

**Susquehanna Waldorf School  
All School Handbook  
2011-2012**

*updated 2/2012*



**susquehanna  
waldorf  
school**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**WELCOME TO THE SUSQUEHANNA WALDORF SCHOOL..... 1**

- Our Mission Statement..... 1
- History of the School..... 1
- Our Governance and Organization Structure..... 2
  - Board of Trustees*..... 3
  - Management Team*..... 3
  - Pedagogical Chair*..... 4
  - Section Chairs*..... 4
  - Parent Guild*..... 5
  - Policy and Decision Making*..... 5
  - Business and Financial Management*..... 5
  - Human Resources*..... 6
  - Development and Fundraising*..... 6
    - School Store “Under the Sycamore Tree” ..... 6
    - Donation and Fund Raising Policies..... 6
    - Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) Program..... 6
    - Susquehanna Waldorf School Endowment..... 7
    - SCRIP Program..... 7
    - Annual Giving Campaign..... 8
  - School Plant and Facilities*..... 8
- Our Parents..... 8
- Parents’ Association..... 8
  - Membership & Meetings*..... 9
  - Organization*..... 9
  - Committees*..... 9
  - Communication Crossover*..... 10
  - Class Parents*..... 10
  - Class Representative*..... 11
  - 5 C’s of Community Striving*..... 11
- Our Publications..... 11
  - The ePost..... 11
  - School Calendar*..... 12
  - SWS Handbook*..... 12
  - School Directory*..... 12
  - Email Guidelines*..... 12
- Class Visits and Observations..... 12
- Nondiscrimination Policy..... 13
- Child Abuse and Neglect Policy..... 13

**THE SCHOOL DAY..... 13**

- Absences and Late Arrivals..... 14
- Attendance Requirements..... 14
- Timeliness and Pickups..... 14
- Contacting Your Class Teacher..... 15
- Getting to School..... 15
  - Car-pools*..... 15
  - Buses*..... 15
  - Walkers*..... 15

<i>Parking</i> .....	15
Field Trips.....	16
<i>Day Trips</i> .....	16
<i>Overnight Trips</i> .....	17
<i>Third Grade Class Trip</i> .....	17
<i>Eighth Grade Class Trip</i> .....	17
Parent-Teacher Conferences and Progress Reports.....	17
Transcripts.....	17
Playground.....	17
<i>Rules</i> .....	17
<i>Consequences</i> .....	18
Pets Policy.....	18
<b>EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS.....</b>	<b>18</b>
Our Early Childhood Program.....	18
Parent and Child Programs.....	18
Mixed-Age Kindergarten.....	18
Afternoon Garden.....	18
Changing Early Childhood Programs.....	19
Allergies & Dietary Concerns.....	19
<b>OTHER SCHOOL PROGRAMS.....</b>	<b>19</b>
Extended Care Programs.....	19
<i>Sunset Program</i> .....	19
<i>Sunset Program Policy for Committee Workers</i> .....	20
<i>Emergency Situations</i> .....	20
General Music Program.....	20
Stringed Instrument and Orchestra Program.....	21
<i>Choral and Orchestra Performances</i> .....	21
<i>Performance Attire</i> .....	22
Sports Program.....	22
<i>Conduct During Sports Events</i> .....	22
<i>Safety of Children During Sports Events</i> .....	22
Summer Camps.....	22
Care Group Program.....	23
<b>EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATION.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>CONCERNS AND CONDUCT.....</b>	<b>23</b>
Illness or Injury .....	23
Visiting School Nurse.....	24
Head Lice Policy.....	24
Emergency Procedures.....	25
<i>Inclement Weather</i> .....	25
<i>Other Emergencies</i> .....	25
Conduct and Discipline.....	25
<i>Classroom Conduct and Expectations</i> .....	25
<b>THE HOME CONNECTION.....</b>	<b>26</b>
Television and Other Media.....	27
Electronic Devices & Cell Phones.....	27

Rest and Sleep.....	27	
Home Toys.....	27	
Recess & Outdoor Time.....	27	
Food and Hot Lunch.....	27	
Clothing.....	28	
Student Dress Code Policy.....	28	
Camera Policy.....	29	
Lost and Found .....	30	
<b>DEVELOPMENT.....</b>	<b>30</b>	
Development Principles & Policies.....	30	
Educational Improvement Tax Credits.....	30	
Volunteer Opportunities.....	30	
School Fundraiser Policy.....	31	
Class and Lunch Fundraiser Policy.....	31	
<b>FINANCE.....</b>	<b>31</b>	
Tuition.....	32	
Tuition Assistance/Financial Aid.....		32
<b>ADMISSIONS.....</b>	<b>32</b>	
Admissions Process.....	32	
Evaluation of New Students.....	32	
<i>Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten.....</i>		32
<i>Grades 1-8.....</i>	33	
Summer Provisional.....	33	
Continuing Enrollment Procedure.....	33	
Re-Enrollment Procedure.....	34	
First Grade Readiness.....	34	
<b>DEPARTURE POLICY.....</b>	<b>35</b>	
<b>AWSNA.....</b>	<b>36</b>	
<b>FURTHER READING.....</b>	<b>36</b>	

<p><i>These policies and procedures are subject to change as may be determined to be in the best interests of the school or the students by the Management Team or the Board of Trustees.</i></p>
---

## **Welcome to the Susquehanna Waldorf School**

The Susquehanna Waldorf School follows the philosophy and method of Waldorf education, an educational movement developed by Austrian philosopher and educator, Dr. Rudolf Steiner. Since 1987 the Susquehanna Waldorf School has grown to provide classes for children from infancy through eighth grade. The school is a Pennsylvania-licensed academic private school and a full member of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA). We received full accreditation from AWSNA in January 2004 and are working to be re-accredited in the spring of 2012. Our Early Childhood program is also recognized as a full member of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN) and the International Association of Waldorf Kindertagesstätten.

### **Our Mission Statement**

*The Susquehanna Waldorf School is an independent school community rooted in the international movement and philosophy of Waldorf education. We provide a rich and challenging environment that inspires our students to reach the highest levels of intellectual, spiritual, artistic, and physical achievement. Through the integration of these pursuits, we nurture the potential within each child to fully develop his/her unique capacities. Our students acquire a lifelong love of learning and a sense of compassion that benefits them, their community, and the world at large.*

(updated August, 2011)

### **History of the School**

The Susquehanna Waldorf School began as a parent initiative in 1987 with nine Pre-Kindergarten students. The school has an even longer history, however. From 1970-1973, the Lancaster Society of Friends ran a kindergarten using Waldorf pedagogy. Between 1976 and 1978, the Friends organized a second, parent-run kindergarten. After this second venture closed in 1978, the Lancaster Waldorf School Association became a legally incorporated entity. The intent of its organizers was to establish and operate an independent private school upon the principles of the Religious Society of Friends, and using Waldorf pedagogical methods. The school opened in 1979 as the Lancaster Waldorf School, with five preschoolers. It grew to include twenty children in kindergarten through fourth grade, but closed its doors in 1984, due to financial difficulties and meager enrollment. A parent body continued to meet regularly to celebrate festivals and organize fundraisers.

In the early spring of 1987, a group of parents interested in Waldorf education met at the Lancaster Friends Meetinghouse. After several planning meetings, mounting enthusiasm, and a growing understanding of Waldorf pedagogy, the group decided to open a preschool that fall. One of the parents, Linda Heywood-Getz, supported with the mentoring of experienced Waldorf teacher Dorothea Williams, taught the first class. Dorothea Williams and her late husband Dr. Hal Williams gave the initiative loving support and guidance. Dr. Williams, an anthroposophical doctor, helped to choose the school's current name and served on SWS's first Board of Directors.

Enrollment doubled in the second year with an additional kindergarten, taught by Boel Neville, an experienced Waldorf teacher and participant in Waldorf initiatives. With Board President Thomas Getz and others, Boel helped the school to re-incorporate, to become established as a non-profit organization, and to join the Federation of Waldorf Schools.

The Lancaster Friends Meetinghouse had provided a warm and congenial atmosphere within which the school had begun to flourish. In the third year, in the late summer of 1989, with enrollments exceeding available space, the school relocated to its present home in Marietta, not far from Lancaster and closer to the homes of students from York County. The new home, a turn-of-the-century (1899) school building

that had served the town of Marietta for generations as a public school, once again had children entering its arched doorway and enlivening the classrooms. The Marietta Trust, a group of local citizens, had purchased the building when it closed as a school, in order to preserve and use it as a community gathering place. SWS leased space in the building, sharing occupancy with various other organizations until December 2002 when the school purchased the building and began to occupy all the available space.

Throughout the school's first seven years in the new location, more grades were added, and the faculty grew and developed into a decision-making body. The parents organized into an energetic and active Parents Association, and the Board worked with both faculty and the parents to help develop and stabilize the school's three pillars of leadership: faculty, parents, and Board.

In 2011 significant changes were made to the governance structure of the school. A four-person Management Team was formed to oversee the day-to-day administration of the school, replacing the Council of Teachers and the Central Communication Committee. The school's by-laws and governance documents underwent significant revision.

### **Some historical highlights:**

1987	Preschool founded at Lancaster Friends Meeting
1989	Moved to Marietta; First grade offered for the first time; many other firsts
1990	Pennsylvania Department of Education approved SWS application for licensure as a private academic school; second grade added
1991	School store opened; third grade added
1992-3	Over 100 children enrolled; fourth grade added.
1994	Specialty subject classes included French, German, handwork, music, woodworking, and games; fifth grade added
1995	First sixth grade class graduated
1996	Tenth Annual Winter Fair
1997	SWS Tenth Anniversary celebration; Care Group established
1998	Council of Teachers founded; first Eurythmy block; Leo Klein as mentor
1999	Seventh grade added; Parent-Child classes begin; Admissions consultant; Mandate system implemented
2000	Admissions Coordinator and Business Manager hired; office moved downstairs; first Development Committee
2001	Eighth grade added and first eighth grade class graduated
2002-3	First Development Coordinator
2003	Building purchased; First AWSNA accreditation
2004	First Shepherds' Play performed
2005-6	New logo
2007	First Middle School Support Teacher; Endowment began
2008-9	Lancaster City Parent/Child satellite
2010-11	Governance and By-laws revision; Management Team founded; PA renamed as Parent Guild; middle-school clubs formed
2011-12	Celebration of Twenty-Fifth Year

### **Our Governance and Organization Structure**

Leadership of our school is shared among the members of the Board of Trustees, the Management Team (representing the will of the full faculty and staff), the Pedagogical and Section Chairs, and the Parent Guild Steering Committee.

**The Board of Trustees:**

Sustainability and legality are the primary responsibilities of the Board. The Board ensures that the school will be able to sustain itself in optimal fiscal condition, will be responsible stewards of the facilities and land, and will continue to provide Waldorf education into the future. The Board keeps the bigger picture alive; its focus on the mission and vision of the school and its study of Steiner's indications for Waldorf education and the threefold social order allow it to undertake strategic planning and to measure the work of the school against its desired ends.

The composition and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees are dictated by the By-laws of the school. The Board includes between nine and thirteen members, each holding two-year terms. Non-vested (non-employee) members comprise a simple majority, including at least two parents, one of whom is appointed as a representative of the Parent Guild, and at least one non-parent. Vested members include the Business Manager and at least three members of the teaching faculty, one of whom is the Management Team representative.

