III

Self-Administration and Governance in Waldorf Schools

Seek the real practical life but seek it in a way that does not blind you to the spirit working in it. Seek the spirit but do not seek it out of spiritual egoism, from spiritual greed, but look for it because you want to apply it unselfishly in practical life, in the material world. Make use of the ancient principle: Spirit is never without matter, matter never without spirit.

– Rudolf Steiner

On April 23, 1919, Emil Molt, the owner of the Waldorf Astoria Cigarette Factory in Stuttgart, Germany, asked Rudolf Steiner to take on the planning and leadership of a school. Steiner agreed, and on September 15, the first Waldorf school opened with 256 children and eight grades. The school was founded in connection to Steiner's movement for the Threefold Social Order and was to be independent of state control and self-administered. "The school, therefore, will have its own administration run on a republican basis and will not be administered from above. We must not lean back and rest securely on the orders of a headmaster; we must be a republic of teachers and kindle in ourselves the strength that will enable us to do what we have to do with full responsibility."[1]

From these statements three principles emerge about self-administration: Schools must be free of state control as part of a free cultural life, teachers must be centrally involved in the running of the school and in decision making, and the school should be organized along republican principles in which teachers are equal but delegate specific responsibilities to individuals and committees. So Waldorf schools from the very beginning had a non-hierarchical social form in

which individuals had to work on their relationships and experience the working of social and antisocial forces in themselves and in others.

In addition Steiner sought to integrate ideals from his work on broader social issues into the running of the first school. Salaries were not position- or job-based but needs-based, meaning that they reflected the prevailing sense of equity in the school community. Teachers with more dependents received higher salaries than those without, and neither degrees or length of service played into the financial support received. As the Stuttgart school was initially financed by the Waldorf Astoria factory and Emil Molt personally, tuitions were not charged to workers' children, although families from outside the factory paid what they could. It was hoped that as the Waldorf School Movement grew, local, regional and world school associations would develop in order to provide the financial support for an independent school movement. For Steiner it was not only a question of providing support for independent Waldorf schools but to demonstrate the principles of a free cultural life supported by the profits of economic life. "I am convinced that nothing is more important for the social development of humanity than the foundation of such a world association of schools which would then awaken a real sense for a free cultural life and spiritual life in the widest circle of people."[2] Such a World School Association was never created and Waldorf schools have become tuition-dependent (in the United States, Britain, France, China and Brazil) or partially publicly-funded (in Germany, Holland and the Scandinavian countries) or, as in the U.S., have become public charter schools, with better salaries but greater government regulation.

Principles of Self-Administration

The idea of Waldorf schools, and indeed of all schools, being free of state control is not difficult to grasp. The primary reason for this perspective is that governments, when they function well, are oriented towards equality and will therefore seek to impose uniform standards on all schools as well as to prescribe curriculum requirements. This severely limits the freedom and creativity of teachers and makes it difficult for a school to develop an education focused on the needs of the individual child. We have seen the negative consequences of "America 2000" and

of the "No Child Left Behind Act" in the United States, as political and business elites impose their vision of education on teachers, children and parents, seldom involving teachers in the formulation of educational policy and goals.[3]

The issue was the same in Rudolf Steiner's time. Here he is speaking with the teachers in 1919: "Compromises are necessary as we have not yet reached the point where we can accomplish an absolutely free deed. The State will tell us how to teach and what results to aim for, and what the State prescribes will be bad. Its targets are the worst ones imaginable, yet it expects to get the best possible results. Today's politics work in the direction of regimentation, and it will go even further than this in its attempt to make people conform."[4]

Waldorf schools around the world are self-administered in the sense that there is no outside regional or national body that controls the running of a particular school. However, by self-administration Steiner primarily meant that teachers in a particular school should not only provide a quality education to the children but should also be centrally involved in decision making and administration. "The administration of education, from which all culture develops, must be turned over to the educators. Economic and political considerations should be entirely excluded from this administration. Each teacher should arrange his time so that he can also be an administrator in his field."[5] The rationale behind this view is that decisions about education and the school should flow out of a deep engagement with the children and their educational needs.

