



# Inspiring News and Events

From the Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota

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## Editor's Introduction

*Lani Shapiro*

***We envision a community that equips its people to invigorate democracy and expand the concept of learning through dialogue, reflection and collaborative work.***

*-Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota*

As a Network inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach, we assert relationship and democratic participation are core; it is essential to observe learning both for children and adults; listening, reflection and documentation are key tools of thinking; the environment plays a crucial role; we hold and express multiple points of view using a variety of 'languages' and possibilities are limitless. We affirm this is true for the children, but are they true for teachers? Can teachers and schools engage in practices they only know about as abstractions? We talk about children 'constructing knowledge.' But do we see ourselves doing the same? All of us draw on our experiences as learners to inform our actions as teachers. What if we have never been affirmed as learners with agency, autonomy or purpose? If we understand learning as 'constructed' and not 'received,' we will need to

practice new dispositions that will support learning through dialogue, reflection and collaboration.

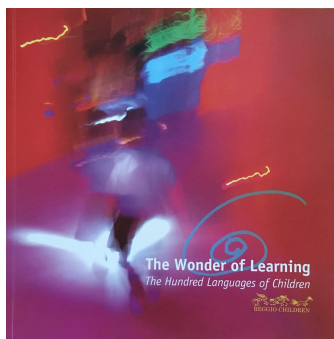
In this issue of the newsletter, in addition to announcements about compelling opportunities and coming events, there are thoughtful reflections about learning and participation of children and adults that we hope will call you to clarify your values and challenge your thinking. Both planners and participants at Network events 'unpack' their experiences from Gatherings, Enter Encounter Engage, Documentation Lab and Open Book Study and invite your participation.

*"When education is the practice of freedom, students are not the only ones...Engaged pedagogy does not seek simply to empower students. Any classroom that employs a holistic model of learning will also be a place where teachers grow, and are empowered by the process. That empowerment cannot happen if we refuse to be vulnerable while encouraging students to take risks."*

*-bell hooks*

## Wonder of Learning Exhibit: Plan Ahead

**Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota Trip  
To The "Wonder of Learning" exhibit from Reggio Emilia, Italy  
Friday, April 12 – Sunday, April 14, 2019**



Join area colleagues for a unique travel opportunity to Madison, Wisconsin that includes:

- The "[Wonder of Learning](#)" exhibit
- Visit to the [Pre-School of the Arts](#)
- Time with colleagues to reflect

For full event information, visit: [Travel to Madison to View an International Exhibit from Reggio Emilia](#)

## *Shared Vision, Collaborative Leadership, Advocacy: New Opportunities for Change and Growth*

*Cassandra Guttenfelder, Tamara Weiss Rhodes and Maya Richmond*

The authors have all been participants in the CARE (Childcare Advocates Ready to Emerge) fellowship sponsored by MnAECY which focuses on public policy.

***“Advocacy is about changing the conversation and defining the debate. Participants will learn how to use their voice and share their story to impact change.”***

[-https://mnaeyc-mnsaca.org/page/care\\_fellowship](https://mnaeyc-mnsaca.org/page/care_fellowship)

### ***Cassandra Guttenfelder***

The Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota is committed to fostering partnerships with like-minded people and organizations to promote positive changes and experiences for children. To this end, the Network’s Civic Engagement Committee launched a project called the ‘Geography of Childhood’ as a frame for examining how children and families are profoundly affected by their physical and social environment. As a committee member, I hear stories from people that illustrate the marked differences in childhoods and parenting experiences between different contexts. One clear distinction is parental leave.

Tamara Weiss-Rhodes and Maya Richman, CARE fellows, collaborated to bring *Zero Weeks*, a movie that chronicles the consequences of our abysmal lack of support for families in the US to Minneapolis (<http://www.zeroweeks.com>). Invigorated by their energy and activism, I joined their effort.

Inspired by Reggio Emilia, all of us see children as competent, curious and ready to engage with the world. With the understanding that children grow *in relationship* with the world around them, a child’s bond with a caring parent is fundamentally important. In America, however, there is no systemic support for families to build and strengthen family bonds. We are *one of only two countries* in the world that fails to offer any type of paid family leave. Further, in Minnesota, care for young children is fraught with conflicting philosophies focused on “gaps” and inadequacies.

