



# Inspiring News and Events

From the Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota

Volume 6, Issue 4 | Summer 2019

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## Editor's Introduction

*Lani Shapiro*

We're beginning to notice the days are shorter; anticipation grows as the season turns. Some of us participate in year-round settings while others are governed by the school year calendar, which the Network uses to organize our annual professional development opportunities. The beginning of every school year holds such promise!

In this issue of the Newsletter, you will find our calendar of professional development for the coming school year. You can also download a [PDF calendar](#) to print and post. A continuing thread extending through many of this year's professional events is the rich possibility of materials – loose parts, blocks, paper, and collage are all languages that will be unpacked over the course of the year, all informed by the deep principles of the Reggio Approach.

We continue to schedule Documentation Labs in various locations in the Metro area. These are free, self-forming groups that gather to practice studying documentation and exchanging perspectives. Find one that suits your schedule and location. Also, keep in mind there is an ongoing Book Study, third Sunday of every month at Open Book, in Minneapolis. Contact [pattiroseoftus@gmail.com](mailto:pattiroseoftus@gmail.com) for more information. See details for Documentation Labs and Book Study and contact information below.

Pay particular attention to the Membership Survey and please take the time to respond to that effort so that we can better nurture our local community of learners.

We also have an update on the launching this fall of the St. Paul School of Northern Lights, a local charter elementary school based on Reggio principles.

From inception, the work of the Network has always been driven by the volunteer efforts of those who show up and the not-so-visible contributions of time, talent and space from various people and organizations. In this edition we honor the sustained contributions of Barb Murphy, outgoing chair.

As always, we are grateful for all the volunteer time and effort, seen and unseen, that goes into the work of the Network.

*“Teachers are like explorers using maps and compasses, they know the directions but they also know that every year the terrain, the climate, the seasons, the children can add new directions and that the order of times and problems can change.*

*Destinations are important and must not be lost from sight but more importantly is how and why we reach them. That is why it is essential for both adults and children to be able to retrace their steps, or rather their knowledge processes, through an attitude of recognition made possible by observation, documentation and interpretation.”*

Loris Malaguzzi

## Professional Development Calendar for 2019-2020

*Outreach and Growth*

**Saturday, October 5, 2019 | 8:00AM-1:30PM**

**Enter, Encounter, Engage**

**The Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota 8th Annual Conference**

**Wandering and Wondering: Connecting the Joy of Loose Parts to the Early Childhood Setting**

featuring **Carla Gull**, nationally renowned speaker on the whys and hows of using "Loose Parts" with children of all ages to support creativity and inquiry

- How can we respond to children's interests and needs by offering them open-ended materials?
- How can we use "loose parts" to make our classroom environments enticing, stimulating and appropriately challenging for children?
- How can we support children's inventiveness through our intentional, thoughtful presence and planning?

8:00 a.m. Registration

8:30 a.m. Welcome and Introductions

9:00 a.m. Keynote Speaker, Carla Gull

10:45 a.m. Break-Out Sessions: Choice of smaller group workshops, including using loose parts outdoors in nature; materials and the classroom environment; math and literacy development with loose parts and sensory play.

12:00 p.m. Lunch and networking; book browsing and sale  
1:00 p.m. Annual meeting, Door Prizes and closing

Cost: \$50 | Students: \$25.00  
Group Rate (5 or more, 10% discount): \$45.00  
RINM Board or Committee members: \$37.50  
Includes lunch and CEUs

Registration: <https://www.mnreggio.org/event-3492875>  
*Deadline for registration is Monday September 30, 2019*

**Location:**

Benilde-St. Margaret's School  
2501 Hwy 100 S  
St Louis Park, MN 55416

Featured Speaker: Carla Gull  
Topic: Loose Parts

**Saturday, November 9, 2019 | 9:00AM-Noon**

**Topic: Block Play and The Role of Symbolic Representation in Thinking and Learning**

It's no secret that blocks are one of the most versatile and important materials for young children. In this session, we will take a deeper look at the symbolic representation skills supported through block play as well as how blocks support development in all domains. We will also explore how children use these materials to show us what they know as they make sense of the world around them.

