

## 2018 – 2023 Rudolf Steiner School Ann Arbor Strategic Plan

	Principles	Approach 1	Approach 2	Approach 3	Approach 4	Approach 5
<b>Curriculum</b>	RSSAA is committed to sustaining a relevant and evolving Waldorf curriculum designed to serve our students from the Early Childhood Program to High School graduation	Ensure that students are ready to learn and capable of benefiting from the curriculum	Invest in increased staffing in key areas that are currently under supported	Continue to develop the curriculum we offer to our students to develop engaged, informed, compassionate and motivated adults	Make Community Service and volunteer engagement in our local community a central aspect of the students' experience with a goal of ensuring that they develop engagement and compassion	
<b>Relationships</b>	RSSAA is committed to nurturing a strong, connected and warm school community that supports families and children	Actively work to ensure that the RSSAA Community is welcoming to a diverse and varied community of families, staff and faculty	Create a stronger and more active Parent Council with the resources to lead community development	Develop a school wide Parent Education and Support Program	Develop a school wide family connection and community building program	Actively work to ensure that the circle of teachers – both full and part time – is healthy, well connected, and able to truly support the school
<b>Connections</b>	RSSAA is committed to forging strong connections and bonds between the school and our environment – reaching out into the local community, the international Waldorf Education Movement, and the national education conversation	Develop and strengthen the School's connections to the state and local education conversation	Actively increase the school's connection to the wider Waldorf world in both North American and the world.	Take our Waldorf message and community out into the greater Southeastern Michigan area.		
<b>Resources</b>	RSSAA is committed to ensuring that the school is economically stable and has the resources to support continued stability and healthy growth	Strengthen enrollment across the school	Actively explore new ways of funding the school to ensure that our community stays vibrant and diverse, with families from across the socio-economic spectrum	Actively develop a culture of giving and investment across the school	Expand and grow Annual Fund giving to reach a yearly goal of \$350,000 by 2022	Actively work to expand the ways that gift/development funds can support the school
<b>Capacities</b>	RSSAA is committed to building administrative and structural capacities across the school community designed to support students, faculty, parents, staff and community members	Continue to build and develop communication strategies and technologies to support greater connection throughout the school.	Develop Board Recruitment and Support plan to ensure the Board has the members needed to nurture and support the school.	Create a marketing and outreach structure that creates a strong, positive and authentic public perception of the school in the wider community		

## 2018 – 2023 RSSAA Strategic Plan

**Principle A: The Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor is committed to sustaining a relevant and evolving Waldorf curriculum designed to serve our students from the Early Childhood Program to High School graduation**

**Approach 1: Ensure that students are ready to learn and capable of benefiting from the curriculum**

- Expand Education Support program to a full-time coordinator K-12 and PT area specialists, tutors and support staff.
- Offer a full eurythmy program across both campuses with appropriate rooms and accompanists.
- Offer a Spatial Dynamics based movement program with a full time teacher supported from the RSSAA budget.
- Expand the English Language Learners support resources across both campuses – including an ELL Coordinator for the High School, a program of special main lesson curriculum for newly enrolled international students, and support for ELL students in the Lower School with English language acquisition.
- Continue to work on creating a warm and accepting culture for all students from Early Childhood to High School by supporting the Student Action Committee, social support and community building work in the Middle and High School, and helping parents, faculty and staff all develop stronger skills at conflict resolution.

**Approach 2: Invest in increased staffing in key areas that are currently under supported**

- Expand High School Humanities staff from two full-time positions to three to provide a strong HS curriculum, and additional support for the middle school.
- Expand support in the Middle School – consider either expanding staffing to four fulltime teaching staff, or adding a half time administrative role for middle school support.
- Expand funding and support for Lower School Gardening program and grounds care.
- Over the coming five years, internally fund positions to replace Shared Time funding the areas of vocal music, movement, instrumental music and computer science.
- Expand Early Childhood staffing to include a full time Golden Eagles teacher
- Increase funding for support of experienced and effective classroom assistants (Early Childhood and Grades) with an eye to appropriate paying them, and to creating consistency and reliability in our classrooms.