In understanding the principle of republican self-administration, it is helpful to return to an essay written by Ernst Lehrs, one of the early teachers in the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart. In *Republican–Not Democratic* (no reference to political parties), Lehrs notes that Steiner intended Waldorf schools to develop new social forms embodying three different and at times competing principles: aristocratic leadership, aristocratic meaning "the best"; delegated responsibilities to groups and individuals by the *res publica*, the common body of teachers; and democratic selection of such individuals and groups based on competence and skill. Teachers exercised their free initiative (aristocratic leadership), both in the classroom and in carrying out their chosen

and delegated administrative roles. They were also part of a republic of teachers who made all important pedagogical and administrative decisions together democratically.[6] As Francis Gladstone notes in *Republican Academies*, a short study providing an excellent description of the principles and practice of self-administration in the first Waldorf school, "The merit of the republican approach is that it secures individual freedom, a necessary condition for creative work. Its danger is that the members of the republic fail to use that freedom to work together towards a common end. And when the give and take of free cooperation is absent, social harmony evaporates and unity is lost."[7] Then as now the two great dangers of republican self-administration in Waldorf schools are that individuals and groups who have been given specific mandates or responsibilities are not allowed to do their job, being interfered with or criticized by the full faculty or Board, and the opposite, that those chosen for positions of responsibility or who volunteer for them become a *de facto* oligarchy, building up their power at the expense of the teacher circle.[8] These issues are discussed in some length in chapters II and IV.

We should not wonder that many teachers and parents today struggle with understanding how their Waldorf school works, how leadership, governance and decision making are exercised. Even in Steiner's time the struggle to blend the values of individual freedom and creativity, the selection of individuals and groups based on competence, and the functioning of a teacher republic working with democratic principles, was messy.[9]

A Historical Perspective:

While the Rudolf Steiner School in New York was founded in 1928, the great majority of Waldorf schools in the U.S. were created after World War II and in particular in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. The individuals who played a significant role in founding many of these schools were Frances Edmunds, Henry Barnes, Werner Glas and René Querido, all Waldorf educators and lecturers who traveled the country extensively supporting new school groups. Each of them had their formative Waldorf experience in English Waldorf schools: Henry Barnes, Frances Edmunds and René Querido at Michael Hall School

in Forest Row, and Werner Glas at Wynstones and Edinburgh. English law being similar to American law meant that schools in both countries were non-profit organizations or charitable trusts, with a Board of Directors or Trustees that was legally responsible for the school in the eyes of the state. In the English and later in the American Waldorf schools, this meant that teachers and some parents and friends of the school were the directors of the school, with a faculty circle making most important pedagogical, administrative and financial decisions. Early Waldorf schools in both England and the United States were indeed faculty-run schools with limited administration and Boards which existed mainly to support the teachers in their work.

It was only from the late 1970s on that well-established Waldorf schools grew in size and complexity and needed larger administrative staffs and Boards which had greater financial, legal and fundraising expertise. It was then in the 1980s and 1990s that some Waldorf schools developed a picture of school governance and decision making which was based on a conception of partnership between a strong faculty or College of Teachers and a strong Board, consisting mainly of parents, a Board which saw itself as responsible for the financial health of the school as well as for the competence and professionalism of the school's administration.

I remember attending the early "Healthy Waldorf School" conferences sponsored by AWSNA and being struck by the emergence of this different conception of the Board's role. The argument which began to emerge at these meetings and in other conversations was that the parent body made the school possible through sending their children and providing the financial resources for it to work. As some members of the parent community had the requisite legal, financial and fundraising skills needed by the school, should not members of the parent body form the majority of the Board and work to provide the physical, financial and administrative resources to support the teachers in their work? This perspective made sense to increasing numbers of parents and teachers so that more Waldorf schools began to work with partnership forms of governance in which the teachers carried all pedagogical and hiring responsibility and the Board, including teacher representatives, the legal and financial responsibility. In this approach

the administration was seen as serving both the faculty and the Board, with some administrative functions having more a pedagogical quality, such as Faculty or College Chair and others, such as Finance and Development, being closer to central Board responsibilities.

I would say that a third approach to Waldorf school governance has emerged since the turn of the century, in particular based on the work of John Carver who, looking at the legal responsibilities of a Board, refined its leadership role in regard to the mission, values, policies and guidance of an institution.[10] Schools such as the Seattle Waldorf School and the Vancouver Waldorf School have worked with this approach and have each chosen to have a school director, responsible to both Board and faculty. While this is clearly a departure from Steiner's original intention, it is an understandable development given the complexity of mature Waldorf schools and the desire for clarity and accountability.