The *Zero Weeks* screening was a success, but more importantly, we fostered a partnership with other like-minded people and organizations to create a true platform for change, resonating and rippling like a stone thrown into a beloved Minnesota lake, reminding us that relationships are the foundation, the place to begin.

### ***Tamara Weiss-Rhodes***

Recently, members of the Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota joined together to support paid parental leave, and in doing so enacted three key principles of Reggio pedagogy: (1) a deeply held belief in the child as a competent learner from birth (2) a primacy placed on learning in relationships; and (3) a commitment to developing engaged citizenry. In this collaboration, the benefit of Reggio-inspired work came to us as adults. The central, integrated theme of honoring children was rooted in our experience as parents and caregivers. We deepened our understanding, application and self-reflection by working collaboratively with each other and with local networks. We each took new and uncertain steps to grow our civic participation. The short-term result, the screening of *Zero Weeks* at Temple Israel, is far from the culmination of our work; it marks both an organic end and beginning of a cycle. This reflection shares how this journey unfolded and the potential paths we now perceive.

My newborn was about three weeks old when I first brought him to our CARE Public Policy fellowship meeting; or perhaps he brought me. My pregnancy prompted me to resign from a full time position in order to focus on ensuring that his first year of life was healthy, loving, and secure. Knowing that I wanted to continue my commitment to the field of early childhood even while I focused on my own precious baby, I applied to the MnNAEYC-MnSACA CARE fellowship. It was an opportunity to build relationships with others passionate about early childhood as well as deepen my understanding about the policy issues affecting the field. For one full day a month, CARE fellows gathered to learn more about the local history of early childhood policy, to discuss our varied perspectives, and to become more familiar with and comfortable with our voices entering the policy debates.

Together as CARE fellows, Maya and I shared stories about parenthood, caregiving, and families. Maya works with Simpson Housing Services, supporting families and young children who are transitioning out of homelessness. She shared stories that were riveting testaments of human strength. She visited new mothers who wanted desperately to provide their babies with healthy attachments, nutritious foods for themselves as they tried to sustain breastfeeding, and predictable care. Yet these mothers struggled alone to become financially stable, even as they fought against the opportunity gaps from several generational cycles of poverty. How could they secure housing or maintain health care services without employment? How could they maintain employment without showing up - no matter the circumstances? How could they ensure their infant was building the basic neurological building blocks to guide them through life without a safe, predictable, loving and knowledgeable caregiver? Listening to her stories helped me understand the broader context of how a detrimental, callous attitude towards infants destabilizes society for everyone, and across sectors. When we decided to present this issue to Representative Frank Hornstein, Maya brought her voice of passion, empathetic understanding of the complex factors intersecting to harm infants, children and families and her vision. Frank listened. The rest is history... or, perhaps, her story?

### ***Maya Richman***

I had the honor to work with Reggio-Inspired Network Board member, Tam Weiss-Rhodes, during our CARE Fellowship. During our coalition's Day on the Hill at the MN State Capitol in March, we met with representatives to discuss the importance of paid family and medical leave. Tam taught me a great deal about the issue and the importance of paid family and medical leave for a wide variety of people and issues (childbirth, caring for an elderly parent, caring for yourself during an illness, etc.). In particular, I thought about how participants I work with at Simpson Housing Services, who work in low-paying jobs, are often without paid family leave. I see mothers going back to work mere weeks after giving birth since they are not provided paid leave and risk going back into homelessness if they do not work. These mothers want to prioritize their relationship with their newborn, but are unable to optimally care for their infants and heal themselves after giving birth since they are forced back into work (often in physically demanding jobs) far too often.

Tam and I spoke with Rep. Frank Hornstein, who brought our attention to the documentary *Zero Weeks*, and asked if we would be interested in organizing the Minnesota premier of this film to animate our community around the issue of paid family and medical leave. Tam and I were immediately energized and brainstormed the event details. We joined the coalition Minnesotans

for Paid Family Leave, led by Lars Negstad at ISAIAH. Lars and the coalition members welcomed Tam and I with open arms; their work over many years has been instrumental in advocating for paid family and medical leave in Minnesota. People were blown away by the film, and surprised to learn that the United States is the only country - alongside Papua New Guinea - that does not offer paid family and medical leave.

Working together on the film screening and the coalition Minnesotans for Paid Family Leave led to an invitation to the national conference for Family Values at Work in Detroit, MI, a national coalition at the forefront helping individual states and our entire nation fight for paid family and medical leave. It was an incredible honor to attend this conference, to network with individuals from around the country who are dedicating their careers to fight for paid family and medical leave. Their passion was inspiring and energized me even more to be an advocate for paid family and medical leave here in Minnesota.