**Presenters:** Ross Thompson & Barb Murphy

**Location:**

Wildflower Early Learning Center  
5532 Hanrehan Lake Blvd  
Savage, MN 55378

Registration: <https://www.mnreggio.org/event-3492884>

Cost: \$38 | Students: \$19.00  
Group Rate (5 or more, 10% discount): \$34.00  
RINM Board or Committee members: \$28.50

**Sunday December 8, 2019 | 1:30-3:30 PM**

**Current Inspiration from Reggio Emilia**

Description: At an advanced study tour to Reggio Emilia last spring, participants were invited to engage in one of various "ateliers" – of clay, of photography, of light or paper. We will reflect on and analyze an experience in the "Atelier of Paper" as a way to think about how we introduce materials. We will focus on how the encounter was organized and reflected upon. We'll highlight how we introduce, select and organize materials, create invitations for their use and how documentation supports this work.

**Presenter:** Lani Shapiro

**Location:**

Saint Paul School of Northern Lights

426 Osceola Ave S  
St. Paul, MN 55102

Registration: <https://www.mnreggio.org/event-3499839>

Cost: \$38 | Students: \$19.00

Group Rate (5 or more, 10% discount): \$34.00

RINM Board or Committee members: \$28.50

**Saturday, January 25, 2020 | 9:00AM-Noon**  
**Collage and Printmaking with Young Children**

This hands-on workshop will explore printmaking and collage experiences that you can offer to support children's self-expression and creativity. Using every-day, easily obtainable materials, we'll experiment with a variety of techniques and project ideas you can adapt for your own children's interests and needs.

**Presenter:** Kim Lane, Lower School art teacher, Blake School

**Location:**

The Blake School - Hopkins Campus  
110 Blake Road South  
Hopkins, MN 55343

Registration: <https://www.mnreggio.org/event-3492887>

Cost: \$38 | Students: \$19.00

Group Rate (5 or more, 10% discount): \$34.00

RINM Board or Committee members: \$28.50

**Saturday, March 14, 2020 | 9:00AM-Noon**  
**Presentation and Environment Tour: Nothing without Joy**

Finding Joy in Projects, community and the ongoing journey of the Reggio Philosophy at Little Trenderers

**Presenters:** Little Trenderers Childcare Teaching Team

**Location:** Little Trenderers Child Care | 20855 Kensington Blvd. | Lakeville, MN 55044

Registration: <https://www.mnreggio.org/event-3492891>

Cost: \$38 | Students: \$19.00

Group Rate (5 or more, 10% discount): \$34.00

RINM Board or Committee members: \$28.50

**Friday, May 1, 2020 | Time TBD**

**Topic: Annual Meeting and Happy Hour with a short presentation**

Join us to celebrate our year.  
This event is free and all are welcome.

**Location:** TBD

Please register so we have an idea of how many people are attending:  
<https://www.mnreggio.org/event-3492899>

## Additional Professional Development Opportunities

### *Documentation Labs*

Documentation Labs are 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. The Documentation Labs are co-facilitated, collaborative working groups where participants can bring work-in-progress, critically analyze it and learn from each other, at whatever stages they are in their practice.



**North Metro Documentation Lab**  
**First Sunday of Each Month | October-May | 1:00-3:00 PM**

**Location:**  
Ramsey County Library - Shoreview  
4570 Victoria Street North  
Shoreview, MN 55126  
651-724-6006

There is no fee; ALL ARE WELCOME. Join us!