Members of the Board of Trustees, 2011-12:

Connie Waltz, Vice-President  
Sharon Trostle, Secretary (PG rep)  
Fausto Rivera  
Kevin Mullen  
Melissa McIntyre (faculty)  
Sal Martino (faculty)  
Deborah Duke, Business Manager  
Kris Miller, MT rep

The Board of Trustees holds regular monthly meetings to discuss the school's legal and fiscal health and to further strategic planning. Each monthly meeting begins with an open session, during which all members of the SWS community are invited to participate. A key aspect of the Board's work is their preparation and approval of the school's annual budget, which is presented at an All-School Meeting in the spring. The Board conducts a self-evaluation of its work by the beginning of April of each year, at which time the Management Team also reviews the Board's work and makes recommendations.

The Board's committees include its Executive Committee (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary); Nominating Committee; Tuition Assistance Committee (Business Manager plus three Board-appointed members); and Facilities Committee (Facilities Coordinator, Board member, and Business Manager). Two additional committees are considered joint committees between the Board and the Management Team: the Finance Committee (Treasurer, Business Manager, Board and Management Team representatives) and Human Resource Committee (with two members from both the Board and the Management Team).

**The Management Team:**

Accountability is the primary responsibility of the members of the Management Team. Their jobs are to help all faculty and staff members live up to the agreements, expectations, and aspirations that we all have for ourselves and each other as professionals in our field. The administrative and managerial work of the Management Team is undertaken as a means of achieving the school's mission.

The Management Team carries the administrative and managerial leadership of the school and is responsible for decision-making and oversight in all matters concerning day-to-day administrative and pedagogical life. The work of the Management Team is informed by the pedagogical work of the faculty and the Management Team's collaboration with the Board of Trustees. The MT, with legal guidance from the Human Resource Committee, makes decisions about faculty and staff employment in all cases except

for the Business Manager (who is hired directly by the Board). The MT oversees matters relating to pedagogy and programs.

The Management Team consists of four members: three faculty members and the Business Manager. Three members constitute a quorum for the purposes of meetings and decision-making. When possible, the three faculty members include a representative from each of the three sections: subjects, early childhood, and grades. These members are chosen by the full faculty and staff and their work is reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees, the Pedagogical Chair(s), the faculty and staff, and the Parent Guild. If three MT members express "no confidence" in a fourth member's contributions, the full faculty and staff will meet to determine if a new MT member should be appointed.

Members of the Management Team, 2011-12:

Kris Miller, chair and Board rep (Class Teacher, Class of 2013)

Deborah Duke, Business Manager

Wendy Dougherty, rep to Parent Guild and HRC (Kindergarten Teacher)

Elizabeth Curtis, rep to Finance Committee (Class Teacher, Class of 2016)

The Management Team meets regularly twice a week, on Monday and Wednesday afternoons, and meets weekly with the faculty during Thursdays' after-school faculty meetings. All members of the community are invited to share suggestions and concerns with the MT, which will promptly respond directly to the matter or redirect the matter to its proper place. The MT will inform the entire school community about its work in an article in the weekly ePost.

### **Pedagogical Chair:**

Creativity is the primary responsibility of the Pedagogical Chair(s) and, by extension, the whole faculty. The lifeblood of the pedagogy in the school depends upon the active research, study, and creative imagination of the teachers and staff members who undertake paths of inner development and who meet weekly for the purpose of deepening their work with Anthroposophy and with Waldorf education. This work ideally informs the direction and mission of the school.

Pedagogical Chair(s) are selected during year-end faculty meetings by full faculty/staff. Their term runs for one year and can be renewed. The work of the Pedagogical Chair is reviewed annually by the Management Team and by the Section Chairs.

Pedagogical Co-Chairs for 2011-12:

Linda Heywood, Kindergarten Teacher

Kirsten Updike, Administrative Coordinator

### **Section Chairs:**

The Section Chairs carry the management and visionary leadership of the sections of the school: Early Childhood, Grades, and Subjects. These Chairs proactively guide work in the section meetings to strengthen pedagogy within a healthy Waldorf school environment. The Chairs are chosen annually by their sections, receive delegated tasks from the Management Team, and keep the Management Team informed of their activities and decisions.

Early Childhood Section Chair for 2011-12:

Jackie Randazzo, Parent-Child Teacher

Grades Section Chair for 2011-12:

Sharon Hill, Class Teacher, Class of 2015

Subject Teachers' Section Chair for 2011-12:  
Kate Nation, French Teacher

**Parent Guild:**

The Parent Guild is a community-building organization and serves as the vehicle for full parental involvement in the life of the school community. The Guild elects a representative as a full member of the Board of Trustees and actively supports the work of the Board, Management Team, and Faculty on behalf of our children, contributing to the intellectual, physical, and social climate of the school community. The Parent Guild also supports the school, fosters communication, and builds community through actively participating in planning social fundraisers such as the Winter and Spring Fairs.

All parents of currently enrolled students are members of the Parent Guild. Every class in the school should have one class representative active in the Parent Guild, which meets at least once a month. The Parent Guild Steering Committee--consisting of Chair, Co-Chair, one or two Secretaries, Representative to the Board, and Outreach Coordinator--oversees the work of the Guild and serves as an advisory group to the Board and Management Team. The Guild does much of its work through committees. *Please see more on page \_\_\_\_*

Parent Guild Steering Committee, 2011-12:  
Kim Klein, Chair  
Claire Taylor, Secretary  
Sharon Trostle, Board Rep.

**Administrative Staff:**

Our school has a full-time Admissions Coordinator who leads our work in outreach and marketing, admissions, and enrollment. Our full-time Business Manager is responsible for financial and contractual agreements. Our Administrative and Facilities Coordinator staffs our front desk, coordinates record-keeping and school communications, and oversees the management of the school facility, among other duties.

**Decision-Making at SWS**

Decisions are reached by consensus within all decision-making groups. For the Management Team and the Board, a quorum must be met in order to make a decision. Management Team decisions are sent to the Board for approval.

Parent input on important school issues has a formal channel in the parent representative on the Board. Input from parents is sought and encouraged.

**Business and Financial Management**

The ultimate responsibility of the financial state of the Susquehanna Waldorf School lies with the Board of Trustees. All financial matters of the school are handled by the Treasurer of the Board, the Finance Committee, and the Business Manager. Financial recommendations are made by these bodies or people and approved by the Board of Trustees.

The Treasurer of the Board has custody of the funds and securities of the school. The Treasurer must be a non-vested member of the Board and is nominated and elected to the officer position annually at the May meeting of the Board or when the position is vacant. The Treasurer, in conjunction with the Business Manager, prepares and presents annual reports to the Board of Trustees, including a balance sheet

showing the assets and liabilities of the corporation (SWS) and a profit and loss statement showing the gross and net income and operating expenses of the school.

The Board Finance Committee (comprised of Treasurer, Business Manager, and representatives from the Board and Management Team) is responsible to ensure the present and future financial health and stability of the school through sound policies and principles. The committee is responsible for initiating, implementing, and carrying through the annual budget process; for managing operating expenses and seeking approval of any proposed bottom line changes from the Board; and for formulating investment policies.

### **Human Resources**

The Board of Trustees is responsible for hiring the Business Manager and for overseeing his or her work, as well as for helping to oversee the work of employees who maintain the school facilities. All other human resource issues, including hiring, termination, job descriptions, and professional development, are handled by the Management Team. Section Chairs assist in cases where applicants for a faculty position are sought, and qualified job candidates are taken by the Management Team through a process of "poid-ing": paperwork submission, observation, interview, and demonstration. Input on candidates for teaching and staff positions is sought from the full faculty and staff.

The Human Resource Committee, comprised of two members each from the Board of Trustees and the Management Team, becomes involved in human resource issues when matters at hand have legal significance.

The Management Team, Pedagogical Chair, and Section Chairs assist all members of the faculty and staff in professional development. The work of all teaching and administrative staff members is evaluated in regular cycles, both by in-house and outside observers.

### **Development and Fundraising:**

#### ***School Store: "Under the Sycamore Tree"***

The school store manager reports directly to the Board. The store carries products that reflect the values and philosophies of Waldorf education. The school and community members provide many original items. Profits from store sales create income for the school's operating budget.

#### ***Donation and Fundraising Policies***

All donations to the school are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law and the Internal Revenue Service. The school accepts gifts of cash and cash equivalents including stocks, securities, bonds, bequests, and charitable trusts. Donations of tangible items and services (in-kind) are often needed and requested. We encourage families to take advantage of corporate fund matching for charitable donations. *Please see the Development section for more information.*

#### ***Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) Program***

The Susquehanna Waldorf School participates in the Pennsylvania Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program as an approved scholarship organization. This program allocates thousands of dollars each year in tax credits to encourage incorporated businesses to donate money to scholarship and educational improvement organizations for primary and secondary education. Scholarship organizations, such as Susquehanna Waldorf School, offer tuition assistance to improve educational opportunities for children. For more information regarding the EITC program, please contact the school and visit [www.inventpa.com](http://www.inventpa.com).

### ***Susquehanna Waldorf School Endowment Fund***

Through the philanthropic support of alumnus parents Rich and Deb Mauro, an endowment fund was established in 2006 through the York County Community Foundation ([www.yccf.org](http://www.yccf.org)) who manages, administers and distributes the funds accordingly. If you have any questions regarding this fund or have an interest in being a part of it, please contact the school.

### ***SCRIP Program***

SCRIP is a national fundraising program used by schools and other non-profit organizations. As a non-profit organization, SWS is qualified to participate in the SCRIP program.

Families purchase gift cards and a percentage of that purchase is deposited into a savings account for children in that family who are students of our school. Percentages vary based on vendor and range from 2% up to 20%.

Monies earned can be used for school expenses other than tuition. Qualifying school expenses are:

- School Lunch
- Class Field Trips
- Annual Giving
- Individual Class Funds

### **SCRIP at UTST**

SCRIP cards for Giant, Weis, SKH, and The Country Store are sold in the school store during operating hours. Payment must be made in cash or by check at the time of purchase. A certain amount of cards are kept in inventory for convenience, therefore a limit on the amount of gift cards that can be purchased from the school store at one time are as follows:

- Giant: \$500
- Weis: \$200
- SKH: \$300
- The Country Store: \$200

An order can be placed for an amount larger than the limit with the school store manager. Payment in the form of cash or check must accompany your order. There is no shipping cost associated with an order for any of these four vendors.

### **Special-Order SCRIP**

In addition to the SCRIP sold in the school store for local vendors, SCRIP is also available for purchase from over 800 national vendors. For a comprehensive list of vendors and the percentage discount they offer, go to [www.shopwithscrip.com](http://www.shopwithscrip.com)

### **To place a SCRIP Special Order:**

Go to [www.shopwithscrip.com](http://www.shopwithscrip.com) and create a Family Account.

Associate your account with The Susquehanna Waldorf School (Code: L8F5ALAL2963)

Place your order.

Bring payment of cash or check to the receptionist.

There is a \$7.50 shipping charge associated with SCRIP Special Orders that must accompany the Special Order. Multiple orders from multiple families can be combined for a savings on shipping.

### ***Annual Giving Campaign***

The Annual Campaign is our most significant fundraising effort of the year, which differs from our other fundraising efforts in a very important way. Other fundraising activities usually involve the buying or selling of goods or the joyful participation in an activity or event. One can see the return they receive for their money.

The Annual Giving Campaign presents an enriching opportunity for our community—parents, Board Members, faculty, grandparents, alumnae, etc.—to make a statement of trust in the mission and works of our school through our financial gifts. The return on this investment is more than a lovely item purchased, planted or eaten. The return comes when we see our gifts at work to enliven, foster and expand Rudolf Steiner’s vision for how our developing children become whole, moral beings.

