

Spring Garden

WALDORF SCHOOL

Parent Handbook 2014-15



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Welcome to Spring Garden Waldorf School!

It is always a joy to welcome students and their families to Spring Garden. We are eager to help you feel at home, make friends, and discover the talents you can share with this unique community.

By choosing Spring Garden for your child, you have become part of a community of students, teachers, and parents whose approach to education embodies meaning inherent in the Latin roots of the word educate: *ex duco*, to lead forth. This "leading forth" of each student's special gifts and capacities is accomplished through a dynamic method of integrated education that instills strength of will, moral responsibility, and clarity of thought.

A Waldorf school bases its educational methods and administrative structure on the principles and philosophies of Rudolf Steiner. The Waldorf teacher brings to the classroom a comprehensive understanding of the physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of child development. Students in a Waldorf school engage in creative and artistic activities that stimulate perceptual skills and build learning capacities. Every year, it seems, contemporary educational research confirms the value of the Waldorf model of education. If you are interested in learning more about Steiner or Waldorf education, please browse the shelves of the Lending Library in the SGWS School Store.

We are eager to nurture and cultivate relationships of understanding and trust with the families of the students we teach. Through discussion, study groups, workshops, and conferences, we join with you to develop a shared understanding of your child and to encourage harmony between home and school life.

You have embarked on an exciting journey, and we are happy to be a part of it.

The Parent Handbook

The purpose of the Parent Handbook is to welcome you to our school, to present our history, to set forth your role of the parent in the school community, to describe the admissions procedure and curriculum, to outline the everyday workings of the school, and to offer guidelines for working within the Spring Garden Waldorf School community.

Please note that the policies, procedures, and statements in this Handbook are subject to change. Should they change, you will receive updates to add to your copy of the Handbook. Please keep this Handbook in a convenient place and refer to it as needed.

Non-Discrimination Policy Statement

Spring Garden Waldorf School recruits and admits students of any gender, race, color, or ethnic origin to all the rights and privileges of its programs and activities. In addition, the school will not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, scholarships, loans, fee waivers, educational programs, athletics, or extracurricular activities.

The History of Spring Garden Waldorf School

Spring Garden Waldorf School is an independent, self-administered school linked to other Waldorf schools by a shared philosophy. The faculty teaches in an age-appropriate manner, as indicated by Rudolf Steiner's philosophy of meeting each student where he or she is developmentally.

The Waldorf school movement was founded by Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), based on his study of Anthroposophy, the study of mankind. Steiner was an Austrian scientist, philosopher, artist, and educator who founded the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart, Germany, in 1919. Steiner created a curriculum that provided a comprehensive academic, artistic, cultural, and practical education that encouraged students to develop into creative, balanced, responsible, and free-thinking individuals. His ideas included educating the whole child – addressing cognitive, social, and creative development together – and meeting the needs of each child through a challenging and multi-sensory environment.

Spring Garden opened in 1981 in a private home with an initial enrollment of 17 students divided into three multi-age classes from kindergarten through third grade. The emphasis centered on a balanced, multi-sensory education that integrated spiritual ideals with academics.

In September of 1982, the school moved into the education wing of the Margaret Park Presbyterian Church on Russell Avenue in Akron. In 1985, Spring Garden became a member of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA).

Fundraising, recruitment, and community outreach efforts were enormously successful, and enrollment increased to the point where the school eventually outgrew the church facility. In August of 1990, Spring Garden moved to a beautiful rural setting southeast of Akron, in an extensively remodeled former public elementary school. Highlights of our years there included our first Children's Festival and Annual Benefit Auction, and professional development in Waldorf education for our teachers.

In the fall of 1994, the Spring Garden community had the opportunity to purchase its own school building, where we are currently located, on twelve acres in Copley, Ohio. After countless hours spent by the Spring Garden community cleaning and preparing the building, the school opened its doors. We are proud of our school, which offers us permanent roots and room to grow and prosper in the Waldorf tradition.

Spring Garden currently serves students from preschool through Grade Eight with an integrated curriculum of world languages, choral and instrumental music, art and handwork, wood working, movement, gardening, and extra lesson. Our current student body represents a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds and an equal balance of genders. We are striving to achieve a greater balance of ethnic diversity within our community.

The Role of the Parent

As members of the Spring Garden community, parents are expected to do the following:

Read the Parent Handbook and all school communications to familiarize themselves with school policies and practices and to stay informed about school events.

Attend class meetings and parent-teacher conferences to ensure that their child's class has an informed, active, and supportive parent body who understand the curriculum and its foundations.

Participate in fundraising efforts, with heartfelt gifts to the best of their ability, knowing that tuition alone does not meet the school's budgeted expenses.

Direct questions, concerns, or complaints to the appropriate person or group, according to the Communication section of the Parent Handbook (see page 11).

Respect others in the Spring Garden community and strive to hold each member in his or her best light, tolerating differences and recognizing that each member of the community brings unique talents and insights to every situation.

Encourage volunteerism through actions and words, serving to the best of their ability and treating all volunteers with appreciation and respect.

Communicate openly and honestly. It is the quality of our interpersonal relationships that sustains and nourishes the school. Connecting with another person, and perhaps overcoming a difficult situation, strengthens both the individuals involved and the community as a whole. Parents should speak to and behave toward others as they would have others speak to and behave toward them, and we expect written correspondence to any member of our community to be respectfully worded and signed. Parents should be vigilant against gossip and guard against its destructive nature, and in all conflicts they should work toward understanding, clarity, resolution, and if necessary, healing.

Set an example for all the children of the community at all times, and engage in speech and behavior that are worthy for our children to imitate.

Meetings

Several important meetings are scheduled regularly every school year. Some are mandatory, others are optional but highly recommended. All the meetings in this section can be counted toward your Contract Service Hours (see page 8), so please be sure to keep track of your hours and record them in the binder located in the school office.

Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled twice yearly, in the fall and late spring. Parent attendance at Parent-Teacher Conferences is mandatory. Additional conferences may be arranged at any time throughout the school year at the request of parents or teachers. Dates for Parent-Teacher Conferences are listed on the School Calendar.

Class Meetings are held throughout the year to inform parents about and discuss issues relevant to the class. These meetings are an essential aspect of parent participation in the life of the school, and at least one parent from each family is expected to attend each meeting. Dates for scheduled Class Meetings are listed on the School Calendar, but your child's teacher may schedule additional Class Meetings if necessary (for example, to plan a class project or trip).

Parent Council meetings are held on the second Thursday of every month to discuss relevant issues and to plan community events. Though each class has a designated Parent Council Representative, all parents are welcome to attend Parent Council meetings. Dates for all Parent Council meetings can be found on the School Calendar.

Parent educational opportunities such as lectures, workshops, and discussion groups are offered throughout the school year. All parents are encouraged to attend these events, which both deepen parents' understanding of Waldorf education and strengthen bonds in the

school community. Parents are encouraged to bring family and friends for these special events. As events are scheduled, they will be announced to the community via email.

School committees meet as necessary throughout the year to organize events. The contribution of skills by parents and teachers is vital to the functioning of the school, and all parents are welcome to serve on the Festivals Committee, Auction Committee, Site Committee, or Marketing Committee. If you are interested in serving on a committee, please pick up a Committee Application from the Parent Information Board in the SGWS School Store.

Student recruitment efforts provide an excellent opportunity for parents to share their experience with prospective families or to bring friends and relatives to learn more about Spring Garden. Walk Through the Grades is a monthly scheduled tour of the school while class is in session. Open House events are held three times during the school year, typically on a Sunday afternoon.

Work Days are opportunities for faculty, staff, alumni, and current families to mitigate the costs of building maintenance by working together to perform a variety of routine tasks, both inside and out (depending on the weather). The Parent/Guardian Contract requires each family to complete 20% of their Contract Service Hours on scheduled work days. Work Days are scheduled according to the season and to the building's needs, and they are announced to the community by email.

Financial Obligations

Tuition

Before a student can attend class, a financial contract for tuition must be completed, signed, and returned to the school. There are three tuition payment options available:

Annual Tuition - Payment in full is due on August 15 of the current school year.

Semester Payments - One half of the tuition is due by August 15; the other half is due by the first day school resumes after Holiday Break in January of the current school year.

Twelve Monthly Payments - File a completed Form 8 for Automatic Bank Draft Withdrawal and pay monthly installments starting on July 16 and ending on June 16 of the current school year. Payments must be made by automatic bank draft only.

Once a contract has been signed, tuition payments for the full year are required whether or not the student starts or completes the academic year. Please note that students will be withdrawn from school if any payments due are not paid in full within two months of the due date.

All financial terms for current tuition and fees are set forth in the School-Parent/Guardian Contract. Statements will be put in parent mailboxes by the 20th of each month. If you have questions about contracts or billing, please contact the Finance Director.

Continued enrollment is subject to yearly review by the Board of Trustees and the faculty, with consideration given to the following:

- 1) All previous financial obligations were met on time.
- 2) All recommendations and requirements for the student were met.
- 3) The family has acted in a supportive and cooperative manner with Spring Garden Waldorf School policies and procedures.

Tuition Assistance

Tuition assistance is available to families based on financial need. A Tuition Assistance Packet can be obtained from the Finance Director. Applications for tuition assistance are due

by April 15. Any tuition assistance awarded does not carry over from year to year, and a new application must be submitted each academic year.

