WECAN

WALDORF EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA

Membership Handbook

Early Childhood Teacher Education Programs and Institutes

Updated August 2026

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WECAN
WALDORF EARLY CHILDHOOD
ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA

Welcome Letter

Greetings from the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America!

This Membership Handbook for Institutes is a guide to our work together in association as Waldorf early childhood institutes throughout North America. In it, we describe the history, goals, and activities of our association, our Shared Principles, and details about membership for institutes. The path to membership for early childhood teacher education programs and institutes is intended to foster a culture of self-study, peer review, and collaboration that will strengthen and deepen our work together. It offers opportunities for reflection and collaboration within and among training centers throughout North America. WECAN organizational member and affiliate institutes are listed on the WECAN website's Options for Training page.

WECAN's Shared Principles for Early Childhood Teacher Education have been developed through a collaborative effort between WECAN's teacher education committee, board, and member institutes, and the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE). The Shared Principles are intended as recommendations and guidelines rather than as strict requirements or prescriptions, and it is understood that there is a wide range of possible approaches to the training of Waldorf early childhood educators. At the same time, they represent an effort to uphold the quality and integrity of Waldorf early childhood teacher education and thus the vocation of Waldorf early childhood education. For Full Member institutes and training programs, the Shared Principles are an expression of the ideals and practices that allow the institutes to stand as representatives of Waldorf early childhood teacher education here in North America and worldwide. For Associate Member institutes and programs, the Shared Principles provide guidelines for the development of training activities and the organizational health of the training program. Individuals who complete WECAN-recognized trainings are generally recognized throughout the worldwide Steiner/Waldorf early childhood movement as "Waldorf trained".

We invite you to join us as we engage in a process of self-reflection and collaboration that will ultimately strengthen and deepen the early childhood teacher training programs and thus the care and education of young children in Waldorf settings throughout North America.

Please contact Ruth Ker, WECAN Teacher Education Coordinator, at teachered@waldorfearlychildhood.org, if you have questions, concerns, or suggestions. Other WECAN contacts can be found on the Contact Us Page of the WECAN website. We look forward to our work together in association!

With best wishes,

Ruth Ker
WECAN Teacher Education Coordinator

Heather Church
WECAN Director

Introduction to the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America

The Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN) was founded in 1983, originally under the name of the Waldorf Kindergarten Association of North America. WECAN's mission is to foster a new cultural impulse for the work with the young child from pre-birth to age seven. Based on an anthroposophical understanding of human development, WECAN is committed to protecting and nurturing childhood as a foundation for renewing human culture.

WECAN is a tax-exempt not-for-profit organization with a board made up of experienced early childhood educators from throughout North America. You can find photos and bios of WECAN Board members on the About Us Page of the website. The WECAN Board has two multi-day annual meetings in the fall and spring each year, and its committees and working groups are active throughout the year. The board acts as an organ of perception for the needs of the Waldorf early childhood movement and takes initiative, with the support of the WECAN staff (listed on the Contact Us Page of the website), in making manifest WECAN's mission. The staff and board accomplish this mission in several ways, including but not limited to the following:

- Supporting the development of Waldorf early childhood centers, birth to three programs, kindergartens, pre-schools, home programs, and training centers through a path to membership involving self-study and peer review;
- Encouraging and supporting research regarding Waldorf early childhood education and the development of the young child, and publishing the results of such research;
- Supporting the advancement of diversity, equity, and inclusion in Waldorf early childhood through research, publications, workshops, conferences, and other activities;
- Offering resources to professionals working with young children based on the educational philosophy of Rudolf Steiner, through conferences, webinars, publications, and other means;
- Providing resources to parents and caregivers through webinars and publications;
- Encouraging and providing opportunities for the exchange of information among colleagues who draw their inspiration for their work with young children from the work of Rudolf Steiner, through regional gatherings, an online hub, and other forms of communication;
- Protecting the name of Steiner/Waldorf on behalf of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North American (AWSNA), owner of the Steiner/Waldorf service mark, by ensuring that the marks are not misused in early childhood programs and granting use of the name to programs that have demonstrated through self-study and peer review that they can stand as representatives of Waldorf early childhood education in North America;
- Working together with other organizations that share similar goals and ideals, such as the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA), the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education (APWE), the Council of Anthroposophical Organizations (CAO), the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE), and the Pedagogical Section of the School of Spiritual Science.
- Interacting with other educational organizations representing a wide spectrum of ideas about early childhood education;

Activities in relation to teacher education include the following:

- Colloquia and gatherings, both in person and remote, of North American Waldorf early childhood trainers to share experiences, research, and questions.
- International conferences and meetings for early childhood teacher trainers.
- Development of Guidelines for the Training of Child Care Providers, through participation in the International Association

- Publication of a wide variety of resources for early childhood teacher training, with discounts for students enrolled in early childhood teacher training courses.
- Development and publication of Mentoring in Waldorf Early Childhood Education and Professional Review and Evaluation in Waldorf Early Childhood Education.
- Publication and distribution of a brochure on Waldorf early childhood teacher training: A Journey of Becoming –Working as a Waldorf Early Childhood Educator, including listings of training programs.
- Listings of Waldorf early childhood teacher training programs and activities on the WECAN website, in Gateways and in WECAN News Updates and Calendars of Events.
- Opportunities for teacher trainers and prospective students to meet at WECAN conference job fairs.

