



Parent and Student Handbook

School Year 2016-2017

Oxbow Schoolhouse

270 Barnum Road

Devens, MA 01434

Phone: 978-772-9500

Email: info@oxbowschoolhouse.org

www.oxbowschoolhouse.org

Table of Contents

I. Introduction	1
Welcome	1
History	1
Vision	1
Mission	1
Philosophy	1
Equal Opportunities and Non-Discrimination	2
II. Educational Program	3
Oxbow Schoolhouse’s Educational Program.....	3
Unique Aspects of Oxbow Schoolhouse’s Educational Program.....	3
About Waldorf Education.....	5
Rudolf Steiner	6
Anthroposophy	6
Curriculum Overview by Grade	6
Assessments.....	7
Student Evaluation.....	7
Progress Reports	7
Parent-Teacher Conferences	8
Arts Night.....	8
Parent Evenings.....	8
Festivals	8
A Word about Videotaping.....	9
III. School and Family ~ A Partnership	10
Parent Participation.....	10
Fundraising Events	10
Financial Contributions.....	10
School Communication.....	10
Parent-Teacher Communication.....	11
Supporting Students in the Home	11
Reverence, Rhythm, and Ritual	11
Attendance and Punctuality at School	11
Reporting Absences	12
Snack and Lunch.....	12
Television and Other Media.....	12
Religion and Religious Celebrations	13
IV. Administrative Policies	14
Application Process	14
Tuition and Fees	15
Confidentiality.....	15
Children’s Records	15
Late Fees.....	16
Financial Hardship	16
Financial Assistance	16
Withdrawal Procedures	16
V. Wellness and Safety	18
Good Health.....	18
Health Requirements.....	18

Illness.....	18
Food Allergies.....	19
Other Allergies.....	19
Special Needs and Other Healthcare Conditions.....	20
Injury Prevention Plan	20
First Aid.....	20
Accidents and Emergencies.....	21
Emergency Contingency Plan	21
Emergency Phone Numbers	21
Child Protection Mandate	22
Community Agency Involvement.....	22
Substance Abuse Policy.....	22
VI. School Standards and Guidelines.....	23
Arrival and Departure	23
For Your Child’s Safety, Oxbow Schoolhouse Staff Will:.....	23
Telephone Use.....	23
Field Trips	24
Personal Belongings and Animals.....	24
Inclement Weather.....	25
After School Conduct	26
Discipline.....	26
Referral Procedure	27
Resolving Conflict.....	28
Termination of Enrollment	28
VII. Oxbow Schoolhouse Organization	29
Organization	29
Lines of Communication.....	29
Board of Directors	30
Class Teachers.....	30
VIII. About Our Teachers.....	31
The Staff.....	31
IX. Additional Resources	33
If You Would Like To Know More.....	33
Suggestions for Health Snacks and Lunches.....	35

I. Introduction

Welcome

School is an important part of each child's upbringing. We hope this handbook will serve as a helpful reference to the policies and practices of Oxbow Schoolhouse.

Oxbow Schoolhouse is a not-for-profit elementary day school, serving children in grades 1 - 6. We are located at 270 Barnum Road, Devens, Massachusetts 01434.

A Board of Directors oversees the operation of Oxbow Schoolhouse. It is an approved private school program in compliance with the regulations of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Our bylaws and articles of incorporation are on file at the school and are available upon request.

History

Oxbow Schoolhouse began as a heartfelt wish shared by a handful of teachers and parents to establish an alternative elementary school experience for their children that offered them "something more". During the 2008-2009 school year, this group formed the first Board of Directors and began working together with the intention of opening the doors of Oxbow Schoolhouse in September of 2009. Inspired by a Waldorf curriculum, they strove to create a program that would not only give their children a solid academic foundation but also instill in them a life-long love of learning and a can-do spirit.

It is the hope of the founding members that as others join our community, Oxbow Schoolhouse will flourish and be a gift to the children, their families, the surrounding communities, and offer a viable and enduring alternative elementary education to local families.

Vision

Oxbow Schoolhouse's faculty, staff, families and board members strive to nurture the program so that it continues to develop and grow, offering further opportunities for students and their families to flourish. With this growth, we hope to share the ideas developed by Rudolf Steiner with a continually widening circle of families and educators thereby inspiring positive change within the field of education.

Mission

Oxbow Schoolhouse exists to provide an affordable, Waldorf-inspired, elementary education to local families. Recognizing and honoring the unique spirit and potential in each child, as well as the stages of childhood, Oxbow Schoolhouse offers a rich, integrated curriculum of academics, artistic work, and practical skills. Together with the wider Oxbow community, our staff is devoted to awakening within the students the warmth of heart, clarity of thought, and strength of purpose that will set a sturdy foundation for a life-long love of learning and achievement.

Philosophy

Children are naturally curious and interested in the world around them. They need a supportive environment and developmentally appropriate curriculum that stresses respect and cooperation, recognition of the importance of a well-rounded education, and opportunities to be challenged every day.

It is the program's philosophy that human development takes place in stages throughout the entire course of one's life. A well-rounded education takes into account intellectual learning, basic skills training, the cultivation of balanced feelings, and the ability to initiate and complete actions out of one's strength of will.

Oxbow Schoolhouse provides a rich curriculum, including mathematics, the sciences, humanities, and language arts is interwoven with watercolor painting, handwork, baking and cooking, building projects,

outdoor play, and the celebration of seasonal festivals. This integrated and engaging approach to education is intended to provide a solid foundation for future studies in high school and beyond.

The elementary school age child thrives in an environment that supports healthy development. At Oxbow Schoolhouse, a child's desire to learn is supported by a Waldorf-inspired curriculum. We believe that elementary age children flourish when offered opportunities to make hands-on and heartfelt connections to the curriculum and the world around them

The relationships between families and school are important at Oxbow Schoolhouse. Teachers strive to develop collaborative relationships with parents for the benefit of their children. As a community we seek to work together, honoring the personal contributions of each individual.

Equal Opportunities and Non-Discrimination

Oxbow Schoolhouse is truly committed to the concepts and practices of equal opportunity and non-discrimination. We conduct programs for children and our employment practices without regard to race, gender, religion, age, cultural heritage, marital status, sexual orientation, political belief, veteran status, national origin, disability, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law. Supporting equal opportunity goes beyond our obligation to the law. We work toward the cooperation of everyone to achieve a healthy, caring, learning environment. Discrimination or harassment in any form is not tolerated. We will always uphold this policy.

II. Educational Program

Oxbow Schoolhouse's Educational Program

Oxbow Schoolhouse is a small community based, private elementary school program serving children in Grades 1 - 6. The inspiration for its inception came originally from parents and teachers at Evergreen Garden Playschool, a Waldorf early childhood program. At Oxbow Schoolhouse the teachers strive to recognize each child's individual gifts. The curriculum and small community setting help the teachers work to bring out the best in each student. The atmosphere is respectful, creative, and cooperative. Oxbow Schoolhouse is organized around a few basic elements:

- Waldorf methods
- Multi-age and hands-on experiences
- Parent and community involvement

At Oxbow Schoolhouse, students actively create their own knowledge and understanding by connecting new learning to prior knowledge and experiences. The classroom environment is critical for students. A deep connection to nature and respect for one's environment (both indoors and out) is supported through the use of high quality, natural materials as well as seasonal studies and outdoor educational activities. Daily rhythms that include times for lively, active engagement alternated with quiet work help foster good work habits and cooperative and respectful attitudes. A combination of academics, the arts, and practical work builds multiple abilities in children. These experiences foster a "can-do" spirit and give each child a variety of skills to tackle life's challenges whether they are academic, social or personal.

Waldorf methods and curriculum are time tested and present a cohesive program that challenges the whole child, academically, socially, and artistically. Waldorf pedagogy is based on developmentally appropriate, rigorous academics delivered through an arts-infused curriculum and has a proven ability to reach and inspire students. The founders of Oxbow Schoolhouse have chosen a Waldorf Curriculum because it offers developmentally appropriate practices based on child development principles and scientific evidence regarding brain development and the growth of neural and cognitive structures. Its primary goals include: (1) develop skills and competence in all areas (intellectual, social/emotional, and physical); (2) develop positive feelings about learning; and (3) be responsive to individual differences in developmental stages, abilities, and interests. Please see the section, About Waldorf Education, for an overview of Waldorf education and how it was developed.

A strong school community provides a rich environment for children and their families. Parents and other highly qualified community members will be brought into the school community as volunteers to share their expertise and enhance our program through their participation. Benefits include both increased parent-community-school partnerships and, at times, decreased student-teacher ratios. These opportunities encourage community-wide learning and information sharing among the children and adults in the school and create a healthy, vibrant, and strong school-based community. We believe that children benefit greatly from parental involvement at school, whether that involvement takes the shape of administrative or organizational support, involvement with school fundraisers and activities, or volunteer work in the classroom.

Unique Aspects of Oxbow Schoolhouse's Educational Program

The Class Teacher stays with the child for multiple years, teaching all the main subjects. For the teacher, this means time to deeply know the children and help them unfold their gifts. For the children, this means stability and continuing guidance.

A Mixed Age Classroom creates an environment where different levels of ability, development, and learning styles are embraced as each child is continually working to acquire competence in all areas. Multi-age education values cooperation over competition and is particularly well suited to delivering developmentally oriented curriculum. Cooperative project work builds on academic and social skills and often requires students to employ creativity and ingenuity as they discover the problem-solving process. Multi-age

groupings have been found to increase harmony and nurturance, decrease aggression and competition, and accommodate more easily the increasing diversity of contemporary society.

Integrated/Interdisciplinary Curriculum gives students the opportunity to experience the interrelated nature of all subjects and makes learning relevant to their lives. Revealing the connections that exist across disciplines allows students to experience the world around them as an integrated whole. This allows the teacher to create lessons within a theme that are targeted towards the specific interests and skills of the students in her class. This is especially effective in mixed age group settings, where a theme is explored at many levels by the children. It allows the class to delve into lessons, exploring a time period in history, or new mathematic concepts through multiple learning experiences – academic, artistic, musical, social, and kinesthetic.

Main Lesson Books are made by each child for each subject taught. The teacher creates the presentation and the children record and illustrate the substance of their lessons.

(OF NOTE: These books are an important way in which art is integrated into every subject; they have even been the focus of Waldorf exhibitions at American and European museums. Under the title "Education as an Art," the Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibited student work from the Rudolf Steiner School in New York in 1979, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art showed work from Highland Hall Waldorf School in 1981. In 1979, within a period of six weeks, over 50,000 visitors attended a similar exhibit at Stockholm's Lilljevachs Exhibition Hall.)