Each of these three approaches to Waldorf school governance has its rationale and virtues. There are successful Waldorf schools working with each approach as well as with combinations of these structures as each school rightly is engaged in finding those forms and processes which most effectively meet its present needs.

Waldorf School Forms: Roles and Responsibilities

In all schools, teachers, parents and administrative staff are there to serve the needs of the growing and developing child. In developed Waldorf schools there are typically three main decision-making groups and eight main group meetings, not counting committees and task groups. The three main decision-making groups are the faculty (Faculty Council) and/or College of Teachers, the Board of Trustees and an Executive Committee or Leadership Group. In some Waldorf schools the full faculty is the main decision-making body on all pedagogical and personnel questions (the Toronto Waldorf School worked this way for many years), and in others it is the College of Teachers. Whether a Faculty Council or a College of Teachers, the main responsibilities of the faculty body include:

- Deepening the understanding and commitment of the teachers to Waldorf education through pedagogical and child study as a way of inspiring the teaching and each other.

- Assuring educational excellence through the hiring, mentoring, evaluation and dismissal of teachers and staff and developing the appropriate policies and processes for this to take place.
- Carrying the festival life of the school.
- Overseeing the administrative life and the scheduling of school activities.
- Understanding and developing the school budget together with the Board finance committee and the school's finance department.
- Selecting delegates or representatives to sit on the Board of Trustees and other groups and committees.
- Creating mandates and establishing committees to carry out the work of the faculty, such as a personnel committee or a festival committee.
- Carrying a sense for the whole life of the school and being committed to learning and development for the school through workdays, review of meetings and a sensing of the school community's health.

For Steiner the teacher's meeting was the heart and soul of the school's life.

> We have our Teacher's Meeting in the Waldorf school which is the heart and soul of the whole teaching. In these meetings, each teacher speaks of what he himself has learned in his class and from all the children in it, so that each one learns from the other. No school is really alive where this is not the most important thing, this regular meeting of teachers.[11]

Realizing this imagination of a creative, inquiring academy of teachers sharing their insights is critical to the health of Waldorf education. To keep even a semblance of this dream alive in today's world requires great vigilance in not letting business absorb all the time and energy of the faculty. Good planning, a clear agenda, and a conscious and disciplined Faculty Chair, as well as the ongoing delegation of tasks to committees and mandate groups are essential conditions for allowing this space for teacher creativity and sharing.

In many developed Waldorf schools the full faculty meeting, including the administrative staff, is more an all-school meeting, a space for artistic work, study, and announcements and scheduling, whereas decisions are made either by a College or Council of Teachers or in what are often called the section meetings: Early Childhood, Grades Faculty and High School Faculty. The College of Teachers, which exists in many Waldorf schools, is a body of faculty members and staff who have made a commitment to the particular school, to Waldorf pedagogy and to the path of inner development in anthroposophy. They see themselves as being spiritually responsible for the school and its well being. Usually the College of Teachers also works with the teacher's imagination and verse which Rudolf Steiner gave to the teachers of the first Waldorf school. Information on the forming of a College of Teachers can be acquired from the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA) and the Pedagogical Section of the School of Spiritual Science of the General Anthroposophical Society.[12]

The second important decision-making group in Waldorf schools is the Board of Trustees or Directors. The Board typically carries the following responsibilities:

- Seeing that the mission and purpose of the school is being realized.
- Assuring the financial health of the school through good financial policies and administration as well as fostering a robust development (fundraising) effort.
- Seeing that all local, regional and national legal requirements are being met.
- Together with the faculty, choosing quality administrative staff to serve the school.
- Developing and maintaining the physical plant of the school which includes responsibility for the Capital Campaigns conducted by the school.
- Initiating and coordinating Long Term or Strategic Planning in the school.

Most Waldorf school Boards consist of nine to twelve people, with a majority of parents and friends of the school and usually from two to four teacher representatives selected by the faculty or the College of Teachers. Boards are usually self-perpetuating with a nominating committee selecting new candidates based on their experience and expertise. Typically Board terms are from two to three years, renewable once or twice thus assuring some turnover in Board membership. In some schools the Chair of the Parent Association or a representative of the Parent Association is elected to the Board.

