

K-12 Parent Handbook

Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	1
WALDORF EDUCATION	1
HISTORY OF OUR SCHOOL	2
GOVERNING STRUCTURE OF OUR SCHOOL	3
<i>Faculty Development Committee.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Curriculum Oversight Committee.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Social Inclusion Coordinating Group (SICG)</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Festivals Committee.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Care Circle</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>HUB Group</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Finance Committee</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Tuition Assistance Committee.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Building and Grounds Committee.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Personnel Committee.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Development Committee.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Outreach Committee.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Committee on Trustees.....</i>	<i>7</i>
OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS	8
COMMUNITY LIFE.....	12
RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS	13
TELEVISION, VIDEOS, COMPUTERS AND THE INTERNET	13
ESPECIALLY FOR PARENTS	15
<i>Faculty and Staff.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Parent Evenings</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Community Support Process.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>K-12 Website: steinerschool.org</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Interactive Online Calendar</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>K-12 Weekly Announcements</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Newsletter.....</i>	<i>17</i>
VOLUNTEERING	17
<i>Parent Council.....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Holiday Bazaar.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Social Inclusion Coordinating Group</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Library Committee</i>	<i>18</i>

<i>Festivals Committee</i>	18
<i>Room Parents</i>	18
<i>Study Groups</i>	18
<i>Parent-Sponsored Field Trips & Events</i>	18
SCHOOL SAFETY	19
ADMISSION, CONTRACTS AND FINANCIAL MATTERS	20
<i>Annual Giving</i>	22
<i>Scrip Program</i>	22
<i>Special Events</i>	23
<i>School Store</i>	23
<i>Gift Giving</i>	23
<i>Internet Shopping</i>	23
<i>Business Partners</i>	23
LOWER SCHOOL PRACTICAL MATTERS	24
DROPPING OFF AND PICKING UP YOUR CHILD.....	24
LUNCH AT SCHOOL.....	27
LEAVING SCHOOL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY.....	27
PLAYGROUND SAFETY	27
LOST & FOUND	27
BEFORECARE & AFTERCARE	27
EXTENDED CARE	27
BUS TRANSPORTATION	28
VISITORS	28
BIRTHDAYS	28
PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOCAMERA USE	28
GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT CONDUCT	28
<i>Timeliness and Attendance</i>	28
<i>Absences</i>	28
<i>Appropriate Clothing</i>	29
<i>Discipline & Conduct</i>	29
<i>Discipline in the Middle Grades</i>	31
HIGH SCHOOL PRACTICAL MATTERS	32
HIGH SCHOOL DRIVING & PARKING	32
LEAVING SCHOOL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY.....	32
LUNCH AT SCHOOL.....	32
PICKING UP STUDENTS IN THE AFTERNOON	32
BUS TRANSPORTATION	32
VISITORS	32
PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOCAMERA USE	32
GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT CONDUCT	33
<i>Timeliness and Attendance</i>	33
<i>Absences</i>	33
<i>Appropriate Clothing</i>	33
<i>Discipline & Conduct</i>	33
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ON WALDORF EDUCATION	34

Introduction

Welcome to the Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor. We are glad to have you with us as members of our community. We hope that this handbook will answer your questions about the operation and organization of our school. If you have questions that are not covered here, please direct them to your class or High School teachers, or feel free to visit the Lower School or High School front office and ask any of our staff members.

High School students are reminded to consult the High School Student Handbook for additional information that may not be contained in this document.

Waldorf Education

The first Waldorf School was founded in Stuttgart, Germany in 1919. It was based on the work of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), an Austrian-born scientist, educator, artist and philosopher. Emil Molt, owner of the Waldorf Astoria cigarette factory, asked Steiner to start a school for the children of the employees of the company. Starting from this single school, Waldorf education has become one of the most rapidly growing private school movements in the world today. There are now over 900 schools worldwide, with schools on every continent.

Steiner based the curriculum of the Waldorf schools on his belief that it was critical to call forth all of the child's innate capacities, not just the intellect or particular vocational skills. Some aspects that characterize Waldorf schools today are:

The curriculum is developmental. In each grade, the activities and lessons are tailored to the child's changing sense of self and relationship to the world and others. The curriculum recognizes that one must address different aspects of the child's nature at different ages.

The Lower School class teacher ideally stays with the same class for eight years, and thus comes to know the students intimately. Moving with the class from grade to grade provides the teacher with a unique opportunity to integrate the entire main lesson curriculum. Waldorf class teachers specialize not in a subject or a grade, but rather in a specific group of students. Subjects are taught in a "block" method in which several weeks of intensive study are devoted to a single subject. The integration of academics, the arts, and practical skills lies at the heart of the Waldorf curriculum.

There are no electives in the Lower School, and few in the High School. Our goal is to help each student develop his or her many capacities and capabilities.

Traditional textbooks are rarely used in the Lower School because much of the material studied is presented orally by the teacher. Students create their own "textbooks" in most subjects by synthesizing the material presented in class. As the students grow older, reference books, classic literature and original source material increasingly supplement the class teacher's oral presentations. We do use traditional textbooks for math and languages in the High School and sometimes for math in the middle grades.

Our school belongs to the worldwide movement of Waldorf Schools. We feel that the best education should help children not only to become knowledgeable adults, but also inwardly free, secure and creative people in later life. We wish to educate complete human beings who have confidence in themselves and are prepared to meet the challenges of our rapidly changing society. At our school, we strive to implement the complete Waldorf curriculum, and we seek fully trained Waldorf teachers for every full-time position. We believe that the spirit of the curriculum is as valid today as it was when originally formulated in 1919. We also feel strongly, however, that it is not only consonant with the

spirit of Waldorf education, but also inherent in that spirit that the curriculum be constantly renewed out of contemporary insights.

History of our School

Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor (RSSAA) opened its doors with Grades 1 through 4 on September 4, 1980 in a small three-room building on Packard Road near historic Cobblestone Farm. Behind the school's opening were decades of work in the community by many people, including Dr. Ernst Katz (Prof. Emeritus of Physics, University of Michigan) and Mrs. Ruth Nilsson, a parent and teacher who was instrumental in founding the school.

The school's third year saw a move to a leased building on ten acres in York Township, necessitated by continued growth and the addition of our kindergarten. A new first grade was added each succeeding year, with the 1984-85 school year marking the first time that the Lower School had its full complement of kindergarten through 8th grade classes. Being in Milan was very challenging for the school: most of our students came from Ann Arbor and had to be bussed in. The building itself was not large enough to accommodate our expansion to a full K-8 program, nor did its design really meet our needs. It was extremely fortunate that we were able to purchase our Newport Road campus in 1986.

With our move back to Ann Arbor in 1986, we had room to grow. Steady and rapid growth in enrollment continued to reflect the community's response to the value of our educational program. The growth of the school has been supported by an active parent body that has worked closely with the faculty on tasks such as publicity, fundraising, and recruitment. Such involvement has been essential in helping the school to confront first, the challenges of its infancy, and now the new challenges brought by continued growth.

Our High School opened in fall 1997 in a leased facility, the Genesis Building on Packard Road, completing the vision of the founding teachers and parents to have a full pre-K through Grade 12 program. In October 2001, a six-acre property located on Pontiac Trail was purchased to be the permanent home for our growing High School. After extensive renovations to the building and site, the new campus opened for classes in fall 2002.

We invite you to join us in writing the next chapter of our school's history.

Governing Structure of our School

In developing the structure and curriculum for Waldorf schools, Rudolf Steiner felt that it was important to have the schools governed by the people who work with the children every day. Thus, the faculty of our school plays an important role in setting policy. The College of Teachers, the Board of Trustees and our administrative team jointly administer our school; there is no head of school or principal.

COLLEGE OF TEACHERS

At the Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor, ultimate responsibility for all matters of pedagogy rests with the College of Teachers, a core group of full-time faculty dedicated to the long-term interests of the school. The College, along with the Board of Trustees, is concerned with the long-term health and development of the school. The work of the College is assisted by the full faculty during the business meetings and by the faculty committees, which take their mandate from and report to the College.
Daryl Honor, College Chair

ADMINISTRATION

The school's administrative team is responsible for operational matters that support both the daily educational programs and the long-term viability of the school. They are also responsible for implementing the policies established by the Board of Trustees and the College of Teachers. Our administrator attends board meetings and our Lower School and High School Coordinators may also attend to make presentations and offer input.

K-12 Administrative Staff

Sarah Cleveland, Bookkeeper
Sandra Greenstone, Administrator K-12
Katrina Klaphake, Gifts Coordinator
Melinda Mathias-Porter, Internal Communications Coordinator
Lucia Resteman, Finance Clerk/HR Assistant
Marian Xavier, Business Manager

Lower School Administrative Staff: 734-995-4141

Joseph Allen, Facilities Maintenance
Joann Constantinides, Lower School Office Assistant
Brigid Kowalczk, Admissions Assistant/Outreach
Perla Schaeberle, Lower School Faculty Chair
Lenore Pacitto, Office Manager/Facilities Manager
Peggy Wilson, Lower School Coordinator/Admissions Director

High School Administrative Staff: 734-669-9394

Carole Coulter, High School Office Manager
Barbara Dumbrigue, High School Registrar
Mary Emery, High School Faculty Chair
Blanche Price, High School Admissions & Operations Director
Ashlea Walton, High School Events Coordinator
Kirk Williams, High School Coordinator/College Counselor

In 2009, the Finance Office was repositioned in order to maintain a presence at both campuses to serve faculty, staff, students and parents.

Business Office –Location: Frame House, High School Campus 734-222-0058

Offices of Marian Xavier – Business Manager and

Lucia Resteman – Finance/Human Resources Clerk

Payroll Processing and Reporting

Personnel/Human Resources (New Hires, Change Information, Pension Benefits, Health Insurance, Employee Contracts, Etc.)

