



# TAMARACK WALDORF SCHOOL

2022-2023

## Family Handbook

### Early Childhood through Grade 8

*Revised August 2022*

#### **Tamarack Waldorf School Mission Statement**

Our mission is to provide an Early Childhood through 8th Grade Waldorf education to develop independent, critical thinkers with a strong sense of social responsibility

#### **School Policies and Statement of Understanding**

Tamarack Waldorf policies are written in this family handbook. Parents/Guardians of Tamarack Waldorf School students are required to read this handbook and guide their children through the policies and requirements set forth. The signing of the Pledge of Understanding at the beginning of each school year acknowledges that you have read and agree to follow all school policies and guidelines.

#### **COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan**

Please refer to the *Tamarack Waldorf School COVID-19 Operational Plans* for the 2022-23 School year for information on the health and safety protocols we will be following during the pandemic.

*Tamarack Waldorf School, Inc. is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization with 501c3 status and does not discriminate based on race, religion, sex, national origin, or sexual orientation. Tamarack Waldorf School is a member of, and accredited by, the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America and the North Central Association – Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement*

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# Table of Contents

<b><i>PART I - School Mission and Guiding Statements, Anti-Racism Statement, Organization, and Curriculum</i></b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>WALDORF EDUCATION</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>TAMARACK WALDORF SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>TAMARACK WALDORF SCHOOL ANTI-RACISM STATEMENT</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>SCHOOL ORGANIZATION</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Faculty.....	8
Administration .....	8
Board of Trustees.....	8
Parent Council.....	9
<b>CURRICULUM</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Portfolio Assessment .....	9
Proficiency for Grades 1-8 .....	10
Standardized Tests.....	10
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation Requirements.....	11
Early Childhood Overview.....	11
Festivals.....	11
<b>ENROLLMENT AND RE-ENROLLMENT</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Application Appeals Process .....	12
Preliminary Enrollment Period.....	12
Classroom Requests.....	13
Re-Enrollment Issues .....	13
<b><i>PART II - Daily Policies, Procedures and Guidelines</i></b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Attendance Policy .....	13
Extended Absence from School .....	15
Truancy .....	15
Tardiness.....	16
Absentee and Tardy Reporting .....	16
<b>VISITOR POLICIES</b> .....	<b>17</b>
General Procedures .....	17
Adult School Visitors .....	17
Student-Aged Visitors .....	17
<b>CHILD CUSTODY INFORMATION</b> .....	<b>17</b>
Access to Pupils on School Grounds and Special Release of Pupils .....	18
<b>DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP</b> .....	<b>18</b>
Entry to School Building.....	19
Speed Limit & Parking Policies .....	19
Drop Off and Pick Up .....	19
<b>EXTENDED CARE</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b> .....	<b>20</b>
Public Transportation.....	21

Bicycles.....	21
Independent Departures.....	21
<b>CONDUCT IN SCHOOL .....</b>	<b>21</b>
Pledge of Respect:.....	21
School Rules: .....	21
Student Cell Phone Use.....	22
Non-Harassment Policy.....	22
Conduct Outdoors.....	22
<b>PULASKI PARK.....</b>	<b>22</b>
Park Procedures .....	22
Playground/Outdoor Rules: .....	23
<b>DISCIPLINARY ACTION/ACADEMIC CONCERN POLICY.....</b>	<b>23</b>
Consequences .....	24
Guidelines for Suspension.....	24
Probation or Continuing Enrollment.....	25
Expulsion .....	25
Restriction from Sports Participation.....	25
Due Process.....	26
Parental Behavior at School.....	26
<b>DRESS CODE .....</b>	<b>26</b>
Early Childhood Dress Code .....	27
<b>FOOD GUIDELINES.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES.....</b>	<b>28</b>
Emergency Contact Forms .....	28
Illness and Injury at School .....	28
Special Medical Needs .....	29
Immunizations .....	29
Communicable Conditions.....	29
Head Lice Policies.....	29
Weather Concerns .....	30
<b>TAMARACK SPORTS.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b><i>PART III - Parent Involvement, Communication and Fundraising.....</i></b>	<b><i>30</i></b>
<b>PARENT INVOLVEMENT .....</b>	<b>30</b>
The Role of Parents at a Waldorf School .....	31
Pledge of Understanding .....	31
Parent-Teacher Conferences .....	31
Class Meetings .....	31
All-School Meetings .....	32
Tamarack Parent Council .....	32
Class Parent.....	32
Parent Education Opportunities .....	32
<b>VOLUNTEER POLICIES .....</b>	<b>32</b>
Parent, Grandparent and Community Volunteers.....	32
Alumni Volunteers .....	33
Concerns about Volunteers .....	33
Parent Drivers on Trips .....	33
<b>COMMUNICATION .....</b>	<b>34</b>

School Office .....	34
School Website and Emails .....	34
Newsletters .....	34
Faculty, Staff, and Board of Trustee Mail.....	34
Notice of School Closings or Urgent Information .....	34
Parent Square .....	35
Community Agreement.....	35
Specific Communication Guidelines.....	35
Grievance Procedure and Conflict Resolution Guidelines .....	36
<b>HOME LIFE, SLEEP AND SCREEN TIME GUIDELINES.....</b>	<b>36</b>
Rhythm, Repetition and Reverence .....	36
Sleep/Rest Requirements .....	36
Television and Other Media.....	36
<b>FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES .....</b>	<b>37</b>
Annual Appeal.....	37
Fundraising Events .....	37
Class Fundraising.....	38
“Painless” Fundraisers .....	38
<b><i>PART IV - Additional Information .....</i></b>	<b>38</b>
Adult Cell Phone Use.....	38
Video Recording and Photography at School.....	38
Donations.....	38
Bringing Pets to School .....	38
Lost and Found.....	39
Supervision of Students .....	39
Building Use .....	39
Social Media.....	39
<b><i>PART V - Payment Policies.....</i></b>	<b>40</b>
Payment Contracts.....	40
Collection Policy for Private Pay Families .....	40
Tuition Refund Policy .....	41
Choice Funding.....	41
Supplies Fees.....	41
<b>TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM .....</b>	<b>41</b>
Tuition Assistance .....	41
Tuition Assistance Awards .....	41
Award Decisions.....	42
Tuition Assistance FAQ.....	42

**PART I - School Mission and Guiding Statements, Anti-Racism Statement, Organization, and Curriculum**

**Tamarack Waldorf School**  
**1150 E. Brady Street**  
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**Milwaukee, WI 53202**  
**Fax:** 414-277-7799

**Hours:**

Early Childhood (Pre-K & K) half day	8:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Early Childhood (Pre-K & K) full day	8:00 a.m. – 3:10 p.m.
Grades 1 – 8	8:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
Extended Care Afternoons	3:15 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

**Leadership Team**

<b>Pedagogical Director</b>	Martha Flores
<b>Administrative Director</b>	Lora Poulos
<b>Grade Level Chair</b>	James Boland
<b>Early Childhood Level Chair</b>	Faith Danniell

**School Administrative Team**

<b>Administrative Director</b>	Lora Poulos
<b>Finance Manager</b>	Cheri Rognsvoog
<b>Development Specialist</b>	TBD
<b>Outreach and Enrollment Coordinator</b>	Dorothy Kulke
<b>Administrative Assistant</b>	Magdalena De Osio
<b>Administrative Assistant</b>	Amanda Lewna

**Board of Trustees**

<b>President</b>	Susie Ralston
<b>Vice President</b>	TBD
<b>Secretary</b>	Denise Haussy
<b>Treasurer</b>	Michelle Skelton

## WALDORF EDUCATION

Tamarack Waldorf School, founded in 1996, is part of a world-wide community of schools. While southeast Wisconsin has many Waldorf-affiliated organizations, Tamarack is the only school in the city of Milwaukee to embrace Waldorf education, a pedagogy based on the insights of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). Waldorf education strives to develop and strengthen all capacities of the human being by providing a curriculum that addresses not only the intellectual life of the young human being, but their inner developmental needs as well. To that end, the education stresses the importance of practical learning as well as aesthetic training.

The first Waldorf School was founded in 1919 in Stuttgart, Germany, through the initiative of Emil Molt, the director of the Waldorf Astoria Company. Molt, out of concern for the new generation of children living through the devastation of WWI, asked Rudolf Steiner to develop a form of education framed by a vision of a healing future and guided by Steiner's observation and understanding of the developing human being.

Tamarack Waldorf School strives to work in communion with families who desire to acknowledge the educational philosophies of Rudolf Steiner. We are a community aspiring towards the deepening of modern education, working through the artistic realm and into the inner life of every young human being.

Today there are more than 250 Waldorf schools in North America. As parents have become more aware of this education, they have increasingly sought to establish schools in their own communities. The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA) is the governing body that articulates a unifying vision about Waldorf education for member schools, but each school is independent and self-governing. Tamarack is a full member of, and accredited by, AWSNA.

## TAMARACK WALDORF SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our mission is to provide an Early Childhood through 8th grade Waldorf education to develop independent, critical thinkers with a strong sense of social responsibility.

In all that we do we take the following as our Guiding Principles:

- We recognize that children's needs, interests, strengths, and challenges evolve from their early childhood years through 8th grade graduation. Our curriculum is consciously designed to best meet each developmental stage as children grow, providing the right experience at the appropriate time.
- We seek to work together in ways that increase the diversity of our school community and promote equity and inclusion for all community members regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, financial means, sexual orientation, sexual identity, gender, or disability status. This includes ensuring that we have a continually evolving curriculum that meets all our students.
- Relationships are what make our work possible – between students and teachers, among classmates, among faculty members, between all community members – and we consciously strive to foster and support healthy relationships in all areas of our community.
- Human beings are individuals with their own personal strengths, challenges, and interests. We seek to meet each community member with love and care, ensuring that there is flexibility and support in our classrooms, policies and practices, and community expectations.
- Children are best supported when there is partnership between home and school. We seek to provide parent support, education, and engagement, and we ask that parents collaboratively work with teachers in the same way.
- Each community member is a whole human being: body, soul, and spirit. Our faculty and staff members draw insight and inspiration from the work of Rudolf Steiner and Anthroposophy.

- Through our curriculum, policies, employment agreements, community expectations and services beyond the classroom we strive to fully engage all community members and create a culture of purposeful activity and joy.
- Through our community life we respect and support the inner development and growth of our community members, sharing the celebration of festivals, athletic competition, artistic work, and study.
- Collaboration and shared responsibility are the foundations of our school governance and leadership model. We work with consensus within all governance groups. We are committed to a transparent and cooperative process for all significant decisions in the school.

## TAMARACK WALDORF SCHOOL ANTI-RACISM STATEMENT

Tamarack Waldorf School values the spirit of community. We recognize each person as a whole human being and a unique individual. We value the diversity of our community and believe that each member should experience equity and inclusion. We strive to engage all community members and create a culture of purposeful activity and joy and support their inner development and growth. We value healthy relationships that thrive through collaboration and shared responsibility and a vibrant partnership between family and home. We value a Waldorf curriculum that meets each developmental stage as children grow, providing the right experience at the appropriate time and a continually evolving curriculum that meets all of our students.

Studying the works of Rudolf Steiner upon which our pedagogy is based, we are faced with statements and beliefs that are racist and do not align with our school values. The statements that assess race as an indicator of the evolution of spiritual development are incorrect and harmful as well as in contradiction with the respect for each individual that is so important to our work in Waldorf education. We also stand behind the statement from AWSNA (Association of Waldorf Schools of North America) that can be found below.

Tamarack Waldorf School is continually striving towards understanding and implementing current best practices relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion. By engaging in reflective practices that allow us to collectively grow and learn as a community, we reject practices and ideas that are discriminatory. We commit to redeveloping curriculum that de-centers Eurocentric narratives and reimagines Waldorf curriculum and traditions to be more inclusive of different cultures, backgrounds, histories, and lived experiences. We believe that offering students reflections of themselves within the curriculum, as well as windows into unfamiliar perspectives, contributes to positive and compassionate learning experiences.

Tamarack Waldorf School has taken up a number of initiatives to support these commitments and propel our DEI work forward, beyond the social and curricular work being taken up by classroom teachers each day. In the summer of 2021, three Tamarack faculty members took part in a leadership training to become SEED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity) facilitators. Together, they are bringing these workshops to Tamarack faculty and staff. Each seminar is centered around different social justice issues, offering reflective exercises and conversations in which participants examine how their own lived experiences shape their perspectives. The purpose of these seminars is to work against racism and other systems of oppression through dismantling white supremacy conditioning by exploring and understanding our own stories and experiences.

In addition to our work with SEED, a working group, called IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access), has been formed to support and facilitate this work within the school. This group meets weekly to discuss and respond to diversity, equity, and inclusion matters and to collaboratively

work to support Tamarack in offering equitable, accessible, and inclusive Waldorf education to our school community.