Tuition alone does not fully cover the cost of educating a child at SWS but rather represents the school’s desire to make a Waldorf education accessible to as broad a population as possible. It is expected that each family participate in our annual fund drive to whatever extent is fiscally possible.

### **School Plant and Facilities**

The Facilities Coordinator is responsible for managing the building maintenance, improvements, and surrounding grounds, with the assistance of the Facilities Committee, the Facilities Steward, a cleaning service, and volunteers. The Facilities Committee meets as needed to support the Facilities Coordinator in coordinating, overseeing and completing projects. The Facilities Committee keeps the interior spaces and outside areas, including the playground and parking lot, both aesthetically pleasing and safe, as well as in compliance with state regulations.

The Facilities Committee strives to support all aspects of sustainable living, which include using green cleaning products and rendering services from local businesses whenever possible to support maintenance and repair projects. At this point in time, we continue employing a pest control company to limit the amount of critters visiting our school. If you have any specific questions as they pertain to the use of any products at SWS, please contact the Facilities Coordinator.

The staff’s commitment to sustainability keeps us recycling our paper and cardboard as well as ordering office products that are green. We ask parents to support us in this endeavor whenever possible by ordering recycled paper goods that are biodegradable. The Administrative staff is happy to assist families interested in "being green." Please come in or call to set up an appointment.

### **Our Parents: Parent Guild**

The Parent Guild is the collective parent body of the Susquehanna Waldorf School. Our mission is to promote parental participation in the life of the school and inspire unity within the school community. The Parent Guild serves as a strong voice for the parent community and works in partnership with the Board of Trustees, Management Team, Faculty and Administration. Together, we embrace the mission, vision and goals of the Susquehanna Waldorf School to joyfully support and enrich the lives of our children and ourselves.

The Guild organizes learning opportunities that educate parents on the philosophies of Waldorf Education and outreach activities that serve the local community. For a more in-depth understanding of the role of the Guild, contact the Guild chair or refer to the Parent Guild Handbook.

### ***Membership and Meetings***

All parents with children currently enrolled at the Susquehanna Waldorf School are members of the Parent Guild. All Open meetings of the Parent Guild and Guild Steering Committee are open to the entire school community.

Guild shall have at least one regular monthly meeting throughout the school year. The Guild Chair creates the meeting agendas. Decisions of the Guild will be made by consensus with all who are present at the meeting.

### ***Organization***

The Parent Guild is organized into:

The Steering Committee

1. Chair
2. Co-Chair
3. Representative to the Board
4. Secretary(s)
5. Outreach Coordinator

Guild Committees

1. Head Committee
2. Heart Committee
3. Hands Committee

Its elected officers or Steering Committee will manage the business and communications of the Parent Guild. Every member of the parent body is encouraged to participate in the life of the school in a manner that is compatible with respective schedules and interests.

Parents can contribute to the success of the school in many different ways by providing work, wisdom and wealth. Parents are encouraged to attend Guild meetings and class meetings, to read the weekly ePost and regularly visit the school website; and to identify the ways they can best contribute.

### ***Committees***

The structure of the Parent Guild strives to be consistent with the philosophy of Waldorf Education – educating the Head, Heart, and Hands. The Guild will provide opportunities for a healthy balance of thinking (head), feeling (heart) and willing (hands) in everything we do.

To assure that all of the tasks and goals of the Guild are carried out in an organized and efficient manner, the Guild's work is separated into three mandated committees - Head, Heart, and Hands.

The parent body, through the mechanism of the Guild, will identify and elect members from the parent body to serve on these Guild Committees. Members of the Guild Steering Committee, Class Representatives, as well as members from the parent body may serve on these committees.

#### **Head Committee**

The Head Committee focuses on parent **education** and **communication**. This committee organizes parent education and works to support the aspects of communication within the parent body and school community. The Head Committee works with the Guild Steering Committee and Administration to expand and revise the portion of Parents' Handbook that relates to the Parent Guild. The Guild Chair serves as chairperson for this committee and the Secretary also serves as a member of this committee. This committee will oversee any monies of the Guild.

#### **Heart Committee**

The Heart Committee focuses on **community building** and **outreach**. This committee supports

new parent mentoring, organizes community-building activities, provides hospitality, and supports outreach events such as charity endeavors and Grandparents' Day. Their intentions are to cultivate friendship, hospitality, unity, and gratitude. The Outreach Coordinator serves as the Chairperson of this committee.

### **Hands Committee**

The Hands Committee is actively involved in the physical aspects of our school as well as fundraising and enrollment endeavors. The Hands Committee oversees the organization of the Crafter's Circle, which creates handcrafted items for our school store. Their energies are also directed toward supporting the efforts of the Admissions Coordinator and the Facilities Coordinator. A Chairperson for this committee will be selected at the beginning of the school year. The Co-Chair also serves as a member of this committee.

### ***Communication Crossovers***

The Faculty and Staff and the Management Team each elect a representative to attend the Guild meetings and to facilitate communication between the Guild and their respective group.

The Guild elects a parent to represent the parent body on the Board. This representative facilitates communication between the Board and parents. The Guild Representative to the Board is a voting member of the Board. He/she attends open and closed sessions of the Board as well as Guild meetings. The Guild Rep must be approved by the Board and agrees to fulfill the duties of a Board member, including signing all contracts and agreements as authorized by the Board.

The Guild Chair and the Co-Chair are invited to a Management Team meeting as needed to represent the Guild and the parents.

### ***Class Parents***

Developing a close relationship with his or her child's teachers will help a parent to gain a more thorough understanding of Waldorf pedagogy. All parents provide practical, emotional and spiritual support for the teacher and the class as well. To help with the facilitation of these aspects of classroom life, each class has one or more Class Parents who take the lead to organize parents to help with class events and, at times, all-school events. The teacher chooses the Class Parents. Following is a list of some of the items that Class Parents may be asked to do:

- Support field trip events (i.e. transportation, food, lodging, etc.);
- Coordinate the class's efforts for Community Service;
- Set-up a phone tree and/or email list to facilitate class communication;
- Coordinate teacher's requests for volunteers for moving day, housecleaning, and other classroom needs;
- Arrange social opportunities (potlucks, picnics) at the beginning and the end of the school year;
- Usher new families into the school community by introducing them to various functions and activities at the school as well as to answer any questions they may have;
- Organize special gifts or services the class may wish to give the teacher; and
- Seek to apply the skills and talents of the class parents to the benefit of the school, which may include fundraising activities.

The Class Parents work directly with the teacher in developing the class community. All aspects of Class Parents' work are under the direction of the class teacher. The Class Parents interact frequently with the class teacher and are knowledgeable about the school and its traditions.

### ***Class Representatives***

To facilitate communications between the parents and the Parent Guild, Class Representatives for each class (Kindergarten through Eighth Grade) may be selected annually by any means their class desires.

Class Representatives serve as members of the Guild. The Class Representative(s) serve as a two-way communication link between the parents of their class and the Guild. Duties of a class representative can be shared between two parents. The Class Representative(s) responsibilities include:

- Attending all class meetings and Guild meetings; if unable to attend a Guild meeting, finding a substitute
- Communicating information to the parents in their class regarding school wide events social activities, special speakers, all school meetings and Guild meetings
- Coordinating parent volunteers from their class to staff all-school events as requested by Guild or committees
- Being in contact with the class teacher to gather information regarding classroom activities and joyful learning experiences to share with the Guild at monthly meetings
- Being in regular communication with other parents in the class, and solicit feedback from parents who are unable to regularly attend Guild meetings
- Representing and conveying the issues and concerns of your class to the Guild or appropriate body; even when issues and concerns are different than your personal viewpoint
- Seeking to apply the skills and talents of the parents within the class in ways that benefit the Parent Guild as well as the school

### Qualities/Qualifications of Class Representative(s)

- Ability to work well with the other parents in the class
- Has the desire and time to be actively involved with the life of the school
- Good organizational, and communication skills
- Ability to handle issues of confidentiality with sensitivity and discretion

### ***The 5 C's of Community Striving***

The following five principles guide the social structure of the Guild's committee work.

**Communication** is the expression of thoughts, feelings or information. All forms of communications should be expressed in a compassionate and constructive manner.

**Cooperation** is an act of reworking or working together for a common purpose or benefit.

**Compromise** is the settlement of differences by mutual concessions, and an agreement reached by adjustment of opposing views. Flexibility and willingness to give up something is sometimes necessary to reach a beneficial agreement.

**Consensus** is reached when all members of a defined group have examined an issue from every angle, discussed the pros and cons and finally set aside objectives to unite themselves in a final decision.

**Consistency** is adhering to the same principles, guidelines, policies or structure in accordance to standards that have been previously agreed upon.

### **Our Publications**

#### ***The ePost***

Beginning with the 2011-12 school year, we are reviving our "Post" publication as a weekly e-mailed digest of school information. Each ePost will contain articles of interest and updates by the Management Team, faculty and staff, Board, and Parent Guild. All community members interested in receiving the ePost should make sure the school has their current e-mail address. Archived articles will remain on our

website at [www.susquehannawaldorf.org](http://www.susquehannawaldorf.org). Submissions to the ePost may be sent to [admissions@susquehanna.org](mailto:admissions@susquehanna.org); the weekly deadline is Wednesday, at the close of school.

### ***Community Calendar***

To ensure that all members of our community are "in the know" about events and opportunities, the Management Team oversees a full-school calendar which is available on our website at [www.susquehannawaldorf.org](http://www.susquehannawaldorf.org). While the calendar can be printed from the site, it is updated often, and reminders about calendar and scheduling updates will be announced in the ePost.

### ***SWS Handbook, Early Childhood Handbook, and Parent Guild Handbook***

Our school handbooks offer a comprehensive view of the school's identity, policies, and procedures. These handbooks are posted on our website at [www.susquehannawaldorf.org](http://www.susquehannawaldorf.org).

### ***School Directory***

The school directory contains the class list and alphabetical entry of each family. It also lists the Faculty and Staff, Board of Trustees members, School Store staff and other committees of the school and their chairperson(s). The directory is not to be used as a mailing or telephone list for non-school purposes.

The school directory is issued sometime in the early fall. As families come and go, directory updates will be published in the ePost. It is up to individual families to update their directories.

### ***E-mail Guidelines***

When e-mails or phone lists are being used for school-related information, please consider the following: Not every communication is appropriate for email. Email is neither private nor secure. Do not use e-mail to discuss confidential or sensitive information.

Group emails are to be used for class communications, ePost mailings, and committee work. School e-mail addresses published in the school directory are not to be used as a mailing list for non-school purposes.

### ***Class Visits and Observations***

Teachers in Waldorf schools work in a unique way with classes as social groups. Due to the change in dynamics when adults enter to observe the class, it is not always possible for parents to participate in lessons. However, parents may visit their children's classes for observation by making prior arrangements with the teacher. There are also Observation Mornings held once a month, as well as class meetings and Open Houses that offer more information about our school.

Please respect the work of the class by knocking and awaiting an invitation to enter. We request visitors to arrive on time, being courteous to the class time frames.

### ***Visitation and Participation of Non-Enrolled Students***

Prospective students' families are invited to make arrangements with our Admissions Coordinator for student visits to classrooms.

If former students (including alumni as well as students who have not graduated from SWS) would like to visit SWS during the school day, their families should submit a request to the Management Team for consideration. Requests should be made at least a week in advance of the proposed visit.

Former students are currently not permitted to actively participate in SWS classes, curricular lessons

(such as French or Orchestra), or organized extracurricular activities (such as middle-school clubs or basketball).

