



Inspiring News and Events

From the Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota

Volume 10, Issue 3 | Summer 2023

Inside this Issue

- Professional Development Calendar 2023 - 2024: Monthly Gatherings | Loose Parts Lab | Documentation Lab | Book Study | “Let’s Talk”
- Book Review: *Accorpamenti* - Resonances between dance and music
- Loose Parts Lab Update
- Sponsorship Opportunity
- Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota Scholarships
- Calls for Participation
- NAREA
- Public Library Resources
- Job Opportunities

Editor’s Introduction

Lani Shapiro

The Network summer issue highlights our Professional Development Calendar for 2023 - 2024. Monthly Gatherings, Loose Parts Lab, DocLab, Open Book Study and “Let’s Talk” are all opportunities for you to join with colleagues and community to reflect critically about childhood, learning and teaching and to connect your practice to your values.

The annual calendar with details about each event is [here](#) in a format that you can print and post. Note that some events are virtual, some are in-person and some are hybrid. A downloadable version of this entire summer issue of the newsletter (including the calendar) is available [here](#).

Although this issue is heavily focused on the professional development calendar for the year ahead, don’t miss Rie Gilsdorf’s book review of the recent Reggio publication, *Accorpamenti* - Resonances between dance and music. You’ll also find a Loose Parts Lab update.

Thank you to Network sponsors: Dodge Nature Center, Embody Equity, Grace Neighborhood Nursery School, St. Paul's Childhood Center and Westwood ECC. Thanks also to contributors for their generosity, time and collaboration in making their thinking visible and to readers for engaging with those thoughts.

Professional Development Calendar 2023-2024

Each year, the Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota hosts Monthly Gatherings. These events take many forms at different sites around the Twin Cities: early childhood centers, schools, community centers, libraries or other venues. Participants discuss topics, tour the environments and explore materials. This year’s slate of Monthly Gatherings will inspire us to participate more fully and listen more actively to create an educational context for children that can serve their wide range of needs as complex individuals and as partners in a classroom

community. As always, our Monthly Gatherings will be a time for reflection and renewal and a chance to connect with colleagues. We welcome all who wish to participate!

October 7, 2023 | 8:00 am – 4:00 pm Central Time

“Enter Encounter Engage”

Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota Annual Conference in collaboration with the Evangelical Lutheran Educators Association

Certificate of Attendance available

Keynote presentation and three breakout sessions with many topics to choose from

Keynote: “Elevating our Planning: Supporting Children’s Working Theories as a Foundation for Learning”

Keynote Presenter: Sandy Lanes is a pedagogical consultant specializing in early childhood progressive education, working with schools nationally and abroad. Until 2019, she was the Curriculum Director/Pedagogista for 13 years at the JCC of Greater Washington ECC in Rockville, Maryland, which she helped to transform from a traditional preschool to a Reggio-inspired program. She has attended three Study Institutes in Reggio Emilia and served for three years on the steering committee of the DC Reggio Alliance.

Location:

Westwood Early Childhood Center
9001 Cedar Lake Rd
St. Louis Park, MN 55426

Cost: \$100

To RSVP and get registration information when it becomes available: <https://www.mnreggio.org/event-5320374>

Breakfast and lunch provided

Monday, November 6, 2023 | 4:30 pm – 6:30 pm Central Time

Provocations & Practice for Developing Race Consciousness in the Classroom: Anti-Racism Through a Reggio-Inspired Practice

Certificate of attendance available

Tour Temple Israel ECC and discuss key findings from the Arise framework, which offers strategies to support caregivers as they cultivate learning environments that embody racial equity and engage children (3-6 years) in a dialogue about race.

