

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access

The WECAN Board has made an on-going commitment to work consciously and intentionally with the themes of inclusion, diversity, equity and access (IDEA) in Waldorf Early Childhood Education. Below is an overview of recent events and information on some of the activities taking place during this school year:

Summer DEI Update:

Through our collaboration with AWSNA, the Council of Anthroposophical Organizations, the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, our WECAN Community, and other organizations, many of us had ample opportunities this summer to work toward a better understanding of the effects of racism and to commit to anti-racist thinking and activity.

We thank the Council of Anthroposophical Organizations for making possible a workshop with the [Racial Equity Institute](#) for leaders in our organizations. Several members of the WECAN Board and IDEA Committee were able to attend - along with members of AWSNA, the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education and other anthroposophical organizations - and found it extremely valuable.

We are also deeply grateful to Kirsten Ivey-Colson and Lynn Turner at [The Anti-Racist Table](#) for the incredible 30 day anti-racist challenge that they offered to our community this summer. The challenge was made up of extensive educational and artistic resources paired with inner work and was transformative for Waldorf educators and many others. Thank you Lynn and Kirsten for your remarkable work.

And another thank you to AWSNA's BIPOC Networking Forum for providing a panel webinar for Waldorf educators on [White Supremacy in Waldorf Schools - Our Stories](#). Hearing the panelists' personal stories helped participants to better understand Waldorf schools from a different perspective. Their honest sharing was of tremendous value.

Ongoing and Upcoming DEI Activities:

AWSNA is hosting monthly Pedagogical Webinars this year. One series is called ["What Steiner Actually Said - Examining Steiner's educational ideas which have manifested as white-centered educational practices"](#) and the other series is called [Reimagining Waldorf Pedagogy: Nurturing social renewal through education for racial justice](#). Susan Howard and Holly Koteen Soule from WECAN, together with Magally Luna and Van James, were presenters at the first webinar on September 15th, on the topic of "Color, Light and Dark, Crayons and Children". Those with access to the AWSNA Community Hub can find the recording of this webinar in the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion section there.

Waldorf early childhood educators Meggan Gill, Kendra Cooley and Monika Stanislawek presented how they are working with this theme at the first Reimagining Pedagogy call on September 22.

AWSNA also has two affinity groups, a BIPOC group and an LGBTQ Group that are open to WECAN members: <https://community.awsna.org/browse/affinity>. For further information on joining the AWSNA Hub, which is open to colleagues in AWSNA Member schools and institutes, visit <https://community.awsna.org/participate/contactus283>

Through our work as a board and on the WECAN IDEA Committee (Nancy Blanning, Adrienne Doucette, Laura Mason, and Magdalena Toran) it has become increasingly clear to us that we can only do this transformative work with a wider circle of colleagues. To that end, the IDEA Committee is seeking new members - individuals who are committed to an anti-racist, anti-oppression approach to institutional development, as well as to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility more generally. We are especially encouraging participation from those who have been traditionally excluded from positions of power; people of the global majority, the LGBTQ community, and from other historically marginalized groups. For more information about joining us in our work, please see the full invitation [here](#).

Social and racial justice is being taken up throughout our Association. See other reports in this News Update for details on our DEI work in teacher education, conference planning, and other activities. Conversations and resources can also be found on the WECAN Community Hub.