

CŌNFLUENCE

Fall 2014

News from the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education

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SPECIAL SECTION

Thank you, Will Stapp

This past summer, longtime Alliance board president and recent Interim Executive Director, Will Stapp, resigned to take an administrative position at the Marin Waldorf School. While Will continues to be an ardent supporter of the Alliance and a contributor to *Confluence*, he has stepped back from his leadership role.

Will served on the Alliance board for the great majority of its existence, and also served two lengthy terms as president—surely our leader with the longest tenure and certainly among our most influential, garnering wide respect for our public Waldorf movement. During his time, we grew to over 40 schools, many of which Will visited and wrote about in previous issues of *Confluence*. He supported the continuing growth of our annual conference, and spoke there on many topics with warmth, wit and wisdom.

An ardent student of Steiner and a committed biodynamic farming practitioner, Will has generously shared favorite readings, perspectives—and extraordinary tomatoes and watermelons with colleagues and students. My school, Credo High, was blessed to have him teach biodynamic farming for a term, and our soil is richer and our imaginations more fertile for his contribution. He is a scholar, artist and visionary—a true inspiration to the students and adults in his care.

Will has written eloquently on our behalf and represented us well to the broader world. In California, he spoke before the State Board of Education in opposition to computer-based testing, championing the developmental curriculum that is our core value. In 2012, he represented the Alliance at the World Waldorf Teachers Conference in Dornach, Switzerland. At the Goetheanum, we were welcomed with respect and fraternity by world leaders because of Will's earnest and evident commitment to the depth of Waldorf education. He made international friends on behalf of our public Waldorf movement, one of whom, Christof Weichert, he interviews in this issue. His personal relationships with world Waldorf leaders, such as 2014 conference keynoter Martyn Rawson, bolster our confidence and gather support against adversarial forces.

I trust I speak for all in our movement when I offer a tremendous thank you to Will Stapp for his deep and selfless commitment to a more peaceful, healthy and loving future via accessible Waldorf education for all.

Thank you, Stephanie Skinner

I first met Stephanie Schantz Skinner in 2002, when, as administrator of Woodland Star Charter School, I hired her to teach kindergarten. I found Stephanie delightful, good humored, energetic, profoundly committed to the ideas and ideals of Rudolf Steiner, and unusually gifted in the teaching of young children. Her creativity was abundant and her patience saintly. I particularly recall one extraordinarily challenging boy whose needs seemed unquenchable; Stephanie loved him and loved him, and I know him now as a highly capable high school student.

When Stephanie joined the Alliance as Administrative Coordinator and sole staff person to a volunteer board, our needs may have felt unquenchable as well. We were in a period of accelerating growth, and the number of member schools doubled during her years with us. Stephanie welcomed all newcomers and built relationships with each initiative. When I had the opportunity to meet these new pioneers at our conferences, I frequently heard a deep appreciation for Stephanie and her guidance and optimism. She ushered new school communities into confidence and competence.

At our conferences, Stephanie spoke with knowledge and effervescence, and she gifted a new sense of cowboy-boot chic to our picture of the early childhood Waldorf educator. Behind the scenes, she was a producer extraordinaire. She supported the board and the Executive Committee with facility, professionalism and mother-love.

The little children have called her back, and now Stephanie is teaching pre-K at Live Oak Waldorf School. We miss her, but their gain is our gain as she quenches their needs and initiates their journeys through Waldorf education. I look forward to welcoming some of them as high school freshmen in years to come. I also look forward to seeing Stephanie in January at the conference, which she is continuing to support as a volunteer.

Thank you, Stephanie, for who you are and for all you have given to ensure the opportunity for Waldorf education for all children. Blessings on your work! — Chip Romer, *Confluence* Editor



WILL STAPP



STEPHANIE SKINNER

CŌNFLUENCE

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Eighth Grade Class Play 2011

NEWSMAKERS

Live Oak has offered a great educational experience at its current site since 2003, despite challenging site limitations. Big improvements may now be on the horizon.

Live Oak Charter Secures District Bond Funding

BY CHIP ROMER

People familiar with the challenges of charter school facilities may have read something like this in the fine print of their school's Memorandum of Understanding with their authorizing district: "In the event that the District seeks and receives a voter approved bond, parcel taxes etc., the Charter School shall participate only if negotiated in advance." All too often, when approaching authorizers to participate in such bonds or parcel taxes, charter school representatives have been rebuffed.