We have started a Facebook Study with the book, *Really Seeing Children* by Deb Curtis. Search on Facebook: "Reggio Inspired Documentation Book Study"

Contact: Stephanie Ponticas [heartsandmindsdaycare@gmail.com](mailto:heartsandmindsdaycare@gmail.com)

**South Metro Documentation Lab**  
**Saturday, September 28 | 9:00AM-Noon**

**Location:**

South Metro Montessori  
10970 185th St. W.  
Lakeville, MN 55044

Contact: Sandy Burwell [smburwell@gmail.com](mailto:smburwell@gmail.com) or  
Shannon O'Connor [Shannon@SouthMetroMS.com](mailto:Shannon@SouthMetroMS.com)

There is no fee; ALL ARE WELCOME. Join us!

**South Metro Documentation Lab  
Saturday, October 26 | 9:00AM-Noon****Location:**

Edina Daycare  
3205 W. 76th St.  
Edina, MN 55435

Contact: Sandy Burwell [smburwell@gmail.com](mailto:smburwell@gmail.com) or  
Shannon O'Connor [Shannon@SouthMetroMS.com](mailto:Shannon@SouthMetroMS.com)

There is no fee; ALL ARE WELCOME. Join us!

Stay posted for more South Metro dates!

**Metro Documentation Lab  
Thursday, October 10 | 6:30-8:00 PM****Location:**

Roosevelt Library  
Meeting Room  
4026 28th Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55406

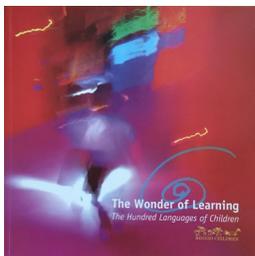
Contact: Joanne Esser [esserjo\\_57@msn.com](mailto:esserjo_57@msn.com) or  
Joey Schoen [JSchoen@dodgenaturecenter.com](mailto:JSchoen@dodgenaturecenter.com)

There is no fee; ALL ARE WELCOME. Join us!

Stay posted for more Metro dates!

**Book Study****Third Sunday of Each Month | August-June | 3:00-4:30 PM**

We are continuing to read the Wonder of Learning, a visual catalogue of the traveling exhibit which many of us recently visited; it is also 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.

*"Poetic thought does not separate the imaginative from the cognitive,  
emotion from the rational,  
empathy from deep investigation.  
It lights up all the senses and perceptions and cultivates an intense  
relationship with what is all around us.  
It constructs thoughts that are not conformist.  
And this creates two important elements:  
solidarity and participation,  
both of which are the foundation of democracy."*

Vea Vecchi

There is no fee; ALL ARE WELCOME. Join us!

**Location:**

Open Book  
1011 S. Washington Ave.  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

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) or [pattiroseloftus@gmail.com](mailto:pattiroseloftus@gmail.com)

## Membership Survey

*Tamara Weiss Rhodes*

In 2018-2019, the Network made space for reflection and celebration of the tremendous work over the past decade. Because of the interest and engagement of early childhood professionals like you, we've been able to:

- design experiences that raise the visibility of children and their capacities;
- provide high quality opportunities for professional development; and
- establish forums for all of our learning communities to come together in dialogue about early childhood education.

At our Board retreat in January, we envisioned the next 5-10 years and posed difficult questions:

**What are our current levels and diversity of engagement?**

**What draws you to the Network and facilitates your participation in our events?**

We strive:

- to improve the ways we provide meaningful and actionable professional development.

- to nurture a community of intellectual, progressive thinkers using Reggio Emilia pedagogy within our current educational context.
- to improve and establish new initiatives to ensure that our work actively seeks diversity, prizes inclusivity, and engages in authentic dialogue.
- to center our learning and growth within strong relationships among children, families and communities.

### **How do we know the short and long-term impact for those who are active in the network?**

We want to understand how our various forums, gatherings and discussions are (1) meeting the needs of our Network and (2) enacting our vision for early childhood. Learning, change, growth and evolution can be difficult to capture; yet understanding is critical to the Network's strategic decision making.

### **In what ways have we identified and established our role in the field of early childhood?**

Being Reggio-inspired means that our engagement with this field be rooted in Reggio principles. The relationships that we build with you, that you build with each other, and that we build within the field of early childhood should be central to how we envision our work together.

