



Potomac Crescent  
**WALDORF SCHOOL**

212 S. Washington Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 | (703) 486 - 1309 | [www.potomacwaldorf.org](http://www.potomacwaldorf.org)

# Parent Handbook 2022-2023

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## PCWS Mission, Vision, and Values

### Mission Statement

We strive to educate the whole child in a nurturing, creative community.

### Purpose

Potomac Crescent Waldorf School (PCWS) brings Waldorf education to families in Northern Virginia. PCWS educates children from early childhood through fifth grade, based upon the educational philosophy of Rudolf Steiner, a developmental approach which emphasizes goodness, beauty, and truth. We endeavor to build a diverse community that supports each other and works together to create a healthy social life. Our Faculty brings the Waldorf curriculum to students in ways that cultivate in each child a sense of meaning and purpose in life, kindness, respect, academic excellence, confidence, creativity, and a love of learning.

### Vision

Our vision is to develop thoughtful, fulfilled citizens who have the capacity to think imaginatively, communicate effectively, and relate compassionately. We believe in the Waldorf curriculum for educating the whole human being — head, heart, and hands — and for nurturing well-rounded individuals who will be successful in school and beyond.

### Values

- The individual child is at the center of all we do.
- We value Waldorf education and strive to keep the education relevant to our time and place.
- We value a lifelong love of learning and help children love what they learn.
- We educate each child according to age and development so learning and growth are united.
- We provide each child with capacities that will serve the child for the future and for life.
- We address the child's whole being: the mind, artistic life, and physical skills.
- We have the courage to do what is right for our children and for our community.
- We are eager to welcome and serve families of all races, creeds, and economic levels.
- Our teachers are dedicated to preserving and protecting the wonder and reverence in childhood.
- We are stewards of the earth and of nature and strive to live and work in a sustainable fashion.
- Our community is built on the cooperation of our parents, Faculty, Administration, and Board.
- We are committed to serving and reflecting our locality of Northern Virginia near the District of Columbia.
- We are committed to providing a safe learning environment for our students and employees.

*The Northern Virginia Waldorf School Initiative (NVWSI), DBA Potomac Crescent Waldorf School, does not discriminate by race, gender, color, ethnic or national origin, or religion in its admissions,*

*administrative, financial aid, or any other policies.*

*PCWS complies with Title IX, Title VI, and Americans with Disabilities Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act in its decisions regarding evaluation and accommodation of PCWS students with disabilities.*

*Families with questions or concerns about any issues related to the above can contact the PCWS Equal Opportunity Coordinator at [eoc@potomacwaldorf.org](mailto:eoc@potomacwaldorf.org)*

## **The Basics**

### *Office Hours*

|                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Monday through Friday | 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m, |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|

### *Contact Information*

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Physical Address | 212 South Washington Street<br>Alexandria, VA 22314 |
| Mailing Address  | P.O. Box 320396<br>Alexandria, VA 22320             |
| Main number      | 703-486-1309  |
| School email     | office@potomacwaldorf.org                           |

### *School Hours*

|  |   |                        |
|--|---|------------------------|
| Elementary School                          | Monday, Tuesday,<br>Wednesday, and Friday | 8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.  |
|  | Thursday                                  | 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. |
| 5-day Pre-K and<br>Kindergarten            | Monday through Friday                     | 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. |
| 3-day Pre-K                                | Monday through<br>Wednesday               | 8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.   |
| Early Childhood (EC) Early<br>Bird Program | Monday through Friday                     | 7:30 – 8:30 a.m.       |
| Early Childhood (EC)<br>Afternoon Program  | Monday through Friday                     | 12:00 – 3:00 p.m.      |
| Grades Afternoon<br>Program                | Thursday                                  | 12:00 – 3:00 p.m.      |

Potomac Crescent Waldorf School is a non-profit corporation with tax-exempt status under IRS code section 501(c)(3). We are a member of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN) and an associate member of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA). Our Early Childhood classes are licensed by the Virginia Department of Education (formerly Department of Social Services).

## **Safety, Health, and Emergency Procedures**

### *Inclement Weather & School Closing/Delayed Opening*

In the event of inclement weather, PCWS generally follows Alexandria Public School (ACPS) decisions related to full-day closures, delayed openings, and early closings. Please read the following specific guidelines, which include some departures from ACPS policy:

- If ACPS makes a full-day closure or delayed opening decision before 8 p.m. the night before, then PCWS's administration will review the decision and make its own determination. In most cases, PCWS will follow ACPS's decision. However, if the reason is due to circumstances that do not affect PCWS, then PCWS will open at its regular time.
- If ACPS makes a full-day closure or delayed opening after 8 p.m. the night before, or on the morning of, PCWS will follow ACPS's decision.
- If ACPS has a delayed opening, PCWS classes will start at 10 a.m. and there will be no Early Bird program. Grades students may begin entering the building at 9:45 a.m. to get ready for class. Classes will end at their usual time. The Afternoon Program will be held.
- If ACPS closes school early due to impending inclement weather, PCWS will do likewise. If ACPS's announcement states a time that it is closing, PCWS will use the same time. If ACPS's announcement states that it is closing early by a certain amount of time, for example, one hour, then PCWS will close early by the same amount of time using 3 p.m. as the end of the day.
- PCWS may also close or remain open when we judge it is necessary to do so, even if this differs from ACPS decisions.
- While PCWS remains at 212 S. Washington Street, our distance from parks and green space requires that we err on the side of caution and may require PCWS to implement indoor days as necessary. Families will be notified either the night before or early in the morning if the school rhythm of the day has changed due to impending weather.

The grades curriculum factors in the possibility of up to five full days of closure. If we have a sixth full day of closure, PCWS will schedule a make-up day. If we have additional full day closures, PCWS will evaluate whether the grades department needs additional make-up days to fulfill its curriculum. Decisions about scheduling make-up days will be communicated to parents within one week after each full-day closure that exceeds the five-day allowance. When make-up days are offered, they include all PCWS programs scheduled for the added day. Note: Closures due to COVID-19 will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, in collaboration with local and state authorities.

### *School Closing/Delayed Opening/Early Closure Communications*

The administration will notify school families, faculty, and staff about changes to the school operating hours in the following ways:

- Email
- PCWS Emergency WhatsApp Notification System
- PCWS Website (home page, bottom right under “Operating Hours”)

For closures and delayed openings, notifications will be sent as soon as possible to allow families time to make alternative arrangements. Early closures will be communicated as soon as a determination has been made by PCWS.

Closures related to COVID-19 will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Please see the PCWS COVID-19 Health & Safety Plan, 2022-2023, available on the PCWS website under the “COVID Plan” tab, hereafter, the “PCWS COVID Plan”.