The Sciences are taught phenomenologically. Sharpening the students' powers of observation is the first goal of the science curriculum. As the children reach the upper elementary years, science experiences involve experiments. The teacher prepares an experiment, calls upon the children to observe carefully, ponder, and discuss, and then allows them to discover the conclusion – the law, formula, etc. Through this process, rigorous, independent thinking and sound judgment are fostered.

Mathematics begins when the young children first encounter numbers through stories, musical rhythms, and other artistic activities that engage their whole bodies and moves to the arithmetical processes and later to pre-algebra. Form drawing, begun in the first grade, sets the stage for geometry in the later grades.

The Humanities Curriculum takes the children through the full sweep of their cultural heritage. It begins in first grade with folk tales and fairy tales and continues in second and third grade with mythology and legends. The Old Testament in grade three, Norse mythology in grade four, the ancient cultures of India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece in grade five, and ancient Rome in grade six provide the background for the study of history and arts presented through excerpts from original texts. By learning about these cultures through their legends and literature, the children gain an understanding of and an appreciation for the diversity of mankind.

The Language Arts Curriculum includes poetry, songs, recitation and storytelling along with reading and writing skills, which are practiced regularly. **Performances** are an essential part of Oxbow Schoolhouse's language arts program and reflect the seasonal curriculum. All families are encouraged to attend and enjoy these theatrical performances.

The Arts (including drama, painting, music, drawing, modeling, etc.) are integrated into the entire academic curriculum, including mathematics and the sciences. The Waldorf method of education through the arts awakens imagination and creative powers, bringing vitality and wholeness to learning. In addition, the arts provide a highly effective tool for learning, exploring and mastering the material. This approach recognizes the direct link between art, music and movement and high academic achievement. Woven throughout a rigorous curriculum, the arts support children's deep understanding and academic success in unique and developmentally appropriate ways. This multifaceted approach allows information to be presented in a variety of ways, including verbal/linguistic, mathematical/logical, visual/special, bodily/kinesthetic, as well as musical/rhythmic. An arts-based curriculum embraces a myriad of learning styles and ensures that each

student has the opportunity to completely participate in his/her own education and discover unsuspected talents.

Music is taught not only for its own sake and for the joy it engenders but also because it brings a strong harmonizing and humanizing force into the child's life. Additionally, there are many important inner skills to be learned from the study of music. The discipline of practicing with an instrument helps children find the inner discipline to face other challenges in life. Group music lessons offer an opportunity for children to practice the ability to listen to others and to work cooperatively. It is quite a challenge for a group of children to work completely in unison in any realm, be it social, academic, or physical. In trying to play their instruments as a group, with the same timing and pitch, the resulting harmonious sound allows them to directly experience the value of working well together. Playing an instrument is a means of self-exploration, self-expression, and creativity that allows the children to grow into more well-rounded human beings.

Practical Work, Crafts, and Handwork are an integral part of the curriculum at Oxbow Schoolhouse. Decades before brain research could confirm it, Rudolf Steiner recognized that brain function was founded on body function and incorporated handwork into Waldorf education. Knitting and other handwork projects play an important role in the development of fine motor skills, inner calm, and intellectual clarity. Coordination, patience, perseverance, and imagination are also schooled through practical work. Handwork offers many opportunities for reinforcing math skills in practical, challenging, and enjoyable ways. Activities such as woodworking, house building and gardening included in the elementary school curriculum give the children an understanding of how things come into being and a respect for the creations of others.

Author and Waldorf teacher Eugene Schwartz says, "We cannot underestimate the self-esteem and joy that arises in the child as the result of having made something practical and beautiful – something which has arisen as the result of a skill that has been learned. In an age when children are often passive consumers who, as Oscar Wilde once said, 'Know the price of everything and the value of nothing,' learning to knit can be a powerful way of bringing meaning into a child's life."

Movement, Games and Free Play also add to the children's experiences at Oxbow Schoolhouse. In a culture where organized team sports hold such high status, children can sometimes think of movement only in these terms. The Movement curriculum strives to give the children basic coordination and movement skills that will help them when they decide to play organized sports. Depending on the grade, the children will play games or do relay races that serve to develop skills that are also required for conventional sports such as soccer or basketball. String games and jumping rope are also activities that develop skills that can be used in many different sports.

The focus at school is primarily cooperative, as our culture offers numerous opportunities for competitive sports and games outside of school time. Lessons often contain a rhythm of joining together and moving apart. Highly active games balanced with quieter ones, and working together as a group, are part of each class. Not only does an active curriculum provide the opportunity for the children to play games and have fun, it also works with their social interaction by teaching them to play with each other before they play against each other, to acknowledge each other, to play safely, and to gain an appreciation for all kinds of movement.

Foreign Language: Spanish is taught in the same way that children learned their native tongue. Through story, song, rhyme, and movement first, second, and third graders become acquainted with different cultures and widen the horizon of human understanding by looking at the world through the eyes of others. They experience the food, festivals, and dance of these cultures. Grammar and reading begin with imaginative games in the fourth through sixth grades.

About Waldorf Education

"Developed by Rudolf Steiner in 1919, Waldorf Education is based on a developmental approach that addresses the needs of the growing child and maturing adolescent. Waldorf teachers strive to transform education into an art that educates the whole child—the heart and the hands, as well as the head." (From AWSNA, the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America).

The first Waldorf School was located in Stuttgart, Germany and was founded to benefit the children of workers at the Waldorf Astoria cigarette factory. Today Waldorf Education is a growing educational movement; there are over 750 Waldorf schools worldwide, with over 250 Waldorf schools in North America.

Through this education, Steiner hoped to cultivate in young people capacities of heart and mind and the strength of will that would enable them to meet the challenges of their own time and in the future. He laid the foundation for an art of education in which the teacher, ever aware of the inherent dignity and individuality of each child, would strive to awaken and draw out the child's individual gifts. This is in keeping with the true meaning of "to educate" – from "*educere*," to "draw out" rather than to put in. Instead of becoming a passive receptor for information, the child is led to participate actively in all that is presented, in hope that he or she will become a seeker of truth and knowledge and a doer who may one day find the strength and capacity to effect positive change in the world.

Waldorf curriculum is meant to unfold according to the stages of development of the growing child. Education proceeds in three major steps as the child develops. During this process, the child's consciousness develops. Up to age 12, it is largely a pictorial and imaginative consciousness; from then on it adds the element of reason. Until age 12, the Waldorf curriculum works with the child's imagination, proceeding from fairy tales, legends, and fables through the Bible stories and ancient mythology. In the fifth and sixth grades, the transition is made to actual history and science. From then on, without losing its imaginative and artistic elements, the curriculum is presented in a more scientific manner, increasingly relying on direct observation, objective description, and reflection in all subjects.

It is worthy to note that Steiner's detailed psychology of child development, described over seventy-five years ago, has been confirmed by leading researchers such as Piaget and Gesell and more recently by right brain-left brain research. For more information about Waldorf education, see our reference list at the back of the handbook, or visit AWNESA's website, www.whywaldorffworks.org.

Rudolf Steiner

Rudolf Steiner, an Austrian-born philosopher and scientist (1864-1924), founded the first Waldorf school in Germany in 1919. His intention was to found a school movement based on spiritual wisdom to renew the art of education so that modern children could develop the full range of their capacities and become free, self-reliant individuals capable of contributing fresh insights and initiatives to the world. The curriculum of the first Waldorf School is still relevant today in achieving these goals, as many new schools using this curriculum are being formed around the world.

Anthroposophy

Through the course of his life, Rudolf Steiner developed a body of knowledge and a paradigm of human development called Anthroposophy, meaning "the wisdom of mankind." This world view is based on a centuries-old wisdom concerning the evolution of humankind and of the world, which Steiner reformulated in a manner accessible to our modern scientific consciousness. While Anthroposophy represents the philosophical foundation of the Waldorf approach to education, it is not taught in the classroom.

Curriculum Overview by Grade

At Oxbow Schoolhouse a Waldorf elementary level curriculum, modified to meet a mixed age class, offers students a comprehensive educational program as well as rich and varied experiences that integrate the whole child: head, heart and hands.

Each morning begins with the Main Lesson, which lasts for two hours and is taught by the teacher or a guest teacher. During this uninterrupted time, the class teacher calls the students together as a group, often practicing a seasonal poem or song or a movement activity related to the lesson. She then presents a lesson on the current subject. The teacher engages the students with a variety of approaches: scientific, literary, historical and artistic. Each student creates a record of Main Lesson work in books that are filled with

compositions, observations, maps, diagrams and illustrations. These colorful Main Lesson books are carefully crafted with attention to detail and artistic presentation. They are a unique and vital part of Waldorf education. A recess and several shorter periods follow the Main Lesson with subjects such as reading, math skills, writing, music, handwork, clay modeling, form drawing, painting, physical education, and gardening/farming, for example. Thus, the rhythm of the day alternates between the work that requires intellectual focus and physical activities that engage the body and hands.

The following is a brief summary of the language arts, mathematics and science curriculum presented in Main Lesson, grade by grade. Please note that due to mixed age class groups, teachers draw their yearly blocks from this list in ways that best meet the needs of each class.

First Grade: Fairy tales, folk tales and nature stories; pictorial introduction to letters; preparation for reading through writing; qualities of numbers; introduction of the four operations in arithmetic. Form drawing begins in First Grade and continues through Fifth Grade.

Second Grade: Legends and Fables; stories of saints; continued work in writing, reading and arithmetic; introduction of cursive writing.

Third Grade: Old Testament stories; composition and grammar; study of practical life (farming, housing and clothing); time, weights, measures and money in arithmetic.

Fourth Grade: Norse mythology and sagas; local geography, and map-making; Massachusetts history; study of the animal kingdom; fractions and decimal fractions.

Fifth Grade: Ancient history and mythology from India, Persia, and Egypt; Greek mythology and history; American geography related to vegetation and agriculture; botany; decimals, ratio and proportion in math.

Sixth Grade: Roman and Medieval history; astronomy; geology; physics (sound, light); beginning algebra; geometry and geometric drawing; business math (interest, percentage).

Mathematics and language arts skill goals for each grade level are available upon request.

Assessments

At Oxbow Schoolhouse, teachers and parents work together to be aware of and meet the children's learning needs. It is the goal that all students graduating from Oxbow Schoolhouse will be proficient to grade level or higher in all academic subjects to the best of their abilities. Children's work is assessed in a variety of ways, including parent and teacher meetings, written progress reports, and exhibitions of work. We do not give letter grades at this level.

