

*Journey School*  
*A California Public Charter School*

*November 17, 2011*

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**Approved February 23, 2012**

**6:30 p.m.**

*At Journey School*  
*27102 Foxborough*  
*Aliso Viejo, Ca 92656*  
*Journey School Office: (949) 448-7232*  
[www.journeyschool.net](http://www.journeyschool.net)

*Roll Call:*

*Jon Kaplan, Council President: Present, but arrived at 6:45 pm*  
*Dr. Kris Powell, Council Vice President: Present*  
*Michael Corbo, Council Treasurer: Present*  
*Jan Geisendorfer, Council Secretary: Present*  
*Marc Damikolas, Council Member: Present*  
*Michelle Spieker, Council Member: Present*  
*Colleen Patterson, Council Member: Absent*  
*VACANT: Parent Cabinet Member*  
*Gavin Keller, Educational Trustee Member: Present*

*Guests:*

*Pam Watkins, CUSD liaison (left at 9:30 pm),*  
*Marie Kenney, Parent Cabinet liaison*

*Staff: Bonnie River, Franci Sassin (administrative consultant)*

<b>AGENDA ITEM</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>Call to Order, Roll Call and Review of Norms/Roles</b>  <i>The meeting was called to order at 6:31 by Mike Corbo. Franci Sassin was taking minutes.</i>
<b>2</b>	<b>Council Attendance at Lantern Walk (in lieu of Inspirational Passage)</b>  <i>Council listened to story presented by a teacher at Lantern Walk. Council members reconvened at 7 pm in conference room.</i>

3	<p><b>Approval of Agenda*</b></p> <p><b>NOTE: The order of the agenda may be changed without prior notice to the public.</b></p> <p><i>A motion was made to approve the agenda by J. Geisendorfer, seconded by M. Damikolas and approved Unanimously.</i></p>
4	<p><b>PUBLIC COMMENT:</b> <i>There were no public comments.</i></p>
5	<p><b>CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:</b></p> <p><b><i>Items on Consent Agenda may be approved with one motion and vote for all but without discussion. If an item is to be discussed, it is removed from the Consent Agenda and moved to an Action Item immediately following the Consent Items.</i></b></p> <p><i>As the minutes were not available, Item A was tabled until next meeting.</i></p> <p><b>A. Approval of Minutes:*</b></p> <p><b>i. Minutes from regular meeting Oct 27, 2011</b></p> <p><b>B. Approve submission of First Interim Report to CUSD: Approve ExED to prepare and submit the first interim report in CUSD format by Dec 15 deadline, with Council ratification in January</b></p> <p><i>A motion was made by J Geisendorfer, seconded by G Keller and approved unanimously. Noted: J Kaplan and M Spieker were not present for this vote.</i></p>
6	<p><b>INFORMATION ITEMS:</b></p> <p><b>A. Financial Report: October financials are not yet available</b></p> <p><b>B. Administrative Budget committee update: Update on status of budget revisions and timeline for adoption of revised budget</b></p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> <i>Jon Kaplan and Michelle Spieker arrived at 7:03 pm.</i></p> <p><i>Mike Corbo reported on the budget committee meeting, the committee agreed to wait to ask for Council approval of the revised budget, especially due to enrollment numbers going up this month, and the uncertainty about the state budget cuts. The budget committee will have another meeting on Dec 6, and then present a proposed budget to the Council at the January meeting. There will likely be a 180K shortfall, but the school will still have 145K favorable reserve by year end, even with the deficit this year. The main concerns are regarding future years. Larry is conservative on both revenue and expenses, so if both of those end up favorably, then the school could see a trend to the</i></p>

positive. The CCSA report on the state budget just came out yesterday, it is projecting a cut of approximately \$185 per pupil, and the Journey current budget is based on a \$300 per student cut. The Council discussed the Close The Gap status, and it was noted that we have a lower percentage of families contributing, but there will be a new targeting of CTG message soon. It was also noted that the current budget does not include the contributions to the school from the Parent Cabinet budget, at this time. Mike handed out the CCSA budget analysis. A comment was made that the new Executive Director of Finance at CUSD will require higher accountability from the school on its fiscal status.