### *Illnesses & Absences*

Children who have any symptoms of illness should not come to school. Children should be fever-free for 24-hours before returning to school. Please see the PCWS COVID Plan for detailed information about when children can return to school after showing symptoms of an illness.

If your child will miss a day of school, please call or email the school at [attendance@potomacwaldorf.org](mailto:attendance@potomacwaldorf.org) by 8:00 a.m. for the grades and 8:30 a.m. for the early childhood programs to let us know your child will be out and the reason for the absence. This information will be relayed to the teacher. This is to comply with state and county regulations.

Please see the PCWS COVID-19 Plan for additional information about PCWS policy regarding illnesses and absences.

### *Tick Checks*

Given the outdoor nature of our programs, we strongly encourage you to include tick checks in your child’s daily routine. Please see <http://www.alexandriava.gov/Ticks> for tick information and prevention in Alexandria.

### *Head Lice*

Head lice are a common problem in many schools throughout the area. We recommend that you check your child’s head on a weekly basis. A lice infestation can be detected by the presence of nits or tiny egg sacs attached to the hair shaft. Itching is the most common symptom and possibly a red rash near the hairline or nape of the neck. If you do find evidence of head lice on your child, please notify his or her teacher so that other parents can be made aware that a case was reported. You will need to treat your child’s head before he or she returns to school. The hair should be carefully checked and nits removed every day for two weeks to be sure the infestation has been cured.

### *Illnesses & Injuries During School Hours*

Children who are obviously sick during the school day will be isolated to the extent possible while a parent is called to take the child home as soon as possible. Each child’s file must contain contact information for parents and other authorized contacts. Please see the PCWS COVID Plan for more details.

In case of a life-threatening or other serious emergency, calling 911 is always our first step. As

quickly as feasible, the parent will be notified. For lesser, but still significant, emergencies, parents will be called promptly. For minor scrapes and events requiring only light first aid or TLC, a first-aid trained staff member will administer the aid and the parent will be told details of the occurrence at pick-up time.

#### *Administering Medication to Children*

The state and county strictly regulate medication storage and administration at school. We prefer not to administer medications at school. A child ill enough to need medication may be best served by staying home. We also prefer that sunscreen products and insect repellent be applied at home before coming to school. In the case of a child needing emergency medications, such as an Epi-pen or asthma medication, the county and state have regulations that must be followed. Parents who need emergency medications kept at school for their child must complete PCWS authorization forms.

#### *Procedure for Urgent Medical Needs While on Outings*

We have established the following protocol for children who are injured while on walks to the park or other outings:

- All faculty carry cell phones.
- If injured, a child will first be assessed and, if necessary, emergency medical personnel (911) will be called.
- If emergency medical personnel are not needed, a teacher will call the office personnel.
- The office personnel will contact parents and arrange for the child to be picked up.
- If necessary, office personnel will go to the site to assist teachers.
- An adult will be with the child at all times.

#### *School Closing Due to Illness*

(See PCWS COVID Plan for details related to COVID-19-related closing.)

As a guideline, if 25% of the school population is out with flu or flu-like symptoms in a typical year, PCWS may close. It will reopen as soon as possible. We may also close at our discretion based on the number or severity of ill children in our student body.

#### *Emergency Evacuation*

In the event of an emergency situation that requires an evacuation of Potomac Crescent Waldorf School, one of the following plans shall be implemented.

- If the emergency environment is confined to the immediate area of the school (e.g., fire or toxic fumes) and the children cannot stay on the premises, the children will go to a designated off-site assembly point where they will remain accompanied by the teachers, while the parents, guardians, or authorized emergency contacts are contacted. The off-site location is the PCWS drop-off and pick-up location on Prince Street between S. Washington Street and S. St. Asaph Street.
- In the event of exposure to toxic materials or gas and if a physical examination is recommended, children will be transported to the Inova Alexandria Hospital Emergency Center, 4320 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA 22304 (703-504-3066). Parents will be notified as soon as possible.

- If the emergency is more widespread and encompasses a larger area, such as a neighborhood or several homes due to non-confined environmental threat (e.g., toxic fumes from a spill, flood waters, or brush fires), and the children cannot remain in the area, the children will be brought by car to Jones Point Park, located at 100 Jones Point, Alexandria, VA 22314. If an indoor location is required, the children will be brought by car to the Nannie J. Lee Community Center by car located at 1108 Jefferson Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. They will remain there accompanied by the teacher(s) while parents, guardians, or authorized emergency contacts are notified and arrangements for either transportation home or a continuation of care are made.
- In the event of a major environmental hazard that necessitates a larger area evacuation (such as several neighborhoods, a city/town, or geographic area) due to a large non-confined hazard (e.g., earthquake or hurricane), the children will be transported to an American Red Cross-designated mass shelter beyond the danger area. They will remain there accompanied by teacher(s) while parents, guardians, or authorized emergency contacts are notified and arrangements are made for their pick-up. The nearest Red Cross location to PCWS/OTCC is located at: 123 N. Alfred Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. (Phone Number: 703-584-8400).

In all situations, the teacher in charge when evacuating shall:

- Take an accurate attendee list;
- Account for all children and staff as they board/depart vehicles;
- Bring any necessary medication/supplies and emergency records; and
- Take a cell phone to be used for emergency notifications.

Teachers will remain with and care for the children at all times during an event.

#### *Sheltering in Place*

A secure location stocked with food, water, and other necessities is designated within the school building. In the event of an emergency situation that may require a sheltering-in-place, the children's safety will first be assured. Thereafter, parents, guardians, or emergency contacts will be notified of the situation and arrangements will be made for either transporting the children home or care-taking for the remainder of the emergency.

#### *Lock Down*

In the event of an emergency in the surrounding area that does not immediately impact the premises, PCWS will lock down. All classes will go into/stay in their classrooms. All exterior doors will be locked. No one may enter or leave the premises until the lockdown is lifted; however, classroom activity may continue.

#### *Communicating with Parents During an Emergency Situation*

In the event of an emergency situation that may require sheltering-in-place or evacuation from the building to a safe site, family/guardian/emergency contacts will be notified of the situation and arrangements will be made for either transporting the child(ren) home or care taking for the

remainder of the emergency. Initially, all contact will be made by the PCWS class WhatsApp, as well as landline phone or cell phone.

If communication becomes impossible due to the emergency situation, contact with parents will be made as soon as communications are reopened or reestablished.

### *Emergency Drills*

Our state and county licensing requires that we conduct monthly fire drills, biannual shelter-in-place drills and an annual lock down drill. These are always conducted in a calm manner and rarely, if ever, upset the children.