We don't know enough about the ways that our Network intersects with the activities, organizations and advocacy that you do every day on behalf of children, families and communities.

This summer, we take a first step towards responding to these critical questions by asking you to count yourself in and take our Member Survey. Becoming a member means that you are actively choosing to join us in this process, interested in what the work entails, and envision a role for yourself in the Network. Membership means that you are invested in your relationship to the local Network; there are no associated fees nor required responsibilities beyond those that you choose to adopt.

Please take a few minutes to review and respond – we enthusiastically await your survey submission and will be in contact shortly thereafter!

[Take our Member Survey](#)

## **Elementary Dialogues with Reggio**

*Reba Bataldan*

My first experience as a student in a Reggio environment occurred just seven years ago, as an adult in an ECFE parent classroom. At the time, I did not know Reggio by name, but I felt the difference in my bones. I felt an expansive sense of welcome and belonging, even as I joined a group already in progress. The relationships formed in this space and the community built through our learning were unique, transformative, and left me desiring more. The Reggio educational philosophy unfolded for me as a place where myself and my family were deeply seen and known within a context of intellectual rigor and civic engagement.

At its inception, in the aftermath of World War II, the women of Reggio conceived of an educational philosophy for the youngest children and their families. In the decades since and throughout the world, we continue to be inspired by the learning made visible in these classrooms. As I learn more

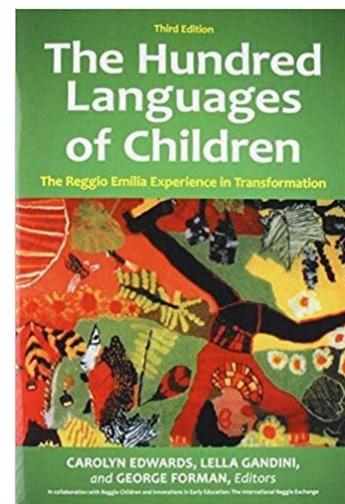
about Reggio philosophy, I am struck that the initial motivation of these women for increased community, civic engagement, and critical thinking are the same highlights of my Reggio experience. Here in the United States, the vast majority of Reggio-inspired schools are preschools. While Reggio used to refer to itself as an “Educational Project 0 -6,” in recent years it has changed to an “Educational Project 0 - 99” since truly, the Reggio educational philosophy applies to learners of any age.

The educators and schools in Reggio Emilia invite us to learn from them, not to replicate their process wholesale, but to be in dialogue with their pedagogy in our own time and place. Today, some schools in Reggio Emilia, Italy carry the Reggio philosophy through the grades. Moved by my experiences at a Reggio-inspired ECFE, knowing that learners of all ages would benefit from Reggio practices, I became one of the founders of St. Paul School of Northern Lights, a Reggio-inspired public charter school opening September, 2019. I am thrilled for our educators, K-8 students and their families to experience the transformative learning and community of a Reggio classroom.

## Travel to Reggio Emilia with a Book

*Emily Benz*

Books. We read them for all sorts of reasons. Sometimes we want to learn something or to experience a story different from our own. Other times, we yearn to be transported to another place and time, and to disappear from our own lives for a little while. Truly disappearing into a great book consistently ranks as one of my absolute favorite ways to spend my time, and books from Reggio are no exception. I remember my first experience reading *The Hundred Languages of Children* in a class with other educators, almost a decade ago now, and the chapter on the history of the city of Reggio Emilia and the creation of the first school. From the first sentence, I was transfixed and delighted to ride along with Loris Malaguzzi on his bicycle and learn about the courage of the first families and educators in this small Italian city who sold a German truck, a tank and a horse to build a school that would create a different future for their children. To read these words was to not only to be transported to another place, but really, to another world, in which a town wounded by war banded together to put their children and their collective future first. It moved me deeply and I wanted to learn more, and to read more about this philosophy which teaches democratic principles by respecting children as wholly capable people, with their own bold ideas and creative brilliance. And so I read on, and was transported again and again through finishing that first book, *The Hundred Languages of Children*, and went on to be transported again many times over in the highlights of my Reggio reading.



