

Charter Talk.....!

By Delano Jones

As promised I will continue to publish information relative to all charter schools, in addition to educating the Journey School community on how charter schools function and operate. Many have asked and often wonder how are we able to operate such a wonderful school like Journey with the funding we receive. I will tell you it is not an easy undertaking. Another frequently asked question is:

How are charter schools funded?

The Charter School Funding Model

The charter school funding model was created to provide charter schools with an operational funding level equivalent to a similar school district serving a similar pupil population. This funding model applies to all charter schools. It is comprised of two basic components, the **general purpose entitlement** and the **categorical block grant**. The general purpose entitlement is usually the largest source of unrestricted charter school revenue. It is driven by our Average Daily Attendance or more commonly referred to as ADA. Charters are funded for their current year ADA only and have no protection from declining enrollment. The general purpose entitlement is funded as the statewide average amount of general-purpose funding per unit of ADA received by school districts at four different grade levels: K-3, 4-6, 7-8, and 9-12. [Education Code 47632]. For the 2007-08 school year the charter school estimated funding rates per pupil are as follows:

General Purpose Entitlement

- Grades K-3 \$5589
- Grades 4-6 \$5673
- Grades 7-8 \$6765
- Grades 9-12 \$7265

Categorical Block Grant

- Grades K-3 \$500
- Grades 4-6 \$500
- Grades 7-8 \$500
- Grades 9-12 \$500

The general purpose entitlement is similar to revenue limits funding that school districts receive, in that it is funded by a combination of state aid and local funds. The local portion of funds, called the "**in-lieu of property tax**", is computed by multiplying the tax dollar amount per ADA of the sponsoring school district (Capistrano Unified School District), by the charter school's total ADA. The sponsoring school district is the district that approved the charter.

The balance of the general purpose entitlement is funded by state aid. The categorical block grant was created to provide charter schools with a flexible source of unrestricted funds consolidated from individual restricted categorical programs. Charter Schools are not eligible to apply separately for these programs. The state has established funding levels, based on the programs that comprise the block grant as \$500 per unit of ADA for 2007-08.

THE JOURNEY SOLSTICE

By John Bennett

December is a month embraced by a Thanksgiving of November, and the resolutions of New Year. It holds the Winter Solstice, the shortest day of least light—a time of year when externalities are drawn-in, and the future is symbolically compacted into an embryo as *seed*. After the Solstice, days grow long again ... light and warmth renew, and the *seed promise* will manifest. But *December* is a time for outlining our resolutions, and for working together concertedly in anticipation and celebration.

Journey participates actively and consciously in this seasonal rhythm. *Seed planning* began back in November with the annual visitation, not by Santa, but by a charter consultant, George Hoffecker, who helped focus our collective thought. He has called us to recognize the power of our *appreciations* in mental *images*, and he has challenged us to restate our Journey *seed thought* known as the *mission statement*. But ironically, no sooner did he make his appeal, that Journey shifted its direction towards a seemingly different focus. Suddenly we were met with opportunities for demonstrated gratitude in volunteer action. Opportunities for gift-giving and fund-raising build as volunteers staff the Book Fair, Fairy Market, and garden development. On December 13, Journey celebrates its traditional Winter Concert—recognizing our children's' efforts, and reaffirming our connectedness. Then, finally, on the last day of school, there is a Winter Solstice ceremony following a student Assembly.

So what has become of Mr. Hoffecker's request for reappraisal and restatement of the Journey *mission statement*? The Winter Solstice, a time when the sun "stands still" at its most southern latitude, is *not* recognized as a time to move forward. But this Solstice will soon pass and light will build again... days will lengthen, and time for reevaluations and redirection will again be upon us. Fortunately for administrators, the winter season is not over until the Vernal Equinox of March 22. By then, Journey's re-emergence from seed should again be recognized.



VISIT BY GEORGE HOFFECKER

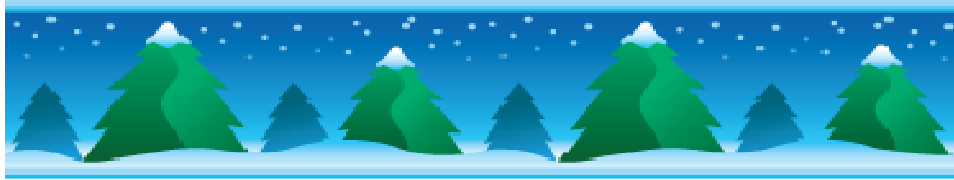
By John Bennett

In the week of November 6 through 9, consultant George Hoffecker was invited to Journey School for a site visit and "whole school system" consultation. During that week he observed teachers in their classrooms, coached and evaluated faculty, and attended meetings of the Journey School Council, Faculty and Parent Cabinet. He made an evening presentation to the school community and met with individual members of the parent body, Council, Faculty and Administration. The following observations will surely be of interest to you.