**Approach 3: Continue to develop the curriculum we offer to our students to develop engaged, informed, compassionate and motivated adults**

- Develop and expand Cyber Civics Curriculum for middle and high school students to ensure that they are prepared for the challenges of our evolving technological, social media and highly connected environment.
- Fully implement the Environmental Curriculum in Grades 6 – 8 through additional faculty training, material support, and equipment.
- Support Faculty in further explorations of ways to maximize the appropriate and efficient use of technology to support the delivery of our curriculum

**Approach 4: Make Community Service and volunteer engagement in our local community a central aspect of the students' experience with a goal of ensuring that they develop engagement and compassion**

- Ensure that experiences such as the Early Childhood outreach to University Living and the Eighth grade Wednesday Outreach community service are created and sustained for all students every year in an age appropriate way and with significant administrative support
- Ensure that experiences offered across the grades cultivate awareness and positive attitudes relating to diversity of human experiences (racial, religious, generational, socioeconomic, etc.)
- Ensure that experiences offered across the grades cultivate awareness and positive attitudes relating to environmental care and sustainability
- Support faculty (with funding and support for necessary absences) in participating in relevant local organizations that serve our local community – such as Child Care Network, Huron River Watershed Council, Community Farm, etc.
- Highlight our involvement and outreach in these areas through our website.

**Principle B: The Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor is committed to nurturing a strong, connected and warm school community that supports families and children**

**Approach 1: Actively work to ensure that the RSSAA Community is welcoming to a diverse and varied community of families, staff and faculty**

- Ensure that we are actively working to minimize barriers which keep families and students from engaging in our community – including creating an inclusive festival life, strengthening our commitment to a strong tuition assistance program, and actively recruiting diverse faculty and staff across the school.
- Continue to analyze and develop our curriculum to ensure that it supports the growth and development of all children – valuing each child’s personal culture, religion, ethnic background, and gender identity
- Commit to a growth of tuition assistance funds – explore growth in whole pool, or growth in targeted funds
- Actively work to ensure that students, teachers, staff and parents of color are supported within the school and school community.
- Actively work to ensure that students, teachers, staff and parents of all religions and faiths are supported within the school and school community.
- Actively work to ensure that LGBTQ students, teachers, staff and parents are supported within the school and school community.
- Continue to recruit international students for the school and to actively support international exchange for high school students.
- Develop a positive technology position for the school which supports healthy child development, engagement in the current times, student learning and parent support.

**Approach 2: Create a stronger and more active Parent Council with the resources to lead community development**

- Nurture and empower parent leadership for the Parent Council, provide administrative support and assistance but not administrative leadership.
- Develop a School Governance Model to include Parent Council as a permanent body of the school with a clear mandate, policies and responsibilities.
- Increase participation and transparency through improved accessibility, inclusiveness and communication, including finding ways for parents to participate without being present (such as surveys), and at more varied times and places.
- Include a Parent Council Representative on the Board of Trustees.

- Actively work to involve Alumni parents on the Parent Council

**Approach 3: Develop a school wide Parent Education and Support Program**

- Ensure that parents, from Parent/Child to High School, receive child development and curriculum education designed to prepare them for developmental growth and to be the best parents to their children.
- Provide sufficient administrative support and planning that individual teachers are not responsible for developing individual parent support curriculum – the program should be a school program. Simultaneously insure that the unique print of each teacher is present in his or her parent meetings
- Hold at least three events annually that are open to the wider community of parents in Southeast Michigan.
- Ensure that entering families receive either pre-enrollment or orientation support around Waldorf Education and how our school works
- Work to provide parent education in a wide variety of ways, locations and at different times, to make them as available to all parents as possible. Include childcare for some of these events.
- Ensure that parent education content and educators meet parents where they are in terms of assumed background and experience with Waldorf Education and parenting.
- Develop Waldorf centered ways of assessing student progression and achievement of key milestones – then develop ways to communicate these metrics frequently and clearly to parents.
- Work to improve regular Class meetings across the school including supporting stronger teacher facilitation skills, increasing attendance and participation of parents, providing childcare and administrative support, and making the meetings more rewarding and meaningful for parents.

**Approach 4: Develop a school wide family connection and community building program**

- Regularly offer events that are designed to foster social connection, fun and relationship building within our school community - activities such as dances, games nights, parents' nights out, hikes, etc.
- Provide sufficient administrative support and planning that individual teachers are not responsible for developing individual social/community activities – the program should be school program.
- Offer a wide variety of activities that in total meet the needs of a wide range of child ages, parent needs, family lifestyle choices and levels of physical activity.
- Increase connections between students in different parts of our programs, such as High School students to Middle School students, through regularly scheduled activities and programs.