Occasionally, alumni of SWS may be invited to volunteer at our school. Students who have graduated eighth grade in good standing are invited to participate in the annual faculty/student basketball game the spring following their graduation, and all former students in good standing who have participated in the SWS basketball program will be invited to participate in Alumni Basketball games.

### **Nondiscrimination Policy**

The Susquehanna Waldorf School follows a policy of nondiscrimination in all aspects of operation and does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, sex, religion, age, or national or ethnic origin. All admissions and services are provided without regard to race, color, religious creed, ancestry, sex, disability, age or national origin. Any complaints of discrimination may be filed with the Office for Civil Rights, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Bureau of Civil Rights Compliance, the Department of Public Welfare, and/or the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect Policy**

An operator, faculty, or staff person who has reason to believe that a child enrolled in the facility has been abused is required to report suspected child abuse to Child Protective Services.

A written report regarding the suspected child abuse shall be submitted by the operator, faculty, or staff person to CPS, within 48 hours.

## **The School Day**

The school day begins at 8:15 a.m. and ends at 3:15 p.m. Your child's teacher approaches the day with a reverent attitude and seeks to bring the children into this atmosphere. If a child is late, s/ he misses the teacher's personal greeting and the daily verse. It is imperative that parents are on time so that all children are included and can make the transition into the school day. Tardiness also disrupts Circle and Main Lesson time.

Student drop-off begins at 8:00 a.m. Children whose buses arrive earlier than 8:00 may wait on the bench in Williams Hall, or, if they are in grades 5 through 8, outside their classrooms. All other children may not be dropped off at school until 8:00. **Please note that teachers will not be in the classroom until 8:00 a.m. Parents are not to leave their children in the classroom unsupervised.**

The children are dismissed at 3:15 p.m. Parents should please strive to pick up their children promptly. Families who need childcare beyond normal dismissal time can enroll their children in the Sunset Program. (See the "Sunset Program" in the Extended Care section for details).

Parents should inform their teachers and the office, in writing, of any changes to persons who are authorized to pick up their children, as well as any other schedule changes such as early dismissal or absence due to vacation.

### **Absences and Late Arrivals**

Regular attendance is important for the academic and social life of the child. Parents should try to schedule appointments and vacations when school is not in session. Parents are encouraged to help their children understand the importance of punctuality and good attendance.

If you arrive late, do not interrupt class by walking in; please knock, and wait with your child in the hall until the teacher finds an appropriate moment to invite your child into the classroom. The faculty recognizes that occasional delays are unavoidable. However, habitual tardiness is highly disruptive and will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Please leave a message before 8:15 a.m. if your child will be absent or is arriving late. If a teacher indicates a child's absence and the parent has not notified the school of this absence, a call will be made to the parents to confirm the child's whereabouts. **If your child takes a bus to school, please remember to notify the bus company when transportation is not required in such instances regarding illnesses, planned absences and early dismissals.**

### **Attendance Requirements**

The State Board of Education requires that school-aged pupils enrolled in the schools of this district attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the State. The educational program offered at SWS requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. Therefore, if a child has three or more unexcused absences or is excessively absent (defined at 10% of the days in the term to date or 17 days per school year), a notification will be sent to the parents. After that notification, any absences will require a doctor's excuse and may result in suspension until a meeting with parent, child and teacher is held to find resolution for the situation. Outside tutoring may be requested at the parents' expense. Tutoring could be required to keep the student up to date with the curriculum.

All absences require a written excuse and are determined to be excused or unexcused based on the following guidelines:

#### *Excused Absences*

1. Illness
2. Death in immediate family
3. Impassable roads
4. Religious holiday
5. Any absence pre-approved with the class teacher

#### *Unexcused Absences*

1. All reasons not listed as excused
2. No written excuse within five days after returning to school

### **Timeliness and Pickups**

Grades children will be dismissed at 3:15 p.m. in front of the school building. (For Kindergarten children, please refer to the Early Childhood handbook for arrival and dismissal policies.) Please be prompt in picking up your grades child(ren) at 3:15 p.m., as it can be frightening or saddening to a child to feel forgotten, even for just 10 minutes. If you think you will be late, please call the office so that we can reassure your child that you are on your way. At 3:30 p.m., your child will be placed in the Sunset Program according to the terms of the Emergency Situations section of the Other School Programs in this handbook. A second occurrence and all occurrences thereafter will each incur a \$25 fee.

### **Contacting Your Class Teacher**

Your class teacher will be happy to discuss your questions or concerns. Hurried discussions at drop-off or pick-up times aren't satisfying for either the parent or teacher and may make the student uncomfortable. Please check with your child's teacher as to the times most convenient for school-related phone conversations. Any personal concerns that require a lengthy discussion can be addressed in a prearranged conference.

### **Getting to School**

Many of our students are driven to school individually; for some parents car-pooling may be an option to reduce their driving time. Busing is available for students (see below for more details). Some students may be able to walk to school.

#### ***Car-pools***

Please give your child's teacher a written schedule of your car-pool arrangements and note any changes in writing. We also need to have a note to the teacher or phone call to the office when someone other than regular drivers will be picking up your child.

#### ***Buses***

If your school district lies within ten miles of the Susquehanna Waldorf School you may receive public school bussing for children who are at least 5 years of age by September 5th. For more information contact the Administrative Coordinator. Currently, the following schools provide bus transportation to the Susquehanna Waldorf School:

- Donegal
- Eastern York
- Elizabethtown
- Hempfield
- Penn Manor

Once bus arrangements are established, parents are required to notify the bus company directly when their child will not be riding the bus; for example due to illness, class field trips, or other scheduled absences, etc. This communication is very important to the bus drivers.

The bus services ask that your children be at the assigned bus stop 5 minutes ahead of the scheduled pick up time in the morning. Their bus schedules are tight and they ask all for their cooperation to help keep the buses on schedule. This is important as well to our teachers so that the children arrive before the school day begins.

Should a registered child need to get on or off at a different existing bus stop, permission notes will be required from the child's parent. These notes then need to be authorized by the Administrative Coordinator, who will return the notes to the child to be given to the bus driver. Should an emergency arise during the day and your child needs to get off at a different bus stop within the route, please contact the Administrative Coordinator to write the authorization note to the bus driver. Please note that busses will not transport non-registered students.

#### ***Walkers***

Children should cross at designated cross walks. Crossing guards are not provided.

#### ***Parking***

Please observe the "No Parking" signs in front of the school so that buses and emergency vehicles have access. Use the spaces in the west lot adjacent to the school. Please do not park in the lot to the east of

the school next to the Marietta Restoration Museum building. This lot is not available to the school. Please observe our one-way traffic flow on Walnut Street.

*Note:* When dropping off or picking up your child, be especially vigilant driving near the school. Please do not allow children to play in or around the parking lot or in front of the building during these hours. **Please do not leave your children unsupervised, and always remember to turn your car ignition off.**

## **Field Trips**

### ***Day Trips***

As part of the Waldorf curriculum teachers may take the children off the school grounds on walking trips in Marietta for educational and recreational opportunities such as: nature walks, geography lessons, botany lessons, playing ball, or enjoying the local playground. A walk waiver is required for teachers to take children on walking trips.

Teachers may also arrange to take children away from Marietta on field trips. Notification of a field trip will come by letter from the teacher. This letter will include information about fees and a permission slip. Field trip costs are not included in the tuition.

All school field trips are chosen based on the curriculum and age appropriateness. Field trips are designed as pedagogical tools, which support a specific learning experience for the students of any given grade; therefore, siblings of various ages are not invited to join these trips, which are for enrolled SWS students only.

Permission slips **must** be signed and returned before the trip if you want your child to participate. If a permission slip is not returned, the parent will be contacted to pick up their child. Teachers may ask for volunteer parent drivers to provide transportation. Volunteer drivers will also be required to provide copies of valid driver's license and insurance certificate, which will be kept on file in the office.

*State law requires that all children wear seat belts. We extend this requirement to all students while on any school-sponsored field trips. Additionally, no student in grade four or below may ride in the front seat of a car with a passenger side airbag. Fifth and sixth grade students may only ride in the front seat with parent's permission.*

*The effects of alcoholic beverages are of serious concern to many individuals and families. We feel that their use on any school sponsored trip is, therefore, inappropriate and to be avoided.*

*All school rules for appropriate behavior are in effect during field trips. Drivers/chaperones must be fully prepared to support and enforce school rules.*

### ***Overnight Trips***

School overnight trips are considered days away from school. They are intended to be educational, community building and an overall group and individual experience. The only excusable absence is a doctor's excuse to be provided to the class teacher. If the doctor's excuse prevents a child from attending the overnight class trip, they will then attend school under the supervision of a teacher completing school assignments while the rest of the class is away. Teachers will inform parents of the arrangements and the costs.

### ***Third Grade Class Trip***

The Third Grade class has traditionally taken an overnight trip. The ideal overnight trip for the third grade is a farm trip during which time children work with a farmer tending to the daily chores of farm life. There are costs for this trip that are not covered by tuition.

### ***Eighth Grade Class Trip***

It is the tradition of the Eighth Grade class to take one final memorable field trip celebrating their time spent together as a class. This special trip offers opportunity to sum up and reinforce the pedagogy of the entire eight-year journey. Once the class teacher has established the format and choices for the class trip, parents and teacher together will decide upon the final destination as well as the financial aspects of the trip and what fund-raising activities would need to take place within the guidelines of the Development policy.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences and Progress Reports**

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice per year for private and comprehensive discussion between parents and teachers concerning the progress and development of the child. These conferences are the Waldorf equivalent to report cards and are of utmost importance in maintaining open communication about each child's progress and development. Either the parent or teacher can request extra conferences.

Parents will also receive via mail by the first week of July, a thorough narrative account of your child's progress in each subject, written by your child's class teacher and each subject teacher. Our experience and conviction is that a written progress report gives a more accurate, complete and useful measure of student achievement than does a letter grade. These reports are written for parents. Parts of these reports may be shared or summarized with children in grades 6, 7, and 8.

### **Transcripts**

All requests for transcripts or evaluations of any kind will come directly to the school office, Attention: Administrative Coordinator. The various evaluation and recommendation forms will be given to the proper teachers to fill out and return to the Administrative Coordinator. We attempt to send out all transcript packages, evaluation or recommendation forms within two weeks of the request, and document all that we have mailed. All financial obligations must be current in order for student records to be sent as is stated in the Enrollment Agreement (contract).

### **Playground**

#### ***Rules***

1. Anything a teacher says is to be obeyed immediately.
2. No child may leave the school premises during school hours without a teacher or a parent.
3. Climbing over the fences is not allowed.
4. Once outside for recess, children need to ask for permission to enter the building.
5. Throwing of gravel, rocks, sand, snowballs, etc. is not allowed.
6. No child may leave the playground area to retrieve a ball without a teacher's permission and supervision.
7. Foul or abusive language will not be tolerated.
8. Play outside the fence is reserved for grades four and up.
9. Please ensure that all equipment is cleaned up before you leave the playground. The last teacher outside will check that the gates are locked, and the playground is secured.

### ***Consequences***

When a rule is willfully broken on the playground, the child who broke the rule will be sent to sit down. A teacher will come to the child within 5 minutes to restate the situation, listen to the child, and confirm the bottom line. The class teacher may also choose to do some or all of the following:

1. Have a conversation with the child in order to understand what is going on, and identify a plan to avoid a repeat of the behavior.
2. Call the child's parents.
3. Seek help from the Care Group committee or their colleagues.

