

PA Committees for the 2014-2015 School Year

Heads Committees

▪ Communications

This committee will work closely with the executive committee to examine ways to improve school-wide communication this year both about the PA and overall within the school. As necessary, the PA Moderator will take recommendations from this parent-led committee back to other realms of the school.

This Communications committee will also audit, review and update governance documents and school-wide documents that make mention of or describe the PA and its purpose and role in the school. Our charge is to make sure these guiding documents and descriptions are accurate and current. Some documents may not yet exist and will need to be drafted, such as clear and complete job descriptions and committee charters.

The committee will work closely with all PA committees and with the executive committee on the completion of this audit and updates of and drafting of new defining documents. The committee should set and communicate achievable goals for the year.

▪ Parent Education

This committee will gather ideas and work in close collaboration with the faculty to set a calendar of educational programming for parents over the course of the school year to help families learn more about aspects of Waldorf Education. These events could take shape in the form of lectures, presentations, demonstrations, classes, workshops, discussion groups, book studies, etc.

Sometimes the presenters or facilitators will be members of our own faculty or community and sometimes arrangements will be made for outside guest presenters. The committee will also coordinate all publicity to promote the programming. The committee should set and communicate achievable goals for the year.

▪ Environmental Sustainability

Our Parent Handbook lists the following statement as one of the school's core values:

"We believe that schools should awaken social responsibility, service to community and stewardship of the earth."

This Environmental Sustainability Committee will review and communicate ways that the school can improve on the efforts that we already engage in to protect the environment. Some ideas that have come forth to date include:

- making recommendations for earth-friendly and environmentally responsible cleaning supplies, office products, etc.,
- expanding the level of composting and recycling that we do at the school,
- investing in a rain barrel,
- offering helpful suggestions to the community to raise awareness, etc.

The committee should set and communicate achievable goals for the year.

Hearts Committees

- Welcoming

The Welcoming Committee will identify ways that we can be more effective as a school (and especially as a parent community) to help families new to RWS feel welcome, comfortable and well-taken care of. This committee will examine such questions as:

- what are the needs of new families (grades and early childhood program)?
- where are the communication gaps?
- how best can these needs and gaps be met?
- what are some achievable goals can be met by the end of this school year?

- Community Care

The Community Care Committee acts on two fronts – *internally* in a number of ways to nurture our school “family,” and *externally* by exploring ways that the school can positively impact the larger community.

Internally, Community Care has traditionally come in the form of:

- Meal support, transportation or play dates for families in transitions (new babies, moves, illness, surgery or hospitalization). Members of this committee will stay in close contact with the class parents for classes with families to whom these forms of support are offered.
- teacher appreciation efforts in December and May each year (planning in November and April respectively)
- the traditional rain gear and boot swap that have traditionally taken place at Michaelmas (late Sept/early Oct) each year.

External forms of Community Care could include (as examples):

- the coat drive to donate winter coats, traditionally held at Martinmas (mid-November) each year
- participating in food drives for the Westover Baptist Church (from whom we lease the school's building and playground) food pantry
- tree planting on Arbor Day

The committee may develop its own vision for this important work and set a calendar of achievable goals for the coming school year.

- Social Events

The Social Committee comes up with all kinds of fun ways that we can play together! Some examples include: periodic parent coffee/tea events at drop off in the mornings, fall fun days or spring kite-flying in local parks, a summertime potluck block party and other fun gatherings for parents and families throughout the year.

The options of fun activities are limitless and this committee is encouraged to get creative and define a list of achievable programmatic goals for the coming school year (and perhaps even into the summer).

Hands Committees

- **PA Fundraising**

This Committee will focus on fundraising initiatives that will help the PA carry out its work and build base funding for future years to come.

Traditionally, PA funding has come through parent dues and other small fund-raising efforts that were carefully planned and approved so as not to compete with the school's Development Office. These smaller fundraisers have included program like Box Tops for Education, recycling printer cartridges and electronics, registering for store-based programs that contribute a portion of sales to RWS as a designated school. In addition, a portion of school picture sales comes back to the PA as a donation from the photographer.

This year, the PA would also like to take on a more work-intensive fundraising project called Scrip. With Scrip, families purchase pre-paid cards to stores and businesses where they already shop and a percentage of those cards – anywhere from 3%-15% – comes back to RWS. The program is highly successful in schools and other nonprofit organizations nation-wide and can bring in thousands of dollars annually.

A good deal of brainstorming, communication and legwork will need to go into getting the program up and running effectively and efficiently at RWS. This committee will be organizing education sessions for the community early in the school year and will need to meet to set additional goals for the year.

- **Playground Improvement/School Beautification**

This committee will examine ways to improve our playground through landscaping and play structure improvements. The first phase of this project will include visioning and planning with input from the faculty and the entire community. Initial landscaping work can be funded out of the existing PA treasury. Much of the initial anticipated earnings from the Scrip program are earmarked for later phases of this multi-year improvement project.

In addition to playground improvement, the School Beautification side of this committee will also maintain the existing perennial and flowerbeds that frame the entrance to the school. The committee will work closely with the faculty committee for school beautification about other ways parents envision these improvements for the school. The committee should set short and longer term project goals and define which ones are achievable for the present school year.

- **Handwork**

A core part of Waldorf education is that children learn they can make things themselves. As our children learn these skills, parents often find that they would like to learn them too.

The Handwork Committee's function is partly Hearts (social), partly Heads (education) and partly Hands (handwork) – all combine to form a committee of skilled individuals who are willing to nurture the creativity and craftiness of the parent community. This committee might set as its goals to organize a monthly knitting group, host a workshop on lantern making for the Lantern Walk, hold gatherings for those interested in woodwork, felting, toy-making, etc. This committee might also volunteer to help with making costumes or building sets for school plays and events.