The collaboration - putting our minds, hearts, and passion together - has provided me with a new perspective and wider community connections.

One conversation. One collaboration. A new door to advocacy has forever opened.

## **Teaching: A Delicate Balancing Act**

*Sandra Burwell*

As teachers working with children, how do we decide when and how to offer support that honors the power of children's own discovery and learning? My journey with the Reggio Approach is changing the value I place on the children's own process of learning. I don't want my perceptions, viewpoint or knowledge to interrupt the children's thinking. Despite additional intellectual insight from my Montessori study of the child's competence in self-direction, I am still tempted to "instruct."

I have always enjoyed exploring a new topic with children. If I know nothing or very little about it, then I am sure we will learn together, as happened when children began exploring "sewers." From the very first day, it was evident that this had the makings of a long-term exploration and deep investigation.

How many times have you walked past the metal grill in the street next to the curb? Did you stop when you heard water rushing through? Did you look down, even get on your knees to look further? I have not. Neither had the teachers with whom I was working. But a group of children in their class were engrossed and delighted!



At the newly formed South Metro Documentation Lab, our group collaborated on this exploration of sewers, sharing photos, conversations and drawings. During our discussion, we recognized how very little we knew about sewers. Our follow-up research made our lack of knowledge obvious. It is humbling to think that because the children were calling them “sewers” we did too. We realized these were not sewers, but storm drains. We made a plan to offer pictures of different views and types of what the children had seen, to discover more about the children’s knowledge.

*“In order to meet students where they are... you have to know the individual and collective zone of proximal development (ZPD) of your learners. ‘The ZPD is the distance between what children can do by themselves and the next learning that they can be helped to achieve with competent assistance.’”*

*-Eileen Raymond*

We did not share graphs showing both sewers and rain run-off drains with the children, but saved them for possible use later. We discussed how we did not want to influence or discount the knowledge they were formulating, nor should we introduce our research and terminology until they were further on in their investigation.

We continued to observe, listen and think. One particular incident gave us a clue.

There was a depression near the drain that would fill up during periods of heavy rain and allow the water to seep slowly into the ground. The children talked about this phenomenon:

*Al: We have two sewers in back. We heard water. I keep hearing water going.*

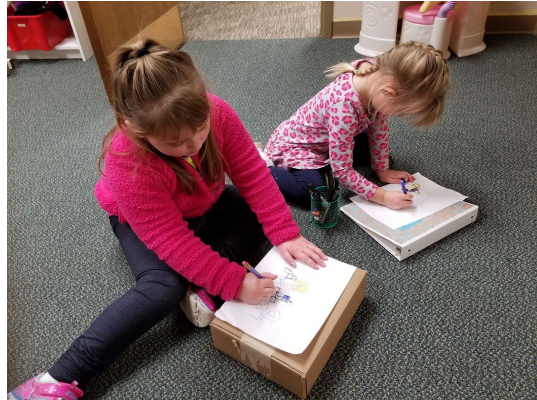
*An: There’s water underground in the dirt. It’s brown under there. It goes under the train. Now there’s leaves, not water. Garbage gets stuck and mixed up like a tornado. Sometimes there’s water by the railroad tracks and we can hear it coming down.*



We realized that the children had made the connection between the drains and the water run off in the lowlands and something “under” the train tracks.

We offered materials: loose parts of tubes, small grates, boxes and fabric so the children could express

and develop their ideas by building different versions of “sewers.” They drew map-diagrams and built constructions with blocks and other loose parts. Increasingly, their focus was on what was underground, what they could NOT see.



After the teachers thought the children had advanced their work and thinking, we introduced a detailed and uniquely formatted book about all that goes on underground. The Street Beneath My Feet by Yuval Zommer seemed to us to be a resource that could further the children’s knowledge. They became more interested in possibilities other than just rain run-off.

We gathered the four most interested children to the art studio where we offered tubes, cardboard and other loose parts. We invited the children to represent their concept of what happens underground. There were several discussions and disagreements. At one point the children divided themselves into two groups and created an “upper sewer” and “lower sewer.” Several times when they got stuck, they referred back to the map diagram that A. had drawn, paying special attention to clean water and dirty water and how it is kept separate.