### **Pets Policy**

For the safety of all our children and community members as well as of our facilities, please refrain from bringing pets inside our school building unless they are invited to a classroom visit which you have arranged with your child's teacher. All visiting pets on school grounds must be on a leash or in a cage, and owners are responsible for pet clean-up.

## **Early Childhood Programs**

### **Our Early Childhood Program**

In the Early Childhood programs at the Susquehanna Waldorf School, the seeds for love of work and learning are sown and grow with the child. The young child's school day contains a familiar rhythm that repeats each week as the seasons pass. Nature's cycles define the work, as seasonal songs, verses, stories, and crafts fill the mornings.

In the pre-school years, children learn primarily through their own need to be active and their uncanny ability to imitate all that surrounds them. Teachers bring activities and rhythm in an atmosphere of beauty, warmth, and harmony to nourish their blossoming creative thinking upon which all future abstract thought will be built. Simple material from nature provides the stimulus for creative play, which develops imagination, concentration, coordination, language, and number skills that will be gently called forth in the elementary years.

### **Parent and Child Programs**

The Parent and Child program offers an opportunity for parents with infants, toddlers, or young children to discover the world in a special setting with other families.

These programs provide a supportive environment for parents to explore the joys and challenges of raising young children, and to learn simple crafts, stories, and songs. A snack is prepared and enjoyed by all. Through play and work, the children will have their first taste of being with others in a group. Parents are encouraged to attend any scheduled adult meetings for discussion about the children and the class; the parent and child attend the rest of the classes in the session together.

Please refer to the brochure for specific dates and times of classes. To enroll in this program, contact the Admissions Coordinator.

### **Mixed-Age Kindergarten**

The Susquehanna Waldorf School offers 2, 3, 4, and 5 day mixed-age kindergarten programs designed for the young child who is 3 to 6 years of age. The children in the 2-day program attend school on Thursdays and Fridays, the children in the 3 day program attend school on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and

the children in the 4 day program come to school on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Both half-day (8:15 a.m. to 12:00 noon) and full-day (8:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.) programs are available.

The Susquehanna Waldorf School strongly recommends that 5 and 6 year old children who will go to first grade the following school year attend 5-day kindergarten (at the latest by January of the preceding September first grade enrollment) to ensure stamina, strength, and social maturity. Your child's individual needs will be accessed by his or her teacher.

### **Afternoon Garden**

Afternoon Garden is the afternoon portion of our full-day kindergarten programs. Here all the full-day children come together for rest and play in support of the morning activities. Each child is provided with a cot, pillow, and blanket and is expected to rest quietly, listening to a story. This is followed by a time of outdoor play (weather permitting) providing the balance needed after a busy morning.

Please note that the Afternoon Garden is not available as a separate program. A minimum number of days are required for enrollment. Speak to your teacher or to Admissions for more details. Advance registration is required as Afternoon Garden is not a drop-in program.

### **Changing Early Childhood Programs during the School Year**

As your child grows and matures during the year, you may wish to increase your child's hours in school. Space permitting and with the approval of your child's teacher, you may upgrade to an increased program length (for example, 4 day to 5 day or half day to full day).

Unless advised by the teacher to reduce your child's program length, you may not downgrade your early childhood program and your financial responsibility remains at the contracted level for the school year.

### **Allergies and Dietary Concerns**

Our Early Childhood teachers strive to provide healthy and varied snacks for the children in our care. If your child has food allergies or specific dietary guidelines that you would like us to follow, please speak with your child's teacher. We will work with you to provide an appropriate snack, keeping in mind your child's needs and the needs of the group.

## **Other School Programs**

### **Extended Care Program**

#### ***Sunset Program & Policies***

This program provides childcare and activities for children of all ages from 3:15 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Because we provide the option of full day Kindergarten programs, the Sunset Program is not available between 1:00 p.m. and 3:15 p.m. The program has 17 spaces and is available to children currently enrolled in the Susquehanna Waldorf School. Parents who need regular childcare should enroll their child in this program to ensure availability. Contact the Admissions Coordinator to enroll or for further information. The authorized person picking up the child will check in with the Sunset provider to sign the child out in the logbook and indicate the time of pick-up. Daily registration takes place with the Administrative Coordinator. Parents must call the Administrative Coordinator no later than 1:00 p.m. for same day use. Calls after 1:00 p.m. will be considered an emergency situation as described in the policy below. If the program is full, parents will be informed and will need to make other childcare

arrangements. If there is space available, your child's name will be added to that day's roster. The person picking up the child will check in with the Sunset Program provider to sign the child out and indicate the time of pick up. An hourly fee applies, which is billed monthly.

Note that, because we provide the option of full-day Kindergarten programs, no childcare program is available between 1:00 p.m. and 3:15 p.m. This program is day care licensed by the Department of Public Welfare.

### ***Sunset Program Policy for Committee Workers***

We welcome volunteers to make use of the Sunset Program at no charge. Because time commitments for volunteer work are generally known ahead of time, please check with the Administrative Coordinator prior to 1 p.m. to make arrangements. Sign-up procedures are the same as described above. Keep in mind that only 17 spaces are available. **This benefit to volunteers will not be available the week prior to Winter Fair.** We encourage parents to set up babysitting cooperatives during this time of work.

### ***Emergency Situations***

If you are unable to pick up your child from the Sunset program by 5:30 p.m., the Sunset care giver will call. If we are unable to reach you we will call your child's emergency contacts and request for them to pick up your child immediately.

Each family is allowed one emergency late pick up without a fee. **The second will incur a \$25 fee.**

We understand weather and traffic conditions can cause tardiness. Please have alternate care arrangements for these occasions and put them into place as soon as it becomes apparent that you will be arriving past 5:30 p.m.

Children in the half-day Kindergarten program will be placed in the Afternoon Garden program until you arrive. Each family is allowed one emergency drop-in without charge. **The second request will incur a \$25 fee.**

Children in the full-day Kindergarten program or a Grades class with a 3:15 dismissal will be placed in the Sunset program. **Each family is allowed one emergency drop-in without charge. The second request will incur a \$25 fee.**

Children who miss their bus or who are waiting for a late car pool pick up will be taken to the Sunset program. The child's name will be signed into the logbook. The Administrative Coordinator will contact the parent or other authorized pick up person to come for the child. **A second occurrence and all occurrences thereafter will each incur a \$25 fee.**

### **General Music**

Music, as with all academic subjects, is an integral part of our school's curriculum. Singing is generally practiced with both the class teacher and the music teacher throughout Grades 1–8. Other musical experiences are brought to the children at the developmentally appropriate times. In **1st grade**, the children begin to play the CHOROI interval flute, the pentatonic lyre, and chime bars as their first instruments. In the **2nd grade**, they continue playing the pentatonic lyre, and chime bars, and are introduced to the CHOROI pentatonic flute. This study continues until the middle of **3rd grade**, when the music curriculum moves away from the pentatonic scale, and the children move on to a flute program, which includes playing the CHOROI diatonic flute, the soprano recorder, and the "harmony" recorders. This continues through **8th grade**.

### ***Stringed Instruments and Orchestra Program***

In the spring of **2nd grade**, the orchestra teacher will give a demonstration to the children of the stringed instruments the children may choose from when they begin their private strings instruction.

The **3rd grade** year marks a year of transition for the child in music. As the curriculum moves away from the pentatonic scale, the children take up instruments which play in a diatonic mode. Along with the diatonic flute, which is introduced in class, the children begin their individual study of an orchestral stringed instrument. All students at SWS are required to take string instrument lessons by January of their **3rd grade** year. The orchestra teacher will send a letter to the third grade parents, reminding them to begin lessons for their children. A list of string instructors with all pertinent information will be provided. Parents will be responsible for arranging lessons and instrument rental; the cost of which is not included in tuition. The orchestra teacher will follow up to make sure the children have begun taking lessons on a stringed instrument.

Private lessons must be with a professional music teacher on a weekly basis, and are required to continue from January of **3rd grade** through the end of **8th grade**. Lessons may take place with one of the private music teacher's teaching at the school, either during the school day, or outside of school hours. A number of music instructors are available at SWS for lessons. These instructors are hired by the Music Department. Payment arrangements, however, are to be made directly between the instructor and the parents. It is the parents' responsibility to notify the music teacher if their child will be absent from a lesson. Daily practice (20 minute minimum) is expected, and may be viewed as music homework.

All students in **Grades 4 – 8** will play twice weekly in orchestra class. Instruments and music must be at the school on orchestra days. The orchestras will perform several times during the year, and attendance at the performances and dress rehearsals are mandatory. If a string instrument is clearly not the best-suited instrument for the student, the student may choose a woodwind instrument in **6th grade**, or a brass instrument in **7th grade**. The orchestra teacher will help choose a woodwind or brass instrument. A student must take private lessons on the new instrument for at least one year before playing the new instrument in the orchestra.

Some families may find the cost of instrument rental and music lessons difficult. Parents should discuss financial difficulties with the Business Manager, who can suggest alternatives.

If students are not meeting the music requirements by either failing to practice, not attending weekly lessons, or failing to have instruments and music at the school on the appropriate days, the parents will be contacted by the orchestra teacher with support from the class teacher. The orchestra teacher and/or private music instructor, and parent will establish a goal to ensure the continuation of instrumental study by the student. If the goal is not met, the student will not be in compliance with the music requirement of the school. Continued noncompliance may result in dismissal from SWS.

### ***Choral and Orchestral Performances***

Students perform throughout the school year in festivals, assemblies, special events and concerts. If your student's class is scheduled to perform at an event, the student's attendance is required. Specific requirements will appear in the orchestra and chorus agreement that will be given to your 4th to 8th grader at the beginning of the school year.

*Special note to the 7th grade:* The 7th grade orchestra performs at Graduation and students' attendance at this event is required.

### ***Performance Attire***

To help elevate self-esteem and confidence while performing, the students attire will usually consist of the following: Boys—Collared white shirt, dark pants, dark socks, dark shoes, no sneakers, ties optional. Girls—White blouse, long dark skirt or pants and dark shoes, no sneakers. Any change in this dress code for a particular event will be communicated to the parents by the music department.

### **Sports Program**

Basketball is offered as an after school sports program. The program is open to currently enrolled students in grades 6, 7, and 8. This program is designed to give the students an appropriate competitive atmosphere where they can utilize the various skills that have been taught in their Games classes. Basketball practices promptly end at 5:00 p.m. Parents must come inside to pick up their child. If you cannot arrange to pick up your child by 5:00 p.m., the student will be enrolled in the Sunset Program and you will be billed for that cost. There is a fee for students to participate in the Basketball program. The fee covers referee costs, uniforms, and equipment needs. Registration forms will be sent home with all 6-8 grade students in the fall.

### **Conduct During Sports Events**

Everyone is welcome to attend our student sporting events. We encourage your enthusiastic support of our students at both home and away games. A few essentials to remember are:

- 1) Good sportsmanship at all times, whether you're a team member or cheering from the bleachers. Please welcome the opposing teams and treat them well.
- 2) Stay off the playing court.
- 3) Please keep food and drink out of the gym. And look around you as you depart so you don't leave anything behind.

Thank you for your cooperation!

### **Safety of Children During Sports Events**

During the sporting event season, it is very important that all children staying after school to watch home games be under the supervision of a parent. This means that students must be accompanied by their supervising parent at all times. Students are not to be in the classrooms or wandering the halls.

### **Summer Camps**

During the summer months, SWS offers 5 weeks of summer camp programs geared toward all age groups. The summer camps are led by qualified teachers and are open to children enrolled at SWS as well as to the wider community.

Summer camps typically run from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Upon receipt of registration, letter of introduction, emergency forms and directions are sent to the parents.