These activities are made possible through grant funding (Waldorf Educational Foundation, Waldorf Schools Funds, and Waldorf Curriculum Fund), individual donors to WECAN, WECAN Membership contributions, and through collaboration among the WECAN Early Childhood Teacher Education Committee, the circle of North American Waldorf early childhood teacher educators, the AWSNA Teacher Education Delegates Circle (TEDC), the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE) and its Working Group on Training, the Pedagogical Section in Dornach and the WECAN Board and Staff.

WECAN Shared Principles for Early Childhood Teacher Education

The *WECAN Shared Principles for Early Childhood Teacher Education* form the basis of our understanding of our work together in association and are used in our self-study and membership processes. As a living document, these Shared Principles will continue to be refined through the work of the WECAN Board, the WECAN Early Childhood Teacher Education Committee, and our Member Teacher Education Programs and Institutes. The current version of the Shared Principles was adopted by the WECAN Board in May 2023.

A. Purpose, Goals, and Educational Philosophy

A1 In our work with adult students, we support the preparation, ongoing professional development, deepening and renewal of the work of Waldorf early childhood educators and caregivers.

A2 We are committed to the ideals and continually developing practices of Waldorf/Steiner early childhood education, which are founded on anthroposophical pedagogical principles and an understanding of the human individuality as a being of body, soul, and spirit. We respect the dignity of childhood and educate our students to offer care and protection for children from all communities and backgrounds.

A3 Rudolf Steiner's educational insights are our primary, but not exclusive, source of guidance for understanding the developing human being. Our activities are based on contemporary research in anthroposophy, Waldorf education and other compatible pedagogical approaches. We work to ensure that Waldorf pedagogy becomes neither a theoretical system, nor a collection of outer methods, but a wellspring of living insight and inspiration.

A4 It is our intention to provide an inclusive, diverse, equitable and accessible program for our community so that every member can experience a sense of belonging. We recognize and value the race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, learning style, religion, nationality, and socio-economic status of every member as well as the traditions and values of their cultural community.

B. The Educational Program and Faculty

B1 Our programs incorporate historical and contemporary educational research, the evolving practice of Waldorf/Steiner education, and other relevant approaches to pedagogy and adult education.

B2 The program director or person responsible for the early childhood training program - including curriculum development, review and evaluation - is qualified through active training and experience in Waldorf early childhood education and work with adults.

B3 Our faculty members are qualified for their positions and responsibilities by education and/or experience in their recognized field.

B4 We recognize that Waldorf teacher education is a process of lifelong learning. Our faculty and staff are committed to ongoing self- and professional development as demonstrated by active participation in conferences, courses, and professional development workshops.

B5 We have processes in place for mentoring new faculty members and for regular self and peer review for all faculty members.

B6 Our faculty actively strive to implement inclusive, diverse, equitable and accessible practices for working with all adult learners within our community.

B7 Instructors intentionally create an environment of belonging and inclusion. Our instruction reflects an understanding of differences in individual and cultural learning styles, balancing conceptual, self-reflective, artistic and experiential/practical activity. Instructors encourage and cultivate creativity and independent thinking.

B8 Our program provides equitable individual student advising, means of student assessment, and maintains records of attendance, course completion and other relevant documentation.

B9 Our program offers a minimum of 450 class contact hours for birth to seven trainings or 300 hours for birth to three trainings. Curriculum and course content includes a balance of the following areas, with the understanding that program elements may be configured in a variety of ways. (See Curriculum and Course Content for a listing of specific course content areas.)

1. Anthroposophical Studies and Human Development (20 – 25%)

2. Child Development and Waldorf Education (20 – 25%)

3. Practical and Artistic Activities for the Classroom or for the Birth to Three Program (20 -25%)

4. Professional and Social Aspects of Waldorf Education (10 - 20%)

5. Artistic and Handwork Activities for the Educator (20 – 25%)

6. Independent research project

B10 Observation, mentored teaching, practicum or internship in well-established Waldorf early childhood settings is an essential component of the training. In addition to the above course content, our program provides a minimum of the following:

For birth to three programs:

1. In-service students (those working at least 3 days per week in a Waldorf birth to three setting) must have a minimum of three weeks (fifteen days) of observation and practicum in a Waldorf birth to three program, (of which one week may take place in their own classroom with a mentor, one week may be in another classroom in the same center, and at least one week must be in a center other than their own), and an additional two days each year of mentoring visits in their own classroom.
2. Pre-service students (those not yet working at least three days a week in a Waldorf birth to three setting) must have a minimum of one week (five days) of observation plus four weeks of practicum with experienced Waldorf birth to three early childhood teachers in a birth to three setting and will be visited during a practicum by an Institute-approved Advisor at least once during their training.