Student Evaluation

Teachers use observation as a key assessment tool. Oxbow Schoolhouse does not use a grading system in evaluating student progress. Students are encouraged to make their best effort in school and are expected to complete the work that is assigned to them. Main Lesson books are reviewed weekly and considered an important part of a student's portfolio work. For the oldest children, grades are sometimes given for individual tests or projects. Students may also be asked to self-evaluate their work. Students working below capability are given extra help and encouragement. Parents may be asked to meet with the student and teacher to discuss ways to improve performance in school.

Progress Reports

The teachers prepare two written reports for parents each academic year that are included in a child's permanent school record. Reports detail academic, artistic and social progress. Copies of written evaluations

and other required student forms are kept confidential in locked student files in the office. Parents can arrange with the class teacher to read their child's file. Reports include:

1. A description of Main Lesson blocks and special subjects classes.
2. A characterization of the child's work, attitude, and effort.
3. Social relationships.
4. Problems and challenges faced by children and what can be done to help successfully address them.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are an important part of the evaluation process and take place in autumn and spring. Please refer to the calendar for specific conference dates.

Arts Night

Arts Night is a special evening when parents, relatives, and friends are invited to view the work that the children have been engaged in. This is an opportunity for the students to share, through performance and display, their best work and favorite activities. Please refer to the calendar for specific dates.

Parent Evenings

Parent Evenings are held twice a year and organized around themes pertinent to parents of elementary aged children. Child development, curriculum, academic expectations, social life, upcoming events, fund-raising, and class trips may be discussed. Parents who wish to suggest topics should contact the class teacher well before the planned meeting.

Festivals

Families at Oxbow Schoolhouse come from various religious and cultural backgrounds. The curriculum is not based on a particular religious doctrine. Rather, it is based on the belief that there is a spiritual dimension to each human being that also requires nurturing. At Oxbow Schoolhouse, we bring this philosophy to bear as we enjoy seasonal festivals each year. Seasonal festivals renew our awareness of the rhythms of the year and foster the children's relationship to the seasons, the world, our community and other cultures, as well as give them a sense of gratitude.

Children love preparing for festivals by decorating the room, baking, and singing. Nature stories, songs, poetry, and special tales help bring deeper significance to the children.

As families at these festivals, we ask that you assist in supervising your children in keeping with the spirit of the festival.

Here are the festivals we celebrate at Oxbow:

Michaelmas

This autumn festival includes a workday in which students, teacher, and parents work side by side on projects around the campus. The workday is followed by the pageant of *St. George and the Dragon* and a community potluck supper. The story of *Saint George and the Dragon* remains a story very much for modern times. George overcoming the dragon with his sword is an image that calls us all to be brave, to take command of our 'dragon' and transform it. George's qualities of courage, compassion, and steadfastness can be an inspiration to us all.

Solstice Spiral

This celebration of light and peace is a beautiful opportunity to remember the true nature of this holiday season in the midst of all the holiday hoopla. Walking the spiral path during this darkest time

of year is a magical experience for children and adults. The silence and beauty of a winter night become illuminated by candlelight as each person places a lit candle along the spiral path.

May Day

In moving through the cycle of the seasons, May Day is a celebration of spring and the beauty it brings to our campus and our lives. This event has included maypole dancing, flower-garland making, strawberries and games.

A Word about Videotaping

While it may seem the perfect way to remember events and share them with absent loved ones, we ask that you not videotape festivals, plays, and school events for two reasons:

- At the elementary age children are still relatively un-self-conscious; they enter into events more or less wholly. When they later view the videos, their fond memories of the experience of a play or festival can be destroyed by “objective” criticism.
- It is difficult for both the videographer and any children who realize that they are being filmed to be actively engaged in the event or play at hand.

Oxbow Schoolhouse will make arrangements for plays, festivals, fundraisers and other memorable moments in the life of the school to be photographed. These photographs will be available to all families who may make prints as they wish.

III. School and Family ~ A Partnership

Parent Participation

The successful operation of the school relies largely on the time and energy given by parent volunteers. There is a need for parent volunteers both in the classroom and outside of it. A sense of community, new friendships, and a genuine sense of pride can be gained by involving oneself in working together toward a common goal. An understanding of what is expected of parents throughout the school year is essential in allowing parents to participate in a way that works for them. We ask that each family contribute at least 20 hours of time in support of our program each year.

Some possibilities for volunteering are:

- Organizing and volunteering at festivals, fundraisers, or special events
- Supporting the teacher by assisting with specialty classes or special classroom needs
- Sewing costumes or gathering props for plays
- Chaperoning field trips
- Playground, garden, and site beautification
- Administrative work of all types, such as grant writing, photocopying, and computer support

Please note that we require background checks on all classroom and field trip volunteers. Contact your child's teacher for more information on volunteering.

Fundraising Events

Our school, like most private schools, requires an ongoing fundraising effort by the parent body to achieve a balanced budget; tuition and fees alone are not enough to allow the school to operate. We depend on the ongoing financial support and work of the community. The money that is spent on operating the school comes from annual tuition, donations, and fundraising. Parents' sharing of skills and services contributes to the strength of the school and keeps tuition costs down. Fundraising events such as our Holiday Faire and Spring Social thrive with participation by all families. They require careful preparation and result in spectacular events that delight not only us but the community at large. They serve as a reminder of what a truly creative and committed group of people our parents are.

Financial Contributions

All independent schools, and now even many public schools, rely on extra support above and beyond tuition and fees. This is because the real cost of educating our children – of giving them a solid cultural and academic foundation – is more than the cost of tuition. To provide a vibrant and diverse education, generous tax-deductible gifts are a welcome and necessary part of our school program.

School Communication

Parent to Parent Communication: Please use the bulletin board located in the hall outside the classroom door to post notices/services/events/want ads/for sale etc. We ask that all postings be dated on the day posted. The bulletin board will be periodically updated.

Yearly Calendar: Our Yearly Calendar of Events gives parents an opportunity to be a part of a community of like-minded families. At the beginning of the year there is a scheduled parent orientation when parents can meet each other, meet board members and teachers, and where questions can be addressed. Throughout the school year, there are scheduled parent evenings, parent-teacher conferences in the autumn and spring focusing on your child's growth and progress, seasonal festival celebrations, and other family evening events that are developed by the parents and board members.

Newsletter: The school publishes a monthly newsletter with updates from the teachers and other information that may be of interest to our families, including recipes, upcoming events, and other information.

Email: We share a variety of information with all school families via email, including monthly newsletters, class updates, and information about school closings or delays. Each family will receive a class list with contact information for the other families in class.

Parent-Teacher Communication

The teachers are committed to developing a personal and professional relationship with you, knowing that our parent-teacher relationship is a very important aspect of elementary education. We welcome your insights.

There are times when you will need to convey information that pertains to your child's immediate daily experience. The teacher is ready to listen to a brief update as she greets you at morning drop-off. However, it is difficult for a teacher to have a complete conversation while she is also greeting the others. If you need a more in-depth conversation on the telephone or in person please leave a note for the teacher or message on the school's phone and all efforts will be made to contact you within a day.

Parents are free to come to the school any time they wish, but it is preferable to arrange your visit with the teacher beforehand.

Supporting Students in the Home

As parents and teachers, we are joining together in a partnership for the care and development of children. As partners, we need to be in close touch. You are the "eyes and ears" at home, just as the teachers are the "eyes and ears" at school. We encourage you to share your insights, questions, and goals regarding your child's development with your child's teacher.

Your child's educational experience does not begin and end at the classroom door. The care they receive at home is essential in preparing them to succeed at school. In general, to fully participate in their day, your child should arrive at school with a warm body, a full belly, and a sense of well-being. Getting enough sleep every night is also essential for children to be able to function well all day at school.

Reverence, Rhythm, and Ritual

We encourage you to foster reverence, ritual, and rhythm in your family life. Many parents find, in fact, that the emphasis on reverence, ritual, and rhythm is one of the ways Waldorf education directly affects the quality of their lives. In the speed and "busyness" of our contemporary world, it often helps to be reminded of more enduring values. Establishing an environment in which each day is rhythmically ordered and the year is marked by special moments with rituals and celebrations helps create, for our children, a secure foundation from which to grow.

The parent who by example shows reverence to the earth, respect for self and others, and follows healthy rhythms in his or her life, gives a precious treasure to the child. This is as simple as marking the daily rhythm of life in meaningful ways: lighting a candle at the evening meal, reading a special bedtime story, or celebrating a family tradition. Establish a rhythm at home by serving meals at the same time every day and maintaining a consistent bedtime.

Attendance and Punctuality at School

We expect that parents will maintain their children's punctual and regular attendance at school. Children thrive in the rhythms of the day and as parents and caregivers, we can help our children succeed in all their endeavors by ensuring they are present and on time. Learning begins immediately each morning and throughout the day with community building activities, established routines, structured lessons, and shared recess/break times. Regular attendance ensures that each child participates in all manner of learning

experiences and traditions at Oxbow Schoolhouse to support their individual growth and development. Consistent daily interaction with educators and peers nourish healthy relationships, allow for a clear understanding of expectations, routines, and learning outcomes, and promotes inclusion in common shared community experiences.

Please make every effort to arrive at school at 8:15 to begin the day at 8:20 so that your child can be greeted individually by his or her main lesson teacher and settle into the classroom.

In general, students with over ten absences or tardies per semester (20 per school year) are in danger of falling behind their peers academically and are missing a significant portion of their school experience, including shared experiences with peers. Parents will receive written notification from the school requesting a meeting with the class teacher if their child falls into this category. Chronic absence may be cause for dismissal.

Reporting Absences

Please keep absences for reasons other than illness to an absolute minimum. Vacations should be taken during regularly scheduled school holidays and breaks.

If your child must miss class for an appointment or vacation, please let your class teacher know in advance.

Unplanned absences should be communicated verbally or in writing via a call or email to the school office.

When a student is absent without explanation, the Administrator will contact the parent/guardian.

Snack and Lunch

Parents are encouraged to send their children with an ample and wholesome snack and lunch each day. Children may not bring soda, chewing gum or candy. Trading of snack or lunch items is discouraged. See the many suggestions for healthy snacks and lunches compiled by our families at the end of the handbook.

Television and Other Media

Oxbow Schoolhouse urges parents to allow *no screen time for entertainment purposes during the school week.*

The school aims to develop creative, fully engaged individuals. We urge parents to involve children in meaningful play and work as much as possible. For older children, practicing regular study habits without the backdrop of music and flickering images is essential to the learning and growing process. Stories are an essential component of Main Lesson in a Waldorf education. New curricular material is presented imaginatively by the teacher one day and then reviewed (brought back to life) the following school day. Time spent with television and/or electronic games between the presentation of new material and its review works against the child's ability to make the lessons presented at school his or her own. Without interference from screen time, children are both more likely and more able to review the lessons of the school day both consciously and subconsciously, yielding a richer review and deeper connection to the curriculum. For this reason, we ask that parents allow *no screen time for entertainment purposes during the school week.*

There are also many practical reasons for eliminating screen time, including:

- Better physical fitness,
- Development of independent hobbies,
- A greater ability to focus on and persist with tasks,
- A greater ability to regulate one's self.