**C. Administrative Update\*: including enrollment and facilities update, ZOOM!, etc.**

Franci Sassin reported that enrollment is continuing to increase, the school is expecting 7 more added to kindy. For the facility update from CUSD: CUSD has approved the kindergarten water project and it should start soon. Dr. Sassin reported regarding ZOOM, giving the Council some background information and reporting that JS has been working on it, and now has started to launch it to the teachers. Bonnie River discussed the role of ZOOM in being able to compare Waldorf charter school data.

Gavin Keller noted that the hard part for teachers is finding time initially, but once a teacher gets used to it, it can be time saver—it is very valuable to see which areas the students are strong in, so that data can then inform instruction.

**D. Business Office/HR update\*: Update on Prop. 39 submission**

FS went over the Prop. 39 application, pointing out what had changed from last year. Journey added additional student data, as per CUSD request last year, and also added more detail regarding the school's needs. Dr. Sassin discussed the ongoing meetings with CUSD regarding a long term lease, including a few of the possible terms and possible length. If an agreement is reached prior to January, that would avoid the next Prop. 39 steps. The Council discussed the relative costs of a Prop. 39 arrangement vs. a lease.

Pam Watkins reported that currently CUSD is staffing at 30.5 in a class for grades 1-3 and 31.5 in a class for 4-5, and 32.5 in a class for middle school. It is likely these class size numbers will go up, after union negotiations, if the mid-year budget triggers occur.

**E. Faculty Update:**

Gavin Keller reported that Council members joined the Faculty meeting last Wednesday, and a camera was brought by Jon Kaplan to use in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. As the Council wants teacher input for Strategic Planning and development, so they broke up into small groups to discuss the unique things in the classroom

that foster 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills and that could be used to bring in money from outside sources. Some items mentioned were:

Arts, gardening, cooking, building, medieval games/pentathlon, student/school businesses.

The faculty “wish list” includes owning our own school facility—they believe that having this would allow other things to happen, such as additional specialty support and an increase to the teacher salary schedule.

There was discussion about the needs of the middle school program regarding Main Class Teacher skills as well as specialty support. Using interns was also mentioned as a way to help fill these needs. Hiring an additional Main Class Teacher who would rotate for Main Lesson Blocks was also discussed.

Mr. Keller reported that they just adopted a new faculty meeting schedule, with 2 ‘business meetings’ a month plus, one meeting on “renewal and training” for things they can bring back to classroom, and one week for teachers to work on their own projects.

**F. Parent Cabinet Update**—See also the update provided by Marie Kenney

Marie Kenney reported that Parent Cabinet still has an opening for an 8<sup>th</sup> grade rep and for Council. One parent’s company donated 100 bags and 800 scarves to sell as a fundraiser, they are very nice quality. There was a Barnes and Noble and a Wahoo’s fundraiser yesterday, and they seemed to have good steady attendance. Online orders can be made through Barnes and Noble until 11/21.

The Harvest Faire went well, \$6,825 was the gross, the net was around 5K, about 1K to go to fundraiser for 5/7/8 trips. There was a donation from a family of EZ Ups to offset some of the usual costs.

The memorial service for Melanie McAdams is on Nov 26, and the school will also have tree planting ceremony in her honor.

There will be a Eurhythmy teacher presenting Friday, Dec 2 and parents are invited to participate.

The PC Annual auction will be moved to February to coincide with the school’s anniversary. PC would like to solicit donations to the auction from Council.

Mike Corbo suggested the following challenge to all board members: Everyone brings 3—either items or attendees.

Ms. Kenny reported that Fairy Market is coming up. She also noted that the topic of peanut allergies came up at last PC meeting: PC agreed that at all PC sponsored events they will ask for no nuts, or if they have a vendor they will

also ask the same. They had a discussion and one compromise brought forward was to have students who bring nut products eat at “nut” tables.

Ms. Kenny reported on the Lunch program status: Sushi and Wahoo’s are now approved again. The Health Department did not approve pizza.

Pam Watkins gave contact for Dawn Davey regarding the option of purchasing food services from CUSD. She noted that at Elementary schools the food is cooked at the district and heated at site, and for Middle School it is different.

Regarding PC finances, they are having a discussion regarding moving to a PTO 501 c 3 umbrella in order to remove PC finances out from JS 501c3. PTO has resources to assist in the set-up of a corporation.