For birth to seven programs:

1. In-service students (those working at least three days per week in a Waldorf early childhood classroom with children ages three to seven) must have a minimum of three weeks of observation and practicum, (of which at least two weeks must be in classrooms other than their own), and two days of mentoring per year in their own classrooms.
2. Pre-service students (those not yet working at least three days a week in a Waldorf early childhood setting with children ages three to seven) must have a minimum of two weeks of observation and six weeks of practicum with experienced Waldorf EC teachers and would be visited during a practicum by an Institute Advisor at least once during their training

C. Governance, Finances and Administration

C1 Our program complies with all applicable laws regarding discrimination based on any and all protected categories, in all areas, including admissions, employment, and personnel. We work to ensure that students and colleagues in our program do not experience discrimination in admission, retention, or participation. All staff and faculty are expected to participate in ongoing anti-bias training.

C2 Our program is a collaborative and cultural activity and not a profit-oriented business. In our administrative, financial, and leadership processes, faculty and staff work to be socially responsible and equitable in our work with colleagues, families, the institution, and the wider community.

C3 Our program has the physical facilities and clearly defined, effectively implemented organizational structure necessary for the healthy functioning of the program. We have clear processes for making administrative decisions regarding current and future planning, review and development of programs, and creation of inclusive, diverse, equitable and accessible fiscal, administrative, legal, and personnel policies and procedures.

C4 Our program has clearly articulated, inclusive, diverse, equitable and accessible student-related policies and procedures for admissions and dismissal, enrollment, tuition, and program completion.

1. Relations with the Wider Movement

D1 We are part of a worldwide cultural impulse and consider ourselves colleagues in a world movement on behalf of the young child. As such, we are committed to collaborating with colleagues on local, regional, North American, and international levels as a fully-established representative of Waldorf/Steiner early childhood teacher education. Our early childhood program director and/or faculty participate in activities such as teacher trainers' meetings and conferences, collaborative research groups and colloquia, and task force activity of the broader Waldorf /Steiner movement.

WECAN Diversity Statement

In our work with young children from pre-birth to age seven, WECAN is committed to the ideals upon which Waldorf/Steiner education was founded. These include respect for the dignity of each individual child and family in honoring diverse race, culture, religion, national origin, socio-economic situation, gender identity and sexual orientation, family composition, and individual ability which form the backgrounds of their lives. Waldorf early childhood education is committed to supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion as a pathway to social justice and to rectify the explicit and implicit biases that undermine creation of healthy social life in our society.

Waldorf education was founded in 1919 upon the insights of Rudolf Steiner, whose indications provide the foundations for a truly humanized education that recognizes the individuality of each person and the universal spirit living within every human being. WECAN affirms this educational and social truth. Any statements attributed to Rudolf Steiner which imply or suggest discrimination or judgment toward any race, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexuality, or socioeconomic group, are rejected. Such attitudes are contradictory and undermining to the goals of this education.

Working toward these goals requires committed inner work from the adults who care for our children. Teacher preparation and professional deepening call for each educator to engage in self-reflection that will ennoble inner attitudes to support diversity, inclusion, and equity. Recognizing and celebrating the differences that make us uniquely individual fosters healing and creation of new social life. We strive to create conscious, collaborative communities of parents, teachers, and children which strengthen the children in our care to meet future challenges with optimism, confidence, resilience, and tolerance and experience their lives as filled with purpose and meaning.

The Training of Waldorf Early Childhood Educators: WECAN Expectations

For Educators Working with Children Ages Birth to Three

Supervisors, Directors and Lead Practitioners
For practitioners responsible for the development and quality of care and education of the birth to three program, completion of a Waldorf birth to three teacher education program recognized by WECAN is expected.

This is the expectation for practitioners working with children from birth to three, including childcare providers in center or home-based care, childcare supervisors/directors, and educators who facilitate parent-child classes or classes for expectant parents.

Recognized Waldorf early childhood birth to three teacher education programs offer a minimum of 300 class contact hours*, plus mentored teaching and extensive practicum or internship experiences. This coursework can be in a WECAN recognized birth to three training program or can be part of a birth to seven training if it contains sufficient birth to three coursework. The *Shared Principles for Early Childhood Teacher Education* describe the course content, fieldwork component and curriculum guidelines for recognized Waldorf early childhood teacher education programs. (Please also see the *WECAN Curriculum and Course Content Areas* below.)