Below is information on current research and recommendations from pediatricians.

The passivity inherent in watching television is increasingly recognized by educators and parents as counterproductive to the process of learning and growth in the young child. The fast pace and fragmentation of television work against the cultivation of concentration and imagination. Teachers have found that students whose diet includes regular media exposure have trouble entering into the level of focus being asked for in the classroom experience. Students accustomed to passively receiving impressions have difficulty making the inner effort necessary to sustain imaginative thought.

There is a growing body of research on the negative impacts of media regarding neurological development, vision tracking, and the ability to focus in school in children exposed to television, videos, and computer games, particularly below the age of nine. At a recent public health summit, the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry made an announcement that based on thirty years of research, the viewing content of entertainment violence in TV, music, video games and movies leads to increases in aggressive attitudes, values and behavior, particularly in children. Media exposure has negative effects on the neurological, cognitive, and sensory development of the child, including speech and language development, motor skills, attention span, perseverance levels, creativity, imagination, and initiative. We encourage you to be informed about ongoing research on the effects of media on the child.

Religion and Religious Celebrations

Oxbow Schoolhouse does not seek to teach a particular religious view. Students from a wide range of religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds are welcomed at school, and differences are respected. Seasonal festivals, including the major religious festivals of the year, are observed in the classroom. The curriculum itself, through Native American tales, Old Testament studies, Norse, Indian, Egyptian, African Roman and Greek mythologies, provides many opportunities to share other religious and cultural traditions from around the world in the classroom.

We acknowledge and share the religious customs and celebrations enjoyed by our families. If you are interested in celebrating special holidays in your child's classroom, we encourage you to give suggestions to your child's teacher. Parent participation helps make these festivals meaningful and special. Parents are also welcome to keep their children home in observance of their religious holidays.

IV. Administrative Policies

Oxbow Schoolhouse's enrollment process is intended to give you the information you need to make a comfortable decision for your child and family. We encourage you to visit the school during an Open House or for a school tour during school hours. You may be surprised by the lengthy conversations and initial meetings our Faculty Chair and Teachers are happy to have with you. A visit to the school allows you the opportunity to see the program in action and have your questions answered about Oxbow Schoolhouse's program.

Application Process

Please visit our website at www.oxbowschoolhouse.org/Admissions.html for the Admissions Checklist and Application Form.

Application Deadlines

New applications must be postmarked by January 31 for the following school year. Once the application process is completed (see the application checklist), it will be reviewed by the Faculty.

Mid-year applications are processed in the same manner as other applications if space is available in the class the family is applying for.

Admissions Decisions

The School will determine from year to year how many students will be accepted for each class depending on school resources and class composition. Once the application process is completed for all applications arriving on time, the Faculty will convene to make admissions determinations for the following school year. The Faculty makes admissions decisions based on many factors, including staffing and other School resources, and class composition, such as gender balance, classroom dynamics, student needs, teacher load and class size. In the event a class is full, or there are more applicants who meet the criteria for admission than spaces available, a wait list is formed. Students remain on the waitlist for the duration of the school year for which they applied. Following that time, families wishing to remain on the waitlist must indicate that in writing by January 31 of the preceding year.

The intention of our admissions decisions is to be as inclusive as possible and to create as diverse a community as possible while maintaining classes in which the needs of the individual children and the children as a group are met by the School. The School's decisions are mailed no later than March 31.

Re-Admission Policy

Re-enrollment decisions are usually made each January by the Faculty. A decision to re-enroll a student and to subsequently forward a re-enrollment contract to the parents is based upon a student's progress (academic record, effort, attitude and behavior) throughout the prior year, and upon the willingness of the parents to work in partnership with the School. On occasion, re-enrollment contracts are held temporarily pending further evaluation or resolution of any existing academic, behavioral or financial issues. Final decisions on these held contracts are normally resolved by May.

In some cases, it may be determined that it is not appropriate for a student to continue at the School. This difficult conclusion is only reached after careful consideration. While parents are obviously involved in this process, the School will make the ultimate decision, and will attempt to assist, when possible, in the process of identifying appropriate alternative schools.

Families should understand that the School reserves the right not to offer a re-enrollment contract for a student if the parents and/or students have been uncooperative or if their actions have in any way undermined the School or the effectiveness of its teachers.

Preferential Admission for Siblings of Current Students and Students Attending Evergreen Garden Playschool

Oxbow Schoolhouse gives preference in admission to siblings of current students and families attending Evergreen Garden Playschool, in that order, provided they meet basic criteria for acceptance and their applications are received on-time. Admission preference for siblings and students attending Evergreen Garden is only possible when applications and all aspects of the Admissions process are completed on schedule.

Tuition and Fees

Please visit our website at www.oxbowschoolhouse.org/Admissions.html for the current school year tuition and fees.

It Takes More Than Tuition

Tuition and fees account for roughly 85% of the total operating budget at Oxbow Schoolhouse. The remainder is raised through direct contributions and special fundraising activities. *All parents, teachers, and administrative staff are expected to participate in these efforts by making appropriate commitments of time, financial support, and talent to the school.*

- **Gifts to Oxbow's Annual Fund:** Monies gifted through annual giving help bridge the gap between tuition and the actual cost of educating each student. It is so important that we receive 100% community participation as grants and corporate matching programs often require schools with 100% parent participation. A gift of any amount is encouraged and appreciated!
- **Fundraising Events:** Our December Holiday Fair and Food, Friends and Funds Auction in March offer many opportunities to contribute time, goods and services and to deepen relationships by working with fellow parents and teachers. Without every family's commitment to these events, they wouldn't be as successful or as fun!
- **Volunteer and Community Service Opportunities:** In addition to fundraising events, parents and teachers support the school by community service and volunteering for many other tasks.
- **Friend-Raising:** Parents sharing their experiences at Oxbow Schoolhouse with other families is the best form of public relations. By inviting interested friends and family to the Holiday Fair, Auction, Open Houses, and other such events, you can positively influence our community, enrollment, and budget.

If you have any questions about tuition and fees, please contact Oxbow Schoolhouse's Treasurer.

Confidentiality

We believe in protecting the confidentiality of all families who choose Oxbow Schoolhouse. We will not discuss the affairs of one family with another family without prior mutual consent, nor will we release information to parties outside the school or to the general public without written consent. We will also ask for written consent when requesting outside records from other agencies or families. It is also against our policy for staff members to discuss the affairs of families in casual conversation within the school or in any inappropriate way at any time. We hope all families will follow the same principles of confidentiality with respect to all other families and staff members.

Children's Records

The information contained in a child's record is privileged and confidential. We do not release the information in a child's record to anyone without the written consent of the child's parent or guardian. We

will notify a parent should his or her child's record be subpoenaed. Parents shall have access to their child's record at reasonable times with no delay. If the parents request a copy of any records, we will provide the requested copies within two days.

A child's parents may add information to the child's record at any time. The parents may request to have information in the record deleted or amended. If the Faculty Chair feels that information needs to remain in the record, the Faculty Chair will meet with the parents to discuss the issue. If, after the conference, the Faculty Chair still chooses to deny the request, the Faculty Chair will provide parents with a written explanation and will explain to the parents how to file an appeal with the school's Board of Directors.

Upon written request of the parents, the school will send a copy of the child's record to any other person or agency so designated.

Late Fees

A late fee of \$50 will be applied toward any tuition not paid by the 15th of the month in which it is due. Oxbow Schoolhouse operates on a tight budget and we require timely payments to meet our financial obligations such as rent, teacher's salaries, and utilities. This fee may be waived with a written explanation submitted to the board of directors by the tuition due date. We will work with families who find themselves with financial hardships.

Financial Hardship

Oxbow Schoolhouse recognizes the commitments that parents make when they choose Oxbow Schoolhouse and seeks to honor those with an equal commitment to each family who joins our school community. If your family finds itself experiencing extreme financial hardship, please speak with the Treasurer. We seek to support the families who are members of our community in whatever ways we can.

Financial Assistance

When Oxbow Schoolhouse was founded in 2009, the original members desired to provide a Waldorf-inspired education for children that was within the financial reach of as many families as possible. It is important for incoming families to understand that tuition does not cover all the expenses of this education and the participation of parents in supporting the school program is essential to its successful operation. The school's operating budget, including educational programs for students, salaries for teachers, and building and grounds maintenance and improvements runs very tight and only through the commitment of all involved.

Families who need financial assistance to make the tuition payments may contact the Administrator for information about how to apply for limited assistance through FACTS Grant & Aid Assessment.

Any family wishing to contribute to the Tuition Assistance Fund may donate their tuition discount. One hundred percent of this donation will be given to the student(s) determined to have the greatest need (through the FACTS assessment process) in the next school year. Your contribution will make it possible for more children to benefit from an education at Oxbow Schoolhouse.

Please contact the Administrator for more detailed information about the application and award process.

Withdrawal Procedures

When a student graduates from Oxbow Schoolhouse or leaves the program for any reason:

- The Faculty Chair will send a Student Withdrawal Form to the appropriate school superintendent informing that superintendent of the student's withdrawal from a private school program within ten days of withdrawal.

- The Faculty Chair will send one copy of each student's transcripts to the school of the student's choice or the student's parents/legal guardian. If multiple copies are requested, a fee of \$5 per additional record request will be assessed to cover the cost of copying and mailing.
- The student's file will be removed from the active files and stored in a secure cabinet.

V. Wellness and Safety

Good Health

Only students who are in good health should come to school. Students go outdoors daily, weather permitting. Parents are responsible for sending children in adequate clothing and footwear to maintain good health during outdoor play in all suitable weather conditions, including normal winter temperatures and rain. Please do not ask us to keep a child inside because of a cold or other illness. A child who is too sick to go outside is too sick to be in a social situation with other children.

When a child is unable to participate in school activities, the teacher will ask parents to pick up their child as soon as possible. If we are unable to reach a parent, we will contact people on the child's emergency card by order of listing, and give the child over to their care. We will continue to call parents to inform them of the situation.