Matthew Morgan, director of Live Oak Charter School in Petaluma, California, has a different story. Morgan first learned about the possible bond opportunity from Live Oak founder Will Stapp in late 2013. Coincidentally, Live Oak was in the process of charter renewal, already undertaking changes to its charter that more clearly expressed the school's developing commitment to public education and to an economically diverse student population. In light of this, the school had removed an enrollment preference for parents who had attended a presentation about Waldorf education and added a preference for families living in immediate proximity to the campus, including a large English learner and free-and-reduced-lunch population. These steps, along with effective direction from Morgan and the school's governing board, led to a smooth charter renewal last December and to a new openness from the district board toward the charter school.

"We had to relieve the board of a concern that as a charter school we are vultures," Morgan explained. "Instead, we are working inside the public education system to serve the public. What we need is people who are committed to being part of a school community. The Waldorf piece will come as families become part of Live Oak. District board members understood that this is our priority—and approved our charter on December 10." **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

FROM THE ALLIANCE

12 Years of Service

BY SHANNA MALL,
INTERIM PRESIDENT

This fall marks the beginning of the Alliance's twelfth year of commitment to providing access to Waldorf education for all children and families. During our September meeting at Credo High School, the Alliance board accomplished many things that will surely benefit our member school communities. On the practical side, I am very pleased to announce that Victoria Temple, Managing Editor of *Confluence*, joins the Alliance as Administrative Coordinator, succeeding Stephanie Schantz. The board also formed a committee to develop a job description and needs assessment for a paid Executive Director to follow Will Stapp.

During our time together, we were met with a profound appreciation of the unique time during which our movement has manifested itself in the world. We are consistently reminded that there are more unknowns than knowns meeting us each day. As leaders, we are becoming acutely aware of the fact that we are unable to use past problem-solving strategies to address today's issues. No longer are we able to say, "I know that, I have seen it before." Instead, we often find ourselves lacking clarity around issues that have the potential to change the world. This is certainly not the time for the faint of heart.

To fortify and focus ourselves, the board opened and closed each session of the two-day meeting with the future-oriented Steiner verse copied here in the sidebar. This practice deepened our resolve to embrace future-driven decision-making models for the

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FOCUS OF THIS ISSUE:
COLLABORATION

Live Oak Charter Secures District Bond Funding

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 In February, after hearing from Morgan and a Live Oak contingent, with ninety supporters present, the district board increased the maximum bond limit they had been planning, adding language that would allow for \$1.7 million in improvements to the charter school, including the purchase of an alternate site if one were to become available. While this was shy of the \$3.5 million that Live Oak had requested, it was nevertheless a celebrated step towards significant campus improvement. "It would buy property and cover development costs, and we would be able to access the rest of the funding either through facilities grants or access to other bonds," Morgan explained.



Matthew Morgan,
Live Oak's Executive
Director since 2011

"Live Oak is in the center of a publicly accessible investment with ripple effects. We can use district bond money to purchase land from the city, and then the city can use that revenue to do other good for the local citizens. The same initial money can create several cycles of good. One of the things we communicated to the board early on was that we respected the need for the public to retain some control over their investment—to ensure that it served the public purpose. So, if the Live Oak-acquired property were ever to be abandoned by the school, it would revert back to the district."

Founded in 2001, Live Oak is situated in "temporary" housing on the Sonoma-Marin County Fairgrounds. The classrooms and common spaces are familiar, attractive Waldorf spaces with lazured walls, but the site comes with a host of challenges, including a bifurcation of the school into upper and lower campuses and the requirement to completely vacate space each summer so that the fair can move in.

"The city wants to make broader use of the fairgrounds than just a few days of the year. One vision for the property is to develop a kind of super-park, maybe a convention center, a performing arts center, a semi-pro baseball team. They already have the library and the city pool here. Live Oak, being part of this land for the long term, makes great sense from a lot of perspectives.

"The city owns the land and leases it to the fairgrounds, but the lease is expiring in 2023. The fair is talking about changing its model, and is becoming more development-focused. The fair may continue to occupy space to promote agriculture, which very nicely overlaps with Live Oak's goals and values. Live Oak can host a demonstration farm. We have already started 4-H partnerships. Our kids benefit directly, but this collaboration serves many people's purposes.