Assistants, Support and/or Beginning Practitioners
For practitioners working with a trained lead educator, supervisor or director in any of the above-listed classes or programs, introductory coursework of at least one week (or its equivalent) and at least one week of observation in Waldorf birth to three early childhood education is expected. This would be followed by a minimum of one year of mentoring in their place of employment. For those who intend to continue in this position, further coursework and a full WECAN-recognized birth to three training is expected.

Ongoing yearly participation for at least one week in early childhood mentoring, evaluation, conferences, deepening courses, and workshops is an essential part of the continuing professional development for all Waldorf birth to three practitioners.

Note: Early childhood educators already trained in birth to seven who take responsibility for a Waldorf program serving children from birth to three are expected to complete a WECAN recognized birth to three training or its equivalent. Early childhood educators who have completed a birth to three training who take responsibility for a program serving children from three to seven are expected to complete a WECAN recognized birth to seven training or its equivalent.

For Educators Working with Children Ages Three to Seven

Lead Educators and Caregivers
For early childhood educators who carry responsibility for the care and education of the child from three to school entrance, completion of a Waldorf birth to seven early childhood teacher education program recognized by WECAN is expected.

This is the expectation for lead early childhood educators working with children from three to seven, including nursery, pre-school and kindergarten teachers and lead extended care providers in Waldorf schools, home programs and other early childhood settings.

Recognized Waldorf birth to seven early childhood teacher education programs offer a minimum of 450 class contact hours*, plus mentored teaching or extensive practicum or internship experiences. The *Shared Principles for Early Childhood Teacher Education* describe the course content, fieldwork component and curriculum guidelines for recognized Waldorf early childhood teacher education programs. (Please also see the *WECAN Curriculum and Course Content Areas* below.)

Assistants and Support Caregivers
For assistant teachers, in the above programs, introductory coursework of at least one week (or its equivalent) in Waldorf birth to seven early childhood education is expected. For those who intend to continue in this position, further coursework is expected, and a full WECAN-recognized birth to seven training is recommended.

Ongoing yearly participation for at least one week in early childhood mentoring, evaluation, conferences, deepening courses, and workshops is an essential part of the continuing professional development for both lead and assistant Waldorf early childhood educators.

This expectation is consistent with the guidelines of the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (see www.iaswece.org).

Note: Early childhood educators already trained in birth to seven who take responsibility for a Waldorf program serving children from birth to three are expected to complete a WECAN recognized birth to three training or its equivalent.Early childhood educators who have completed a birth to three training who take responsibility for a program serving children from three to seven are expected to complete a WECAN recognized birth to seven training or its equivalent.

WECAN Curriculum and Course Content Areas

Birth to Three Early Childhood Teacher Education Programs

WECAN-recognized birth to three training programs offer a minimum of 300 class contact hours. Curriculum and course content include the following areas, with the understanding that program elements may be configured in a variety of ways. Note: Although content related to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) is only listed explicitly in sections 2 and 4 (Racial and Cultural Identity Development and Literacy); IDEA content is expected to be applied throughout all curriculum and course content topics.

1. Anthroposophical Studies and Human Development (20 – 25%)

- Evolution of consciousness
- Karma, destiny and biography
- Anthroposophical view of the human being
- Spiritual foundation of the human being
- Path of inner development of the adult/educator
- Life and work of Rudolf Steiner

2. Child Development and Waldorf Education (20 -25%)

- Racial and Cultural Identity Development
- Child development pre-birth to twenty-one with a focus on embryology and the first three years in the context of the whole lifetime
- Development of movement, speech and thinking in the first three years
- Understanding the role of the will in the first three years in the context of the first seven years
- Importance of healthy attachment as a foundation for relationship, developed through daily life and in the physical care of the child
- The Pikler Institute research and practice in infant and toddler motor development and care
- Sensory development/emphasis on the foundational senses
- Supporting self-directed movement as a primary learning experience for infants, toddlers and nursery ages
- The importance of free play
- The integration of the reflexes and the seven life processes
- Imitation
- Sleep, health and nutrition
- Child observation and study

3. Practical and Artistic Activities for the Birth to Three Program (20 – 25%)

- Creating programs for infants, toddlers, nursery groups and parent and child programs.
- Rhythm of the day, week and year
- The young child's relationship to festivals and celebrations
- Indoor and outdoor environments for young children
- Meaningful, purposeful work, including daily life activities such as meal preparation and care of the physical environment
- Speech and gesture, including verses, rhythmic games, hand gesture games, simple stories and puppetry
- Singing, music and mood of the fifth
- Working with mixed-age groups
- Bodily care of the young child
- Gardening and working in nature
- Hygienic and therapeutic approaches

