Dear Journey School Friends and Family,

At Back to School Night, we launched this year’s voluntary CLOSE-THE-GAP pledge program. We discussed the priceless gift of public Waldorf education and how families can support it. We then asked you to return your Close-the-Gap pledge form by Friday, September 23rd.

You may return the pledge form to the office or your child’s teacher. Please know this deadline is important because the school is in the middle of its annual budget revision process and needs reliable data to inform important decisions. For your information, highlights from the Close-the-Gap presentation are included below. Thank you for your endless support. **Together, let’s leave weave a wonderful legacy for generations to come!**

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### What were some key highlights from the Close-the-Gap discussion?

- Journey School offers a unique educational program that honors your child’s yearning for **relationship** and **purpose**.

- Journey School educates students in the best of the **renaissance tradition**, where all disciplines are imaginately woven together to inspire each student.

- The **renaissance** education offered at Journey School is a bargain compared to many other schools.

- We provide superb class sizes, a nurturing campus environment, well trained teachers, a robust specialty and arts program, high-quality student supplies, and a rigorous curriculum tailored to challenge your child as they **come of age**.
Private schools charge upwards of $15,000 per year in order to cover the costs of a Waldorf educational program.

- **Charter schools**, on the other hand, are funded through public funds and receive only $5,000 to $6,000 per student annually.

This equates to a **PER STUDENT funding gap** of approximately $5,000 to $10,000. We ask that you help us “Close the Gap” between the cost of our priceless education and the amount of revenue received from the state.

- **All gifts are voluntary, confidential, and have no bearing on your status in the Journey School Community.**

- Please give generously. For some, that may mean $10.00 a month—the cost of coffee. For others, it may mean $10,000 a month.

- Last year, over 70% of Journey families participated in the “Close the Gap” pledge campaign and donated nearly $130,000 in 2010-11. THANK YOU!

- **THIS Year’s GOAL IS 90% PARTICIPATION and $250,000.**

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**How will Close-the-Gap monies be used?**

1. We not only have Main Class Teachers, but we run a whole **specialty program** that is underfunded relative to what we would like to see. While we’ve assembled a great team and offer many opportunities students in traditional schools just don’t get, we can build a much stronger program.

   - We need to start by offering more competitive compensation packages for our specialists so we can retain, attract, and grow the best educators in the region.

   - In addition to higher wages, our specialists need more planning time and training opportunities. Let’s support them so they can deliver superb service to our kids without disruptive programmatic or personnel changes.
2. When it comes to Main Class Teachers, we need livable and competitive compensation packages.
   
   - While we are pleased teachers recently received a much needed salary enhancement, we have not yet gone far enough.
   - Additionally, we have a fabulous middle school team, including extra doses of English Language Arts and Mathematics support. But, this is not cheap. We need your help so the middle school program may continue to thrive. You can read more about the middle school’s impressive achievement results at www.journeyschool.net.

3. Our class sizes are arguably the best in the region’s public sector because that is what our specialized program requires.
   
   - Right now, the class size capacity is 22 in Kindergarten and about 26 in the 8 grades.
   - If we were to go 30 like traditional schools we would add about $300,000 to the annual budget each year.
   - Our intimate program is wonderful, but not cheap.

4. We are currently providing robust assistant support in handwork, first grade, and kindergarten because it’s the right thing to do in these high-need areas. Please help strengthen and secure these vital services.

5. On top of all of this, as a charter school, we pay rent and other huge costs which traditional schools simply don’t incur.

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**Finally, how has Journey School demonstrated fiscally responsibility in recent years?**

1. Over the past 2 years, Journey School has worked hard to become a fiscally responsible organization. For a personal appointment to discuss how we manage money, please contact Mr. Shaheer at administrator@journeyschool.net.

2. In the meantime, we’ve listed some recent financial accomplishments to demonstrate our successful track record over the past two years. These accomplishments fall under the school’s 4th priority area, also known as “BIG ROCK #4.”
**Big Rock #4 Results: Grow and Leverage School Resources**

- Expanded the financial reserves over a two year period by approximately $370,000, which equals roughly 20% of the school’s annual budget.
  - In spite of a decline in state revenue of approximately $300,000 over the past 3 years, Journey is now in closer alignment with recommended reserve levels for charter schools.
  - The school is now better protected from future economic hardship and can better pursue its strategic goals such as teacher retention, a successful specialty program and a permanent campus solution.

![Net Assets Graph](image)

- Contracted with reputable and effective business management firm, ExEd, and developed a partnership with a dedicated account manager.
- Increased capacity and transparency in the school’s financial realm resulting in increased levels of trust within the school community.
- Established new charitable pledge program, called Close-the-Gap.
  - Donations were received in 2010-11 for 186 students, representing 72% of all families and bringing in over $125,000.
- Increased demand for and satisfaction with Journey School’s educational program as evidenced by:
  - Class capacity has been reached in many grades.
- Substantial wait lists have been established in most grades.
- Attrition rates have fallen by approximately 50%.
- Long-standing school aspirations for expansion are now being implemented.

- Journey School receives most of its income from state revenues based on Average Daily Attendance of our students. We exceeded enrollment and attendance goals for 2009-10 by 2.5% and in 2010-11 by 3.5%.
*Note: Enrollment is currently approximately 275.

- Exceeded 70% volunteerism rate for Journey school families in 2009:
  - Most families volunteered more than 50 hours in 2009.
  - This translated into about 7000 annual hours of volunteerism.
  - Despite a slightly lower rate of participation in 2010, we look forward to a significant boost in 2011.

- Journey School’s end-of-year cash balances have steadily grown:
- Journey School’s net income has grown in spite of significant state cuts:

![Journey School Net Income Over Time](img)

- Notice the drop in state revenue:

![Charter School ADA Funding Rates](img)