When considering the teachers' thinking and choices, one can see these are very new steps in our journey. We see a lot we could have done differently, but we are gratified in our realization that we were all learning together step by step. The children's exploration continues.

*“Observe and listen to children because when they ask ‘why?’ they are not simply asking for the answer from you. They are requesting the courage to find a collection of possible answers. This attitude of the child means that the child is a real researcher . . . Yet it is possible to destroy this attitude of the child with our quick answers and our certainty. How can we support and sustain this attitude of children to construct explanations?”*

*-Carlina Rinaldi*

## References

Raymond, Eileen as cited in “6 Scaffolding Strategies to Use With Your Students” Rebecca Alber, TEACHER LEADERSHIP at edutopia.org 1/24/2014

Rinaldi, Carlina, “Relationship Between Documentation and Assessment” INNOVATIONS Vol. 11, No. 1, Winter 2004

Zommer, Yuval, The Street Beneath My Feet QED Publishing 2017

## Reflection: Enter Encounter Engage

*Stacey York*

This fall I dared to dip my toe in the water by attending the Network's fall conference. For years, I've watched this group form and grow from afar. I was ready to enter, encounter, and engage with other educators to explore the Reggio approach. The fall conference planners offered us love through details that provided a rich, nourishing experience. The hosts were warm and open, the space was beautiful and inspiring and I appreciated the opportunity to connect with dear old friends and engage in meaningful conversations with others. The conference moved me in ways that few in-service opportunities ever do. I left inspired, affirmed, and with my heart full of gratitude. Why was this such a personally moving experience?

It's helpful to get back to the basics. Barb Murphy presented the key elements of a Reggio approach with delight, humor, and passion. I took lots of notes as if hearing it for the first time and feeling worried that I'd forget important details.

Upon weeks of reflection, I remembered that I was a constructivist teacher long ago. I read *The Logic of Action* by Francis Hawkins and *The Cognitively Oriented Curriculum* back in the early 80's,





followed by George E. Forman's *The Child's Construction of Knowledge* and *Constructive Play: Applying Piaget in the Preschool*.

I earned a Master's degree from a college renown for valuing the child and emergent curriculum. Over time I'd become distracted by "quality initiatives" and "research-based practices." Over the years, I lost my way. Now I'm finding my way home.

Exploring new possibilities provokes thought and inspiration. The Westwood Early Childhood Center staff led by Kellee, Sarah, and Shannon showed a video documenting a long term investigation on sound. The entire teaching staff took turns reflecting on how their particular group of children engaged with the materials and each other throughout the investigation. Then we were invited to tour the center classrooms at our leisure. Experiencing the embodiment of the Reggio approach in this way is truly a gift. Gazing at the displays on the window sills and out the windows, finding joy in the natural and seasonal materials, noticing the details, and studying the documents of learning makes the Reggio approach real. I felt the respect for the child. I saw what is possible when education is a process of mutual collaboration.

Context matters. Children and families thrive as part of a larger community. Westwood Early Learning Center operates within a faith-based community. This context provides immense learning opportunities like an orchestra, bell choirs, and a pipe organ. The building itself includes a variety of flooring that produces different sounds when the kitchen carts carrying the children's meals rolls across the surfaces, some which are barely noticeable and others that irritate and annoy. It's the context of that community and the adjacent nature center that create the possibility for a rich variety of relationships, encounters, and opportunities for meaning-making.

Engaging relationships empower. I walked in and a familiar colleague greeted me. She asked, "What brings you here?" I explained that as a community college instructor, I've revised courses to focus on the theories and concepts that served me well in my work with children and families. In the past five years I've replaced textbooks with books that have a "voice," inspire, and incorporate a Reggio perspective. Now I'm redesigning course assignments based on Reggio Emilia principles. That simple question led to a powerful discussion even before the conference began. As I looked to the right, there sat Karin and Lynne from Meadow Park Preschool and Child Care Center, the only Reggio-inspired center-based program in Rochester. We talk and share ideas, but not nearly enough. In them I see the potential for relationship-building, collaboration, and reflection. Maybe we could start our own book study and documentation lab!

