



Dear WSGC Families,

In a few short weeks, the 2020-21 school year will begin! The staff has been working diligently to prepare the site and implement health and safety procedures. The faculty have been undergoing training and preparing lessons. Everyone is thrilled to welcome our families and rejoin the healthy rhythms and traditions the school year brings.

Just as the pandemic has caused significant change in lives around the globe, it has impacted some of our families. We will sorely miss those who will not be with us this year and hope for their quick return once things normalize. The Waldorf School of Garden City has also experienced change, but it stands strong, ready to serve our families now and into the future. It is in times of uncertainty that the strength of a community is realized. Through generous donations, we were able to secure \$228,000 in Emergency Relief Funds – 100% of which was given as tuition assistance to our families who suffered financially in the pandemic. Thank you to our alums, families, and employees past and present who contributed to this fund.

A strong and resilient organization like our School makes the most of a challenging situation. So when the pandemic brought rapid change, we adapted. We recognize the world is still in a fluid situation and we must continue to be ready to adjust as needed. We will accomplish this without losing our identity. Our mission to cultivate purpose, gratitude, and respect in the world through our teaching is here to stay.

At this time, we bid a sad farewell to employees who have departed and warmly welcome into our community the next generation of teachers and leaders.

Nicole Littrean steps into the role of Interim Administrator with the full support of the Board, Faculty, and Community. Leading the administrative team, Nicole will oversee the financial well-being of the School, safety and facilities, development, communications and enrollment. If you know Nicole at all, you know she is a powerful, positive can-do force! She's a real leader who inspires others to achieve their best. Nicole has always been a bright light in my workday, and I'm positively thrilled to work with her more closely in her new role. We also give Helene Smith our heartfelt thanks for her dedicated service over this past year. [Read more...](#)

Thomas Jenkins is our new Lower School Chair. He brings years of experience in Class Teaching and strength in communication and team-building skills. [Read more...](#)

Nina Renker's education and training in a new field have taken her in other directions. **Christopher Garcia** joins us as our new ENL Teacher for grades 8-12. In addition to English, he is fluent in Spanish, and also speaks, Korean, Chinese, and some Japanese. [Read more...](#)

Claire Pariente, our HS French teacher, will expand her role to teach our grades 7 & 8 this year. Over the next two years French will phase out while Spanish phases in.

Stephanie Rameriz, WSGC parent, has been hired as our Lower School Spanish Teacher. She will start with grades 1-6 at the end of September.

John Devaney teaches the Economics Main lesson in grade 12, one of the sections of Math in Grade 12, and American History in grades 11 and 12. He is also this year's senior co-advisor and together with Mrs. Yaeger runs the Model UN class.

Katie McCarthy is our fifth-grade teacher, taking the place of Bobby Lyons who retired last spring. Katie has earned her Masters in Education from Hofstra University after receiving her BS in Elementary Education from the University of Delaware. This summer she completed Waldorf teacher training at Sunbridge Institute. [Read more...](#)

Tasha England decided to return to Oklahoma to be closer to family. **Alanna Michtavy** has stepped in as our fourth-grade teacher. [Read more...](#)

Although Florence Kadri had stepped in as the rising grade one teacher, she had a change in heart and will be returning to France after all. We warmly welcome **Mara Esposito**, WSGC parent, as our First Grade Class Teacher. [Read more...](#)

We give our many thanks to Gina McCullough whose smile greeted us from the main reception desk each morning. We wish her the best in her future endeavors.

The School will also be hiring a full-time Eurthymist to fill the position Maria VerEecke left by her retirement. Travel restrictions due to COVID-19 and distance-learning protocols means this will likely take place in the next calendar year.

Our whole community celebrates and respects those who have served the School and who have now made a decision that takes them in different directions. We carefully chose who to bring into our School and we warmly welcome each new employee. Added to that we welcome about 40 new families into our community this year!

This new year also brings an increased commitment to **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** in our community and within our School. The Waldorf School of Garden City, founded on the anthroposophical teachings of Rudolf Steiner, is an evolving institution that continually strives to meet its diverse body of students and to prepare them to meet the future with purpose, gratitude, and respect. Our school recognizes that in *The Mission of Folk-Souls*, and other teachings, Steiner expresses racist ideas that the School does not share, support, or condone in any form. We strongly disavow any attempts to justify systemic injustices based

on evolutionary or karmic theories. Acknowledging that racial biases are embedded in the very fabric of Western Civilization, we actively engage in the ongoing evaluation of curricular content, teaching practices, and institutional policies to find and eliminate all racial biases. The Waldorf School of Garden City prioritizes and values these efforts to foster diversity, equity, and inclusion in the daily academic lives of all students and faculty members in our community. For more information please visit our website:
<https://www.waldorfgarden.org/basics/dei/>

Please note that **Early Childhood** families will receive a separate communication this week with back-to-school information.

Lastly, please find attached a printable copy of the **2020-2021 Calendar**. You will receive a full-color calendar in the mail prior to the start of the school year as well as an email with a link to all back-to-school resources for each class.

Thank you and we look forward to an excellent year!

Sincerely,

Kelly O'Halogan

Faculty Chair

The Waldorf School Of Garden City

225 Cambridge Avenue

Garden City, NY 11530

P. 516.742.3434 ext. 314

E. ohalogank@waldorfgarden.org

W. www.waldorfgarden.org