"I'd like to see the school district, the fair and the city co-develop the site into a new park. The city will move the vision toward more public access to the site, which is excellent for Live Oak. We have been investing a lot in lease payments and ongoing improvements. This is \$180,000 annually that can be use to help fund a permanent campus here, on the fairgrounds, for this very local population. The school will change and become more diverse to reflect the immediate community. We will be a kick-ass neighborhood Waldorf school."

12 Years of Service

BY SHANNA MALL,
INTERIM PRESIDENT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 important work facing the Alliance. Old models, vested in the idea of right and wrong, are being eclipsed by a new model of decision-making that embraces what is coming from the future.

Each of us is working toward a future where childhood is honored and where we are committed to removing obstacles from the paths of the children and families we serve. As we move forward, I ask that each of us renew our commitment to living into the future with its infinite possibilities. What would it be like if we opened our hearts and minds to possibilities beyond our individual ideals? What might meet us if we check our egos and our sympathies and antipathies at the door and meet each other and the future with open hearts?

This is an exciting time that also carries with it potential for fear and trepidation. Meet those shadows with strength and resolve, always remembering the collaborative community of Waldorf educators standing by your side. It is an honor to serve this extraordinary community.

Blessings on your work!



We must eradicate from the soul
All fear and terror of what comes
Out of the future.
We must acquire serenity
In all feelings and sensations
About the future.

We must look forward
With absolute equanimity to everything
That may come...and
We must think only
That whatever comes is given to us
By world direction full of wisdom.

It is part of what we must learn in this age,
Namely to live out of pure trust
Without any security in existence,
Trusting in the ever-present help
Of the spiritual world.

Truly, nothing else will do,
If our courage is not to fail;
Let us discipline our will,
And let us seek the awakening
From within ourselves
Every morning and every evening.

Rudolf Steiner



Child Study

AN INTERVIEW WITH **CHRISTOF WEICHERT**

Supporting Students Encountering Difficulty

INTERVIEW BY WILL STAPP

This is the second part of an interview; the first part appeared in the Spring 2014 issue of *Confluence*. This half of the interview focuses on the child study process, an approach used by some faculties to support students who are encountering difficulty. The child study process, as described by Weichert, has three main parts:

1. **Anamesis:** pure observation or how do I/we describe this of the child?
2. **Diagnosis:** how do I/we understand this child (via various developmental and anthroposophical typologies articulated by Steiner and other theorists)?
3. **Therapy:** how can I/we help this child?

Will Stapp: You have been a big advocate of revitalizing child study in the schools.

Christof Weichert: Ya. We just did one here [Marin Waldorf School].

WS: Why do you think that it is so important for faculties to be engaged in child study?

CW: In the child study you see the reality of Steiner's view of the human being. There you see the concepts of his spiritual science living in the child. One, if you see that, you understand the child. Two, if you have understood the child, you find the way to help. All our teaching is about three concepts: envisioning, understanding and helping.

The child study is just a concentration of our normal work, but it has outstanding side effects. One side effect is that it always enlivens the faculty conversation. It is interesting to look from different sides, from different angles, from different perspectives that teachers can share with each other about one child. We do not do it out of antipathy for a child, but just out of wonder. Child study enriches the life of a faculty, endlessly. And, as a result, the faculty is refreshed.

You hear always, "We have no time for this." But time isn't the issue—it's about priorities, and when it comes to faculty meetings, we probably prioritize unimportant things and forget important ones. There are lots of Waldorf schools that specialize in unimportant things in their meetings!

WS: There are child study models out there that have a three-day process, and so the faculty ends up doing only four child studies a year, given everything else that they prioritize. Yet, more and more children could benefit from this focused faculty attention.

CW: What you describe is the so-called Cadillac model, the luxury model of the child study. If you have so much time in your school and so few problems, then do a child study over three months...it's wonderful. But my experience with the child study in two or three parts is that at the beginning of the second part, nearly everyone has forgotten what we had already talked about, so you have to redo the whole thing.

It is true that if you have a problem, and you focus and then sleep over that problem, solving that problem the next day is probably better. But if you carry forward a child's description (anamesis) and you continue the next week, what is our reality? No one had really worked on the child in the evenings! So, I have never seen a better result from the child studies over two or three sessions as when you do it in one.