Tamarack Waldorf School is also taking part in the NAIS (National Association of Independent Schools) AIM (Assessment of Inclusion and Multiculturalism) Equity Audit to help us understand our current strengths and needs, showing us what further actions must be taken.

The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA), Tamarack Waldorf School's accrediting body, has published the following statement pertaining to DEI work within the Waldorf education movement. Tamarack Waldorf School stands behind this statement and supports AWSNA's work in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion work within Waldorf schools. You can find AWSNS's statement here: <https://www.waldorfeducation.org/awsna/statement-of-inclusion-and-equity>

## SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

The faculty, board and administration are all decision-making bodies holding particular areas in the school. At Tamarack, the Administrative Director and the Pedagogical Director serve as co-Heads of School for the organization, as mandated by the Board of Trustees. The co-Heads work with a Leadership Team comprised of Faculty Level Chairs to oversee all aspects of the school.

### **Faculty**

The faculty is composed of individuals working in the school who have chosen a destiny linked to the growth and development of Tamarack Waldorf School. The faculty includes class teachers, part-time specialists, and subject teachers. The faculty is dedicated to the creation and implementation of a developmentally appropriate curriculum based on Rudolf Steiner's indications, as well as their own body of research. The faculty also shares responsibility for school administration, including policies, procedures, and program development. The work of the faculty is carried out in cooperation with, and with support from, the board and the administrative office. Full-time faculty members meet weekly, working together and striving to bring unity and cohesion to the educational experience of each student.

### **Specialty and Subject Teachers**

Tamarack Waldorf School is privileged to have on staff a number of specialty and subject teachers who are experts in their fields. These teachers work with students in order to bring a variety of subjects to the classroom in an experiential way. Mentored by the full-time faculty, the specialists develop their curriculum to meet the needs of students in many grade levels.

### **Administration**

The administration forms a communication link and support structure between the groups of the school and with agencies outside the school. They have day-to-day responsibility for the business, records, facilities management, enrollment, and outreach activities of the school. The administration works collegially with the faculty and board, and with parents to enhance the smooth running of the school, coordinating and communicating with the various school bodies.

### **Board of Trustees**

The board of trustees of Tamarack Waldorf School is composed of community professionals, faculty, staff, and parents. The board of trustees is responsible for the legal and financial affairs of the school and seeks to make tangible the vision of the school expressed by the community through strategic planning. The board usually meets monthly; meeting times and dates are listed on the school website's monthly calendar and in the school newsletter.



## **Parent Council**

Tamarack's Parent Council (formally known as Tamarack Parent Association-Community Circle (TPA-CC)) will be reimagined and formed during the 2022-23 school year. The primary aim is to grow a vibrant, connected and committed community at Tamarack, guided by the principles of Waldorf education. Please look for updated information as the new school year progresses.

## **CURRICULUM**

To provide parents with a picture of Tamarack's Waldorf curriculum for each grade, we have created a basic chart to reflect the underlying core educational gesture of each year. Keep in mind that a Waldorf teacher builds the curriculum for their class or specialty based on widely practiced Waldorf curriculum suggestions and on the developmental progress of the particular group of students entrusted to their care, not on a rigid model or set of expectations. Because each class and teacher are unique, a great deal of variance from the chart is possible, even probable, within the course of a year. However, teachers also receive curriculum guidance from our Waldorf accrediting organization, AWSNA, which ensures that they stay in line with Waldorf practices. Teachers also will present detailed block and skill plans to parents at the beginning of each year. We hope that this chart can answer some of the basic questions about our school's curriculum.

## **Portfolio Assessment**

Tamarack Waldorf School places special emphasis on the learning process used to obtain an eventual product. To cultivate an atmosphere of cooperation rather than one of competition in the classroom, standardized tests are de-emphasized and portfolio assessment, as a true picture of the student's achievement, is brought forward.

By the end of each block of study, students at Tamarack have a portfolio of work that includes teacher notes on their observations of a student's classroom participation, review and recall of lesson content, various aspects of the student's ability to respond to subject matter, as well as main lesson books and practice work produced by the student. At the end of each year, students emerge from their grade with a comprehensive set of materials that stand as a record of presented materials and that show their level of proficiency in all subjects relative both to the skills and lessons presented and to the work of others in that grade.

While Tamarack teachers may choose to administer short quizzes or block assessments from time to time, our educational system does not rely upon standardized test scores, which we consider an inaccurate measure of our student's skills and capacities given that these tests are not drawn from the particular curriculum taught in our school; nor are they capable of measuring many of the most important aspects of student experience and learning such as social and emotional indicators, teacher and student relationships, or the integration of skills and capacities into practical application.

Much of our curriculum emphasizes the implementation of curriculum subjects into practical and social situations thus requiring intensive teacher observation, note taking, and narrative reporting to capture and record evidence of such abilities.

Communicating the results of this ongoing assessment is not possible by assigning numbers or letters (grades) but is best done in conversation with parents and by a detailed report on the student.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Teachers of students in the upper grades may choose to begin giving grades or percentages for certain projects or blocks in an effort to prepare the student for experiences they will have in high school. Test taking experiences may also be part of this preparation. These choices are available, but it is left up to the class teacher to decide what is needed by the class.

Feedback also is given to students on a daily basis by the teacher's direct interaction with each student. At times, projects or work for home may be assigned to boost skills in a specific area. As students grow older, written feedback may be given at the end of each block, upon completion of a book or project or through year-end reports. Some teachers directly address the student in these reports as early as first grade. A sentence or two about their progress and focus for continued study might be added at the end of a longer report written primarily for parents.

Tamarack is able to offer on-site tutoring for math, reading and writing through Title I funding, and a teacher may recommend a student for this service, if necessary, after a student has reached nine years of age.

Tamarack provides many opportunities during the year for communication with parents regarding student progress, and parents are always free to request additional conversations. The scheduled opportunities are:

- In the fall, all grade school teachers will provide parents of their class with a curriculum overview for the school year.
- Parent/Teacher Conferences are held in October and March of each school year. Parents are expected to attend both sessions.
- Class Meetings are held two to three times per school year, and parents also are expected to take advantage of these opportunities to learn, along with other parents, what the class is doing.
- Quarterly student reports.
- By the end of June, all teachers will complete a year-end report that includes an overview of the year's work and specific feedback on each student's challenges and successes.

Kindergarten teachers collectively assess the readiness of five-year-old kindergartners to advance to Grade 1. Kindergarten students are assessed in the spring of their K5 year to ascertain their readiness for the and potential placement in Tamarack's first grade. They may decide that some students, particularly those young for their grade, continue in kindergarten for another year. K5 placement does not guarantee placement in the first grade the following year. They also may recommend, in consultation with the school's learning support specialists, that some students receive extra learning support lessons as a condition of moving into first grade.

All second-grade students participate in an assessment with the learning support specialist at some point during the school year. This assessment provides the class teacher with important information regarding the development of the individual student.

### **Proficiency for Grades 1-8**

Tamarack Waldorf School uses five proficiency categories that indicate how well students perform. Each category is noted by a number, which corresponds to a set of descriptors on a rubric of skills and capacities indicated for each grade level. Parents may request a copy of the Tamarack Curriculum Standards document from their student's teacher.

### **Standardized Tests**

Because of Tamarack's participation in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP), Tamarack must administer standardized tests to students in grades 3 – 8 that are then reported to the state's Department of Public Instruction. However, we do not recommend this experience, especially for the younger grades. While such testing is not consistent with Waldorf assessment practices nor does our curriculum align, it is required for all Choice schools. However, all families do have the option to opt out of taking the test. These test scores are not used by class teachers in their evaluations of students. However, as students enter

middle school, teachers consciously prepare them for the transition to high school, including those schools espousing other academic styles.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation Requirements**

The following is a list of areas determining students' standing in order to receive a 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation Certificate from Tamarack:

- A student must adequately complete all assigned work with good effort, including main lesson books, reports, exams, and projects for all main lesson blocks and specialty teachers. Each teacher will sign off on the completion of work in their area/class.
- An 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation Checklist will be given to 8th grade parents at intervals throughout the year.
- A student must attend school regularly throughout the year and adhere to our attendance policy.
- A student must be in good standing regarding behavior. No 8th grade student who has been expelled will be issued an 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation Certificate.
- A student must be currently enrolled at Tamarack. If a child has been withdrawn from school prior to 8<sup>th</sup> grade completion, they will not receive an 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation Certificate from Tamarack.

A student who fails to meet the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation requirements will neither be allowed to advance to the next grade nor participate in the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation Ceremony unless prior agreement has been reached with the class teacher.

### **Early Childhood Overview**

Within the framework of Waldorf Education, the Early Childhood Program is structured to provide a gradual transition from the life of the home to the life of a grade school classroom. It is based upon the simple, yet profound, concepts of imitation, repetition, and creative play. Due to its unique format, Waldorf early childhood is appropriate for, and open to, a mixed-age group of children from four to six years old. Tamarack's pre-kindergarten class (Rainbow Garden) is structured with developmentally appropriate activities for three and young four-year-olds.

While in early childhood, a child will gradually become accustomed to working within a group, listening to stories, interacting with a teacher, and following a daily routine. At the same time, the child is aided in their development as an individual through the encouragement of creative play and many artistic opportunities. All these activities are carefully developed and guided by the teacher. The teacher deeply understands the young child and their immersion in the world of movement, as well as the child's devotion to learning about the world around them through imitating everything they experience.

### **Festivals**

The celebration of many festivals throughout the year are among the most joyous and vital elements of Waldorf education. The purpose of festivals is to provide nourishment for the soul of each individual as well as to bring the community together. Festivals are a celebration of life, bringing to the school community a richness of story, song, light, and food.

Our first festival of the school year, as the light diminishes, is the Festival of Courage in early fall. The Lantern Walk is in November. The Winter Garden Walk echoes the deep winter holidays of light of many traditions, such as Christmas, Hanukkah and Winter Solstice, and is in early December. Late winter brings the gradual return of the light, and the spring bursts forth with the May Festival.

Throughout the year, depending on the traditions of the students in a class, other holidays are sometimes observed in the classrooms, in the form of songs, poems, stories, and crafts, such as Thanksgiving, St.

Nicholas Day, Diwali, Ramadan, and Earth Day. All play a part in the recognition of the seasons through celebration.

Parents assist with festival celebrations, particularly the school-wide events. Speak to your child's teacher and find out how you can work with the class to help bring about a full celebration of the annual turning of the seasons and festivals of the year.

## ENROLLMENT AND RE-ENROLLMENT

### **Transfer of Credit Policy**

Offering the well-established and international Waldorf curriculum at Tamarack Waldorf School does not utilize a traditional credits approach to evaluating and placing students. Regarding the tracking of student progress, and in accordance with Waldorf principles and curriculum, Tamarack Waldorf School operates as follows:

### **Incoming Student**

#### Early Childhood and Grade School

To identify the proper grade placement of an incoming student, the school requests reports and other school records from the parents/guardians. Two members of the faculty are assigned to review and assess such records and to meet with the incoming student and their parents/guardians. Following a thorough interview and evaluation, class placement will be made and records from the previous school requested.

### **Outgoing Student**

Each student at Tamarack Waldorf School is reviewed periodically by his or her teachers and a written evaluation prepared and provided to the student's parents/guardians and retained in the student's school records. This evaluation is comprehensive in nature, detailing the student's academic and non-academic accomplishments and areas of opportunity in a thorough and thoughtful manner. The evaluation contains the data and information for a student's new school to make an informed and appropriate decision on proper grade placement and academic achievement of each student. Requests for copies of outgoing student records made by the new school's administration are fulfilled promptly.

### **Application Appeals Process**

Under Tamarack Waldorf School's appeals process, a rejected applicant has five working days from the date of receipt of their notice of rejection to provide written information to a designated committee of school leaders that the applicant was improperly rejected. The information must include income and residency documentation. The administrator will respond to the applicant's appeal within five working days of receipt of the appeal notifying them of the acceptance or rejection of the appeal.

### **Preliminary Enrollment Period**

Tamarack has a standard 60-day preliminary enrollment period for all new students, and a check-in time with parents/guardians after the first 30 days if needed. This provides an opportunity for both parents/guardians and teachers to discuss how the transition to our school is progressing both academically and socially. Class teachers and specialists will provide input on the student's progress to determine the viability of full enrollment to Tamarack Waldorf School. Parents/guardians will receive an acceptance or denial to full enrollment after the 60-day preliminary enrollment period. In some cases, the preliminary enrollment period may be extended for an additional 60 days.