Facilitators: Sharon Rosenberg-Scholl, Director, Temple Israel ECC; Celeste Finn, Director & Founder of Big Wonder Early Learning; Rie Gilsdorf, Racial Equity Coordinator & Educator

Hybrid event:

Zoom (link sent after registration)

In-person location:

Temple Israel Early Childhood Center
2323 Fremont Ave S.
Minneapolis, MN 55408

Cost: \$30

Register: <https://www.mnreggio.org/event-5317581>

Students: Limited spots available at no cost for students - email Heidi Wolf for details and registration
hwolf@bsmschool.org

December 3, 2023

TBD check website: www.mnreggio.org

January 13, 2024 | 9:00 am – Noon Central Time
Playing with the Language of Music

Certificate of attendance available

Explore the influence music has on children's learning and how to grow this language with children through imagination, participation, play and active music-making.

Facilitator: Mark Sorvari

Certified in Orff Schulwerk, trained in Music Together and experienced in the Reggio Emilia Approach

Hybrid event:

Zoom (link sent after registration)

In-person location:

Big Wonder Preschool

60 N. Kent Street

St. Paul, MN

Cost: \$30

To register: <https://www.mnreggio.org/event-5332845>

Students: Limited spots available at no cost for students - email Heidi Wolf for details and registration
hwolf@bsmschool.org

Light breakfast served

February 10, 2024 | 9 am – Noon Central Time

Discussion and Tour: Focus on the joys of home and employer-based programs serving mixed-age groups of children

Certificate of attendance available

Facilitators: Heidi Wolf & Gretchen Sandburg, Little Knights Early Childhood Program;
Stephanie Ponticas, Program Consultant; Cheryl Vargas, Owner/Director, Cherie's Learning Tree

Hybrid event:

Zoom (link sent after registration)

In-person location:

Little Knights Early Childhood Program

Benilde St. Margaret's School

2361 Parkwoods Road

St. Louis Park, MN

Cost: \$30

To register: <https://www.mnreggio.org/event-5332849>

Students: Limited spots available at no cost for students - email Heidi Wolf for details and registration
hwolf@bsmschool.org

March 9, 2024 | 9:00 am – Noon Central Time
Journey of a Reggio-Inspired Spanish Immersion Program for Infants - 5 year olds

Certificate of attendance available

Discussion of the context and a tour of the environment with the staff of Edina Daycare

Facilitators: Sarahi Barco and staff of Edina Daycare

Hybrid event:

Zoom (link sent after registration)

In-person location:

Edina Daycare

4940 W 77th St.

Edina, MN 55435

Cost: \$30

Link to register: <https://www.mnreggio.org/event-5332851>

Students: Limited spots available at no cost for students - email Heidi Wolf for details and registration
hwolf@bsmschool.org

Continental breakfast

April 13, 2024 | 9:00 – Noon Central Time
Immersing Ourselves in Nature

“I took a walk in the woods and came out taller than the trees”

Henry David Thoreau



Participants will take some time to reflect on their own personal relationships with nature and how those relationships impact their careers and the world beyond. Workshop includes time to design a cover for a mini

nature journal.

Certificate of attendance available

Facilitators: Karen Walburg, Classroom Teacher and Kellee Nelson, Director, Westwood Early Childhood Center

Hybrid event:

Zoom (link sent after registration)

In-person location:

Westwood Early Childhood Center

9001 Cedar Lake Rd

St. Louis Park, MN 55426

Cost: \$30.00

Register: <https://www.mnreggio.org/event-5332856>

Students: Limited spots available at no cost for students - email Heidi Wolf for details and registration hwolf@bsmschool.org

Continental breakfast

May 11, 2024

Year-end Celebration

TBD

Loose Parts Laboratory – Calendar



Saturday and Sunday, September 23 & 24 | Noon – 4:00 pm

Saturday, October 14 | 10:00 am – Noon

Sunday, October 29 | 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Saturday, November 4 | 10:00 am – Noon

Sunday, November 19 | 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Saturday, December 2 | 10:00 am – Noon

Sunday, December 17 | 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Additional times by appointment – Email to arrange a time: hwolf@bsmschool.org

Documentation Labs

“We do not learn from experiences. We learn from reflecting on experience.”