Worker's Compensation

Property and Liability Insurance, Student Insurance

Risk Management/Safety

Accounts Receivable and Collections (Delinquent Accounts)

Budget

Financial Information & Reporting

Audit

Tax Exempt Information and Purchasing Cards

Tuition Assistance

Field Trip Forms and Services for Faculty

Finance Office –Location: Lower School 734-995-4141 ext. 34

Office of Sarah Cleveland – Bookkeeper

Accounts Payable – writing Checks, Processing Check Requests, etc.

Payment Processing

FACTS

Enrollment Contract, Childcare, Athletics, Summer/Bike Camp, Etc. - Billing and

Payment Processing

Enrollment Deposits

Process Credit Cards

School Store Deposits, Taxes and Invoices

Petty Cash Boxes for Events and Class Funds

Vendor Records and 1099's

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the legal and financial organization of the school. The board includes faculty, parents, and community members. In order to facilitate the work of the board, committees have been established which implement policy, make policy recommendations and report directly to the Board of Trustees. All board committees have at least one faculty representative.

Officers and Members of the Board of Trustees: 2009-10

Jack Bernard, President

Diane Black

Steve Coulter, Vice-President

Shannon Fisher

Robin Grossheusch

Carolyn Hejkal

Bob Rajewski, Secretary

Geoff Robb

Brenda Slomovits

Donica Varner

Brian Vroom, Treasurer

Cynthia Wilson

FACULTY COMMITTEES

Faculty Development Committee

This committee is responsible for overseeing recruitment, mentoring and evaluating new faculty; managing a peer review process for all faculty members; arranging mentoring and master teacher evaluations for full-time faculty; promoting faculty development through support of workshops, conferences and in-service training; preparing and managing faculty development budget.

Curriculum Oversight Committee

The charge to this committee includes reviewing main lesson block plans with the Lower School teachers as well as skills classes for the year; viewing assigned festivals, assemblies, and other social events; evaluating the communication between the faculty and others in the school community regarding special events. The committee is also responsible for reviewing main lesson block plans and the skills lesson plans of the class teachers, developing and updating scope and sequence documents, and working with the department heads in the High School to review and develop the High School curriculum.

Social Inclusion Coordinating Group (SICG)

The Social Inclusion Coordinating Group works cooperatively to cultivate and maintain healthy relationships in our school community. This committee advises on social dynamics working with students, parents and teachers to facilitate a healthy social life.

The Social Inclusion Coordinating Group facilitates an explicit process that provides practical tools adopted from the Social Inclusion approach developed by Kim John Payne. This approach aims to foster inclusiveness and recognize mutual humanity even while addressing conflict. This committee advises on disciplinary issues if necessary. It also advises the Student Social Action Committee comprised of seventh and eighth grade students. These volunteer students are provided with training and take an active role in supporting and guiding the younger students. The students participating in Student Social Action Committee have been asked to lead by example and take an active role in contributing to the healthy social life of the school.

Festivals Committee

The Festivals Committee is responsible for overseeing all of the school-wide celebrations. The Lower School Assembly and Michaelmas are examples of the kind of events for which the committee accepts responsibility. Some celebrations are hosted by one of the grades, such as the Halloween Festival and the Thanksgiving Celebration. For these events, class teachers and parent volunteers work closely with the Festivals Committee to organize the celebration.

Care Circle

The Care Circle is charged with caring for the special needs of students. Care Circle is a resource to teachers who may ask for observation and assistance with a student about whom they may have concerns. The group can help teachers make decisions about school readiness, observe and help class teachers deal with a student's behavior, and can help with concerns about academic performance. The group meets weekly to develop policy and protocol for administering our support program and to discuss the needs of individual students. In evaluating the program needs of individual students, the group seeks input from observations of the class teacher, the school doctor, feedback from other members of the teaching staff, evaluations of our own education support specialists, and may also seek consultation of outside specialists.

HUB Group

HUB is an administrative committee formed to facilitate communication amongst the governing bodies of the school. HUB is also charged with the responsibility to make decisions about school operations that do not require group discussion or policy changes and to discuss and direct problems,

concerns, and new ideas to the proper committee or governing body. Members of the group include the Lower School and High School Faculty Chairs, College Chair, Lower School and High School Coordinators, the Administrator and the President of the Board. HUB meets weekly, with attendance as needed from the Board President.

SCHOOL COMMITTEES

In order to facilitate the work of the board, the following committees have been established which recommend and implement policy and report directly to the Board of Trustees. Each of these committees must have at least two board representatives and at least two faculty members. All board members serve on at least one of the board committees. Membership on a board committee needs the approval of the committee chair or coordinator.

Finance Committee

This committee oversees the ongoing fiscal management of the school. With help from the Business Manager, the committee prepares the budget according to guidelines established by the board (the budget is presented to the board in January for approval). The committee deals with financial concerns that arise during the year, such as: faculty requests for items not in the budget, families having problems with payments, maintenance emergencies, etc. The Finance Committee is responsible for reviewing financial policies and recommending changes to the board. Representatives from the faculty serve on this committee and report regularly to the full faculty. The Finance Committee meets once a month after school; extra meetings are required in January to prepare the budget. Chair: Board Treasurer

Tuition Assistance Committee

This is a relatively small committee (4 or 5) composed of parents, faculty members and board members. They oversee the allocation of assistance funds to families in the school. Their work is highly confidential. The bulk of the committee's work occurs in the early spring. Committee Coordinator: Business Manager

Building and Grounds Committee

The Building and Grounds Committee concerns itself with developing and communicating to the larger community the overall master site plan, including the shape and location of buildings, prioritizing aesthetic and structural improvements, landscaping and long-range development of both our Newport Road and Pontiac Trail campuses. The committee seeks input and assistance from faculty, staff, parents and students at both campuses, and from the site facilities managers. Committee Coordinator: Facilities Manager

Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee is composed entirely of faculty members, members of the Board of Trustees or administrative personnel. It is not an open committee. Its mandate is to develop and update personnel policy and procedures for the faculty and staff of the Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor, as well as to facilitate discussion of current policy. The group also handles concerns or questions the staff may have about the interpretation of personnel policy, as well as reviewing applications for short-term disability. Committee Coordinator: K-12 Administrator

Development Committee

The Development Committee is responsible for raising funds for the current and future needs of the school. The committee prepares a development plan to include the annual giving campaign, special events, corporate sponsorships, business partnerships, endowment possibilities and grants. The committee is also responsible for planning and participating in major donor cultivation activities. Chair: Development Director

Outreach Committee

The Outreach Committee works with the Lower School and High School Coordinators, Development Director and Admissions Directors to oversee external communication and outreach into the greater Ann Arbor community and beyond. It also works with internal outreach to the parent body in order to continue to encourage our best advertisement: “word of mouth.” The committee assists the staff with media advertising, introductory evenings, school tours, real estate and relocation agency contacts, art and music outreach, PLAIMS representative, lecture series, and other events and outreach activities. Committee Coordinator: Outreach Coordinator

Committee on Trustees

The Committee on Trustees has been established to assist the Board of Trustees in identifying and nominating new board members and overseeing board orientation. The committee also assists the board with communication and evaluation procedures. Chair: Board Vice-President

Overview of Programs

PARENT-CHILD PROGRAM

The Parent-Child Program is a special gathering where children over age two and their parents meet to enjoy a rhythmic morning of songs, verses, a snack, and conversation. This is a time to learn from each other and share life experiences and insights while our hands are busy. Growth, flexibility, and creativity are encouraged in ourselves while we watch these qualities unfold in our little ones. This program meets on Thursdays and Fridays from 9:45 to 11:30 a.m. Children in our Parent-Child Program must be two years old to enter the program.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN

Our pre-kindergarten program is designed specifically for the younger child. The program has its own unique daily rhythm, with specifics determined by the pre-kindergarten teacher in coordination with kindergarten teachers. Children in our pre-kindergarten program must be three years old by June 1 and able to use the bathroom independently. This program meets three days per week, 8:30 a.m. through 12:15 p.m.

KINDERGARTEN

The school offers a half-day kindergarten program beginning at 8:30 a.m. and ending at 12:15 p.m., with two classes of up to 20 children in each class. A child who turns four by September 1st may attend, and children may remain in the program for one to three years. A kindergarten teacher and at least one assistant (depending on enrollment) are available to the children. Extended Care is available until 3:00 p.m., with Aftercare continuing until 5:30 p.m.

Children under the age of six or seven learn primarily through imitation and activity. Thus, in our kindergarten the children engage in creative play with home activities and with simple, natural materials that encourage the imagination.

The rhythm of a Waldorf kindergarten offers time for whole-group activities and for smaller group interactions. Some time is given for more focused structured activities and time is also given for free imaginative play. Rhythms of the seasons and festivals are woven into the daily activities. As the children gather for “morning circle” they sing and move together with circle games, and seasonal poems and stories. There is a time to listen and watch as the teacher tells a fairy tale or nature story or presents a puppet play. During free time, the children enjoy the use of various handmade, natural fiber toys and costumes. Each day highlights a special artistic activity such as watercolor painting, crayoning, beeswax modeling and eurythmy. A morning nature walk, snack and outdoor recess are also part of the daily rhythm.

LOWER SCHOOL (GRADES 1 THROUGH 8)

All of our teachers recognize that each student has unique academic, artistic and physical gifts. The task of the Lower School teacher is to provide the inspiration and environment in which these gifts can be cultivated.