## Classroom Requests

Tamarack does not accept requests for placement in particular kindergarten classrooms or other classrooms; placement in kindergartens and the grades is determined by faculty.

## Re-Enrollment Issues

We are proud that Tamarack continues to grow and attract new families every year. However, this does mean that our families need to be aware of re-enrollment requirements and deadlines so that they do not jeopardize their enrollment status.

Because of our participation in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, our re-enrollment period begins in earnest in March for the following school year. The laws governing the Choice program changed dramatically in 2011-12, resulting in new income guidelines and new procedures that went into effect in July 2011. In general, the changes allow more families to participate in the Choice program.

Tamarack encourages all Choice families to prepare to re-enroll as early as possible. Two Choice rules impact re-enrollment for our returning families. First, we are limited in the number of Choice seats available in each class. Second, we are required to treat all Choice applications submitted within a given enrollment period equally. This means that it is possible for a new student who has submitted a complete Choice application (complete with required documentation) to take the intended spot of a returning student who has not submitted a complete Choice application. *Therefore, all returning Choice families should be sure to re-enroll (sign the required forms in the office) during the first open enrollment period of the season.* Look for more information regarding changes in Choice enrollment procedures throughout the school year.

Private pay families also need to be aware of re-enrollment requirements, fees, and deadlines. With many classes at capacity, it is possible for new private pay students to take the intended spot of a returning private pay family, if the returning family has not taken the required steps to reserve their child's seat or has not clearly communicated their re-enrollment intentions.

## PART II - Daily Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

### ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS

As in all Waldorf education, the learning at Tamarack is based upon experience. Teachers create an unfolding of the curriculum throughout the day, the week, and the year. Because the curriculum is planned so that material will be built upon later in the year and/or following years, it may not be possible to adequately make up missed class time. By promoting regular, on time, and full day attendance, parents allow their students to fully experience what their teachers have so meticulously prepared for them. The benefit of regular attendance begins in the early childhood classrooms and continues through the grades. Absenteeism and tardiness effects not only the student who will experience gaps in their educational experience, but also socially affects the student and the other students in the class as well. If your student must take time away from any part of the school day, please keep in mind that communication with your class teacher is vital.

### Attendance Policy

**A student may not exceed 10 absences, either excused or unexcused, in any school year.**

- A student who accumulates more than ten (10) total absences (including both excused or unexcused) can only be promoted to the next sequential grade at the discretion of the faculty and/or administrator.

- If a student misses ten (10) or more consecutive days as a result of a truancy absence, he/she will be considered to have voluntarily withdrawn on the 11<sup>th</sup> consecutive day.
- A student promoted to the next grade who has exceeded the limit of ten (10) total absences (including both excused or unexcused) in the school year, is promoted on a trial basis with a "Continuing Enrollment Contract" in place. The duration of this trial basis is based on the terms of the contract. If the terms of the contract are not followed, the student will be dismissed.

If a student is absent five (5) or more days in the school year, a letter will be sent home as a marker of this concerning level of absenteeism.

If a student reaches ten (10) missed days a letter will be sent home with the date and time of a scheduled meeting between the student's parents/guardians, the lead teacher, and the administrative assistant/attendance monitor. (Please note that a student in grade 6 and older will attend this meeting with the group.) The purpose of the meeting will be to 1) evaluate how the student is doing, and 2) draw up a "Conditions for Continuing Enrollment Contract." This contract will be signed by those involved in the meeting.

If the student does not fulfill the requirements of the contract, a reevaluation meeting will be scheduled with the same parties to discuss the dismissal of the student from Tamarack.

Regular attendance at school may only be interrupted for the following excused reasons:

1. Illness of student (*Any absences must be accompanied by a signed note from the parent/guardian or doctor indicating both the reason for and the duration of the absence.*)
2. A serious illness or death of an immediate family member (*Parent/guardian must contact the school office to explain the situation and estimated time of absence from school.*)
3. Mandated medical appointments or mandated medical leaves must be accompanied by a physician's note indicating both the reason and the duration of the absence (*medical procedures or specialist appointments that cannot happen at any other time*)
4. Observance of religious holidays (*Parent/guardian must contact the school office and give estimated time of absence from school.*)
5. Those mandated by the school (*suspension, lice, strep throat, etc.*)

In any of these five (5) circumstances, an absence is excused. Regular medical or dental appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours, as much as possible. Parents/guardians are responsible for calling the office on the day of a student's absence from school, and the lead teacher will be notified. Depending on the grade, the teacher will decide the best course of action for making up work missed. Students are responsible for work missed and parents/guardians are responsible for possible tutoring to make up for missed work.

Attendance is mandatory at all scheduled performances, field trips and class trips, including those that take place outside of regular school hours. Attendance is also mandatory at all festivals scheduled during the school day. These experiences are part of Waldorf and individual class curricula.

Absences that are considered unexcused:

1. The result of family travel plans that extend beyond the published starting and ending dates of school holidays and vacations, or any vacations taken during school days
2. Home days
3. The result of willful truancy on the part of a student
4. Those that are not excused by standards 1 – 5 above

5. Any absence after the tenth absence that is not accompanied by a note from the parent/guardian or doctor to explain the circumstances

In the case of an unexcused absence, depending on the grade, the student and parents/guardians must put forth an effort to make up any work missed. Students will be held responsible for work missed and parents/guardians are responsible for possible tutoring to make up for missed work. The teacher cannot be expected to provide the help necessary to complete an assignment when an unexcused absence occurs.

The Wisconsin Board of Education requires all students enrolled at Tamarack to attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the state. School attendance directly affects whether Tamarack will be permitted to continue participation in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, and Tamarack takes attendance issues seriously. It is a legal necessity that Tamarack documents all absences on a student's permanent record. In cases of habitual unexcused absences and excessive tardiness, a high school may take this into account when determining admissions or allowing candidates into particular programs (honors programs, foreign exchange, etc.).

### **Extended Absence from School**

Partly because of the importance of attendance at our school, Tamarack requires families who wish to have their children miss extended periods of time from school (i.e., for a month or two abroad), or families who wish to try alternative methods of schooling within a school year (i.e., homeschooling), to formally withdraw their student. Once a student has been withdrawn, re-enrollment will require the parents to start the admissions process anew, beginning with filling out a re-admittance application. Re-admittance must be approved by a committee, including the Administrative Director, the class teacher, and the Pedagogical Director. The student's school record, any outstanding charges, and assessment of the family's commitment to the school may be factors in whether the student is re-admitted. Choice students who withdraw in a semester cannot return to Tamarack until the following semester (after submitting a new Choice application).

Per Wisconsin state Statute section 118.15(3)(a), students may be excused who are temporarily unable to attend school for medical reasons but expected to be able to return upon termination or abatement of the illness or condition. Such an excuse under this paragraph shall be in writing, from a physician, and must include both the time frame and the reason for the excuse, which may not exceed 30 days.

### **Tuancy**

Wisconsin statute states that a student who misses part or all of one day without an acceptable excuse is considered "truant." A student who misses five (5) or more days without an acceptable excuse in one school semester is considered "habitually truant" and a truancy referral may be made by the school against the student. The entire Wisconsin statute pertaining to this matter is available in the school office for review. [Statute 118.16]

When a student is truant from school, the following steps, as outlined in the Wisconsin statute, will occur:

1. If a student is absent from school without an acceptable excuse for all or part of one day the school will notify the parents/guardians and direct the parent to provide an excuse. Notice will be made by personal contact, phone call or mail, and a record will be kept.
2. If a student has accumulated five (5) truant days in one school semester, they will be considered habitually truant, and a letter will be sent by certified mail. This letter will include the date and time of a required meeting between school personnel and the parents/guardians.
3. A habitually truant student may be referred to the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office.

4. After ten (10) consecutive days of unexcused absences without parent contact, the student will be considered withdrawn.

## **Tardiness**

A student who is tardy ten (10) times in a school year is considered excessively tardy.

- Continued excessive tardiness may result in dismissal from the school.
- A student promoted to the next grade who has a record of excessive tardiness, is promoted on a probationary basis. The duration of this probation may last throughout their time at Tamarack. If the terms of the probation are not followed, the student may be dismissed.

Punctuality plays an important role in the rhythm of the opening of the school day. To support the rhythmic life of each student, on-time arrival to school is imperative. To begin the school day as a unified whole is a committed effort that profoundly affects the habit life of the school, the class, and the individual student. When students arrive late to class, they are denied its full benefit, including emotional and social benefits. In addition, they create a disruption to the natural flow of the lesson that all our teachers endeavor to develop in each and every one of their classes. Being on time will help students establish good habits, a rhythmic relationship to time, and a strong will that can serve them in their educational journey.

Grades 1 through 8 begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. School doors open at 7:50 a.m. *Parents are strongly encouraged to consider 7:50 a.m. as the start of school so that their children understand the importance of being on time and are never tardy.* Arrival time should be planned to allow students to enter the building with their class each morning at 7:50 a.m. Class time begins at 8:00 a.m. and students must be in their desks ready to begin. Late arriving students are required to obtain a late slip from the school office and wait quietly outside the classroom until they are admitted.

If a pattern of tardiness develops, the following will take place. Upon the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) tardy, a letter will be sent home eliciting parental support and cooperation in teaching their child the value of being prompt.

If a student reaches ten (10) tardy days a letter will be sent home with the date and time of a scheduled meeting between the student's parents/guardians, the lead teacher, and the administrative assistant/attendance monitor. (Please note that a student in grade 6 and older will attend this meeting with the group.) The purpose of the meeting will be to 1) evaluate how the student is doing, and 2) draw up a "Conditions for Continuing Enrollment Contract." This contract will be signed by those involved in the meeting.

If the student does not meet the requirements of the contract, a reevaluation meeting will be scheduled with the same parties to discuss the dismissal of the student from Tamarack.

Early Childhood children begin their day promptly at 8:00 a.m. When arriving late, after the day has already begun, it can be quite difficult for a child to comfortably enter the room. Some children are reluctant to join in with the activity already in progress, while others are equally overwhelmed by a joyous welcome from their friends. When arriving late, parents must bring their child to the main door and wait for a staff person to take the child to the classroom. If the class is beginning their day outdoors it is the responsibility of the parent to deliver the child to the outdoor class location when the child arrives late to school. All early childhood children will be expected to follow the tardy policy set for grades 1-8. Families will be notified if excessive tardiness develops

## **Absentee and Tardy Reporting**

*Under Wisconsin's "Missing Child Law," parents or guardians must notify the school office any morning their child is not attending.* If a student will be absent or late to school, Tamarack requires a parent to call 414-



277-0009 and leave a message on the attendance line at school, stating the reason for the absence or tardy, before the start of the school day, so that the teacher may be informed before starting their class for the day. Informing the teacher directly does not officially excuse a student. The school office must be notified. Please do not email this information; we prefer phone calls. If a student is unable to attend school for more than one day, please notify the office on each day, unless it was a planned absence that is communicated in advance, (i.e., a funeral). Written notice of a doctor's appointment or other pre-planned absence from school should be provided to the office at least one day ahead of time. It is strongly encouraged that medical or dental appointments be scheduled outside of school time.

All absences must be accompanied by a note signed by the parent/guardian or doctor indicating the reason for and duration of the absence.

If there has been no communication from a student's family regarding an absence, the office will contact the family. Absences will be considered unexcused until a parent/guardian informs the office about the nature of the missed day. This notification to the office should be made by the parent/guardian as soon as possible, but no later than the close of business on the day following the unexcused absence.

## VISITOR POLICIES

Tamarack teachers cannot accommodate drop-in visitors. There may be days and weeks that a visit is not possible because of a variety of reasons. Visitors who plan to work directly with students must have a background check done by the school. Paperwork for this background check is available in the school office and must be submitted 5 days before the visit.

### General Procedures

- Classroom visits require prior approval by the teacher of that class.
- All visitors must register with the front office upon their arrival for that day and wear a visitor's badge during their visit.
- All visitors must support the mood that is cultivated in the school (electronic devices, including mobile phones, must be turned off, etc.).
- Any teacher reserves the right to accept or deny classroom visits.

### Adult School Visitors

Tamarack welcomes visitors to see our school and alums to drop in to say hello and let us know what they are currently doing. Visitors observing classes must make arrangements ahead of the visit with either the teacher(s) being observed or through the Enrollment Coordinator. All visitors must sign the log in the office and wear a "Visitor" badge during their visit.

### Student-Aged Visitors

In the grade school, special arrangements can be made for a student who is not enrolled at Tamarack to visit a class. All student visits need to be arranged in advance with the school office and the teacher of the class being visited. Information must be filed noting the reason for the visit, emergency contact information and the duration of the visit. The parent bringing the student should sign the log at the front desk.

