

Journey School
A California Public Charter School

June 23, 2011

APPROVED ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

APPROVED ON 10/27/2011

At Journey School

Conference Room

27102 Foxborough

Aliso Viejo, Ca 92656

Journey School Office: (949) 448-7232

www.journeyschool.net

Roll Call:

Marc Damikolas, Council President: Present

Dr. Kris Powell, Council Vice President: Present. Left at 11 pm.

Jon Kaplan, Council Treasurer: Absent

Jan Geisendorfer, Council Secretary: Present

Kimberly Brown, Council Member: Present

Diana Graber, Council Member: Present

Parent Cabinet Member: VACANT

Bonnie River, Educational Trustee Member: Present

Also present: Administrator Shaheer Faltas and guests Michelle Spieker and Franci Sassin

	AGENDA ITEM	SPONSOR
1	Call to Order, Roll Call and Review of Norms/Roles Meeting was called to order at 6:45 pm.	Marc Damikolas
2	Inspirational Passage The Council members acknowledged Kim and Marc's service on the board and as President. Marc quoted Victor Franckl that one's attitude is the most important element and that can't ever be taken away.	
3	Approval of Agenda Motion was made by Marc to approve the agenda, seconded by Kris and	Marc Damikolas

	approved unanimously	
4	<p>PUBLIC COMMENT:</p> <p>1. Name of person: Diana Graber</p> <p>Brief description of comment: Diana commented in her capacity as a parent regarding the gift policy that was raised in public comment last time. She noted that historically families have helped to pick up the “extra” and be generous at the end of the year and holiday because the teachers are not compensated adequately in the charter school. She would not like to see anything that discourages that practice.</p>	
5	<p>Consent Agenda Items:</p> <p>Kim asked to pull the item A. i and item F. On item F she had a question regarding the school calendar relative to negotiations.</p> <p>Jan asks to pull item B because she couldn’t open the file to review the document.</p> <p>A. Approval of Minutes:*</p> <p>i. Revised Minutes from February 24 and March 6, 2011</p> <p>ii. Minutes from regular meeting May 24, 2011</p> <p>B. Consolidated Application 2011-12 Part I*: Review and approval of Consolidated Application for federal funds and reporting</p> <p>C. Contract with ExED for 2011-12*: Review and approval of contract with ExED for fiscal and payroll services for 2011-12 fiscal year.</p> <p>D. Contract with Orange County Department of Education for STRS and PERS reporting for 2011-12*</p> <p>E. Authorization to open bank account at Wells Fargo for payroll processing, and approval of resolution to do so</p> <p>F. School Calendar and Instructional Minutes for 2011-12*: Review and approval of student and attendance calendars and instructional minutes</p> <p>Motion was made to approve all remaining consent items as written by Marc, seconded by Kris and approved unanimously.</p>	

	<p>For Item A. i there was no discussion, and the motion was made to the minutes as written by Diana, seconded by Marc. Kim abstained as she was not present at the February meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.</p> <p>For Item B the board reviewed the document briefly. Shaheer will be verifying some data to be included in final draft, which will be submitted by deadline, and he will let Board see the final draft after it is complete. Marc asked what Journey does with the free/reduced lunch data. Shaheer said the school collects the data for reporting and funding purposes, but does not currently provide lunches, but the school may look into it in future.</p> <p>A motion was made to approve the 2011-12 Con App Part I by Kris, with appropriate additions to be made prior to submission. The motion was seconded by Marc and approved unanimously.</p> <p>For Item F, Kim wanted to be certain that the calendar does not reflect any changes to teacher days or instructional minutes since those items are in negotiations currently.</p> <p>Kim also asked about the schedule during parent teacher conference week, and Shaheer explained the plan for that week.</p> <p>A motion was made by Marc to approve the calendar and instructional minutes, it was seconded by Kris and approved unanimously.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>INFORMATION ITEMS:</p> <p><i>A. Financial Report:</i></p> <p><i>1. Report from ExED on May financials*</i></p> <p>Larry reported that he had the same news as he did for May, that the school is doing well, he is forecasting a positive position at the end of the school year, his projections have gone up from 102K to about 127K. The school has been very conservative in spending, plus there was an increase at P2 of 8 ADA. The school has plenty of cash and reserves, and will be entering next year on a sound foundation.</p> <p>Larry went over the forecast and reviewed the dashboard.</p> <p>Marc noted a cash decrease in June. Larry responded that mostly is due to the lack of revenue coming in. Shaheer noted that there will</p>	<p><i>Larry Tamayo</i></p> <p><i>Shaheer Faltas</i></p>

be some large expenses in June to get set up for next year.

