



Martha did two workshops with the Board last year, focused on working with our leadership to put into practice a strategic approach to equity in alignment with our mission and culture. In June 2021 the Board approved an amendment to the By-Laws, establishing the DEIB ad hoc committee as a standing Board committee, cementing our commitment. She is scheduled to hold two sessions with the Board in 2021-2022. And she will meet monthly this year with Admin on their roles, with the goal of infusing equity into our policies and procedures and systems, supporting what the faculty do in the classrooms.

Martha is genuinely impressed by the WSMS faculty: their deep engagement, readiness to share experiences, willingness to ask for support, and their rich, open and honest communications. As she has said, early childhood educators know how to move beyond DEIB as an intellectual exercise in order to make learning about equity a concrete experience for children.

Martha will expand her classroom coaching this year. Teachers will send her an agenda of their questions/ideas for discussion on curriculum, how to partner with parents, and their concerns. Martha will then foster dialogue, and provide resources and guidance.

As Mimi said so eloquently to the school community last year,

At WSMS, we have a long-standing commitment to creating an environment where every child and adult celebrates human diversity, recognizes injustice, and has the skill set to address it. We are working together to build an anti-bias community, a world in which all children are able to blossom, and each child's particular abilities and gifts are able to flourish.

Martha is helping us get there.

42 YEARS AT WSMS!



We had a lot to celebrate at the end of the 2020–21 academic year, but our happiness was tinged by the departure of WSMS teacher, Joan Shisler, after 42 amazing years.

Joan's time at WSMS began in September 1979, in 3E. She was hired as an Associate, working from 10:30 to 6:30, cementing her love of—and commitment to—working with children in what we now think of as LAP.

She quickly learned she was teaching parents as well as children (her student, Beatrice, would often say, "You were my daddy's teacher"), and she became adept in her collaborations and communications with families.

About 15 years ago, she took over the nature program from Naomi Stern, which brought her into every classroom to explore and celebrate the wonders of nature with the children. Joan is now "educating" her new puppy, Molly, and planning a trip to Belize.

Joan has lots of memories, including the AMS conference in Boston where she enjoyed the company of Dr. Gordon Mack, one of WSMS's first visiting scholars (and the father of Margot and Melissa). Another terrific memory was the 2010 trip to Ghana with six fellow teachers; they shared their teaching experience and were warmly welcomed into the lives and culture of the adults and children they met.

But, as Joan has said, "The greatest highlight has always been the interactions, the congeniality of all my fellow teachers, all the children and their parents I've had the privilege to meet, and the staff of WSMS. They have all so enriched my life."

When Joan announced her pending departure to her colleagues, she ended with a quote from Muhammad Ali: "Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on Earth."

Joan, you have enriched our lives, and we miss you!