## CHILD CUSTODY INFORMATION

Both custodial and non-custodial parents (a non-custodial parent is a parent who does not have physical custody of the child) have the right to (a) view their child's school records, (b) receive school progress and

disciplinary reports and all school mailings, (c) attend parent/teacher conferences, and (d) visit the child briefly at school. Tamarack Waldorf School shall administer these rights in accordance with the policies set forth below:

Tamarack Waldorf School shall respect the rights of custodial and non-custodial parents equally, except when a court order exists restricting such rights. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school administrator with a copy of such a court order if restricted access to students or student information is requested. The court order must be affixed with the court's official file-stamp.

It is the responsibility of both parents, regardless of custody and/or visitation rights, to provide the school with address and contact information so that the school can include both parents in their mailings and communications. If there is no information about one parent on the school's Emergency Contact Forms, that parent will not have access to the student on school premises until the relationship can be verified. If a parent fails to complete the annual back to school forms which include emergency contact forms and policy statements, their parent status will be moved to secondary parent. Secondary parents will not receive school progress reports, disciplinary reports, or school mailings.

In cases where there is a dispute over either parent's relationship to the student, both parties will be asked for legal documentation verifying their relationship to the student. School records will reflect the student's legal name, regardless of the remarriage of the mother, reversion of the mother to her maiden name, or the wishes of either parent.

### **Access to Pupils on School Grounds and Special Release of Pupils**

Tamarack Waldorf School respectfully asks the cooperation of all family members in handling issues of parental access to pupils at school. Please join us in placing concern for the safety and well-being of the children above all others. Parents are urged to handle personal matters involving their children outside regular school hours. The school will err on the side of the safety of the student when determining access in any situation. The administration and faculty are responsible for the safety and welfare of the pupils during the school day.

Unplanned visits by parents to students during school hours are discouraged. Teachers and students must use their time together carefully, and a drop-in visit by a parent can be disruptive. Parents wishing to visit their children during the school day should make specific arrangements with the class teacher at least 24 hours in advance and check in at the office just prior to the visit so that the administration is aware of their presence in the school building.

Unplanned visits by non-custodial parents during school hours may not be allowed, depending upon whether the parent has registered with the school on the child's Emergency Contact Form and upon the school's understanding of custodial and placement arrangements.

A pupil may be released to a parent who is not the enrolling parent with primary placement only in three specific situations: 1) that parent is identified on the student's current Emergency Contact Form, and there is no document restricting access on file; 2) that parent gives the school the most recent file-stamped court order showing their joint custodial and placement arrangements which allow access; 3) the enrolling parent with primary placement gives explicit permission.

### **DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP**

The school is located in a high traffic area. All parents are asked to use CAUTION and PATIENCE when dropping off or picking up their children. All parents and students must obey traffic signals, including

crosswalks and parking limits. All parents are asked to drive clockwise around the school: from Humboldt, to Hamilton, to Franklin, to Brady.

### **Entry to School Building**

The doorbell is located at the main entrance. Visitors should be prepared to identify themselves, as most office desks do not have a visual line to the entryway. A staff member will either buzz the door to allow entry or come to the door to speak with the visitor.

The doorbell at the driveway door (in the driveway off Brady Street) should only be used outside of normal school hours. This door is used to pick up students from aftercare. We may also direct parents to use this door when picking up students from the health room or for COVID testing.

### **Speed Limit & Parking Policies**

Our parking lot is closed to cars and parking during the school day. We ask that all parents seek street parking and walk the short walk to school with your student. We ask that everyone observe a voluntary SPEED LIMIT 15 mph or less while traveling on the two streets adjacent to the school, Franklin Place and Brady Street. This is especially important during peak drop-off and pick-up times, as students may run out to meet cars.

### **Drop Off and Pick Up**

Parents, or others who are dropping off or picking up students, will not be permitted inside the building during drop-off or pick-up times. Parents and others must stay out of the parking lot line up area. Parking lot barriers will be in place each morning and afternoon. Classroom days will be extended slightly to allow for staggered arrival/dismissal.

**Drop-Off:** Drop-off will begin at 7:40 a.m. Cars can pull up to the drop-off zones on Franklin Place or Brady Street. Each class will have a designated place to meet in the parking lot to line up. Class teachers will be stationed at their assigned designated class spot to help usher their class students into the school building and to the classroom. Class entry into the building will be staggered, as all must enter through the basement door to hang up coats and change into indoor shoes. Students will go up their designated stairwell to class as a group with the class teacher and assistant. Classroom teachers, assistants, and administrative staff will support drop-off and pick-up each day.

Assistants can assist with helping a student out of their car seat, but we ask that the car seat be on the passenger side of the car. We also encourage parents, or those dropping off students, to find parking in the neighborhood and walk their children to the drop-off location. There is free morning parking in a lot located between Arlington Pl. and Warren Ave., one block from Tamarack.

Students who walk to school, or whose drop-off person has parked in the neighborhood and walk their student to the building, may enter the parking lot from the driveway or the church garden off Humboldt Street. Only students will be allowed in the parking lot line up area.

Students of employees must remain with their parent until it is time to line up in the parking lot.

**Pick-Up:** Pick-up will take place outdoors, with students lining up in their designated area in the parking lot, with their class teacher. Families will be asked to pick up at their oldest child's designated time. Walkie talkies will be used to move students from their designated area to cars. Students who have permission to leave on their own afterschool will be dismissed once the class is outside. Class assistants will be stationed on Franklin Place and Brady Street, and in the parking lot to assist with pick-up. School end times will be

staggered to allow for distance between the classroom groups. Classes must use their designated stairwell to move to the basement for building exit.

Parents, or pick up person, arriving on foot to pick up their student should check in with one of the assistants in the pick-up zones. The assistance will radio the class teacher to send the child to the pick-up zone. Younger students will be retrieved by the assistant and brought to the parent.

Students of employees will remain with their class teacher until their parent is ready to retrieve.

**Other notes:** Student drop-off and pick-up will take place on Franklin Place and Brady Street. Students must exit and enter the car on the passenger side of the car. Pick up person may walk into the parking lot via the driveway and ask the assistant at the barrier to call their student over.

During situations of extreme weather, we may decide to have students enter the building when they arrive. The class teacher or assistant will meet students in their designated basement area and lead them to the classroom as they are ready. We will work to move students quickly in and through the basement, so that interactions remain limited. We may also take this approach at the end of day for pick-up. If weather is severe, students will wait inside until called to exit the building. Tamarack students are accustomed to going outside in all types of weather. We expect them to come to school prepared to wait outside in different types of weather.

Please do not send someone with whom the teacher is not familiar to pick up your child without prior notification. In the interest of safety, teachers may need to hold a student with them until they can verify that the person picking them up has authorization to do so.

Parents must be aware of their children's location and behavior after the class teacher has released them. Parents need to remind their children that school rules are ALWAYS in effect both in the building and on the grounds.

## EXTENDED CARE

Our Extended Care program is changing. More information regarding before and after school care will be made available before the start of the 2022-23 school year.

## TRANSPORTATION

Tamarack encourages school families to carpool when possible. Office staff will help families locate other families in their neighborhoods for carpooling if requested.

### **MPS Transportation Reimbursement Program**

Milwaukee Public Schools has a reimbursement program for elementary families who live within city limits and more than two miles from Tamarack. Both MPCP and Private Pay families can qualify. The enrollment deadline for this program is in June, so families who are admitted to Tamarack after June must wait until the following year to qualify. It is important for enrolled families who move during the school year to inform the office in writing or by email of their new address, in case it qualifies parents for MPS reimbursement. Families who qualify will receive notice in the spring of the school year to sign their contract in the school office. Reimbursement checks are issued by DPI once all the school contracts are signed and processed. Families will be notified when checks are ready for pick up in the school office. Please note that checks can come as late as September of the next school year.

## **Public Transportation**

Milwaukee County buses and trolleys can be used to travel to and from the school. For a complete schedule and rate information, please call 414-344-6711 or log on to [www.ridemcts.com](http://www.ridemcts.com). Students may be able to ride free or at a discounted rate, depending on their age. In general, bus Route 10 travels on Humboldt Avenue. Route 15 travels on Brady Street. Route 14 travels on Holton Avenue. Route 30 travels north on Farwell Avenue, and south on Prospect Avenue. There is also the river route trolley that travels along Brady Street and to downtown.

## **Bicycles**

We have a secure bike rack installed on Franklin Place. Riders must provide their own locks. Bubblr public biking has a station adjacent to St. Hedwig's church on Brady Street as well.

## **Independent Departures**

Students who walk, bike, or bus to school on their own will be allowed to leave the school independently so long as parents have completed the proper release form. We trust parents will instruct their children in proper safety for making their way home from school. Students who depart independently may not linger on school grounds after 3:20 p.m. Students waiting to be picked up must have an alternate place to wait beyond the school grounds.

## **CONDUCT IN SCHOOL**

Students are expected to be cooperative and to show respect for teachers, staff, volunteers, visiting adults, other students, follow rules and show respect for personal and school property. They also are expected to conduct themselves honorably in their academic work. These expectations apply to the instructional day, as well as Extended Care, at the park, during extracurricular activities, on field trips, and during school functions. Please review the rules of good conduct with your children.

### **Pledge of Respect:**

At the beginning of the school year, the following Pledge of Respect will be discussed with all students from grades 4 to 8 in a manner appropriate to each grade.

*This is my pledge:*

- *I will strive to listen and act in a respectful way towards all community members of Tamarack Waldorf School, both adults and students alike.*
- *I will strive to observe and follow all school and playground rules, as well as the school dress code as outlined in the school handbook.*
- *I will strive to care for the building, its grounds, and other places I go with my class.*

### **School Rules:**

- Respect self, others, and property
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to oneself
- Students may not leave the school building without permission of the teacher
- No candy or gum at school
- Students and adults must be quiet in the halls
- No running in the halls
- No offensive or obscene language or gestures
- Everyone is welcome to play – no exclusive games. Students must ask politely if they can join

- No electronic games, music playing devices, cell phones or beepers visible or in use during the school day. Cell phones may be used by students in grades 6 – 8 outside the school building with permission of the sidewalk supervisor and while standing with them (please see Cell Phone Use policy).<sup>2</sup>
- No hitting, punching, biting, spitting, or fighting of any kind
- No roaming the halls – all students in the hall must have a Hall Pass, a note from their teacher, or be accompanied by an adult
- Bathroom breaks may only be taken with permission of the teacher
- All pick-up arrangements should be made prior to being dropped off before school. Students may not use the office phone after school.

### **Student Cell Phone Use**

Students are allowed to use their cell phones outside the school building, with faculty or staff permission. Students must request permission from a teacher prior to using the phone and remain near that teacher while on the phone. Use of phones without faculty permission is prohibited.

### **Non-Harassment Policy**

Tamarack Waldorf School takes pride in, and is committed to, creating a safe and nurturing environment for all students, staff, and parents. We believe in treating others with respect and will not tolerate any form of harassment. Harassment includes repeated, unwanted, and disrespectful conduct towards another. Tamarack Waldorf School encourages everyone at the school to help in the prevention of harassment. Persons who observe or suffer incidents of harassment may report such incidents to a teacher or member of administration, who will document the reported incident. The report will be turned over to the Head(s) of School who will investigate and address it in accordance with Tamarack Waldorf School's disciplinary process.

Parents are responsible for their own children until they are in the care of a staff member at the start of the day and are responsible at pick-up time once they have been released from the teacher. Parents also are responsible for their children during festivals and other school and community events.

### **Conduct Outdoors**

School rules remain in effect when students leave the school grounds for recess or other school sponsored excursions. The grade school primarily uses Pulaski Park, a public playground, for outdoor play. However, students also may visit other playgrounds and natural areas.

### **PULASKI PARK**

Students in the kindergartens and grades typically visit Pulaski Park, a public recreation area, at least once a day. The park, located northeast of Pulaski Street between Arlington and Kane, is approximately three blocks from the school. There is minimal traffic on the walking route. Information about safety procedures is provided here:

#### **Park Procedures**

- Students are always under the supervision of teachers or teacher assistants.
- Teachers or teacher assistants walk with students to the park, supervising all street crossings.

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<sup>2</sup> Disciplinary measures may include, but are not limited to, confiscation of the item by faculty or staff witnessing the use, or detention. Only by explicit permission of a teacher may a cell phone be used after school.

- When multiple classes are present, teachers and assistants generally position themselves to cover the entire park – playground, tennis courts, and the upper field.
- Students are instructed, while at the park, to always stay within sight of teachers or assistants.
- Students may be restricted to a smaller area of the park when there are fewer supervising adults.
- Teachers generally bring first aid kits with them to the park.
- Teachers are always able to communicate to the school using school walkie-talkies or personal cell phones.
- When incidents or injuries occur, supervising teachers document them in the school office and communicate to parents as necessary.
- All items under Playground/Outdoor Rules must be followed.

