Waldorf
EDUCATION

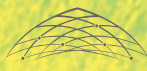# INNOVATING FOR THE NEXT 100 YEARS

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

2019-2024

Updated February 2021

AWSNA

ASSOCIATION OF WALDORF
SCHOOLS OF NORTH AMERICA

INTRODUCTION

INNOVATING FOR
THE NEXT 100 YEARS

Growth and stability in The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America member schools and institutes is predicated on our collective ability to address real issues facing our communities and to develop school ecologies that are appropriate for the time and place in which we live.

Throughout the association and within Waldorf classrooms and teacher preparation institutes we must recognize where the past best serves the future; and, through research and collaboration, bring forth new impulses for Waldorf education in the next century.

VISION, MISSION, VALUES

AWSNA was founded in 1968 to support schools and institutes in North America. Our vision is to strengthen and nurture Waldorf education and to advance Waldorf principles worldwide.

AWSNA's mission is to support schools through collaborative regional work, professional and resource development, accreditation, community outreach, and advocacy. The association's work is based on four core values:

- Evoke and develop Quality and Integrity in everything we attempt and achieve.

- Promote Strength and Resourcefulness in every school community.

- Foster, encourage, and support inspired Leadership and Colleagueship.

- Work toward conscious and collaborative human Community and Relationships.

PRIORITIES

STRENGTHEN AND SUPPORT TEACHER QUALITY

INCREASE CAPACITIES FOR COLLABORATIVE AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

ADVANCE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

PREPARE FOR THE NEXT CENTURY OF WALDORF EDUCATION

STRENGTHEN AND SUPPORT TEACHER QUALITY

PRIORITY
Nº1

Many factors contribute to student achievement but research suggests that among school-related factors, teachers have the greatest influence on student learning. To that end, the strength of our movement lies in the quality of the classroom experience. It is critical that we continue to take steps to ensure that talented, creative, and committed educators enter the Waldorf teaching profession, that they are well-trained and prepared for the classroom, and that they receive ongoing professional development.

Objective 1: Position institutes for the possibility of accreditation through the continued development and implementation of effective practices.

a. Ensure all institutes are fulfilling association minimum program expectations.

b. Develop and implement a framework for teacher trainee assessment.

c. Develop and implement a framework for institute teacher qualifications and expectations, onboarding, ongoing professional development, and assessment.

Objective 2: Pilot a financially sustainable, regionally based, innovative solution to quality teacher training that is accessible to a broad range of students and inspires the next generation to become Waldorf educators. *Additional funding needed to execute.*

NEW Objective 3: Facilitate collaboration among institutes to expand and deepen the offerings available to teachers and to support teacher inner development activities that strengthen institute quality.

a. Develop and implement a pedagogical mentoring program as an ongoing institute offering.

b. Support the inner life of the teacher by hosting regional colloquia as professional development for institute teachers.

PRIORITY N°2

ADVANCE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Waldorf education, intended to be accessible and relevant for all children, was founded on and espouses principles of respect for all human beings. Dedicated human and financial resources are necessary to counteract systemic injustices and unconscious bias that serve as hindrances to fully express these principles. It is critical that we take steps to ensure that we are awake to the needs of all and that resources address diversity, equity, and inclusion.

b.

Objective 1: Demonstrate a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in AWSNA's defining documents and in so doing, act as a model for change.

a. Revise AWSNA's mission, vision, and values to ensure that racial justice, equity, and inclusion are at the forefront of our work.

b. Reconcile the narrative of Rudolf Steiner's writings in relation to race and ethnicity in order to redress any dehumanizing or disparaging aspects of our history and foundation that are in conflict with our values and social mission.

Objective 2: Position schools and institutes to develop communities of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and address questions related to place, race, class, and gender.

a. Leverage collaboration and provide resources that increase member awareness, engagement, and commitment to DEI.

b. Engage an outside organization to conduct a climate, inclusion, and equity survey of parents, teachers, staff members, and middle/upper grades students in representative schools.

c. Support school DEI committees by providing networking opportunities that encourage exchange of practices that support school transformation.

d. Utilize the member approved Commitment to DEI as the basis for a voluntary DEI criteria for self-study/accreditation in order to strengthen an association-wide commitment to racial justice.

Objective 3: Promote the development of and access to North American curricular/pedagogical resources focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).

a. Reimagine Waldorf pedagogy by hosting monthly webinars that examine both Rudolf Steiner's indications and educational ideas that have manifested as white-centric pedagogy, with the goal of supporting pedagogical innovation for racial justice.

b. Develop a curriculum repository of practices that are informed by the AWSNA Principles for Waldorf Schools that support racial equity and justice.

c. Engage in equity and inclusion DEI curriculum research in order to further our understanding and practices that support racial equity and justice.

d. Facilitate engagement in Pedagogical Special Interest and Research Groups so that faculty have a space for deepened, ongoing dialogue with colleagues who are engaging in action research towards racial equity.

e. Initiate dialogue among institutes to support the inclusion of racial equity practices in teacher preparation and professional development programs offered by AWSNA member institutes.