4. Professional and Social Aspects of Waldorf Education (10 – 20 %)

- Racial and Cultural Literacy
- Working with parents
- Working with colleagues
- Working with diversity and inclusion
- Basic knowledge of program administration, organization and social transformation
- Outreach and advocacy for children

5. Artistic and Handwork Activities for the Self Development of the Educator (20 – 25%)

- Eurythmy
- Spacial Dynamics
- Painting
- Sculpture – beeswax, clay modelling and/or woodcarving
- Instrumental music and singing
- Speech
- Handwork and crafts - working with natural materials

6. Independent Research Project

7. Mentored Teaching, Practicum or Internship in an Established Waldorf Birth to Three Setting. In addition to the above course content, birth to three programs require a minimum of the following:

- **In-service students** (those working at least three days per week in a Waldorf birth to three setting) must have a minimum of three weeks (fifteen days) of observation and practicum in a Waldorf birth to three program (of which one week may be in their own classroom, one week may be in another classroom in the same childcare center, and at least one week must be in a childcare center other than their own) and two additional days each year of mentoring visits in their own classroom.
- **Pre-service students** (those not yet working at least three days a week in a Waldorf birth to three setting) must have a minimum of one week (five days) of observation plus four weeks (twenty days) of practicum with experienced Waldorf birth to three early childhood teachers in a birth to three setting and will be visited during a practicum by an Institute approved advisor at least once during their training.

Additional coursework, fieldwork observation or practicum experience may be required at the discretion of the training Institute.

Birth to Seven Early Childhood Teacher Education Programs

WECAN-recognized birth to seven programs offer a minimum of 450 class contact hours*. Curriculum and course content include the following areas, with the understanding that program elements may be configured in a variety of ways. Note: Although content related to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) is only listed explicitly in sections 2 and 4 (Racial and Cultural Identity Development and Literacy); IDEA content is expected to be applied throughout all curriculum and course content topics.

1. Anthroposophical Studies and Human Development (20 – 25%)

- Evolution of consciousness
- Karma, destiny and biography
- Anthroposophical view of the human being
- Spiritual foundation of the human being
- Path of inner development of the adult/educator
- Life and work of Rudolf Steiner

2. Child Development and Waldorf Education (20 -25%)

- Racial and Cultural Identity Development
- Child development pre-birth to twenty-one
- First grade readiness
- Overview of Waldorf education
- Sensory development/emphasis on the foundational senses
- Role of imitation and free play
- Development of movement, language and thinking in the first seven years
- Development of the will
- Child observation and study
- Health, nutrition and sleep

3. Practical and Artistic Activities for the Classroom (20 – 25%)

- Rhythm of the day, week and year
- Festivals and their celebration
- Indoor and outdoor environments for young children
- Meaningful, purposeful work and domestic arts
- Language arts – speech, verses, hand gesture games, fairy tales and stories, puppetry
- Singing, music and mood of the fifth
- Rhythmic games, movement, gesture
- Working with mixed-age groups
- Bodily care of the young child
- Gardening and working in nature
- Hygienic and therapeutic approaches

4. Professional and Social Aspects of Waldorf Education (10 – 20 %)

- Racial and Cultural Literacy
- Education towards social renewal
- School organization
- Working with colleagues
- Working with parents
- Outreach and advocacy for children
- Working with diversity, inclusion and equality

5. Artistic and Handwork Activities for the Educator (20 – 25%)

- Eurythmy
- Painting
- Sculpture – beeswax, clay modeling and/or woodcarving
- Instrumental music and singing
- Speech
- Handwork and crafts- sewing, knitting, soft toy making (dolls, marionettes, etc.), plant dyeing, felting and working with natural materials
- Spacial Dynamics

6. Independent Research Project

7. Mentored Teaching, Practicum or Internship in an Established Waldorf Early Childhood Setting. In addition to the above course content, programs provide a minimum of the following:

- **In-service students** (those working at least three days per week in a Waldorf early childhood classroom) must have a minimum of three weeks (fifteen days) of observation and practicum during the course of their training (of which at least two weeks must be in classrooms other than their own and one week must be away from their own school/center), and two days of mentoring per year in their own classrooms.
- **Pre-service students** (those not yet working at least three days a week in a Waldorf early childhood setting) must have a minimum of two weeks (ten days) of observation and six weeks (thirty days) of practicum with experienced Waldorf EC teachers and will be visited during a practicum by an institute-approved advisor at least once during their training.

Additional coursework, field work, observation or practicum experience may be required at the discretion of the training institute.

** Institutes imbedding birth to three training in birth to seven training should anticipate that it will require at least an additional 50 hours.*

WECAN Affiliation and Membership Categories

The following section describes the WECAN Path to Membership for Early Childhood Teacher Education Programs and Institutes as well as Registered Initiative Affiliation for Early Childhood Teacher Education Programs and Institutes in Mexico, Puerto Rico and on tribal lands.