### **Playground/Outdoor Rules:**

- Students must walk on sidewalks, respecting neighbors' property, while traveling to and from the park and in the neighborhood.
- Students are not permitted in the street and must cross the street ONLY at designated crosswalks with adult supervision, or under the teacher's direction.
- Students may not leave the park without the teacher's permission and must be accompanied by an adult.
- Students are not allowed to play on the hillside or retaining walls facing Pulaski Street.
- Students may not climb on or play under the park fences.
- Tree climbing is not allowed.
- Ball play is limited to the tennis courts and upper field. Only an adult may retrieve balls that have travelled out of the park into the yards of neighbors.
- Sledding is allowed, at the teachers' discretion, in the upper field ONLY, when snow is sufficient; only plastic sleds are allowed; no snowboards are permitted. Students MUST sit facing forward on sleds.
- Sports equipment may be brought only with advance permission from the class teacher.
- Students may use sticks for building or play.
- No throwing of snow, wood chips or sand will be permitted.
- Everyone is welcome to play – no exclusive games; the only rule is that students must ask politely if they can join. Teachers may take someone out of play if their actions become too silly or destructive.
- No fighting (some rough play is allowed; teachers monitor the mood of play to ensure safety).
- No secrets at school.
- No unsupervised play.

Parents in attendance at outdoor festivals and picnics are responsible for their children. Please uphold the ideals described in this section and in the school rules section of the Family Handbook.

### **DISCIPLINARY ACTION/ACADEMIC CONCERN POLICY**

A student who does not follow the rules and Pledge of Respect (see Conduct in School), or who is not striving to meet academic standards, will need remedial action. Discipline is individualized to meet the needs of students and situations, and may include one or more of the following:

- **Letters of Concern** or other written communication with parents: Letters of Concern are letters or notes sent home to parents about students whose work is consistently late, incomplete, or of poor quality, or whose behavior has been inappropriate. Class teachers or specialty teachers may send these.

- **Discipline Reports:** When an intentional injury occurs or when an incident warrants serious attention from parents and teachers, the teacher will complete a Discipline Report, including appropriate consequences for the intentional action, such as a student missing recess, being sent home, or performing a school community service. Such Discipline Reports will be hand-delivered to parents or information will be communicated via phone call or email within two business days. The Discipline Report will be placed in the student's file. If a student hurts another student physically, both sets of parents will be notified, and Injury and Discipline Reports will be completed and delivered to parents as described above and placed in the appropriate files.
  - **Purpose of Report:**
    - Report will be completed when a student action warrants serious attention from teacher and parent.
    - Parent will be informed of the incident, by the teacher issuing the report, on the day the report is filed in the office.
    - Student consequence and/or suspension is determined by multiple factors and each situation is dealt with on an individual basis.
    - Depending on the nature of the action or violation, expulsion may be considered.
    - Incident/Discipline Reports are for TWS records only. An Expulsion Notice is part of the student's permanent record.

## **Consequences**

As our younger grade students are learning to take responsibility for their own behavior and the consequences of inappropriate behavior, the class and specialty teachers will implement an incremental system to help a student understand the importance of appropriate patterns of behavior. Some methods might be a warning, an individual conversation, redirection of activity, loss of privileges, or some required tasks of reparation or restitution. Restitution may consist of writing a letter of apology or an essay about the behavior and the part of the Pledge of Respect that was broken.

There is a gradual progression in accountability for individual conduct and responsibility. Older students are more capable of understanding the importance of their schooling and how their own behaviors enhance or detract from the learning of their classmates and the importance of modeling appropriate social community behavior for younger students. Students for whom the loss of privileges does not deliver a strong enough message may be expected to participate in the forming of behavior plans and contracts with their teacher and other staff. The hope of such processes is to impress on the students the importance of appropriate school behavior and working positively in the school community and to give them voice and ownership in a plan to do so.

## **Guidelines for Suspension**

### **Suspension**

Parents/guardians will be called to remove their student from school immediately for a disciplinary infraction and/or consistent or serious disregard of school policy. Parents/guardians must make an adult available during the school day when the faculty and staff determine that the student may no longer be in the school. Before a student may be readmitted to class, the parents/guardians need to meet with the suspending teacher, and sometimes other personnel to discuss the matter and set conditions for the student's return to school. The following are examples of misconduct that may result in a student being sent home the day of occurrence and/or for a predetermined number of subsequent days:

- **Safety:** any action that endangers the safety of another person



- Blatant defiance of school policy, protocol, or of a school employee
- Inappropriate sexual behavior
- Violent behavior or threats of violence
- Destruction of property
- Unauthorized leaving of classroom, school grounds, or group
- Abuse of classroom materials
- Emotional, physical, verbal, or sexual harassment of another school member
- Bias or hate speech, or action
- Physical hostility or fighting
- Verbal hostility (swearing, insults, taunting, teasing, etc.)
- Theft
- In possession of illegal substance or weapon

### **Probation or Continuing Enrollment**

Tamarack Waldorf School reserves the right to place a student on probation under any of the following circumstances:

- New students are admitted with a standard 60-day preliminary enrollment period, during which the school evaluates its abilities to meet the student's needs.
- A student may be placed on disciplinary probation with a behavior contract.
- A student may also be placed on academic probation with an academic behavior contract.
- A student who has exceeded the limit of excused absences, unexcused absences, or tardy days for a given school year, is promoted to the next grade on a probationary basis with a continuing contract.

### **Expulsion**

Tamarack Waldorf School reserves the right to expel a student under any of the following circumstances:

- Violent behavior or threat of violence
- Inappropriate sexual behavior on school property
- Act that endangers the safety of another person
- Blatant defiance of school policy, protocol, or of teacher/staff
- Theft or accessory to theft
- Arson
- Destruction of property
- Leaving school grounds
- Emotional/physical/sexual harassment of another
- Bias or hate speech or action
- Possession of alcohol or illegal substances on premises
- Possession of weapon on premises
- An accumulated record of misconduct
- Special needs are greater than the school's ability to meet them
- Fails to fulfill the terms of academic, disciplinary or attendance contract
- Parent/guardian behavior
- Default on tuition payment and agreement

### **Restriction from Sports Participation**

Class teachers and coaches may restrict students from sports participation for behavioral, academic or attendance reasons, at their discretion.

## **Due Process**

Parents/guardians of students who are expelled may appeal the action. Appeals are directed to and handled by the Administrative Director and Pedagogical Director. An appeal must be received in writing within five (5) business days of notification of the expulsion. The letter containing notification for expulsion will give directions on who to send the appeal to. A decision regarding the appeal will be made by and communicated to the parent via email and mail within ten (10) business days of receiving the written appeal, unless additional information or investigation is required. A communication will be sent to the parent, if additional time is needed, giving an expected date of decision.

## **Parental Behavior at School**

Parents are asked to sign a Family Pledge of Understanding at the beginning of each school year demonstrating their general support for school rules. Parents who do not abide by the Family Pledge of Understanding may be required to meet with the administrator or other school personnel to address the behavior issue. Parents who repeatedly disregard the Family Pledge of Understanding may be required to sign a contract outlining conduct objectives that must be met for their family to continue at Tamarack. Parental behavior can be a reason for the expulsion of a student from Tamarack.

## **DRESS CODE**

It is Tamarack Waldorf School's intent to sustain a community that is inclusive of a diverse range of identities. While the primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and parents or guardians, Tamarack Waldorf School is responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student while at school and that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student. The school is also responsible for seeing that dress code enforcement does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any student or interfere with any student's engagement in learning or feelings of safety, security, or belonging in the classroom.

### **Goals**

Our dress code is designed to accomplish the following goals:

- Maintain safe and functional learning environments.
- Allow students to wear clothing of their choice that is comfortable.
- Allow students to wear clothing that expresses their self-identified gender.
- Allow students to wear religious attire without fear of discipline or discrimination.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing with offensive images or language, including profanity, language or symbols implying profanity, hate speech, images or language depicting or advocating violence or the use of alcohol or drugs, racism or racially insensitive content, content that is lewd, vulgar, or obscene, defamatory speech or threats to others.
- Ensure that all students are treated equitably in dress code enforcement regardless of race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, cultural observance, household income, body type/size, or religion.

### **Expectations**

Our dress code requires the following of student attire at school and school functions:

- Students **must wear** a top (with fabric in the front, back, and on the sides under the arms), bottom (pants/sweatpants/shorts/skirt/dress/leggings), and shoes at all times. Some activity-specific requirements may apply (including: Physical Education, Woodwork, weather-based outdoor requirements, field trip-based activity requirements).
- Students **cannot wear** attire containing the following:

- Violent language or images
- Images or language depicting drugs or alcohol (or any illegal item or activity)
- Hate speech, profanity (explicit or implied)
- Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class
- Visible underwear (visible waistbands or straps on undergarments worn under other clothing will not be enforced as a violation)
- Helmets or headgear that obscures the face (exceptions: religious headwear, cold-weather gear when outdoors, medical headgear, or COVID-19 related personal protective equipment)

### **Early Childhood Dress Code**

***The following dress code is in addition to the all-school dress code. Early childhood students must comply with both.***

- All items brought or worn to school must be free of logos, words, and images. This includes blankets, pillows, and bags.
- Children should be dressed in layers which are easy to take off. We suggest three layers on top and two on bottom during the cold months. Children should also have warm socks that are high enough not to slide down. Too much is better than too little.
- All children must have a sun hat during the warm months.
- No umbrellas allowed.
- Outdoor clothing appropriate for all conditions must be present during the school day throughout the year.
- Indoor and outdoor shoes must be comfortable, rubber-soled shoes designed for running. Tennis shoes are the best. Shoes must be able to stay on a child's feet during all activities.
- Jewelry should not be worn or brought to school. Pierced ears are permitted. Earrings should be studs only.

### **FOOD GUIDELINES**

Students need to bring a bag/box lunch to school. Please send lunch boxes without media or cartoon images per the dress code. Grade school students must bring a lunch that includes enough food for a midmorning snack, unless otherwise directed by the class teacher. The school will provide early childhood students with a nutritious snack each day.

Good nutrition is the cornerstone of a healthy life and supports learning. We encourage parents to pack food that is fresh and high in nutrition. Our "Golden Rule" is: Send as much living food as possible.

**Living food:** Healthy lunches include raw fruits and vegetables, yogurt, cheese, nuts, seeds, whole grains, dried fruit, hard boiled eggs, soups, stews, and salads. Good proteins include tuna, peanut butter, tofu, turkey, chicken, salmon, beans, and legumes.

**Beverages:** Water or milk makes the best drink for children. A limited amount of fruit juice is acceptable, but keep in mind that eight ounces of juice packs as much sugar as five or more pieces of fruit! Brands of 100% fruit juice are preferred. Water is always available to the children at school.

**Do not send:** We discourage highly sugared or processed foods. Students require nutritious foods to properly develop. Do not send the following for snack or lunch: candy, gum, sugary drinks like Hawaiian Punch, junk food (highly refined products containing large amounts of sugar, salt, food dyes, etc.), Lunchables, soda, highly caffeinated drinks, fruit snacks (Gushers, fruit roll ups). Please keep highly processed foods to a minimum.

**Sweet treats:** If a dessert is included with lunch, be sure there is only one. Desserts are not to be traded or shared. Dessert foods are not to be eaten at snack time. Special treats to share for birthdays may be brought in. Please check with the teacher before anything is brought.

If teachers notice students bringing lunch items that are not nutritious, they may call parents to request more attention to the nutritional content of the lunches. They also may ask students to take home certain items rather than allow them to consume these foods at school.

Parents should monitor their student's lunch and snack consumption regularly. Are they eating the food sent to school? Does your child have enough food to sustain them through the entire school day? If your student feels hungry after lunch or snack, it may help to pack food with a higher nutritional value to meet the needs of your growing student.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

### Emergency Contact Forms

Emergency Contact Forms allow the school to contact the parents in the event of an emergency. Emergency forms for all students must be updated and filed each year with the office prior to the beginning of the school year. In the case of two-household families, **each parent is responsible** for making sure their contact information is given to the school.

In the event of an emergency, parents will be notified immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, we will contact an adult whose name and number have been given on the form. **It is extremely important that parents notify the office in writing or through email of changes through the year to telephone numbers and other contact information listed on this form.** Please do not give this information to teachers and expect it to automatically go to the office. The office is the keeper of official contact information.

The Emergency Contact Form also is used to call parents if a student becomes ill at school. Teachers and staff also may need to refer to the health records section of the form for information about the student's current health and to check whether various school permissions have been given.