### *Cases of Suspected Child Abuse*

Teachers are required to report any suspected incident of child abuse, in accordance with Title 63.1 248.3 of the Code of Virginia.

## **In the Classroom**

### *Introduction to Waldorf Education and Waldorf School Methods*

Some practices at the school may appear puzzling, and we invite you to raise any questions so that they may be answered by either conversation or suggested readings. The brief descriptions below are intended as an introduction to Waldorf education.

### *Elementary School (Grades One-Five)*

“The Waldorf approach to educating the child strives to achieve rhythm and balance in every school day and throughout the school year. The presentation of each subject directly connects with the child, head, heart and limbs.”

from *Rudolf Steiner Education - The Primary Years* by Carl Hoffmann

As children enter our elementary school, they will be guided by a class teacher who often carries the class from first through fifth grade. The children and teacher develop a deep and enduring relationship through the shared experience of the main-lesson curriculum.

### *Main Lesson*

The heart of Waldorf education during the elementary school years is the main lesson. During the morning, the main lesson centers on one subject taught in “blocks” of three or four weeks in length. This arrangement allows for intensive, uninterrupted study. When the block concludes, another main-lesson subject takes its place. The former study goes to “sleep” and reawakens later in the year.

The main lesson takes into account the subconscious life. For example, a child who has difficulty understanding an arithmetic problem will often find this resolved when they return to a main lesson block on the same subject later in the year.

The daily main lesson follows the beneficial rhythm of breathing in and out; concentration and

relaxation; and formal instruction and individual activities. Thinking, feeling and doing are kept in balance. The teacher's artistic, imaginative faculties make the lessons living and exciting. Rather than relying on text books that teach to the common denominator, the students write and illustrate their own workbooks.

### *Specialty Classes (Grades One-Five)*

In the grades, PCWS specialty teachers offer classes in/for Spanish, Chinese (Mandarin), handwork, games, circus play, music, and stringed instruments, including ukulele in second and third grade and violin, viola, or cello in fourth and fifth grade.

### *Early Childhood (EC) Classes (Redbud and Maple Tree Classes)*

The emphasis in our early childhood classes is on developing will forces. We cultivate the young child's ability to learn through imitation, and the teacher sets an example through their daily classwork activities. We encourage healthy, fantasy-filled play with simple materials from the natural world. Thus, through imagination and imitation, the children try on the world and make it their own.

Every effort is made to make the early childhood classroom a warm, homelike environment for the children. Much learning takes place through imitation and example—rather than through verbal instruction. Young children strive to fully develop their senses and desire to engage in all healthy aspects of life. The teacher helps them to accomplish this.

In the Waldorf early childhood classroom, the teacher plays a central role; through their example, the children enter the life of the class deeply. They experience the regular rhythm of each day's activities, be it household work, arts, or crafts. They are led into the yearly rhythm of the seasons with uplifting festivals, which are alive with rich colors, soulful moods, and heartfelt activities. The teacher introduces the children to song, dance, gesture and verse in the daily movements of "circle time." The children become familiar with the world of stories, both nature tales and appropriate fairy and folk tales, which are told to them in the time-honored oral tradition or are presented as simple table-puppet or marionette plays. The children come to know and love the kindergarten and pre-K world, and through it, the wider world around them.

An important task of the early childhood teacher is to help the children grow through creative, open-ended play. Through such play, the children create the world anew each day and try on every imaginable situation within it. They build houses, pilot ships, fly rockets, and drive fire engines. They explore life in homes and farms, forests and mountains, underwater caverns and outer space. They create their play worlds using the simplest of materials, such as logs and stumps, stones and shells, cloths, and play stands. In the course of play, their growth in all areas is stimulated physically, emotionally, socially, and mentally. As has been confirmed by a growing body of research, such open-ended, creative play lays a foundation for emotional and social wellbeing, as well as for lively, imaginative thinking into adolescence and adulthood. It also stimulates an interest for all aspects of life, which the children may cultivate through academic studies in the elementary grades and beyond. Play is at the very heart and soul of healthy early childhood and is the center of the Waldorf early childhood classroom.

### *EC Early Bird Program*

We offer an EC Early Bird program Monday-Friday from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. Please pay close attention to the following drop-off times and procedures:

Monday-Wednesday Early Bird students should be dropped off at Windmill Hill Park (501 S. Union Street) by the volleyball sand court on Union Street between 7:30 and 8:00 a.m. An Early Bird teacher will meet cars at the curb to receive children until 8:00 a.m. Redbud children who have not arrived by 8:00 a.m. should be brought by their parent or guardian to PCWS, where they can park and walk their child to the school during the regular Redbud class arrival window of 8:15-8:30 a.m. If a Maple Tree child in the Early Bird program arrives after 8:00 a.m., their parent or guardian will need to park their vehicle near the park and walk their student to meet the class.

The Thursday-Friday Early Bird program is held at Jones Point Park. To avoid traffic from St. Mary's School, students should be dropped off between 7:30 and 8:00 a.m. at the S. Lee Street/Jones Point Park Community Garden (at the corner of S. Lee Street and S. Lee Court) between 7:30 and 8:00 a.m. **(See Map, Appendix A)**. To avoid traffic, we suggest that you avoid using Green Street and Jefferson Street. If you are traveling south on Washington St., you can make a left turn on Franklin Street during the morning rush hour, turn right on S. Lee St., and follow Lee Street until it dead ends at the garden entrance.

Early Bird children who have not arrived by 8:00 a.m. should be brought by their parent or guardian to their class drop-off location at Jones Point Park during the regular arrival window of 8:15-8:30 a.m. Drop-off locations per EC class are:

- Maple Tree children at the Jones Point Park playground.
- Redbud children at the grassy area by the path across the parking lot from the playground.

### **The Early Bird teachers will not be able to receive children while they are walking from the community garden to the playground area.**

Enrollment in the Early Bird program is for the full year. If you are interested in enrolling your child part-time or full-time in the Early Bird program, please email Kensei Phillips at [kphillips@potomacwaldorf.org](mailto:kphillips@potomacwaldorf.org) to inquire about space availability. Beginning in October, drop-ins are allowed on a space-available basis if arranged in advance with Kensei. The daily drop-in fee for the Early Bird program is \$20.00.

### *Afternoon Program: Early Childhood*

The Afternoon Program complements the morning pre-K and kindergarten; the same Waldorf education principles and care shape the program. The morning program flows into the Afternoon Program, creating a seamless transition for the child. The Afternoon Program offers a time to receive nourishment, rest, digest the morning activities, socialize, and play.