WECAN Path to Membership

The purpose of the WECAN Path to Membership for Early Childhood Teacher Education Programs and Institutes is to ensure that the principles of Waldorf Education are upheld and that the graduates are prepared for their professional work as Waldorf early childhood educators. WECAN invites and encourages early childhood teacher education programs to become organizational WECAN members. The WECAN organizational Path to Membership leads from Associate Membership to Full Membership.

We encourage those who are planning to offer a new early childhood teacher education program or add an early childhood teacher training within an existing Waldorf training institute to contact Ruth Ker, WECAN Teacher Education Coordinator, so that we can offer advice and support and discuss the WECAN Path to Membership.

Membership Eligibility

WECAN accepts as applicants early childhood teacher education programs and institutes that are working with the WECAN Shared Principles for teacher education and whose courses and activities are based on the ideals of Waldorf early childhood education.

WECAN membership is not open to programs that identify with a different or additional set of educational principles and practices. Such identification will be evident on the program website or other program materials in one or more of the following ways: the name of the program, the tagline of the program name, and in text describing the program. This policy is intended to avoid confusion on the part of prospective teachers, Waldorf schools, and the general public, in regard to the distinctions between Waldorf early childhood teacher education and other approaches to teacher education that have separate identities and their own guiding principles.

Associate Membership

Applying for Associate Membership:

A training program or institute aligned with WECAN's goals and purposes, with early childhood training students in regular attendance, may apply for Associate Membership for Training Programs and Institutes. Application

forms and other information may be obtained by contacting the WECAN Teacher Education Coordinator at teachered@waldorfearlychildhood.org. WECAN Early Childhood Teacher Education Committee members help guide applicants through the process.

Application Steps:

1. Request the Associate Membership Application Instructions from the WECAN Teacher Education Coordinator at teachered@waldorfearlychildhood.org.
2. Complete an Application Form and send it, along with the $200 US application fee, to WECAN as instructed on the form.
3. Complete the Self-Study and send it to the WECAN Teacher Education Coordinator.
4. Read the Site Visit Guidelines and contact the WECAN Teacher Education Coordinator to arrange for a WECAN Site Visit.
5. Following the site visit, review the Site Visit Report for accuracy.

Decisions regarding applications for WECAN Associate Membership for Training Programs and Institutes are made by the WECAN Early Childhood Teacher Education Committee on behalf of the WECAN Board.

Criteria for Associate Membership are as follows:

- The program is committed to the ideals and practices of Waldorf early childhood education and anthroposophy, the philosophy developed by Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925)
- The program has students in regular attendance and has taken one group of students through to completion.
- The program is in the process of becoming aligned with the WECAN Shared Principles
- The program intends to support and contribute to Waldorf early childhood education in North America
- The program is in compliance with the AWSNA Service Mark Guidelines
- The program meets legal licensing requirements at the federal, state or provincial, and local levels.

Benefits:

- Permission to use the name “Waldorf” in your title or by-line
- Listing in the AWSNA and WECAN Directories
- Permission to include in the program’s literature and on its website: “An Associate Member of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America”
- Permission to use the WECAN Associate Member Institute logo in the program’s literature and on its website
- An annual subscription to *Gateways*
- A 20% discount on WECAN books for institutes in the United States
- A 30% discount on WECAN books for institutes in Mexico and Canada (recognizing exchange rates and shipping costs)
- Advice and support through WECAN’s Early Childhood Teacher Education Committee
- Invitations to WECAN gatherings and conferences for early childhood teacher trainers
- Invitation to WECAN Teacher Educator Zoom conversations
- WECAN e-News Updates and other informational mailings
- An invitation for all educators in the program to subscribe to the WECAN Community Hub
- Group discounts on individual WECAN memberships for students in your training program
- Listing in the IASWECE World Directory of Waldorf Early Childhood Training Programs
- E-newsletters from the International Association
- Eligibility for AWSNA Teacher Education Loans and Grants
- Invitations to live AWSNA webinars

Responsibilities:

- Payment of WECAN dues (see below)

- Submission of annual updates of contact information, program data and substantive change
- Completion of a Self-Study Update and a Site Visit every three years.

WECAN Associate Member Training Programs and Institutes are engaged in a process of growth and development on their path to recognition as Full WECAN Members. They are encouraged to participate in WECAN teacher education activities and cultivate relationships with the wider Waldorf early childhood movement in North America and worldwide.

Dues:

- Associate Membership dues are 0.30% of early childhood tuition income with a minimum of $300.00.
- A portion of the dues supports the activities of the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE).
- Invoices for dues payment are mailed in late August, with payment due on Oct. 15.