Health Requirements

The state requires children attending school have a complete physical examination within one year prior to admission. The physical exam required upon enrollment shall be valid for one year from the date the child was examined and shall be repeated annually. Oxbow Schoolhouse is required to obtain evidence of each child's annual physical examination, updated immunizations and lead screening or obtain a completed Request for Exemption from Vaccination and Immunization Form.

The following forms legally must be returned to Oxbow Schoolhouse prior to your child's first day of school: Enrollment Contract, Emergency Contact Card, Student Information Form, Parental Consent Forms, and Student Health Form and Immunization Information.

A complete copy of all forms must be on file for your child to attend.

Illness

Please do not send an ill child to school. If you are unsure, the following guidelines can help you determine if you should keep your child home:

- 1) Fever of over 100°—Children sent home with a fever in the middle of the day may not return to school until they have been fever-free for a full 24-hour period.
- 2) Diarrhea—2 or more instances close together may be assumed to be contagious unless determined by a doctor not to be so.
- 3) Vomiting—in the previous 24 hours at home or at school.
- 4) Mouth Sores—unless the physician states that the child is non-infectious.
- 5) Rash— with a fever or behavior change until the physician has determined that the illness is not a communicable disease.
- 6) Purulent conjunctivitis—defined as pink or red conductive with white or yellow discharge, often with matted eyelids, until examined by a physician and approved for re-admission, with or without treatment.
- 7) Tuberculosis—until the child is non-infectious.
- 8) Impetigo—until 24 hours after treatment has started or all the sores are covered.
- 9) Head lice—free of all nits or scabies and free of all mites.
- 10) Strep infection—until 24 hours after treatment and the child has been without fever for 24 hrs.
- 11) Hepatitis—many types of hepatitis are caused by viruses. The symptoms are so alike that blood tests are needed to tell them apart. In the US, the most common types of hepatitis are A, B, and C. Types B and

C are spread through blood and other body fluids. Type A is spread through contaminated food and water or stool. Fact sheets are available from the state Department of Public Health.

www.state.ma.us/dph.

- 12) Chicken pox—until the last blister has healed over.
- 13) Any of the following conditions—fever, unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or other signs of serious illness.
- 14) Any illness requiring greater care.

We feel that when sick children are kept at home, all of the children and their families benefit from better health. Please remember that all symptoms must have disappeared at least 24 hours before returning to school. In some instances, a physician's certificate of good health may be required before a child will be allowed to return.

When a communicable disease has been introduced into the school, parents will be notified immediately, and in writing by the school Faculty Chair. Whenever possible, information regarding the communicable disease shall be made available to parents. DPH must be contacted when there is a reportable communicable disease in our program.

Food Allergies

Oxbow Schoolhouse strives to ensure the well-being of our students through an allergy awareness program. The successful management of food allergies is the jointly held responsibility of the School, families, and the student with the allergy. Education encompasses the entire School community including employees, parents, and students. It focuses on preventive strategies, the symptoms of anaphylaxis in individual students, and emergency care. We recognize that the management of food allergies is a developmental process, and we strive to take reasonable measures to protect our youngest students while recognizing that students must learn to assume increasing responsibility for their own health and safety as they mature.

As an "Allergy Aware" school, the School does not require families to eliminate allergens from their students' snacks and lunches. However, the School will work in conjunction with the parents of students with allergies to provide supports for students with anaphylaxis within the parameters of the School's resources. Following is a list of the types of supports the School is able to implement on an as-needed basis:

1. Students will be encouraged to wash their hands before and after meals to reduce the transmission not only of germs but of allergens.
2. When students eat together in a communal space, students with food allergies will be provided a separate table or desk space at which they can sit that will abut at least one of the other tables in the space. This table will be washed before its next use.
3. When students eat at their own desks in the classroom, the desks will be washed after every meal with an appropriate cleaning solution and paper towels.
4. The School strives to ensure that students do not share food in school, and birthday celebrations during the school day do not include food.
5. Families will be made aware of the allergens of concern to the community and, while not required to eliminate specific foods, will be encouraged to reduce the use of these foods in snacks and lunches whenever possible.

Other Allergies

If your child has an allergic reaction that causes skin or breathing difficulties, we will work with you to ensure that he/she does not have contact with the substance. For instance, if a particular soap causes eczema,

we will not use it. Or, if your child develops hives when in contact with wool, we will take care to see that he/she does not have contact with it. Again, please inform us of changes in your child's allergic conditions.

The names of children with allergies that may be life threatening (i.e., bee stings) will be posted in conspicuous locations with specific instructions if an occurrence were to happen. The Teacher will be responsible for ensuring that she/he received appropriate information from the parents to handle emergency allergic reactions.

Special Needs and Other Healthcare Conditions

If your child has special healthcare needs or conditions, we need to know. We will acquire information from your child's healthcare forms and the parent interview. Please keep us up to date about your child's special needs.

If your child has a temporary condition, such as ear tubes that should not be exposed to wetness, we will work with you to ensure his/her proper care while at school within the parameters of school resources. If your child has a handicap we will work with you and any other care team to the best of our ability.

Injury Prevention Plan

Our goal is to provide a safe environment. The faculty and staff at Oxbow Schoolhouse will guard against accidents and injury by taking reasonable precaution to protect the safety of all students, other employees, visitors, and others present on school property or at school-sponsored events. However, we recognize play as an important part of our curriculum, including nature walks, sledding, ice skating, and outdoor play. Learning to take reasonable risk is a goal of our program and teachers actively work with students to assess risk and determine limits for activities depending on the ages of the children involved and the specifics of the activity. Our supplies, tools, and play equipment are maintained and replaced regularly.

The practice of safety will also be considered a facet of the instructional program of the school including regular yearly emergency drills and instruction in accident prevention as well as fire prevention appropriate to the age level of the children.

First Aid

If an accident or sudden illness occurs, school personnel will administer first aid and, if warranted, call for emergency medical assistance. First aid is defined as the immediate and temporary care given in case of an accident or sudden illness, which enables the child to be taken safely home or to a physician. It does not include diagnosis or treatment. Any care beyond first aid will not be given. Teachers receive first aid and CPR training. All accidents and injuries more serious than minor scrapes, bumps, and bruises, will be reported to parents on an Injury Report Form within 24 hours of any such occurrence.

At school, faculty and staff will treat injuries or illness in the following way:

1. Minor cuts and scrapes will be treated with soap and water and band-aids. Minor bumps and bruises will be treated with an ice pack and/or comfort care and an Illness/Injury Slip will be completed and logged.
2. When the nature of the illness or an injury appears in any way serious, every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian and/or family physician immediately.
3. No student who is ill or injured will be sent home without prior notification of parent/guardian or their designee.
4. In extreme emergencies, a teacher or staff member may make arrangements for immediate hospitalization of injured or ill students, contacting parent/guardian in advance if at all possible.

5. The teacher or another staff member to whom a child is responsible at the time an accident occurs will make out a report providing details of the accident. This will be required for every accident/illness for which a parent is notified.
6. All accidents to students and staff members will be reported as soon as possible to the Faculty Chair.
7. All medical care providers will incorporate universal precaution procedures when applicable.

First Aid Kit Contents: A thermometer, tweezers, rubber gloves, cleansing wipes, Band-Aids, gauze, tape, ippecac syrup, ice pack, and our Emergency Information Binder (including emergency numbers, parent's work/home numbers and the number of parent designated emergency contacts) are the contents of the kit.

First Aid Kit Maintenance: The first aid kit is maintained and stocked regularly.

Accidents and Emergencies

Each year parents shall supply information indicating where the student is to be taken in case of an emergency, Emergency Contact Person(s) to be contacted in case the parent/guardian is not available, and any allergies or medical conditions the student might have. The School shall maintain an Emergency Response Plan, as required by law, which shall be utilized by the Faculty Chair for handling emergencies.

In the case of a more serious accidental injury, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent. If we cannot reach a parent or the designated emergency contact, we will call an ambulance and your child's physician. A staff member will accompany your child in the ambulance to a hospital and remain with your child until you arrive. You will be expected to assume responsibility for any resultant expense.

Emergency Contingency Plan

- 1) **IN CASE OF A FIRE, NATURAL DISASTER, OR SITUATION NECESSITATING EVACUATION OF THE BUILDING:** We will follow the plan for removing all children from the building, and proceed on foot to the Bob Eisengrein Community Center located at 100 Sherman Avenue, Devens, MA.
- 2) **IN CASE OF A POWER OUTAGE, HEAT LOSS OR LOSS OF WATER:** We will close the school until the utilities are in working order. If it is safe to remain in the building, we will call parents, and if we are unable to reach them, call their emergency contact people by order of listing. We will remain with the children until parents/emergency contacts arrive.
- 3) **IN CASE OF A VIOLENT STORM OR SITUATION NECESSITATING TAKING COVER:** We will bring the children to the middle of the central hallway (away from windows) and sit on the floor. We will remain there until the threat has passed. We will call parents only when the threat has passed.
- 4) **IN THE CASE OF A NEIGHBORHOOD EVACUATION:** We will follow the plan for removing all children from the building and proceed on foot to the Bob Eisengrein Community Center located at 100 Sherman Avenue, Devens, MA.
- 5) We will practice safety drills yearly.

Emergency Phone Numbers

Fire, Police, Ambulance ~ Emergency cell phone # for all three is: 978-772-7200
Emergency non-cell # is 911

Child Protection Mandate

In order to grow and learn, children's basic needs for good nutrition, shelter, health care, bathing, clean clothes, social stimulation, appropriate discipline, love and a feeling of respect must be met. Children need a safe, nurturing environment that makes them feel secure and loved. Our commitment is to provide the best possible environment to support children's healthy development. To help our staff understand your child's needs, we ask that you keep us informed about your child's health, well-being and illnesses, injuries or situations outside the school which might adversely affect your child. If for any reason, you feel that our staff is not meeting your child's needs, we encourage you to speak with the Teacher.

Should you have any difficulty in providing for your child's emotional or physical needs, please ask for help. We can provide a referral to a community resource when you are experiencing a need for additional support.

In the rare instance when we recognize that your child's basic needs are being consistently neglected, the Faculty Chair will inform you and will assist you in finding ways to meet those needs. If you are temporarily unable or unwilling to meet your child's minimal needs as described above, our staff is mandated by State Law to file a report with the state regulatory agency, the Massachusetts Division of Social Services, or D.S.S. It then becomes the responsibility of the D.S.S to work with you and your family.

In all cases of suspected child abuse, we are also mandated reporters under State Law. Our procedure is for staff to report their concerns to the Faculty Chair, who will assess the facts and assist the staff members in making a decision to file a report. A decision is also made about whether to notify the parents or guardian. In making this decision, risk to the children involved will be of the utmost concern.

