

The Essence of Waldorf Education

(by Jamie York; Spring 2017)

- Developmentally-Based.
As teachers, we need to understand child development and the specific needs of each stage of development. Everything we teach is viewed through this lens.
- Spiritual Core.
Waldorf education assumes the existence of a higher power and acknowledges that humans have a spiritual nature. As teachers, we guide our students along a path that allows them to establish their moral compass and eventually find their own destiny.
- Educating the Whole Child.
We educate children so that they can develop into healthy, well-rounded human beings. We need to educate more than just the *head* (thinking). We also educate the *heart* (feeling), and the *hands* (willing). As educators, we cultivate our students' capacity to think clearly and independently; to feel love for the world and compassion for others; and to act responsibly and with moral courage.
- Reverence.
We teach children so that they develop reverence and respect...for life, for the world we live in, and for the people around us. This reverence grows in children when they are immersed in beauty, and when they experience that the world is good and life is filled with wonder.
- Creativity & Imagination.
Creativity is at the core of education. Imagination is the ground from which knowledge springs. Through the teacher's creative work, the children engage their imagination and develop their creative potential.

"Receive the children with reverence, educate them in love, send them forth in freedom."

-- Rudolf Steiner