Payment for summer camps is due by the first day of the camp session. Refunds will be honored only if a child is disenrolled two weeks prior to camp beginning. The summer camp programs will not be prorated. Brochures regarding the summer camp program are typically available in late winter. For more information, please call the Admissions Coordinator.

The Waldorf summer camp program welcomes children of all cultural, racial, social and religious backgrounds, and is run in a safe environment.

### **Care Group Program**

The school offers Extra Lesson support through the Care Group for children with developmental and/or emotional challenges. The class teacher will get permission from the parents to have a child in question observed and assessed by the Resource Coordinator. The findings will be discussed with the teacher, the parents and the Resource Coordinator in a follow-up meeting. The teacher informs the parents what help the school can offer for children with extra needs and what is available through outside agencies. If the parents decide to use the Care Group Program a plan is created reflecting the child's specific needs. Extra Lesson Support will begin once or twice a week for a fee. Financial assistance may be available.

The Care Group offers support for the admissions process as well as for the maintenance of the healthy social life in the classroom. A teacher may call for the support of the Care Group in helping to observe the social needs of the classroom. The classroom observation may lead to identifying issues within the classroom between students or individual students themselves. This, in turn, may lead to creating an improvement plan for the class as a whole or for an individual student. Parents will be notified if their child is involved.

The Care Group also offers support to the teacher and parents involved in the child study process. All children in the school are possible candidates for child study with prior parental approval. The selection of a particular child for study does not mean that the child is problematic, although children experiencing difficulties may be given priority. This confidential process involves a review at a Faculty meeting of the child's health and development designed to focus our thinking and generate support for the child. Developing a child study is a continuous process, and the collective insights of the entire Faculty are offered in an atmosphere of love and concern with the intention of deepening our understanding for each child.

### **Eighth Grade Graduation**

Each June, as we bid farewell to our graduating Eighth graders, the faculty and staff take pleasure in preparing a meaningful ceremony for our students, families and friends. We believe that Graduation is a formal occasion in a quiet and respectful environment. The Graduation of the Eighth grade falls on the Saturday after the last day of school. Seventh grade families will provide cake, beverages, and paper goods for the reception. The Eighth grade teacher uses his/her discretion regarding the attire and the location. At the end of the ceremony each student will receive a graduation certificate; provided that the family's financial account is in good standing.

During the ceremony and reception, all children are required to be under the supervision of an adult at all times which include the Seventh grade Orchestra members. All children must be seated with their parent(s) or responsible party during the ceremony.

## **Concerns and Conduct**

### **Illness or Injury**

If a child develops a fever, is injured, or is too sick to participate in class, the parent or authorized person will be notified. All students must have an emergency form on file in the school office. In the event of an accident or illness, the school will follow the instructions provided by the parents. **Current emergency phone numbers (include a cell phone number if necessary) and instructions are imperative for your child's welfare.** Your child will be taken to the school office and allowed to rest quietly until a parent or guardian arrives. Many of our staff and teachers are trained in First Aid and CPR.

Please be sure your child is well enough to participate in all activities before returning to school. A child who has had a fever or vomited in the past 24 hours should be kept home to recuperate. Remember to advise the office of any contagious or transmittable illnesses so that the teacher and parents of exposed children can be notified. The school reserves the right to suspend classes due to a high percentage of absenteeism.

Children taking prescription and over-the-counter medication during school hours must have written permission and original directions for dispensing on file.

### **Visiting School Nurse**

A school nurse is provided through the Donegal School District to ensure compliance with our status as a PA state licensed private school. Through regular visits she maintains students' health records, obtains immunization information, and ensures compliance with state laws. She conducts annual vision and hearing screenings, as well as height and weight charting for all children in kindergarten and the grades. Physical exams are required for students entering kindergarten and 6th grade. Dental exams are required for kindergarten, 3rd and 7th grades. Notification of physical and dental exams will be sent home in advance so parents may have a personal physician complete the form or schedule an exam. The Donegal School Physician and Dentist also provide these exams at the Susquehanna Waldorf School, if desired, on notified, scheduled dates.

If for religious, medical, or philosophical reasons your child has not been immunized or has been partly immunized, an exemption form (available in the office) must be completed, according to PA State regulations. The completed exemption form will then be placed in your child's health file in the SWS office.

### **Head Lice Policy**

The Susquehanna Waldorf School has adopted the following policy, which is based on state public health guidelines, and is the policy currently used in the area public schools. Because we do not have a school nurse, if a child is suspected to have head lice, the child will be sent home. We require a follow-up confirmation by a physician.

1. Once a case of lice is suspected, the child's parents will be notified immediately to pick the child up from school. All siblings of suspected cases will also be inspected and may possibly be sent home from school. Every effort will be made to remove affected students from the classroom until parents arrive.
2. The school will provide educational materials to parents that outline step-by-step treatments for the infested child, family and home.
3. The school supports a "No Nit Policy". Students will be readmitted to school only after all nits are removed and a written doctor's approval indicating such is received.
4. A "No Nit Policy" calls for:
  - a. The removal of all lice, eggs (nits), and egg cases following the application of a lice-killing product.
  - b. The exclusion of a child from school and school activities until such measures have been accomplished.
  - c. Community education to insure that parents understand their responsibility under a "No Nit Policy" which includes a notification to the school if their child has been infested with head lice.
5. A student's absence from school due to head lice is considered an excusable illness.
6. Parents will be notified by letter of a confirmed lice infestation.
7. Upon the recommendation of the Pennsylvania Department of Public Health, the school administration has the authority to close the school.

## **Emergency Procedures**

### ***Inclement Weather***

If the school must close due to inclement weather, an announcement will be made on the following radio, internet and television stations:

Radio (AM): WHP 580, WSBA 910

Radio (FM): WITF 89.5, WJTL 90.3, BOB 94.9, WRVV 97.3, KOOL 99.3,  
WROZ 101.3, WARM 103

Television Stations: WGAL (8), UPN (15), WHP (21), WHTM (27), WPMT (43)

Internet Web Site: WGAL.COM

This information is subject to change and notification will be by separate announcement.

### ***Other Emergencies***

The Susquehanna Waldorf School lies outside the Three Mile Island 10-mile evacuation circle. If an emergency situation concerning Three Mile Island were to occur, children who live within the 10-mile radius will be kept at school until a parent or authorized person picks up the child. An emergency operations plan is available in the office.

If the school must close early due to power difficulties, threatening weather, or other unforeseen problems, notification will be posted on the same channels as inclement weather.

Emergency drills are conducted regularly as required by the state.

## **Conduct and Discipline**

Politeness is expected. A child who is disruptive not only affects his own school experience, but that of his classmates as well. Children are expected to respect their teachers, school staff, classmates, and all property.

### **Classroom Conduct and Expectations**

- Class starts on time; children are on time.
- The main lesson teacher shakes the hand and looks in the eyes of each student. The day starts with a verse.
- Students are expected to follow the school dress code policy.
- No gum chewing is allowed on campus.
- No eating or drinking is allowed during class without specific teacher approval.
- Bathroom and water breaks are encouraged during recess time.
- Students stay in their seats unless otherwise directed or given permission.
- Permission to speak and/or leave one's seat is given in response to a raised hand, unless otherwise agreed upon.
- Basic courtesy is always expected.
- The class is standing quietly (in their classroom or outside the subject teacher's classroom) and ready to greet the subject teacher and engage in the lesson.
- Unrelated interruptions are discouraged.
- Students take responsibility for their own trash.
- Students help to clean the room daily.
- The teacher shakes the hand of each student at the end of the day, as the students are dismissed.

Any of the following incidents may lead to stronger disciplinary actions including student suspension or dismissal:

- Fighting, bullying or any behavior that violates the person or possessions of another.

- Foul, rude, obscene language or gestures.
- Belittling or teasing.
- Pushing, pinching, or hitting.
- Littering.
- Possession of collectable items, toys or electronic equipment.
- Physical or verbal sexual harassment.
- Possession of knives or other weapons.
- Drugs and/or drug paraphernalia, alcohol, or tobacco.

Weapons, drugs and/or drug paraphernalia, alcohol or tobacco will be immediately confiscated and taken, along with the student, to the office. The class teacher will be found immediately to manage the situation, if s/he is not with the group.

Waldorf education uses the principle of imitation as one method of directing the behavior of children. If the children see teachers treating each other, the students, and all property with care and respect, then they are likely to follow suit.

However, at times, disciplinary actions may have to be taken at school. This can include the child's name on the chalkboard, elimination from an activity, removal from the group, or the assignment of special tasks such as writing an apology, work as retribution and/or a pedagogical story. Corporal punishment or punishment which shames, demeans, or belittles the child is not used.

Teachers may have to call upon parents for support in their efforts to bring a disruptive child back into the class flow. Disruptive behavior that does not respond to either verbal correction or techniques such as those listed above will warrant a call from the teacher to the child's parents. Consequences for such behaviors include, but are not limited to, sitting out at recess, removal from after school sports activities, and after-school detentions. A faculty member may inform colleagues of these difficulties and request therapeutic recommendations from the Care Group or a child study (please see Care Group Program for more information on child study).

Continuing disruptions may necessitate a suspension (1 to 3 days) from school and school activities. Following a suspension, a parent-teacher conference may be held by phone or in person before the student can be readmitted to class. This conference may be structured to include additional faculty members, parent advocates, and the student, if deemed appropriate. Older students may also be requested to submit a personal improvement plan prior to return. Any school letters of communication will be filed in the student's academic record with a copy sent to the parent.

When unimproved, repeated behavior disrupts or affects the safety and well being of the class, the teacher along with the Management Team may ask that a child no longer attend the school.

## **The Home Connection**

### **Television and Other Media**

Television, video, radio and electronic games have many noticeable effects on children: shortened attention span, reduced perseverance, less initiative, and less play. A child's imagination is the vehicle for learning and growth, and children need opportunities to develop this crucial capacity.

Television watching is in the domain of the family, and you must decide what role it will play in your children's lives. The faculty strongly prefers that children not watch television, movies, or play electronic games because it negatively affects the class environment. The process of weaning your children from

these influences takes courage and creativity on the family's part. Your child's teacher can suggest a number of books on this topic. Other parents who have changed media habits are also a great resource and can be supportive with ideas and play dates.

### **Electronic Devices & Cell Phones**

We would like to remind parents and students that **electronic devices, such as gameboys, walkmans, and MP3 players are not to be brought to school or on the buses.** The use of these devices compromises the quality of children's experience of the Waldorf pedagogy, including the social realm, the reverent attitude with which we enter the school day, and the calmness needed to focus on their coming day's work.

While we acknowledge the usefulness of cell phone in general, they are not to be used by students on school grounds during school hours (8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.). After 3:30 p.m. a student trying to contact their parent may use their cell phone in the office. Any student will be given access to an office phone when needed. Cell phones on field trips will be left to the discretion of the class teacher or other accompanying teachers.

### **Rest and Sleep**

Being in school is both exciting and tiring to the children. To ease your child's transition, we suggest you provide quiet time after lunch and use the time after dinner for calming activities leading into a bedtime routine.

During the hours before midnight we get our deepest and most restful sleep. Seven o'clock is certainly not too early for a three- to six-year-old child's bedtime. Older children also need their rest and an eight o'clock bedtime and a book is a soothing way to settle in. How nice it is for the child to wake up by himself in the morning rested and refreshed and ready for an active day in school. Your child's teacher or any faculty member will be happy to share some suggestions on bedtime routines.