The program begins at noon, when the children wash up and sit together to enjoy the lunches they bring from home. After lunch, the children prepare for rest with a ritual that is not rushed, and the

teacher tells them a story. The morning is so full for the children that the afternoon should allow for them to breathe in and digest their morning. Lots of “soul warmth” is thus provided for them. After rest time, the children are gently awakened and return to their play.

The Afternoon Program dismissal time is 2:50-3:00 p.m.

#### Monday-Wednesday

The Monday-Wednesday Afternoon Program is held indoors at PCWS, and dismissal is on Prince St.

#### Thursday-Friday

The Thursday-Friday Afternoon Program is held outdoors at Jones Point Park, and dismissal is at the Jones Point Park playground. If children need to return to PCWS for weather or other reasons, the teachers and office will coordinate to transport them in their vehicles, using booster seats, and parents will be informed of the change in their pick-up location.

Enrollment in the EC Afternoon Program is for the full year. If you are interested in enrolling your child part-time or full-time in the Afternoon Program, please email Kensei Phillips at [kphillips@potomacwaldorf.org](mailto:kphillips@potomacwaldorf.org) to inquire about space availability. Beginning in October, drop-ins are allowed on a space-available basis if arranged in advance with Kensei. The daily drop-in fee for the Afternoon Program is \$50.00.

#### *Afternoon Program: Grades Students*

The Afternoon Program for grades students is offered on Thursdays, which is an early release day. In the Afternoon Program, the students have lunch, socialize with friends, and play games. Weather permitting, the children will walk to Windmill Hill Park and return to PCWS for the 2:50-3:00 p.m. pick-up at the Prince Street carpool lane.

If Thursday Afternoon Program students need to be picked up before 2:50 p.m., a parent or guardian must contact the PCWS Administration to arrange pick-up at Windmill Hill Park and then connect with the Afternoon Program lead teacher at the park to sign out the student. Pick-ups are only allowed at the park or at the Prince Street carpool lane and not while the students are walking between the two locations.

We kindly ask parents and guardians not to bring students who are not enrolled in the Thursday Afternoon Program to Windmill Hill Park to play with students in the Afternoon Program. Even if the student’s parent/guardian is present, it puts the Afternoon Program teachers in the position of supervising their interactions with the students in their care.

Enrollment in the Grades Afternoon Program is for the full year. If you are interested in enrolling your child in the Grades Afternoon Program, please email Kensei Phillips at [kphillips@potomacwaldorf.org](mailto:kphillips@potomacwaldorf.org) to inquire about space availability. Beginning in October, drop-ins are allowed on a space-available basis if arranged in advance with Kensei. The daily drop-in fee for the Afternoon Program is \$50.00

#### *Outdoor Play Time*

Outdoor play is a regular part of the school day. Children in all classes typically go outside in all but

the most severe weather. Children do not go outside in a thunderstorm, an extended downpour or a blizzard, and their outdoor time may be shortened when a combination of cold and rain or wind will hamper a healthy outdoor experience. Each child should come with outdoor clothing matched to the daily weather: rain boots, rain pants, and a hooded raincoat for the inevitable mist or drizzle; heavy coat, mittens, hat, scarf, snow pants and winter boots for cold weather; a jacket, sweater, or sweatshirt for in-between days. (Families will receive a detailed list of appropriate clothing from the lead teacher of each class.) If a child is not dressed appropriately for the weather, it can negatively affect their experience, health and safety, as well as the class rhythm. It is essential that parents follow PCWS clothing and outerwear guidelines and send their children to school prepared for the weather. Please note that it is often colder and windier at the parks near the school than where PCWS families live. If a child's lack of clothing or outerwear is impacting their well-being or the rhythm of their class, PCWS will contact their parent or guardian and ask them to deliver appropriate clothing to PCWS as soon as possible or to pick up their child for the day.

### *Class Outings & Field Trips*

Class outings begin in first grade with long walks. We regularly walk to local parks. These walks may be rather lengthy and are always adventurous. It is not typical for first- and second-grade classes to go on field trips requiring transportation; however, if something special comes up and we decide to go on a field trip, permission slips are kept in the children's files. For any grades field trip that requires transportation, your child's class teacher will contact you with details and a permission slip.

Depending on the teacher and the nature of the class, the kindergarten may have occasional class trips, such as fruit picking at local orchards, hiking, or ice skating. The teacher organizes the trips, but the parents take responsibility for their children's transportation and care during the trip. For most of these early childhood years, however, emphasis is placed on the wonder found in our own classroom, backyard, and neighborhood.

### *Lunch and Snack*

Our early childhood students are served a mid-morning snack with their class. Every effort is made to serve fresh, wholesome, and organic foods. We avoid refined sugars and additives. Special nutritional requirements can usually be accommodated; please inform your child's teacher, in writing, of any special needs. Early childhood students who stay for the Afternoon Program should bring a packed lunch to school.

The grades children bring their own snacks and lunch to school. PCWS has different requirements for classes based on the dietary restrictions of the children in each class, so class teachers will inform families if their class has dietary restrictions. (ie; some may need food that is peanut and treenut free.)

### *Substitute Teachers*

If a teacher is absent from school, a substitute teacher will be brought in. When a lead teacher is absent, the assistant teacher will take over the lead duties and the substitute teacher will assist. If an assistant is absent, the substitute teacher will serve as the assistant teacher.

## Practical Matters for Parents

### *Parking*

Traffic is a concern when young children are about. Parents should follow the latest guidance provided by teachers and PCWS administrative staff on parking. Please note that free, short-term parking (3 spaces) are available for parents who are dropping off or picking up children outside of regular drop-off or pick-up hours at Tavern Square Garage, located at 418 Cameron Street. Parents are encouraged to utilize these spaces or to use the metered parking spaces located on Prince Street or Duke Street. The metered parking does not include the PCWS drop-off/pick-up carpooling lane, however.

### *Drop-Off Procedures*

PCWS takes safety very seriously during student drop-offs. Please follow all guidance provided by the PCWS administrative staff and your class teacher, and please follow the staggered drop-off schedule and location assigned to your child's class. Students are only allowed to exit from the sidewalk side of vehicles, and parents should remain inside of vehicles during drop-offs. PCWS staff will be present and will assist the children if needed. Please follow considerate drop-off etiquette and have children prepared to get out promptly when it is your turn in the drop-off lane. To keep our drop-off process running smoothly and efficiently, please move your vehicle out of the carpool lane once your child has safely exited and is in the care of PCWS staff.

