immediately alongside the building or in front of the Wilber Street entrance.** These are fire lanes and could be needed at any time in an emergency. In the morning, you may park in any marked space and also in overflow spaces along the playground fence until school begins.

The first four parking spots are open for visitor and handicapped parking. In fall and spring all other parking spots must be available from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily, for classes coming outside for recess and games class. Winter parking will be available in the parking lot during the school day, but we ask that parents watch out for children and markers in the parking lot.

- 3) Our school was built originally as a neighborhood school with no provision for adequate parking. We ask that you bear this in mind. When visiting during school hours please park on the **south side** of Church Street or the **east side** of Valley Street and Probate Street if the two visitor spots are taken and walk the short distance to the school. Do not park on Hardy Court.
- 4) Parking on Wilber Street is limited. Park only after the first driveway. Parking on the curve creates a danger for drivers and pedestrians. Your car may be towed to clear the roadway. When parking on neighborhood streets, please remember the following city ordinances:
  - **No parking within 30 feet of any intersection unless otherwise posted.**
  - **Park in such a way that all driveways can be safely accessed.**
  - **Do not park on sidewalk or facing oncoming traffic.**

**Our parking plan states that MWS families will limit our parking to one side (as designated in #3, above) of neighborhood streets at all times to ensure the safe passage of school buses and emergency vehicles.**

- 5) Afternoon pick-up at dismissal time offers two options. Parents may park their cars on Wilber or Church Streets, following the above guidelines, or they may pull into parking area and drive along the back of building. The teacher on duty will direct traffic. Please help to keep traffic moving by observing the no parking areas: in front of the school's main entrance (Wilber Street), immediately alongside the school building (fire lane), and in the rear of the parking lot (leaving room for the turn-around).

Cars are to drive back to the turn-around (basketball court) area, where children will be directed to their carpools. Upon entering the lot, cars should drive alongside the school building for pick-up, then circle around to the left, continuing out the exit lane.

**During Monday and Wednesday 1:00 dismissal for Grades One and Two, please park on Church Street or Wilber Street and walk on to school grounds to pick up your child.**

*Please refer to Early Childhood and High School handbooks for drop-off, parking, and pick-up procedures.*

## **PARTICIPATION IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

Our school community is a living thing. Its health and vitality, its life-force, radiates from relationships: teachers with students, parents with teachers, colleagues with colleagues. Our community reaches beyond the boundaries of our buildings and includes alumni, grandparents, friends of the school, alumni parents and even those who deliver our wood pellets or our mail.

We all know that human relationships are exhilarating, transforming, and life-giving. Human relationships can also be frustrating, are almost always complex, and, if we're honest, so human!

At Monadnock Waldorf School our families often have five, ten and sometimes even fifteen year relationships with the school that can carry parents, students, and teachers from pre-k through grade twelve. Though we may not know when or how, we do know that somewhere along the way we will hit a rough spot. It is the nature of deep, meaningful human relationships. A teacher may make an error in judgment. A parent might overlook a teacher request. Student behavior might be seen differently by teacher and parent. A sensitive decision by the school leadership, necessarily confidential, might not

meet with understanding in the parent community. Mismatched expectations might lead to misunderstanding.

The challenge at these times is not so much that we have a difficulty to face together; the challenge is in how we will work with each other when now that a difficulty has come up. These are the very times when our commitments to respectful communication, active listening, and engaged, solutions-orientated communication are really put to the test.

Here we want to outline for you what you can expect from your school at times like these and we want to be clear about what we expect from you on the good days and on the challenging days, as well.

What you can expect from your school:

- Clear timely communication of information
- An immediate response to your questions and concerns
- A call back or conversation with your teacher within 24 hours (or sooner)
- Thoughtful listening to your concerns
- Non-judgmental, respectful inquiry
- Clear plan for ideas, solutions, and next steps
- Follow-through on action steps
- Review to be sure the action steps are showing desired results
- Maximum appropriate transparency in communicating school decisions

What your school expects from you:

- Willingness to meet as an equal partner in your child's education
- Clear and timely communication about challenges or concerns
- Concerns brought directly to the teacher, administrator or other school leader who is designated to receive and respond (See Parent Handbook for a clear outline of where to bring questions and concerns.)
- Thoughtful listening
- Non-judgmental, respectful inquiry
- Active participation and follow through in developing and implementing solution-oriented action steps
- Commitment to not engage in complaining and griping about concerns that should, instead, be brought by a parent directly to the teacher, administrator, or other school leader who is designated to receive and respond.\*
- Commitment to not "rush to judgment" when you receive information and news about school decisions, realizing you may not have knowledge of all the facts and processes that went into the decision
- Willingness to demonstrate and assume goodwill, good intent, appropriate confidentiality

\* A word about complaining and griping: If parents get together and complain about the school it has a draining effect on goodwill. It undermines our collective efforts and sets a poor example for our children. And, importantly, it does not lead to solutions.