The Lower School teacher uses different pedagogical methods from those of her kindergarten and High School colleagues. The most important of these is that every subject (even science and math) is initially presented artistically, through a story, poem, drama, drawing or song. This artistic doorway is one through which students with widely varying intellectual capacities and learning styles can readily enter. The class teacher ideally remains with her students from first through eighth grade. Not only is the teacher’s intimate knowledge of the children a tremendous advantage, but she can also draw out connections within the material across the years. The Lower School students thereby receive a cohesive, comprehensive education that unfolds organically without unnecessary duplication. The

teacher's commitment to her class enables the children to develop trust. They can then focus joyfully on their academic work.

The class teacher is responsible for instruction in virtually all the academic subjects in Grades 1 through 8. Seventh and eighth grade classes typically have guest main lesson teachers who are specialists in their field. A number of special subject teachers who are experts in their fields teach Spanish, German, painting, singing, orchestra, handwork, woodworking, eurythmy and physical education.

In Grades 3 and 4, instruction and violins are provided for all students. In Grades 5 through 8, private lessons in the orchestral instrument of the student's choice are required. All students participate in our instrumental music program that is comprised of the following performance groups: chamber music, wind ensembles, and the full orchestra.

HIGH SCHOOL (GRADES 9 THROUGH 12)

An underlying principle of the Waldorf High School curriculum is that human beings, endowed with profound moral, intellectual, aesthetic and physical capacities, enter the world in order to find their chosen destiny in life. It is the task of education to facilitate the sequential awakening of these capacities so that the individual is prepared to embrace her chosen tasks in life. Although the intellectual content of the High School curriculum in many ways resembles that of other college preparatory schools, imparting such knowledge is not, in itself, the end of the teaching. Rather, we view it as the vehicle through which capacities are awakened and nurtured.

The sciences are taught primarily in the laboratory and in the field. Observation and experimentation with the phenomena are the basis for the development of the laws and theories that modern scientists use to make sense of their observations. In the humanities and social sciences, students are taught using primary source materials and the original versions of great works of literature. Writing is an important part of the curriculum in all subject areas. Students keep notes, laboratory records and journals of their observations and use them to write reports, essays and poetry, creating in each case a document summarizing not only the content of the course but also the students' own understanding of it. Work in the arts supports the academic curriculum by developing the capacity to solve problems creatively. Through the creative arts, we aim to help students cultivate imaginative thinking, perseverance and attention to detail. Practicing the performing arts develops self-discipline, focus and the ability to work effectively in a group.

We measure our success not just by performance on standardized tests and numbers of students gaining admission to college. More important is the degree to which Waldorf graduates go out into the world possessed of an inner balance, a confidence in life and its possibilities, a sense of responsibility for their work in the larger society, and the academic and practical skills to be successful in future endeavors.

SPORTS & AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

It is important to us that all children who wish to participate in a sport may do so. We hire coaches who emphasize sportsmanship and skill development for all members of the team.

Lower School

The Lower School offers an after-school sports program of competitive seasonal sports for Grades 6 through 8.

Co-ed Soccer and Girls' Volleyball are offered in the fall, and Boys' and Girls' Basketball in the winter. The school belongs to the Mid-Michigan Independent Athletic Association (MMIAA) and is in a league with other small private and parochial schools. All middle grades sports teams participate in a league tournament at the end of their respective seasons.

Middle grades “home” basketball and soccer games are held at our Newport campus. Sports seasons generally run eight weeks with an average of two games per week. Participating league schools usually face each other two times during a season making it possible for each team to host a home game with every other team. Practices are held in the school’s home gym at the Lower School. Fees for the program are commensurate with the fees of the Ann Arbor Rec & Ed sports programs.

Our Athletic Director oversees the program. The sports program is self-sufficient and the various sports subsidize each other. The only income for the program at present is the registration fees. The money collected is used to pay for equipment, tournament costs and referee fees. We recruit coaches from amongst our parent body, teachers, college students, High School students and interested adults outside the school community.

Our after-school sports program reflects the needs of the developing child. We do not feel that competitive team sports are appropriate for children younger than sixth grade. Organized sports leave little to the imagination, rules are strictly codified and unyielding. We hope that children in kindergarten through fifth grade spend their after school hours playing actively outside. We think it is best that these younger children learn traditional children’s games (hop-scotch, tag, jump rope) that promote imagination and flexibility. However, when the children are in fifth grade, we offer classes in various sports on Friday afternoons, giving them the opportunity to work and practice their skills in order to be better prepared for league play.

High School

The High School currently offers Men’s and Women’s Basketball, Women’s Volleyball and Co-Ed Golf as competitive team sports. Fees for playing team sports vary. Participation fees are used to offset the cost of gym rental, referee fees, equipment and uniforms. High School home basketball and volleyball games are played at various rented facilities. We will continue to build our High School athletic program in response to student interests. The High School belongs to the Michigan High School Athletic Association.

The High School also has a number of after-school clubs that typically meet on Tuesdays and Fridays. These include Model UN, Yearbook, Drama and Community Service. It is always possible for students to form other clubs based upon their interests.

FIELD TRIPS

Class trips serve social and pedagogical purposes and have become a tradition at the school. These trips gradually increase in length and scope, ranging from one-day field trips in the pre-school and first grade, to overnight trips as long as a week or more by eighth grade.

In high school, student service learning blocks are one to two weeks long. Each class teacher or high school teacher makes decisions about a trip based on the needs of the group and situation. Cost is also a consideration, and can vary depending on travel and housing choices.

High School service learning trips are ten to 14 days in length. The focus of these June trips is meaningful work and study:

Grade 9: work on a biodynamic farm in Ontario, Canada

Grade 10: survey trip at a camp in northern Michigan

Grade 11: internships with businesses in and around Ann Arbor, Michigan

Grade 12: early September, marine biology study in Maine

In March, the senior class travels to Italy for a practical study of art, architecture and history.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT WORK

Time is set aside in the fall and the spring for regular parent-teacher conferences about the progress and well-being of each student. A conference can be arranged at other times by either the parent or the teacher if there is a special concern. We urge you to call or write a note immediately if you have any question. The best person to contact is your child's class teacher, or High School teacher. We feel that good communication between parents and teachers is essential.

Education Support Services are available to students in all grades through the recommendation of their class teacher (Lower School) or main lesson teacher (High School). Our educational support program strives to foster a strong foundation and worthwhile habits to pave the way toward an individual's highest potential.

Lower School

A written report on the progress of each child is given to the parents at the end of the school year. In addition to a lengthy report by the class teacher, it will include a paragraph report from each of the special subject teachers. The report will discuss in detail how your child has progressed in the various classes, his or her mastery of the different subjects, and the child's personal growth in the social sphere.

In addition, although we do not give letter grades, upper grade class teachers keep records of spelling and math tests, homework assignments, main lesson book completion, and other measures of student progress. Class teachers expect that students will complete homework assignments and main lesson units. If there are any concerns about your student's academic progress, the class teacher will be in touch with you.

High School

For a complete description of the academic guidelines for the High School, please refer to the High School Student Handbook. Progress reports are given on a regular basis following the completion of Main Lesson blocks, Arts/Crafts blocks, and Life Skills blocks. Reports are given quarterly on year-long subject lessons (math, English, foreign languages, eurythmy, music, chorus, physical fitness). It is expected that students will pass all of the courses that they take. Requirements for passing any given course consist of some combination of the following: mastery of subject material, completion of assigned work on time, and participation in class.

In the event that students are not meeting some or all of the course requirements, several steps can be taken to help the student succeed. The teacher will try to work with the student directly to remedy the problem. If necessary, the teacher will inform the parents and enlist their help in supporting the student. The teacher may convene a meeting with the student, parents, and the High School faculty to find additional ways to support the student. Special accommodation plans will be developed for students as necessary.

If a teacher concludes that a student did not meet the requirements of the course, despite the efforts to help, the teacher has the option of not giving the student credit for the course. A student will be placed on academic probation when they have failed to earn credit for two courses in a school year. A faculty member will be assigned to the student as a mentor. Not receiving credit for courses may jeopardize the student's qualification for a high school diploma, and may jeopardize the student's place in the school.

Parents who have concerns about their student's academic performance should contact the specific teacher or any member of the High School full-time faculty,

SUSPENSION

Students who are a disruption to the learning environment or endanger themselves or others, may be suspended. The suspension may last one or more days. Before a student is sent home, the teacher or staff member will consult with a member of the College of Teachers. A suspended student may not return to class until a meeting between the appropriate faculty and/or staff member and the student's parents has occurred. Depending on the age of the student, he or she may attend the meeting.

DISMISSAL

If a student is disruptive or incorrigible to the point where it is unlikely that successful learning can take place, or the required academic standards are not being met, the school reserves the right to dismiss a student. The College of Teachers is responsible for reviewing such cases. The decision of the College is final. Tuition and fees are not excused, returned or pro-rated for periods of dismissal or suspension. Families choosing the Dewar's Tuition Refund Insurance would receive a benefit under the terms of the insurance when the school dismisses the child. Parents are responsible for the remaining balance.

Parents should be aware that in addition to the situation described above, certain behaviors may result in immediate expulsion or suspension. Examples of such behavior include but are not limited to: bringing weapons or illegal drugs to school; theft; arson; destruction of property; threats of violence; extreme physical and/or verbal hostility, such as fighting or abusive swearing; overt and inappropriate sexual behavior on school property.

WITHDRAWAL

If problems are such that resolution is not possible and the parent(s) decision is to withdraw the child from the school, a family who has taken the Dewar's Tuition Refund Insurance will receive a benefit under the terms of the policy. The benefit is paid to the school on the family's behalf and is based on the remaining portion of the school year at the time of withdrawal. The family is responsible for the remaining tuition balance owed. Withdrawal for any reason does not reduce or cancel the obligation for the full year's tuition and fees.