### *Grades Student Drop-Offs*

Grades students should be dropped off at the Prince Street carpool lane according to the staggered drop-off schedule below. Families with more than one PCWS Grades student may use the earliest of their assigned times to drop off all of their Grades students, as long as they have made a standing arrangement with their children's teachers in advance. The Grades drop-off schedule is as follows:

|              |           |
|--------------|-----------|
| First Grade  | 7:30 a.m. |
| Second Grade | 7:40 a.m. |
| Third Grade  | 7:45 a.m. |
| Fourth Grade | 7:50 a.m. |

### *Redbud Student Drop-Offs*

There is no drop-off carpool lane for Redbud students, but Redbud families should arrive 8:15-8:30 a.m.

- On Mondays-Wednesdays, Redbud parents/guardians may park and walk their Redbud children to the double doors of the PCWS building, where staff will greet them and bring the children to their classroom.
- On Thursdays-Fridays, parents/guardians should park on the right side of the Jones Point Park parking lot (across from the playground), where the Redbud teachers will be ready to receive the children. Parents/guardians should walk their child to the teachers.

### *Maple Tree Students Drop-Offs*

There is no drop-off carpool lane for Maple Tree students, but Maple Tree families should arrive 8:15-8:30 a.m.

- On Mondays-Wednesdays, Maple Tree parents/guardians may park near Windmill Hill Park (501 S. Union Street) and walk their children to the Maple Tree teachers by the volleyball sand court on S. Union Street.
- On Thursdays-Fridays, Maple Tree parents/guardians should park on the left side of the JPP parking lot (by the playground) and walk their children to the playground gate, where Maple Tree teachers will be ready to receive them.

### *Attendance & Timeliness*

An important part of a healthy school experience is starting the school day as a whole class. When a child is late or absent, the child suffers because they are missing valuable school experiences and because it can feel unsettling and isolating to join a class that has already begun their day together. The rest of the class also suffers, as one of their classmates is missing, and this leaves a hole in the social realm or the "heart" of the class. Therefore, it is very important that every child — both in the Grades and the Early Childhood programs— be present and ready to start the school day on time. Absences related to illness cannot be helped, but non-health related absences should be kept to a minimum.

### *Late Arrivals of Grades Students*

The arrival times above reflect careful planning about how each class will start the day. Students who arrive after their drop-off window may find that their class is already in session, or they may miss the movement exercises that help them engage fully in the rich curriculum of their morning classes. Grades students who arrive after their class goes inside will be marked as tardy.

For grades children arriving late at school:

1. The parent or guardian should park their car, walk their child to the school and call the PCWS office to arrange for someone to meet you at the entrance and receive your child.
2. The child will be given a tardy slip to bring to their teacher and will be escorted to their classroom, where they will wait until the teacher opens the door to welcome late-comers.

For grades children, the teacher may request a phone conversation or meeting with parents in the following cases:

1. A child is absent for six or more days for health-related reasons — to discuss how the child's health can be best supported in the classroom;
2. A child is tardy three times in one week or five times within a 30-day period — to discuss how this is impacting the child and the class and how to rectify the problem;
3. A child is absent for four or more days for non-health related reasons — to discuss how this is impacting the child and the class.

Please note: Daily communication between PCWS administration and parents will be carried out to monitor the health of a COVID-positive child or a child who has to quarantine at home. (See also PCWS COVID Plan.)

When a child is absent for ten or more days for non-health related reasons, a meeting will be held with the parent and teacher regarding the possibility of the child's dismissal from PCWS.

### *Late Arrivals of Early Childhood Students*

The rhythm of the EC programs is an essential component of the child's experience. Young children do not have a developed sense of time, so when they arrive even a few minutes late and find their classmates engaged without them, they can feel a sense of missing out. This can be an unsettling feeling and sometimes inhibits children from entering into play in a healthy way. If they miss this healthy play opportunity, it might affect their relationships with other students or their sense of belonging and full engagement in the class.

#### Mondays-Wednesdays

- Redbud families who arrive late should park, walk their child to the school, and call the PCWS office to arrange for someone to receive their child and bring them to class.
- Maple Tree families who arrive late to Windmill Hill Park should park and walk their child to the teachers.
- Drop-offs are only permitted at the school or Windmill Hill Park, and children may not join the classes while walking between the two.

#### Thursdays-Fridays

- Redbud and Maple Tree families who arrive at Jones Point Park late should park and call the PCWS office so they can help facilitate finding the child's class. Once teachers have been notified of their arrival, families can walk their child to the teachers.

### ***Pick-Up Procedures/Schedules***

#### **Redbud Pick-up (Monday-Wednesday at Safeway and Thursday-Friday at JPP)**

Dismissal is 11:50 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

5-minute grace period is 12:01-12:05 p.m.

If children are still waiting at 12:06 p.m., the fee schedule begins.

#### **Maple Tree Pick-up (Monday-Wednesday at Prince St. Carpool Line and Thursday-Friday at JPP)**

Dismissal is 12:00-12:10 p.m.

5-minute grace period is 12:11-12:15 p.m.

If children are still waiting at 12:16 p.m., the fee schedule begins..

#### **EC Afternoon Program (Monday-Wednesday at Prince St. Carpool Line and Thursday-Friday at JPP)**

Dismissal is 2:50-3:00 p.m.

5-minute grace period is 3:01-3:05 p.m.

If children are still waiting at 3:06 p.m., the fee schedule begins.

#### **Grades (Monday-Thursday at Prince St. Carpool Line and Friday at JPP)**

Fourth Grade: 2:15 p.m. (5-minute grace period is 2:16-2:20 p.m. and fee schedule begins at 2:21 p.m.)

Third Grade: 2:20 p.m. (5-minute grace period is 2:21-2:25 p.m. and fee schedule begins at 2:26 p.m.)

Second Grade: 2:25 p.m. (5-minute grace period is 2:26-2:30 p.m. and fee schedule

begins at 2:31 p.m.)  
First Grade: 2:30 p.m. (5-minute grace period is 2:31-2:35 p.m. and fee schedule begins at 2:36 p.m.)

-Families with multiple students in the grades may pick up all their grades students at the latest class time assigned to their family if they make a standing arrangement with the teachers.

**Grades Thursday Afternoon Program at Prince St. Carpool Line**

Dismissal at Prince St. is 2:50-3:00 p.m.

5-minute grace period is 3:01-3:05 p.m.

If children are still waiting at 3:06 p.m., the fee schedule begins.

*Late Pick-Up*

We kindly ask that you pick up your child promptly at dismissal time. Teachers have many responsibilities at the end of the school day, and children can find it stressful to wait for a late pick-up.

If a child is not picked up as planned, the child will be kept under supervision at the PCWS Office while an administrator calls the custodial guardian(s) and then the emergency contacts, if the custodial guardian(s) cannot be reached. Parents/custodial guardians are asked to come to the PCWS office to pick up their child, and to sign the Late-Pick-Up form acknowledging the late pick-up.