Typically standing Board committees include Finance, Development, Buildings and Grounds, Capital Campaign, and Long Term or Strategic Planning. Committee membership is not limited to Board members, as both faculty and parents may be asked to join, thus familiarizing them with Board work and preparing them for possible future Board membership.

A third important decision-making group in many Waldorf schools is the Executive Committee or Leadership Group which meets weekly to make operating decisions on behalf of the school. Typically this committee or group consists of the lead Administrator, the Faculty Chair, the College Chair and sometimes the head of the Finance Department. Such a group functions somewhat like a collective school head or principal and serves to integrate the interests of faculty, Board and administration. It can function well as long as it communicates effectively with these three bodies, has their trust and confidence and is able to draw upon a well-developed body of policies for guidance in decisions.

In addition to these decision-making groups, there are a number of other important meetings and groups working in the school. These include the section meetings of Early Childhood, Grade and High School Faculty, the weekly administrative staff meeting and the Parent Teacher Association. The Parent-Teacher or Parent Association is an important part of the school but is often not well understood by either faculty or parents. In my experience it works most effectively when it sees its role as primarily building and strengthening the whole school community, meaning that it supports the teachers through providing class parents who assist the class teachers, communicating

issues of parent concern to the faculty, and conducting all-school meetings or forums on topics as diverse as next year's budget and the school's media policy. It should also play a role in adult education by requesting courses, lectures and seminars on topics of general interest to Waldorf school parents. Typically it will also be involved in the Winter Fair and other school benefits. However the Board or Development Committee needs to be careful not to turn the Parent Association into a fundraising arm, as this can undermine its essential communicating and community-building role. In some schools the Parent Association will also have a role in the orientation of new parents and in developing and implementing a parent-teacher dispute resolution process.

In many Waldorf schools the Parent Association with its chair or co-chairs will be very active for a few years and then will almost disappear as the volunteer energy of a few energetic mothers wanes. This is to be expected as only a quarter to a third of parents are actively interested in understanding and supporting the school through volunteering their time and talents. As the need for this energy and commitment is great, from serving on Board committees to class parent duties, not too mention the Winter Fair and other benefit activities, it is easy to see that after three to four years of intensive involvement activity decreases. Then in a few years new parents will seize the opportunity to make a difference in the life of a school and again activate the work of the PTA.

Threefold Perspectives

We have noted previously that for a human being to be healthy we need a spiritual purpose and sense of direction, we need friends, family and meaningful relationships and we need to attend to our physical health and well-being. I once heard a medical doctor say that he asked his patients three questions: Are you on a path of inner development? Do you love someone? Do you like your work? If they could answer each of these questions positively, he felt that they were likely to be well. In hearing him speak, I realized that I ask my organizational clients a similar set of questions: How is your dialog with the spirit, with the mission values and central purpose of your organization, and how do you keep this dialog alive? What are the qualities of the dialog between

people, the nature of the relationships between the teachers, parents, children and administrative staff, and how do you seek to strengthen these relationships? Thirdly, what is the quality of the dialog with the earth, with finances, buildings and grounds, with the material well-being of your school? I found that when teachers did not understand or agree on the central aspects of Waldorf education and the profound and rich image of child development at the heart of the curriculum, then relationships in the school suffered since people could not trust others to be striving in the same direction, working toward the same star. Then if trust was lacking between people, work arrangements, committee assignments and delegation did not function, undermining the effective working of the school. If we have a body, soul and spirit, then all social creations—families, groups and institutions—also do, and it becomes our task as parents, teachers and staff to see that the dialogs in these three domains are as alive and healthy as possible.

We can also see that the three dialogs in the school are related to the three essential qualities of social life described by Rudolf Steiner in *Toward Social Renewal*, the book in which he first described the characteristics of the Threefold Social Order.[13] For there to be a healthy spiritual life in society and in a Waldorf school, individuals need to experience freedom in their teaching and in the forming of insights, values and judgments. Yet a Waldorf school (and indeed any community) also needs a common vision, an agreement on the central nature of Waldorf education, on the pedagogy and the picture of child development. So *freedom* as a principle for the *dialog with spirit* needs to be balanced by common vision and striving. When I have worked with Waldorf schools in which teachers had very different visions of what Waldorf education was, then inevitably relationships suffered and work agreements broke down. In these situations no amount of work on governance structures or on relationships will resolve the underlying disunity of purpose.