Any request to change your family's contractual obligation during the school year should be directed to the Finance Director.

Spring Garden participates in the Ed Choice Ohio program. For more details, visit www.education.ohio.gov.

Contract Service Hours

As part of their contract with the school, each family is obligated to provide a number of mandatory Contract Service Hours. Service hours help reduce the overall operating costs for the school while providing students with a positive model of community service. They also build our community by providing parents and teachers opportunities to become better acquainted in a supportive, informal setting.

Service Hour opportunities are posted on our website, announced in weekly emails, and publicized throughout the building. If you have an idea for a special project you wish to pursue to fulfill your Service Hours, check in the school office for information on how to submit a proposal.

Parents are responsible for keeping track of their Service Hours by documenting them in the Service Hours binder located in the school office. Record your activity as soon as possible to keep your record up-to-date.

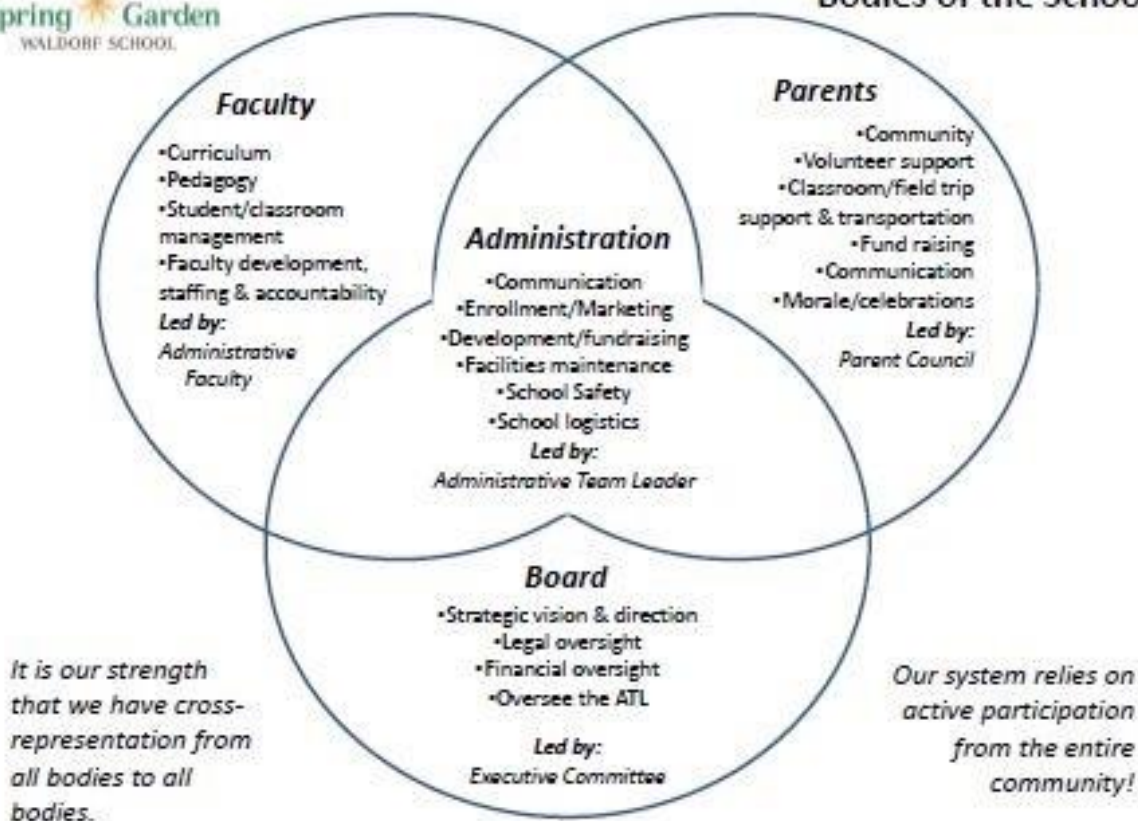
The number of Service Hours required is based on the student's enrollment status and is indicated in the contract. A buy-out option is available; contact the Finance Director for more information. Families who receive tuition assistance of any kind may not buy out of Service Hours.

Fundraising

Fundraising plays an essential role in keeping tuition costs down and in strengthening our community. Various fundraisers held throughout the school year reduce tuition fees by approximately 10% per student. Your contract obliges you to support our two major fundraisers, the Annual Giving Campaign and the Annual Benefit Auction. We ask that you also consider supporting additional fundraising programs and events to the best of your ability, whether financially or through volunteerism.

How Spring Garden Waldorf School Is Organized

Governance in a Waldorf school is not concerned with exercising authority, but with addressing the real question of how the children and the spirit of the school are best served. The organizational structure of Spring Garden consistently strives to uphold Rudolf Steiner's principle of the threefold social order, in which the sphere of rights, the sphere of economics, and the sphere of spirit each operate independently of one another while still supporting the work of the others. The need for these separate yet interconnected spheres at Spring Garden has led to an organizational structure in which each constituent group within the school holds representation in each sphere of the threefold order.



The school is made up of three major working groups: the faculty, the Board, and parents. The Administration coordinates the flow of information and resources between these three bodies. The functions of the school are divided among these groups with intentional overlap in certain areas so that the activities of the school can be carried out effectively with collaboration between groups, where it is appropriate. The form of leadership in Waldorf schools is republican, which means that smaller groups are empowered, through mandate, to carry out tasks determined by the larger bodies of the school. These smaller groups, including committees, work within current policies or bring recommendations to the larger bodies of the school. Working committees are structured with representation from the Faculty, the Board, and Parents to ensure representative collaboration between the bodies of the school.

School Personnel and Working Groups

Faculty

The faculty are staff members directly involved in the education of the students. They represent the thread of continuity within the school, assuring that all practices within the school are rooted in the anthroposophical basis of Waldorf education. The faculty includes all classroom teachers in the grades, all subject teachers, all Early Childhood teachers and assistant teachers, and all members of the Educational Support Team.

Administration

The administration carries out the day-to-day business of the school. It is responsible for ensuring organizational integrity while carrying out agreed-up policies. It is the connective tissue between the bodies of the school, helping to hold the parts together and keep everything in place. Our administration is made up of the following positions:

The *Administrative Team Leader (ATL)* is the leader of the school's administrative functions. The ATL has two broad areas of responsibility: communication and administration. As the communication hub for the school, the ATL serves as the point person for, and ensures the flow of communication between, all of the school's constituent groups, including the faculty, administrative staff, Board members, parents, and the broader community.

The *Finance Director* handles questions or concerns about tuition assistance, tuition payments, the Miscellaneous Charges Account, buy-out of Contract Service Hours, or billing for uncompleted Contract Service Hours. The Finance Director can also answer questions related to the school's financial and operational matters.

The *Director of Admissions and Marketing (DAM)* is the initial point of contact for all families exploring Spring Garden for their children. The DAM is also responsible for developing and implementing a school marketing plan.

The *Facilities Manager* is responsible for managing people and processes that will ensure the proper maintenance of the building and grounds.

The *Administrative Assistant* provides administrative support to the faculty and administrative staff and is responsible for maintaining school directories, student records, and all other records pertaining to the operation of the school. The Administrative Assistant also maintains the school calendar and sets appointments for the ATL.

Educational Support Team (EST)

The EST is made up of the Academic Tutor, Extra Lesson Teacher, and Speech Pathologist. This team works in collaboration with teachers, parents, and outside service providers to develop and implement accommodations to support the academic success of all students. Accommodations may include modifications within the classroom, strategies and techniques implemented by the classroom teacher, and interventions by EST members. Parent permission is needed before any child can work with the EST, and the EST and the student's teacher will monitor the student's progress and the effectiveness of the accommodations and communicate this to the student's parents. The EST reports to the Administrative Faculty.

College of Teachers

The College of Teachers includes the entire faculty. Through regular meetings, the College of Teachers deepens individuals' understanding of Waldorf education specifically as it pertains to Spring Garden. This group is also responsible for providing input on the school's policies and curriculum through interaction with the Administrative Faculty.

Parent Council

The Parent Council is a supportive body of the school that promotes community enrichment and communication. It also acts as a constructive link between the Board of Trustees, the faculty, and the parent body at large. The Parent Council is made up of eleven members, each representing a different grade or Early Childhood class, to act as the voice of

the entire parent body. The Parent Council is led by the Parent Council President, who also serves as a member of the Board of Trustees.

Administrative Faculty

The Administrative Faculty comprises a group of faculty members and the ATL, who together are responsible for making pedagogical and curricular decisions on behalf of the College of Teachers, based on an understanding of Waldorf education.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is the publicly recognized body of the school, responsible for the school's overall financial and legal health. Its membership consists of three members of the faculty (including a representative from the Administrative Faculty); the President, Past President, and President Elect of the Parent Council; and fifteen members elected at-large. The ATL, Finance Director, DAM, and Facilities Manager are members *ex officio*. The Board of Trustees meets monthly; twice yearly these meetings are held as Joint Board-Faculty Meetings to support the school's mission and purposes.

