

## WECAN News Update March 2023

### **WECAN's Work on Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access – a DEIJ Audit Update**

Laura Mason and Susan Howard, for the DEIJ Self-Audit Team and the WECAN Board

As you know, WECAN is deeply committed to actively working to support inclusion, diversity, equity, and access (IDEA) as a pathway to a healthy social life in our association, in North America and globally.

Some of our recent activities include:

- Updating our Shared Principles to better demonstrate the commitment of our members to IDEA
- Renewal of our website, including providing more IDEA resources (see new version [here](#))
- Working with a marketing consultant to help us grow support for WECAN, strengthen engagement with our community and boost awareness of our publications – all with an eye toward inclusion
- Focus on IDEA in our Gateways newsletters and publications, including *Toward a Kinder, More Compassionate Society: Working Together Towards Change*, available through the WECAN Online Book Store.
- The third annual WECAN February Conference on IDEA, this year in person and online, with the theme of *Finding our Ways*.
- An IDEA Zoom Work-alike event, *Weaving Threads of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access Into Daily Classroom Rhythms* on January 10<sup>th</sup>

Our main activity this year has been to engage in a DEIJ self-audit, guided by [Alma Partners](#). Three audit groups - focused on board, membership, and teacher education - thoroughly reviewed our policies, procedures, publications, website, and other materials to identify areas that need improvement.

The audit included a survey for members from which we received quite positive feedback. Thanks to those of you who participated! Results indicate that our commitment to IDEA is clear, and our members feel they can be their authentic selves when engaging with us. Respondents indicated feeling well supported in the realm of IDEA in their inner work, in working with children, and in the resources, publications, and communications we provide. We found room for improvement in our support of members in working with colleagues and parents. A lot of gratitude for our work with IDEA was expressed, though a small number of respondents shared concerns - most asking us to do more, and a few who were concerned that we focus too much on IDEA.

Our many hours of Self-Audit work over the summer culminated with a 2-day retreat held in Spring Valley, NY, in November. The WECAN board, administrator, IDEA coordinators and membership coordinator, along with Vicki Larson and Meggan Gill of Alma Partners, met to review findings and prioritize recommendations. Our top priorities coming out of that meeting include:

- Creating a space to be in right relationship with our communities
- Renewal of our mission, vision and values
- Renewal of Board policy, process and composition
- Renewal of documents and membership processes
- Increasing access
- Implementing anti-bias/DEIJ training for leadership.

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The audit team leaders are now working with the board and IDEA coordinators to identify and undertake practical next steps. We look forward to updating you through our e-newsletters as our work progresses.

We wish to offer gratitude to those who volunteered their time on our audit teams. The following early childhood educators, teacher educators, IDEA committee members, board members and WECAN staff took part:

Nancy Blanning  
Amber Chavez  
Heather Church  
Angela Gladstone  
Ruth Ker  
Laura Mason  
Kate May-Price  
Anjum Mir  
Aimee de Ney  
Gabriela Nuñez Plata  
Katherine Scharff  
Monika Sutherland  
Magdalena Toran  
Lynn Turner  
Leslie Wetzonis Woolverton

Many thanks to all of you!