John Dewey

Documentation Labs are an opportunity for Network folks to collaborate on the process of documentation in the tradition of Reggio Emilia, a process that many find challenging. Doc Labs began as an on-going way for teachers to share traces of children's work with each other, get and give feedback about documentation and generate ideas for next steps in learning based on what children have been doing. They continue to be an opportunity for participants to collaborate by sharing traces, following learning, choosing photos and considering possibilities through dialogue.

For the 2023-2024 year, we are planning four sessions. We will be considering questions such as: What is documentation? Why is it important to our practice? What can we learn from the Italian educators? How does it contrast with display/decoration? How can documentation be used in the assessment process? We will continue to examine traces of work, collaborate on insights into the process of learning and suggest readings.

“Documentation is not about what we do but what we are searching for.”

Carla Rinaldi

October 28, 2023

January 27, 2024

April 27, 2024

9:30 am to Noon

Benilde-St. Margarets
2361 Parkwoods Rd, door #15
St. Louis Park, MN 55416

On February 22, 2024, Doc Lab will be a virtual event from 7:00 - 8:15 pm.

All are welcome. Participation is free.

Register for October, 2023 Doc Lab: <https://www.mnreggio.org/event-5339169>

Register for January, 2024 Doc Lab: <https://www.mnreggio.org/event-5339174>

Register for a Zoom link for the February, 2024 Doc Lab: <https://www.mnreggio.org/event-5355302>

Register for April, 2024 Doc Lab: <https://www.mnreggio.org/event-5339177>

Open Book Study via Zoom

Third Sunday of the month from 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm Central Time

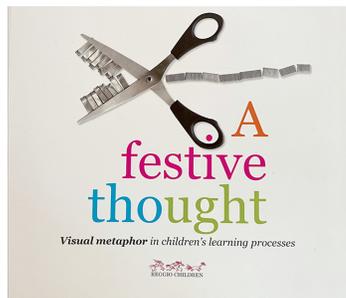
Each meeting we form a flexible learning group without a fixed destination, with the intention of cultivating a context for uncertainty, diversity and complexity. We read slowly, never more than one chapter per month. (Sometimes we repeat a chapter, if we don't feel finished with it.) Together we strengthen the disposition for close reading, careful listening and thoughtful conversation.

We are beginning a new book: *A Festive Thought*, published by Reggio Children, which can be accessed [here](#)

which focuses on visual metaphor.

“Creative thinking and knowledge are the first line of defense for freedom and equality, and therefore primary objectives that schools should be pursuing and diffusing.”

Reggio Children



<https://www.reggiochildren.it/en/un-pensiero-in-festa/>

Join us on Zoom, all are welcome! Register for a zoom link: <https://www.mnreggio.org/event-4918458>

Participate when you can, there is no charge.

Questions? Contact reggioinspiredmn@gmail.com for more information.

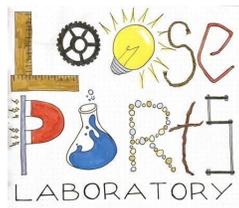
Let's Talk

“Let’s Talk” is a space for people to think deeply and make connections with others studying the Reggio-inspired philosophy. “Let’s Talk” is free to participants and provides a structure to engage with topics of interest. A “Let’s Talk” is planned for Thursday, January 18, 2024, 7:00 - 8:15 pm via Zoom where participants will explore the many considerations involved in talking with young children about race.

Register: <https://www.mnreggio.org/event-5355289>

If you are interested in convening a discussion, contact Heidi Wolf hwolf@bsmschool.org. Watch your email for those opportunities.

Loose Parts Laboratory Update



The Loose Parts Laboratory, a Project of the Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota, is a space curated with a variety of materials donated to distribute for low or no cost. The Loose Parts Laboratory aims to provide a growing initiative of increasing materials, patronage and volunteers. As part of this endeavor, in addition to the material offerings, we hope to make the space available to the community for gatherings of parents, senior groups, professional associations as well as professional development for educators.