Associate Member Training Institutes that do not fulfill their membership responsibilities or are found no longer to meet the criteria for Associate Membership may lose their membership status.

Full Membership

Applying for Full Membership:
Associate Member Training Programs and Institutes are encouraged to apply for Full WECAN Membership when they are sufficiently established and meet the criteria for WECAN Full Membership, listed below. Application forms and other information may be obtained by contacting the WECAN Teacher Education Coordinator at teachered@waldorfearlychildhood.org. The WECAN Teacher Education Committee helps guide applicants through the process.

Application Steps:

1. Request the Associate Membership Application Instructions from the WECAN Teacher Education Coordinator at teachered@waldorfearlychildhood.org.
2. Complete a Full Membership Application Form and send it, along with the $200 application fee, to WECAN as instructed on the form.
3. Complete the Self-Study and send it to the WECAN Teacher Education Coordinator.
4. Read the Site Visit Guidelines and contact the WECAN Teacher Education Coordinator to arrange for a WECAN Site Visit.
5. Following the site visit, review the Site Visit Report for accuracy.

Decisions regarding applications for WECAN Full Membership for Training Programs and Institutes are made by the WECAN Early Childhood Teacher Education Committee on behalf of the WECAN Board.

Criteria for Full Membership are as follows:

- The program is working out of Waldorf education and anthroposophy as described in the WECAN Shared Principles for Early Childhood Training and is committed to furthering a deepening of an anthroposophical study of the human being among faculty and staff.
- The program can stand in the world as a representative of Waldorf early childhood teacher education.
- The program has functioned as a Waldorf teacher education program or institute for at least three years with students in regular attendance.
- The program supports and contributes to Waldorf early childhood education in North America
- The program meets legal licensing requirements at the federal, state or provincial, and local levels.
- The program has demonstrated viability in terms of finances, enrollment, and personnel.

Benefits:

- Permission to use the name "Waldorf" in your title or by-line (see Service Mark Guidelines below)
- Permission to include in the program's literature and on its website: "A Full Member of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America"
- Permission to use the WECAN Full Member Institute logo in the program's literature and on its website
- Listing in the AWSNA/WECAN Directory
- Two annual subscriptions to *Gateways*
- A 30% discount on WECAN books for institutes in the United States
- A 40% discount on WECAN books for institutes in Mexico and Canada (recognizing exchange rates and shipping costs)
- WECAN News Updates and other informational mailings
- An invitation for all educators in the program to subscribe to the WECAN Community Hub
- Advice and support through the WECAN Early Childhood Teacher Education Committee
- Invitations to WECAN gatherings and conferences for early childhood trainers
- Invitation to WECAN Teacher Educator Zoom conversations
- Group discounts on individual WECAN memberships for students in your program
- Listing in the IASWECE World Directory of Waldorf Early Childhood Training Programs
- E-newsletters and other mailings from the International Association (IASWECE)
- Eligibility for AWSNA Teacher Education Loans and Grants
- Invitations to live AWSNA webinars

Responsibilities:

- Submission of annual updates of contact information, program data and substantive change
- Payment of WECAN dues (see below)
- Renewal every five years by completion of a Self-Study Update and Site Visit (AWSNA-affiliated WECAN Full Members may fulfill the WECAN renewal requirement through their AWSNA self-study rhythm of seven years.)
- Submission of a One-Year Follow-up Report to the WECAN Teacher Education Committee, one year after the completion of a Site Visit, describing how the institute has worked with the recommendations in the most current Site Visit Report.

Full WECAN Members are encouraged to:

- Engage with their colleagues in the movement and with the wider world as fully-established, healthy representatives of Waldorf early childhood training and education
- Participate in site visits for developing training programs and institutes
- Collaborate with the WECAN circle of teacher education colleagues
- Participate in early childhood teacher education meetings and conferences sponsored by WECAN and IASWECE.

Dues:

- Full Membership dues are 0.35% of early childhood tuition income, with a minimum of $400.00.
- A portion of the dues supports the activities of the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE).
- WECAN dues invoices are sent out each year in late August; payment is due October 15.

Full Members who do not fulfill their membership responsibilities or are found no longer to meet the criteria for Full Membership will be required to undergo a review by the WECAN Early Childhood Teacher Education Committee.

AWSNA Member Programs and Institutes

Some WECAN Member Training Programs are part of a training institute that is also a member of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America. The membership requirements for the two organizations are closely linked. WECAN and AWSNA have established cooperative processes for integrating membership activity in the interest of reducing redundancy between membership processes.

Site Visits:
A WECAN Full Member renewal visit may be combined with an AWSNA visit to fulfill the requirement (every seven years) for a WECAN renewal. WECAN pays an honorarium to the WECAN site visitor, and the institute is responsible for travel, room, and board costs. (Applicants moving from Associate to Full membership in WECAN are not eligible for a combined AWSNA/WECAN site visit.)