Questions and Concerns: What Consensus Means in a Waldorf School

In a Waldorf school, decisions are made through consensus, which requires people to come to unity: agreeing with the essence of a decision and feeling that they can live with it, not necessarily feeling that every detail of the agreement is exactly as they would have preferred. A group committed to making decisions by consensus must have a common purpose and a desire to work together, openness to and respect for the ideas, opinions, and experiences of others, enough mutual trust to listen and to talk openly, respect for the feelings of all parties involved, and an understanding that some conflicts can lead to productive ends.

When conflicts arise, parents can foster the climate of trust and respect essential to consensus work by communicating their concerns openly and constructively to the individual closest to the situation, whether that be a teacher, a member of the staff, or another parent. It is the responsibility of the faculty and administrative staff to be open with parents and to work constructively towards resolution. While parents may not agree with every decision of the school, in most cases the school and the parent are able to find sufficient common ground to continue in a mutually respectful relationship.

Curricular, pedagogical, or classroom concerns should be addressed directly to your child's teacher. Should you feel that you have not received appropriate resolution to your question or concern from the teacher, you should make an appointment to meet with the ATL.

Concerns about financial matters, including tuition payments, tuition assistance, or MCA account charges, should be addressed to the Finance Director. Please note that the Board-directed Tuition Assistance Committee, not the Finance Director, is responsible for decisions concerning Tuition Assistance. Also, it is essential that you read and follow the school's Tuition Assistance Policy, including application deadlines, to be considered for tuition assistance.

Questions about Contract Service Hours can be addressed to the Finance Director. Work Days and other specific volunteer opportunities are announced as they are scheduled, and there are many opportunities for Service Hours during the school year (driving for and chaperoning field trips, working in the School Store, and tending the garden, to name a few). If you are unsure how to fulfill your Service Hours, please ask your child's teacher or your

classroom Parent Council Representative to help find the best way to put your talents to use in service of the school.

Questions about admissions or enrollment, including questions about paperwork and the application and admissions process in general, should be directed to the DAM.

Ethical or legal concerns – Should parents have an ethical or legal concern with respect to school activities, they should set an appointment to meet with the ATL. Following the meeting, the ATL will determine whether the matter can be resolved using current policy or if the Board of Trustees should be involved. The ATL will follow up with parents when the matter is resolved.

General comments or suggestions – If you would like to provide constructive feedback about the school and its operations, you can do so by requesting a Suggestions Form from the Administrative Assistant. Once you have completed and signed the form, return it to the Administrative Assistant, who will then deliver it to the appropriate person or committee.

Guidelines to address performance concerns – Situations arise at times when parents or colleagues may have concerns regarding the performance of a faculty or staff member. In those cases we strive to work with direct warmth to address the situation and come to a resolution that meets the concerns. However, at times concerns directly addressed may not be resolved, and there may be need for further action by the school as an organization. Toward that end, we have developed the following guidelines for addressing concerns as they arise. Faculty and staff, including the Administrative Team Leader and Personnel Committee members, will direct concerns along this process when brought to their attention.

- 1) *Direct Communication* – The best way to work through a concern is directly between the people involved. The person with the concern will bring it to the faculty or staff member in question at an appropriate time and place, making clear their concern and their desire to find resolution.
- 2) *Report to the ATL* – When the concern has been discussed directly and continues to exist, or when the person bringing the concern does not feel it has been addressed, the concern will be brought to the Administrative Team Leader (ATL) for discussion and next steps of action. Based on the discussion and the concerns, the ATL will work with the people involved to resolve the concern. The ATL will review the concern with the faculty member. Other possible steps include involving the mentor and setting up a meeting to include a neutral party.
- 3) *Formal Complaint* – If the concern has been directly addressed following the previous two steps and resolution is still not found, the concern will be brought to the Administrative Team Leader or a member of the Personnel Committee. This person will ask directly if this is being brought as a formal complaint and if steps one and two have occurred. When this is the case, they will find out in as much detail as possible what has occurred. The person bringing the complaint will be asked to describe, in writing, what events have led to their complaint. At this point in time the person bringing the formal complaint will be informed that they will no longer be involved in the situation, nor will they be informed of what action the school will take as this will now become a confidential internal personnel matter. The faculty or administration member will be made aware that a complaint about them has been submitted. The faculty/administration member will have the opportunity to know the nature of the complaint and be given the opportunity to respond in writing. The information regarding the concern will be

brought to the Personnel Committee as a whole. This group will evaluate the concern as well as any other connected incidents to identify patterns and implications for future action. Concerns regarding Administrative staff will be directed to the President of the Board of Trustees. When a faculty member is involved the Personnel Committee will determine future actions to be taken, including but not limited to watching the situation for further developments, direct conversation with the faculty member involved, bringing the matter to the Administrative Faculty for further discussion, or recommending actions to be taken to the Administrative Faculty. Documents, including the written formal complaint, will be kept by the Administrative Team Leader in a Personnel Committee file for future reference.

Conflict with a non-staff member of the Spring Garden Community– The first step in resolving conflict with a non-staff member of the Spring Garden community is to attempt direct resolution by talking to the person involved. Third-party dispute resolution is reserved for grievances directly related to school operations, students, or curriculum and is not used for personal disagreements between community members. A Grievance Form may be submitted to the Administrative Faculty through the ATL. The grievance will be evaluated by the Administrative Faculty, without prejudice, and a response will be given within two Administrative Faculty meetings (typically three weeks) after receipt of the grievance.

When an impasse is so severe that the parent involved cannot remain as a constructive member of the community, consideration should be given as to whether another school would be a better match for the family. Continued conflict caused by a member of the Spring Garden community may be cause for the person to be banned from the school or the family to be asked to leave the school.

Communication from Spring Garden Waldorf School

We communicate with parents in a number of different ways. It is essential that you read all correspondence from the school promptly so you stay informed about school events.

Emergency Communications: The school uses OneCallNow, an automated dialing system, to alert parents of school closures due to inclement weather or other emergency situations, including early closures (which are rare but which do occur). Please make sure the office has up-to-date contact information so our system can reach you. We make every attempt to inform you of school closures by 6:30 a.m. Please note that, in the event of a closing, all school events and activities for the day are canceled as well.

In addition to OneCallNow, school closings will also be listed on the following local television and radio stations:

Channel 3	WAKR-1590 AM
Channel 19	WNIR-100 FM
Channel 43	Fox 8
WEWS Channel 5	

Community Directory: Each year we publish a directory with contact information for all our families. This is provided for your personal use only. This information is not intended to be used for business purposes and should not be given in whole or part to any other person, school, or organization without express written permission from Spring Garden Waldorf School.

Email: The *Tuesday Note* is a brief newsletter published weekly throughout the school year and as needed during the summer. It contains essential information about classroom activities, Waldorf education, and upcoming events. *Weekly Announcements* are sent out each Friday during the school year, noting the dates and times of coming events in the following two-week period.

www.sgws.org: Our Website contains not only a wealth of information about our school but also a blog with information on Waldorf education, alumni accomplishments, parenting, and child development. The Parent Directory and many of our standard forms can be downloaded from our website. We also have a strong social media presence on Facebook and Twitter.

Mailbox Folders: Each family has a folder in the mailbox files that sit outside the school office. It is your responsibility to check your mail folder frequently. **Please note that mailbox folders should be used for school business only and may not be used for solicitation purposes – parents must get approval from the office prior to distributing *any* information in the mailbox files.** There is a Parent Bulletin Board in the School Store that can be used to post general notices for the school community. *Please do not place clothing, books, or dishes in the mailbox folders.*

Parent Meetings: Attendance at Class Meetings and parent-teacher conferences is mandatory because these meetings are the most efficient way for teachers to communicate directly with parents.

Parent Handbook: All parents receive a copy of the Parent Handbook, which describes the school's philosophy, policies, and procedures. The Parent Handbook can also be downloaded from our website in PDF format.

Admissions

Spring Garden Waldorf School strongly believes that a Waldorf education should be available to all children. The school seeks students who can contribute to our school and benefit from its Waldorf curriculum.

Spring Garden Waldorf School accepts enrollment applications for all grades throughout the year. Typically, enrollment decisions are based on multiple criteria including academic readiness or qualification, maturity, size and composition of the class, family affiliation with the school, and the appropriateness of the match between the family and the school. In all cases, the school retains the right to determine, in its sole discretion, whether or not to select a student for admission or to re-enroll a student.

When Spring Garden Waldorf School cannot place a child, we may offer counsel on other schools that may be better able to accommodate the student. When there are more qualified candidates than openings available, the school will continue to accept enrollment applications and place those applicants on a waiting list.

Spring Garden Waldorf School recruits and admits students of any race, gender, color, or ethnic origin to all the rights and privileges of all the programs and activities it provides. In addition, the school will be inclusive of all races, genders, colors, or ethnic origins in the administration of all its educational policies, scholarships, loans, fee waivers, education programs, athletic programs, and extracurricular activities. All persons are encouraged to apply.

Curriculum

The Waldorf curriculum provides a comprehensive academic, artistic, cultural, and practical education that encourages students to develop into creative, balanced, responsible, and free-thinking individuals. The curriculum stimulates the mind with a full spectrum of traditional academic subjects. It nurtures healthy emotional development through conveying information experientially as well as academically. It teaches the hands to be valued members of the student's being through a broad range of artistic and handwork activities. Rudolf Steiner's educational philosophy enhances traditional learning with a sense of connection to cultural, moral, and spiritual values. This philosophy emphasizes respect, wonder, and reverence for human existence and the natural world.

