

## **Report from the WECAN Board**

Louise deForest, Board Chair

The WECAN Board has not met all together since this past June but has remained very active throughout the summer through our committee work and our working groups. Zoom calls fill many hours of the day, keeping us in touch with one another and our sister organizations and providing the opportunity to participate in panel discussions and classes.

Collaboration continues to grow and there have been very frequent zoom calls between WECAN and AWSNA and many conversations with the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education. Together we strive to provide our members with the practical information and resources they may need and to offer consistent leadership at a time of confusion and anxiety.

The WECAN Board Committee has met frequently over the summer, trying to integrate and digest all the issues we are all facing so we can maintain our focus on our mission and our organization as a whole. We realize that our organization needs to meet our times with increased flexibility and support, and we are listening for ways that changes need to be made. You will see in the Membership and the Teacher Education reports that we are responding to the needs of our members by making (what we hope are) temporary changes to our process to better support our member schools and institutions. Our beloved WECAN conferences, both on the East and West Coasts, will also be different this year, combining the two into one big virtual conference with the theme of diversity and equity.

We have been keeping a close eye on our financial situation and I am happy to report that, in spite of lower dues so far from our members, which we expected, WECAN seems financially stable. We were conservative with our budget, knowing that many of our members will be faced with enrollment challenges, which of course will affect our dues income, and yet we do not feel that our planned activities have been compromised.

As you can see from the report on Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access, this has been a summer of increased activity, rich and profound conversations, and a general waking up to racial and social justice issues in our country and in our Waldorf Schools. Here, too, our collaboration with others has grown and deepened as we look outside our Waldorf educational world to meet and work with a diverse range of individuals also working towards a truly just world for every individual. As you can see in their report, the IDEA Committee is hoping to add more members to the ongoing work for inclusion, diversity, equity and access and if these are burning issues for you, please contact the co-chairs of the Committee.

While the planned Birth to Three Conference has had to be canceled, as you will read in the Birth to Three report, the deepening of this work is ongoing and increasingly urgent, as online learning takes over young children's lives and the need for social distancing results in limited opportunities for movement and human contact, which are so essential in these early years of development.

While we have had many practical issues to work with, our biggest work has been to not be swayed by the fear and uncertainty of our times and to maintain equanimity in the face of constantly shifting circumstances. Both Laurie Clark and Stephanie Hoelscher from the WECAN Early Childhood Research Group have shared their thoughts, urging us to look for the spiritual wisdom behind all outer events. How can we understand the realities of today without losing hope and our moral compass? Reflection, listening, sensing and opening our hearts to release and receive will enable us to meet the swirling events of our times with courage and love.