The *dialog between people* rests on mutual respect, seeing the other as an equal human being. This is the realm of *equality*, of human rights and responsibilities. In Waldorf schools this dialog is fostered through consensus decision making, the exercise of democratic rights and the many groups and committees which make up the life of the

school. It also comes to expression in clear agreements, ranging from employment contracts, tuition agreements, dress codes, media policies and disciplinary procedures. In Western societies there is a pronounced focus on rights with much less attention paid to responsibilities. This is also true of Waldorf schools. Yet for schools to function well, the rights of the individual need to be balanced by our responsibilities and obligations to each other and to the school. It is not acceptable for a teacher to decide not to attend faculty meetings or to avoid committee assignments, or for a parent not to attend class evenings or to withhold tuition payments because of some grievance with the school. The new community forms of Waldorf schools can easily be exploited by individuals seeking power or not wishing the school well, so that we need the balancing protection of clear agreements which spell out expectations in a host of areas including: committee mandates, Board membership, selection and responsibilities, employee contracts, grievance and disciplinary procedures and financial contracts. Only in this way can both rights and responsibilities be protected and a healthy rights life fostered based on equality and mutual understanding.

The *dialog with the earth* is concerned with the school's work life, its finances and relationships with the buildings and campus of the school. In this realm of economic life Steiner refers to brotherhood and sisterhood or *fraternity* as the essential qualities for societies to foster. In schools this dialog comes to expression in a concern with competence and service in the administration and the selection of individuals for tasks and responsibilities, in the clarity and transparency of the school's finances and the effort to make the education affordable to as many families as possible, and in the concern for the beauty and cleanliness of buildings and grounds.

All the partners of the Waldorf school community are involved in all three dialogs, for example in the festival life which seeks to enliven the dialog with the spirit, or in all-school meetings and the many groups and committees which make up the dialog between people in the school, or in the financial life of the school which affects everyone. However in exploring the threefold character of Waldorf schools in the Waldorf School Administration and Community Development Program at Sunbridge College over many years, we also came to see

three distinct cultures in the school's life, each strongly associated with one of the three dialogs.

The first is the *teacher* or the *pedagogical culture* of the school. This culture is more strongly focused on the ideals of truth, beauty and goodness, on the teacher as the guardian and facilitator of the child's healthy incarnation and development. The teacher culture and its formal institutional expression in the College of Teachers or the weekly faculty meeting is primarily concerned with fostering the dialog with *spirit*, with the spirit of the child, the spirit of the class and the spirit of the school. It is fostered through the process of inner spiritual development the teacher engages in, through the teacher meditation and through the inspiration and creativity of the teaching process.

The dialog with the *earth* is strongly connected to the central responsibilities of *the Board and the parent community*. Their task is to help incarnate the school, to provide the human and financial resources to help the school develop its physical home and its financial base. Here the central values are service and competence so that the abundant resources of the parent community can flow into the school and provide a healthy basis for the educational process. Professionalism, performance orientation, efficient use of resources, action learning, capacity development and competent service are the watchwords of this service culture which is strongly carried by the Board and the parent community.

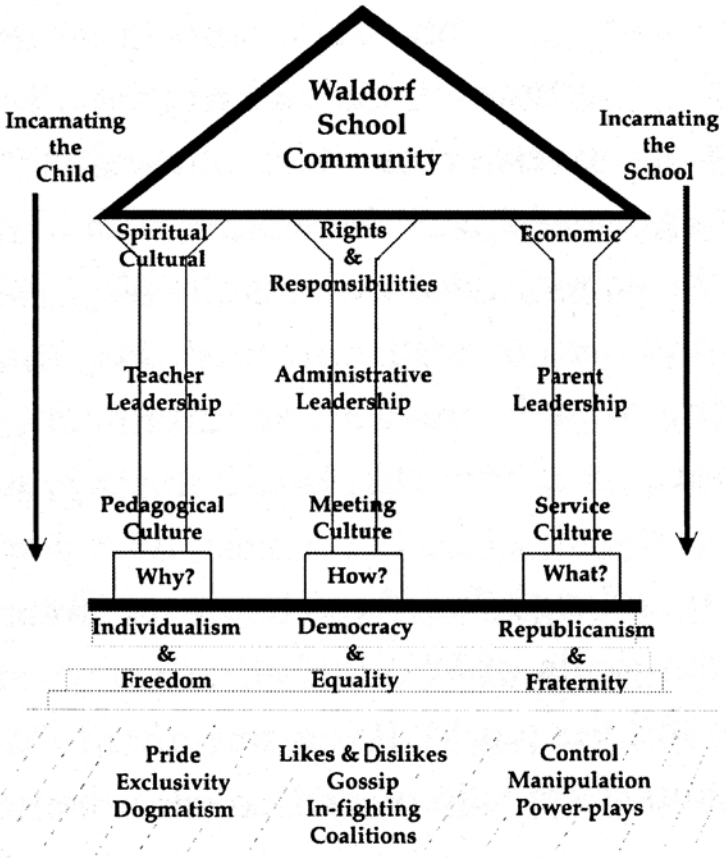
The dialog between *people*, of course, involves the *whole school community*. It is the *meeting culture* so central and at times so frustrating in the life of Waldorf schools. Here interest in the other, the art of conversation, true meetings, recognizing that we are destiny partners on the road of mutual development are important values to practice, and developing social sensitivity, effective communication and group skills capacities to acquire. The meeting culture and fostering clarity in the institutional process are strongly carried by the school's administration which exists to serve and balance the educational work of teachers and the Board's and parents' role in providing the financial and physical basis of the education.