The late pick-up policy is outlined below:

5-minute grace period for late pick-ups

6-10 minutes late = \$20

11-15 minutes late = \$40

16-20 minutes late = \$60

More than 20 minutes late = \$80

**Notes**

-Parents/guardians who are in the pick-up line, but waiting their turn won't be assessed a fee.

The fee will be invoiced at the beginning of the following month. There will be a grace period for the month of September as we all adjust to the new school year.

In the extreme event of a failed pick-up and the inability of the school to reach the parents or an emergency contact, a child will remain with a teacher or in the school office. If no contact can be made, the staff member must keep the child upon leaving school. No child will ever be left unattended.

*Transition Between Classes*

For pre-K, kindergarten, and Grades students, your child's teacher(s) will make a recommendation for your child's class placement for the coming year. We will communicate these recommendations and enrollment procedures to families no later than January 2023.

### *Custodial Parents' Rights*

The custodial parent has the right to be admitted to any child day program as required by the Code of Virginia (63.2-1813). Such right of admission shall apply only while the child is in the child day program.

### *Lost & Found*

Articles of clothing, lunch boxes, toys, and other items that are found on school grounds will be placed in the lost and found bin located in or near the school office. Please contact the office if you would like us to check the lost and found bin for a specific item. Items not claimed by winter break, spring break, or the conclusion of the school year will be donated to a local charitable organization.

### *Tuition & Fees*

Tuition payments are paid through FACTS. Please refer to the Terms and Conditions of your child's enrollment agreement for details on withdrawals and other circumstances regarding tuition obligations. Tuition questions may be addressed to the Enrollment & Admissions Coordinator, Ms. Kensei Phillips, at [kphillips@potomacwaldorf.org](mailto:kphillips@potomacwaldorf.org).

### *Tuition Assistance Program*

Tuition Assistance is available in limited amounts from the school budget. Applications for financial assistance for the following school year should be made by the announced deadline by filing the Parents' Financial Statement form (available on-line) with the School and Student Service for Financial Aid (SSS). An objective and confidential assessment of family need is provided by SSS to the PCWS tuition assistance committee. The tuition assistance committee makes its decisions in time for financial-assistance offers to be included in the child's enrollment agreement. Applicants filing after the deadline may find that all available funds have been awarded.

It is PCWS's hope that anyone desiring Waldorf education will not allow financial constraints to prevent their application to the school. Requests should be made with the knowledge that our aid funds are limited.

### *Contacting Faculty or Staff*

Messages for teachers or staff can be left on the school voicemail or by sending an email to the teacher or staff member, using the following format: firstinitiallastname@potomacwaldorf.org. Your child's class teacher will provide specific guidance with their contact information. Please keep in mind that messages sent in the evenings or during the weekends might not be replied to until the next business day. Urgent communication during the school day should go to the PCWS office, as teachers are unlikely to see emails or voice messages during the school day.

### *Parent Questions*

Due to the organizational structure of PCWS, your class teacher is your first point of contact for most of your questions. Please reach out to your class teacher with any questions or concerns. If they cannot answer your question, they will direct you to the person who can.

Because the teachers' primary interactions during drop-off and pick-up are with the children, your child's class teacher will provide you with the best ways to get in touch with them at other times.

Brief conversations may be possible at drop-off and pick-up, but phone calls or in-person meetings should be arranged for longer or more sensitive discussions.

### *Communication*

Potomac Crescent Waldorf School is committed to openness in communication and attempts to be responsive to parent and community concerns. Every parent should feel free to express concerns to the faculty, administration, and board members. The grievance policy, described in this handbook, guides the protocol for parental concerns. The faculty, administration, and board welcome inquiries from parents regarding the administration and operation of our school. Some matters may be confidential, such as those regarding another family, and the discussion may be bound by the need to be judicious.

### *Grievance Process*

If there is a persistent concern about the school, parents should initiate a meeting with their child's teacher to clarify and discuss the problem. If there is no resolution, the parent will meet with the classroom teacher and the relevant department chair (Grades or EC). If necessary, the faculty chair will be brought into the discussion. If there is still no resolution, the issue will be taken up by the Core Group, which is composed of representatives from the faculty, administration, and board. The Core Group will meet with all necessary parties to resolve the concern.

### *Photographing & Recording School Events*

In typical years, our school has a variety of all-school events: Lantern Walk, Spiral of Light, Children's Festivals, opening and closing assemblies, May Day, and more. Other celebrations may take place within the individual classes during the course of the year. All of these school events enrich the lives of our students and their families and strengthen our school community. These events are special, inner experiences for the students, and, if nurtured, live vividly in their memories. The memory of the event undergoes a gradual transformation over time.

A recording, such as a photograph or videotape, is a material rendering of an event, not well suited to revealing its inner spirit. It is in the nature of performing that the performer not see themselves in a recording. In such recordings, a performer sees an exterior version of themselves that is only a slim portion of the experience. The presence of cameras and video recorders makes the younger child, in particular, very self-conscious. Sometimes children conclude, after re-playing the performance, that they did not do as well as they thought they had because of the discrepancy between the reality as recorded and the child's inner sense of the event. It can be very disappointing for the child. In addition, a recording freezes the experience and may run counter to the transformation that happens in the memory.

The children are very proud to share festivals and performances with family members, and we find that they are better able to engage in these events when they see their family's faces without the presence of cameras. Many times, the class teacher will arrange for one designated photographer at an event. The photographs and/or video would then be shared with the rest of the families. We encourage families to view these as precious souvenirs of childhood rather than something to share now with the children that might overtake their experience of the event. Please speak with your class teacher if you have any questions.

### *Our Physical Space*

Our landlord is Old Town Community Church (OTCC). We rent rooms in the education and sanctuary wings of OTCC. Potomac Crescent Waldorf School's liability insurance covers our use of the premises.

It should be kept in mind at all times that we are tenants and not owners of the building. Thus, a certain respect must be given to the school building and to any specific requests made by the landlord.

### *Community Life*

We strive to be a welcoming community of mutually supportive families. We encourage you to attend community events and class gatherings that happen throughout the year during typical years. Details on upcoming festivals and activities are included in newsletters and emails from the office and class teachers.

### *Community Events*

Additional activities beyond the classroom are an important and satisfying part of the life within our school. This can include class parent evenings; parent education speakers; school and class festivals; a parent handwork group; committee and volunteer work; and community work days. We are continually working to provide meaningful opportunities for everyone to participate in the life of the school to the fullest extent of their interests. Please note that events and activities may be held remotely (not in-person) depending on the status and latest CDC/VA State COVID-related guidance. Please see the Parent Association section for additional opportunities for community engagement

### *All-School Emails and Newsletter*

Throughout the school year, the school office sends emails and a biweekly newsletter with information about upcoming events and other school-related news.

