



April 24, 2020

Dear Washington Waldorf School Community,

I hope you and your families are safe and well. On behalf of the Trustees Council, I wish to express my sincere gratitude for the patience, adaptability and positive attitude all of you have shown during this uncertain, challenging time. It has been inspiring to see again how deeply we are woven together in mutual support, respect, and kindness, despite the physical distancing that this moment calls for. The Washington Waldorf School has always been more than just a school; it is a thriving community with a big heart, creative, thoughtful, and giving.

Your safety and the safety of the students is our primary concern. For that reason, and in accordance with State of Maryland health requirements, the school moved to distance learning a little over a month ago. While the current conditions are obviously less than optimal for full learning, it has nevertheless been very impressive how quickly our faculty, under the leadership of Jennifer Page, Faculty Chair and Head of School, transitioned to a new teaching landscape to ensure a developmentally appropriate, positive, and thoughtful Waldorf education continued for our students. While our Waldorf students have been able to continue learning and growing, putting them ahead of the pack, many local school districts still have not been able to provide meaningful instruction for their students, who are in danger of losing an entire semester of learning. While the future is unclear, it is certain that our students are ahead of the curve as a result of the learning they continue receiving. To this end, I thank the faculty and staff who worked tirelessly to develop and provide our students with our distance learning program.

Of course, each of you has played a key role in facilitating this distance learning, and on behalf of the school, I would like to thank you for supporting this new learning environment at home. I commend our students, from our youngest to our Seniors, for their resiliency, engagement and progress in the distance learning curriculum. The heart of our community is our faculty and staff. I am encouraged by the outpouring of good wishes the school has received from the community, and the concern expressed for our faculty, staff, and families during this time. We are doing everything we can to help our students and community weather this storm so we can continue to sustain strong, healthy class communities and Waldorf graduates for years to come.

In addition to the community's health and safety, the Trustees Council is also focused on the financial health of the school, which continues to be solid despite this unexpected closure of its facilities. However, 90 percent of our revenue is from tuition, and it is the strength of our enrollment that brings us financial stability. As a non-profit organization, we operate on a balanced budget every year. We thank you for helping sustain the school's financial health during this time with your children's continuing enrollment and regular scheduled tuition payments. This makes it possible for us to meet our current operations, including continuing to pay the salaries of our teachers and staff.

While we are largely focused on supporting the work of the faculty and staff for the current distance learning program, we are also closely watching the economic impact of this pandemic on our school community. We know that some in our community will be impacted more deeply than others, and we are ready to work with you to adjust to altered financial realities. For families that are experiencing unanticipated and growing financial challenges, please contact our Operations Manager, Lelia True, ltrue@washingtonwaldorf.org, to discuss ways to manage tuition payments. If you are fortunate to be in a position to make a charitable gift to the School at this time, your gift would be most appreciated as we anticipate that some of our families may have a greater financial need as the crisis continues.

It is hard to believe that it was only six weeks ago or so when many of us gathered in the auditorium to hear the extraordinary performance by Time for Three. The magic in that room, from the obvious excitement of the performers to the knowing chuckles about eurythmy, is the kind of thing that happens all the time at our school, whether it be the Fall Festival, the Carol Sing, the Spring Festival or any number of other events. That magic is made possible by our dedicated faculty, our wonderful students and all of you. Thank you for your dedication to our school and the Waldorf program.

As always, we are committed to the future sustainability and accessibility of Waldorf education to all of our community members. Though we are apart, we remain and continue to strive to be in unity with you, our community.

Together, we will get through this challenge and be stronger for it.

With deepest gratitude,

Eric Holdsworth, Trustees Council Chair