These reflections on threefold perspectives in the life of a Waldorf school are summarized in the following chart:

The Dialog with Spirit—
Freedom and Common Vision— Teacher Culture
Aristocratic
The Dialog between People—
Equality (Rights and Responsibilities)—Meeting Culture
Democratic
The Dialog with the Earth—
Fraternity (Competence and Service)—Service Culture
Republican

At the beginning of this essay, Ernst Lehr's comments on aristocratic, democratic and republican leadership in the first Waldorf school were described and the difficulty of combining these qualities noted. This is also visible when comparing the three cultures and their shadow sides. For the teacher culture the shadow side is often: "We know Waldorf education so you can't possibly understand the rationale for our decision." For the meeting culture it is: "I thought we are an alternative institution in which all things are decided democratically and we haven't had an adequate process with this decision." For the service culture the call can be: "Why are we so inefficient, why so many meetings? If only we had effective managerial leadership and a clear cost benefit analysis of this decision." The one-sided dangers of spiritual arrogance, of excessive democratic process and of managerial economic efficiency are clear to anyone who has spent time working in a Waldorf school. Unless parents, teachers and staff are all committed to reflection and self-development, the new community partnership forms of Waldorf schools can easily be subverted and the social impulse of Waldorf eduction lost.

The three, balancing cultures form the basis of the three-pillar model of Waldorf school governance described by Robert Schiappacasse in *Administrative Explorations*.[14] It is a visual portrayal of a set of threefold principles, values and structures which can help each school to reflect on its governance and administrative forms and determine those changes which can serve the school's further development.



What Teachers, Parents and Administrators Want

It is important to recognize that the complex threefold nature of Waldorf school governance may well meet the needs of Waldorf school teachers, parents, administrators and children more effectively than either public schools with their politically determined top heavy administration or the headmaster and Board-run model of most private schools. In many conversations with both Waldorf and public school teachers, I have found that most teachers want to be able to meet the children in a free and creative manner through offering a curriculum that responds to the children's needs for an age-appropriate, stimulating and holistic education. Out of their experience in eduction and their love of children, they want a level of freedom in determining the content of their lessons and a say in choosing their colleagues.

Administrators, if they have not been brainwashed by corporate models of education, want to support and nurture the educational process and be perceived as equal partners by teachers and parents in their work of carrying out the myriad administrative tasks required for the efficient running of a successful school. In most cases they do not wish to be the bosses of teachers, recognizing the need for substantial autonomy in the classroom.

Children want to be seen by the teachers for the individuals that they are and to be enthused by learning. I recently did a school audit at a young Waldorf school and in interviewing parents was frequently told that their children hated being sick because they missed their classmates and teachers. It was a clear statement of a Waldorf school's meeting its children's needs successfully.

For parents their children are precious, and in sending them to a particular school they hope against hope that their children will be seen, loved, encouraged and educated to reach their potential. They also want to be able to understand the education their child is receiving and to be able to support it financially and with their time, energy and knowledge.

The friends, alumni, former parents and supporters of Waldorf education also wish to have the possibility of helping, of getting involved with their time, energy and resources. I remember an elderly women who had not met Waldorf education and anthroposophy when her children were growing up but who nevertheless spent countless hours on the Board of a newly-established Waldorf school in her community.