Community Life

LOWER SCHOOL ASSEMBLY

One Lower School Assembly is held during the school year at which parents can see and appreciate the work of their children as the students present some of what they have been doing. Typically, the classes give glimpses of math, language arts, eurythmy, music or foreign language. Each class participates and parents have an opportunity to see the natural progression of the curriculum as it is developed through the grades.

Please feel free to invite grandparents and friends to this assembly. Although kindergarten children do not present anything on the stage, they and their parents are encouraged to attend in order to become familiar with the work of the grade school. Attendance is required of all students in Grade 1 through 8.

FESTIVALS

Festivals celebrating the passing of the seasons are a very important aspect of Waldorf education. They bring rhythm and order to the year and meaning to our lives. The mood of autumn with the diminishing light reminds us to strengthen our inner forces if we are to accomplish the work at hand. Michaelmas and the Lantern Walk capture the mood of this season, leading into Advent, Christmas and Hanukkah with their images of light coming into the darkness. In spring, we celebrate the return of life and light to an earth transformed. All the celebrations and assemblies make their special contribution to the year as a whole.

By participating in these great human and social experiences, the child builds up an inner understanding that will help him or her through life. We feel it is extremely important that the child be present on all special assembly and festival occasions and request that parents plan their vacations so that these events will not be missed.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Throughout the year, there are public events sponsored by the school. The Holiday Bazaar, as well as being a fundraising event, transforms the school into a winter wonderland for people of all ages and helps kindle the holiday spirit. Monthly Introductory Evenings at the Lower School provide an introduction to Waldorf education for people in the community. Concerts, dramatic performances, seminars and conferences are sponsored at different times during the school year and are held at locations throughout the community.

Religion and Religious Festivals

At the Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor we strive to foster, through creative teaching, attitudes of wonder, awe, reverence and gratitude in the children's experience of nature and in their relationship to their cultural heritage. In doing so, we feel we are helping to lay the foundations of a true religious feeling in our students as they grow up. Such values are common to all religions and great philosophies and are independent of any particular creed. The school is nonsectarian and does not teach any form of religious doctrine to the children.

Of particular importance in fostering a healthy relationship to nature is that the rhythmic changes of the seasons be experienced as significant events in the cycle of the year. Major religious traditions reflect the significance of these seasonal changes in their festivals. At our school, we freely make use of festivals in the celebration of these important events of the year. We feel fortunate that we are able to offer these festivals undiluted to the children, in contrast to the impoverishment of such celebrations that has become common today.

Every effort is made to help all children, regardless of their religious backgrounds, feel included and valued in the observance of these festivals. We encourage parents to share with the class teacher or High School teachers aspects of their religious tradition, which might add to the richness of our experience of the seasons.

Television, Videos, Computers and the Internet

"I must say that I find television very educational. The minute somebody turns it on, I go to the library and read a book." (Groucho Marx)

The faculty strongly recommends that families eliminate or substantially limit electronic media exposure for children because it is in most respects contrary to Waldorf child development principles. The effects of television watching are brought to school in the children's play, and affect listening skills, communication, and attention spans. The school offers guidance and support to families based upon the accumulated knowledge and professional expertise regarding child development, education and media exposure.

TELEVISION

Television watching, regardless of the choice of programming, adversely impacts the development of very young children by robbing them of time to play imaginatively. It robs school-age children of time that is "free" and unscheduled with school and lessons, valuable time in which they can be creative,

and it robs all children of time with books. Television, with its fast-paced visuals, fosters a short attention span that directly impacts the child's school experience.

Exposure to commercial television carries additional influences that are inconsistent with the principles of Waldorf education. For example, play patterns of children who watch television tend to be less spontaneous and instead tend to be dominated by television themes. This is a poor substitute for the more creative and social imaginative play that is a tenet of Waldorf education.

Children who watch television may bring violent and dominating play based on these themes into the classroom, to the consternation of teachers, other children, and to their parents, who seek the Waldorf school to avoid this negative impact.

VIDEOS

Videos (and theater movies) share many of the same detrimental attributes as television, including an asocial learning environment, passivity and mental captivation. We caution that popular selections such as some Disney movies and many cartoon videos often contain levels of drama, violence, and adult themes that are inappropriate for many children. Careful parental judgment should be exercised.

COMPUTERS AND THE INTERNET

Extensive exposure of children to computers is discouraged by Waldorf educators because the interactive learning that occurs is a poor substitute for learning from an ensouled person or a book where the context is more social and imaginative and the pace is not electronically governed. Computer games are particularly objectionable because of their tendency to create obsessive/addictive behavior among users and their often-violent content.

It is difficult to rationalize uncontrolled access to the Internet for school-aged children due to the wide variety of developmentally inappropriate materials that are available on-line. We do use the Internet at the High School and encourage its proper use in various assignments for class, as well as to communicate with foreign exchange students, colleges, etc.

FURTHER READING

265 TV-Free Activities You Can Do With Your Child, by Steve and Ruth Bennett

Endangered Minds: Why Children Don't Think and What We Can Do About It, by Jane M. Healy, Ph.D.

Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television, by Jerry Mander

Kick the TV Habit!, by Steve and Ruth Bennett

The Computer Delusion: Atlantic Monthly, by Todd Openheimer

The Plug-In Drug: Television, Children and the Family, by Marie Winn

Who's Bringing Them Up? "How to Break the TV Habit!" by Martin Large

You are Your Child's First Teacher, by Rahima Baldwin

Especially for Parents

Parents are an integral part of the life of our school. In fact, it is hard to imagine how the school would function without all of the volunteer help we receive from our parents. We offer many opportunities for parents to get involved in the life of the school. Parents are invited to help out in the classrooms, serve on committees, attend conferences, take classes in the local Waldorf teacher training program, sign up for specialty classes offered at the school, participate in workshops, join study groups or find other areas where they may wish to volunteer their time. We encourage all parents to take advantage of the many opportunities to become involved in the life of the school.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between parents and the school faculty is essential. The following avenues of communication are available.

Faculty and Staff

Perhaps our most important avenue for communication is the willingness of our faculty and staff to talk with students and parents about any question or concern. Please do not hesitate to approach any of your children's teachers with questions, or any member of the office staff. We all consider communication with parents an important part of our job. If you are not sure to whom a question should be directed, check with anyone in either the Lower School or High School office. We will be happy to direct you to the appropriate individual.

Parent Evenings

Parent evenings are scheduled throughout the year in every K-8 class and are organized by the class teachers. This valuable time together is used to share information with parents about the curriculum and to discuss any concerns that parents might have about life in the classroom for their students, or general questions about the school program. Parents are strongly advised to attend these evenings.

The High School schedules two parent evenings every year. Parents then divide into class groups for discussion of curriculum, extra-curricular and social issues relevant to their students' grade. Class meetings are chaired by High School faculty and staff.

Community Support Process

The purpose of this process is to support members of our community in working through concerns by facilitating communication to enhance shared understanding and strengthen relationships.

Two-step Process

You are encouraged to make every attempt to speak directly to the teacher or RSSAA employee involved. If speaking to the teacher or employee does not resolve your concerns, contact any member of the committee.

Committee Members	Phone
Diane Black, Early Childhood Faculty Chair	995-4141
Mary Emery, High School Faculty Chair	669-9394
Perla Schaeberle, Lower School Faculty Chair	995-4141

Once the initial contact has been made, we would like to schedule a time to sit down together. So that you are best heard, we ask you to meet with two members of the committee with whom you feel most comfortable. You are welcome to invite a friend or family member to join you.

Once the information has been gathered the committee member will:

- Contact the employee to get his or her input
- Gather and bring information to the next committee meeting for consideration and determination of next steps and report to College and Board as necessary
- Respond to the person who raised the concern within 7 days

The committee will provide an accessible, consistent, and responsive process for working with concerns and seeking resolution in a timely manner. Additionally, the committee will be able to spot patterns quickly since they will have “all the pieces.” Meetings will take place once a week or more frequently, if necessary. The committee is tasked with:

- appropriately gathering information
- working with the necessary individuals
- developing best practices for dealing with problems efficiently
- conducting exit interviews
- gathering data and tracking trends

COMMUNICATION TOOLS

K-12 Website: steinerschool.org

In Fall 2008, a complete overhaul of our school website was unveiled. Please explore the website, taking special notice of the interactive calendar.

Interactive Online Calendar

Our school website calendar contains all school-sponsored functions and is updated regularly (community events will be shared in the weekly K-12 Announcements). The following FAQs will hopefully help you use the calendar.

Where will I find the new school calendar?

Go to steinerschool.org and click News & Events. The current month will appear. If you prefer to view the calendar by year, by a single week or as a list, simply make your selection from the top right side of the screen.

Do I need to log in?

While you don't need to log in to view the calendar, you should do so in order to customize your view of it. Go to “Sign Up” at the top right of the screen, and follow the prompts.

A new icon, “My Tandem” will appear in the top navigation bar; this is where you can view only the events that you choose to track, or request an email update if there are changes. You may also synchronize our school calendar to the electronic calendar your family uses (e.g., Google or Outlook).

Can I view, for example, all of the school vacation days and school breaks?

Yes! Select Schedules from the top navigation bar. A variety of schedules has been created. Simply click on the one you want to see, such as “Academic Calendar/Schools Days On & Off,” and it will appear. Good news: if any changes are made to the calendar, they are automatically updated on the Schedules!

Can I view more detail about an event?

Yes! Simply roll over the item and an Event Details window will appear. Click on it to access even more information, including a map to the location.

May I add something to the calendar?