The Early Childhood Curriculum

Students arrive in the morning and meet their teacher outside in the Meadow, where they play for about half an hour. Teachers ring a melodic bell to signal that it is time to line up, and the classes go on a short nature walk on their way into the school. This time is used for observation and discussion of the natural world as it changes through the seasons, providing a strong foundation for the powers of observation used in the sciences in the grades.

When students get inside the school, they work on personal care skills such as taking off their outside clothes, hanging them on hooks, taking off their boots, and going into the classroom, which has been thoughtfully prepared for the day's work. The students put on their indoor shoes and form a circle with the teacher's guidance. The teacher then leads the children through rhymes and verses as they welcome each other to the day.

After the morning circle, students move on to the daily activity, which has been carefully prepared and set up before the students entered the room. This preparation helps the students feel secure and comfortable, as the rhythm and routine of each day are predictable. The daily activity may include coloring, painting, or baking bread. These activities are designed to lengthen the child's attention span while working on a single task, which prepares them for the academic work introduced in Grade One. It also allows them a multi-sensory artistic experience (for example, the feel of bread dough and the smell of bread baking) while strengthening their relationship with their teacher. After the daily activity is completed, students are encouraged to engage in creative play; during this time, kindergarteners may be working on handwork projects with their teachers while their younger classmates continue to play.

Following creative play, students are led by example in a clean-up of the classroom where toys are placed in their special places, the floor is swept, and the tables are cleaned. Students are then led to another circle time where they learn seasonal songs accompanied by movement to build gross and fine motor skills, balance, crossing the midline, learning right from left, and number concepts.

Part of the daily rhythm is experienced in the form of a warm, homemade, healthy snack following the second circle time. While preparing food and eating together, children develop and practice social skills, as well as fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination. In addition, when children observe or help with snack preparation, they are exposed in an innate way to basic mathematics through counting and measuring. Students use glass dishes for their snack and are responsible for washing and putting away their dishes, which helps them learn to take care of their things.

Following snack time, students are told a story by the class teacher, usually presented with puppets or marionettes. Story time nourishes students' own ability to imagine. They enter a world of rich verbal images brought to life by the rhythms and gestures of the stories they

hear. Over time, students gain both a richer vocabulary and a greater capacity for experience. After the story, students again put on their outside clothes and go outdoors. Supervised, unstructured play on the Meadow encourages gross motor skills, social skills, and problem-solving abilities.

At noon, half-day students are picked up while full-day students are brought inside to the Extended Care classroom, where they have lunch family-style with their classmates and teachers. Rest time follows lunch. Every student has his or her own cot. Students may bring a blanket, a pillow, and a "lovey" (a soft stuffed doll or animal that does not light up or make noise) to have with them during this time. During rest time, the teacher will tell a story or softly play a lyre. It is common for younger children to fall asleep while the older children rest quietly and listen. Following a gentle awakening, belongings and cots are put away and students dress for outdoors and play outside until the end of the school day.

Parents of children in the Early Childhood program are welcome to observe the class at any time; however, visits pre-arranged with your child's teacher are preferred, to lessen the disruption to the classroom rhythm. Please check in at the office before entering the classrooms.

Spring Garden's Early Childhood program is licensed by the Ohio Department of Education and is in full compliance with all ODE regulations. Copies of yearly inspection reports are posted in the school office and on the Parent Bulletin Board in the School Store.

Curriculum in Grades One through Eight

Students "in the grades" at Spring Garden begin their day outside on the playground. At 8:30, a bell rings and students line up with their classes to come inside and begin their day. Once inside, students take off their outdoor clothing and greet their teacher at the classroom door with a handshake. This is a good way for the teacher to gauge how the student's day is beginning, and it teaches students how to shake the hand of an adult and make eye contact when greeting someone.

When the students enter the classroom, they take care of their personal belongings and join their teacher and classmates in a verse to begin the day. Because studies have demonstrated that children learn best when their whole bodies are engaged, students generally begin their day with gross motor skills combined mental academic work – for example, students in Grade Three might jump rope while working with multiplication tables, while students in Grade Seven might engage in intricate ball passing and catching games.

Main Lesson follows. Academic concepts are taught in "blocks," where a particular theme (for example, math or language arts) is studied for a number of weeks. The goal is for students to engage with the material, not to pass tests or earn grades. Main Lesson lasts for approximately 90 minutes. After Main Lesson, students have a short break to eat a snack (supplied from home) and to go outside and "breathe out" for a few minutes. When students come back inside they are energized, refreshed, and ready to start their next lesson.

The remainder of the day is made up of subject classes that support the curriculum of the Main Lesson. These subjects are not optional; they are an integral part of the broader Waldorf curriculum. Subjects taught at Spring Garden Waldorf School include:

World Languages – Spanish is taught in Grades One through Eight, and German is taught in Grades One through Four. In the early grades, these are taught through immersion in stories, songs, rhymes, and movement. As students progress through the grades, they develop skills in grammar, reading, translation, and conversation.

Music – Students begin choral instruction in Grade One, and chorus is a part of students' weekly schedule through Grade Eight. In Grade Three, all students learn to play the violin. As they progress through the grades, students are given the opportunity to change to a different stringed instrument or to a woodwind. Students perform both choral and symphonic

pieces at assemblies, Winter and Spring Programs, and graduation, as well as a number of other special occasions.

Physical Education – In the lower grades, students engage in games and activities that provide the enjoyment of physical activity in a non-competitive environment. Competitive play begins in Grade Five, where physical education and Main Lesson studies merge and students prepare for and compete in a traditional Greek Pentathlon. Similar integrative experiences are afforded to students during the Grade Six Medieval Games and the Grade Seven Renaissance Faire.

Waldorf Curriculum for Grades 1-8

Based on the Overview for American Waldorf Teachers

	LITERATURE & HISTORY	ENGLISH & GRAMMAR	MATH	SCIENCE	GEOGRAPHY	FOREIGN LANGUAGE	MUSIC	ART AND HANDWORK	PHYSICAL EDUCATION
GRADE ONE	Folktales, fairytales and nature stories to introduce letters and writing	Pictorial introduction to the alphabet. Writing, speech exercises, phonetics	Whole numbers, four processes of arithmetic: addition, subtraction, division and multiplication	Nature studies and observation, gardening and cooking	Study of surroundings through observation	Imitation of songs, verses, counting, colors, and stories	Soprano recorder, circle games and movement exercises, rhythm and meters	Form drawing, watercolor painting, knitting, hand sewing, and beeswax modeling	Circle activities, non-competitive games, and large muscle activities
GRADE TWO	Fables, legends of heroes, heroines and saints, native American stories	Reading and Writing, Sentences, rhyming words, plays, speech work	Whole numbers, multiplication tables, number patterns, carrying and borrowing	Nature studies and observation, gardening and cooking	Study of surroundings through observation	Counting, animals, parts of the body, food, seasons, and months of the year	Recorder, learn songs to accompany fables and folk songs	Form drawing, watercolor painting, crocheting, and beeswax modeling	Jump rope, non-competitive games, and large muscle activities
GRADE THREE	Biblical stories as introduction to ancient history	Sentence structure, verbs, nouns, adjectives, punctuation and spelling is introduced	Multiplication tables, measurement, learning time, patterns, carrying and borrowing	Farming: soils, farm life, grains, study of root, stem and flower, vegetables, garden work	House building: cave, tent, cliff, lake dwellings and modern homes	Counting, animals, parts of the body, food, seasons, and months of the year	Recorder, violin, music notation, and folk dances	Form drawing, watercolor painting, crocheting, embroidery, and beeswax modeling	Jump rope, non-competitive games, and large muscle activities
GRADE FOUR	Norse mythology, local history through geography, area development through settlers	Adverbs, pronouns, writing compositions and reports, grammar rules, vocabulary and spelling	Word problems, fractions, long division, averages, factoring	Zoology, comparison of man and animal	State and local geography and mapping	Grammar, writing, reading, dictations, and individual expression	Recorder, choir, violin, harmony, rounds and canons, and reading music notation	Form drawing, watercolor painting, geometric drawing, cross stitch, and clay	Rhythmic exercises, gymnastics, kickball, and softball
GRADE FIVE	Ancient India, Persia, Mesopotamia Egypt and Greece	Parts of speech, syntax, research papers, vocabulary and spelling	Decimals, fractions, mixed numbers and metric system	Zoology - adaptations of animals to environment and botany	United States geography	Grammar, simple text, syntax, and short descriptions	Recorder, violin, choir, three-part singing, major and minor scale, and Greek music	Form drawing, watercolor painting, geometric drawing, chain stitch, clay, and woodworking	Greek pentathlon sports, softball, basketball, kickball, gymnastics, and volleyball
GRADE SIX	Founding of Rome, life of Christ, crusades, life of Mohammed, Islam medieval society	Advanced grammar, composition, exposition, narration, description, outlining vocabulary	Practical applications, geometry, beginning algebra	Botany, physics and geology	Geography of Canada, Central and South America,	Reading texts, stories, and translation	Alto and tenor recorders, choir, orchestra, minstrel songs, and Roman music	Form drawing, watercolor painting, geometric drawing, four needle knitting, clay, and woodworking	Softball, basketball, kickball, gymnastics, and volleyball
GRADE SEVEN	1400-1700 Age of Exploration, Age of Discovery, Reformation, Renaissance	Review all grammar, essays, comparisons, poetic forms, vocabulary and spelling	Algebra, practical applications, area, powers and roots	Chemistry, Physiology, Physics and Astronomy	Geography of Africa and Europe	Reading, conversation, poetry, and advanced grammar	Alto and tenor recorders, choir, orchestra, and Renaissance music	Watercolor painting, geometric drawing, felting, perspective drawing, and woodworking	Softball, basketball, kickball, gymnastics, volleyball, and football
GRADE EIGHT	1700 - Present U.S. History, industrial revolution, comparative biographies	Continue reviewing all grammar, newspaper reporting, business and practical writing	Algebra and practical applications	Chemistry, anatomy and physiology and physics	Geography of Asia and Antarctica, and world geography	Continuation of above, vocabulary building, dialogues, grammar and syntax	Alto and tenor recorders, choir, orchestra, symphonic form, and American music	Solid geometric drawing, charcoal drawing, art history, and watercolor painting	Softball, basketball, kickball, gymnastics, and volleyball