I simply follow the way that Steiner did it. It is all written down. His studies were immediate and short. Now, he was very talented, and we are not so talented so we need some more

"Child study enriches the life of a faculty, endlessly. And, as a result, the faculty is refreshed."

time, an hour or 75 minutes. Still, we can count on our presence of mind, if we are all together, to find the right solutions for a child.

Yesterday, we did one here about a child I saw. I said that we have to work on this child. We did it, and we came up with conclusions that we will do this and that and that. Then, in ten weeks, the faculty will look and see if what they did worked. That is quality care.

WS: You actually have a new book coming out on child study. When is the publishing date?

CW: The translation is done, and that is the biggest part. Now I have to find a publisher in America. It should come out this fall. It will be different from my first book on teaching, which was fairly easy going. This new one is really a workbook to support thinking about the child study process.

WS: You are in a new stage in your life. How would you describe your role with Waldorf education now that you have retired as Pedagogical Leader?

CW: It's just to help where people want me to help, to do the right things, to make Waldorf a living reality. That's my role. To encourage people, to help them experience that being a Waldorf teacher is wonderful. If you do it in the way it was meant, then it is not an exhausting profession. ■

Christof Wiechert is former leader of the Pedagogical Section at the Goetheum, Dornach, Switzerland. He was also a Waldorf class teacher for some thirty years in the Netherlands. Christof's latest gem of a book is *Teaching: The Joy of Profession*. It was recently translated by Dorit Winter and is available from the bookstore at Rudolf Steiner College.

AT THE 2015 ALLIANCE CONFERENCE

► Christof's new book on *Child Study* will be available in January at the Alliance's 2015 Annual National Conference Toward the Deepening of Public Waldorf Education.



Relationship: The Heart of Waldorf Education

BY ANNA JACOPETTI

Waldorf charter teachers stand in a crossfire. On one side are the ideals that attracted us to Waldorf education and on the other, an increasingly materialistic education focused on assessment and the inculcation of certain intellectual skills and discrete sets of information. At base are profoundly divergent views of what a human being is and what is essential to the learning process.

We work with these contradictions because we want Waldorf education to be available to all children, and because we hope for meaningful dialogue with the public sector. The risk is that in our compliance with curriculum and testing mandates, and in the compromises we make to survive, we could lose our souls and the vision of our intent.

How we are to find our balance in the middle of these contradictory forces is a vibrant question. Balance supposes clarity of purpose that can resonate through each decision we make and policy we enforce. We must know and protect what is essential, and it is this clarity under fire that may be the good news for all of Waldorf education, helping to separate dogma and habit from the dynamic, evolving relationship with the future that Rudolf Steiner envisioned.

Peter Selg, author of *The Essence of Waldorf Education*, describes Steiner's deep concern with a growing materialism that attempts to turn human beings into puppets, stripped of their soul lives and unable to realize their unique destinies. The first Waldorf school in Stuttgart was Steiner's counter-impulse to this dehumanizing trend. Steiner envisioned a school in which children would be safe to develop their inborn capacities. Such young people would be free to realize their own destinies, with the soul strength necessary to shape both their personal futures and the future of human evolution. Instead of being victims, cogs in an impersonal machine of material fabrication and consumption, such children would be able to think and act creatively. The essential key to this process lies in the quality of the relationship between student and teacher.

Steiner charges teachers to connect deeply and intuitively with children, thereby being able to recognize and remove impediments to healthy development. He states that the success of Waldorf education should be measured in the amount of life force exhibited by students. This life force is essential if young people are to be able to incarnate their ideals and begin to shape the future.

We must ask if our policies and procedures support this intent. In practice, there is a hodgepodge of methods at the classroom level, mixing curative work, behavior modification techniques and pharmaceutical prescriptions as solutions to attention and behavior problems. Discipline policies that outline rules and consequences leave little consideration for the individual needs of children.

During my tenure at Woodland Star Charter School, the faculty, my co-administrator, Sheila Reilly, and I attempted to bring our discipline policies into line with our core values. We were aided immeasurably by the work of Gordon Neufeld, a developmental psychologist who bases his work with children on attachment theory. Like Steiner, Dr. Neufeld stresses that behavior is communication. If our response to children's behavior is based on a system of rewards and punishments, we stifle rather than encourage development. Instead, Dr. Neufeld directs us to observe the children to see where

they are stuck and how to hold them securely until they begin to relax and to develop the resilience necessary for maturation and healthy adaptive and integrative growth.