This calendar is for school functions only; all other events are placed in the K-12 Weekly Announcements. Send an email containing all of the details of your event or item to announcements@steinerschool.org. See below for more information on K-12 Weekly Announcements.

K-12 Weekly Announcements

This weekly publication keeps parents and others up-to-date about upcoming events at the school, opportunities to take classes or workshops, information about the daily operation of the school and community news. It is our principal vehicle for communication with parents. Announcements are emailed to a K-12 distribution list; a limited number of copies are mailed (if requested) and copies are left in both Lower School and High School front offices.

There are two ways to place an item in the K-12 Weekly Announcements

- Via email to: announcements@steinerschool.org.
- Via paper: forms are in the Lower School and High School front offices.

The deadline for submission is **Tuesday at 3:30 pm, two days prior to publication**. Items will be included for two consecutive weeks; an extension can be made upon request.

Newsletter

“The Steiner Times” newsletter is for parents and community friends. Its purpose is to highlight achievements and provide information on a variety of topics. The newsletter features articles on our students, alumni, outstanding volunteers and generous donors. We are always looking for volunteers interested in writing articles, taking photographs or preparing the newsletter for mailing. Please contact the Development Office if you would like to help.

Volunteering

There is an active volunteer program at our school. A volunteer sheet is included with each year’s contract packet. The Development and Outreach Committees encourage parents to fill these out for future reference when volunteers are needed. Parents serve on the Board of Trustees and on board committees, they help in the classrooms, chair fundraising events, coach in the after-school sports program, assist in the office, and serve as room parents.

If you are interested in becoming a member of any of the board committees, please contact the committee chair or coordinator.

Other committees that are open to parents include:

Parent Council

The Parent Council works together with the Board of Trustees, faculty and administration to help create a thriving, cohesive community. Collectively, we reach out to the greater community to support the growth and potential of our school, guided by the principles of Waldorf Education. All are welcome to this growing parent group! Meetings are held one Saturday morning each month, September through May.

Holiday Bazaar

Parent volunteers chair this wonderful event, and each class in the school is responsible for organizing a portion of it. The Holiday Bazaar is an important source of funding for our operating budget and is a wonderful way for new parents to get to know each other. There are many committees associated with this event. See the Development Office for details.

Social Inclusion Coordinating Group

The Social Inclusion Coordinating Group works cooperatively to cultivate and maintain healthy relationships in our school community. This committee is dedicated to having this work be consistent with Waldorf pedagogy while taking a deeper look at social dynamics. The committee meets weekly throughout the year. Any parents interested in committing to this ongoing process please contact the Lower School Coordinator.

Library Committee

This committee is responsible for maintaining, developing and improving the school libraries.

Festivals Committee

Several seasonal celebrations during the year are carried by specific classes with help and consultation from the Faculty Festivals Committee. Please contact either the Lower or High School Coordinators if you are interested in helping with these events.

Room Parents

Room parents offer a great service to Lower School class teachers, other parents and the entire school community in their work to coordinate various activities and dispense information. Please see your class teacher if you are interested in helping in this way.

Study Groups

Study groups are offered at various times depending on parent interest. Faculty members facilitate some of the study groups; parents facilitate others. Discussion topics vary in the different groups: some focus on education and the ideas and thinking behind the Waldorf curriculum; other groups explore anthroposophy and the teachings and philosophy of Rudolf Steiner. The office can direct parents to study group facilitators.

Parent-Sponsored Field Trips & Events

The school realizes that events and field trips are a wonderful part of our school community and create many opportunities for new learning, activities and relationships. Events and field trips that are sponsored and organized by the school/faculty will follow all existing policy to ensure safety, adequate supervision, communication, and permission from parents.

Parent-sponsored field trips that are not initiated by the faculty (i.e., that may happen on weekends) are the responsibility of the parents. Parents shall assume full responsibility and liability for the organization, planning, transportation and safety of all children and adults during these events and trips. It is further understood and agreed that any and all arrangements for sharing transportation and care of each other's children are made independently of the school.

In the event that a field trip extends to in-class time on days that school is in session, children that are not in attendance will be marked absent.

School Safety

SCHOOL EMERGENCIES & CLOSINGS: SCHOOL REACH

The school follows the State of Michigan Code concerning fire and tornado emergencies established for our buildings. The students take part in at least eight fire drills and two tornado drills each year.

We use an automated emergency notification system called School Reach to contact the entire school community in the case of school closings, snow days, or emergencies. In the case of school closings or any other type of emergency, a call is made to all of the phone numbers provided by families to both the Lower School and the High School – cell, home and work. School Reach replaces the “phone trees” used in the Lower School, and allows us to effectively communicate with the entire community instantaneously.

If we must be closed because of inclement weather, the following radio stations will also broadcast the news: WAAM, 1600 AM and WUOM, 91.7 FM. We also notify the Channel 4 and 7 School Closing Hotline.

When Ann Arbor public schools are closed for bad weather, the Rudolf Steiner School will also be closed whether or not it is mentioned by name.

If we are closed due to the weather, the Lower School and the High School will both be closed. On rare occasion, it is possible that only the Lower School or only the High School would be closed for some kind of building emergency (for example, no heat).

For families who live in outlying areas, we encourage you to drive safely during winter storms. We do not count students tardy on days when driving is slippery. Safety is our primary concern and we take into account the extra amount of time it takes to get here. Please be careful!

HEALTH, ACCIDENTS & INSURANCE

Health forms must, by state law, be filled out by a physician and be on file at the school in order for your child to attend. Families that opt to “waive” immunizations carry a heavier responsibility to the school to keep us informed of communicable diseases that your child has or may come in contact with. Should we be faced with a communicable disease outbreak, students who have not been immunized may be asked to stay at home until further notice from the school.

Emergency Information Forms must also be on file by the first day of school. These cards are the school’s link to reaching parents and are important for the comfort and safety of your child. If you move, get a new phone number, or change your job, let the office know right away so that your card can be updated.

A First Aid Kit is kept in the office at both the Lower School and the High School. In case of a medical emergency, parents will be notified. There is an Accident Log kept in both offices that is filled out by the teacher on duty for any injury that requires medical attention. Parents will be notified in the event of a serious injury.

If a communicable illness is reported in a class (strept throat, chicken pox, etc.), we will send a note home. A nurse may be called in to check each child if the school feels it is necessary. If your child becomes ill while at school, we will phone you to come and get him or her. The office (Lower School or High School) is an uncomfortable place to be when sick and our space is limited. Prompt arrangement for transportation is appreciated.

No medication will be given to a student without written instruction or permission from a parent. If your child must take medication, please send the medication and the instructions for its use to the office. Lower School students should not keep medication on their person.

If your child is ill, please keep him or her home. We are not equipped to deal with sick children.

Remember that children who feel “under the weather” at breakfast usually feel worse by mid-morning. If your child was ill the night before, please keep him home. If your child has a temperature above normal, a red or sore throat, or signs of infection, he or she does not belong in school. If you have taken your child to the doctor and he or she has been diagnosed with a communicable illness, please let the office know.

The school provides Student Accident Insurance at no extra cost to our families. This coverage provides benefits when there is no other family insurance applicable or when there is a deductible or other out-of-pocket expense related to an injury sustained at school or during a school-sponsored activity. Claim forms are available in the Business Office at the Lower School.

The State of Michigan sponsors an insurance plan called MICHild. MICHild is for uninsured children of Michigan’s working families. MICHild services are provided by many HMOs and other health care plans throughout Michigan. More information is available in the Lower School office.

Admission, Contracts and Financial Matters

APPLICATION AND INTERVIEW

The first step toward enrolling a child in the Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor is to submit an application form along with a non-refundable application fee of \$60 per child, when applying at the same time.

After receipt of the application and fee, an enrollment interview will be scheduled so that both parents and student can meet with class teacher and the Admissions Director. This interview is important. Each child is considered individually and the interviewing teachers make the decision as to whether he or she will be accepted into the school. Kindergarten interviews are done in small groups.

The Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor does not discriminate in its admission policies on the basis of race, creed, religion, sex or ethnic origin.

Interviews for the next school year are not scheduled until after the January for new kindergartners. Interviews for Grades 1 through 8 and High School can be scheduled at any time by contacting the Lower or High School Coordinator.

ENROLLMENT CONTRACT

When a student has been accepted, an enrollment contract is offered to the parent(s) with legal and financial responsibility for the child. Once the contract has been signed by the parent(s) and returned to the school (with the appropriate deposit), the school promises to provide a place for the child in the class.

Students entering as new students into grades five through eight are issued a provisional six-week contract. Students new to the school in any grade who join us after the start of the school year, or students with whom teachers have a particular concern, may be asked to attend on a provisional basis for the first six weeks (nine weeks for High School students). Upon successful completion of this probationary period, students are offered the standard contract for the remainder of the school year. The class teacher or High School teachers are responsible for evaluating the new student’s success in meeting our expectations for good behavior and academic progress during this time. Special subject teachers will be consulted before a final decision to offer a full contract is made. Tutoring in “skill”

subjects such as foreign languages and instrumental music should be initiated during this probationary period if indicated. Specific requirements for tutoring in such areas will be communicated to the parents at the time of admission. A decision not to issue a contract following the probationary period will be made by the class teacher or High School teachers and staff in consultation with the College of Teachers.

By signing the contract, parent(s) accept the obligation to pay the fees for the entire school year. The school depends upon this financial commitment and determines its budget accordingly.

Contracts are offered to students in good standing in February. Returning students must return their contracts by the specified deadline in order to secure a place in the class. After the deadline, any remaining places will be offered to students in our waiting pools, and other qualified applicants.

The faculty reserves the right to withhold a contract for the next year if the student has had on-going academic or social problems during the year. The administrative staff also reserves the right to withhold a contract if student accounts are not current.