Larry provided a state Budget update. The legislature put forward a budget, it was vetoed by governor, as he wants the tax extensions in the budget. ExED is still budgeting based on SSC recommendations, and due to this budget instability and uncertainty, ExEd is still estimating 11-12 revenue as conservatively as possible.

Marc asked about field trip costs. Shaheer reported that the field trip was around \$255 per person for 7th grade field trip.

2. Administrative Update:

Shaheer provided written recommendations and update. He wanted to be sure to remind the board of the very good things that happened over the course of the last school year. His report was organized by the Big Rocks.

He went over the lease issue history, and reported that it is being wrapped up now, and that he will discuss this further with a later agenda item.

Shaheer announced that the Compassionate Campus program will be launched next year. It is similar to the Social inclusion model by Kim John Payne that Journey used in the past. Master Scheduling will allow all classes to do a 'civics' class at the same time. Parents and the entire community will work on the project, with Bonnie leading.

Shaheer reported on teacher training. He asks that all learning plans contain the student goals to start and then main lesson block plans will be developed from those and shared weekly between teachers. Also included will be how each goal will be assessed. He is planning a Title I support program for students who need extra support in learning. He will give a ZOOM presentation in fall on student state assessment data.

Shaheer is planning to have project based learning scheduled into each class' schedule and it will be based on main lesson for each block. The class will work in groups. Presentations will occur.

He noted that the trimester reports will be strengthened and new instructional materials are being purchased as well. In addition, the school has hired an Ed Director who is a leader in the field and Journey now has more visibility in Waldorf charter community.

Shaheer commented that the RSC hybrid training program was well worth the increase funds that go to teachers and it is a good recruitment tool as well.

For future years, he plans to increase the Specialty over next years, and also to find a way to increase class teacher salaries.

Finally, he mentioned that Parent Ed modules, supported by Bonnie, will be put into place next year, and they are recruiting experts to run these in sequence and also at the same time, build capacity with staff for parent training in future.

Kim commented that the last Trimester reports came out too late to be useful and Shaheer replied that the parent conferences and trimester reports are moved earlier next year.

Kim also noted that she had received questions from the community on the civics and students “voting” on who is “fair” and that this possibly was creating a popularity contest. She asked that staff be sensitive to parental concerns about this that are surfacing.

Kim noted that while the board had tried to put things in place for the school, but that it had great leadership in Shaheer to get all this done.

3. *Faculty Update:* Shaheer noted that most faculty were at summer training now. Shaheer again noted what a big decision it was to begin the Waldorf training program for the teachers.

4. *Parent Cabinet Update:* Shaheer attended the Parent Cabinet meeting. There was not a Parent Cabinet rep to give a report.

5. *Update on work with Journey School Teachers’ Association (note that actual content of negotiations are discussed during closed session):* Kim noted that the group was making headway, she will make some specific recommendations in closed session. The process is on target with its internal agenda and timelines for negotiations.

Kim Brown

6. *Report on Follow-up for Previous Board Items: What*

Jan Geisendorfer

	<p><i>commitments were made and did we follow through?</i> Jan will be putting together and reviewing the past minutes to see if there are any additional items for follow up, and in addition, she will be working on making sure binders with minutes etc. are all updated.</p>	
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DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of Preliminary 2011-12 Budget

Shaheer went over the budget committee priorities. He had included info in his recommendations that were reviewed earlier.

Larry commented that this budget was developed despite state fiscal uncertainty. They kept in the \$350 per ADA cut, so if funding end up being better, it will free up resources for school and the school can revisit the budget in the fall. The committee went through each line as well as all the assumptions, such as ADA percentage. Is a very tight but balanced budget, but since it is conservative on both revenue and expenses, plus the school has a good reserve, so even if the school ends up going into a deficit for 2011-12, it can withstand some of that.

Larry went over the state deferrals and the various revenue sources.

Board members noted that there is no money currently in grants and they would like to change that if the school can get more active in this area.

On the section of the budget that shows the staff schedule, the salary schedule increases are shown. Larry noted that some cuts to staff costs are shown to balance out the budget and he recommends that the Council adopting the budget with this staffing plan, but with the understanding that those cuts will be restored if possible. Larry noted that adopting the budget does not create any obligations to have any particular contract amounts, as the budget is just the target/estimate.

A motion was made to approve the budget by Marc, Jan seconded the motion and added the direction that Shaheer's contract be executed within the next week. The motion was approved unanimously.