### **Home Toys**

A child thrives in an environment of simplicity and beauty and absorbs the impressions around him. A few simple, natural playthings will help enliven the child's creative play. We prefer that toys such as stuffed toys and electronic games stay at home.

Children are always welcome to bring gifts from nature to school, and they can find a place on the nature table for all to enjoy until the child is ready to take it home again. Please check with the teacher if your child wants to bring in an animal.

### **Recess and Outdoor Time**

Recess is an important part of the rhythm of any Waldorf school. Children benefit from the balancing effect of lively outdoor play. Parents must send their children to school with clothing appropriate for any conditions likely to occur in a given season, as it is the practice in any Waldorf school to go outside for recess daily, even when conditions are less than ideal. In the case of heavy rain, a teacher may elect to keep his or her class indoors. In the event of dangerously cold weather, which the school defines as a temperature factor of 10 degrees Fahrenheit or colder, teachers will hold indoor recesses.

### **Food and Hot Lunch**

Please help your child start the day with a wholesome breakfast and pack nutritious lunches and snacks. Please do not send soda and sweets.

At an additional cost, lunches for the grades are provided through class fundraising efforts on various days throughout the week. These lunch programs are announced on the website and in the Welcoming

Packages. Kindergarten children do not participate in these programs. Any Kindergarten child staying for the Afternoon Garden program should bring a lunch from home. Please refer to the Development section for lunch fundraiser policy information.

### **Clothing**

The child's school experience is affected by clothing — for the wearer and the observers as well. A child's dress and appearance can affect and reflect their own attitude toward school and schoolwork.

We encourage children to be cleanly and neatly dressed in sturdy play clothing in good repair. This allows them to participate in all activities. We prefer simple clothing, with no characters, cartoons, or other inappropriate-for-school images. The Waldorf School seeks to create a mood of reverence, wonder, and beauty that can live in the child. Cartoon images are distracting and have a deleterious affect on the Waldorf experience. The final decision as to what is or is not appropriate in regards to apparel and accessories rests with the teachers.

Children not only enjoy recess, they truly need it. Please send children to school with the proper outerwear and shoes. You may leave rain boots, snow pants, a jacket, and a complete extra set of clothing in the classroom. Please label your child's clothing so it can be identified. Special dress may be requested for school assemblies and special occasions. During the days your child has Games class, please be sure to have your child wear appropriate shoes and attire.

### ***Student Dress Code Policy***

As a Waldorf School, we work hard to create a beautiful environment for our children. We teach them to put care into everything they do. The teachers set examples by putting care into their work, their classrooms and their clothing. The desire for individuality in clothing is strong in modern culture and seeps down to the youngest ages due to the effectiveness of advertising. Yet within the Waldorf approach, the unfolding of the child's freedom and individuality is best demonstrated in the student's work and relations with his classmates. It is our humanness that needs development, not our responsiveness to advertising, slogans, sports allegiances, etc. In dress, competitiveness, precocious behavior and self-absorption can contribute to unnecessary conflict between students and between students and teachers, undermining a productive learning atmosphere. The following guidelines will ensure that students are dressed in a way that is consistent with our school philosophy:

- Simple, functional clothing, with no characters or writing of any kind (with the exception of the school logo).
- Skirts/shorts must be long enough to be below the student's fingertips, when the student's arms are resting at their sides.
- Clothing must cover torso and underwear.
- No strapless tops (i.e. tube tops) or spaghetti straps (strap width must be wider than a half inch).
- No sports-oriented or military clothing.
- Shoes should be sturdy and appropriate to the activities of the day. Backless shoes, such as flip-flops, or shoes with electric lights are not allowed. Closed-toe shoes must be worn during Woodworking classes. Athletic shoes must be worn during Games classes.
- Shoes with recessed wheels must have the wheels completely removed before entering the school building. The wheels may be reinstalled only after leaving the school grounds or, if a child is enrolled in the Sunset program (after school care), with the consent and supervision of that program provider. There are designated areas for wheeled toys in the Sunset program. Additionally, students are required to wear helmets for any wheeled activities.
- Hair must be neat, clean and out of the face. Avoid extremes – students may not shave all or part of their heads.
- No dyeing or highlighting of hair.

- Only ear lobes may be pierced.
- Jewelry is acceptable as long as it does not interfere with activities.
- No nail polish or make-up in grades one through six.
- In grades seven and eight, light use of make-up as well as light nail polish may be worn.
- Festive dress may be requested for assemblies, class trips or other special occasions. This consists of a dress shirt or blouse, dress slacks (or a skirt or dress for girls), and dress shoes and socks, with optional sweater, vest jacket or blazer, especially during the cold season.

If a student's attire, hair or accessorizing is found questionable by any faculty or staff member, that person may speak to the child's teacher or to the Management Team if necessary. The MT may approach the child's parents for further discussion. It is within the Management Team and faculty's purview to make decisions around the appropriateness of a child's appearance at school. Some of the other consequences in not following the dress code may include the following:

- Children may be asked to change clothing that is inappropriate.
- Parents may be called to bring in suitable clothing if none is available at school.
- A class teacher may require students to keep a complete set of extra clothing, including shoes, at school.
- A child may be sent home.

The Management Team and faculty ask the parents to comply and support the dress code. The Waldorf School seeks to create a mood of reverence, wonder and beauty that can live in the child. The quality and style of clothing can truly enhance children's feelings about themselves and the school. If you have any questions regarding the dress code or are unsure about your child's attire, feel free to talk to your teacher or an MT member.

## **Camera Policy**

### ***Policy on Camera Use during School Events***

The school asks that you do not use cameras or video recorders during school events, such as concerts, assemblies, festivals, and class plays. There are a number of important reasons for this request. Firstly, cameras are distracting to the student performers and may make them overly self-aware. With many of the activities that we do each day (painting drawing, nature walks, etc.) we work hard to keep the students focused and "in the moment." Secondly, many of our events evoke a mood of quiet reverence that is broken when cameras begin to click. Additionally you, as the audience member, cannot truly enjoy and take in the whole of the event or performance if you are looking at it through a view finder. Our performances are live; please watch them in person.

At certain events, a professional photographer may be asked to discretely take photographs. Your class teacher may also arrange a "photo call" after a class play so that you have a chance to photograph your child and his or her classmates in their costumes. Thank you for your support and cooperation in this matter.

## **Lost and Found**

Lost items can be claimed in the baskets under the bench in Williams Hall. The last week of every month unclaimed items will be donated to a charity. Labeling items is a must to ensure against losing valuable items.

## **Development**

Each year we work towards fulfilling our mission as well as to enhance programs and facilities. We manage operations within our annual budget and actual resources. Tuition covers roughly 85% of our total costs and the remaining 15% is generated from fundraising efforts of the entire school community and through charitable gifts.

Our Fundraisers are required to meet certain criteria that align each effort with our mission and school values derived from the tenets of Waldorf Education. Themes, advertising, posters, invitations and decorations must be congruent with these values. There is a faculty liaison available to offer input to the Fundraising chair person and team regarding these criteria.

Any designated contributions are accepted with respect to the donor wishes however SWS reserves the right to reallocate funds to general operating expenses when necessary.

### **Development Principles & Policies**

The Susquehanna Waldorf School is a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization. All donations to the school are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. The school gratefully accepts gifts of cash and cash equivalents including stocks, securities, bonds, bequests and charitable trusts. Donations of tangible items and services (in-kind) are often needed and requested. Many businesses offer corporate matches for employees who donate to educational entities. We encourage families to take advantage of these kinds of programs if their employer is willing to match a financial donation to the school. Additionally, our nonprofit status qualifies SWS to receive United Way donations.

### **Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC)**

The Susquehanna Waldorf School participates in the Pennsylvania EITC program as an approved scholarship organization. This program allocates millions of dollars each year in tax credits to encourage incorporated businesses to donate money to scholarship and educational improvement organizations for primary and secondary education. Scholarship organizations, such as Susquehanna Waldorf School, offer tuition assistance to improve educational opportunities for children.

When your own business or a business you know participates as an EITC donor, any contribution to Susquehanna Waldorf School will help a child to develop a lifelong love of learning through a Waldorf educational experience. Each year a business can receive up to a maximum of \$200,000 in state tax credits.

Since 2002, Susquehanna Waldorf School has received tax credit donations each year which help to provide scholarship aid to SWS students and SWS faculty members. We also annually satisfy our EITC program obligation by awarding scholarship funds to outside students. For more information on the EITC program, contact the Admissions Coordinator and visit [www.inventpa.com](http://www.inventpa.com)

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

As with many public and private schools, much of the work done outside the classroom is done by volunteers. The Susquehanna Waldorf School relies on this same practice. Volunteering gives each of us a sense of community and a sense of meaning. Our school is sustained by a strong parent body; one that supports their teachers in their work and the school as a whole to provide a Waldorf education for our children.

Parents are the cornerstone of many of our fundraising events. They produce our major fundraiser, the Winter Fair, along with the Spring Fair, Auction, etc.. Through these volunteer efforts parents become

involved in the school, meet other parents and families, and get a taste of the wonders of Waldorf education. *We have often observed a direct correlation between parents' positive involvement in the ideals and activities of the school and the child's positive experience in class.*

### **School Fundraiser Policy**

Once the fundraising calendar is set, no other fundraisers will be placed on the calendar unless requested by the Board and/or Finance Committee. As parents take up fundraisers, a proposal is to be submitted to the Management Team. This includes all on and off-site class fundraisers.

### **Class and Lunch Fundraiser Policy**

All monies earned from fundraisers must be given to the Business Manager to be deposited in the class's account. Class fundraising may begin in Second grade. Second or Third grade classes may participate in up to two short-term fund raisers (one internal and one external fundraiser).

Fourth through Eighth grades may choose to participate in a lunch fundraising program. Fourth through sixth grade may also participate in up to two additional short-term fund raisers (one internal and one external). Seventh and Eighth may have up to three additional short-term fund raisers (one internal and two external). If one of these grades chooses to not participate in a lunch fundraiser, then Third grade will be given the option of participating in the lunch fundraising program. Lunch fundraiser proposals are considered on a first come first serve basis. Please use the fundraising form. Eighth grade has the first choice of the pizza fundraiser.

Please submit your class's fundraising proposals to the Management Team by October 1. All requests will be reviewed by the school and if more than one class is requesting the same fundraiser at the same time, the proposals will be returned to the classes for adjustments. Short-term fundraisers are defined as no more than two weeks. Internal fundraisers are offered to the school community. External fundraisers may only be offered to the public at large (i.e. no soliciting of the school community). Services provided by a class, such as a babysitting or weekly snacks, are not counted as fundraisers. All parents are encouraged to purchase Scrip throughout the year and apply their scrip dollars to their class funds.

In addition to the above information, lunch fundraisers:

- 1) Must have parent point person for contact;
- 2) May not give refunds (i.e. snow days, sick days);
- 3) May be sold by semester only. Semester I runs from Sept – Jan; Semester II runs from Feb – June; and
- 4) Flyers for Semester I are to be prepared by August for the Welcoming Packages and then are advertised on the website. Updated flyers for Session II are to be ready by January.

Any labor involved (i.e., copying, etc.) is done by class. Due to limited staffing, classes are unable to send any food items home.

As they are part of the larger community, each class is encouraged to contribute a percentage of class fundraisers to the school.

## **Finance**

### **Tuition**

Each year the Finance Committee issues to the board for approval, the tuition for the coming school year. The final figure is presented at the winter All-School meeting.

A One or Two payment plan includes a discount. The monthly plan is paid by electronic draft. Any delayed, late or returned funds subject the account to a late fee. Any balance past due 30 days will be charged interest.