Gardening – Gardening begins with nature studies in the early grades then progresses to the study of soils and plants. In Grade Three students plan and plant their own small garden plot as part of their Main Lesson work, and students continue to study gardening in our greenhouse and gardens through Grade Eight.

Handwork – Through knitting, crocheting, cross-stitching, felting, and sewing, all students learn the enjoyment of making practical and beautiful objects with their own hands. Handwork supports literacy in the early grades, as knitting develops left-to-right eye-tracking; mathematics are supported by handwork throughout the grades, from the simple counting of

stitches in the early grades to understanding geometry by creating a 12-sided ball in the upper grades.

Fine Arts – Painting, drawing, modeling, and woodworking deepen students' experience of the curriculum and awaken possibilities for self-awareness and self-expression. Drama is a key part of our curriculum, as students starting in Grade One prepare and present a dramatic performance each year, building up to a full production of a Shakespeare play in Grade Eight.

The Spring Garden curriculum is carefully planned to maintain a balanced schedule that is in harmony with the needs of growing students, and it is essential that all students participate in all of each day's activities. Full participation allows each child's innate capacities and strengths to shine through during the school day and affords children the opportunity to feel a high degree of self-esteem and self-confidence while teaching them how to recognize and collaborate with the strengths of their classmates.

Festivals and Programs

Festivals and programs at Spring Garden celebrate the living rhythms of the year, taken up in each class in different ways, and help provide a common foundation for students and the Spring Garden community to mark time and experience traditions through the year. Our festivals provide imaginations of archetypal truths about human nature, life, and experience, and we strive to bring a global nature to our celebrations.

Dates for all festivals can be located on the yearly school calendar. However, please remember that all dates are subject to change, and you should watch the Tuesday Note and Weekly Announcements to stay apprised of any changes to our schedule.

Rose Ceremony – This all-school assembly welcomes students from kindergarten to Grade One. During the ceremony, the new Grade One students "cross over" a bridge from their parents to join their class, where they are met at the other end of the bridge by a student in Grade Eight with a rose as a symbol of welcome. This Grade Eight student will be the Grade One student's "buddy" throughout the school year and will assist the Grade One student during activities such as lunch, Michaelmas kite-flying, and ice skating.

Michaelmas – Each September, the school celebrates Michaelmas. In the Celtic tradition, Archangel Michael is celebrated for inspiring strength and courage. In his battle against an evil dragon, Archangel Michael represents the unconquered hero fighting against the powers of darkness. The dragon represents the destructive forces that lead us away from goodness. The model of Archangel Michael endows our hearts with courage and feeds the flame of enthusiasm. In the weeks preceding the festival, students in all classes hear stories and sing songs about the brave knight who overcame the dragon with his sword of light, and these stories are also represented through students' artwork. Much preparation leads to an evening program in which all students from all grades sing and perform a traditional Michaelmas play.

Hallowe'en – This magical evening for students and their families is offered as a gentle, nurturing way to celebrate Hallowe'en. Festivities begin around sunset and include a lantern walk along a path lit by jack-o-lanterns carved by students. Through the Waldorf curriculum, Hallowe'en is embraced as a time to celebrate the fullness of life, and the lantern walk symbolizes the light of generosity. Hallowe'en costumes should be simple, media-free, and free of gruesome or violent details or images.

Children's Festival – This is a highly anticipated annual event, open to the public, where children and their families come together to enjoy puppetry, make-and-take crafts, live

entertainment, an artisan's market with vendors from around Akron, and delicious food from the Spring Garden Cafe.

Spiral of Light – This reverent, candle-lit ceremony takes place during the school day. Students enter a dark room, laid with fresh pine boughs in a spiral pathway. At the center a large, lit candle is placed on a table. Accompanied by soft singing and the ringing of bells, each student walks slowly and thoughtfully to the center of the spiral, lights their candle, then walks back outward, placing their lit candle somewhere along the spiral path. With each student, the light grows brighter, illuminating the room and reminding us of the eternal light that is within each of us and within all of mankind.

St. Nicholas Day – Also in early December, we celebrate the spirit of giving by observing St. Nicholas Day. For centuries, St. Nicholas has been remembered and revered for dedicating his life to helping the poor, sick, and suffering. He was well-known for his generosity to this in need and, it is written, for his love of students. Following tradition, students in all classrooms leave their shoes in the hallway the night before St. Nicholas Day in hopes of receiving small treats.

May Day Festival – During the first week of May, the fullness of spring and the impending arrival of summer are celebrated with flowers, music, dancing, and singing. Early Childhood students dance around a Maypole early in the morning, while students in the grades wait until after Main Lesson, when an all-grades procession is led to the Sportsman's Club adjacent to our property. There, students participate in a scavenger hunt, with teams made up of students from each grade. Following the scavenger hunt, students in the lower grades weave ribbons around Maypoles while students in the upper grades play madrigals on their recorders. When the dancing is complete, students gather to enjoy lunch and share lemon cupcakes.

Graduation Ceremony – Each graduating class works together to develop its own unique graduation ceremony. Held the evening preceding the last day of school, this is an important event for the graduating Grade Eight students, who are given a special send-off by the entire community. This emotional, heartfelt evening includes the Grade One students giving their Grade Eight Buddies a rose, bringing the year to full circle, and the passing of the torch to the Grade Seven students who will enter Grade Eight the next year.

Birthdays – Student birthdays are very special occasions in Waldorf classrooms. Each child's birthday celebration is carefully coordinated by the Class Teacher. Please contact your child's teacher for more information about how birthdays are celebrated in his or her classroom and to schedule a day to celebrate your child's birthday with the class.

Student Performances

Assemblies – Assemblies are held periodically throughout the school year on Friday mornings at 9:15 a.m. (see the current school calendar for assembly dates). Assemblies are an opportunity for students in Grades Two through Eight to share some of the songs and activities they have been working on as a class. Parents are welcome and are encouraged to attend, as these assemblies offer insight into the depth of experience children receive through Waldorf education.

Class Plays – Drama is part of Waldorf education from Grade One, and children in all grades prepare for and perform a play each year. Students in the early grades perform in their classrooms, generally for parents only. In later grades, student productions are staged in the gym and are open to ever-wider audiences. Finally, in Grade Eight, students perform a full production of a Shakespeare play as the culmination of their drama experience at Spring Garden.

Musical Programs – Each year, two seasonal evening programs are presented in which students in Grades Three through Eight perform both choral and orchestral pieces they have been learning. Programs are wonderful opportunities for parents, families, and friends to see how music is woven into the Spring Garden curriculum.

Assessment, Testing, and Promotion Criteria

Student Assessment

The Waldorf approach to student assessment is based on the student's performance in a variety of domains. It looks at the development of the human personality as well as the acquisition of academic tools; it aims not only to measure skills and accomplishments but also to create a whole picture of the student.

Waldorf teachers strive to know each student very well, and they are trained to observe children carefully and with a warm interest. This relationship begins in the initial interview, where the teacher and parents can share the family and life circumstances of the student. In the classroom, the Class Teacher greets and shakes the hand of each student to observe his or her demeanor at both the start and end of the day, and determined observations take place throughout the day.

To create a more nuanced portrait of each student, the Class Teacher seeks input from his or her colleagues regarding different perspectives, while continued input from parents reveals other facets of each child. Teachers use this input to think in a meditative, reflective way about each student and his or her particular needs.

To quantify and communicate the teachers' observations, a written student assessment is presented to parents during the mandatory parent-teacher conferences in the fall and spring. This in-depth report contains far more detail than the traditional report cards used in many schools. Main Lesson teachers create a narrative profile of each student's capacities, including strengths and weaknesses. Subject teachers also complete written assessments with comments regarding the child's progress.

First Grade Assessment

The Waldorf curriculum uses chronological age to determine a child's grade level. Children entering kindergarten must be five years old by June 1. Children entering Grade One must be six years old by June 1, and must undergo a First Grade Assessment to determine whether or not they are ready for academic learning and to respond to the authority of teachers.