B. Class Size and Capacity: Consideration of proposal to increase class size, pending formula for allocation of additional funds to teacher compensation

First of all, Shaheer noted that this issue is time sensitive. Board members asked about the wait lists—are they OK? Shaheer replied that they are in good shape now, but they may not be if he waits any longer. Marc wants to be sure it is noted that this would be an informal concession. There is an issue with the informal “approval” of this via JTA vs. waiting until this item is done through formal negotiation process. Questions about the details of the proposal were raised and the Board discussed details of the proposal. The discussed a few items, but also determined that the details could be worked out later and that the goal was to keep the maximum flexibility. The Board

discussed the need to have some type of cap on class size while maintaining the flexibility. They discussed the impact of class size on the culture of the school and each class. In particular, they discussed the impact of adding a high PERCENT of NEW students to a class.

The Board asked whether the attorney should review it. It was agreed that it would be a good idea to have it reviewed, especially with respect to negotiations. They agreed that Administration should have discretion regarding class size.

A motion was made by Marc to approve the proposal with maximum class size of 30 students. The motion was seconded by Kris and approved unanimously.

C. Fiscal Policies: Consideration of fiscal policies and administrative practices/procedures, as revised to reflect Journey School and ExEd best practices

The Board discussed the contract threshold. They also discussed the Board's role in the internal controls.

A motion was made to approve the fiscal policies as presented by Diana, it was seconded by Marc and approved unanimously.

D. Hiring Policy: Consideration of Board Hiring Policy

Shaheer opened the discussion by asking, "What is council's role?" He believes that the Administrator should have the ability to do the hiring as part of his job.

Council members noted that there is a need to have checks and balances—and to completely delegate is too risky because the school doesn't yet have all the processes in place.

Shaheer commented that he has what he needs right now. But that this policy is based on best practices. If the Council leaves the hiring policies as they are currently, it will be OK as long as the school has a high functioning administrator and board.

Kris commented on her experience with hiring in school districts. Because they are so large and complex, the principal makes a recommendation and it goes to board, but the board approves on consent for most staff. For principal positions, or other high level administrators, the final decision goes to the school board, and depending on community, there is an approval by board.

One suggestion was to add "Subject to final board approval" as part of the

hiring process.

Marc commented that the Board could have all hirings on consent. Council members did not feel that they were ready to approve this policy at this time.

Diana and Jan agreed to take responsibility for revising the hiring policy and bringing it back for future consideration, ideally in August. They will consider the relative role of administration and the Board, and the checks and balances and Journey's needs.

E. Facilities Lease: Update on status of 11-12 lease and delegation to negotiator if needed*

Shaheer reported that CUSD promised to renew the current lease, but there is now a version that the CUSD Board will be approving which has some changes and modifications for next year compared to the current year lease.

He noted also that there was an increase in the square footage in the lease that is based on CUSD's new measurements and calculations. This will likely result in an 18 thousand dollar annual increase.

CUSD has agreed to do some modifications to the buildings to accommodate the new kindergarten.

CUSD has promised a multi year lease by Aug 31.

CUSD Board will be approving the lease proposal on June 29.

Kim wanted to ask Larry and legal counsel: what is the legal right of the district to charge for a lease of facilities that have been given to them for the use of public school students.

No action was taken.

F. Council Business, Development and Training:

- 1. Council retreat for August 23, 2011 for training and best practices, in conjunction with August Council meeting**

It was suggested that when a new Council member comes on, there should already be materials prepared. Examples would be orientation, norms, beliefs, goals, training, strategic planning, welcoming. The retreat could be done on the day of the August meeting. Aug 25 would be the day then, not August 23.

The Council members agreed that it would be good to set up an retreat as a best practice and do this every year. Some suggested topics were:

orientation, teamwork, training, visioning/strategic planning, board calendar for events and reporting, ethics training, Bylaws, board terms and the Brown Act.

It was suggested that it could be planned for 1 pm to 4 pm.

Administration will put together materials in a binder. Kris will help from Council end. Jon could help also.

*2. Council Nominating Committee Recommendations:
Review of recommendations and election of Council
members*

Diana reported on informal interviews of four candidates. One candidate ended up being more skilled and interested in curriculum matters and not really in the Council. She may be better suited for administrative committee work instead. All other of the three candidates are well suited to Council. Therefore, the Nominating Committee nominates Michelle Spieker, Colleen Patterson and Michael Corbo to fill the two current vacancies, plus Michelle would start in the vacancy created when Diana's term is over this summer.

It was noted that the teachers are requesting to have two members to the Council. Also, the District will continue to have the option to appoint a member in future at their discretion, as per the law.