ENROLLMENT DEPOSIT

An enrollment deposit of \$500 (per family) must precede/accompany the signed contract for all students. This deposit will be refundable less any outstanding amount due the school, upon completion of the school year for non-returning students. Continuing students will have their enrollment deposit applied to the new school year's requirement.

The enrollment deposit is non-refundable should the student not enter or should he or she be withdrawn or dismissed prior to the normal completion of the school year.

TUITION ASSISTANCE

The Faculty and board of RSSAA encourage families to consider Waldorf education apart from financial circumstances. Awards of tuition assistance are based on need. Applications are available from both the Lower School and High School offices once an enrollment contract has been offered. Tuition assistance applications should be returned with the contract. For parents who would like help filling out the paperwork, our Business Manager is available to go over the forms with you.

TUITION AND PAYMENTS

There are three plans available to parents for the payment of tuition: annual, semi-annual, and monthly. Our monthly payment plans are handled by an outside agency, called FACTS. Our Bookkeeper and Business Manager are available to help parents set up their payment schedules.

If families should fall behind in their tuition payments for any reason, it is imperative that they come in and speak with the Business Manager or the High School or Lower School Coordinator. The school is always willing to work with families that are experiencing financial difficulties, but we cannot help if parents don't come in and talk to us.

Regular statements are sent to all parents apprising them of the status of their tuition balance. Parents who fall behind in their payments will be asked to meet with the Business Manager to discuss an alternative plan for meeting their tuition obligation. Please be advised that if parents do not respond to written reminders about their tuition obligation, and if they do not take advantage of opportunities for discussion of their financial situation, their student may be asked to remain at home until payment is received, or an acceptable plan for making payments has been established. All contracts and tuition payments are handled through the Business Office. Call 734-222-0058 if you have questions.

FUNDRAISING

Annual Giving

The annual fund appeal is the cornerstone of the Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor development program.

Each year, parents, teachers, trustees, staff, friends, grandparents, and neighbors impact the lives of our students by contributing to the Annual Fund.

Annual Fund contributions are essential to the day to day operations of the school, and are tax-deductible for the donor. These funds help fill the gap in the operating budget (approximately \$1,000 per student) not covered by tuition and other fees. They help to pay for everything that facilitates the teaching in the classrooms, like instructional materials and equipment, facilities and utilities, and faculty and staff salaries.

As we continue our work with the wonderful children and young people here at RSSAA, we feel a renewed appreciation for everything that makes this school so vibrant and successful. The ongoing commitment and involvement of numerous people in many roles all contribute to the vitality of our school. Each year we build upon prior efforts as we continue to grow and nurture our children and the school.

Please join with us in ensuring that the Annual Fund continues to be secure bedrock upon which to build the future of our school by making your pledge or contribution. Call the Development Office for more information.

Scrip Program

Scrip is substitute money, in the form of a gift card, that is used for everyday household purchases. There are over 500 retailers that offer scrip to non-profit organizations like ours, for gas, groceries, restaurants, travel, clothing, etc. Each time you use Scrip, a percentage of your purchase is donated to our school.

We have Scrip for seven local grocery stores. Rechargeable gift cards are available for Arbor Farms, Busch's, Hillers, and Plum Market. When the card is depleted, you simply add value to the card at the store using any form of payment. We have single use gift cards for Whole Foods and People's Food Co-op. Kroger has a program in which you register your Kroger-issued Plus card to have a percentage donated to the school. So does Plum Market: you may register your Plum Market Rewards Card at Guest Relations in the store or by calling 248-487-7007.

Scrip can be ordered on-line at shopwithscrip.com. Set up an account using our school code: 75LBF72699L. Pay for your order on-line by setting up to debit your bank account (Prestopay) or print out your order and bring it with a check to the school. You may also mail your check to our Scrip coordinator:

Martha Leabu
6023 Winans Drive
Brighton, MI 48116

Scrip orders placed on-line by 11:00 a.m. on Mondays are available for pickup the following Friday at both campuses.

A supply of Scrip grocery cards, gas cards, and a few retailers are available at both campuses for those who do not place on-line orders. Scrip can be purchased at the Lower School on Friday mornings from 8:30 to 9:00 a.m. in the main hallway, or from the office of either campus at other times.

Special Events

Special events are scheduled during the year that provide additional sources of revenue to the school. Our Holiday Bazaar and Spring Auction have historically been our two largest special events. Others have included dances, flower sales, concerts and dinners.

School Store

We are very fortunate to have a wonderful school store in our Newport Campus building. Several parents devote countless hours to this wonderful fundraising business that is also a service to our parents. The store sells many items that the children use in our curriculum, as well as a diverse selection of books and other items. We invite you to shop at our school store; hours are posted on the door.

Gift Giving

During the holiday season and on other special occasions, we think of the people who especially matter to us and we seek to demonstrate our affection particularly through the exchange of gifts. The school gratefully accepts special gifts in honor of someone you might like to acknowledge on one of these special occasions.

When a parent or group of parents wishes to make, build or otherwise provide enhancements for a particular room or for a class, it is important to do this as a gift to the school as a whole and to understand that the furnishings, equipment or special improvement will remain in that younger grade room when the current students move up into the next year's classroom. We have been fortunate to receive many such gifts of skill and generosity over the years that have enhanced both the appearance and the value of our school campuses. Please see the Development Office regarding any ideas related to gift giving.

Internet Shopping

Parents and friends can support RSSAA by shopping over the internet. Our website, steinerschool.org, provides a direct link to various online merchants that provide a percentage of your sale to the school. Each online store has specific instructions in order to receive the donation. Remember, to benefit the school, you must start your shopping through the school's website.

Business Partners

There are numerous businesses in our community that have made a commitment to support our school financially. These businesses have agreed to give back to the school a portion of the revenue that they receive from parents and friends of the school. Many of these businesses also generously contribute goods and services to the school, and act as sponsors for our special events. We encourage you to patronize these businesses, be sure to let them know that you are from the Rudolf Steiner School. The various business partners have different ways of "crediting" purchases by parents. Be sure to ask what the procedure is before your purchases are rung up. See the Business Partners roster at the end of this handbook.

Lower School Practical Matters

DROPPING OFF AND PICKING UP YOUR CHILD

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten

The school day begins for pre-kindergarten children at 8:40 a.m. and ends at 12:15 p.m. Kindergarten students begin their day at 8:10 and end at 12:15. Children may arrive after 8:10 a.m., but must stay with a parent until class begins.

At 12:15 p.m., children, except those in Extended Care, will be dismissed from either their classrooms. Those going home by school bus will be walked to the bus; others will be released to a parent or to another adult if written permission has been given ahead of time and the teacher has been notified. Please be sure to check with your child's teacher before taking your child from the playground.

Grades 1 through 8

Morning Drop-Off is from 8:10 to 8:30 a.m.

Option 1 -- Park and walk in with student (mandatory for pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and Grade 1)

Option 2 for Grade 2-8 students -- Drop off student in front of school

- Pull forward as far as possible.
- Form a single line in the Drop-Off Lane.
- Let children out of the car, then proceed slowly.

Notes:

- There is no stopping in the Drive-Through Lane.
- If you arrive before 8:10 a.m., sign your child into Before-Care.
- Children who arrive after 8:30 a.m. must check in with the front office.

Grade 1 -- Students are dismissed at 2:55 p.m. and must be picked up at the 1st Grade door by 3:15 p.m. After that they go to Aftercare.

Grades 2-6 -- Students are released from class at 3 p.m. and must be picked up by 3:20 p.m.

Grades 7-8 -- Students are released from class at 3:15 p.m. and must be picked up by 3:35 p.m.

For safety reasons, no child may be left outside of the building unattended, regardless of age.

If you are unable to pick your child up by the 3:20/3:35 p.m. deadline, he/she will be sent to Aftercare. There is a \$7.50 fee for drop in use of Aftercare.

For students who are to walk home from school written permission from parents must be given to the individual class teachers and to the Front Office.

Younger Siblings

3:00 -- Siblings of 7th and 8th graders stand with their own classes upon dismissal.