The First Grade Assessment is not a test. It is conducted by a team of kindergarten teachers as a playful game, which children find enjoyable. This assessment helps to develop a whole picture of the child in relationship to his or her own development, and it helps identify early signs of physical challenges that might stand in the way of learning. The teachers will look for right-left laterality, mid-line crossing, hand-eye coordination, verbal and visual memory, and other indicators of readiness for Grade One.

Decisions about the acceptance of children who are applying directly for Grade One and are not enrolled in our kindergarten will be made by the Grade One teacher and the Extra Lesson teacher, based on the results of the First Grade Assessment of the child for the class.

Testing and Grades

While students are assessed in a variety of ways at Spring Garden, traditional written testing and grades are used with much less frequency than in other educational settings. In the early grades, students are generally encouraged to work to the best of their own ability rather than to an external standard of performance. In the middle and upper grades, however, students begin to have a more concrete understanding of their teachers' expectations, which are assessed with graded tests and quizzes.

Standardized Testing

Each spring, students in Grades Four through Eight are given the IOWA Test of Basic Skills, a professionally scored standardized test. Students in Grade Four take only a few sections of the test, untimed; as students pass through the grades, additional sections are added until students in Grades Seven and Eight are taking the full test while timed. This gradual introduction of high-stakes testing can lessen the anxiety that standardized testing can sometimes breed.

Waldorf students tend to perform well on standardized tests, both in the Waldorf setting and after they have moved into mainstream education where standardized tests play a key role in student and school evaluation. Waldorf students perform well not because they have been drilled on test-taking but because their schooling has nurtured their capacity to assess and respond to new situations with clear, creative thinking.

Results from the IOWA tests reveal yet another facet of the whole child and help teachers with the overall assessments of the skills of each student and of the class as a whole. Test results are shared with parents during the spring parent-teacher conference. Parents are strongly discouraged from sharing these test results with their children.

Promotion and Retention

Promotion or retention of students at Spring Garden will be based upon a certain level of competency in all subject areas: language arts, social studies, mathematics, and science. Academic competency levels will be determined and supported by documentation, including but not limited to participation with achievement in the classroom, standardized testing, and pupil performance objectives.

Social and emotional competencies also play a role in promotion and retention. Observations by the student's teacher, subject teachers, academic tutor, speech therapist, or extra lesson teacher may be used in reviewing a student's competency.

Daily Procedures and Policies

Arrival and Dismissal

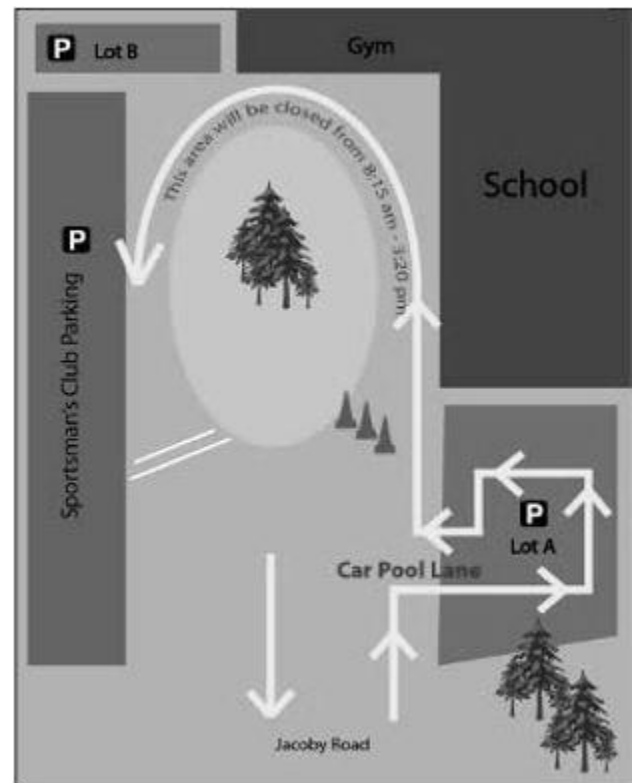
The school day begins promptly at 8:30. Students are encouraged to arrive at 8:15 to allow them time to prepare for the start of the day. It is extremely important that students arrive on time. Students who arrive late disrupt the class, and the late student faces a disadvantage in entering a Main Lesson period that has already begun.

Half-day Early Childhood students are dismissed to their parents, usually from the Meadow, at 12:00 noon.

School is dismissed at 3:20. Students who are not picked up by 3:30 p.m. will automatically be taken to Aftercare.

The diagram to the right shows our traffic flow pattern. Please note the following:

- The speed limit on school grounds is 5 mph at all times
- Talking on the phone or texting while driving is prohibited
- Music should be turned off or down very low on the grounds
- There is no parking at any time by the yellow curb in front of the building. This is an emergency vehicle zone that will be blocked to all non-emergency traffic during school hours. The lane will be opened at 3:20 p.m. for traffic to be directed around the Oval to pick up students.
- When a driver is picking up or dropping off a student in front of the school, the driver **MUST** remain in the car. Should you need to leave your car, please park in Lot A or in the Sportsman's Club parking area.
- Double parking is not permitted. Students should not walk between cars to get to their ride.



Student Attendance

The Spring Garden Waldorf School calendar is based on the Ohio Department of Education requirements for attendance for chartered nonpublic schools. The school calendar is established and communicated to parents in May of the preceeding school year. Each parent, guardian, or custodian having charge of a child of compulsory school age must send the child to school for the entire time school is in session. The Administrative Faculty will reserve the right to review attendance issues on a case-by-case basis.

Records of attendance are included in the student's evaluations and are a part of each student's cumulative file. Parents will be expected to call the school when their child is absent. Parents are expected to provide a written explanation to their child's teacher for planned absences or tardies.

Pupils will be expected to make up work missed during absences if required by their teacher. This may be completed at school or at home, as arranged by the teacher and pupil.

Absence and Tardy Policy

All absences, regardless of reason, will be recorded on the student's attendance record. Absences are designated as excused and unexcused. An excused absence or tardy is accompanied by a doctor's note or note describing a family illness or circumstance.

Excused absence:

- *Illness of student
- *Serious illness of immediate family member
- *Death of family member

- *Observance of religious holidays
- *By request of the school (suspension, lice, strep throat, etc)

Unexcused absence or tardy:

- *The result of family travel plans that extend beyond the published starting and ending dates of the school holidays and vacations.
- * The result of willful truancy on the part of the student
- * Those that are not excused by the standards.
- * Any excused absence without a note of explanation will be considered unexcused.

Tardy Students

All children should arrive between 8:15 and 8:30 a.m. When arriving late it can be quite difficult for a child to comfortably enter the class. Some children are reluctant to join in with the activity already in progress, while others are equally overwhelmed by a joyous welcome from their friends. Punctuality plays an important role in the rhythm of the opening and closing of the school day. When students arrive for class after the prescribed time, they are denied its full benefit. In addition, they create a disruption to the natural flow of the lesson that all of our teachers endeavor to develop in each and every one of their classes.

Classes begin promptly at 8:30 a.m. Students who arrive for school after 8:30 am must go to the office, with their parent or guardian, to secure a late pass and be signed in at the office by their parent. In such circumstances, the parent must park in the parking lot and walk their child into the office. Parents of early childhood students will accompany them to their classroom.

Results of Absence or Tardiness:

A student may not exceed 20 absences or times tardy, either excused or unexcused in any school year.

- Students who accumulate more than 20 absences or tardies may be put on probation at the discretion of the Administrative Faculty. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to bring this to the attention of the Administrative Faculty.
- A six-yr-old kindergarten student who is age ready for first grade the following year, but has exceeded the limit of 20 absences or tardies in the kindergarten year may be promoted to grade one on a probationary basis. The duration of this probation, based on attendance, will be for the first 6 weeks. This will be determined by the first grade readiness group and the kindergarten lead teacher will bring the concern to their attention.

Beforecare and Aftercare Program

Spring Garden Waldorf School offers a before-school and after-school childcare service.

Beforecare: 7:15 a.m. - 8:15 a.m.

Aftercare: 3:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Fees: \$2.50 per half-hour for the first student

\$2.00 per half-hour for each additional student in the family

All students arriving before 8:15 a.m. will be directed to Beforecare, and all students who are not picked up by 3:30 p.m. will automatically be taken to Aftercare.

Aftercare ends promptly at 6:00 p.m. After 6:00 p.m., the parent will be charged \$10 per student for every 15-minute period they are late.

Student Dress Standards and Behavior Guidelines are in effect during Beforecare and Aftercare. Students are expected to respect and cooperate with the Aftercare Specialists. If for any reason the student is not cooperating with or repeatedly disobeys the Aftercare Specialists, the parent will be contacted and the school may require that the student be removed from the Beforecare and Aftercare program for that day. If disobedience or lack of cooperation occurs again, a conference will be scheduled with the parent, the child's teacher, and the Beforecare or Aftercare Specialist to attempt to solve the problem. If no reasonable solution is found, the student will not be allowed to participate in the Beforecare and Aftercare program.