The resonance between Dr. Steiner's vision and Dr. Neufeld's system is heartening for teachers and parents. That Dr. Neufeld's work is grounded in current discoveries in neurology, presenting a vocabulary that is accessible to parents, is particularly helpful. Attachment theory addresses many of the questions that live in the gap between our professed aims and our daily implementations. What to do with a child who is too upset to comply with protocols? How to respond to a child who is trying to take charge? Identifying what is causing the behavior is imperative, even if lessons have to wait. When a teacher treats every child with this respect and attention, the whole class learns that it's safe and loved. Conversely, a teacher who shames, reacts out of anger, is punitive or sarcastic to any child, loses the trust of the entire class, and real learning ceases.

Children learn from those who make them feel safe, who do not trap them in labels, and who orient them positively to the world. When parents and teachers form such an informed circle around the children, then Waldorf education can happen. Only then can the arts, the stories, the rhythms of the day, week and year begin to do their work of transformation.

- ▶ A full version of this article can be read on our [website](#)
- ▶ Woodland Star's [discipline policy](#) is also posted there.

During Anna's 50 year career as a teacher/educator, she has taught all of the grades through junior college, including 20 years as a Waldorf teacher. Before retirement last year, she worked as Education Director at Woodland Star Charter School.



A handwork class at Woodland Star Charter School.

Threefold Governance in Action

AT WINTERBERRY CHARTER SCHOOL, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

BY SHANNA MALL, PRINCIPAL
and MEG EGGLESTON,
PEDAGOGICAL CHAIR

Twelve years ago, our community began a journey that would prove to be life changing for all involved. We were a group of mothers reading books, loving our children and families, and sharing the vision of what the future was asking of us. It all started with the question, “Is Anchorage, Alaska ready for a public school inspired by Waldorf education?” What was birthed as a result of these words is Winterberry Charter School, now ten years old and serving 260 students in K–8.

In the beginning, our development group naively believed that if you build a school students will come, and everyone will be happy and at peace. Unfortunately, we had no knowledge regarding the stages of organizational development. We couldn’t have explained founders, pioneers, or sustainers to save our lives! Each of us felt moved by the call to action in that specific place and time. We worked feverishly to make certain our school would not only be born, but also find a place where growth could be sustained. So it went for at least the first year. We moved through tension and strife with individual personal convictions—leading, in the end, to disconnection.

In January of our second year, we decided to seek mentorship from our movement’s elders. Through this choice we were able to solidify not only who we were as individuals, but also who we were being called to become as a collective. For the first time in our history, we truly understood that we were involved in something that was so much bigger than any single one of us.

Winterberry Charter School began the process of developing two elements critical to our success—our process of operating through consensus, and our threefold governance model. The consensus model, as applied to our school, came out of work that was offered by Rudolf Steiner College through their administrative workshops. The three-body work came from the impulses of Rudolf Steiner regarding threefold social order, manifested

recently through the work of MIT professor, Otto Scharmer (Theory U), and practiced by our school mentors, George Hoffecker and Donna Burgess.

As presented clearly and succinctly in the article entitled, “The Threefold Social Organism: An Introduction,” by Stephen E. Usher, Ph.D., our school community clearly identified our threefold structure as:

1. The Winterberry Faculty Council (WFC) holds the pedagogical impulse of the school along with the responsibility for guiding the culture of our charter school as we move through the course of each year, including traditional festivals.

2. The Winterberry Parent Guild (WPG) holds the economic life of the school through fundraisers and celebrations that are not festivals.

3. The Winterberry Charter Council (WCC) holds the legal domain, including adherence to our charter document, fiscal responsibility, and navigating any legal issues facing our school.

When our community is faced with a major decision, we begin by identifying the sphere where the final decision will most likely have the biggest impact. Once this has been identified, our community is able to work through the threefold process one body at a time, with the collaborative end goal being a final prototype that is reflective of all three spheres of our school. Depending on the nature of the issue facing our community, this process can take anywhere from a few weeks to months or longer. For festivals, for instance, WFC guidance typically holds a lot of weight, and such prototypes typically move quickly through the threefold process. Changing our school site, in contrast, took many months, but through this process, led by WCC, we were able to move from our original site into another design-build location in less than one year!