Claim the truth. Two months later I'm still ruminating. I'm wondering why I'm so hesitant to say I'm Reggio-inspired. Is it because I haven't been to Reggio Emilia? Is there an unwritten rule that you can't claim to be shaped by Reggio if you haven't personally been to Italy? I do believe in the rights of the child. I carry with me a vision of children as competent and capable. I value positive child-child, child-adult, and adult-family relationships as the foundation of early childhood practice. I carefully plan the environment, curating materials to foster curiosity, wonder, and an aesthetic sense. I am a keen observer who thrives on reflection. My work is influenced by Piaget, Erikson, Vygotsky, Bruner, Gardner, and Malaguzzi. As a teacher I go with the flow, inviting the curriculum to emerge from the students and my shared experience.

It's time to dive in, stand up tall and use my voice to claim my truth. This much I know, I'm inspired by Reggio Emilia and I teach in a Reggio-inspired program.

## **Our Documentation Journey: A Reflection about Hosting**

*Barb Berris*

On November 7, 2018, Temple Israel Early Childhood Center hosted a Network gathering titled "Our Documentation Journey." I have heard teachers talk about the fear documentation induces in them. Just the thought of creating documentation panels is daunting. So it was exciting to listen to our staff, along with other teachers, share perspectives. It quickly became apparent how group discussion was helpful to hone, add and subtract perspectives.

In the past, our teachers have used photographs to record classroom happenings, but the photos didn't illustrate thinking. This evening was an opportunity to examine how we create and use documentation through many different perspectives.

After creating documentation panels and seeing how others created them, it became more clear how documentation panels offer evidence of intention and purpose. Often what looks like a simple or insignificant exchange is truly a learning and teaching moment. We discussed who is the target audience? It might be the students, the families, other classrooms or all of them.

In addition, those documentary traces became the foundation for our professional experience at the Network gathering.



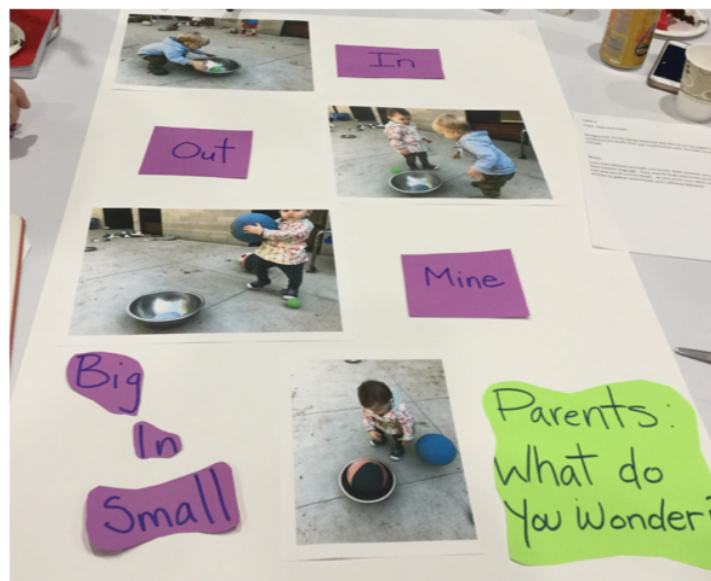
It was interesting to watch groups put together their panels, thinking that they knew how it should look at the end and who they thought they were addressing.

Then, as they discussed it in a group, the target audience changed and the intention behind the photographic evidence shifted too!



One idea stayed in my mind, even though I had heard it many times before: just as our classroom studies may continue on, so may our documentation. It may be completed for a time, but later provoke more discussion and thought, giving way to additional interpretation and revised documentation. We get caught up in completing tasks and need these reminders that this work can be fluid.

One of my favorite documentation panels was generated at this November 7<sup>th</sup> event. This is a good example for people who may not have much experience creating documentation panels...Look what we did!



The language is so spare and the photos are so rich, yet it conveys all anyone could wish for; so much in so little verbiage! My biggest take away from this event was that something that may feel so overwhelming becomes transparent when viewed with intention, a focused audience and anticipation. At that moment, it became so clear that I just looked with both excitement and a sense of calm purpose.

## Open Book Study: A Reflection

*Nancy Cox*

As a new resident of the Twin Cities looking to reenter the world of early childhood education, I felt a strong hunger to find like-minded and curious educators. During that search, I found the Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota Book Study.

Perhaps it is my interest in fostering provocative learning experiences for children that keeps me interested in the RINM Book Study. What brings me back to the monthly meetings is that I find open-ended thinking, thoughtful listeners, and frequent delving questions both into passages from the text and ideas shared by attendees. Perhaps meeting new and interesting people is the big draw, or maybe it is the challenge of thinking deeply about the writings and considering how those writings apply to my own learning experience. Whatever the reason, I leave the Book Study gatherings feeling fed and supported in my desire to grow and share in the Reggio way.