In order to foster creative and imaginative play, the faculty requests that no toys or games be brought to school for Beforecare and Aftercare. This includes action figures, dolls, trading cards, cards, trucks, video games, etc.

Outside Play

Outside play is a part of every student's day. Students in all classes go outside daily unless the temperature (including wind chill) is zero degrees or below.

Clothing – Students in preschool through Grade Four are expected to wear appropriate clothing and footwear for the weather or they will not be allowed to participate in all aspects of outdoor play. Students in Grades Five through Eight will experience the natural consequences of poor clothing choices, within reason. Please see Student Dress Standards on pages 25-26.

Supervision – During snack recess (following Main Lesson), each class is supervised by the Main Lesson teacher. During lunch recess, four teachers are assigned supervisory locations throughout the playground. One teacher is also available in a study hall to proctor students making up missed work. In the event of extreme weather (i.e., thunderstorms or temperatures below zero) a supervised recess will be held indoors.

Playground Rules – Playground rules are consistent with school rules and are posted in the upper grades hallway. Behavior on the playground that does not conform to school rules is initially redirected. Failure to follow the request of playground supervisors will result in removal from play and any other steps as necessary under the Discipline Code (pages 30-31).

Homework

One of the purposes of homework is to develop the discipline of carving out a time outside of school in which the student works at something requiring an act of his or her will. Doing work at home is a habit that can be developed when students enter school and will create capacities to help students become lifelong learners. A general guideline for the amount of time that should be spent doing homework is ten minutes per grade each weekday.

In the early grades, this homework time can be spent in a variety of ways that would be initiated by parents or by the students themselves, since traditional homework assignments are not usually given until about Grade Three. Some suggestions are reading to your child or

having your child retell the Main Lesson story or another story they heard at school that day. Another possibility might be to have them spend time doing "homework," whatever they interpret that to be.

In the middle and upper grades, some of the students' homework time will be spent on traditional assignments such as spelling, math, reading, writing, memorization, and research. Other types of homework might be making observations, conducting informal interviews, creating artwork, studying Spanish, or creating handwork projects. Students in the middle and upper grades all play musical instruments, and regular practice should be part of their homework as well.

The parents' role in homework should be limited to finding a time and place for their child to complete his or her homework and being available to answer occasional questions. If the student appears to need more direction than just occasional answers to questions, he or she needs to discuss these questions with the Class Teacher.

Bedtime

It is important that students have a calm bedtime routine. A special time, perhaps half an hour, for parents and children to tell a story, say a verse, and just sit together helps create a healthy preparation for sleep. A well-rested student has a better day at school. This applies to older children as well as younger ones, and routine bedtimes are just as important for upper-grades students as for Grade One students.

Media

At Spring Garden, a child's natural creativity and imagination are encouraged by providing time and materials for drawing, painting, music, and storytelling. It is our aim to create a mood of reverence, wonder, and beauty in the classroom that can live in students and be expressed in their play. Through experience, we have seen that any reference to television, movies, cartoon characters, or other media characters has a negative effect on creative play.

Clothing, shoes, lunch boxes, blankets, hats, or other accessories with media characters are not permitted in the school. Spring Garden discourages excessive exposure to media for students of all ages. This includes television, movies, computers, and video games. We encourage all parents to seek alternative forms of entertainment that enliven each child's individual thinking, feeling, and physical capacities. Parents who wish to find alternatives to media entertainment are encouraged to talk with their children's teachers.

Snacks and Lunches

If your child has special dietary needs, especially if he or she has a known food allergy, please inform your child's teacher and the school office.

Early Childhood: Students receive a nutritious, filling snack in the morning program. Parents of students in the full-day program must pack a lunch and an afternoon snack for their child. Please refer questions about lunches and snacks to your child's afternoon teacher.

Grades One through Eight: Parents are encouraged to provide wholesome, nutritious lunches for their children and not pack candy or sweetened drinks. Chewing gum is not allowed at any time during the school day. Time is allotted each morning for a break, and we suggest parents provide something extra, such as a piece of fruit, for a snack at this time.

Hot Lunches: Twice monthly, we offer students the option of a hot lunch prepared in the school kitchen. Hot lunch order forms are distributed a week before the hot lunch date and can also be downloaded from our website. The cost of hot lunches is charged to the family's MCA.

Student Dress Standards

A Waldorf curriculum is designed to help students develop socially as well as academically. Student attire is particularly important because many school activities include movement and interaction among the students. Furthermore, health, hygiene, and safety are all enhanced by appropriate attire.

- Students are to come to school neatly dressed in clean, un-torn, sturdy play clothing.
- Students are to wear clothing that fits properly.
- Students' skirts must approach the knee and extend beyond the fingertips when arms are resting at one's sides
- The hem on shorts for both men and women should be no more than a hand's length from the kneecap
- Students are to have three pairs of closed-toe shoes:
 - One pair of indoor shoes to be left in the classroom for wear there during the school year
 - One pair of outdoor shoes appropriate to the season (rain boots, snow boots, or sturdy shoes)
 - One pair of shoes appropriate for gym class
- Outerwear must be appropriate for the season and should include the following:
 - Rain pants or snow pants (depending on the season)
 - Rain coat or snow coat (depending on the season)
 - Hat (winter hat or sun hat, depending on the season)
 - Gloves or mittens
 - Scarf
- Students are not to wear coats, hats, head coverings, sunglasses, or other outdoor apparel while in school.
- Students in Early Childhood and Grades One through Three must have a complete change of clothing, appropriate for the season, labeled with the student's name in a non-disposable bag for emergency use. Older students should keep an extra pair of socks and a sweater in their classrooms.
- Students are encouraged to wear dressy clothes for festivals and special occasions.
- The following are not permitted:
 - Clothing with media images
 - Any form of dress or hairstyle that is considered contrary to good hygiene
 - Any form of dress or hairstyle that is considered a safety hazard
 - Any graphic or offensive images or wording on clothing
 - See-through clothing, shirts with spaghetti straps, or tank tops, unless a shirt is worn under or over
 - Clothing that is skin-tight or excessively revealing
 - Shoes with open backs or platform heels
 - Clothing that reveals the abdomen, waist, hips, or undergarments
- While parents may allow students to wear makeup to school, its application during the course of the school day will be at the Main Lesson teacher's discretion.

Toys and Electronic Items

Students should not bring any toys, radios, or electronic items to school. This includes but is not limited to puzzles, mechanical toys, dolls, computerized games, alarms, calculators, video games, MP3 players, iPods, and cell phones.

Students in the full-day Early Childhood program are allowed to bring a blanket and one small soft toy that does not light up or make sounds for naptime.

Transportation

Busing or public transportation is not available to Spring Garden students. Carpooling is a convenient and sometimes necessary arrangement for parents. The easiest way to create a carpool is to review the Community Directory and find the families closest to you. You may be able to join an existing carpool or you can start a new one. Parents are asked to work together in transporting students to and from school. Carpooling parents should remember to notify drivers of absent students so they do not wait or look for that student.

For young students, once the transportation schedule has been arranged, it is most important that it remain consistent. A dependable rhythm is very important to the growing child, and students who are unsure of their ride home tend to have very insecure days at school.

It is also important for your child's teacher to be aware of your transportation arrangements. Should a change in the arrangements occur, please notify both the office and the teacher.

Some local school districts do offer yearly financial compensation for transportation to and from private schools. To see if your family qualifies, contact your local school district.

Health and Medical Procedures

School Nurse

Spring Garden Waldorf School does not have an on-site school nurse. The faculty and administrative staff are all trained in first aid and CPR, and there is a sick room with cots in the school office. Spring Garden has a visiting nurse who reviews student medical records; conducts hearing, vision, and scoliosis screenings; and is available to the school for consultation regarding illnesses and communicable diseases.

Medical Emergency Form

An Emergency Medical Information Form (Form 2 in the yearly enrollment paperwork) must be completed and signed for each student's file. This form must contain the names and telephone numbers for at least three adults to contact in case of an emergency. This form must also contain the name, address, and phone number for your doctor or dentist.

This form is where you should indicate any and all medical information regarding your child, including medications, chronic illnesses, diabetes, allergies, or any other pertinent information.

Under state law, students in Early Childhood must be seen by a physician once every 12 months. The Medical Emergency Form also contains a statement that the child is healthy and free of communicable diseases, which must be signed by a physician.

Special Health Concerns

Special dietary concerns, food allergies, or other health concerns such as asthma should be clearly spelled out in writing for both the teacher and the administrative staff.

Students with life-threatening allergies must have a current Allergy Action Plan, signed by their physician, and all necessary medications for treatment on file in the office. Students with other life-threatening medical conditions must have the appropriate care instructions and medications for treatment on file in the office. Faculty and staff are trained by the visiting nurse in the proper administration of student medications. (Please see Prescription Drugs under Medication Policy for more information.)

Medication Policy

By law, school personnel are not allowed to administer any type of medication, including homeopathics or ointments, without the express written and verbal permission of the parent and, in the case of prescription medications, without the physician's signature.

Nonprescription Medications: For over-the-counter remedies, parents must complete and sign Form 4a listing all the nonprescription medications the parent approves for their child. In the event the child becomes ill or is injured, medication will not be administered until the parent has been contacted and given verbal approval to administer the medication. A record is kept in each student's file of the date, time, and reason for each time medication was administered during the school year. The school office has the following medications available in the event a student falls ill during school: Benadryl (adult and children's strength), ibuprofen (adult and children's strength), and acetaminophen (adult and children's strength).