### Illness and Injury at School

*Please note: our current COVID protocol may call for a 5 to 10 day quarantine when symptoms are present. Please see our current COVID protocols for further details.*

Students with symptoms of illness should not be sent to school. For the health of staff members and other students, students will be sent home with symptoms of fever, vomiting, lice, excessive coughing, runny nose, eyes, or sores, or any perceived communicable condition. All students should be free of such symptoms for at least 24 hours before coming back to school.

When a student becomes sick or injured at school, they will be brought to the office for evaluation. When a student has a fever or has become extremely ill while at school, parents will be called right away and asked to pick the student up. If a parent cannot be reached, the school will call the emergency numbers provided to us. Some students may need to rest or lie down for a short time in the health room and will then feel like going back to the classroom. This is fine if the teacher feels it is necessary. Students who are in the health room because they are "sick" must lie quietly on the cot.

Teachers will have adhesive bandages in their classrooms to use for minor abrasions or injuries. In addition, when a student is injured at school, the responsible adult or teacher will fill out an Accident Report Form. Parents/Guardians should receive a copy on the day of the accident.

### **Special Medical Needs**

If a student has special medical needs (for instance, allergies or asthma), parents are responsible for informing the school during the enrollment process and should give regular updates to the student's teacher. All medication (prescription, allergy, aspirin, etc.) that is brought to school must be accompanied by a Parent/Guardian Medication Authorization Form (available in the school office). Any prescription medication must be accompanied by a Medical Provider Authorization Form and Parent/Guardian Medication Authorization Form for school personnel to administer it (forms are available in the school office). All asthma inhalers must be accompanied by an Asthma Inhaler Administration Authorization Form. All medication must come to school in a professionally labeled bottle/container (your pharmacist will give you an extra bottle/container for school). All medications will be kept with the lead teacher at their desk or in the health room, except for inhalers, which the child should keep on their person in order to use when necessary.

### **Immunizations**

Wisconsin State Law requires that all students entering a Wisconsin elementary school be immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella (chicken pox). These requirements can be waived ONLY if a properly signed health, religious or personal exemption is filed with the school.

### **Communicable Conditions**

For the protection of all community members, a doctor should certify that a student is free of communicable conditions before they are returned to school, following the diagnosis and treatment of such. When communicable conditions are discovered while a student is at school, the teacher and administration work together to inform the class families of the situation and will send home information regarding the condition or suspected condition.

### **Head Lice Policies**

We have found it necessary to create an explicit policy regarding head lice (pediculosis) and procedures for both school and families.

#### School/Faculty/Staff Procedure:

Upon learning or being informed that a student has pediculosis, the school will call the family so the student can be picked up. They should be taken home as soon as possible and given treatment as described by the Department of Health & Social Services, a copy of whose procedures will be given to the parent by the school. The school will then notify each family in the class about the case and a member of the faculty or staff will personally check each student in the affected class. At the end of the school day, the classroom will be thoroughly cleaned, and all potential materials where lice might drop eggs or attach themselves (such as play cloths, costumes, etc.) will be removed and treated. If a student with pediculosis has siblings in other classrooms at the school, this procedure will be used for those rooms as well.

#### Family Procedure:

If a parent suspects that their student has head lice, they should immediately seek the advice of someone who can confirm this condition. Upon confirmation, the school office should be notified immediately. If a child is diagnosed with pediculosis, the family should immediately follow the treatment prescribed by the D.H.S.S. (the school will give parents a written copy). After using the appropriate shampoo or cream rinse, parents should NOT assume the condition is cleared up. The shampoos and other products can kill lice and

some of the eggs or nits but may not kill all of the nits. Unfortunately, it only takes one live egg to re-infest a student and potentially other family members and/or classmates. After use of the suggested products, it is necessary to meticulously search each strand of hair on the student's head and to remove by hand each of the remaining nits.

A Tamarack staff member will check the student upon their return to school. If the student still has nits, the family will need to continue the process of manually removing the eggs until they are totally gone. For the protection and health of all the students at the school, a student with nits still visible in their hair will need to return home to prevent passing the condition back and forth indefinitely.

### **Weather Concerns**

Ordinarily, students will have outside play or activities every day. However, activities and playground time will be shortened if the wind chill is between 0 and -20°F. If the wind-chill drops below -20°F, there will be no outdoor activities.

## **TAMARACK SPORTS**

Tamarack is at times able to offer co-ed volleyball, tennis, and basketball to its students in grades 5 through 8 through various recreation leagues, depending on parent support and student interest.

- Sports at Tamarack are self-supporting, meaning that parents, coaches, and players must finance the program through fees and, when necessary, fundraising.
- Students in grades 5 through 8 are allowed to play competitively on Tamarack's sports teams.
- It is a privilege to play on a sports team at Tamarack; students must be in good academic standing and be good citizens to play. Class teachers and coaches may restrict students from sports participation for behavioral, academic, or attendance reasons, at their discretion.
- Students must attend the full day of school on the day of a sports competition, or a full day of school the day before a sports competition, if the competition is on the weekend.
- Coaches are community volunteers in good standing. Coaches must:
  - agree to a background check prior to coaching.
  - complete any coach trainings/certifications required by the league; the school will pay for any costs associated with this.
  - abide by and enforce all applicable school rules.
  - commit to at least 1-2 practice days per week plus game days.
  - ensure the participation of at least one other adult assistant coach as possible.
  - be a liaison between the school and the league in which they are participating.
- Coaches who successfully complete a season and receive positive feedback from team parents are preferentially appointed coach for the next season if they are willing and available, at the discretion of the school's sports coordinator.
- Changes to the current sports program requires agreement by the current coaching staff and the sports coordinator, with faculty as needed.

## **PART III - Parent Involvement, Communication and Fundraising**

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

## **The Role of Parents at a Waldorf School**

Parents play an integral role in the success of a Waldorf school, along with faculty, board of trustees, and administration, working to keep the students' education and needs at the center. The choice to participate in Waldorf education at Tamarack Waldorf School is a commitment to the healthy, well-rounded, successful future of your student and involves a commitment to the well-being and development of the school.

Parents are expected to be energetically involved in their children's education by being active participants in the school community, attending school events, assisting in school activities, performing parent involvement duties, and supporting the teachers and the school in their quest to educate.

## **Pledge of Understanding**

At the beginning of the school year, parents will be asked to sign a Family Pledge of Understanding, promising to be active members of the community and to uphold the policies and procedures of the school.

It is critical to the good functioning of the school that parents attend parent-teacher conferences, class meetings, and All-School Meetings. Face-to-face communication about your child's development is foundational to Waldorf education. For this reason, at least one parent of every family should attend parent-teacher conferences. We consider this a mandatory obligation for every family, and we will conduct an inquiry with those parents who do not take time for this. Class meetings and all-school meetings typically address issues of broader significance, such as those of curriculum, budget, and programming. If you are unable to make these meetings for any reason, please send a friend or relative in your place. If that is not possible, please make individual arrangements with your child's teacher.

Parents are expected to volunteer time and resources to the school to the best of their abilities. We realize that many parents lead extremely busy lives, and that finding time to devote to the school can be challenging. However, we put such a high priority on community life that we ask parents to make personal sacrifices for the sake of community when possible.

Parents with an appetite for community life will find plenty of opportunities. Parents support the school by helping make costumes, bringing food to share at events, chaperoning field trips, participating on school committees, and in many other vital ways. Parents who cannot on their own meet the minimum expectation of involvement (including parent-teacher conferences and volunteering for two school events) may have friends or relatives who can help them meet these obligations.

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parents are expected to attend parent-teacher conferences twice a year. At these meetings, parents are given a picture of how their student is doing in class. Parents are also given the opportunity to ask curriculum questions and express concerns. These discussions are necessary to help parents understand where their student stands within the course of Waldorf programming. If parents are unable to attend these conferences during the scheduled times, they must arrange a meeting individually with their child's teacher.

## **Class Meetings**

Class Meetings are an important tool for communicating and discussing the educational goals for your child's class, as well as for getting to know your child's teacher and the parents of your child's peers. Parents are expected to attend class meetings, which are held two to three times per year for each class. Class meetings for different grades are held on separate evenings, so as not to create conflicts for parents with more than one student enrolled.

## **All-School Meetings**

All-School Meetings are an important part of the school year. All parents are expected to attend these meetings. If parents cannot attend, the family is asked to send a representative in their place. If a parent unavoidably must miss a meeting, they should speak to their child's teacher or another class parent to catch up on what was missed. Each meeting will include information about upcoming events and discuss topics of importance to the whole school community, as well as provide a chance to socialize. Meetings are held twice each year.

## **Tamarack Parent Council**

Tamarack's Parent Council (formally known as Tamarack Parent Association-Community Circle (TPA-CC)) will be reimagined and formed during the 2022-23 school year. The primary aim is to grow a vibrant, connected and committed community at Tamarack, guided by the principles of Waldorf education. Please look for updated information as the new school year progresses.

## **Class Parent**

Classes work best when parent volunteers facilitate communication and personal connections within the class itself and with the larger school community. These responsibilities should be held by two or more class parents, so that one individual is not overburdened. Each teacher may choose one or more parents from their class parent body to serve as class parents who will assist the teacher with any tasks necessary outside the classroom.

The Class Parent help with communication within the class and helps the class teacher meet the needs of the class. The Class Parent might help develop and maintain class e-mail and phone trees, which have traditionally been used to spread important messages quickly and efficiently. Depending on the class and the teacher, the Class Parent may be called upon to help in other ways, such as organizing drivers for a field trip or gathering donations for the classroom.

## **Parent Education Opportunities**

The school strives to be a resource for education and cultural renewal for our wider community. The school sponsors workshops and seminars in parenting, and other topics of interest to parents throughout the year. For those interested in the philosophical underpinnings of Waldorf education (Anthroposophy), lectures and events on that topic are publicized in the school newsletter.

## **VOLUNTEER POLICIES**

### **Parent, Grandparent and Community Volunteers**

We very much value, appreciate, and rely upon the many, many volunteer parents who help the teachers in each class to fulfill the curriculum each year. The policy below is not in any way meant to discourage parent, grandparent, and community volunteer enthusiasm. We regularly look for practices to improve our collective due diligence in creating a strong and safe environment in which all the students in our care can flourish.

We require that all parent, grandparent, and community volunteers have a current background check on file with the school. This check is done to protect the safety of all our children and is performed for all the people, paid or volunteer, working with the students in our school. For volunteers, this includes all individuals chaperoning day and overnight trips, supervising students working on projects in the building or at another location, accompanying students to area parks or on walks, and all other volunteer activities involving possible interaction with children and youth.



The Tamarack Administrative Director performs the background checks with the Wisconsin State Department of Justice (the “DOJ”), and with other states as applicable. All volunteers must consent to this background check as part of the “Disclosure Affidavit and Consent,” which declares their interest and ability to volunteer at Tamarack Waldorf School. The information needed to perform the check is: all names a person has had or used, date of birth, social security number, and years lived in other states or countries. This information must be submitted to the administrator five school days before the volunteer work is scheduled.

Once a DOJ background check has been completed, all volunteers will be required to update it every five years. In the interim, Tamarack will conduct an annual informal background check for all continuing volunteers using Wisconsin Court Access “CCAP” website (which can be found at [www.wcca.wicourts.gov](http://www.wcca.wicourts.gov)). Tamarack requires that all volunteers self-report any incidents that could affect their status as a volunteer at Tamarack Waldorf School. We will keep the results and reports on record and can provide each teacher with a list of who is able to be part of the volunteer pool for these kinds of activities at any point the teacher needs this information. All volunteers sign in the log in the office and wear a “Visitor” badge while in the building and return their Visitor badge and sign out upon their departure. The Administrative Director can be contacted with any questions volunteers have about this process.

### **Alumni Volunteers**

Alumni are a vital part of the school community. Some high schools require service hours and our alums have earned volunteer hours at Tamarack. It is important for all alums who wish to volunteer to communicate with the teacher under whom they wish to serve. Prior to the service, a form should be requested and filled out that will clarify intent, purpose, and schedule for these service hours or for any other volunteer service. These forms will ask for current contact information and the signature of a parent or legal guardian. The teacher and administrative director will also sign the form, and it will be filed in the office five school days prior to the anticipated visit. In addition, the parent or guardian of any volunteer who is a minor must complete the “Disclosure Affidavit and Consent,” to be signed by both the parent or guardian and the minor volunteer. All those over the age of 18 will be required to provide information for a background check as explained in the parent volunteer section. The visitor log should be signed in the office and a “Visitor” badge worn while volunteering.