- Journey School is located on a beautiful former CUSD traditional elementary school site in a lovely neighborhood next to parklands; ample room for growth
- Many parents express gratitude for what their children are receiving at Journey School and for what they are receiving as adults
- Journey employs Waldorf trained faculty with significant teaching experience in several of the grades as well as kindergarten
- Journey should be proud to celebrate its first eighth grade class graduation.
- Journey employs a Public charter school expert as business administrator with extensive knowledge of school systems, charter financing and charter regulations
- The newly created position of Pedagogical Administrator potentially provides direction and leadership for Faculty
- There is a Waldorf-supportive remedial teacher on staff
- There is a highly trained Waldorf handwork teacher with dedicated handwork room
- Journey has a dedicated music and movement room
- Journey has an excellent Games program with ample space
- And a professional quality DVD has been produced by member of the Council which should be of great marketing value.

Mr. Hoffecker has recommendations for Administration, Faculty, Parents, and Council to enhance the school's opportunities for continued success. His recommendations will be communicated to the different groups for their review and adoption.





HEORGE HOFFECKER COMMUNITY LECTURE

By John Bennett

On November 7, consultant George Hoffeecker spoke of the benefit and power inherent in parents' holding a common positive *image* of Journey school. This topic continued a theme introduced last year, when he said we should not focus on negative images, as doing so wastes time and energy, tends to draw in more negativity, and redirects potentially long-range planning toward reactive short-term solutions.

This year, Mr. Hoffeecker led the assembly through a group visualization of the *positive* images we hold of Journey, and the ways in which Journey meets our diverse needs. He noted that Journey is passing through what he termed its "7-year change", as it expands into new classes, surroundings, and governance. His purpose was to help us find our commonality in the midst of change, unite us in our common appreciations, and direct us to build on our strengths. It will interest you that parents offered dozens of appreciations, including:

- Children can remain children longer
- Stress on children is reduced
- Media is eliminated
- Creativity is fostered
- Children are enthusiastic
- Teachers care for their students and share advice with parents
- There is a sense of community
- Parents enjoy opportunities for personal growth and participation
- The education is available to the public

Mr. Hoffeecker then inquired "What are the needs being met by these appreciations?" Parents' answers included:

- Enjoyment of Learning
- Creative self-expression
- Connection and collaboration with teacher
- Need of students to feel heard and understood
- Need for positive role-models
- Need for belonging
- Safe environment for each developmental stage
- Nurturing of soul and imagination

In this context, Mr. Hoffeecker then advised that the mission of the school should be reviewed and restated, and he encouraged the Community to dialogue toward a common restatement. As he repeated this message to all the governance groups during his visit, you should expect opportunities to involve yourself in a *mission statement* reassessment.

In this and future newsletters, we invite letters and photographs from members of the community. The following is a letter from student Amelia Tanner.

A STUDENT PROFILE

Dear Family and Friends,

I was asked by Mr. Jones to write my favorite things about Journey School. First, I want to start with kindness. Everyone is kind to you a lot of the time, for instance, when people give you compliments it feels great inside and the person who said it probably feels great inside too. We all are kind of like a family. When the school year starts there is the rose ceremony and the 8th graders give the 1st graders roses. When they do that my sister told me she felt like she could go to them anytime and they would be happy to help her. I know I will be happy to give a rose because I know it will probably give joy to that person.

I also like the way the lessons are taught. I had a hard time in math when I was in my other school. I would dread math. I had help but I still dreaded math. When I moved here to Journey School I fully understood my timetables and division. Now I am one of the first ones to show my answer or raise my hand. I love all the subjects. Personally, I could not pick one out. I love school. I am really glad Mr. Jones asked me to write this because I thought of a lot of great things about Journey School. I hope you remember and think of them too.

Sincerely,
Amelia Tanner
Mrs. Northrip's class

P.S. If you see me on campus be sure to tell me why you think Journey is such a great school.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR REMINDERS

(Remember everyone is committed to complete 50 volunteer hours.)

