

# The Research Institute for Waldorf Education and Waldorf Publications

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**T**hese last six months have been busy at the Research Institute for Waldorf Education (RIWE). We received a grant from the Waldorf Educational Foundation (WEF) to accomplish meta-research — a new arena of research for us. We are choosing approaches and practices in education that have been researched thoroughly over the last fifteen years or so — supporting our practices over the last 100 years in Waldorf education. Our aim is to sort through the mighty oceans of research to succinctly identify the most salient parts of the research and make it more accessible to those in our Waldorf communities. Our goal is to provide schools, teachers, and parents helpful tools to demonstrate how science has been catching up with approaches in Waldorf education, rendering the research clear and to the point, not daunting in its volume and scope. Because this meta-research is new territory for us, we have been experimenting with the best ways to proceed and are making good progress.

This new research comes on the heels of the most recent research, more standard in its approach but demanding and compelling in its results. For example, did Waldorf education change the way parents were parenting at home? Turns out that the answer is “No.” The Waldorf school echoed practices already at home and so is consonant with values already in place. Results of the research conducted with parents of Waldorf students can be read in this issue of the *Research Bulletin*. It identifies many facets of parental experiences in our Waldorf schools.

*Waldorf Publications* has been equally busy. We recently published two beautiful new high school resources: Michael Holdrege’s book on teaching ninth and tenth grade science, *From Mechanism to Organism*, and Van James’s book on *Teaching Art History* in a Waldorf High School. Both are beautifully illustrated, full-color books that lead high school teachers through a carefully carved, imaginative path toward a successful Main Lesson block. Even more: If ever you wanted to know how your own body works, or how the waves of history in artistic expression demonstrate human consciousness, these books are for you, teacher or not!

Jost Schieren’s edited book, *A Handbook of Waldorf Pedagogy*, was completely translated and submitted to Routledge, the internationally recognized academic publisher. With any luck, this publisher will place this

comprehensive book into university libraries in English-speaking countries. The distinguished venue in which this collection appears will enable translation of the book into many other languages. Defending Waldorf education as a scientifically-based approach to education, Dr. Schieren has used experts in psychology, anthropology, child development, and physics, to elaborate on the scientific basis of Waldorf education. He asks in his introduction to have Waldorf educators included in educational science circles, indicating thereby that the worldview held by Waldorf educators has previously excluded them, depriving educational circles from understanding the success made possible by the Waldorf approach and depriving Waldorf educators from the chance to learn from those in different educational streams.

So, 2022 has been an eventful year at RIWE. Add to this brief report the continuing work Douglas Gerwin does with the Pedagogical Section Council, the International Forum for Steiner-Waldorf Education, the Center for Anthroposophy, and AWSNA, as well as both his and Patrice Maynard’s teaching here in the USA and internationally, and there is a lot to do at all times! We are appreciative of the support we receive from our contributors that make all this possible. Thank you!