If you are not receiving these email updates, please contact Paul Nary at [pnary@potomacwaldorf.org](mailto:pnary@potomacwaldorf.org).

### *Website*

Our school website can be found at [www.potomacwaldorf.org](http://www.potomacwaldorf.org).

### *School Mailings*

PCWS regularly sends out important information to parents by email and occasionally by snail mail. Please make sure the school has the most up-to-date addresses and other contact information for your family. If you move, please email your new address to Kensei Phillips at [kphillips@potomacwaldorf.org](mailto:kphillips@potomacwaldorf.org)

### *Family Email Addresses*

The school shares a roster with PCWS families of parent email addresses and other contact information to help our community stay connected. Except for school purposes, the school does not give out email addresses; however, the various parent committees within our school use email

addresses. We ask that no one use our school roster and its information for any purposes other than those connected with PCWS.

### *Teacher Gifts*

The teachers are always touched by the thoughtful gifts given to them at certain times of the year; however, there is no expectation of gifts. No family should feel obligated in any way to give gifts or to contribute to gifts for the teachers. For those who would still like to give, a handmade card, flowers, a seasonal craft, or a heartfelt hug are as welcome as a special purchase for a teacher or the classroom.

## **School Standards**

### *Standards of Behavior*

At school, we strive toward courteous and cooperative behavior. The primary means to achieve this is by exemplary classroom conduct that can be imitated by the young child. In many instances, disruptive behavior can be avoided by the attentiveness of teachers, who can redirect an unpromising situation before it degenerates. Sometimes, but rarely, a child must be isolated from the group, perhaps by sitting apart, but always within sight of an adult. For young children, discipline is more often achieved by firm but gentle action than by verbal admonishment. Physical punishment and verbal belittling are not employed.

Teachers work to support children as they learn appropriate behaviors, but PCWS policy is that teachers may send a child home for the day if they are physically or verbally aggressive at school. In particular, if a child bites another child or adult or they throw rocks or other unsafe objects, they will be sent home for the day.

In the event that a child, or their family, is not ready or able to adapt to the structure of class life, and only after consultations with the parent, the class teacher, and the faculty chair working to resolve problems, a child may be asked to leave the class. In the event of such a request, notice of withdrawal requirements would be waived.

### *No Knife Policy*

Students are not allowed to bring any sort of knife to school, unless specifically requested by their teacher for a school-related project. Your child's teacher will provide procedures and protocols for these types of projects. Such knives will be used under the strict supervision of the child's teacher.

### *Dress Code*

Students should wear clothing that is neat and suitable for the class and the season, and does not impede their activities. The children go outside every day, except in the most inclement weather, so please send along appropriate gear. In wet weather, send a hooded raincoat, rain boots, and rain pants. For cold or snowy days, send a warm coat, hat, mittens, scarf, snow pants, and winter boots.

Because clothing is part of the classroom environment, the following guidelines are designed to help create an atmosphere conducive to learning, focusing attention on the children and not their clothing.

- Clothing should be free of advertising, branded and media-related characters.
- Shorts, leggings, or tights should be worn under dresses and skirts so children can play freely without concern for their clothing.
- Except for religious purposes, hats or head coverings should not be worn in the classroom.
- Tops and shirts need to be long enough so a child can raise their hands without the midriff or belly button showing.
- Torn clothing should not be worn to school.
- Clothing that attracts undue attention (e.g., flashing shoes or sequins) is not supportive of the classroom work and should not be worn to school.
- Makeup, face paint, temporary tattoos and nail polish should not be worn to school.
- Jewelry - such as necklaces, bracelets, and pins - should not be worn to school because they pose a risk of injury at recess or other times of physical activity. If a child has pierced ears and cannot go without earrings, small studs need to be worn to minimize the possibility of injury. Exceptions may be made for jewelry worn for religious and medical purposes or for handcrafted textile jewelry that does not pose a safety hazard. Please speak with your class teacher.
- Shoes must be worn at all times at school. They should be durable, comfortable, close-toed, and suitable for active play.
- Watches should not be worn by children unless given permission by the teacher. In this instance, only analog watches are permitted. No watches shall be allowed for children in the Early Childhood programs.

Similar rules apply to lunch containers. Plain, insulated bags are more suitable than superhero- or toy-motif lunchboxes for the mood we seek to create at the lunch table. Also, toys and other, non-school-related personal items should not be brought to school from home unless prior arrangement has been made with the teacher.

Parents will be contacted by their child's class teacher if their child wears clothing/items that do not meet PCWS's dress code. If the item causes a risk of injury to themselves or another child and can be easily removed, it will be removed for safe-keeping, and you will be notified at the end of the day. If the clothing is not weather appropriate, the teacher will seek an alternative in the child's change of clothes.

### *Park/Playground Safety & Rules*

Time at the park or playground provides an important benefit to PCWS students. The guidelines provided below convey the expectation of behavior for each student, allowing our faculty to ensure the safety of the students while visiting playgrounds or parks. PCWS reserves the right to contact a parent or guardian and/or send a student home if unsafe behavior occurs.

1. No child may be at a playground or park without adult supervision. Both teachers from an Early Childhood class should be out in the playground/park during outdoor time. The grades need only one teacher present.
2. Students will travel on foot to and from local parks, utilizing the sidewalks, crosswalks, trails and Wilkes Street Tunnel in Old Town Alexandria. PCWS does not allow hiding or running

from the teachers or class, as such behavior is especially unsafe while at the playground, park, or during walks. Because it compromises the safety of the child and the entire class, PCWS may send a child home after a single incident and discuss strategies with their parents/guardians to prevent this behavior. PCWS may consider withdrawing a child from our school if multiple incidents occur that impact the teachers' ability to carry out our programs.

3. All playground gates must remain closed while children are in a playground when gates are available.
4. No Early Childhood Program child may leave a playground or park except with a teacher, their parent or their authorized pick-up person.
5. Children may not fight, hit, push, chase, scream, or curse at each other. Threatening or bullying behavior is not allowed.
6. Children may not throw sand, mulch, snow, rocks, sticks or other objects, even if no child is in the path of flight.
7. Children may not run with sticks or tools (e.g., shovels or rakes).
8. Children may not climb atop the playground fortress roofs.
9. Picnic tables are for eating or craft activities; they are not sturdy enough for building projects.
10. When children are playing on any elevated apparatus (walking stumps, balance beam, and monkey bars), adults should be aware of the surrounding fall zones and make sure these zones remain clear.
11. Early Childhood Program children may not walk on top of the playground or park monkey bars. Grades teachers must use discretion with their classes.
12. Sand should not be taken or thrown out of the sand pits.
13. Children should not touch, play, or dig in private or community gardens near the parks.
14. Children should stay on designated paths in the wooded area of Jones Point Park.
15. Benches are for adult use and for tired children to rest. Benches should be kept clean of sand and wood chips.
16. In a case where several classes share a park or playground at one time, all teachers present, regardless of class, share the responsibility of enforcing the playground/park rules for ALL the children present.
17. Bucket swings are for babies and toddlers and are off limits to pre-K, Kindergarten, and Grades children.