Throughout this process, our community uses the consensus model to guide the quality of our conversation. This includes the following agreements:

“Assume goodwill from all involved. Create for yourself a new, indomitable perception of faithfulness. What is usually called faithfulness passes so quickly. Let this be your faithfulness:

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Scenes from an open house event at Winterberry in Anchorage, Alaska.



Free Breakfast in the Classroom AT KONA PACIFIC SCHOOL

BY CHRIS HECHT

The morning began as it always does in Anna Tosick's classroom at Kona Pacific Public Charter School with speech exercises, singing and chanting. But before the pencils, papers and books appeared Monday, the eighth-graders sat at their desks enjoying a free healthy meal consisting of a frittata, rice, fruit and milk.

Kona Pacific became the first public school in the State of Hawaii to serve breakfast in the classroom to all students at the start of this school year, regardless of their ability to pay. The new program, a partnership with Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice, launched on Monday, August 18, feeding 230 students.

Universal breakfast in the classroom, where all children eat a nutritious breakfast for free in their classroom at the start of the school day, is an important development in public education that is quickly gaining momentum in many communities across the country. It has been shown to support academic achievement, improve children's health and well-being, help struggling families and those who must commute a long distance to school to save time and money, and reduce the stigma of school breakfasts served "only for poor children."

With the support of Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice, Kona Pacific piloted a universal breakfast program in a few classrooms in May of the 2013-2014 school year. In the pilot program's three-week time period, teachers observed profound results in terms of students' ability to focus and participate in class, as well as increased attendance and punctuality.

Kona Pacific will be working with Appleseed and additional project partner Adaptations, Inc. in the coming school year to expand the project into every classroom on campus, and to double the amount of locally grown food used. The project will be the subject of an academic research study on the benefits of universal breakfast in the classroom for a range of educational, health, and behavioral indices. The project will serve as a model for the rest of Hawaii, which is currently ranked 45th in the nation for breakfast participation by low-income students. The project aims to take full advantage of the largely federally funded school breakfast program, and improve the health and academic achievement of students to lay the foundation for a lifetime of success. ■

Chris Hecht is the Executive Director of the **Kona Pacific Charter School** which is located on the Big Island of Hawaii.

Threefold Governance

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5 You will experience moments.... fleeting moments.... with the other person.

The human being will appear to you then as if filled, irradiated with the archetype of his spirit.

And then there may be...indeed will be....other moments, long periods of time, when human beings are darkened. You will learn to say to yourself at such times: 'The Spirit makes me strong. I remember the archetype. I saw it once. No illusion, no deception shall rob me of it.'

Always struggle for the image that you saw. This struggle is faithfulness. Striving thus for faithfulness, we shall be close to one another, as if endowed with the protective powers of angels." — Rudolf Steiner

Here is our consensus process in action:

Unity: Ask yourself, "Is the spirit of the action moving in the direction of the shared values?" Aim for unity, not unanimity.

Discernment: Standing Behind the Principle vs. Personal Preference Ask yourself, "Is having my strategy adopted important for the nature of this particular decision, or is this more about steering the decision in a direction that is closer to my own personal preference?" Clearly identify if this about principle or preference before adding to the discussion.

Stand Aside / Step Aside: This typically happens when a person realizes he is too attached to personal preference and is only holding the group process back. Once a person stands or steps aside, he is agreeing to let the group move forward. In doing so he agrees not to undermine group decisions. The aforementioned behaviors uphold the integrity of the body and its agreements.

Blocking (secular term) or Standing in the Way (Quaker term): This technique should rarely be used; it has been estimated that a person who uses consensus consistently in her everyday life should use this no more than six times in a lifetime! In terms of an organization, it should only be used when a particular decision would lead to a probable disaster for the group as a whole. It should only be used to ensure the survival of the group or if the proposed action can be shown to conflict with group's shared values. The blocker bears responsibility to group and process to identify a valid reason for blocking and should provide evidence to support the decision to block.