### **Concerns about Volunteers**

If a concern about any volunteer is brought to the administration or faculty, the Administrative Director will investigate the concern to the best of its ability and make a determination about the volunteer’s continuing service at Tamarack. The volunteer will be asked to suspend their service until after this investigation is complete. If the Administrative Director determines that the volunteer is able to resume their service, the faculty member who supervises the volunteer will be informed of the concern and the findings of the investigation and be asked to submit a written statement of consent to resume the volunteer relationship. If the Administrative Director determines that it is in the best interest of Tamarack for the volunteer to stop their volunteer service, they will notify both the volunteer and the faculty member of this decision. All investigations will be treated with confidentiality. The volunteer is free to end their relationship without an investigation or disclosure to the faculty member. If the supervising faculty member objects in any way to the reinstatement of the volunteer upon learning of the concern, they can terminate the volunteer relationship.

### **Parent Drivers on Trips**

Parents who take part in class outings as a chaperone or driver are required to be separately insured. In addition to the background check process above, parents must sign a form in the office and provide the school with a copy of their automobile insurance coverage before being approved as a driver. Seat belts

must be worn by each student in a vehicle and all traffic and safety laws must be strictly obeyed. Faculty request that parents set an appropriate mood in cars by monitoring and limiting media exposure through radios or the use of other electronic devices.

## COMMUNICATION

### **School Office**

School business office hours will be 8:15 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Forms, payments, etc. may be brought to the main school door and a member of the administration will assist with the task. The main school phone number is 414-277-0009; fax number is 414-277-7799. Calls outside regular office hours may be fielded by the answering machine.

### **School Website and Emails**

Our website, [www.tamarackwaldorf.org](http://www.tamarackwaldorf.org) is an excellent tool for getting information about Tamarack. It has general information helpful to friends and families considering Tamarack, and important information for current Tamarack families. Families can our calendar, and information about upcoming events.

### **Newsletters**

The *Tamarack Newsletter* is the community newsletter that is produced throughout the school year with detailed information for families about school-wide events and news. It is our primary means of communicating school news and provides a current calendar of events, announcements, and information pertinent to the whole school community. The *Tamarack Newsletter* welcomes articles, information, drawings, poems and thoughts from faculty, board members, parents, students, and friends of the school. To submit an item, send it via e-mail to [tamtalk@tamarackwaldorf.org](mailto:tamtalk@tamarackwaldorf.org), or directly to the school office. Include your name and phone number with your submission in case we have questions. All submissions are subject to approval and are due on the Friday prior to Tuesday publication. Articles may be edited for space or content. The newsletter is distributed electronically to the school community through our messaging system, *Parent Square*.

Class-specific communication is handled individually by teachers. Most have a class-specific newsletter that they email or send home with students. Sometimes a class parent oversees class-specific communications. Teachers will let you know how best to communicate with them. Parents need to ask teacher permission to distribute class-wide communication to other parents.

### **Faculty, Staff, and Board of Trustee Mail**

Communication for faculty, staff, or board members should be given to the front office staff. Most faculty, staff, and board members are open to receiving email. If a response is not received in a timely way, please send your message to [office@tamarackwaldorf.org](mailto:office@tamarackwaldorf.org), and we will help follow up.

### **Notice of School Closings or Urgent Information**

Tamarack may close in situations of severe weather or other emergencies. In general, Tamarack closes due to severe weather whenever Milwaukee Public Schools are closed; however, Tamarack sometimes closes even though the Milwaukee Public Schools remain open. We always aim to decide by 6:00 a.m. Announcements will be launched through *Parent Square*, our school message delivery system. Closings also will be phoned in to local news and posted on our school social media sites, Facebook, and Instagram. In unusual circumstances, such as early dismissal due to severe weather, the same communication avenues will be used. If school is not dismissed early during a storm, parents may feel free to pick up their child

considering travel concerns. Parents should use their own best judgment for the drive to school from outlying areas. Snow make-up days, if any, will be scheduled as the year proceeds.

### **Parent Square**

Parent Square is the phone and email message delivery system at Tamarack. When an important message needs to be delivered quickly to all or part of our school community, Parent Square will be used. It will deliver the message through an automated system to phone numbers and emails identified on our Emergency Contact forms.

It is important for parents to update the school office in writing or by email immediately if they change their phone numbers or emails, so that they can receive important information through Parent Square.

### **Community Agreement**

The Tamarack Waldorf School community includes parents and other family members, students, faculty, staff, administration, and board members.

This agreement is intended to encourage and promote healthy interactions in the Tamarack Waldorf School community. We enter this agreement to forge and to maintain strong positive relationships at Tamarack Waldorf School in support of its mission and vision.

We, the community members of Tamarack Waldorf School, make the following commitments to each other:

- We agree to be respectful and honest in our communications.
- We agree and accept that differences of opinion are to be expected, but once we have come to an agreed upon decision, we will all support it.
- We will express and maintain clear personal and professional boundaries.
- We will strive to engage in constructive and objective conversations intended to enhance the well-being of Tamarack Waldorf School.
- We agree to use and share sensitive information only when agreed upon by both parties.
- We agree to follow the formal grievance procedure and conflict resolution guidelines.

This agreement will be considered binding upon all adult members of the Tamarack Waldorf School community and transgressions will be treated seriously.

### **Specific Communication Guidelines**

Where to go with specific questions:

- For questions, concerns or suggestions regarding the curriculum or anything in your child's classroom: ***Please speak first to your child's teacher.***
- If you need to speak to someone about your tuition or other payments due to the school: ***Please contact Tamarack's Finance Manager.***
- If you have a question or suggestion regarding some other aspect of school life:
  - For questions about legal issues, indoor/outdoor safety, the physical space of the school building, a specific question about the site, development, public relations, grant prospects, fundraising, or overall school finances: ***Please inquire in the school office to be directed to the specific contact person. Contact can be made by phone at 414-277-0009 or office@tamarackwaldorf.org***
  - For issues regarding general aspects of the school experience for your child or yourself: ***Your child's teacher is the best place to start. If the teacher is not able to answer your questions, you may bring them to the Early Childhood or Grade School Level Chair.***

## **Grievance Procedure and Conflict Resolution Guidelines**

If you have a concern or difficulty about some aspect of your child's classroom experience or have difficulty communicating with a faculty or staff member, we request that you take the following two steps to begin the process of resolution. Teachers who are having difficulty communicating with a parent will also follow this process.

1. The first step is to speak directly to the person with whom you are having difficulty. We understand that there are situations where speaking or meeting directly with a person one is having difficulty with is not an approach to take. In this case, please contact the Level Chair, the Administrative Director, or Pedagogical Director, to be present or to help handle the situation.
2. After good effort is made and if no resolution is reached, please write a letter outlining the grievance or conflict and email or mail it to the Administrative Director.

After these steps have been taken, the school will adhere to the following procedure in working with difficulties:

1. A designated Administrative Director will communicate the receipt of the letter within three business days.
2. The matter will be brought to the Leadership Team for discussion.
3. Input, as needed, will be gathered (sources may include AWSNA, board members, outside evaluators or mediators, etc.).
4. The Leadership Team will decide on a course of action.
5. Steps, actions, and outcomes will be documented in writing.
6. Steps 1-5 may be repeated.
7. When the parties determine the process is complete, a summary communication will be made to the Leadership Team and may be distributed upon request. It may become necessary for the parties to move forward without total resolution. In this case, the Leadership Team will make a formal communication to the parties of the need to do so.

## **HOME LIFE, SLEEP AND SCREEN TIME GUIDELINES**

### **Rhythm, Repetition and Reverence**

The three R's of the Waldorf kindergarten can guide us in our creation of a home atmosphere that gives students a solid foundation for their work and play at school. We recommend consistent bedtime and morning routines and, if possible, regular mealtimes. Such rhythm and repetition nourish a student's sense of life and security. By expressing a reverence for life, for each other and for your children, you as parents cultivate in your children a capacity for respect and wonder and a basis for their love of learning.

### **Sleep/Rest Requirements**

Sleep is essential for the physical health, emotional well-being, and intellectual stamina of the growing child. While adults manage on eight or fewer hours of sleep, young people need at least 10 hours on average. Early bedtimes also make it easier to have a healthy breakfast and still be on time for school the next day.

### **Television and Other Media**

To support the work we do as a Waldorf school, we seek your cooperation in limiting your child's exposure to television and other electronic media. At the very minimum, we ask you to please not allow your children to view movies, television, computer, or video games before coming to school or before going to

bed. It is especially important for the students in kindergarten through fifth grade to be as free from the influences of the media as possible.

We feel the medium itself, as much as programming content, undermines healthy child development. A reliance on ready-made pictures reduces the child's ability to visualize both the written and spoken word. Students who are accustomed to passively receiving have difficulty making the inner effort necessary to sustain an imaginative train of thought. There is a growing body of research supporting this position.

Essential to the Waldorf approach to education is the daily activity by students of reviewing the previous day's work. As the children sleep, the stories and experiences of the day are transformed and become their own. This process sparks the individual development of thinking. When a child is exposed to strong, fixed impressions, such as media presents, this overnight process of taking in is compromised to a point where we know it cannot work at all as it is intended.

While we realize that 98% of American households have and watch television and use computers, we believe there are healthier alternatives for entertainment. We encourage our families to spend time connecting with nature, socializing with other people, playing a board game, reading, caring for pets, playing sports, playing with toys that spark the imagination, having scavenger hunts, visiting a museum or the nature center, etc.

If a student's media experiences are affecting their ability to benefit from the curriculum and thereby causing disruption to the daily life of the class, the teacher will request a meeting with the student's parents. A student whose media experiences are disruptive to the class, classroom activities or educational process is of serious concern to the faculty and may lead to a request for the student to be withdrawn.

## FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

As is true at most private schools, the tuition payments of both private pay families and Choice families do not completely cover the cost of operating the school. To achieve a balanced budget and help the school grow, fundraising is conducted by the school community in a variety of ways. We strongly encourage all parents to participate in fundraising efforts; financial support is a true need. However, while there are always numerous, ongoing fundraisers at the school, Tamarack recognizes that each family must make choices based on their personal interest and means. We encourage parents to draw a comfortable line and avoid becoming overwhelmed by fundraising requests. However, there are key fundraisers that are more important than others.

### **Annual Appeal**

The Annual Appeal is our biggest and most important school fundraiser. It is launched with a letter in October or November asking supporters for a gift from the heart. The goal for school families is to have 100% participation in this fundraiser. All donations are appreciated and counted, no matter what the amount. High participation signals to potential donors and foundations that our community fully supports and values Tamarack. After the Annual Appeal, parent support and volunteer time for events are the next most important fundraising requests (see below).

### **Fundraising Events**

Tamarack hosts various fundraising events during the year. In the past we have held a Winter Fair, an adults-only Benefit, and a 5K Walk for Waldorf and a flapjack breakfast. We will communicate upcoming events each school year.

## **Class Fundraising**

Guidelines and forms for fundraising are available in the office. The Fund Development Committee is the school's clearinghouse for school fundraising, and any fundraising related issues may be directed to this committee.

## **"Painless" Fundraisers**

Tamarack participates in several ongoing fundraisers that benefit the whole school community yet require little special effort and no extra cost to our school families.

- Amazon Smile: Shop at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and select Tamarack as your donation recipient to earn money for the school: Amazon sends 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible items directly to Tamarack.
- Box Tops for Education: This General Mills Box Tops program has gone digital. Scan your grocery store receipts and earn money for your school. Each box top symbol is worth 10 cents. Download the app at [BoxTops4Education.com](https://BoxTops4Education.com)
- Target's Red Card: If you shop at Target, you can sign up our school to receive up to 1% of your total purchase amount. Sign up online or at the customer service desk.
- Office Depot: If you shop at Office Depot, please sign up for their 5% Back to Schools program. Tamarack's school ID number is 70121683; please note this number when you make your purchases and Tamarack will receive credit for future school supplies.

## **PART IV - Additional Information**

### **Adult Cell Phone Use**

Cell phone use inside the school building is prohibited. Please be courteous and step outside the building when using your cell phone on school premises. Conversations in the halls, inside and outside classrooms, office, and common areas, can disturb and distract others.

### **Video Recording and Photography at School**

Faculty request that parents refrain from taking pictures or recording students at school events, including class plays, music performances, and festivals. It is preferred that parents and students experience these events in the moment and remember them naturally, rather than experiencing them through media that may not correspond to their memory and feelings. For historical and outreach purposes, the school will occasionally allow official photographers/videographers to record events. If you have a question about photographing or recording a classroom event, please speak with your child's teacher.

### **Donations**

Out of respect for our small amount of storage space, please check with school personnel before bringing donations to the school. Families look for good homes for their treasures, but we often cannot make use of items donated. Books for the library are an example. We could fill many libraries with books that were left at the school as donations but were not able to be included in our library for various reasons, including space. Please contact the school office if you have a donation, so we can determine if it is something the school can use.

