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A Newsletter for Waldorf School Communities
from the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America

Creative solutions to challenging times... Although some of our independent Waldorf schools opened with a 7% to 13% dip in enrollment, they continue to creatively cope with the situation. Some schools are taking up the “accessible to all” model of tuition; some schools have allowed families to keep their children in their school taking the unpaid tuition as a loan from the school to be paid later; some schools have found individual child sponsors to carry the tuition costs of a child not their own; some faculties and staffs have drawn together taking an across the board salary cut to make lower tuition or no increase in tuition possible; some have suspended programs for one year to examine strengths and weaknesses in their school for future action. All of these actions, all in order to protect the education and the children, demonstrate the strength of our schools that comes from working together in a community and sharing in the solutions to challenges we face – this is our Strength through Collaboration!

Striving for peace... As U.S. President Obama is recognized with the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to strive towards peace in the world, let us hope that our Waldorf communities celebrate this recognition as we continue to celebrate our own schools for the positive work we do to bring real possibility of peace in to the world. The U.S. president knows personally the value of an independent education, as he himself attended and his children attend independent schools. And it is our hope that his peace efforts extend to education and provide leadership to the world for increased opportunity for educational choice here in America and everywhere

AWSNA regional meetings and conferences... There were several successful regional meetings and conferences this fall around the continent: An Early Childhood Conference in Viroqua, WI discussed the topic of “The Child in the Care of the Authentic Adult.” The topic of “Adolescence for High School & Upper Grades Teachers: The Awakening Self: Sleeping and Breathing in Adolescence” took place at the Great Barrington Rudolf Steiner School, Great Barrington, MA. The Ashwood Waldorf School in Rockport, ME, celebrated the Grand Opening Ceremony for its new grade school. The Northwest Regional Conference was on "Accountability and Freedom - Navigating Change in Waldorf Governance." After this conference, the Puget Sound Collaborative Group invited all participants to celebrate 90 Years of Waldorf Education at a festive gala dinner. This wonderful celebration was hosted by the Bright Water School, Seattle, WA.

AWSNA's budget restructuring... is in keeping with the mirror situation in our schools and features the dedicated work of AWSNA's Board of Trustees and Executive Team. These core people recognized that budget management could be taken to new heights this year and have worked to balance the budget and to begin a stability fund for future bearing self-sufficiency. After months of work in the administrative office, a newly-styled budget was approved and stands to support AWSNA in these more contracted fiscal times.

“Reclaiming the Link Between Independence and the Essence of American Education,”... an article by Patrice Maynard, has just been published in *Independent Schools Magazine*. In it she writes: “If we can identify for our culture the unique opportunity available in America, a national treasure of freedom in education, with rigorous debate between independent schools and government-provided schools, we can protect the variegated landscape of ideas and methods available to us into the future. If we can build a platform for discussion about education that transcends special interests (industries, unions, politics, ideologies) and squarely debates the needs of our nation’s youth, we can lead the world in forging true excellence in education.” Read the complete article on www.waldorfworks.org.