NEW Objective 4: Increase Institutional Understanding and Representation.

a. Expand our knowledge and understanding of the experiences of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) in Waldorf schools and institutes so that we can better understand what changes are needed and take actions to address those needs.

b. Expand BIPOC representation in AWSNA's board, staff, and leadership council with the understanding that education is fundamental to change.

c. Provide racial equity training for the AWSNA executive team, board, staff, and leadership council with the understanding that education is fundamental to change.

d. Support Affinity Networking Groups for BIPOC and LGBTQ+, which aim to further strengthen diversity and inclusion in Waldorf education.

INCREASE CAPACITIES FOR COLLABORATIVE AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

At the heart of organizations with healthy, positive cultures and financial insight are individuals and groups functioning with leadership expertise. Articulated governance structures and accountabilities are essential to providing the clarity for the entire organization to have confidence in the actions of its leaders. These skills and capacities must be sought after and developed within the environment of our schools and institutes.

Objective 1: Implement a training program focused on "developing a culture of leadership."

a. Work with AWSNA member institutes and outside organizations to develop related content and determine modes of delivery.

b. Pilot a Culture of Leadership Workshop with a cohort of schools.

Objective 2: Provide resources and training designed to strengthen school governance and administrator proficiency.

a. Leverage collaboration and provide resources that increase member tools and processes to assess and refine governance structures, delegation of authority, and succession planning.

b. Define and provide training on specific skills essential to strong administration.

c. Provide a leadership roadmap by defining specific skills and capacities for administrators and boards.

d. Develop and foster an administrator cohort for deeper research and learning.

Objective 3: Deepen the understanding of pedagogical leadership through collaborative research and engagement.

a. Leverage collaboration to identify effective practices by sharing current successes and challenges.

b. Gather and publish effective practices.

c. Investigate pedagogical leadership training activities.

PREPARE FOR THE NEXT CENTURY OF WALDORF EDUCATION

Waldorf100 provides us with an exciting opportunity to celebrate the history and impact of Waldorf education throughout the world and enhance its visibility and reach. Thus far, the anniversary has acted as a catalyst to unite the worldwide movement, to deepen our connections and awareness of the other, and to recommit to and strengthen the mission of the future of Waldorf Education. It has provided a significant opportunity to think anew, innovate, inspire, and become an impulse for social impact and cultural transformation.

Objective 1: Execute a high visibility public relations campaign to promote school and institute Waldorf100 activities and Waldorf education.

a. Generate material and execute the Waldorf100 joint social media campaign - Waldorf100 Windows, 100 Faces of Waldorf Education, Alumni Spotlight. **COMPLETE**

c. Seek opportunities for continental press coverage and recognition in the broader educational movement. **COMPLETE**

b. Generate and post monthly continental press releases for distribution aimed at increasing media coverage and interest in Waldorf education. **COMPLETE**

NEW Objective 2: Strengthen collaboration with the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN) and the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education (The Alliance), with the understanding that the three associations, working together, will more effectively further the mission of Waldorf education.

a. Co-host a North American collaborative, virtual conference, titled *School Renewal and the Heart of Change* with The Alliance and WECAN, targeting 1000+ participants.

b. Support and guide collaborative effort, identify shared resources, and explore emerging possibilities.

c. Prioritize the impact of systemic racism as an urgent issue of our time and seek ways of sharing trainings, workshops, forums, and resources.

Objective 3: Launch a continental Waldorf Alum Connect networking platform and support schools in advancing alum relations.

a. Engage a Director of Alum Relations and establish priorities for a successful continental alum relations plan. **COMPLETE**

b. Launch the continental Almabase alum platform, with a goal of onboarding 3,000 alums in the first three years.

c. Develop training materials, effective practices, and mentoring/networking opportunities aimed at strengthening alum relations in our schools and institutes.

NEW Objective 4: In partnership with Waldorf high schools, pilot a high school social entrepreneurship symposium, aiming to strengthen experiences for Waldorf high school students around financial and social entrepreneurship and impact projects.

a. Obtain seed funding for program development.

b. Contract with a project manager with expertise in social entrepreneurship and Waldorf education and recruit a high school advisory group.

c. Develop a pilot program for high school seniors with a participation goal that includes students from 30+ high schools.

d Include Waldorf alums as presenters, workshop leaders, and mentors.

NEW Objective 5: Launch *School Renewal*, a newly branded and contemporary Waldorf education journal for today's parent.

a. Develop a sales, advertising, marketing. branding, and content plan for the new publication.

b. Identify co-creators of the publications - editor, designer, advisory team members, and authors - and develop themes that highlight innovation in Waldorf education.

c. Launch *School Renewal*, aiming for an initial order equal to 5,000 subscriptions at a break-even price point.

NEW Objective 6: Complete an association organizational review that aims to ensure current structures, processes, and activities are designed in a manner that best meets the changing needs of AWSNA member schools and institutes, and further defines the relationship between AWSNA, WECAN, and The Alliance.

a. Designate an Organizational Review Task Group to develop an inclusive and expansive review and visioning process.

c. Implement changes in accordance with the established timeline.

OVERALL ACCOUNTABILITY

The overall accountability and responsibility for ensuring advancement of strategic priorities and objectives for the five-year strategic plan rests with the executive team. Annual progress updates will be provided to association delegates each June, 2020-2024.

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