### **Bringing Pets to School**

The occasional visit of a well-behaved pet can lift spirits and be instructional. However, pets may only be brought to school with the prior permission of your child's teacher. The teacher will decide, after considering students' allergies and concerns, whether and when a visit by a pet would be appropriate. In

addition to allergies, we have experienced congestion, odor, and housekeeping problems with dogs, even on a leash. They need to stay at home or in the cars while picking up your child. Dogs should not be brought to the student drop-off and pick-up zones, areas, or the parking lot.

### **Lost and Found**

Because families invest valuable resources in purchasing boots, coats, hats, mittens, lunch boxes, etc., all such items should be clearly marked with the student's name. There are lost and found tables, usually located in the lower-level coat area. Periodically, unclaimed items will be displayed at the school entranceway or outside for families to identify and claim. Unidentified items will be either incorporated into the classrooms for spares or donated to a charity. Please teach your student to keep track of their items. We will make time available during school days for parents to do occasional checks of their child's items, especially for the early childhood.

There will be a separate bin to serve as a pick-up location for unclaimed kitchen and decorative articles left after a school event. Please label and pick up such belongings promptly. Any belongings that are not claimed within a reasonable period will be to charity. Please do not loan or bring items to the school that you cannot bear to have damaged or lost. Despite our best efforts, loaned items sometimes do go missing or get damaged.

### **Supervision of Students**

There are times when the responsibility for supervision of students may become unclear. Outside of regular school time, if a teacher is leading an activity, such as a play, the teacher is responsible. When the play ends, the student becomes the responsibility of a parent or other adult. During a festival outside of school time, a teacher is responsible during any performance time. Otherwise, the student's parent or guardian is responsible. All students must be always supervised while in the building or on school property. We have experienced damage to and theft of school property in addition to injury to classroom pets when students have been unsupervised. If a parent is unable to be present, please ask another parent to take responsibility. This is for the protection of all of us.

### **Building Use**

As our school has expanded, common space in the building for meetings or other functions that are school related has become scarce. If you desire a school-related meeting (i.e., a committee meeting, parent group meeting, etc.), you must request space at least two weeks ahead of time through the "Request for Building Use and Parking" form available in the front office. Some more regular meetings can be handled by contacting the Administrative Director. Last minute arrangements may not be able to be accommodated.

### **Social Media**

Tamarack has an official website, an official Facebook Pages, and official Instagram Account. Our website ([www.tamarackwaldorf.org](http://www.tamarackwaldorf.org)) contains information for prospective parents as well as current parents, including newsletter archives and the school calendar.

All the adults in our community are invited to "like" us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram (search for "Tamarack Waldorf School"). While the weekly *Tamarack Newsletter* is our primary means for communicating to our families, we also post items of interest on Facebook and Instagram.

Regarding Facebook, while some faculty and staff members enjoy large friends lists, others prefer to keep their profiles private, and their friends lists small. If a Tamarack faculty/staff member invites you to become a Facebook friend, you are not obligated to accept the invitation. Likewise, faculty/staff are not obligated to accept your friend invitation. If friend invitations are not accepted, it should be taken in the context of an

individual's different needs for privacy and different preferences for social interaction. We should respect each other's boundaries for social networking.

Occasionally, groups or individuals at Tamarack create other social media sites, such as those devoted to big school events or individual classes. However, these are not administered by Tamarack staff and therefore not officially sanctioned.

## **PART V - Payment Policies**

### **Payment Contracts**

Payments of tuition, supply fees, and other payments due to TWS, must be made in a timely fashion. The school's cash flow depends on parents paying according to the agreed upon plan. Private pay parents will receive a payment contract for tuition preceding the school year and make payments through FACTS a tuition management service. (Milwaukee Parental Choice Program families have a different payment procedure.)

In the payment contract, parents may choose a payment plan that suits them, including whether they want their payments due in the first or second part of the month. The schedule is as follows:

- Annual payments are due on July 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Semi-annual payments are due July and January.
- Quarterly payments are due July, October, January, and April.
- Monthly payments are due each month, July through May.

All payments are made through FACTS Tuition Management. Semi-annual, Quarterly, and Monthly Payments will include a one-time/year fee. Returning families will continue paying on the same day of the month as current payments are made and by the same method of payment unless contact is made with the finance manager and a Change of Status Form is completed. New families will fill out a FACTS tuition management form and a Tamarack Tuition Pledge Agreement.

### **Collection Policy for Private Pay Families**

Tuition and fee payments are due promptly on the dates indicated in the Tuition Pledge Agreement selected payment schedule.

- Generally. If the account becomes past due, a letter will be sent from Tamarack setting forth the amount overdue and requesting immediate payment. If an account remains past due for more than thirty (30) days, the account may be forwarded to a collection agency and the student(s) enrollment at TWS will be suspended.
- Hardship. Contact must be made with Tamarack's Finance Manager or Administrative Director to discuss situations before the account becomes overdue. We can work with families to find a solution before suspension of a student(s) enrollment is enforced.
  - If a family is experiencing an emergency or hardship, alternative payment plans might be available.
  - Lack of a payment plan will result in suspension of enrollment.
  - If an overdue amount remains from the prior academic year, the student(s) will not be permitted to enroll for the next academic year without an agreed upon payment plan in writing.

The outstanding accounts of Choice families are handled differently because of Choice legislation.



## **Tuition Refund Policy**

A nonrefundable tuition deposit is due with the Tuition Pledge Agreement Form. Deposit is \$300/student. Families with multiple students enrolled at TWS must pay the greater of the two tuition deposit options: at least \$300, or \$100/student. If tuition deposit is not paid, seat will not be held for the student(s). Early withdrawals are responsible for all fees and 25% of remaining tuition prorated from date of departure.

## **Choice Funding**

Since 2012, tuition for Choice families is received by the school directly from the Department of Public Instruction.

## **Supplies Fees**

Tamarack charges families an annual supply fee. Because the Waldorf curriculum requires specific supplies, including special watercolor paper, bees-wax crayons, knitting needles, etc., the school purchases the items and parents pay a supply fee. In addition, parents must pay fees for the flutes used by students (which are personal use items) and must pay to rent or own a ukulele (used in grades 4-8). The school also charges a graduation fee to cover graduation ceremony costs in grade 8.

Private Pay: Supply fees are folded into tuition payments and are managed through FACTS Tuition Management.

Choice: Laws effective after November 2011 allow Tamarack to charge Choice students fees for supplies, personal use items (flutes) and for graduation. Fees are due at Forms & Fees Days in mid-August. Parents for whom these fees are a burden should speak to the **Finance Manager or the Administrative Director** prior to the beginning of a school year.

## **TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

### **Tuition Assistance**

Part of Tamarack Waldorf School's mission is to make Waldorf education accessible to families regardless of their economic circumstances. While we ask every Tamarack family to make an investment in their child's tuition, our tuition assistance program provides support for families who qualify. Because many factors guide tuition assistance decisions, we encourage families not to make assumptions about whether they are eligible, but to have a confidential conversation with our Enrollment Coordinator or Administrative Director.

Tuition Assistance is based solely on a family's demonstrated need, which is defined as the difference between the amount a family can be expected to contribute to the cost of the student's education and the amount of annual tuition at TWS. TWS does not offer academic, or other merit-based scholarships.

Tuition Assistance is made available for families with students enrolled in:

- Grades 1-8
- K5/K6 who are enrolled in the 5-day or 5-morning program

Tuition Assistance is not available to K3/K4 children because they are not required to be in school.

### **Tuition Assistance Awards**

Through tuition assistance, sibling discounts, and payment plans, we strive to make TWS affordable for all families whose students have been admitted. Tuition assistance covers portions of the comprehensive

tuition, but never 100%. A family must pay at least 55% of the total tuition for each eligible Tuition Assistance student. Many factors are used to determine financial need, including income, assets, taxes, family size, unusual expenses, and number of children attending tuition-based schools.

### **Award Decisions**

Tuition Assistance applications are reviewed by the Tuition Assistance Committee, which determines awards using a standardized calculation derived by the FACTS Grant and Aid assessment. Awards are processed by the Tuition Assistance Committee. All information required for the application process is kept in strictest confidence. We expect our new families who begin by paying full tuition to the school will continue to do so unless unforeseen circumstances make that impossible.

We advise families not to go to extraordinary lengths to pay full tuition their first year in hope of receiving tuition assistance the following year. If a current family's financial situation changes significantly due to unforeseen circumstances since joining the school, we encourage the family to apply for financial aid. All families, current and new, follow the same process for application and decision.

### **Tuition Assistance FAQ**

#### **What is the process of applying for Tuition Assistance?**

1. Families new to TWS must first submit an admissions application for their student(s).
2. During the admissions process inform the Enrollment Coordinator of the need for tuition assistance. A TWS Tuition Assistance Request Form and information will be forwarded to the family by the Enrollment Coordinator.
3. The TWS Tuition Assistance Request Form must be submitted to the Enrollment Coordinator by April 18.
4. A Grant and Aid Assessment for financial aid must be completed online at <https://online.factsmgt.com/aid> by April 18 to be considered for tuition assistance. Tax information (previous year tax return) must be submitted to FACTS, requiring applicants for tuition assistance to complete their taxes by the IRS deadline. This deadline is firm and includes self-employed business owners.
5. Applications are considered complete when the following are received:
  - Tuition Assistance Request Form is received by TWS
  - A completed Grant and Aid application is submitted in FACTS
  - Copy of completed previous year's tax return submitted to FACTS
6. Incomplete applications will not be considered for tuition assistance.

#### **What else do I need to know about applying for Tuition Assistance for the first time:**

1. If all students in a family are in Grade 1 or older, TWS assumes that each parent has the capacity to earn a minimum of \$10,000 per year. If this minimum per parent income is not reported, it will be added to your income estimation. This may have an impact on your award. If there are special circumstances that do not allow both parents to work, you may request an exception in writing.
2. Families with separate households must have each parent complete a Tuition Assistance Request Form and a Grant and Aid Assessment in Facts. If there is only one legal guardian (and there is no financial support from another parent/guardian), that parent must state so in writing as a part of the application and include legal documentation from a judge, attorney, or licensed therapist, stating the sole financial responsibility rests with said parent/guardian. Parents must restate/resubmit this in writing on an annual basis.
3. Any extenuating financial circumstances that are not captured in the application should be detailed in an attached letter and submitted at the same time the application is submitted.
4. Final award decisions are made by the Tuition Assistance Committee based on the recommendations of FACTS. All information is held in the utmost confidence.

5. TWS does not offer scholarships or merit-based awards at this time. All awards are need-based awards.

Tuition assistance awards are gifts, not loans; they range in amount but are not full tuition awards.

**For Current Families already receiving Tuition Assistance:**

1. Families are asked to reapply for Tuition Assistance each year.
2. The TWS Tuition Assistance Request Form must be submitted to Enrollment Coordinator by March 18.
3. A Grant and Aid Assessment for financial aid must be completed online at <https://online.factsmtg.com/aid> by April 18 to be considered for tuition assistance. Tax information (previous year tax return) must be submitted to FACTS, requiring applicants for tuition assistance to complete their taxes by the IRS deadline. This deadline is firm and includes self-employed business owners.
4. Applications are considered complete when the following are received:
  - Tuition Assistance Request Form is received by TWS
  - A completed Grant and Aid application is submitted in FACTS
  - Copy of completed previous year's tax return submitted to FACTS
5. Incomplete applications will not be considered for tuition assistance.

**When will we know if we have received a Tuition Assistance Award?**

1. Tuition Assistance is only awarded to families once a student has gone through the Admissions process and been accepted.
  - a. For mid-year applications: A minimum of 2-weeks processing time will occur between the time of all documentation and application parts submitted, to receiving an award response. Mid-year Tuition Assistance awards are based on aid-availability.
2. Awards are announced by May 1 to all new families who have completed the process within the due dates.

**If we receive a Tuition Assistance award this year, will it be the same next year?**

Financial need and awards are recalculated every year, using current information. Families are required to re-apply for Tuition Assistance yearly. If there is little change in a family's circumstances, one can expect that aid will be renewed at a similar level, taking into account tuition increases. Should your need increase or decrease significantly, TWS will reevaluate your financial award.

**We're a current family that has never sought tuition assistance before, but our circumstances have changed. Does it make sense for us to apply this year?**

If your financial situation has changed significantly since your child/children started at TWS, you should consider applying for tuition assistance. TWS makes every effort to be helpful when circumstances are beyond a family's control (i.e., loss of job, death in the family, or unexpected illness). The school is usually not able to support parents who choose to make a change in their employment status that reduces their income (i.e., a working parent who returns to school, or a parent who chooses to quit their job to start a business).

**To learn more about Tuition Assistance at TWS, please contact:**

The Enrollment Coordinator or Administrative Director.