

INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND ACCESS (IDEA)

Laura Mason, Membership Coordinator

The WECAN board has been working consciously to advance IDEA in the association since 2018. This work has taken many different forms over the years, from a small board committee focused exclusively on the work of the board, to an Alma Partners-led DEIJ self-audit and I.D.E.A. coordinators who - along with an advisory group - focused on strengthening this work and helping us incorporate it into WECAN. We're extremely grateful for the support we've received and the seeds of new capacities that have been planted, and we're proud of what we've accomplished together.

We're committed to continuing to focus on these essential themes, and weaving them into WECAN's everyday work and the ongoing work of the board!

Notable this year are several IDEA-focused [Parent/Caregiver Events](#), designed to support educators, parents, and caregivers in their work. Keelah Helwig will present on racial identity development, Meggan Gill will present on anti-bias education, and Amber Chavez will present on supporting gender-expansive families. Keelah's and Meggan's presentations will be followed a week later with practice sessions hosted by Alma Partners, and Amber's presentation will be preceded by a preparatory session for educators (also with Amber). We hope you'll take part in these opportunities and encourage the adults in your community to attend!

Another opportunity we're excited to be providing this year is a series of workshops by Alma Partners for WECAN site visitors, who will be expected to complete them by the end of the coming school year in the interest of ensuring that our site visits are objective, equitable, and supportive of the DEIJ work our programs are being asked to take up. While these workshops are designed for WECAN site visitors, we look forward to having WECAN regional reps, staff, board, IDEA advisors, and AWSNA and Alliance for Public Waldorf Education leaders participate.

In light of the conclusion of the IDEA coordinators' three-year term this summer, the board took time in our most recent meeting to begin to identify our priorities, which we expect to be ongoing indefinitely. Our first task is to create a DEI committee of board members. Laura Mason will be acting as the point person, with support from Keelah Helwig, as we work toward a clear mandate and populating the committee. The board identified the following as ongoing work, to be guided by the committee:

- Continuing the board's DEI education
- Identifying and resolving inequities within the organization
- Preparing space for those who represent marginalized identities in leadership circles
- Considering who is missing in WECAN leadership, expand diversity, and make sure each voice is heard
- Becoming more conscious of understanding the context and needs of our constituents

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In addition, we continue to work on items identified in our DEIJ Self-Audit, including revising our mission statement and board member recruitment and hiring processes, developing shared agreements for the board, and reviewing our membership processes. We're grateful that many of our IDEA advisors have indicated a wish to continue to support us as needed on this journey.

We are aware that time and attention are required, and that our work in this realm will radiate out to our member programs and move us toward a kinder, more compassionate world where all children can experience a sense of belonging. It is essential for our children!