SUNDAY DECEMBER 9

Calling all *Fairy Market* Volunteers

Fairy Market is in need of volunteers for:

Set-up on Sunday afternoon (Dec 9) at 3pm

If you can help please contact Jan Geisendorfer at (949) 495-5187

Or Lisa O'Neill at (949)498-5657

SUNDAY DECEMBER 9

Dear Parents and Volunteers, It's time to renovate the garden! The butterflies are done and we are ready to mount them and complete the restoration of the 3rd grade garden. We need volunteers (including children to haul dirt in a bucket brigade) to help **this SUNDAY DECEMBER 9, at 9:00 a.m.**

This is the plan:

- Clean up garden area and remove trash and debris (we will not touch existing projects or plants the children have planted)
- Install planter beds and irrigation system
- Install butterflies on wall
- Plant vines and plants along wall
- Repair and paint fence
- Fill planter boxes with new dirt and install new mulch groundcover

It sound like a lot but if we have enough volunteers we can do it. We also need the following supplies:

- 2 x 6 lumber for tops of planter boxes
- 4 x 4 recycled impact posts from Ganahl Lumber for planter bed borders (6 posts)
- #4 rebar pieces (to anchor bed borders)
- Paint for fence, 3-4 gallons (color to complement existing color of fence since we are just painting outside of fence)
- ¾" white PVC pipe and fitting (about 200 linear feet)
- In ground box for sprinkler valves and timer
- 6 station sprinkler timer

I am supplying 7 yds of dirt, 9 yards of ground mulch, butterflies and \$2,400.00 in composting equipment donated from Greenculture.com.

I guarantee this will look awesome when it is finished. Please make yourself a part of the experience. We really need you.

Thomas S. Gruenbeck 949-683-3362

MONDAY DECEMBER 10TH & TUESDAY DECEMBER 11TH

Fairy Market in Multipurpose Room

Calling all *Fairy Market* Volunteers

Fairy Market is in need of volunteers for:

Being a Fairy on Monday (all day) and Tuesday morning

Clean-up Tuesday afternoon at 1pm

If you can help please contact Jan Geisendorfer at (949) 495-5187

Or Lisa O'Neill at (949)498-5657

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 12

*JOURNEY STUDENTS RECEIVE **FREE ADMISSION TO OUR GREEN SEMINAR!***

Tickets are available to purchase online at <http://www.journeyschool.net/greenseminar.htm> for the Green Seminar on December 12 for \$8 each. Our Journey students may attend free of charge! There will also be 2 small rooms in the rear of the sanctuary for mothers with young children to hear the lecture. Please let us know if you require additional childcare.

*Janette Loreto Phone: 949.369.1194 Cell: 949.201.6394 Fax: 775.667.1450
Email: janettel@cox.net*

WEDNESDAYS DECEMBER 12 & 19 (Wednesdays)

**ANNOUNCING THE RETURN OF RECYCLING ON WEDNESDAYS!
(VIA THIS PAPERLESS FLYER!)**

**STARTING WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5TH, THE JOURNEY 7TH GRADE
WILL BE HAPPY TO COLLECT YOUR EMPTY BOTTLES AND CANS**



**PLEASE LOOK FOR OUR (RECYCLED DRAPERY) GREEN BANNERS AS A REMINDER!
THANKS IN ADVANCE FROM THE 7TH GRADE!!**

December 12 & 19 (Wednesdays)

Support Our Teachers!

Would you like to show your support and appreciation for our wonderful teachers?

Here's how:

Signup to provide a soup, salad and bread lunch for a Wednesday anytime throughout the rest of the school year!

The Hospitality Committee is providing Soup, Salad and Bread Lunches for Our Teachers on Wednesdays! This gives the teachers a relaxed opportunity to commune with their peers and build their community.

We would love volunteers motivated to show their support by providing a Wednesday Lunch. If you are so inspired (and we hope you are)...

Please contact Susan Hahn, Hospitality Chair

Partyhahn@aol.com

Or (949) 443-1134

Signup Today and Show Your Support!

THURSDAY DECEMBER 13

Winter Concert and Dessert Reception

Performers' arrive at 5:30PM; Concert starts at 6:30PM.

There is a dessert reception following the concert.

Located at:

Laguna Niguel Elementary

27922 Niguel Heights Blvd.

Laguna Niguel 92677

SATURDAY DECEMBER 15

Thank you for those of you that volunteered to help with the bleachers last week. Unfortunately the weather did not cooperate. It is likely the ground will be mud again this weekend so I think that project will be put off until Saturday, December 15, 2008, 8:00 a.m. Thomas S. Gruenbeck

FRIDAY DECEMBER 21

Grades 1-8 Assembly. Assembly dress required. Last Day. 12:35 Dismissal

As the Parent Handbook is recently completed, it is appropriate to review two policies concerning Dress Code and Communication/Conflict Resolution.

DRESS CODE POLICY

(From Parent Handbook)

The objective of our school is to nurture and protect childhood. We would like to create a simple environment that is truly childhood-friendly. Please hold these thoughts in your consciousness as you and your child are making wardrobe selections. Clothing, backpacks, lunch boxes/baskets and any other accessories be free of media advertisements, references to drugs, alcohol, racism, sexism and or violence, slogans, cartoons, and caricatures when at school. Commercial logos on clothing should be smaller than standard shirt pocket size. For safety, sandals and shoes must be as flat as possible, and have a heel strap. And, as kindergarten children are taught to tie shoes, shoes with laces are preferred.