The “Toolbox Collective” is the ‘new’ home of The Loose Parts Laboratory. Rachel and Jim Dunn are the new owners of the building formerly known as Belle’s ToolBox. Rachel was a RINM Scholarship recipient and is a

LPL committee member. They are launching “The Toolbox Collective” in that space. Rachel is a preschool art teacher in St. Paul, introducing the youngest members of society to the arts.

The Toolbox Collective’s mission is to provide a welcoming and supportive community for artists of all levels through offering artists’ studio rentals and teaching and event space in the heart of the Longfellow neighborhood in Minneapolis. There are five artist studios available and teaching space open to the public. They plan to offer a range of classes and workshops taught by experienced artists, giving people the opportunity to learn new techniques, hone their skills and connect with other creatives in the community. (For information about the Toolbox Collective: thetoolboxcollective.com or instagram @thetoolboxcollective.)

Meanwhile, the Loose Parts Lab has settled into its area of the Tool Box Collective and continues to offer open shopping hours and materials explorations. (See calendar above or LPL Facebook page.) In June, the LPL committee hosted an open workshop morning with explorations in clay, natural materials, rattles called “Nattles” and collage materials.



Looking forward, excitement is building around workshop ideas, staff training opportunities and possibilities for scouts, clubs, homeschool groups or pop-up events. At a pop-up, the LPL brings materials and volunteers to your event, perhaps a birthday party, summer family gathering or back to school event, to offer opportunities to play. The hope is to provide what the community needs. Reach out with questions or ideas:

loosepartslabmn@gmail.com

Volunteers wanted! Benefits of volunteering include previewing the materials and a complimentary bag of goodies. [Volunteer here](#).

Spread the word and stop in soon! Find hours and more on [Facebook](#).

Loose Parts Lab, Project of the Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota
@ The Tool Box Collective
3400 42nd Ave South
Minneapolis, MN 55406

The Loose Parts Lab Committee is creating an email list specific to the Loose Parts Lab. If you are interested in specific email updates regarding hours of opening, events, workshops follow this link and sign up [here](#).

Book Review:

Accorpamenti - Resonances between dance and music

Reggio Children, 2022

Rie Gilsdorf

Rie Algeo Gilsdorf, MS, MA, has broad experience as a principal, arts administrator, instructional coach, teacher of science and dance, and parent in many settings, including the Reggio-inspired programs of Portland's Opal School and The Blake School in Minneapolis. Rie is a past Board Co-Chair and Civic Engagement Committee Chair of the Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota and current member of its Resource Development Committee. She now provides racial equity seminars, coaching and consulting through Embody Equity, www.EmbodyEquity.com.

As a former dance teacher and atelierista, I was excited to read this book that focuses on two of the 100 languages that I'm passionate about and have spent time studying. Its title, "Accorpamenti," is a play on words. The word means "amalgamation" in Italian, and it contains "corpo," meaning body, and "menti," meaning mind. So, it's a book that looks at amalgamations of body and mind as well as of dance and music. The volume itself is an amalgamation of documentation of various music and dance experiences with scholarly articles from the viewpoints of neurobiology, music and dance history, linguistics and culture. It physically represents theory and practice by alternating academic articles with links to video "Counterpoints" from the schools of Reggio Emilia. There's even a video of a music and dance workshop presented to staff of several of the schools so that they could reconnect with their own ability to explore these artistic expressions. Ultimately, the goal of the book is to improve the ability of adults to develop and observe provocations using music and dance—even, or especially, for those who don't have much experience in them.

There are moments of insight in the book, for instance this description of how children's artistic experience is not in need of what adults think of as academic disciplines:

. . . [Children] explore the world in a way that is very similar to how an artist works, first of all in an immediate (before mediated), presentative (before representative) and sensitive (before symbolic) manner.

I wish I had had this language to help other adults understand that a dance about, for instance, teeth wiggling and falling out arose from the children's immediate experience and was a far richer experience for them than copying some more symbolic, abstract adult ballet!