There was a discussion regarding the "Interested party" rules for the corporation, plus conflict of interest issues for board members.

Marc made a motion which was seconded by Kris to approve Mike Corbo and Colleen Patterson to start at the next meeting to fill the current vacancy, plus to take the position vacated by the end of Kim's term, and that Michelle Spieker would start when Diana's term is over. The terms for all three positions would end after the meeting in June, 2013. The motion was approved unanimously.

Kim made a motion to nominate Marc to renew his term on the board for one more year until June 2012. Kris seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

*3. Council Officers: Nomination and approval of Council
officers for 2011-12*

Various members were discussed for the office of President. Jan stated that she was not very comfortable being President at this time, she is not very well informed on the job of the President, however, she is willing to do whatever the board feels it needs, including not being an officer at all. She would not

mind continuing as Secretary, as long as someone else would be able to actually take the draft minutes during the meetings and prepare them for review.

Kris commented that she doesn't like to run the meetings so VP may not be her best position. She also does not need to continue to be an officer.

Jon had stated that he would be willing to do either President or Treasurer.

Marc stated that he doesn't want to continue as President, there are strong candidates now and so he is willing to hand over the gavel. It is better to have someone with more ability to make a commitment of time to Journey. He thinks President should be able to meet before each meeting with Administration.

Shaheer commented that he would like to see the President have some visibility on campus and also at community meetings, school events, etc.

Shaheer alerted the board that Mike Corbo would be willing to serve as treasurer, as he was a past treasurer of the Journey Council.

Marc nominated Kris as VP, Jan as secretary, Jon as President, and Mike Corbo as Treasurer.

Kris nominated Jan as President, Jon as Treasurer, Kris as the VP, and the Secretary would be open until a new member was able to accept.

Diana made a motion to approve the nominations made by Marc for Jon for President, Kris for VP, Jan for Secretary and Mike Corbo for Treasurer. The motion was seconded by Kim and approved unanimously.

4. *Council communications:* Diana will be speaking at National Conference for Media Literacy educators in Philadelphia in July.

8	<p>CLOSED SESSION: <i>The meeting will now convene to closed session to discuss the matters described below:</i></p> <p>A. <i>Pursuant to Government Code §54957: Public Employee Performance Evaluation , Title: Administrative Support positions</i></p> <p>B. <i>Pursuant to Government Code §54957: Public Employment , Titles: Specialty Teacher, Instructional Support and Administrative Support positions</i></p> <p>C. <i>Pursuant to Government Code §54957: CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR:</i></p> <p><i>Agency designated representative: Shaheer Faltas.</i></p> <p><i>Employee Organization: Journey School Teachers Association</i></p> <p>A motion was made to adjourn into Closed Session by Marc, seconded by Kris and approved unanimously. The Council adjourned into closed session at 10 pm. The following guests were invited into closed session to participate in the discussion: Shaheer Faltas, Michelle Spieker and Franci Sassin.</p>	Marc Damikolas
9	<p>RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION: <i>The meeting was reconvened to open session at: 11 p.m.</i></p>	Marc Damikolas
10	<p>PUBLIC REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN IN CLOSED SESSION <i>(includes the vote or abstention of every member present).</i></p> <p>No action was taken.</p>	Marc Damikolas
11	<p>DISCUSSION/ACTION:</p> <p><i>Kris Powell left the meeting at 11:00 pm.</i></p> <p>A. <i>Staff Hiring: Approval of administrative recommendation for instructional and administrative support positions;</i></p> <p>Following a brief discussion, a motion was made by Kim to hire: Liz Clark for Handwork, Rita Cabezas for Spanish and intervention specialist, Jan Poth for strings, Diana Corbo for music and the Specialty coordination position, Billy Alexander for guitar/music, Catherine Ji, Karen Dillingham and Elisebeth Sotebeer, and Heather McCook for kinder garten assistants, and Tammra Tanner for “before school” supervision. The motion was seconded by Jan and approved</p>	Shaheer Faltas

	<p>unanimously.</p> <p>Kim also made a motion to approve Julie, Shoon, and Cindy for the administrative assistant support positions and to engage Franci Sassin as independent contractor for administrative support. The motion was seconded by Jan and approved unanimously.</p>	
12	<p>INFORMATION ITEM: <i>JSC meeting self-assessment</i></p> <p>No discussion.</p>	<i>Marc Damikolas</i>
12	<p>Adjournment</p> <p>Meeting adjourned at 11:10 pm.</p>	<i>Marc Damikolas</i>