

Parent Circle Meeting Notes

September 2026 • Concise Summary

Community & Volunteer Model

- The school is working towards rebuilding a strong culture of community participation. Parent involvement is viewed as part of Waldorf community life and as an example of collaboration for the children.
- Parents may choose committees and festivals that match their interests rather than having entire classes assigned to events.
- Faculty leads the curriculum and student-facing elements of festivals; parent committees help plan and provide community support.
- Clear committee descriptions and specific requests are a priority so families—especially new families—understand what they are signing up for.
- Sunni Harbert - Volunteer Coordinator will help connect parents with needs, follow up on unfilled sign-ups, and encourage contributions of both time and individual talents.
- Class Parents serve as teacher-family liaisons, share reminders, coordinate class gifts/support, and communicate classroom needs. Co-Class Parents are welcome.

Michaelmas • Friday, September 25

- Theme: courage, inner strength, transformation, community support, and the reminder that we are not alone.
- Faculty is exploring ways to weave Houston's local harvest items and climate into the festival's traditional Northern Hemisphere harvest produce of apples and pumpkins.
- Parents are the support crew. Typical needs may include food, dragon bread, apples/cider, tables, serving supplies, simple beautification, setup, and cleanup.
- Early Childhood: 11:50 - noon dismissal (park/pick up); families may then proceed to the Grades campus.
- Grades 1–8: students remain with teachers; families should arrive by noon. The pageant begins at 12:30 PM.
- The planning committee will meet with faculty leads, then send the broader community a specific needs/sign-up list. If you are interested in serving on the planning committee for Michaelmas, please sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0A4EA9AC22A7F85-65452165-michaelmas>. The committee is led by Mrs. Badot (4th Grade) and Ms. Kay (5th Grade), and meets Tuesdays at 11:15 am on the Grades Campus beginning Sep. 8th.

Parent Circle & Community Updates

- Committee opportunities include: Care, Welcome, Parent Education, Teacher Appreciation, Craft Circle, Women's Retreat, and Class Parents.
- Women's Retreat (Anna Baugh & Kelly Miller): Martin Luther King Jr. weekend in January at Golden Hill; planned as a two-night retreat with more free/social time and opportunities for community-led activities.
- Craft Circle (Marybel Yanez & Anna Baugh): monthly, relaxed and open to all skill levels; supports school projects, fundraising items, and community connection.
- Men's group (John Wooddell): continues on the first Thursday of each month; a retreat/camping gathering is also being discussed.
- Ladies' gatherings (Analisa Pratt): interest in a consistent recurring date, potentially a weekend brunch format.
- Family Park Days (Amy Pelkner): may continue approximately twice per year.
- Parent Education (Isabel Duque, Caro Perez, Kelly Miller): will offer talks/workshops around Waldorf education and relevant parenting/school topics.
- Teacher Appreciation (needs a chair): supports faculty during conferences, appreciation week, and other key moments.

Fundraising & School Updates

- Annual Giving launches in the fall and relies on direct donations; parent help is needed with outreach and communications.
- Gala planning begins now for the spring fundraiser; volunteers interested in event planning, décor, auctions, and fundraising are encouraged to participate.
- Eighth Grade fundraising supports the New Mexico class trip. Pizza Fridays begin September 18 on the Grades campus (not on half-days); pumpkin sales and other fundraisers will follow.
- Halloween plans are still being developed; more information will be shared.

Key Next Steps

- Finalize and share concise descriptions and expectations for Parent Circle committees.
- Connect Michaelmas planning volunteers with faculty leads and distribute the festival needs list after the planning meeting.
- Recruit/confirm Class Parents, committee members, and volunteers for Annual Giving and Gala.
- Keep simple records of recurring festival needs and logistics to preserve institutional knowledge while allowing faculty to evolve festivals each year.

Community message: The goal is not for a few parents to do everything, but for every family to understand how they can contribute, feel invited to participate, and help build the community our children experience each day.