

WECAN Board Report

Louise deForest, WECAN Board Chair and Secretary

The WECAN Board has had a busy winter starting with the wonderful opportunity for almost all the Board members to meet in November for our first in-person meeting since the pandemic. In that meeting, we finished our self-audit work with Alma Partners and identified our next steps forward as an organization. We revised our Shared Principles in keeping with our intentions to make the D.E.I.J. work a priority. After receiving input from our Full Member Schools, our I.D.E.A. Committee, and our Full Member Teacher Education Institutes, the Board unanimously accepted the Shared Principles.

In this Board meeting, we also continued to look forward to succession planning and committed ourselves to a new leadership structure to better meet the needs around us and the growth of our association. We formed a Search Committee made up of Board members and advertised for an Outreach and Development Coordinator and we are presently in the process of interviews before making a final decision at the end of this month. This new position will start in July 2023.

We also held our first in-person WECAN Conference in February 2023. This conference is the third conference with the theme, *Toward a Kinder, More Compassionate Society* and this year the focus was *Finding Our Way*. Each day, two colleagues from our I.D.E.A. Committee and Early Childhood Research Group shared their thoughts and experiences with the participants followed by discussion groups to deepen the theme. There were nearly 300 participants and another 150 registered for the online option. As we do every year, we passed the basket to raise funds for projects around the world and this year we raised more than \$7000 for the Ukrainian Waldorf early childhood community. Even though many Waldorf schools are closed in Ukraine, teachers continue to support parents and children through stories, puppet shows, and small playgroups, and in schools close to the front lines, teachers provide meals for those fighting. All of this is done mostly without receiving pay.

The Board has continued to have monthly online meetings between the longer Fall and Spring Board meetings and some Board members are working behind the scenes to update our WECAN books and compile resources for parents. The Board Committee meets monthly to plan Board meetings and to follow through with our collective work.

The next WECAN Board meeting will be an in-person meeting in Spring Valley, N.Y., May 10 – 13.