As a practice, our bodies begin meetings with a reminder that we are committed to being together in this consensus process. In doing this we have found that our shared governing has deepened in a way that we never could have imagined when we first began this journey. Together we have created a culture of collaboration that continues to leave all of us fulfilled as the key leaders at Winterberry. ■

► To visit the **Winterberry website**

Alliance Rolls Out New Levels of Membership Pilot Project

BY BETSY THAGARD, MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

In April, the Alliance announced its adoption of new Levels of Membership—a stepped program designed to help our member schools become the best Waldorf schools they can be. Since that time, the Alliance Membership Committee has been busy refining the levels and designing a pilot project to test the program. We are now ready for the first schools to start the self-study process that is key to the program's success. Requirements for the four levels of membership are described below, along with acknowledgement of the four schools that have agreed to be our beta tests for the pilot project.

► **Initiative Schools** include groups planning to establish a public school inspired by Waldorf education and existing schools that have been in operation for one or two years. The membership process for these schools is primarily one of documentation. Initiative Members submit a letter of application and supporting documentation, including:

- a statement of intention to develop a Waldorf-inspired school as demonstrated by draft or finalized charter document, school plan, or communication with school district;
- plans for development of any required legal documents;
- information on current status: plans, site, budget, staffing, teacher training, timeline for opening, current activities, and resources (the self-study for this level); and
- evidence of study of Waldorf education by a core group, including engagement or involvement of at least one trained, experienced Waldorf educator who is guiding the initiative.

The Alliance will review the documentation to determine whether the founding group or new school has a viable plan and adequate resources. Once that is affirmed, the Alliance will assist the Initiative School by providing access to resources—sample charter documents, study articles, information on relevant courses, common core alignment documentation, etc.—and links with mentoring schools or individuals.

Our pilot project school in the Initiative category is **Mountain Sage Community School in Fort Collins, Colorado**. Mountain Sage has just begun its second year of operation as a charter school inspired by Waldorf education. Mountain Sage will provide the documentation listed above during the 2014-15 school year. In the following school year, Mountain Sage will transition to the Developing School category and begin the self-study process that is essential to that phase of membership.

► **Developing Schools** have operated for at least two years and have met the requirements for Initiative Members. Developing Schools conduct a self-study following guidelines provided by the Alliance. After completion of the self-study process, members will be visited by an Alliance representative who will help the school develop a three-year action plan to address strengths and areas for growth identified during the self-study process.

In addition to timely payment of dues and any costs associated with the review process, the Alliance asks Developing Schools to:

- complete a progress report twelve months after the site visit;
- provide evidence that a substantial majority of full-time faculty members have received a certificate from or are enrolled in a Waldorf teacher training

program that includes foundational studies of Rudolf Steiner's developmental and educational philosophies, the arts, and Waldorf pedagogy;

- submit a plan for uncertified class and early childhood teachers and full-time subject teachers to complete a Waldorf teacher training program within five years of hiring; and
- show a commitment to ongoing professional development for all teachers as evidenced by regular participation in Waldorf-focused workshops, conferences, and ongoing faculty study—including curriculum review and child study conducted from a Waldorf perspective.

Monterey Bay Charter School in Pacific Grove, California will be the Alliance's first Developing School to complete the membership process. Founded in 1998, MBCS received its first autonomous charter in 2006 and currently has over 300 students in first through eighth grade. After its completion of the Developing School process, MBCS will transition to the Sustaining Member level in the 2015-16 school year.

► **Sustaining Schools** have at least five continuous years as a public Waldorf charter school. They will meet all requirements listed above for Developing Members and are committed to a cycle of full self-study, site visits, and reports at least every five years. In addition to timely payment of dues and any costs associated with the review process, Sustaining Schools are expected to support the Alliance's work through release of qualified faculty for school visits and mentoring and through additional financial donations to support Alliance projects.

Desert Star Community School in Cornville, Arizona will be the first Alliance member to complete the Sustaining School process as part of our pilot project.

► **Leading Schools** are Alliance members that are well established as leaders in the public Waldorf school movement—typically schools that have developed successfully over ten or more years. Schools in this category will engage in an ongoing process of self-study based on a seven-year cycle. As part of the self-study process, Leading Schools will produce an in-depth study of one area of Waldorf pedagogy that they have refined or are in the process of refining, with the goal of providing assistance to the larger Waldorf charter school movement through a January conference workshop or Alliance publication. Leading Schools support the work of the Alliance by allowing faculty and administrative employees to visit other schools for mentoring, encouraging school employees to be actively involved in Alliance projects, and supporting the Alliance through financial donations in addition to timely payment of membership dues.