If this picture of the learning partnership is true, then the non-hierarchical complex governance and administrative forms of Waldorf schools go a long way toward meeting the central aspirations of teachers, parents, administrators and children. While at times messy, these school forms are lively, engaging and challenging and allow all of us to experience the joys and struggles of building a creative educational community together.[15]

The Developing Administration

In the early years of a Waldorf school, administrative work is a*d hoc* and volunteer based. Parents take turns answering the phones during class hours, function as receptionists, gardeners and file clerks and even do the simple accounting required to keep the books in order. While a bit chaotic, it is energizing to work toward realizing the dream of establishing a school. A few years later, with a nursery, kindergarten and one or two grades, one of the volunteers with an interest in administration joins the school on a part-time or full-time basis in administration, and year by year the administration grows.

Generally more mature Waldorf schools have one administrative staff person for every 35 to 40 children enrolled. The challenge for the Board and the faculty is to gradually help the administration grow from a collection of volunteers with a mixed assortment of skills to a more professional administration. Typically the first two functions which become paid are the receptionist and bookkeeper. A young and growing Waldorf school which I worked with recently has three Parent-Tot programs, two Nursery Groups and two Kindergarten Groups as well as six grades. Its total enrollment is over 200 children and it has the following administrative positions:

Director of Administration: A full-time position to oversee all administrative work, chair the administrative staff meeting and chair the school's Leadership Group. Accountable to Board and faculty.

Enrollment Director: A full-time position to handle all aspects of admissions, from advertising to interviewing, admissions and enrollment contracts. Works with a part-time assistant.

Finance Director: Responsible for budgeting, bookkeeping, financial planning, capital budgets and collections. With one full-time assistant and one bookkeeper.

Communications Coordinator: A part-time position to handle all written and e-mail communication within the school and to coordinate scheduling work.

Receptionist and Security: A part-time position responsible for answering phones and keeping an eye on front door security.

Maintenance and Cleaning: Two part-time positions to deal with repairs and ongoing cleaning in the building.

In addition to these 7.5 positions in administration, the school has a faculty chair for the grade school and an early childhood education chair. While these positions are now filled by individuals with full-time teaching loads, it is anticipated that their teaching loads will be reduced so that they can more adequately carry out their important pedagogical administrative work.

The school described does not yet have a development coordinator or director as the bulk of fundraising work is still done by the Board of Trustees. This is typical of younger Waldorf schools, and it can be expected that in the coming years, the school will add one to two people in development and possibly a part-time coordinator of volunteers.

Fully-developed Waldorf schools will also have at least four positions in pedagogical administration: an Early Childhood Chair, a Grade School Faculty Chair, a College of Teachers Chair and a High School Coordinator or Chair. The development of pedagogical or faculty administrative work has happened gradually over the last decades so that it is clear that the administration of most Waldorf schools has two sides: a faculty administration directly serving and responsible to the teachers, and a financial, enrollment and development administration more responsible to the Board of Trustees. It is however important to recognize that both types of administration need to be able to work together well and to have the trust and confidence of both faculty and Board.

There are two significant dangers in hiring for administrative positions in Waldorf schools. The first is to hire people with administrative experience and expertise from the non-profit or business world but with no experience or understanding of Waldorf education. The culture of Waldorf schools is unique and without a relationship to Waldorf education or anthroposophy, it is difficult for capable administrators to find their way into the language, practices and assumptions which permeate our culture. The many meetings, the lack of hierarchy and sometimes the lack of clarity and accountability can drive people used to other organizational cultures crazy. The other danger is to assume that anyone can do administrative work and to

hire a trained Waldorf teacher who is tired of the classroom to fill an administrative job. This also seldom works unless the person in question enjoys administrative work, establishing the order and clear processes involved in carrying out the myriad tasks which need to be done to support the education. So it is best to find people who understand and love Waldorf education and who also have experience and talent in carrying out specific administrative tasks. Increasingly such people exist in the talented parent body of many Waldorf schools.

As the need for clarity is critical for successful administrative work in schools, it is important to have clear job descriptions for the school's administration. These can be requested from mature Waldorf schools who have had many years to develop clear descriptions or from ASWNA.