Our staff will cooperate in all investigations of abuse and neglect. These procedures include, but are not limited to, ensuring that an allegedly abusive or neglectful staff member does not work directly with children until an investigation has been completed by the school board and the state regulatory agency. Our complete child abuse and neglect policy is available to parents upon request.

Community Agency Involvement

Oxbow Schoolhouse will permit no research, experimentation, or promotions using children without first obtaining written permission from the parents of the children involved. This includes photography, academic research, vision and hearing screenings, or any other activities, such as fundraising or publicity, which are unrelated to the direct care of children.

Photographs of children or samples of children's work will not be displayed outside the school, nor will copies be used for promotional or training purposes without the prior approval of the parents.

Substance Abuse Policy

Oxbow Schoolhouse is committed to providing an alcohol-, drug- and tobacco-free learning environment for its students. The unprescribed use of controlled substances as well as alcohol and tobacco (i.e., cigarettes, rolling papers, lighters and related paraphernalia) is not allowed. This applies both to on- and off-campus school-sponsored activities. Any transgression of this policy will result in disciplinary action and may be grounds for termination of enrollment.

VI. School Standards and Guidelines

Arrival and Departure

Oxbow Schoolhouse does not own or operate any vehicles, and parents must provide for all of the transportation needs of their child.

Please arrive at school to drop your child off at 8:15. Children will gather with a member of the faculty until 8:20 when the school doors are opened. Main Lesson begins at 8:30 a.m. Your child's teacher will be ready to greet your child in the classroom at 8:20 a.m. If you arrive after the classroom door is closed, please proceed to the office for a tardy slip. Knock on the classroom door and wait for the teacher to greet your child.

When you arrive at the end of the day (3:00 p.m.) gather your child in the hallway by the classroom's door. For safety reasons, it is important for parents and children to leave the building together. Be sure to take your child's belongings. At pickup time the Teacher must continue to monitor the rest of the class. Again, if you need a more in-depth conversation on the telephone or in person, please leave a note for the Teacher and all efforts will be made to contact you within a day. If you are going to be late to pick up your child, please contact your emergency pick-up person to receive your child and call (leave a message if we do not answer) to let us know. After the children leave, teachers are responsible for curriculum planning and classroom maintenance. Your prompt pick-up is much appreciated.

Only parents or persons with prior written authorization can pick up children. People who are unfamiliar to the staff will be asked to present identification.

For Your Child's Safety, Oxbow Schoolhouse Staff Will:

- 1) Check pick-up authorization on file.
- 2) Accept a dated and signed note provided by the parent authorizing a specific person to pick up their child at a specific time. The note must include the person's name as it appears on their driver's license, and the staff will verify it.
- 3) Under no circumstance will a child be released to an unauthorized person, even if the staff knows that person.
- 4) Staff members may not sign out a child or drive them home unless authorization to do so is on file for that child.
- 5) No staff member will require a child to leave Oxbow Schoolhouse with an unfamiliar person.
- 6) When parents are involved in a custody dispute, schools have a difficult role. Without a court order, a center cannot deny any parent access to their child. Even with a court order, the ability to deny access is limited to promptly notifying the custodial parent and police, if unsanctioned contact is attempted. Difficulties of this type must be clarified with the Teacher so that procedures and limitations are understood. Teachers will not place themselves or others in jeopardy to mediate a family dispute or to attempt to enforce a court order. A custodial parent will be required to sign a waiver acknowledging our inability to physically obstruct a hostile effort to take their child from Oxbow Schoolhouse.

Telephone Use

The Office telephones are for conducting school business. Children are permitted to use the telephone at any time during the day with written permission from their parent. Should a parent wish to leave a message for a child, we will be happy to convey it. In an emergency, we'll be glad to bring your child to the telephone to speak with you.

Field Trips

Signed parental permission for off-campus field trips is required. The cost, if any, of field trips, varies by activity. Prior to departure, a parent who drives on a field trip must fill out a driver form and provide the school office with copies of his or her driver's license and name of automobile insurance carrier. The teacher will make written note of which students are assigned to each parent volunteer/driver.

Personal Belongings and Animals

Please do not allow your child to bring toys or other personal belongings from home to school. They are often difficult to share and place your child in the position of feeling a need to protect them as others show interest. There is also the possibility of loss or damage. While at each others' homes it is appropriate to share personal items, at school it creates a distraction that is not in line with the values our school is trying to foster. This includes balls, toys or trading cards, electronic equipment, games, beeping watches, cell phones or calculators unless given specific permission by their teacher. If your child wishes to bring something to share at an after-school get-together, please find a way to transfer the item(s) to the other family's car either before or after school so that it need not be brought into the school. Over the years we have found that even the best intentions of keeping the item in a backpack, for example, can be extremely hard for a child to follow when they are excited.

No animals should be brought inside the school building except for special occasions prearranged with the teacher. Please keep pets on a leash and outside the fence.

Dress Code

At Oxbow Schoolhouse, we take great care to ensure that our school's environment is conducive to learning. Every day our lessons include active movement, such as running, jumping, and dancing. Distracting clothing or clothing that restricts movement or doesn't offer good support for the foot and ankle detracts from lessons and could lead to injury. We encourage and appreciate ongoing parental support. Please be conscious of what your child is wearing each day at school.

Refer to these guidelines in selecting students' school clothes. Any questions regarding the clothing policy can be addressed to your child's teacher or the Faculty Chair. These guidelines apply to all school functions including field trips and class trips.

General Guidelines

- Clothing should be comfortable and neatly mended without holes, tears or stains.
- Clothing should fit well. It should not be too large or too small, including too short or tight.
- Shoulder straps must be at least 2 fingers in width (spaghetti straps may be layered with tank tops under dresses or shirts over camisoles). No strapless clothing or spaghetti straps.
- Shorts and skirts must come approximately to mid-thigh length (the end of one's longest finger when arms are at one's sides)
- Jewelry should be tasteful and not distracting
- Watches with dial faces rather than digital watches are recommended. No beeping watches.
- No make-up or extreme hair coloring or styles.

Acceptable patterns, colors and designs:

- Solid colors and/or overall patterns, i.e. stripes, plaid, floral, paisley or polka dot.
- Any label or small logo should be small enough to be covered by two of the child's fingers
- Oxbow Schoolhouse logo wear

Unacceptable patterns and designs:

- Images, including advertising, sports logos, words, numbers, cartoon drawings, pictures

Indoor Shoes

Please provide your child with a pair of “indoor” shoes. These help keep our classrooms clean! Look for comfortable non-slip soles, firm attachment to the foot, and ease of putting on and taking off. We found that slip-on Merrell type sneakers or some simple and flexible shoes like Mary Janes work best. No boots, flip flops, slippers, sandals or anything with heels, please.

Outdoor Shoes

Outdoor shoes (including Games Class on Mondays and Friday) must have non-slip soles, lace-up or velcro and be sturdy enough for vigorous outside play. Sneakers or Merrell- style shoes are ideal. Laces must be tied. Boots, shoes with heels, flip-flops, clogs and Crocs are not suitable.

Outdoor Clothing

As the children go outside every day, please send appropriate gear i.e. raincoat, rain pants hood, hat, lined boots, warm coat, waterproof snow pants or snowsuits, mittens or gloves and leg coverings. Shorts are not acceptable in winter.

Concert Dress

Concert dress is black and white. Black pants or skirt and black shoes with black socks and/or stockings paired with a white shirt. All clothes should be clean and pressed. Parents are asked to support our efforts to create a special event for the whole school. The school will provide a white collared shirt, which may remain at school. Please provide black pants or skirts, and black shoes. No shorts, leggings, yoga or athletic pants, please.

Dressing for Special Events

Throughout the school year, there are special occasions which don't require concert dress but do call for festive wear, including the Opening and Closing Ceremonies and our May Day Celebration. For these types of events, students are asked to come dressed up for a special event or celebration. For girls, a skirt, dress or pants and top that is in keeping with our dress code above. For boys, pants and shirt that are neat and clean, in keeping with our dress code above. No shorts, please.

The teacher reserves the right to make decisions on the appropriateness of a student's dress and will speak to parents as necessary.

Inclement Weather

In bad weather, check www.boston.cbslocal.com/closings for school closings and to sign up for school closing text alerts. We will be closed if the local public schools are closed, and we may also choose to delay opening, cancel school or close early at other times. If weather is questionable, the Faculty Chair will make a decision, and you will also be notified by email.

Snow days will not be made up, as the school's calendar is set for the year. However, the Board of Directors for Oxbow Schoolhouse may make an exception to this rule in the event of a natural disaster or another emergency that interferes excessively with school time.

After School Conduct

To maintain a respectful, caring and safe environment at school, the teachers actively reinforce rules of appropriate school behavior with students at all times. At the end of the school day, when students are dismissed from class but still on school property, it is equally important to follow school rules.

Because after school time is such a nebulous time, we request that any organized after school play times occur at individual homes or other public locations. In Devens, that would include Roger's Field or the playground on the corner of Jackson Rd. and Main St. (by Parker Charter School), as our school playground is closed after school hours.

All family and friends who pick children up at school must be aware of school policies. Please be sure to share this information with them.

After School Meetings

If you are here for a meeting after school, your child(ren) should have a quiet, independent activity to entertain themselves with in the hallway. Otherwise, they must be actively supervised by an adult.

Please use the following guidelines whenever you are supervising children on school property:

- An adult must be *actively* supervising play to ensure that school rules are followed.
- Shoes and shirts must be worn, both inside and outside the building, as this is a public space.
- All people and objects are to be treated with care and respect.
- No rough housing is permitted.

Music Lessons

Any children waiting for music lessons or for sibling's music lessons must wait in the music room. They should have a book to read or similar quiet, individual activity. Children who are unable to do this independently will need to be picked up by a parent or other trusted adult.

Discipline

At Oxbow, showing respect for self and others is a student's primary responsibility. Each student is expected to:

- Respect the feelings, physical safety, and property of others and self
- Respect the guidance provided by teachers and volunteers
- Respect our school supplies, building and grounds

Parental and faculty support is essential to meeting student behavioral standards. Festivals, fundraisers, class trips, and other gatherings are a public display of who we are, and children need adult supervision at school functions. Teachers ask that parents monitor their children's behavior at these events.

There are times when children cross the boundaries of acceptable behavior. We feel that teachers must relate to each situation and each child in a manner that best supports that child and the class as a whole. Each infraction will be dealt with directly by the class teacher and addressed as immediately as possible. The teacher will contact parents following any major incident or if the child fails to recognize and remedy inappropriate behavior. For serious or repeated infractions, parents will be contacted as appropriate meetings are planned. We aim to foster accountability and to assist students in transforming unacceptable behavior or

attitudes. In extreme cases of repeated infractions and conferences, the school may ask a child to withdraw from Oxbow.