Prescription Medications: If a student must take prescription medication during the school day, Form 4b must be completed and signed by the physician, stating exactly and in simple language how and when the medication is to be administered. This form must be complete and must be signed by the prescribing physician. All medications must be in their original packaging with the pharmacy label intact.

Students are not allowed to carry or self-administer any type medication at school. However, students who have a life-threatening condition, such as a severe bee-sting allergy or severe asthma, may carry the appropriate rescue medication only if they have an order from their doctor stating that they are capable of self-administering the medication in question. Otherwise, the medication will be held in the office or with the teacher.

Emergency Care

There are first aid kits in the office and in every classroom, and faculty are trained to handle minor emergency care.

In the event of serious accident, illness, or injury, at least one member of the faculty or administrative staff will remain with the student at all times, while another adult contacts the local paramedics. The parents of the ill or injured child will be contacted after the paramedics are on their way to the school.

Illness and Injury Policy

Students are expected to participate in all activities during the school day. Students that are unable to participate in activities are required to provide a doctor's note to the Administrative Assistant outlining any limitations to participation. The doctor's note should include the anticipated duration of the limitations or provide a follow up note releasing the student from the limitations. In all cases, the parents should consult with their child's teacher, and if necessary, the ATL, to review the limitations and ensure that SGWS can provide adequate accommodations.

Students who are ill need to rest. Sick children should not be sent to school, so they can get the rest they need and so illness does not spread through the school.

Spring Garden follows the Ohio Department of Health's "Communicable Disease Chart," which is posted in the sick room, for the appropriate identification and management of

suspected illnesses. The following precautions are taken for students suspected of having a communicable disease:

- When a student has been observed with signs or symptoms of illness, the teacher or staff will immediately notify the parent or guardian of the student's condition and to arrange for the discharge of the student.

- All parents will be notified by the school when their children have been exposed to a communicable disease.

A student with the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated and discharged as soon as possible to a parent or guardian:

- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a 24-hour period)
- Severe coughing that causes the student to become red in the face or to make a whooping sound
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Conjunctivitis
- Temperature of 100 degrees taken by the axillary method
- Untreated infected skin patches
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- Stiff neck

A student with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall immediately be isolated from other students. Decisions regarding whether the student should be discharged immediately or at some other time during the day shall be determined by the teacher and the parent or guardian. While isolated, the student shall be carefully watched for the above symptoms, as well as the following:

- Unusual spots or rashes
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Elevated temperature
- Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasites

A student isolated due to injury or suspected communicable disease shall be:

- Cared for in the office area of the school
- Within sight or hearing of an adult at all times – no student shall ever be left alone or unsupervised
- Made comfortable and provided a cot to rest and a sick-room blanket (laundered after each use). After each use, the cots are disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent.
- Observed carefully for worsening condition
- Discharged to a parent, guardian, or authorized person as soon as is practical

A student will be readmitted to school only when the following conditions are met:

- The student has been fever-free or has not had a loose bowel movement for at least 24 hours.
- The student has been treated with antibiotics for at least 24 hours (if the disease or illness warrants such treatment).
- Parents have taken appropriate treatment measures for the disease or illness (for example, a child with lice may return once parents have treated the condition with an effective over-the-counter lice removal product).
- The incubation or contagion period for the disease is complete.
- The child's physician has signed a release for the child to return to school.

Immunizations

Spring Garden Waldorf School complies with Ohio State Immunization Law for grades preschool through eighth. This law mandates that all students be immunized before attending school. It also requires that schools submit immunization records to the state for tracking. The state also provides an opportunity for parents to control the immunization schedule and regime for their individual child.

Waldorf schools abide by state requirements as they pertain to immunization. We also concur that the decision to immunize is a personal one, and that it should be made by parents and their physicians. While the majority of our parents opt to immunize their children, there are some who opt not to immunize their children, or to exclude specific immunizations, or to immunize children on a slower schedule than the state code stipulates.

When students are partially immunized, or are not immunized by the beginning of the school year, parents must provide an affidavit pursuant to Ohio Code 3313.671 (referenced above). Any students that are partially immunized are counted as non-compliant by the state, and therefore are reflected in the overall percentage of non-immunized students on state records. Waldorf schools do all they can to ensure the safety and health of the children in our schools. We encourage all parents to consult with their physician about their personal preferences regarding immunization.

In the event of an outbreak of communicable diseases including but not limited to chicken pox, measles, mumps, or pertussis, children whose immunizations for such disease are not current may be excluded from the school and its activities for the duration of the outbreak.

Every student must have a current, dated, signed immunization record or immunization exemption form on file.

Spring Garden Waldorf School Behavior and Discipline Policy

Spring Garden's policy regarding student behavior and subsequent disciplinary actions is an interdependent plan of mutual support maintained by all faculty, staff, and parents. The goal of this policy is to maintain an environment that is safe and conducive to learning while nurturing an atmosphere of cooperation and mutual respect. The policy speaks to both the student's behavior and to the parents' responsibility for that behavior.

Student Code of Conduct

All students are required to follow these rules:

- Be courteous in word and deed to teachers, staff, and other students
- Maintain orderly conduct in the building, on the grounds, and on field trips
- Follow all directions given by teachers
- Remain on school grounds, unless given parents' permission to leave
- No gum of any kind is allowed on the school premises
- Participation is required of all students for the full program, unless a written excuse is provided by a parent
- Vulgar language, persistent neglect of assigned work, persistent insubordination, or excessive truancy are not permitted
- Illegal substances, weapons, or explosive devices are not allowed on school property

Parents are asked to review these basic rules with their children, in language their children will understand.

Parent Responsibilities

- Communicate with your child's teacher. If you become aware of a circumstance that may be affecting your child's behavior in school or at home, let your child's teachers know in a timely fashion. Parents are expected to communicate with all faculty and staff in a respectful manner.

- Read all Behavior Reports regarding your child and acknowledge your receipt of the report by signing and returning it to the school office within 24 hours.

- Attend all meetings arranged with teachers or staff to address any behavior issues your child may have.

- Monitor your child's compliance with any at-home portion of a discipline or probation plan. Sign and return to the school office in a timely fashion all follow-up reports that are required by the plan.

Behavior that is severely disruptive will result in the immediate removal of your child from the classroom. If this were to happen, you would be expected to transport your child from the school for at-home suspension. Failure to provide transportation for your student in a timely fashion may result in your being charged for the cost of hiring a monitor to watch your child during in-school suspension.

Parents are expected to assist their children with compliance with other disciplinary actions, which may include the following commitments:

- Providing transportation for the child to participate in an assigned detention

- Overseeing the repair or replacement of any property stolen or damaged by the child

Discipline Code

A discipline problem is seen as a disturbance of the cooperative and respectful environment of the classroom. It must be kept in mind that a Waldorf school considers the whole student during the educational journey, and this is true in the area of discipline as well. It is not solely an action and a consequence for the inappropriate behavior. Teachers in Waldorf schools realize that there is a normal range of behaviors that are monitored in a classroom. Teachers handle situations based on the individual child's development. Strategies for discipline include but are not limited to mild redirection, separation from the rest of the class in some manner, time in the school office, etc. Teachers develop their own classroom management strategies and are able to consult with mentors or fellow faculty members in doing so. Any questions or concerns should be addressed directly to the class teacher.

If it is found that a student's conduct poses a threat to his or her own safety, or to the safety of teachers or other students, and that student's continuing demeanor prevents the effective learning of other students, that student may be suspended or permanently dismissed.

The cooperation of parents and guardians is crucial to the school's successful implementation of any discipline plan. Failure to show support for the Student Code of Conduct and Discipline Code through persistent noncompliance with its procedures and follow-up steps will result in termination of enrollment.



Communication Required by the Ohio Department of Education

We are required to inform our parents of the following Behavior Management and Discipline policies as delineated by the Ohio Department of Education. The Waldorf approach to education and the healthy upbringing of a child makes each of these bullet points seem an unnecessary focus, however, we respectfully comply with this expectation.

- A. A preschool staff member in charge of a child or group of children shall be responsible for their discipline
- B. The center shall have a written discipline policy describing the center's philosophy of discipline and the specific methods of discipline used at the center. This written policy shall be on file at the center for review. Constructive, developmentally appropriate child guidance and management techniques are to be used at all times and shall include such measures as redirection, separation from problem situations, talking with the child about the situation, and praise for appropriate behavior.
- C. Behavior management/discipline policies and procedures shall ensure the safety and physical and emotional well-being of all individuals on the premises
- D. The center's actual methods of discipline shall apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as follows:
 - a. There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking or biting
 - b. No discipline shall be delegated to any other child
 - c. No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control
 - d. No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box or similar cubicle
 - e. No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family, or other verbal abuse
 - f. Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or toileting accidents
 - g. Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child
 - h. Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use
 - i. Separation, when used as discipline, shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted, and well-ventilated space
 - j. The center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program
- E. The parent of a child enrolled in a center shall receive the center's disciplinary policy
- F. All preschool staff members shall receive a copy of the center's discipline policy for review upon employment