This "no griping" commitment is not a prohibition against conversation. We all know that speaking thoughtfully with a trusted friend about a concern in order to clarify one's thinking, to consider other perspectives, and to test out possible solutions, can really make a positive difference. But it requires that the mood is respectful and that the ultimate intention is to move on to raise the concern with the school.

We invite every parent to put a stop to griping when it starts and to make a personal commitment to bring concerns directly to those in the school who have the responsibility to listen, to work to understand and to help find solutions.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY AT SCHOOL EVENTS**

We would like all of our guests, students and staff at events to enjoy events without distractions. Parents are therefore requested to please refrain from taking still or video images during special assemblies and class plays. Teachers will arrange for a photography session at dress rehearsal or after the assembly.

## **READING AT HOME FOR YOUNGER STUDENTS**

One of the best ways to support your child's Waldorf education is through reading. Ideally, a child who is read to from the earliest age develops skill for and a love of reading that continues throughout life. Many parents have a routine of daily reading aloud that often continues through eighth grade and beyond. Some parents even have to limit their children's reading to themselves to allow for a reasonable balance of activities. A child with a strong home reading program has little time for, or (often) interest in watching television and other audio/visual media.

Selecting books for your child requires some care. Some of the modern children's books are like video-in-print: extreme, violent, scary, etc. Such books are easily avoided, as there are hundreds of excellent children's books.

To begin selecting books to read at home, first check with your child's class teacher. The teacher will be planning to use certain books during the school year, and these are best to avoid so that your child hears them for the first time at school. Your teacher may also have a short list of books for the students to pick from when they begin selecting books from the MWS and public libraries.

The parents' section of the MWS library also has lists of recommended books, sorted by grade level. Most of these books are available at a local library.

## **RECOMMENDED RESOURCES**

The following are recommended as good introductory books on Waldorf education:

Teaching as a Lively Art, Marjorie Spock  
The Education of the Child, Rudolf Steiner  
Waldorf Education, M.C. Richards  
The Experience of Knowledge, John Gardner  
Rudolf Steiner Education, Francis Edmunds  
The Way of a Child, A.C. Harwood  
You are Your Child's First Teacher, Rahima Baldwin  
The Child From Two to Four, Udo de Haes  
School as a Journey, Torin Finser

We are pleased to offer each family in our school a complimentary subscription to Renewal – A Journal for Waldorf Education.

## RELIGION

Monadnock Waldorf School does not provide religious instruction, nor does it advocate for a particular religious belief. Families of all religious beliefs (as well as non-beliefs) attend the school.

Monadnock Waldorf School observes the cycle of the year through both traditional and lesser known festivals, some of which have their roots in the world's religions. We feel they embrace the qualities of hope, courage, joy, gratitude, love, and reverence which are part of religions around the world.

Other holidays are celebrated by the school through the preparations of individual classes and in special assemblies. Your child's teacher will have more specific details to share. Teachers welcome the opportunity to work with parents in bringing other festival events to their classes.

## SCHEDULE FOR STUDENTS

### ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

#### EARLY CHILDHOOD School Hours:

Monday - Friday 8:00 am- 12:00 pm  
(Early drop-off as early as 7:30 am)

#### Afternoon Program:

Monday - Friday 12:00 pm – 3:30 pm or 5:30 pm, as scheduled by family

#### ELEMENTARY School Hours:

Monday - Thursday 8:00 am- 3:00 pm  
Friday 8:00 am- 2:00 pm  
(Drop-off after 7:30am)

### On Time Arrival

The opening of each school day is a special moment for the teachers and the children at Monadnock Waldorf School. When morning exercises are interrupted by a late child it affects the whole class. ***We feel it is essential for the well-being of the children and their classes that they arrive on time. It is equally important that the children be picked up promptly at dismissal.*** Waiting to go home is hard on the children. Teachers cannot provide adequate supervision after regular hours. If you will be delayed or your child will be absent, please call our office as soon as possible.

Morning exercises begin promptly at 8:00am for all elementary classes. We request that parents plan to have children arrive 10-15 minutes early so they are ready to begin their morning together with classmates.