I disappeared into *Reggio Tutta*, a guidebook to the city of Reggio Emilia created by the children, and into *Dialogues with Places*, which features documentation of the process behind children’s gifts to the new Loris Malaguzzi International Center, to name just a couple of the books that so inspired me over the years and made me think differently about the possibilities for the way children learn. Having visited Reggio Emilia, I can say that my experience inside some of these books was equally as enlightening as having set foot in some of these famous schools, and even as watching children at work in them.

I say all this to invite you to engage with our collection at the Debra S. Fish Early Childhood Resource Library, part of the St Paul Public Library system, where the Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota has donated over one hundred Reggio-inspired titles for you to borrow and disappear into yourself – unforgettable books like *Children, Art, Artists* or *The Diary of Laura* and so many more. Even better, these often hard-to-find books can be reserved online with your library card and sent to any public library that is close to you. Traveling on a plane isn't the only way to go and experience Reggio Emilia – do it through engaging with a book. Do it by yourself in a quiet chair at home, or better yet, do it with colleagues or friends in a book group and have a robust discussion about the ideas and questions you encounter. You might be able to disappear for a little while, and then reemerge, reinvigorated for the classroom this fall.

[You can see our list of books here](#)

## 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.

[Scholarship Information](#)

[Scholarship Application](#)

## In Gratitude: Barb Murphy

*Patti Loftus*

*The Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota is an organization of volunteers drawing from various contexts, throughout the Twin Cities. It's a (growing) number of motivated, inspired folks who offer their time, energy and talents on committees and as members of the Board. From time to time we will feature and thank some of those who have given so much, who have made the Network work!*



Barb Murphy, who is ending her tenure on the Network's Board deserves a special tribute. She has served as the Board chair since 2012 and is also the Executive Director of Grace Neighborhood Nursery School in Minneapolis.

A proponent of professional development who believes in the "ripple effect," Barb first learned about Reggio Emilia at an NAEYC Annual Convention in the late 80's. In particular, she was drawn to the creativity evident in the children's work. In 1998, she initiated the first gathering for anyone interested in the Reggio Emilia philosophy; seventy-five people showed up. This was the first meeting of what would later become the Minnesota Reggio Network and eventually the Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota.

Barb has served in multiple ways over the years. She was part of the steering committee that brought the “Hundred Languages” exhibit to St. Paul in 2004. She spoke about Reggio Emilia at state universities, incorporated ideas from Reggio in her own teaching and as former Director of the Shirley G. Moore Lab School at the University of Minnesota. She is a past president of MnAEYC and received the Evelyn House Award in 2015, given to a MnAEYC member who “has made a dynamic contribution to the lives of young children in Minnesota and to MnAEYC.”

Under her leadership as Network Board chair, Barb led annual Board retreats and helped to create an annual professional development gathering that came to be known as EEE (Enter, Encounter, Engage). She was instrumental in improving the Network’s bottom line by charging for monthly workshops to provide needed funds for Network initiatives. The Network is structurally and financially stronger because of her leadership.

Barb sees potential for the Network to grow further in partnering with others in the state around professional development, a collaboration she feels is essential for the Network to be relevant and continue to create those “ripples” that will have a larger positive impact on children and families.

Barb, when interviewed, expressed gratitude to the Network for the personal and professional development she has gained. In turn, we owe Barb our gratitude for the strength and direction she has brought to the Network.

## **Shop and Support**

Do you shop on Amazon? Use Amazon Smile: [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) when shopping at Amazon and designate the Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota to accept their donation. Amazon will donate .5% of your shopping total directly to the Reggio-Inspired Network of Minnesota with no expense to you!

For more news and events visit us at [www.mnreggio.org](http://www.mnreggio.org) and like us on **Facebook!**  
Send us an email: [reggioinspiredmn@gmail.com](mailto:reggioinspiredmn@gmail.com)

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