



WALDORF SCHOOL  
of Princeton





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## Inspired to be Intelligent, Imaginative, Compassionate

At the Waldorf School of Princeton, children from nursery through 8th grade receive an academic, ethical, and artistic education in a beautiful and healthy learning environment.

Teaching the right thing to students at the right time is at the heart of Waldorf education. An understanding of the developmental stages of a child's growth forms the basis of our approach. We tailor the subject matter and the way we teach to each particular developmental phase in order to ensure an optimum learning dynamic at every stage. This approach creates a greater depth of understanding for our students.

The goal of the Waldorf curriculum is to achieve balance in children by cultivating them intellectually, artistically, physically, and socially. In addition to studying science, language arts, history, and mathematics, students learn to speak a foreign language, paint and draw, sing and move expressively, play musical instruments, perform in plays, and craft with their hands. They encounter all subjects through direct participation with the material. Teachers bring the curriculum to life by sparking their students' imaginations and encouraging independent thinking in addition to empowering them to behave ethically and care for others.

We are proud of our graduates, who enter high school with a strong academic foundation, critical thinking skills, and an enthusiasm for learning. Teachers in high schools and colleges recognize Waldorf graduates for their intelligence, curiosity, ethical behavior, and compassion.

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## Early Childhood

### *Nurturing a Sense of Wonder*

Our Early Childhood Program is a natural and nurturing transition from home to school, providing an educational atmosphere that emphasizes direct sensory experience and meaningful activities. We focus on preserving a young child's sense of wonder and capacity for imagination.

The early childhood teachers lay the foundation for formalized instruction by cultivating the children's physical, social, and cognitive skills. The young children participate in unstructured creative play, artistic and craft activities, practical tasks, outdoor play, and nature walks. They learn to focus through engaging circle games, spoken stories, and puppet shows.

We understand that children before the age of seven learn primarily and most naturally through imitation as well as through self-initiated activity, and that rhythm and repetition reinforce this learning. A predictable rhythm, maintained daily and weekly, is a source of comfort for young children. Birthday ceremonies, seasonal celebrations, experiences in nature, and weekly activities such as bread baking all foster familiarity and confidence in the learning environment. Both rhythm and imitation during the early childhood years help young children develop the habits and skills necessary for their next stage of schooling.



## Grade School

### *Developing a Lifelong Love of Learning*

The grade school years begin with the child still standing firmly in the world of imagination, so the teachers create an environment where students learn to think independently. Each day begins with a two-hour block rotation that allows for an intensive exploration of particular subject matter. Students then create their own unique lesson books that record in text and illustration what they have learned during that block.

In the first grade, children learn the times tables partly through group recitation and clapping. By the end of the eight-year cycle, students will have studied history, physics, biology, foreign languages, geography, botany, chemistry, algebra, and English literature. Classical academics are balanced by handwork, athletics, eurythmy, orchestra, chorus, painting, sculpture, gardening, and more.

During these elementary school years children need guides whose authority they can respect. The Waldorf model relies on a central teacher, referred to as the class teacher, who may remain with a class for several years to provide continuity and an in-depth understanding of the children's development over time. The class teachers are supported by many specialty teachers, who further enrich the curriculum through art, movement, music, gardening, and foreign language instruction.

Throughout their education, Waldorf students are taught to access their intuition and thinking with poise and self-confidence, to interact compassionately with others, and to take effective action in the world.



## Students and Graduates

### *Realizing Their Potential*

The education students receive at the Waldorf School of Princeton transforms them into exceptional graduates who are academically prepared, well rounded, and independent thinkers. Imbued with self-knowledge and confidence, they go on to achieve success in excellent private and public high schools, adapting well to new circumstances when they leave the Waldorf community.

Wherever they go, our graduates make an impact, for they have the will and freedom to pursue their individual aspirations. “Being personally acquainted with a number of Waldorf students, I can say that they come closer to realizing their own potential than practically anyone I know,” says Joseph Weizenbaum, author and former MIT professor.