**Approach 5: Actively work to ensure that the circle of teachers – both full and part time – is healthy, well connected, and able to truly support the school**

- Work with the Personnel Committee to create a regular process of review of salary, benefits and working expectations, so that faculty and staff are as financially well supported as possible within the natural constraints of our circumstances.
- Ensure that faculty leaders – faculty chairs, the College Chair, and committee chairs have the time and space to devote to the additional work of leadership. The goal is to ensure that people can step forward to take on roles without feeling that the role will be too great a burden for them.
- Work to ensure that materials, supplies, and practical supports are convenient, stored appropriately and supportive of faculty work throughout the school
- Commit to active and replenishing study in all parts of the school – study that allows faculty and staff to more deeply understand the work we do, the roots of our approach to child development and to be artistically nurtured and supported.
- Bring tools to the faculty and staff to support open, honest and caring communication, effective and efficient group and committee meetings, and healthy conflict resolution skills.
- Create a succession plan, with annual updating, for the school, with a focus on long-term faculty members who are nearing retirement, and for key leadership roles including College Chair, Coordinators, School Administrator and Faculty Chairs.
- Ensure that the eight Grades Class Teachers are well supported in all ways including administrative assistance, parent relationship support, and that schedules and role expectations are appropriate and create the conditions for healthy class teachers.

**Principle C: The Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor is committed to forging strong connections and bonds between the school and the local community, international Waldorf Education Movement, and the national education conversation**

**Approach 1: Develop and strengthen the School's connections to the state and local education conversation**

- Encourage students from traditional education programs to observe, intern and complete teaching practicums at RSSAA
- Support RSSAA faculty and staff in reaching out to local and national education programs (for instance at EMU, and University of Michigan) to bring Waldorf Education into traditional education classrooms.
- Work to provide funding and time for faculty and staff to be actively involved in these areas.

**Approach 2: Actively increase the school's connection to the wider Waldorf world in both North American and the world.**

- Support teachers' work (financially and with the time needed) on AWSNA and International committees, conferences, boards, trainings and workshops – both as students and teachers.
- Ensure, through adequate funding and time off, that at least five faculty/staff members attend the winter AWSNA regional conference, that at least three faculty/staff members attend the WECAN annual conference, that at least three faculty/staff members attend the national June AWSNA conference, that at least two teachers attend the international teachers' conferences and that we have two AWSNA delegates at each delegates meeting.
- Actively work to share the knowledge and strengths of RSSAA with the wider Waldorf world – including mentoring of developing schools, consultation on the development of High Schools, participation by staff on accreditation and AWSNA/WECAN membership visits, and encouraging current faculty to work with the Institutes as teachers of teacher education courses and workshops.

**Approach 3: Take our Waldorf message and community out into the greater Southeastern Michigan area.**

- Develop a variety of outreach programs into the community – to share the message and strength of Waldorf Education. Examples of this include a Puppetry Troupe, the Choirs and Orchestras.
- Offer a variety free, or very low cost, activities, programs, lectures and events designed to share our understanding of child development, parenting and a healthy childhood with the community.
- Work to forge strong connections to appropriate community resources and organizations, such as Natural Area Preservation (NAP), the Washtenaw County African American Cultural and Historical Museum, Water Safety Coalition and many others. These connections should include opportunities

for their members and leaders to come into the school and work with students, and for our students to go out into the community.

- Consider offering some free play mornings and parent/child classes to invite the community in to the school.



**Principle D: The Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor is committed to ensuring that the school is economically stable and has the resources to support continued stability and healthy growth**

**Approach 1: Strengthen enrollment across the school**

- Work towards a goal of 24-26 Golden Eagle students in the Early Childhood program annually through outreach, program size and structure, and parent support.
- Work towards a goal of enrolling 100% of Golden Eagle students into the First Grade.
- Explore options for and decide on adding a nursery and toddler childcare program (possibly offsite) to generate a strong flow of Early Childhood students.
- Explore options for and decide on developing satellite Early Childhood classrooms to generate a strong flow of PreK and Kindergarten students.
- Explore options for and decide on developing a language immersion program for early childhood classes, with transition into the grades language program.
- Actively work to expand the geographic area that the school draws students from – including increased advertising in the wider geographic area, consideration of transportation and carpool supports, and relationship building with feeder schools from key target communities.
- Actively work to expand support for parents and students from outside Ann Arbor, including attendance policies, extended day programs and care and warmth for families making the longer trips.
- Explore alternative and additional routes to connect with prospective parents.
- Actively work to strengthen relationship with potential feeder programs – both Waldorf and mainstream
- Develop multifaceted ways of assessing student progression and achievement of key milestones – then develop ways to communicate these metrics to current and prospective parents.
- Continue to increase applicants to key entry grades (Kindergarten, Grade 6, and Grade 9) through outreach to feeder schools, effective advertising, strong admissions systems, clearly understood and planned transitions between levels, and good orientation and transition support for incoming students.
- Strengthen camp offerings and aftercare program so that they aid in retention, and continue to expand our coverage to support enrolled families with childcare needs.
- Invest time and energy in further publication of the children’s experience of learning and growing in our school, with an emphasis on showing the wider community the value of what we offer
- Ensure that enrollment processes are flexible and responsive to parent needs, and that our process does not enroll students whose needs we cannot meet.
- Implement an annual attrition survey of all families leaving the school to gather data and track where retention work would be the most beneficial

- Streamline re-enrollment process so that it is easier for parents.