As usual, the video documentation of Reggio environments is stunning and inspirational. From babies exploring the distinct sounds of pounding hands on a wooden box and brass discs on a copper pan, to 3- and 4-year olds sculpting themselves across a nature playground, there are plenty of ideas to be had. As a dance teacher, the latter is remarkably beautiful as children play and dance freely in a bamboo forest on the grounds of the Allende Municipal Infant-toddler Centre. I admit I had a moment of envy, never having had access to a bamboo forest for my children. But, on second look, the freedom of their movement is engendered by their local environment

as well as their teacher's willingness to let them explore. What is in my environment? Have I unnecessarily limited children's exploration of it?

Much of the book's text is written in a dense, academic style that made it challenging to read—even as a person with degrees in both biology and dance. Compounding this are instances of what seems to be poor translation, for instance, using the word “withhold” where “hold” clearly makes more sense. Other sentences never did make sense to me. And yet, there are sections, such as the discussion of the origins of rhythm, that provide insight into the body-mind connection and the ways that children use these body-based languages that can open doors to their use in early childhood programs.

Who should read this book/watch these videos?

- Dance and music teachers and teaching artists who want to deepen the Reggio-inspired aspects of their practice or to broaden their approach past a strictly disciplinary one.
- Classroom practitioners who want a better understanding of music and dance as languages of learning.
- Early childhood educators who are looking for inspiration on ways to incorporate sound and movement into their provocations.

Sponsorship Opportunity

The Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota (RINM) is making it possible to be a year-round sponsor for a \$100.00 donation.

The Network has been providing support to early childhood programs through its many opportunities for professional development since 2007. Most of these opportunities are free of charge to participants.

As a Sponsor of the Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota, your logo will be displayed on the Quarterly Newsletter, website and at Monthly Gatherings. Your logo will be associated with the work of RINM and will make your organization stand out and be recognized as a program associated with quality!

If you would like to become a sponsor for the 2023 - 2024 year, please [complete this linked form](#) and send it to Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota, 525 Pelham Blvd. N., Saint Paul, MN, 55104 with a payment of \$100.00. You may also donate the \$100.00 by going to the website and clicking on the donate button. If you have questions, please contact Marty Watson at martywatson549@gmail.com.

Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota Scholarships

RINM Education Scholarship

The Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota's Education Scholarship is available to those interested in learning more about the Reggio Approach. Everyone is invited to apply at any time of the year (a minimum of 6 weeks before an event you plan to attend). This scholarship may be used for registration costs to local, national or international Reggio-inspired workshops and conferences. Preference will be given to professional development opportunities where educators from the schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy are presenting. Funds are limited and awards are made at the discretion of the Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota Board.

[RINM Education Scholarship Application](#)

Monthly Gatherings Scholarship

This scholarship, established by the Network's Board, is in honor of Sandy Burwell, a founding member of the Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota. Sandy has been particularly devoted to the Saturday Gatherings. The dates for the Monthly Gatherings Scholarship cover a full calendar year, from January to December each year. The application deadline is November 15, 2023.

[Monthly Gathering Scholarship Application](#)

Calls for Participation

“Participation, in fact, is based on the idea that reality is not objective, that culture is a constantly evolving product of society, that individual knowledge is only partial; and that in order to construct a project, especially an educational project, everyone's point of view is relevant in dialogue with those of others, within a framework of shared values. The idea of participation is founded on these concepts: and in our opinion, so, too, is democracy itself.”

Paola Cagliari, Angela Barozzi and Claudia Giudici

The Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota is an all-volunteer non-profit 501c(3) organization. Most of our work occurs in committees, where issues are studied, proposals developed and activities implemented. We are looking for a wide range of people with varied skill sets to join our work. Critically, we need people who are willing to collaborate, to do some planning up front, jump in and learn as they go. We would like to hear from you. There are no fees or dues involved, just an interest in learning and growing together. Help us grow our active and vibrant collaborative.