Sebastopol Independent Charter School in Sebastopol, California will be the Alliance's first Leading School to complete the membership process. Other Alliance members can look forward to a future Alliance publication or January conference workshop about one area of Waldorf pedagogy that the school has refined over its twenty-year history.

In the summer of 2015, the Alliance Membership Committee will review the results of our pilot project, refining and improving it for full implementation in the 2015-16 school year. In the meantime, we thank those schools that have bravely agreed to help us begin the process!



BY VICTORIA
TEMPLE

GROWTH AT RUDOLF STEINER COLLEGE

Rudolf Steiner College is going through a major organizational transition. The entire 13-acre facility will be run by the Services Corporation, MOMJJ, headed by Marc Turteltaub and his team. Three Non-Profits will live on the campus: **Rudolf Steiner College**, **Meristem** and the **Institute for Social Enterprise**.

Rudolf Steiner College has a new President, **Dr. Liz Beaven**, and a new Board of Trustees. Meristem is the Center of Autism, serving young adults with autism using the Ruskin Mill model. Meristem is led by **Ollie Cheney** from The Ruskin Mill Trust in England. The Institute for Social Enterprise (ISE) will be a nonprofit working with youth who want to make change in the world.

INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH MASTERS COURSE IN STUTTGART TO BEGIN FEBRUARY 2015

A fully accredited Master of Arts Program for Steiner School class and subject teachers will be offered in English for the first time at the Freie Hochschule (Waldorf Teachers College) in Stuttgart, Germany. The Freie Hochschule is the oldest and largest Steiner teacher-training institute in the world and has been successfully training Waldorf teachers since 1928.

In a full-time course of studies, core elements of Anthroposophy, pedagogical anthropology, child and adolescent psychology and subject methodology are combined with an intensive artistic training in music, speech, Eurythmy, painting, drawing and sculpting. In conjunction with practical experience gained in a series of long-term internships (a number of which will take place in the U.K.), this training thus offers extensive possibilities for a teacher's personal and professional development.

To learn more: http://www.freie-hochschule-stuttgart.de/english_version/index.php

ALLIANCE MINI-GRANT OPPORTUNITIES 2014-15

Using proceeds from the Alliance Silent Auction, held annually at the January Conference, the Alliance is once again offering mini-grants in 2015.

WHAT: Mini-grant awards up to \$1,000

THEME: Arts Alive in the Classroom

This year grants will be awarded to help **new initiative** and **developing schools** provide quality materials for painting, music or handwork in the classroom. The goal is to help fill gaps in a school's existing program to bring it more fully into line with the Waldorf arts curriculum. Proposals that include a creative way to share the fruits of their arts activities with the wider community will be given priority.

Grants are due **DECEMBER 1, 2014**. Winners will be announced on January 1, 2015 and grants will be awarded at the January conference.

To view and download grant application: **CLICK HERE**



*** Save the date!**

2015 ANNUAL CONFERENCE TOWARD THE DEEPENING OF PUBLIC WALDORF EDUCATION

We Have the Will to Work
**Educating the Will for the 21st Century
and Beyond**

January 16 - 18, 2014

Co-sponsored by RUDOLF STEINER COLLEGE
Fair Oaks, CA

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Bente Goldstein

Pre-conference
*The What's, Why's & How's: Creating &
Sustaining Meaningful Work for the Will*

Post-conference
*Find a Smarter Balance: Staying True to the
Impulse of Waldorf Education in the Face
of the Common Core*

REGISTRATION BEINGS AT THANKSGIVING!

YUBA RIVER CHARTER SCHOOL WELCOMES NEW DIRECTOR

Nestled in the Sierra mountains in Nevada City, CA, the Yuba River Charter School recently said a fond farewell to **Caleb Buckley** and welcomed **Charlene Haney** as the school's new Director.



Educating the Whole Child in the Digital Age

JOURNEY SCHOOL WORKSHOP & CONFERENCE ON MEDIA LITERACY

Journey School Foundation is offering two very special events this school year. "Educating the Whole Child in the Digital Age" addresses one of the growing concerns of our time: How to prepare children to live full lives connected with one another both online and off. Workshop: October 10-11, 2014. Conference: April 17-18, 2015.

For more information and to register:

<http://www.journeyschool.net>