Oxbow endeavors to make the buildings and the playground safe for children to work, learn and play. The school reserves the right to remove individuals from the premises who appear to be a threat to the physical or psychological safety of students—and to determine when and whether they can return to school.

Under no circumstances is corporal punishment ever used by staff or volunteers as this violates our basic human dignity. The disciplinary interventions we will NOT use are these:

- 1) Corporal punishment in any form (spanking, shaking, hitting, pushing, pulling, pinching) is strictly prohibited, and is grounds for dismissal, as it is illegal.
- 2) No child will be verbally abused, humiliated, or severely punished.
- 3) Food will not be forced or denied as a form of behavior control.

If a staff member fails to comply with this policy, disciplinary actions including suspension and termination may result.

Referral Procedure

The teachers observe children's behavior and progress daily. If they are at all concerned about a developmental, behavioral, or learning issue, they will first bring this to the attention of the parents in conversation or in writing. Ongoing concerns are brought to the faculty as a whole for study and to develop a plan of action during our "Child Study" process. This process is designed to help teachers strengthen their powers of observation, develop ongoing skills for assisting the children in their care, and, if necessary, determine the proper avenues for referring a family to additional services.

The procedure for referring a child or family to an agency or professional resource is as follows:

- 1) Teachers are responsible for recording information about a child's behavior in an objective and factual manner which describes the specific behaviors and the date, time, and duration of the observation.
- 2) Unless the situation requires immediate action, teachers will agree to focus their attention on observation of the behavior over the course of many days. The teacher will discuss his/her concerns with other teachers at faculty meeting during the "Child Study" portion of the meeting.
- 3) If concern is generated from these observations, parents will be invited to discuss and review the documentation of their child's behavior and, possibly, to sign a statement acknowledging these concerns.
- 4) The Teacher and parents will then develop a plan to identify the child's needs and locate sources of help available to address those needs. This may include a state regulatory agency, the child's pediatrician, the local public school system and/or others.

Parental Comportment and Support for School Policies

At Oxbow Schoolhouse, all members of the adult community strive to treat one another with respect, avoid harmful speech and gossip, build mutual trust, and work in partnership toward constructive outcomes. Together, parents and school professionals exert a strong influence on children, and it is important that children perceive adults are acting in partnership on their behalf. In order to promote a respectful school culture, the School asks that parents refrain from openly criticizing other school adults or school policies when speaking in front of their children. Parents are urged to communicate directly and frankly with appropriate school personnel when concerns arise. In classroom matters, we request that parents first speak with the appropriate teacher or advisor. If concerns remain, it is then appropriate to contact the Faculty Chair, or, finally, the President of the Board.

Resolving Conflict

Occasionally conflicts arise between parents and teachers. Steps to resolve conflicts can be taken if mutual respect is in evidence. The following steps are intended to help in the resolution of disputes:

- 1) Initiate a conference with the teacher, and include the Faculty Chair if you feel that would help.
- 2) If your conflict involves the Faculty Chair, request a conference with her and a member of the Board of Directors.
- 3) If these conferences do not produce a satisfying result, a request to meet with the Board of Directors should be responded to as soon as possible and always within one week of receiving your request.

Termination of Enrollment

Although we feel that our program welcomes and can benefit all children, there may be circumstances that warrant termination of enrollment at Oxbow Schoolhouse. We will make every effort to avoid this, but the following situations may make it necessary:

- 1) Parents' refusal to seek professional help.
- 2) Problems that require regular one-on-one attention.
- 3) Severe behavioral problems that cannot be controlled and may endanger other children.
- 4) A physical or emotional impairment that we cannot reasonably accommodate or professionally address.
- 5) Failure to pay tuition.
- 6) Failure to provide health or educational evaluation forms and other forms required by law or helpful to the school.
- 7) Failure to cooperate with our policies.
- 8) Parents' disrespectful behavior towards other parents, children, or Oxbow Schoolhouse staff.
- 9) Negative behavior that contributes to a hostile environment.

Before a decision to terminate is made, the following steps will be taken:

- 1) Documentation will be prepared by the Teacher and Faculty Chair and shared with parents.
- 2) If parents have sought outside help and the child's behavior has not improved, we will consider termination.
- 3) The child's termination will be treated in a sensitive manner and presented to the child in a way that is consistent with his or her ability to understand.
- 4) If a child must leave Oxbow Schoolhouse, the family and child will be treated in a caring, respectful way.

VII. Oxbow Schoolhouse Organization

Organization

Oxbow Schoolhouse is incorporated in the State of Massachusetts as a 501(c)(3) organization (not-for-profit). Employer ID #: 27-0301965. It is governed by a Board of Directors. The Board of Directors may consist of anywhere between 3 and 12 Directors. New directors will be elected to the Board by the Board itself. Directors of the Board serve for two years, but their tenure may be extended. Officers of the Board are elected by the Board. New Directors of the Board will be chosen from current parents, past parents, current and past staff, and interested members of the larger community. The Board of Directors shall meet the second Thursday of every month during the school year and at any other times it may deem necessary.

If a parent wishes to speak to the Board of Directors, they may submit a written request to the President of the Board. The President will respond promptly as to whether the request has been granted and let the parent know the time and place of his/her appointment with the Board.

The Board of Directors for Oxbow Schoolhouse is responsible for the fiscal and administrative responsibilities for the school. The members of this board are parents, teachers, and community members who support Oxbow Schoolhouse's mission. A representative of the teachers is a non-voting member of the Board of Directors. The School's Faculty Chair is also a member of the Board.

The Teachers are responsible for overseeing and implementing all aspects of the children's education. They meet regularly to collaborate and plan festivals, support each other in implementing the curriculum, organize parent volunteers, supervise assistants, and create an active and involved community. Teachers' responsibilities include but are not limited to ordering classroom supplies, teaching daily lessons, and organizing and supervising parent volunteers in the class. They will maintain daily attendance records for each student and create and submit reports on student progress twice yearly to the Faculty Chair and the student's parents. Teachers will document and clearly report any disciplinary issues that may arise during the school year. Our goal is to create a "community of learners" where the adults by example actively pursue furthering their own learning, and the children are engaged in the academic and social life of the school.

The Administrator for the school oversees the administrative aspects of operating a small school. With the help of the Secretary of the Board, she maintains the school's files, including teacher and student records, CORI requests, and state required paperwork. These files are maintained in a secure cabinet. The Administrator is responsible for ensuring students records, including transcripts, are kept in a secure and organized manner. These records are confidential and may only be shared by written permission of the student's parents/legal guardians. The Administrator provides written notice to appropriate school superintendents when a student transfers in or out of Oxbow Schoolhouse, including providing student transcripts.

The Administrator works collaboratively with the teachers, Board, parents, and other community members to organize the yearly rhythms of the school, including setting the school calendar, planning fundraisers and supporting the teachers in creating and implementing the curriculum.

Lines of Communication

The following is a list to aid you in determining the most appropriate individual to contact for various kinds of questions.

If you have a question regarding your child, please contact your child's teacher.

If you have questions regarding school policy or schedule, please contact the Faculty Chair.

If you have a question about the school's functions or administration or a matter that needs to be taken up at a board meeting, please contact the Board President.

If you have a question about tuition or other financial matters, please contact the Board Treasurer.

If you want a copy of minutes from a board meeting, please contact the Board Secretary.

Board of Directors

Patrick Fredericksen, *President*
62 Bruce Street
Littleton, MA 01460
978-486-0932
fredericksen@verizon.net
Term: 2014-2017

Craig R. Hansen
5 Longmeadow Lane
Pepperell, MA 01463
978-433-3305
crh@crabersen.com
Term: 2015-2018

Amy Hilbert
81 Tahattawan Road
Littleton, MA 01460
978-486-4012
ahilbert@oxbowschoolhouse.org
Term: 2015-2018

Sarah Klein
64 Harvard Road
Stow, MA 01775
978-897-0440
peasklein@gmail.com
Term: 2014-2017

Lisa Langevin
109 Moscow Road
Jefferson, MA 01522
508-829-6730
llangevin@oxbowschoolhouse.org
Term: 2015-2018

Deb Merriam
29 Horse Pond Road
Shirley, MA 01464
978-257-1279
debmerr29@gmail.com
Term: 2015-2018

Vanessa Strong
59 Gilson Road
Littleton, MA 01460
978-501-5864
strong.properties@gmail.com
Term: 2015-2018

Class Teachers

Sara Martin (Grades Bridge - 1)
School: 978-772-9500
Mobile: 978-697-7609
smartin@oxbowschoolhouse.org

Mea Hilton (Grades 2 - 3)
School: 978-772-9500
Home: 617-864-2417
Mobile: 617-968-5009
mhilton@oxbowschoolhouse.org

Christina Kennedy (Grade 4)
School: 978-772-9500
Mobile: 978-496-4783
ckennedy@oxbowschoolhouse.org

Amy Hilbert (Grades 5-6, Faculty Chair)
School: 978-772-9500
Home: 978-486-4012
Mobile: 978-496-6999
ahilbert@oxbowschoolhouse.org

VIII. About Our Teachers

The Staff

Teachers and other staff at Oxbow Schoolhouse are committed to working with children and families, and take a true interest in the wellbeing of everyone associated with Oxbow Schoolhouse. Teachers are college educated and trained in teaching or education. Familiarity with Waldorf Education or the desire to learn about Waldorf education is required. Waldorf training is preferred. All Teachers strive to create and recreate a living environment filled with the warmth, joy, and challenges that elementary age children need. They are talented individuals who are at work on their own development, consciously seeking to bring a well-rounded and inspiring education to the children in their care.

Elizabeth Auer ~ Handwork, Faculty Mentor

Elizabeth Auer, M.Ed, is a graduate of the Waldorf Teacher Training program and the Remedial Resource Waldorf Teacher Training program and holds a diploma in Art and Design. She taught wood, stone metal and glasswork for ten years and subsequently took on a class from grade one through eight. Elizabeth currently runs an after-school arts and crafts program, works as a freelance mentor, tutor and artist, and teaches drawing and handwork courses at Antioch University in Keene as well as various workshops in the arts. Elizabeth is the author of *Creative Pathways* and has illustrated several books. She specializes in watercolor paintings for children.