**Approach 2: Actively explore new ways of funding the school to ensure that our community stays vibrant and diverse, with families from across the socio-economic spectrum, representative of the community we wish to raise our children in**

- Explore alternate tuition models, including accessible tuition, the creation of a related school business, and other approaches being used in schools around the world.
- Work to develop ways to secure funds beyond traditional tuition assistance that can be used to ensure diversity and a variety of families in our school community

**Approach 3: Actively develop a culture of giving and investment across the school**

- Recruit Board members who are able to fundraise, have the personal capacity to contribute, and are interested in actively leading our fund development outreach and campaigns.
- Consider creating an Advisory Board with a focus on fund development.
- Include fund development as a regular aspect of Board meetings, with monthly reports, dashboards and development conversations.
- Actively nurture a culture of philanthropy in the school faculty and staff, including deepening of the understanding of what small financial gifts can mean, expand faculty involvement in development work, grant seeking and the identification of projects that need funding.

**Approach 4: Expand and grow Annual Fund giving to reach a yearly goal of \$350,000 by 2022**

- Nurture and develop Alumni giving as a central part of Annual Fund donations – focusing on both alumni students and alumni parents.
- Invest in necessary staffing and database resources to support the growth of the annual donations to the Annual Fund.
- Commit to continue to use Annual Fund donations for Tuition Assistance and Faculty Development, growing both as the Annual Fund grows

**Approach 5: Actively work to expand the ways that gift/development funds can support the school**

- Implement a Planned Giving Program with a focus on phase three of the capital campaign (debt reduction), endowment and long term investment in the school's facilities.
- Expand outreach to the alumni community - especially through the upcoming celebrations of Waldorf Education and RSSAA anniversaries.
- Actively seek grant opportunities and develop relationships with potential grantors that will support the mission and work of the school

**Principle E: The Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor is committed to building administrative and structural capacities across the school community designed to support students, faculty, parents, staff and community members**

**Approach 1: Continue to build and develop communication strategies and technologies to support greater connection throughout the school.**

- Develop up-to date and responsive channels for communication between the school and parents (weekly announcements, important updates, class teacher letters, emergency information and calendars) – including appropriate use of email, texting, social media platforms, web-based technology and parent portals.
- Invest in administrative staff and equipment to support responsive, warm and helpful communication from the school.
- Develop tools to improve communication and collaboration within classes to support class cohesion
- Commit to as much transparency throughout the school as possible without violating individual's privacy so that all community members can have confidence in decisions and policies
- Create space within both buildings for parent presence during the day, where relationships and parent work can take place
- Ensure that Parent Education offerings include orientation to how our school governs itself and how decision making works

**Approach 2: Develop Board Recruitment and Support plan to ensure the Board has the members needed to nurture and support the school.**

- Consciously seek members to fill specific needs and to bring specific capacities including philanthropic experience/capacity, expertise in areas such as human resources, law, finance and business, Anthroposophical understanding, connection to the Detroit Waldorf School community, and both current and alumni parents. Consider setting a numeric target for each type of Board member.
- Add a Parent Council position to the Board of Trustees.
- Consciously strengthen the Committee Structure of the Board – including the completion of a committee review, and then the strategic use of the committee structure to prepare talented community members for Board service.
- Consider term limits for Trustees.
- Develop a Board Study plan with an emphasis on the three fold social order, and study of economic and community focused Anthroposophical reading.
- Work to actively connect the Board members to the work of the school with at least two Board/College meetings annually and with monthly College reports in the board.

**Approach 3: Create a marketing and outreach structure that creates a strong, positive and authentic public perception of the school in the wider community**

- Appropriately staff marketing, outreach and communication positions with individuals who can represent the school in the community, and have the necessary professional capacities.
- Develop the school's electronic and social media presence to support outreach and prospective parent connection – improving our website, social media posting and online advertising.
- Develop the data management tools and capacities to continuously improve the reach and impact of our marketing approaches with analysis of specific marketing campaign impact on inquiries.
- Develop ways to promote an authentic understanding of the ways in which Waldorf Education supports the development of Emotional Intelligence and preparation for future success in life
- Establish guidelines and standards for promotion of school activities, learning achievements of the children, and publicity around sports, trips, and activities – so that we can more effectively share our message with the wider community