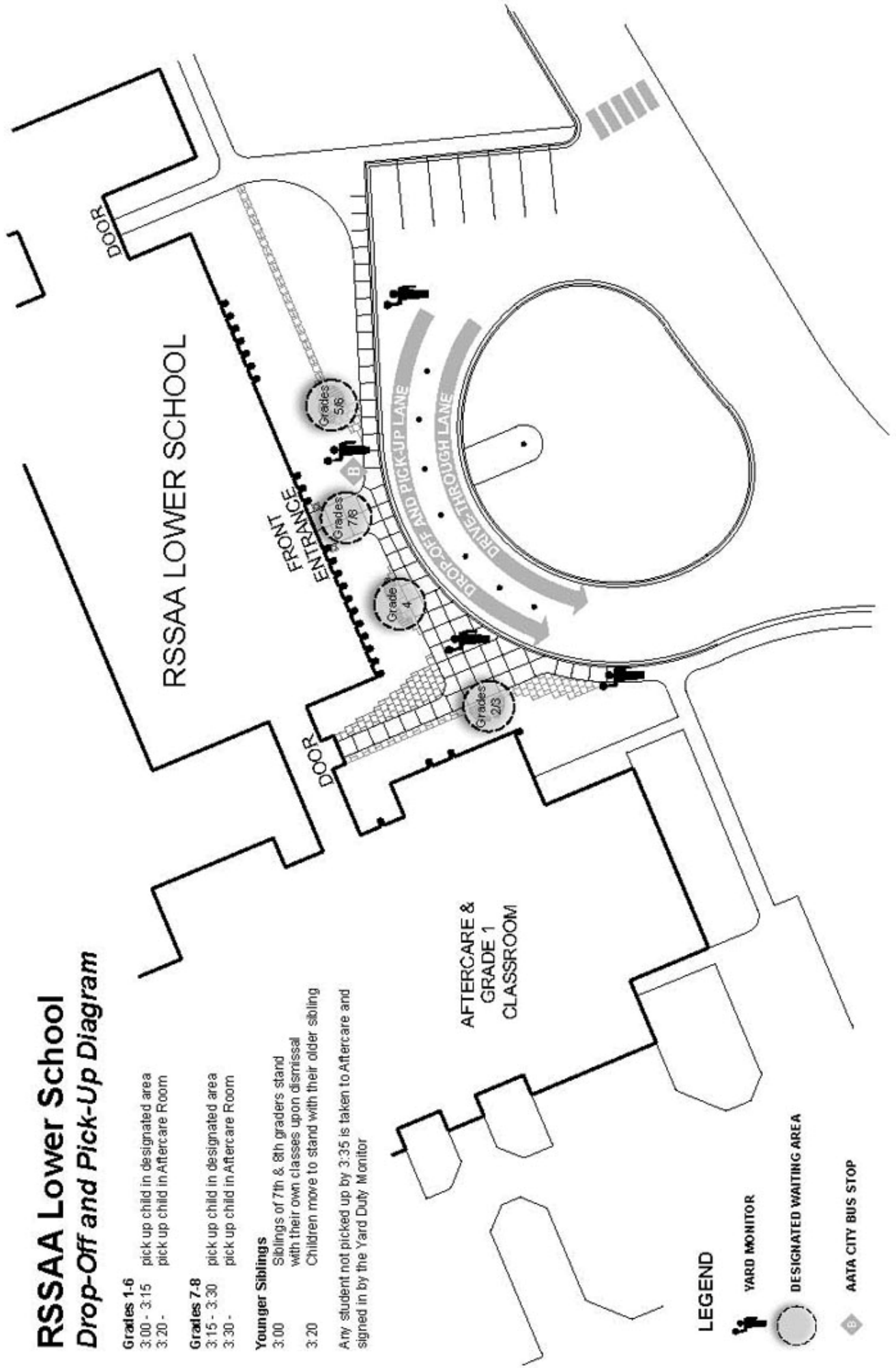
3:20 -- Children move to stand with their older sibling. Any student not picked up by 3:35 is taken to Aftercare by the Yard Duty Monitor.

Notes:

- Students who take the Ann Arbor city bus must stand and wait in designated area.
- Parents who arrive late park their cars and may meet their children in Aftercare.
- As of September 1, 2008 the drop-in rate for Aftercare is \$7.50 and there is a one-hour minimum.
- Parents who are in the building after morning drop-off or after 3:00 p.m. must keep their children with them at all times.
- Volunteers working after school (i.e., Scrip, school store, coaches) must sign their children into Aftercare (there is no charge).
- Children of faculty and administration must be signed in to Before- and Aftercare when parent is working at the school before 8:10 a.m. and after 3:00 p.m.

RSSAA Lower School Drop-Off and Pick-Up Diagram

- Grades 1-6**
 3:00 - 3:15 pick up child in designated area
 3:20 - pick up child in Aftercare Room
- Grades 7-8**
 3:15 - 3:30 pick up child in designated area
 3:30 - pick up child in Aftercare Room
- Younger Siblings**
 3:00 Siblings of 7th & 8th graders stand with their own classes upon dismissal
 3:20 Children move to stand with their older sibling
- Any student not picked up by 3:35 is taken to Aftercare and signed in by the Yard Duty Monitor



LEGEND



YARD MONITOR



DESIGNATED WAITING AREA



AATA CITY BUS STOP

MID-MORNING SNACK

A mid-morning snack should be included in your child's lunch to be eaten before morning recess. We encourage nutritious, wholesome foods that can be eaten conveniently and neatly in the room. Please do not send gum, pop or candy. Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children are given a wholesome snack every day. Let your child's teacher know of any food child allergies or foods he or she should not eat.

LUNCH AT SCHOOL

Lunch at the Lower School begins at 12:30 p.m. for Grades 1 through 6 and at 1:00 p.m. for Grades 7 and 8. Children should bring a sack lunch, including something to drink. The 7th and 8th grade classes have fundraising projects, currently selling pizza (Tuesdays) and bagels (Thursdays) or a healthy snack.

LEAVING SCHOOL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

If you need to take your child out of school before the regular dismissal time, please let the teacher know then sign him or her out in the notebook on the Front Office counter.

PLAYGROUND SAFETY

Children are expected to play and behave in a safe and polite manner on the playground. During the normal school recesses, they are expected to abide by the following rules:

- Hitting, kicking, throwing objects or the use of foul language is not allowed.
- All children must play in designated areas where they are visible to the teacher on duty.
- For safety reasons, the children may not climb trees or over chain-link fences or play tackle sports.
- Children may not climb on the roof for any reason. If a ball or other object needs to be retrieved, a teacher will be glad to help.
- Make sure that all litter is placed in a trashcan.

LOST & FOUND

There is a Lost & Found shelf in the Infirmary in the Lower School office area. Very small items may be kept in the Office Manager's desk.

BEFORECARE & AFTERCARE

Beforecare begins at 7:30 a.m. Children are dismissed to their respective classes just before the start of the school day. Beforecare may be used on a scheduled basis or as drop-in care.

Our Aftercare Program is available at the Lower School from 3:00 to 5:30 p.m. We ask parents to register their students in advance by filling out a monthly registration form, but we can also accommodate drop-in care. The program in the afternoon is more relaxed than the school day. Children play outside, use the gym facilities, have stories, art projects, and board games available to them, and the older children can do their homework.

EXTENDED CARE

The Kindergarten Extended Care Program is designed to provide a rhythmic and stable schedule for the afternoon hours. Our practices are developed with the health and benefit of the children in mind.

K-Extended Care begins at 12:15 p.m. and goes until 3:15 p.m. To preserve the integrity of the afternoon program, the children must stay until at least 2:30 p.m. The K-Extended Care Director and one of the Early Childhood Faculty members will eat lunch with the children. Those children staying

on in the Aftercare program (3:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.) will be delivered to the Aftercare Director at 3:00 p.m.

Registration is a contractual agreement by semester and inquiries for this program need to go through the student's kindergarten teacher and the K-Extended Care Director.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Morning bus service is not available for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students. However, there is bus service for kindergarten students after the 12:15 p.m. dismissal. Students are dropped off at the end of their driveways. Please contact the Lower School office by August 15th to include your child on the bus list.

There is currently no after-school bus service at the Lower School for Grades 1 through 8. However, Ann Arbor city bus #13 stops at the Lower School in the afternoons at 3:35 p.m. For specific information, visit theride.org or call 734-996-0400.

VISITORS

Parents, grandparents and special friends may sometimes wish to visit the school. Classroom visits to the Lower School can be arranged by calling the Lower School Coordinator in advance to arrange a suitable time. Personal tours of the school may be arranged by contacting the Lower School Admissions Director.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are a special time and are often celebrated with songs and stories and cards for the birthday child. If your child is in a younger grade, you may be asked to visit or send a special treat. Your child's class teacher will provide particulars on how birthdays are celebrated.

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOCAMERA USE

To ensure that the students are allowed to experience plays and assemblies without distraction, the faculty asks that any recordings or photographs of festivals, plays, etc., be done in cooperation with the teacher in charge of the event. A prior conversation will facilitate clarity regarding this. The faculty member will work with parents to find an appropriate time for them to take pictures of meaningful events.

GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT CONDUCT

Timeliness and Attendance

Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. at the Lower School must report to the office before going to class. Children in Grades 1 through 4 must be escorted to the office by their parents. Teachers prepare their lessons carefully with a beginning, middle and end. Please help us to achieve our goal of a rhythmic, artistic lesson by making a socially responsible commitment to get students to school on time. We encourage families to schedule medical and dental appointments outside of class time so that students do not miss school. It is the student's responsibility to make up any missed work due to tardiness.

You may expect a phone call from the class teacher or a letter from the Lower School office when there is excessive tardiness.

Absences

Please call the Lower School office by 8:45 a.m. if your child will not be attending school that day for any reason. We encourage families to plan vacations during scheduled breaks so that students do not miss classes. Please alert the office if you know ahead of time that your child will be out of school. Letting the class teacher and the office know of your plans saves us the time of calling and asking the

whereabouts of your child. If your child has a change in his or her schedule, a note from home should indicate the nature of the change, i.e. getting off at a different bus stop, going home with a friend, being picked up at school by parents. By doing this we know that you are aware of this schedule change and we can ensure that your child is being taken care of properly.

Please understand that frequent or prolonged absences may severely impair the student's ability to attain the objectives of their courses.

Appropriate Clothing

Pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and Grade 1 students should have a complete change of clothing at the school.

In the Lower School, appropriate clothing for school is neat and comfortable, and suitable for active play. Please dress your child appropriately for the day's weather. The children play outside except in extreme weather, and it is important that they be properly dressed.

Mark boots, mittens, scarves and coats with your child's name. This makes retrieval of lost items a much easier process. We request that slippers or indoor shoes (for older students) be left at school since it is uncomfortable and unhealthy to wear boots (wet or dry) all day. Shorts are suitable if the weather is hot.

The clothing that a student wears should not be provocative or distracting to the work of the class. We request that clothing which depicts media images or blatant commercial messages not be worn. Excessively torn clothing, spandex, sagging pants and heavy jackets in class are also not acceptable. Excessive make-up or jewelry is distracting to others; unnatural hair color and body piercing is inappropriate. In any class, a teacher may use his or her discretion to determine whether the clothing should be covered, turned inside out or changed, which may necessitate calling home.