### On Time Dismissal

Just as there is a form to the beginning of the day, there is a form to the closing of the school day. Dismissal for the preschool and kindergarten children is at 12 noon. Dismissal for the elementary school is at 3:00 p.m. **On Friday elementary classes are dismissed at 2:00 p.m.** On "early dismissal" days noted on our calendar, school ends at 1:00 p.m.

**OFFICE HOURS – see OFFICE HOURS**

## **SCHOOL DIRECTORY**

Each fall, a printed school directory is given to each family and includes all teachers and students at the school. Parents and family members agree to keep the school directory information and other personal or private information about students and their families confidential, restricted for school purposes only, and not disclose such information to any third party.

## **SNOW DAY POLICY**

Monadnock Waldorf School follows the Keene School District (SAU #29) regarding bad weather cancellations and delays. However, because of the widespread area covered by our students' and teachers' homes, we must reserve the right to cancel school at our discretion.

Check your local radio station for Keene Public Schools, Keene School District, or SAU #29. Since we follow the Keene School District for closings, if any of these are listed, MWS will be closed as well. There will also be a pre-recorded message placed on the school phone as well as a school-wide calling post service. This is an automated service that will notify you of school closings due to weather, as well as meetings, school and class events, and reminders.

School will not be canceled for inclement weather developing during the school day. However, parents should feel free to pick up their children before dismissal if they are concerned about conditions. In the event of a delayed opening, all early childhood programs will begin at 10:00am and end at their regularly scheduled time. There will be no early care. Aftercare will not be affected. The Elementary School will begin at 10:00am and end at the regularly scheduled time. The High School will begin at 9:45am and end at regular time.

Monadnock Waldorf School does not “make up” snow days late in the year. Because we already have many more instructional hours scheduled than required by the State of New Hampshire, we have no need to make up days we have missed. Having a firm end to the school year makes planning easier for our parents and for our teachers.

***TARDINESS – see ABSENCES***

***TELEVISION AND RADIO – see MEDIA***

## **TUITION ASSISTANCE**

MWS is committed to offering a well-rounded education. A diverse student body is a necessary part of the school's program. To help create that diversity and to make MWS a more vital institution, we have established a tuition assistance program to address some part of the need for financial assistance. A committee made up of our Operations Manager and friends of the school administers the tuition assistance program. Applications for tuition assistance are processed using FACTS Grant and Aid Assessment. The Committee reviews each application, taking into account the recommendations made by FACTS.

Determining tuition assistance awards is a balancing of individual financial needs, total financial need, and availability of funds. The Committee asks for information solely to determine need according to established policies. Recipients of tuition assistance are expected to have current accounts clear before awards are distributed. Applications are due in late February for the following school year. New families may apply at any time. For information contact the Operations Manager, Kim Cassin, at the Elementary School (603-357-4442 ext. 107).

Tuition assistance is available to all students, Early Childhood through High School.

There is a process for appealing tuition assistance awards. This process is reserved primarily for families who have experienced a change in their financial circumstances since initially applying for tuition assistance. There may also be a situation where a family does not feel the FACTS application adequately explains their circumstances and they may require the opportunity to provide a detailed explanation. This too may present the opportunity to appeal a tuition assistance award. Appeals are submitted in writing to the Committee in care of the Operations Manager. Each appeal letter must contain the specific amount of assistance that the family is requesting.

***Tuition Assistance Application Form:*** If you are applying for tuition assistance, these applications need to be completed and returned to the office, usually around February 15, for the family to be eligible for the next school year. Applications must include all requested information in order to be considered for a tuition assistance award.

## **TUITION SETTING**

Tuition is set by the Board of Trustees each January. The tuition setting process is comprehensive and involves financial modeling for the whole school, conducted by the Finance Committee and the Operations Manager. The process takes into account the anticipated level of need for tuition assistance for the following academic year. Based on enrollment projections as well as consultation with the Enrollment Committee and the Director of Enrollment and Outreach regarding competitive/comparative tuition/fee schedules, the Finance Committee prepares tuition and fee recommendations that are reviewed and voted on by the Board.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

All volunteers working with students, including chaperones and drivers on trips, must undergo fingerprinting and a criminal background check. With safety in mind, we owe it to our parents and our students to make sure that any adult volunteer, driver or chaperone accompanying them does not have a criminal background. All volunteers should call our Business Office to make arrangements to receive the proper paperwork and instructions on completing the one-time background check process.

## **ZEBRAS AND OTHER PETS**

To protect parents, staff and students from unwelcome nips and bites, zebras and other pets should not be on school property unless secured in a vehicle. Thank you!