Committees

Resource Development

- To develop diverse sources of financial and material support to sustain the Network
- Skills: Business budgeting, grant writing, fund raising

Contact Marty Watson martywatson549@gmail.com

Outreach & Growth

- To plan events, promote growth in Reggio-inspired knowledge and practice and expand the Network
- Skills: Event planning, knowledge of the Reggio Emilia educational project, community organizing

Contact Heidi Wolf hwolf@bsmschool.org

Communications

- To make the work of the Network visible, coordinate communication, improve tools to highlight and elevate the work of the Network and build relationships
- Skills: Writing, editing, research, graphic arts, social media, information/project management

Contact Lani Shapiro lani.shapiro@gmail.com

Loose Parts Laboratory Materials Center

- To develop and grow offerings of materials and workshops
- Skills: Solicit, curate, maintain and display materials

Contact the LPL committee at loosepartslabmn@gmail.com

Civic Engagement (currently dormant, but could rise with interest and a leader)

- To provide information and resources to policy makers, educators and other citizens in order to influence education policy and promote learning through inquiry
- Skills: Knowledge of early childhood and/or K-12 education policy and evidence-based research to support the Reggio approach

Contact Patti Loftus pattiroseloftus@gmail.com

If you are interested in volunteering to support the Network, please email the chair of the relevant committee. If you have general questions or would like to contribute to the Network in another way, please contact board members at reggioinspiredmn@gmail.com.

Share your knowledge or experience

Please consider hosting or presenting a future Network event. Presentations need to include and build on Reggio principles and may include past or current work or area of study. Presentations often include a variety of approaches, including discussion, hands-on experiences and video/or Powerpoint.

Please consider this as a personal challenge to lead or co-lead a Network event, in-person or via Zoom. We would like to incorporate your experiences into upcoming events.

Some questions to get you thinking:

- What have you explored and learned with your children?
- What conversations have given you insight into their theories?
- How are the Hundred Languages expressed in your setting?
- What strategies, intentions and hypotheses have you discussed as a staff?
- What have you struggled with and created solutions around?
- What other learning stories could you tell?

A stipend of up to \$200 is given for a 2-3 hour Gathering, with additional funds if your presentation has Parent Aware/Develop MN approval.

Proposals for presentations will be welcomed until June 1, 2024. We look forward to engaging with participants from anywhere in the world. Here is the link: <https://forms.gle/pHMzedRfNoxd9NTJ6>

NAREA

Be sure to check out the events offered by NAREA, the North American Reggio Emilia Alliance. NAREA exists to connect early childhood educators and advocates together in discovering, interpreting and promoting Reggio Emilia inspired education. If you are a member, you will receive another discount. With Zoom classes, there are

many more opportunities to become involved with the Reggio Emilia educators in Italy. For more information, visit <https://www.reggioalliance.org/anarea/>.

Public Library Resources

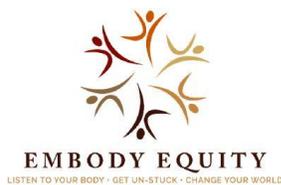
The Debra S. Fish Early Childhood Resource Library is located at Think Small, 10 Yorkton Court, St. Paul, Minnesota. The collection is part of the Saint Paul Public Library system catalog <http://www.sppl.org/> and is available through the statewide virtual library, MnLINK at <https://www.mnlinkgateway.org>. The Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota partners with the Debra S. Fish Early Childhood Resource Library to provide access to literature about the Reggio approach. All the resources are translated into English (even if the title is listed in Italian). All you need is a library card. Resources can be delivered and returned to ANY Minnesota public library.

Debra Fish Library resources are available by request. [This link](#) lists the collection clustered under general topics related to Reggio thought. The links (SPPL or MnLink) will take you directly to that title in the collection. Additionally, you can search by keyword “Reggio” in the library catalogue.

Job Opportunities

There are a number of positions currently available. Click here for current job postings: www.mnreggio.org/jobsforum

Thank you to our annual sponsors!



For more news and events visit us at www.mnreggio.org and like us on [Facebook!](#)

Send us an email: reggioinspiredmn@gmail.com

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