Discipline & Conduct

The school's discipline policy is a work in progress, with great attention being focused upon it. What follows are general discipline expectations. A detailed policy is available for review; please inquire in the Lower School office.

Cell phones

While we recognize the utility of cell phones, the education we offer is optimized in their absence. If a parent deems it necessary for after school use, the cell phone may be brought to school. For families that want their student to have a cell phone at the Lower School, both the student and the parents will be asked to sign a contract acknowledging these policies.

While on the school grounds, the cell phone must be turned off and kept out of sight in a locker or backpack. If a student needs to contact a parent during the school day, the Lower School front office phone should be used. If a student needs to contact a parent or other driver after school, a cell phone may be used outside the school building if the student politely asks, then receives permission from an adult on yard duty.

If a cell phone is seen or heard during the school day or used without permission after school, it will be confiscated immediately and taken to the Lower School front office. Parents will be informed, and the cell phone will be held until the student's parents pick it up. Thereafter, until the end of the school year, the student will be required to drop off the cell phone (if parents still deem its use necessary) in the Lower School front office before school and pick it up after school ends. Further violation of this policy will result in a meeting with parents, teachers and student to determine appropriate actions.

In the classroom

Students will please follow the teacher's requests quickly and quietly. Students should raise their hands when they want to say something, instead of just shouting it out. At no time is any student to be in a classroom without adult supervision, except when a teacher has given special permission.

All students are asked to play their part in keeping our school safe and clean. Chewing gum, sitting on tables, marking classroom furniture, writing on walls are not allowed. Electronic devices, toys or items that might offend others should not come to school. If a student does bring such an item, a teacher or other staff member may take it from the student and return it at the end of the day. If the student brings the item again, it may be taken away until parents have been informed and the return arranged with them.

When outside

Safety and well-being come first. For insurance reasons, there is no tree climbing at our school; however, there are various play structures where climbing is possible. The boundaries of the play area do not include the driveway sidewalk or the parking area. When outdoors, students may only re-enter the school buildings with specific permission.

When on school excursions

Student behavior away from home and school is a reflection of the school community. Students are asked to stay together and listen to the teachers and other adult chaperones.

Regarding bullying and teasing

It is never allowed. If teasing or bullying is occurring, the class teacher should be informed at once.

General discipline guidelines

All of our teachers expect good behavior that is conducive to learning from the students. Normal expectations of politeness and good study habits are emphasized with the children. Disruptive behavior, including hitting, kicking, throwing things, running inside or using foul language, is not permitted. The teachers will handle children who need to be disciplined in a loving and effective way, taking the circumstances, history and age of the child into account.

The values expressed in the curriculum are carried over into the social sphere, including respect, politeness, sharing and care for another's safety and well-being. In the Lower School, when conflicts arise between children, both children are counseled and resolution is sought. In the event that the children have injured one another before a teacher is able to intervene, both sets of parents will be notified and appropriate measures taken.

Consequences for unacceptable behavior tend to relate to the matter involved, again depending upon the circumstances and age of the child. Examples might be sitting out during an activity if the child is disruptive, replacing something that has been broken, or inviting an injured child over to play at home.

If the student's behavior does not improve based on the interaction between the teacher and child, the parents will be called. The faculty has found that a united approach by parents and teachers is most beneficial and effective for the student's growth. For example, a plan may be devised involving consequences at home, combined parent/teacher/child conferences, etc. In the unlikely event that all measures are unsuccessful and the student is so disruptive as to pose a threat to other children or the educational process, the faculty reserves the right to go through the suspension or dismissal procedures as outlined previously in this handbook.

Discipline in the Middle Grades

When a student in Grade 5, 6, 7 or 8 is sent to the office by a teacher for a discipline problem, the student will fill out a discipline form and meet with the Lower School Coordinator before returning to class. This form will be mailed to the parents and kept on file. If a student is sent out of class three times, a meeting will be held with the parents, teachers, and student to determine appropriate actions.

High School Practical Matters

For more detailed information, please refer to the High School Student Handbook.

HIGH SCHOOL DRIVING & PARKING

High School students are permitted to drive to school if they have a signed permission slip on file. If they are scheduled for an off-campus class they may drive to that class but may not transport other students.

Our neighbors have asked that students not park in the subdivision to the south of the Pontiac Trail campus. Students may park in the school parking lot, provided they have a signed permission slip on file. Students who misuse the privilege of driving or are on academic or behavioral probation may have their parking and driving privileges restricted.

The High School day begins at 8:00 a.m. Classes are dismissed at 3:10 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and at 2:40 p.m. on Friday. A detailed schedule for the school year is sent out in the late summer.

LEAVING SCHOOL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

High School students need either a note or a telephone call from a parent if they are leaving school before dismissal time. High School students are expected to come into the office to check out before leaving campus.

LUNCH AT SCHOOL

The High School does not provide lunch on a regular basis. Clubs or classes may offer opportunities to purchase lunch or snacks during the year as part of their fundraising activities. Prior notice of these opportunities will be sent home. Students are not permitted to leave campus during the lunch period.

PICKING UP STUDENTS IN THE AFTERNOON

Students should be picked up in front of the High School campus on most days. Occasionally students may end their day at an off-campus location. A detailed schedule of days and pick-up locations is given to all families prior to the start of the school year.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

There is currently no afternoon school bus service at the High School. However, Ann Arbor city buses do make stops at the High School. For specific information, visit theride.org or call 734-996-0400.

VISITORS

Parents, grandparents and special friends may sometimes wish to visit the school. Visits to your student's particular classes usually be arranged by calling the High School lesson teacher in advance to arrange a suitable time. Students who would like to have a friend visit should consult the High School Student Handbook for additional information on having guests with them for the day. Tours of the High School can be arranged by calling the High School office.

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOCAMERA USE

To ensure that all students are allowed to experience plays and assemblies without distraction, the faculty asks that any recordings or photographs of festivals, plays, etc., be done in cooperation with the teacher in charge of the event. A prior conversation will facilitate clarity regarding this. The Faculty member will work with parents to find an appropriate time for them to take pictures of meaningful events.

GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT CONDUCT

Timeliness and Attendance

Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. at the High School must report to the office before going to class. We encourage families to schedule medical and dental appointments outside of class time so that students do not miss school. It is the student's responsibility to make up any missed work due to tardiness.

In the High School, a frequent pattern of tardiness is also cause for concern and will result in a conference to discuss and remedy the difficulty.

Absences

Please call the High School office before 8:00 a.m. if your student will not be attending school that day for any reason. Please understand that frequent or prolonged absences may severely impair the student's ability to attain the objectives of their courses.

Appropriate Clothing

The clothing that a student wears should not be distracting to the work of the class. We request that clothing which depicts media images, or blatant commercial messages not be worn. Excessively torn clothing, spandex, sagging pants and heavy jackets in class are also not acceptable. Excessive make-up or jewelry which is distracting to others (i.e. black lipstick, spike jewelry, unnatural hair color, body piercing) is discouraged. In any class, a teacher may use his or her discretion to determine whether the clothing should be covered, turned inside out or changed, which may necessitate calling home.

In the High School, students are expected to come dressed in a way that is practical, comfortable and appropriate for the day's activities, be it academic, artistic, movement or laboratory. Clothing should not be excessively distracting to our work together. It is expected that student clothing meets common standards of modesty. Attire that glamorizes drug or alcohol use, hostility, violence or sexual themes is contrary to our purpose. For safety reasons, shoes are necessary at all times. Please see the High School Student Handbook for a detailed description of dress code expectations.

Discipline & Conduct

Students who are having difficulties with a fellow student are encouraged to speak to any High School faculty member. Asking for help to resolve conflicts is always appropriate. Staff members are always available to help students develop strategies for working together, and are also willing to help facilitate conflict resolution between students.

If a student's behavior falls short of the expectations outlined in our High School Student Handbook, High School staff will work with the student to understand and correct the problem. If the situation warrants, parents will be notified and may be asked to participate in a meeting. Repeated problems may necessitate a review by the High School staff for appropriate action which might involve placing the student on behavioral probation. A mentor will be provided to work with the student.

Additional Resources on Waldorf Education

Parents are encouraged to explore the roots of Waldorf education further. Study groups and workshops are offered on a variety of topics throughout the year. A Parent Library is available in the Lower School front office to all enrolled families. Books are signed out for a two-week period. There is no fee for this service. The following are suggested as excellent books to acquaint you with the Waldorf approach to child development and education:

Between Form and Freedom, by Betty Staley. A practical guide to the teenage years.

Beyond the Rainbow Bridge, by Barbara Patterson and Pamela Bradley

Educating as an Art, by Piening and Lyons (Eds.) Essays on various aspects of Waldorf education. A good first book.

Education Towards Freedom, by Frans Carlgren. A survey of Waldorf education throughout the world with numerous color illustrations of children's work as each aspect of curriculum is discussed. An excellent introduction to Waldorf education.

Lifeways, by Davies and Voors (Eds.) Relating questions of practical home life - marriage, money, roles, discipline, mealtimes, etc. - to the Waldorf philosophy. Good for enriching home life and for providing a practical extension of what your child is experiencing at school.

Phases of Childhood by Bernhard Lievegoed

School as a Journey, by Torin Finser. The author describes his eight-year journey with his class. Provides valuable insight into the curriculum and the relationship between the teacher, students and families.

The Recovery of Man in Childhood, by A.C. Harwood. Discusses cycles of child-development and the Waldorf approach from early childhood through high school.

You Are Your Child's First Teacher, by Rahima Baldwin. Discusses what parents can do with and for their children from birth to age six that will enhance their development.