



NORTHEAST WOODLAND CHARTERED PUBLIC SCHOOL ANNUAL FESTIVALS

Rose Ceremony for incoming first graders- Each school year begins with our cherished Rose Ceremony. New eighth graders greet and present roses to the budding first graders as they begin their journey through the grades. The first graders stand in front of the other students and their families with reverence and joy. One by one, each eighth grader presents a rose to their new first grade “buddy” and then stands sportively behind him or her. This ceremony is celebrated in many Waldorf schools as a marker of an important rite of passage for the students. Entering the grades is something many of the kindergartners have looked forward to with anticipation and it marks a key developmental milestone as each child entering first grade has emerged from early childhood and is ready to learn academically. Roses are symbolic of this passage, since in many cultures they are a symbol of love, beauty, and blossoming.

Harvest Festival- Typically held in late September. Our Harvest Festival celebrates the bounty of the land, connects the children and community to the rhythms of nature, and fosters a sense of gratitude in the students. We gather to recognize our striving, both as individuals and as a community, and to foster our bravery to face the challenges of the school year ahead and the opportunities for inner growth that come in the quieter, darker half of the year. The fruits of the summer garden are shared with the warmth of soup and bread, and a sip of sweet apple cider. The children bring the magic of the season with songs and pageantry.

Lantern Walk- In the late autumn, around Halloween, we have a Lantern Walk for the early childhood and early grades. A festival marking the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter or the darker half of the year. The children make their lanterns in an effort to bring their inner light forth as the winter days grow shorter, darkness comes earlier, and the winter chill begins to sink in. Upper grades students help prepare the pathway the younger students will travel on while the younger grades teachers tell a story at the end of the walk. The story kindles our inner courage, so that it may grow and strengthen throughout the quieter, darker winter months.

Evergreen Spiral Walk- As the sun retreats and winter days grow colder, we come together for the special Evergreen Spiral Walk held in late December, close to the shortest day of the year. Each child walks a lush green path to light a candle in the center of a spiral. The child’s path toward the central candle represents a balance between the stillness we all feel during the depths of winter, and the preparation and expectancy of the return of outward growth around us in springtime. As the candles are lit and placed, the entire spiral is enlivened.

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chartered public school



Winter Fun Day- A day to celebrate our reverence for the outdoors and the magnificent valley we live in surrounded by mountains. Northeast Woodland highlights its dedication to outdoor education and therefore this day is spent doing all the activities we love to do in the depth of winter, such as sledding, snowshoeing, and snow sculptures. A great time to set up an obstacle course or scavenger hunt. Students will also have the opportunity to show off the skills they're learning in their outdoor education classes as well as demonstrate their knowledge of nature and environmental studies. We show reverence for the earth at this time of the year as its energy begins to restore itself after long months of resting.

May Flower Festival- May Flower Festival is a celebration to say farewell to winter and welcome to spring and is celebrated in the early month of May. We come together as a community to celebrate the warmth we feel inside and out and find joy in the abundance of life by which we are surrounded. In our community-wide celebration, we come together for dancing, singing, and crafts such as flower crown-making, while enjoying a picnic and BBQ. Our students present traditional dances along with other offerings to the public and it is a wonderful opportunity for fundraising by selling mums or other flowers and plants.

Rose Ceremony for graduating 8th graders- At the end of the school year, the Reverse Rose Ceremony takes place. The first graders, who have grown in height and confidence, offer roses to their eighth grade buddies marking another significant transition. The roses are also a gesture of gratitude to the older students who have accompanied the 1st grade students through their first year of formal schooling. The eighth graders graduate from one community formed by friends and teachers, to another community the students choose and foster on their own. During this ceremony of appreciation, each class also presents the 8th graders with a musical or artistic gift. It is customary for the faculty to do the same. To conclude the day, all staff members "line up" to shake hands with each student in order to bring proper closure as they send these graduates onto the next chapter in their lives.