Our graduates distinguish themselves as being exceptionally “teachable.” A teacher at the Lawrenceville School said, “In my fourteen years of teaching history to high school students, I’ve noticed that Waldorf students are different. They’ve been among my best students, and they always stand out for their genuine curiosity about the world.” And they don’t just excel in the humanities. A science teacher at the Pennington School believes Waldorf graduates are “more inquisitive, open to challenge and questioning in the best sense of what we want our students to be as learners.”

Waldorf education affects graduates in ways that can’t be measured. Their bonds in this special community build lasting relationships with others and with the world they grow into. As one of our graduates told us, “People always ask if I would send my children to Waldorf and my response is always, ‘I have to. It wouldn’t be fair for me to have this experience and not pass it on to my children’”.



## Instruction

### *Inspired Teachers*

Waldorf teachers are guided and inspired by the work of Dr. Rudolf Steiner (1861 - 1925), founder of Waldorf Education, who stated, "Our highest endeavor must be to develop free human beings, who are able of their own initiative to impart purpose and direction to their lives."

Trained in the Waldorf method, our teachers call upon their deep understanding of child development to present an age-appropriate and multi-disciplinary curriculum at every grade level. As mediators between the student and subject matter, Waldorf teachers bring that curriculum to life, masterfully balancing strong academics with arts, world languages, and movement to educate "the whole child" and develop all of his or her human capacities: intellectual, artistic, physical, and social.

Waldorf teachers are acutely aware that their behavior and even their gestures must be worthy of imitation, because students are informed as much by relationships and behavior as they are by facts and figures. Furthermore, recognizing that students learn about the world through their sense perceptions, teachers design the learning environment to be both aesthetically pleasing and practical.

Our teachers are dedicated to discovering the potential that lives inside each student and connecting that student to the world. They forge a special relationship with their students, in order to, in the words of one of our teachers, "help light fires so the students can form their own values, their own being."



# Community

## *Working Together*

Most parents initially choose Waldorf education for its time-tested curriculum and later find that being part of the Waldorf school community is enriching for them too. The relationships connecting our parents, teachers, and students both in and out of the classroom make lifelong impressions.

Thinking about how to raise and educate children is a continuous challenge for teachers and parents alike. They recognize that the core values and social conduct students adopt in their school years give form to their lives, strengthening and guiding them long beyond grade school. Parents play an important role in ensuring that the home life and the social life of the students resonate with the way of life at school. They strengthen their children's education by sending them to school ready to learn each day.

On a school-wide level, parents and teachers are mindful of the factors that influence education outside the classroom, such as nutrition, parenting, child development, electronic media, competition, and commercialism. Parents come together to complete campus projects, such as erecting a greenhouse, building a picnic table, or setting up a playground. The whole community also joins in celebrating seasonal festivals that sustain and renew us, and bring joy to us all.



#### *School Profile:*

1062 Cherry Hill Road  
Princeton, New Jersey 08540  
Tel: 609-466-1970, Fax: 609-333-9991  
[www.princetonwaldorf.org](http://www.princetonwaldorf.org)

Founded in 1983, the Waldorf School of Princeton is an independent, non-profit, co-educational, nonsectarian school for students in preschool through 8th grade. There are nearly 1,000 Waldorf schools worldwide with approximately 170 in the United States sharing this educational philosophy.

Tuition assistance is available to students in kindergarten through 8th grade.

#### *Accreditation:*

New Jersey Association of Independent Schools (NJ AIS)  
Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA)

#### *Facilities:*

- 22 acre campus set on historic farmland surrounded by open space
- Multi-purpose athletic and recreation fields, courts, and trails
- Biodynamic garden and geodesic dome greenhouse
- The Golden House, circa 1830, has been preserved and adapted for early childhood classrooms and administrative offices.

*More information and articles on Waldorf education at: [whywaldorfworks.org](http://whywaldorfworks.org)*

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