If an account goes into arrears beyond 30 days, SWS may request disenrollment of the student(s) in that family. The student will be at the discretion of SWS and occur only after full payment has been made or other arrangement is accepted by the school.

### **Tuition Assistance/Financial Aid**

Tuition Assistance is available on a limited basis, based on need. A School and Student Financial Aid Application can be obtained from the Business Manager after February 1st. It must be submitted to the processing organization (SSS) in Princeton, New Jersey, by April 1st. A copy of one's tax return must be submitted to the Tuition Assistance Committee by April 15th. By the end of May allocations are made and families are notified by mail. Contact the Business Manager for more information.

## **Admissions**

The SWS seeks to develop a culturally and economically diverse school community. SWS is a non-sectarian school and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, handicap, sexual orientation, religion, national or ethnic origin in its admissions or educational policies.

Waldorf Education is designed to meet the needs of children with a range of intellectual, emotional and physical needs. We are happy to meet with families to assess whether we are able to meet the needs of any child with special requirements.

### **Admissions Process**

Parents who may be interested in enrolling their children should complete the following steps by calling the Admissions Coordinator.

- Parent/guardian requests and receives information packet.
- Parent/child(ren) visit school.
- Parent/guardian sends Application and nonrefundable fee to school office.
- Parent interview is scheduled with the teacher through the Admissions Coordinator.
- Child's class visit is scheduled.
- Kindergarten visits for 1-3 days.
- Grades visits for 2-5 days.
- Assessment of the student is completed by the Resource Coordinator.
- Upon acceptance, an Enrollment Contract is sent to parent/guardian.
- Enrollment Contract with signatures of parents/guardians is returned to the Business Manager who signs the contract, acknowledging the agreement.

Questions about the application process and status are directed to the Admissions Coordinator. Applications are valid for the current fiscal year and must be resubmitted each subsequent year. Questions about the enrollment contract are directed to the Business Manager.

### **Evaluation of new students**

#### *Kindergarten*

A child entering Kindergarten must be at least 3 years of age by September 1st. Children must be potty-trained. Upon receipt of an application and fee, the potential student is invited to visit the class for up to three days. During this visit, the teacher has the opportunity to observe the child's interactions with the

other children as well as the child's behavior. The teacher then shares observations about the child with the parents either by phone or by a personal interview.

If the teacher has any questions about whether the school can meet the needs of the potential student, an observation or assessment can be requested of the Care Group. Based on all the above, the teacher makes the final acceptance decision as well as whether there needs to be other contingencies regarding the potential student's enrollment.

### ***Grades 1 - 8***

Upon receipt of an application and fee, a "Request to Obtain Student Records" form is given to the parents to fill out and return to the Admissions Coordinator. When school records are received, the candidate is invited to visit the class for three to five days. During this visit, the teacher observes the child's interactions with the other children, evaluates the child's abilities, watches for any outstanding disciplinary issues and observes the child's self composure.

The teacher, then, shares his/her observations about the child with the parents. The sharing of information during this interview will include the teacher having read the student's school records and the application thoroughly. If there is any question about whether the school can meet the needs of the candidate, further Care Group observation or assessment may be requested by the teacher. The teacher makes the final acceptance decision and whether there will be any other contingencies regarding the candidate's enrollment. Acceptance decisions are based on the child's academic abilities, potential, past achievement, behavior, his/her "fit" with the class and the school, and a family's support of the school's philosophy.

After the teacher notifies the Admissions Office of an acceptance, the Admissions Coordinator sends a letter of acceptance along with an Enrollment Agreement (contract) to the family.

If necessary, we may have to work with the local school district to help assess a student. Home schooled students will be requested to bring student assessment forms from their school district.

### **Summer Provisional**

If a child enrolls at SWS during the summer months, formal acceptance of that student occurs after the first full week of the following school year. Because a formal classroom visit could not be scheduled during the school year, the first full week of school will be considered the visitation week. By the end of the visitation week, if there is any reason for a student to be unaccepted any tuition monies paid to that point is refunded.

### **Continuing Enrollment Procedure**

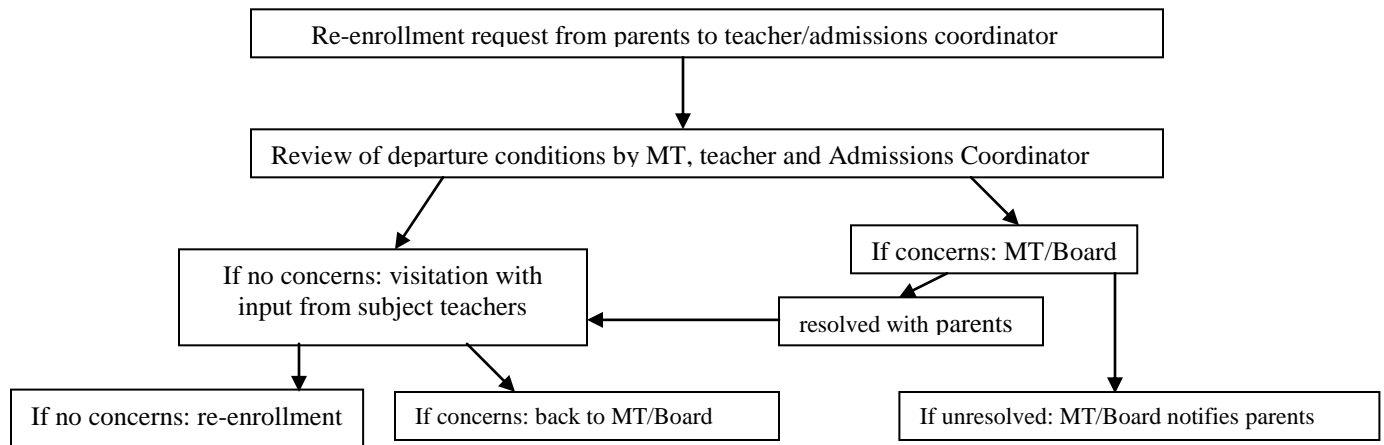
By March of every year, continuing enrollment forms are sent to all SWS families. The return date falls approximately three weeks later. The Board, Faculty and Administrative staff ask families to be punctual in returning these forms which are used to update the students' records for teachers to review and project the class sizes each year. This form also assures a place in the class for your child.

A nonrefundable fee must accompany the continuing enrollment forms. Please note the increase in fee if the form arrives after the due date. Continuing enrollment forms are valid for the current fiscal year. Once the fee and form are received, a contract is issued. Questions about the Contract are directed to the Business Manager.

## RE-ENROLLMENT POLICY

When parents request re-enrollment for their child the conditions of departure will be reviewed by the Management Team together with the grades or early childhood teacher and the Admissions Coordinator. If there are no concerns the teacher will schedule a 3-5 day visitation and collect input from the subject teachers during these days and re-enrollment proceeds, if not, the MT or Board will inform the parents that their child can not be admitted.

Flow Chart as follows:



## First Grade Readiness

In order for children to be accepted into the first grade, they need to be six years old by July 1st preceding the September enrollment. We also strongly recommend a child to be enrolled in the five-day half-day Kindergarten program (at the latest by January of the preceding September first grade enrollment) to ensure stamina strength and social maturity. The Care Group along with the Early Childhood teachers will assess all children who are potential first graders. The steps the team takes are as follows:

1. Resource Coordinator observes potential first grade ready children in Kindergarten.
2. The Resource Coordinator will assess any potential first grader experiencing difficulties in the Kindergarten or whose birthday is out of the window for first grade acceptance. The Resource Coordinator will notify parents, request permission and secure assessment dates. Parents are invited to observe the assessment. There is no cost involved for this assessment.
3. After the assessment, the observations are taken back to the teachers to help create a support plan for the child or to accept a child into first grade despite the birth date falling outside the July 1st window. All plans and results will be brought back to the parents in written form and are open for discussion between the teacher and the parent.

If the first grade teacher is in place by March, the teacher will participate in the first grade assessments. If the teacher is not yet hired, this process is continued with the support of the Care Group, ensuring a successful year for the students and the teacher.

A class study (of the potential rising first graders) is presented to the Faculty by the Kindergarten teachers during the March time period to help paint a picture of who this class may be as a whole. Several opportunities will be scheduled for the rising first grade families to meet their new teacher and to get to

know each other as a class. In addition, the first grade teacher will schedule individual home visits during the summer months.

On the first day of school, the First Grade ceremony takes place in the gymnasium welcoming the rising first grade children to their teacher, to the grades and to each other. Parents, particularly of the first grade students, are encouraged to attend this ceremony, as it is a very special day for the entire school.

### **Departure Policy**

If at any point during the school year or during the summer, a family makes the decision to leave the school, these steps need to be followed:

Step I: It is the responsibility of the parents to inform the class teacher(s) personally and to communicate this intent to the school Admissions or Business office.

Step II: The Admissions Coordinator/Business Manager will inform the Board and the Faculty of a student's disenrollment.

Step III: A letter will be sent to the family and will include:

1. Confirmation that SWS received the notice and a place will not be held for the child.
2. An exit interview questionnaire
3. Or request for an exit interview with the Admissions Coordinator and Management Team

Exit information is used for the purpose of improvement and understanding in our work directed by the Management Team and Board of Trustees.

These policies and procedures are subject to change as may be determined to be in the best interests of the school or the students by the Management Team or the Board of Trustees.
---

### **Association of Waldorf School (AWSNA)**

The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America supports educational research to further our schools with well-trained teachers, new curriculum development, educational publications and trained mentors, evaluators and consultants. SWS belongs to the Mid-Atlantic Region and became a full member in 2004. Accreditation was granted in January of 2004 and Re-accreditation is being sought during the 2011-12 school year.

### **Further Reading**

*You Are Your Child's First Teacher*, by Rahima Baldwin

Discussion support for the child's development in the early years. This highly readable text offers a new way of seeing and understanding children helps us answer issues about living in the modern world.

*The Children's Year*, by Stephanie Cooper

Rediscover the joy and satisfaction of making things children can play with and use in their daily life. Organized by season.

*Festivals, Family and Food*, by Diane Carey

Full of activities, food, songs, games, and celebrations.

*Lifeways: Working with Family Questions*, by Gudrun Davy

A book about family life and being a parent – about freedom and how tension between family life and personal fulfillment can be resolved.

*Who's Bringing Them Up? How to break the TV Habit*, by Martin Large

The effects of television on children and families are examined. The book presents both gradual and drastic ways of cutting viewing.

*Rudolf Steiner in the Waldorf School*, by Rudolf Steiner

Informal lectures by Steiner from 1919 to 1924.

*Waldorf Schools Volume I: Kindergarten and the Early Grades and Waldorf Schools Volume II: Upper Grades and High School*, ed. Ruth Pusch

Collections of articles from the bulletin of North American Waldorf Schools on a wide variety of school topics.

*Understanding Waldorf Education Teaching from the Inside Out*, by Jack Petrash

Is wonderfully informative and will help mothers and fathers come to a deeper appreciation of their child's education.

*Waldorf Education: A Family Guide* by Pamela J. Fenner and Karen L. Rivers

Highly recommended for new parents. This compilation addresses questions and concerns of parents.

*Education Towards Freedom: Rudolf Steiner Education*, by F. Calgren, B. Masters, and A. Klingborg

A comprehensive introduction to Waldorf education includes many beautiful illustrations.

*School As a Journey*, by Torin Finser

An absorbing account of one teacher's journey with his class written for both parents and teachers.

For expanded references, please go to the Waldorf Online Library at [waldorflibrary.org](http://waldorflibrary.org).