## **Supporting the Work of the Teachers**

We invite all parents to support our work by getting involved in the life of the school and by participating in the festivals and events throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to ask their child's teacher or the office administrators about opportunities to engage with the community and support the school.

Parents can best support their children if they are regularly in touch with their child's teacher, and work with him or her over the course of the school year in the best interest of their child. This includes, but is not limited to, making every effort to attend regular Parent Evenings, which focus on Waldorf pedagogy and curriculum, and Parent-Teacher Conferences, which focus on your child in particular. Parents can also enhance their child's school experience by familiarizing themselves

with the contents of this handbook, in particular the sections on how best to ensure that their child has a good experience at school, as outlined below.

### *Bedtimes & Breakfast*

Children need lots of sleep. Much is being asked of them mentally, physically, and spiritually. Sleep is a time for renewal of their energies in all these realms. An early, regularly scheduled bedtime is essential for a child if they are to be fully engaged in every aspect of school during the day. We strongly recommend a bedtime of 7:30 p.m., or no later than 8:00 p.m., for first and second grade children and even earlier for younger children. If a child is well rested, it shows in their face, body movements, attitude, and willingness to participate.

Each child also needs to eat a good breakfast. Having “fasted” for eleven hours or more, children need fuel to run on during the morning lessons. Snack is mid-morning, another four hours after a child has gotten up. Without breakfast, a child may not have eaten for fifteen hours, more than half a day! Please make sure that your child eats breakfast before coming to school every day. Additionally, when children have taken care of bathrooming just before leaving for school, they have a better chance of engaging in play or activities without distraction.

### *Adjustment Problems*

For many children, pre-K or kindergarten will be their first school experience and some adjustment issues may arise. A few tears at the start of class in the first weeks of school are quite common. The teachers are alert to the child who may need extra reassurance. The best approach at first is a little TLC, followed by involving the child quickly in an interesting activity. At these times a prompt, kindly but resolute parental farewell is important. The quicker the farewell, the easier it will be for the child to get into the school rhythms. More serious adjustment problems may occasionally occur, but few are insurmountable. Please refer to the section on Standards of Behavior for more regarding what is expected of the children in the classroom.

### *Media Exposure*

We recommend that young children not watch television because it is a passive activity for children; it fails to enlist their active forces of creativity, imagination, and healthy movement. In addition, forming meaningful concepts from rapidly changing images beamed at the young child may be a neurologically challenging task. Since our reservations are not limited to the program content (a whole different issue), the same concerns apply to videos and computers and any electronic or screen games.

In addition, we have observed that young children who have not developed the habit of watching television and videos more readily and independently take up other activities such as playing house, playing school, playing outdoors, and later, reading, drama, and making music. When they have access to TV at a more developmentally appropriate age, children seem to find it less addictive and retain their interest in more active and creative pursuits.

### *Student Cell Phone Use*

We encourage cell phones to remain at home, as they can be a distraction during the school day. If a student does bring a cell phone to school, the cell phone must stay on mute in the student’s backpack during school hours, including during recess. If the cell phone is used for medical or

emergency reasons, please contact Paul Nary at [pnary@potomacwaldorf.org](mailto:pnary@potomacwaldorf.org) for arrangements to be made to accommodate this need.

### *Working with Separating or Divorcing Parents*

When parents separate, or are in the process of divorce, school can be a place of normalcy and calm for children. As a child's family shifts, we teachers strive to provide day-to-day rhythm and warmth, something the children can count on not to change and to hold them in an accustomed warm embrace. For this reason, we ask that teachers and others in our school not be asked to testify in proceedings related to separation or divorce. We have found that such requests tend to compromise the safe haven teachers offer a child. We thank you for your understanding.

In the event of a separation or divorce of parents of a child in our school, the school will be a neutral party, communicating equally with both parents in matters relating to their child. Please be sure all relevant contact information is on file in the office.

## **Supporting the School**

### *Providing Financial Support*

As with most private schools and all 501(c)(3) organizations, tuition & program revenue is not enough for us to continue to grow and develop. We hold two fundraising events throughout the year: the Annual Fund and the Spring2ACTion campaign.

The Annual Fund supports tuition assistance, classroom supplies, faculty development, funding for new programs, improvements to the campus, and so much more. The Annual Fund begins in the fall and continues through June 2023.

Spring2ACTion is a 24-hour online, crowd-funding event in April to help Alexandria nonprofits raise funds. Through the support of local sponsors, nonprofits are eligible to win grants throughout the day. Spring2ACTion is a great way for PCWS to raise funds for special projects, such as playground equipment or classroom expansion.

Further details regarding Spring2ACTion will be communicated in the early months of 2023.

### *Volunteer Support*

The school relies on parent involvement in order to grow and thrive. Parents can support our school in many ways, including through the Parent Association and helping with the Fall Festival (during a typical year).

### *Parent Association*

Our Parent Association (PA) is active in our school's life with community events and the handwork group. The PA chair and PA class representatives work together to keep communications strong with the parent body.

Our parent community is essential to the life of PCWS. All families are members of the Parent Association. We encourage you to attend the Parent Association meetings held every two months,

or to speak to your PA Class Representative. PA activities and news will be included in the PCWS biweekly newsletter.

## **School Governance**

Potomac Crescent Waldorf School is governed by the faculty, administration, and board in partnership. Leadership members from the three bodies serve in the Core Group. This group helps the faculty, administration, and board work together effectively and cohesively.

The faculty, administration, and board each have their own mandates and committees. Members of all three bodies serve on committees and in working groups. The committees and working groups divide the work of running the school and have power to make decisions within the scope of their mandates.

Decision-making within committees, working groups, and in the greater board, faculty, and administration is carried out through a consensus process. Sometimes a decision may need to be brought to more than one body (or in some cases, all three) for approval.

The Board of Directors carries the legal and financial responsibility for our school. Board members serve on a voluntary basis. We invite interested parents to be considered for Board membership by writing to [board@potomacwaldorf.org](mailto:board@potomacwaldorf.org).

# Appendix A

Adjusted Early Bird Drop-Off  
Thursday and Friday Only