Journey School expects that students adhere to the following:

- Dress should be conducive to the work and activities of school and should be weather appropriate. Thus camouflage and large or violent images and inappropriate language on clothing are not allowed.
- Jackets and sweaters should be labeled with first and last name.
- Hats are acceptable when worn **outside** for the purpose of protection from heat or cold.
- Tops and dresses with straps at least 1” wide are acceptable.
- Dresses may be no shorter than two (2) inches above the knee.
- Midriff tops and undergarments that show are prohibited.
- Lipstick, make-up, brightly colored nail polish and tattoos are prohibited.
- Shorts may be no shorter than the second (2nd) thumb knuckle when measured with hands down by side.
- Any apparel, jewelry or change in physical appearance, such as hair dye and body piercing, that distracts from the learning environment is prohibited.
- 7th and 8th Graders may wear light mascara.
- Shoes with wheels are prohibited
- Shoes with laces preferred in kindergarten.

Decisions regarding appropriateness are at the discretion of Journey School Faculty. In case your child arrives at school dressed inappropriately, we will give you a courtesy call so that you may bring replacement clothes or the teacher will give the student appropriate attire to wear for the day. If persistent violations of the Dress Code occur, the Faculty and or the Administrative Coordinator may take further action up to but not limited to meeting with parent(s) to discuss and review Dress Code Policy.

COMMUNICATION & CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICIES

(From Parent Handbook)

COMMUNICATION MODEL

Direct communication lines are the vehicles that Journey School uses to foster understanding and to resolve conflicts as they arise. These pathways form a structure and process that encourage parties who have concerns or who are involved in a conflict to reach resolution or agree to disagree.

TO WHOM DO I SPEAK?

Journey School works through a four-fold governance structure that allows for community decision-making and open communication. Please review the following to know whom to speak to concerning a specific question or concern:

General Questions concerning daily operations, policy or procedural issues, events, committee work, enrollment, childcare, carpooling, school newsletter, etc. should be addressed to the Administrative Coordinator or designated office staff. Parent committees handle many of the support functions of the school. The School Administrative Coordinator will help direct you to the appropriate person.

Questions Concerning Your Child should be addressed to your child's teacher. We feel that healthy, open communication between parent and teacher is essential for your child's educational experience. If you need to relay a message to the teacher, sending a simple note with your child is best. In the event that the message requires dialogue, communicate directly with the teacher after school or leave a message at the office to schedule an appointment. Although a teacher's home phone numbers may be listed in the class directories, we respectfully request that courtesy be given to the teacher's home life. Ask yourself if the matter can wait until tomorrow. If yes, please do so.

Questions Related to Educational Issues such as curriculum, teaching methods, classroom management, and teacher-student relationships should be addressed to the Faculty Council.

Questions Regarding Capistrano Unified School District should be addressed to the School Administrator.

Questions Pertaining to Legal or Financial Issues should be addressed to the School Administrator or the Journey School Council. Contacting your class Parent Representative is the first step to contacting the Council.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Journey School encourages that conflict resolution in our community starts with direct communication with the involved parties.

- 1. Direct Resolution** If you have a question or concern, go directly to the person(s) listed under the "To whom do I speak?" categories.
- 2. Administrative Resolution** The Administrative Resolution process consists of a meeting between the parties involved with the Administrative Coordinator in attendance. This attempt is to be done prior to requesting formal resolution.
- 3. Formal Resolution** Formal Resolution consists of the submission of a written complaint or grievance to the Administrative Coordinator, who then will delegate the matter to the appropriate persons.
- 4. Arbitrated Resolution** In extreme cases, an Arbitrated Resolution can be used, consisting of a meeting or meetings between the involved parties with an impartial third party. After hearing both parties, the arbitrator will then render his or her decision, which will be binding on both parties. This is the final step in the Conflict Resolution process.

GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

Grievance cases shall be handled on an individual basis and submitted in written form. At this time, the formation of a temporary Grievance Committee can be formed as follows:

1. If the case concerns a staff member other than the Administrative Coordinator, then a team consisting of the Administrative Coordinator, a Faculty member and/or Council member and, if so desired, another parent will offer mediation in a timely manner.
2. If the case concerns the Administrative Coordinator; Council members will determine the strategy and/ or mediation team make-up.
3. If the case concerns a Faculty member; one or two other Faculty members in conjunction with the Administrative Coordinator and, if so desired, a Council member will offer mediation.
4. Whenever the case concerns parents amongst each other, a mutually agreeable team of Faculty and Administrative Coordinator can be chosen to offer mediation.