Institutes that wish to engage in a joint AWSNA/WECAN site visit should contact the WECAN Teacher Education Coordinator. The following requirements must be met to have a joint visit:

1. An early childhood teacher trainer must be part of the AWSNA visiting team, so that the one visit can fulfill both the AWSNA and WECAN site visit requirements.
2. Prior to the visit, the early childhood person on the team must receive a copy of the institute's current AWSNA Self-Study and WECAN supplement, WECAN Site Visit Report from the most recent WECAN visit, and the most recent WECAN One-Year Follow-up Report (when applicable).
3. The early childhood visitor must complete a WECAN Institute Site Visit Report Supplement, including commendations and recommendations.
4. A Full Member Institute must also complete and submit to WECAN a One-Year Follow-up Report one year after the site visit and an update to the most recent WECAN Self-Study Supplement four years after the site visit.
5. The WECAN Teacher Education Coordinator must receive a copy of the AWSNA Site Visit Report and the WECAN Institute Site Visit Report Supplement.

If an early childhood person is not able to be on the AWSNA Team, the training program or institute is responsible for arranging a separate WECAN Site Visit.

WECAN Early Childhood Teacher Education Committee

The WECAN Board has appointed several experienced Waldorf early childhood educators and teacher trainers to serve as the WECAN Early Childhood Teacher Education Committee. This Early Childhood Teacher Education Committee has acted on behalf of WECAN to organize gatherings of Waldorf early childhood teacher trainers and mentors, to develop training guidelines, collaborate with the International Working Group on Early Childhood Training, and develop a membership path for early childhood training programs and institutes. A list of Teacher Education Committee members follows. Please contact them with questions or ideas for collaboration.

WECAN Teacher Education Coordinator and Committee Chair:
Ruth Ker, Duncan, BC, 250-748-7791, teachered@waldorfearlychildhood.org
Committee Members:
Heather Church, Gores Landing, ON, 647-882-0899, hchurch@waldorfearlychildhood.org
Laurie Clark, Denver, CO, 720-982-7162, laurieclark525@comcast.net
Diane David, San Francisco, CA, 415-751-0798, dianejohndavid@sbcglobal.net
Andrea Gambardella, Spring Valley, NY, 516-637-0470, agambardella@waldorfearlychildhood.org
Susan Howard, Amherst, MA, 413-549-5930, showard@waldorfearlychildhood.org
Laura Mason, Issaquah, WA, 425-837-9192, membership@waldorfearlychildhood.org
Holly Koteen-Soule, Seattle, WA, 206-528-1702, hollyksgarden@gmail.com
Katherine Scharff, Gansevoort, NY, 518-859-4791, katherine@sophiashearth.org

The International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE)

WECAN is a Full Member Association in the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE), based in Dornach, Switzerland, and founded in 2006. Member Associations represent more than 3 dozen countries on 6 continents. Each association has representation on the IASWECE Council, which meets twice yearly. WECAN has two representatives on the council who share a picture of our work in North America with the council and report to WECAN members on the activities of IASWECE. WECAN Associate and Full Members provide a membership contribution as part of their annual WECAN dues to support the activities of IASWECE.

The activities of the International Association include the following:

- Cooperation among colleagues throughout the world through meetings, conferences, and working groups;
- Deepening and renewing the work with the young child out of the sources of Waldorf education and support for its quality;
- Fostering training and continuing development of caregivers and early childhood educators;
- Undertaking and supporting collaborative research on contemporary questions about the care and education of the young child;
- Supporting collaboration with parents, other educators, and the wider society on the needs of the young child;
- Protecting the name of Steiner/Waldorf early childhood education;
- Providing resources, information, and publications on Waldorf early childhood education and its programs worldwide;
- Offering support—pedagogical and financial—for projects in countries around the world.

Activities of special interest to early childhood training program directors and faculty members include the following:

- International conferences for early childhood training faculty and program directors.
- Guidelines on training published on the IASWECE website.
- An international Working Group on Early Childhood Teacher Education and Training.
- Pedagogical and financial support for the development of early childhood training programs in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and South America.
- Coordination of visits by early childhood advisors, mentors and visiting faculty to developing early childhood training programs worldwide.
- Regular International Early Childhood Teacher Training Network meetings.

Further information on IASWECE can be found at www.iaswece.org.

Collaboration with the AWSNA Teacher Education Delegates Circle (TEDC)

WECAN works in collaboration with the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America and its Teacher Education Delegates Circle (TEDC). Ruth Ker represents early childhood and the WECAN Teacher Education Committee on the TEDC.

For further information on AWSNA and its Membership Handbook, visit www.awsna.org or contact the AWSNA Executive Director of Membership, Melanie Reiser at mreiser@awsna.org.