Please, join us! Currently we are reading *The Wonder of Learning, the Hundred Languages of Children*. Our pace is leisurely, taking the time we want and need to explore ideas presented. The exchanges are interesting and stimulating, and the participants are welcoming. Come to share, to inquire, to contribute to our thought processes! We look forward to seeing you!

## A New School Update

*Reba Batalden*

In the summer 2018 issue of this newsletter, I wrote to all of you announcing a Reggio-inspired K-8 public charter school opening in Fall 2019. **St. Paul School of Northern Lights** is an educational project rooted in equity for all learners. Exploring our urban ecosystem, Northern Lights ensures a progressive, relationship-based learning process, educating students to be kind, curious, critical thinkers who are advocating for positive change in our diverse community.

Here I am offering an update and an invitation. Since last summer, St. Paul School of Northern Lights has connected with over 250 families and educators at events throughout St. Paul and Minneapolis. The vision and mission of this school resonate deeply with folks from all walks of life. Northern Lights received a federal grant for new charter schools in the amount of \$600,000 over the next three years. This ensures that we will be able to successfully open this fall and allows us to begin hiring educators in the coming months. Throughout this years-long process, the first question families and educators ask is, “Where will you be located?” We are thrilled to announce that we secured a school location in the West 7th neighborhood of St. Paul. As a Reggio-inspired school, we value the environment as the third teacher and see this school building as a key source of educational provocation and insight.

For families, please visit our website for information on registering your child for this fall. For educators, we will begin hiring for grades K-6 in March, and all postings will be on our website: [www.schoolofnorthernlights.org](http://www.schoolofnorthernlights.org)

Please contact us at [schoolofnorthernlights@gmail.com](mailto:schoolofnorthernlights@gmail.com) with any questions or to be added to our mailing list.

## Upcoming Events: Mark Your Calendar

### Gatherings

**March, 2019**

#### **Creativity, Collaboration, and The Arts**

At Friends School of Minnesota, a K-8 progressive elementary school in St. Paul, classroom teachers work collaboratively with the visual arts and music specialists to follow teachers' themes and children's interests to create in-depth projects.

How can the arts provide space for deeper thought, creativity, and engagement throughout the curriculum? Join us to explore ways that teachers can work together to create a holistic child-centered experience for students that also energizes teachers, and to discuss ways to deepen collaboration within your educational context.

Facilitators:

Marshall Anderson, Kindergarten Teacher

Laura Pereira, Art Specialist

Saturday, March 16, 2019

9:00 a.m. to noon

Friends School of Minnesota

1365 Englewood Avenue

St. Paul

<https://fsmn.org>

To Register: <http://www.mnreggio.org/event-3166513>

### Documentation Labs

*Documentation in all its different forms also represents an extraordinary tool for dialogue, for exchange, for sharing. For Malaguzzi, it means the possibility to discuss and to dialogue “everything with everyone” (teachers, auxiliary staff, cooks, families, administrators and citizens . . . [S]haring opinions by means of documentation presupposes being able to discuss real, concrete things – not just theories or words, about which it is possible to reach easy and naive agreement.*

*-Hoyuelos, A.*

The Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota's DOCUMENTATION LABS offer educators an opportunity to study traces of children's actions - photographs, video clips, transcripts of

conversations and children's own work, sketches - as a way to learn in collaboration with colleagues. There are now three different locations and times that folks can gather to engage in this work.

## **Metro**

### **Dates:**

Thursday, February 21, 2019

Thursday, March 14, 2019

6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Roosevelt Library

4026 28th Avenue South

Minneapolis

<https://www.hclib.org/about/locations/roosevelt>

If you have traces of children's work you'd like to share, contact [jesser@blakeschool.org](mailto:jesser@blakeschool.org)

## **North Metro**

### **Dates:**

First Sunday of the month

February 3, 2019

March 3, 2019

April 7, 2019

May 5, 2019

1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

The newest Doc Lab is located the Northern Metro area and will be held on the first Sunday of each month at the Shoreview Library from 1:00 to 3:00 PM. Educators will come together to reflect on and interpret children's work, words, pictures, dialogues and actions through their own reflections and shared dialogues with colleagues. This process is, in part, the essence of teacher-as-researcher and has the possibility of leading to great learning for the educators involved. Participating in a Doc Lab will help support educators in learning how to confirm and validate evidence of children's learning in a social-constructivist setting.