Amy Hilbert ~ Grade 5/6 Class Teacher, Faculty Chair

Amy Hilbert is the Class Teacher for the Grades 5 and 6 and Faculty Chair of Oxbow Schoolhouse. She holds a Master's Degree in Teaching from Tufts University, and Bachelor's Degrees from the University of New Hampshire in both English and Anthropology. After obtaining her M.A.T., she taught Grades 6 – 8 at the Waldorf School of Cape Cod, where she first learned about Waldorf education. Upon moving to Littleton, MA, with her young family in 2000, she discovered the Evergreen Garden Playschool program, which her children attended. Since then she has been actively involved in bringing Waldorf inspired education to children and their families in this area through both Evergreen Garden Playschool and Oxbow Schoolhouse.

Mea Hilton ~ Grade 2/3 Class Teacher

Mea Hilton is the Class Teacher for Grades 2 and 3. She recently completed her Waldorf Grades Training at Antioch New England and an Internship in Grade 2 at The Waldorf School in Lexington, Massachusetts. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Education issued jointly from the University of Massachusetts and the University of New Mexico, as well as a Masters in Education with a concentration as a Reading Specialist from Lesley University in Cambridge.

Tara Rachel Jones ~ Games

Tara Rachel Jones, M.Ed. has been working professionally with young children since 1989. She received her B.A in Early Childhood Education in 1991 from Simmons College, Boston. She received her M.Ed. in both Early Childhood and Elementary Education in 2009 from Antioch New England Graduate University in Keene, NH. She has led yoga programs for children from nursery through high school in public and private schools and youth organizations. She has maintained a stronghold in the field of education by bringing yoga workshops to teachers and parents in schools. In 2011, she started a Yoga Teacher Training course for those aspiring to teach yoga to children, youth, teens and families. She is also a certified Zen Shiatsu Therapist.

Christina Kennedy ~ Grade 4 Class Teacher, Music and Chorus Teacher

Christina Kennedy teaches music and chorus at Oxbow. She holds a Master's Degree in Music from the University of Maine and taught at Albright College in Pennsylvania before relocating to the West Coast to start a family. While homeschooling her three children, Christina co-founded and co-directed The All Together Now Family Chorus, a multi-generational choir that ran for seven years. In addition to teaching violin and piano lessons, Christina works with Rumphius Theater in Westford as music director and leads a group of young cabaret singers within the same organization. She also serves as choral manager and assistant director of the Sounds of Stow Chorus & Orchestra.

Lisa Langevin ~ Administrator

Lisa Langevin joined the staff as Oxbow Schoolhouse's Administrator in 2014 and is accountable for the smooth operation of the school in areas of finance, enrollment and operations. She came to Oxbow as a parent in 2010 and is a member of the Board of Directors on the Finance and Executive Committees. She has volunteered in fundraising, outreach events, bookkeeping and the Parent Committee. She holds a B.S. in Accounting from Saint Michael's College and enjoys working with her thoughtful & creative colleagues. She is so grateful for the nurturing and vibrant education her children are receiving at Oxbow.

Melissa LeBlanc ~ Teacher Assistant and Aftercare

Melissa LeBlanc is Oxbow Schoolhouse's full time Teacher Assistant. Melissa has a background in special education where she has experience working with children and adolescents in the classroom and residential milieu. Additionally, Melissa has worked in public school classrooms as an intern and substitute teacher. Melissa enjoys arts and crafts, horseback riding, and spending quality time with her family.

Sara Martin ~ Grade Bridge/1 Class Teacher

Sara Martin is the Class Teacher for Bridge and Grades 1. She holds a Masters Degree in Education from Lesley University. Over the past 20 years, Sara has worked extensively in education and non-profits, most recently as a teacher at Evergreen Garden Playschool, the Waldorf preschool program. She has also taught in the Maynard Public School system and directed the Concord Youth Theater Program for many years. Sara has established her own successful non-profit organization, ReAct Theater Project, bringing performance opportunities to children ages 6 to 18.

Emily West ~ Spanish

Emily West teaches Spanish classes at Oxbow. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Spanish and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages from Brigham Young University and a Master's Degree in Secondary Teaching and Curriculum from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. As part of her education, Emily lived in Spain and the Philippines. Emily has been teaching Spanish for more than 12 years at Hingham High School and Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School. She left full-time teaching to start her family, and is excited to come back part time to Oxbow and work with younger children on learning Spanish language and culture. Emily also works with AFS Intercultural Programs and the Centers for Cultural Interchange to bring exchange students from around the world to schools in Massachusetts. In her free time, she loves to cook and work with a variety of community youth programs.

IX. Additional Resources

If You Would Like To Know More...

The following books offer more information on Waldorf education:

- Baldwin, Rahima, *You Are Your Child's First Teacher*, Hawthorne Press: helps parents in the task of enhancing their children's development from birth to school age and preventing negative effects at a later age.
- Bradley, Pamela, & Patterson, Barbara J., *Beyond the Rainbow Bridge: Nurturing Our Children from Birth to Seven*, Michaelmas Press.
- Childs, Dr. Gilbert & Sylvia, *Your Reincarnating Child*, Steiner Books: demonstrates that human beings are primarily of spiritual nature and only secondarily of bodily nature; shares how these two natures complement each other in the processes of maturation and development.
- Davy, Gundrun & Voors, Bons, *Lifeways: Working with Family Questions*, and Signe Schaefer, *More Lifeways*, Hawthorn Press: essays by Waldorf parents and teachers on many aspects of family life.
- Elkind, David, *All Grown Up and No Place to Go: Teenagers in Crisis*, Addison-Wesley: spotlights pressures on teenagers to grow up quickly and resulting problems. Shows why adolescence is a time of "thinking in a new key" and how young people need this time to get used to the social and emotional changes their new thinking brings.
- Fenner, Pamela Johnson & Rivers, Karen, *Waldorf Education: A Family Guide*, Michaelmas Press: initially the Marin Waldorf School parent handbook—a treasure of information about Waldorf education, curriculum, family life, festivals, etc.
- Harwood, A.C., *The Recovery of Man in Childhood*, Steiner Books: a lucid presentation of the Waldorf approach from preschool through grade 12 and beyond. A detailed description of Waldorf education.
- Harwood, A.C., *The Way of a Child*, Steiner Books: an excellent introduction and a clear explanation of how Waldorf education is integrated with the fundamental stages of child development.
- Large, Martin, *Who's Bringing Them Up? or How to Break the T.V. Habit*, Hawthorn Press.
- Lievegoed, Bernard, *Phases of Childhood*, Steiner Books: draws on Steiner's ideas and a philosophical tradition going back to Goethe and Schiller to describe the three main stages of child development and the genetic and biographical potential unfolding at each stage.
- O'Neil, George & Gisela, *The Human Life*, Mercury Press: working with human biography and destiny.
- Rudolf Steiner, *Education for Adolescents*, Steiner Books: eight lectures delivered to the teachers of the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart, Germany in 1921.
- *The Kingdom of Childhood*, Rudolf Steiner, Steiner Books, one of Dr. Steiner's last lectures presented to a group of teachers preparing to establish the first Waldorf school in the English-speaking world.

For further reading about festivals in particular, these books are recommended:

- *Festivals With Children* by Brigitte Barz.
- *Festivals, Family and Food* by Diana Carey and Judy Large, 1982.
- *Celebrating the Festivals With Children* by Friedel Lane.

The following organizations offer information that also may be of interest to parents:

**Association of Waldorf
Schools of North America**

3911 Bannister Road
Fair Oaks, CA 95628
916-961-0927

www.whywaldorffworks.org

www.allianceforchildhood.net

A coalition of organizations working to protect childhood.

www.waldorffworld.net

“Waldorf Education on the Web.”

www.waldorfflibrary.org

Provides useful information to English speaking Waldorf teachers, parents and anyone interested in Waldorf education.

www.waldorffearlychildhood.org

Provides resources for early childhood educators and parents interested in Waldorf early childhood education.

Suggestions for Health Snacks and Lunches

Compiled from suggestions by the parents and teachers at Oxbow Schoolhouse.

Beverages:

Healthy juice boxes

Flavored regular or carbonated water

Carbohydrates:

Tortilla chips with hummus

Crackers and cheese

Rice cakes w/nut butter or cottage cheese and salsa

Chips and salsa

Whole grain muffin (made without too much sugar)

Homemade muffins (zucchini, banana, berry, oat)

Chick pea flour pancakes

Hummus and Crackers/Carrots

Organic popcorn sprinkled with dried herbs

Homemade granola bars

Graham crackers w/ hazelnut spread & banana or strawberry slices

Wholegrain bread w/ almond butter and honey

Small wheat/whole grain Bagel and cream cheese

Rice Cakes and nut butter

Fruits:

Kiwi (cut in 1/2 serve w/spoon)

Banana or apple w/nut butter

Orange/clementine

Dried mango

Berries

Applesauce

Banana

Apple chunks w/cinnamon, lemon juice & honey

Pineapple

Dried fruit

Strawberries

Blueberries

Melons

Proteins – Nuts, Egg, Meat:

Roasted and Salted pumpkin (or other) seeds

Nuts

Trail mix (coconut, raisin, nuts, etc.)

Rolled sandwich meat

Hardboiled egg

Cottage Cheese (mixed with fruit or salsa)

Plain yogurt with honey

Plain yogurt with fresh berries

Cheese sticks

Sunflower seeds (other nuts if this will still be okay next year--almonds, cashews, etc.)

Yogurt w/ granola

Yogurt with dried fruit to sprinkle on top

Lara Bar - nut energy bar that is all natural, no refined sugar, etc.

Vegetables:

Ants on a log (cream cheese/raisin or nut butter/raisin)
Roasted and salted garbanzo beans
Kale chips
Veggies with ranch dressing or other dip
Dried Seaweed strips
Cucumber slices (salted)
Veggies & hummus
Small carrots
Celery & cream cheese
Salad
Fresh snap peas in season

Lunch Ideas:

Chicken soup
Soup, pasta, quinoa (with tamari or coconut aminos for flavor) or peas in thermos
Tortilla chips with white bean/garlic dip
(cooked and mashed white beans, roasted and mashed garlic, olive oil and salt)
Cooked green beans with sauce
Salmon cakes
Tuna salad,
Egg salad
Tabouleh
Salad greens w/veggies and chicken or tuna
Tortilla wraps (filling ideas: Greek salad, veggie pizza burgers, salmon, chicken)
Rice pasta w/pesto
Quesadillas (cheese/veggies/chicken)
Chili in thermos w/tortilla chips
Turkey and cheese roll-ups or Sandwich on whole wheat/whole grain bread
Pureed Potato Soup
Nut Butter and Jelly Sandwich on whole wheat/whole grain bread
Whole wheat/whole grain Macaroni and sauce or Mac and Cheese – hot or cold
Lunchmeat roll ups with toothpicks and side salad
Quinoa pilaf