



June 11, 2020

Dear Parents,

It is hard to believe we are in the last week of school, and how different the world feels today than it did three months ago. We know many of you have questions about what school will look like next year. We are approaching our planning with a variety of assumptions and expectations. It is our assumption that the State of Connecticut will provide clear guidelines for K-12 schools on questions of health and safety. We will follow those guidelines. It is our expectation that we will have periods next year when we will be able to hold school on campus and times when we will need to teach--and learn--from home. What we know for certain is that our teachers cannot wait to be able to teach your children in person again, and they are working on planning a carefully considered approach to our curriculum and scheduling for the 2020-21 school year.

We have made the decision to cancel Summer Camp for this summer, and to suspend Morning Glories parent-child classes in the fall. We need to focus all our energy on planning for our PreK-8th grade classes next year.

Early Childhood

We are discussing many scenarios for our Early Childhood program. We are planning on supporting three mixed-age Kindergarten classes which will be capped at 10 students each. This cap is based on current and expected guidelines from the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood. We are looking into the possibility of structuring the program so that it will fall under the umbrella of the guidelines for child care centers, allowing us to continue in-person learning even during a period of state mandated distance learning for our grade school.

The state requirement for a cap of 10 students per early childhood class will create pressure on EC enrollment. Please contact Therese Lederer, tlederer@waldorfct.org, prior to our June 30 re-enrollment deadline to talk through your plans so that we can accommodate as many returning students as possible before admitting new applicants. This applies to both not yet re-enrolled families and families already enrolled who may be questioning coming to campus next year.

Grade School

We hope we will be able to begin the school year on campus. We expect that even if our classes are running in person, we will likely have students who will be unable to attend during the continuation of the pandemic. Teachers will prepare to provide accommodations for these students, sending home classwork and arranging a weekly check-in session. Teachers will aim to provide similar work to that occurring in the classroom.

Our grade school teachers are also proactively planning for block lessons to be implemented during periods of distance learning. We are working to create a school-wide distance learning schedule of daily online classes and calls for each grade including a combination of main lesson work and

specialty classes. Attendance at these classes will be expected in the same way attendance at in-person classes is expected. We are also assessing the appropriate amount of time spent in distance learning (both on the computer and engaged in independent work) per day by grade. This is an incredibly complicated process and we will not have schedules finalized until later in the summer.

Tuition Insurance

In years past we have encouraged re-enrolling families to purchase tuition insurance and have made it mandatory for new families. In light of our current circumstances, we strongly encourage you to purchase tuition insurance. There are multiple scenarios in which the insurance would cover 100% of your child's tuition such as job loss, job transfer, or death of tuition payer. There are many more scenarios in which tuition insurance would cover 50% of a family's remaining tuition should a student withdraw. If you are already re-enrolled and have not purchased tuition insurance, simply send an email to Alex Exley in the Business Office, aexley@waldorfct.org, asking to add tuition insurance to your account. If you have not yet re-enrolled, you can add tuition insurance during the re-enrollment process. Please take a moment to read the attached brochure.

Regarding this year's tuition, if you are on a 12-month payment plan, your June invoice from TADS is your final 2019-20 tuition payment. Tuition payments for 2020-21 will begin in July.

Please reach out to Alex or Therese if you have discovered you will need greater assistance than anticipated due to COVID-19, or if such a need is preventing you from re-enrolling. As a reminder, we have extended our re-enrollment deadline to June 30. Again, we do ask early childhood families to be in touch before that date because space is now limited.

The second attachment in this email is a letter from Rick Branson, the head of the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools (CAIS). Independent schools in Connecticut, HVWS included, are grappling with how best to address racism in our classrooms in a way that fosters healthy, if at times uncomfortable, conversation and growth. This is a topic we have been working with--sometimes more successfully, sometimes less--for years in the faculty and staff and a problem on which we need to shine a brighter light. It is important that parents and teachers work together to support our children's understanding of racism in a manner that is age-appropriate and unafraid. We know this will sometimes make us uncomfortable and that is okay. In fact, it is necessary. We would like to invite all of you to join us in reading *How To Be An Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi this summer. While this title is currently hard to find in bookstores, you could place an order through Byrd's Books in Bethel or find it on Kindle or as an audiobook. As Mr. Kendi writes, "This book is ultimately about the basic struggle we're all in, the struggle to be fully human and to see that others are fully human."

Thank you for your support in this work.

With warmth,

The Leadership Council and HVWS COVID-19 Task Force