Hope to see you any first Sunday of the month at the Shoreview Library from 1 - 3pm.

Stephanie Ponticas

[heartsandmindsdaycare@gmail.com](mailto:heartsandmindsdaycare@gmail.com)

Deb Schein

[schein.deborah@gmail.com](mailto:schein.deborah@gmail.com)



## South Metro

### Dates:

Saturday, February 9, 2019

10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

South Metro Montessori School

10970 185th St W

Lakeville, MN 55044

Housed in THE FAMILY OF CHRIST CHURCH

Park in back parking lot (second driveway) and enter through that door.

RSVP: [smburwell@gmail.com](mailto:smburwell@gmail.com)

## Open Book Study: a new selection

### Dates:

Third Sunday of Each Month

February 17, 2019

March 17, 2019

April 21, 2019

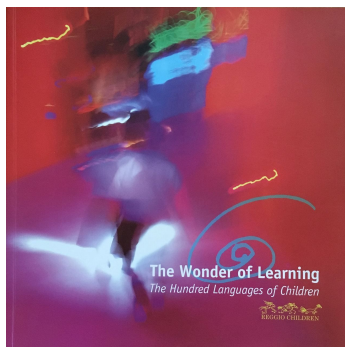
3:00 PM - 4:30 PM

Open Book/Conexion Cafe,

1011 S Washington Ave,

Minneapolis, MN 55415

To support our Network focus on *The Wonder of Learning*, and our planned trip to the exhibit next spring, we have decided to insert *The Wonder of Learning: The Hundred Languages of Children*, into our scheduled reading list.



We have just begun reading this title, which is a visual catalogue of the exhibit, a collection of essays, and documentation of the work of both children and adults.

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

Books can be ordered from: <https://www.store.reggioalliance.org/>

There is one circulating copy available through the Debra Fish collection of the Saint Paul Public Library and interlibrary loan.

For more information contact: [reggioinspiredmn@gmail.com](mailto:reggioinspiredmn@gmail.com)

## 2019 Winter Conference

On February 22-23, 2019, MacDonald Montessori School will host its 2019 Winter Conference titled: "The Rich and Complex Daily Life of the School...Weaving Together Theory and Practice."



Presenters include Amelia Gambetti, Reggio Emilia, Italy; Beth MacDonald, Saint Paul, MN and Educators from MacDonald Montessori School.

For information check out:

<https://www.macdonaldmontessori.org/educator-conferences>

## Scholarship Information

### RINM Education Scholarship

The Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota's Education Scholarship is available to those interested in learning more about the Reggio Approach. Network members are 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.

<https://www.mnreggio.org/resources/Documents/RINM%20scholarship.pdf>

### Monthly Gatherings Annual 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.

It sponsors an individual to participate in the Saturday Gatherings for a school year. Anyone with a deep curiosity about Reggio Emilia is encouraged to apply. If you are awarded the scholarship, you will be asked to write reflections on some of the Saturday Gatherings.

[https://www.mnreggio.org/Learn#Learn\\_about\\_our\\_scholarship](https://www.mnreggio.org/Learn#Learn_about_our_scholarship)

The recipient of the Gatherings Scholarship for 2018-2019 is Elysia Springer.

Elysia Contreras Springer is an artist and educator with a passion for facilitating creative experiences for every age and stage in life. She earned her M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Missouri in 2013, and her BFA in Interdisciplinary Arts and Art History from the Kansas City Art Institute in 2009. She is a Minnesota native that can't get away despite living on both coasts and little in between. Elysia has worked at St. Paul's Childhood Center as the Atelierista, and curriculum coach, and dabbles in some administrative work as well.

Elysia Contreras Springer first learned about the Reggio Emilia approach while she was interning at an early childhood center exploring inquiry-based art practices as part of her BFA degree program. She soon realized that there were so many parallels between her own personal art practice with the added excitement of working with young imaginations. Because of this internship she went on to pursue her Master's in Early Childhood Education. She has attended the Network Gatherings and appreciates the new perspectives gained from other's interpretations of the approach.

## Job Postings

There are currently six jobs posted on [mnreggio.org](http://mnreggio.org).

Click here for more information: [www.mnreggio.org/jobsforum](http://www.mnreggio.org/jobsforum)

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