Because Waldorf teachers are used to functioning as equals in the faculty circle, it is sometimes thought that this should also be the case among administrative staff. In my experience this is seldom effective, as people will tend do that part of the job they like unless they are clearly accountable to someone. A well-developed school should consider having a director of administration to oversee the 10 to 12 people involved in the important work of having an efficient and well-running administration.

Clarity, Social Skills and Self-Development

When asked to speak about the principles and practices of Waldorf school governance and administration in Waldorf school communities, I tend to stress the need for clarity, for articulating the underlying principles of governance and decision making in the school before moving to a description of the main tasks, membership, decision-making responsibility and mutual accountability of each group. Newer parents often want to know who is in charge. The best answer is to say we all are and then to inquire which area of the school's life is being referred to. Many Waldorf school Parent Handbooks have good descriptions of self-administration and school governance, but it is always good to remind everyone how the school runs and who makes what decisions. In the end, however, it is what happens in the classroom that is paramount. If children are happy, then parents are

happy. If, however, things are not going well in a number of classes, then the unease spreads to other areas of the school's life as parents seek to understand what is wrong, often looking at leadership and administration for answers to the problem of inadequate teaching.

It is clear that Waldorf schools are a dialog culture, with their many committees, meetings and groups. Possessing good social and group facilitation skills is critical for individuals in leadership and chair positions in the school. It makes a world of difference if a meeting is chaired well, and this is a skill which can be learned. The new social forms of Waldorf schools require a higher form of social insight and skill than more traditional organizations with their command and control structures.

New social and community forms can work only if all adult members of the school community are reflective and engaged in a process of self-transformation and development. The reason for this is that Waldorf schools foster a deeper meeting between adults than most other kinds of institutions, and deeper meetings mean more conflict. Unless we are capable of self-reflection and understand the ways in which others push our buttons, then Waldorf schools will resemble present-day American politics and will be unable to serve the children's needs well. This does not mean that all adults should become students of anthroposophy, but it does mean that Waldorf schools should promote self-reflection, common learning, and self-transformation through spiritual and meditative work.

Endnotes

1. Rudolf Steiner, *Education as Art* (Blauvelt, NY, Garber Publications, 1970), pp. 74–75. I am indebted to Gary Lamb for many useful insights and quotes from Rudolf Steiner on educational freedom. In particular see Gary Lamb, *The Social Mission of Waldorf Education: Independent, Privately Funded and Accessible to All* (Association of Waldorf Schools of North America, Ghent, NY, 2004).
2. Op. cit., Lamb, p. 33.
3. Ibid., pp. 71–83 in particular.
4. Rudolf Steiner, *Conferences with the Teachers of the Waldorf School in Stuttgart*, Vol.1 (Steiner Schools Fellowship, Forest Row, England, 1986), p. 34.
5. Op. cit., Lamb, p. 40.
6. Ernst Lehrs, *Republican–Not Democratic* (AWSNA Publications, Great Barrington, MA, 1987), pp. 1–7.
7. Gladstone, Francis. *Republican Academies: Rudolf Steiner on Self-Management, Experiential Study and Self-Education in the Life of a College of Teachers* (Forest Row, England, Steiner Schools Fellowship, 1997), p. 17.
8. Op. cit., Lehrs, pp. 3–7.
9. Op. cit., Gladstone, pp. 13–22.
10. John Carver, *Boards That Make a Difference: A New Design for Leadership in Nonprofit and Public Organizations* (San Francisco, CA, Jossey-Bass, 1997), in particular pp. 1–74.
11. Rudolf Steiner, *The Spiritual Ground of Education* (Blauvelt, NY, Garber Publications, 1987), pp. 93–94.
12. Contact ASWNA at info@awsna.org, as well as the pedagogical section representatives in North America.
13. Rudolf Steiner, *Toward Social Renewal* (SteinerBooks, Great Barrington, MA, 1987).
14. Robert Schiappacasse, "Three Pillars of Healthy Waldorf Communities," in *Administrative Explorations*, David Mitchell and David Alsop, eds., (AWSNA, Fair Oaks, CA, 2000), pp. 3–11. The diagram is also from this article and was developed with faculty and students at the Waldorf School Administration and Community Development Program.
15. Christopher Schaefer, "Enhancing the Learning Partnership through New School Forms: The Waldorf Experience," in *Holistic Education Review*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Brandon, VT, 1996), pp. 40–48.