PC maintains about 48-50K per year—and has an annual budget which is generally is divided up as follows: general school budget items, special school projects, parent support and training, special PC projects (like set up of the 501c3), and volunteer support. They also need to maintain some working capital for their events.

Council members expressed their appreciation for all the work PC does, and Jon Kaplan suggested that Council should arrange to have members come to a PC meeting and express their thanks directly.

**G. Report on Follow-up for Previous Board Items\***

Jan Geisendorfer had submitted a written report. She noted that many of the items are on this agenda for consideration.

**7 DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS: Current and school business**

**A. Audit Committee: Appointment of Audit Committee (may be Committee of entire Board) in preparation of 2011-12 audit**

The Council discussed the options for setting up an Audit Committee to fulfill that function that the IRS requires for non-profits. Some options are to have the Committee be a committee of the entire board, or the separate committee would meet either just before or just after the regular board meetings. There was discussion of possible conflict of interest issues and separation of duties.

M Corbo made a motion to create an audit committee to consist of the entire Council. It was seconded by K Powell and approved unanimously.

**8 DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS: Planning**

**A. Strategic Planning\*: Discussion of Strategic Planning with respect to Big Rock #5, which was previously chosen as a priority.**

*The Council will review the goals Shaheer Faltas put together, and then will give him feedback on them to discuss further at the next meeting.*

*The Council had some discussion about how to prioritize the “Big Rocks” and about how budget priorities could be developed from the Strategic Planning process. Some issues discussed included retaining good staff, the teacher training program, the decision to “double track” to bring in additional revenue, and the possibility of starting an Independent Study home based program that could be financially beneficial. This works well in other Waldorf schools, and allows resources to be shared, e.g. with specialty classes and festivals. The Council considered various ideas regarding the Strategic Planning process including whether it was enough time to make it part of the board meeting or not, and whether a town hall or World Café style meeting with the community should be used. Pam Watkins brought a copy of CUSD’s Strategic Plan and commented that the process of getting stakeholder input was the most important element.*

*The Council agreed that having a community meeting to get input on Strategic Planning priorities would be a good idea, and so they want to delegate to administration to create some type of forum, and Jon Kaplan will be the board designee to work with Shaheer Faltas on this, and then at next board meeting the Council will discuss the topic again to see the progress.*

**B. Financial Development:**

**i. Report on development work from last year and any additional follow up**

*Michelle Spieker reported on this item. She noted that Shaheer Faltas has shifted quite a bit of his responsibilities in order to be able to work more on development, and Bonnie River has been able to take on some of the administrative work on to free up Shaheer to do this. Shaheer is excited about it and he has been working with some community people who could become potential donors. Also some parents have come forward with potential opportunities.*

*Colleen Patterson, Diana Graber, Michelle Spieker and Shaheer would make up the Administrative Development Committee, but they plan to also have Advisory people for the committee. They went to training today on narrative fundraising: How to tell your story. The take away was to that Journey must do a much better job telling its story. They are working on possible events to allow this. One goal is to increase the Close The Gap from the current 54% to at least the 75%the school received last year. The Committee would like to plan a large community event in January to bring this forward.*

*It was noted that the Strategic Planning process should be able to fit together with this direction in the Development arena.*

**ii. Report on 501 c3 status, including draft of the “purpose” of the**

**Foundation to be formed.**

Work will continue to check on reactivating the old Foundation, otherwise the direction is to proceed and to stay on target with timeline and to report back at the January meeting.

9 **Board Training and Development:**

**A. Update on Board activities\*: annual calendar of training activities and board calendar for school activities**

Mike Corbo reviewed the possible conference opportunities. One that stands out would be the Alliance conference in January over MLK weekend. Council agreed that this would be a good choice for this year if resources allow.

Each Council member should email any interest AND check on their availability to Franci Sassin and then it can be determined if there is a need to look at the resources.

**B. Board self evaluation strategies\*: Follow up on tools, timeline and process for Council self evaluation process.**

Kris Powell looked at several resources and the one that she feels is most aligned to where JSC is now is the resource from the EdTec session from the CCSA conference. It is a good training tool. She will send this out the EdTec document for all to read by next meeting. The Council also discussed the resources from Carpenter's "Board University", and from Fenton Charter School's best practices.

Kris Powell suggested picking a meeting and use the Fenton's meeting evaluation tool.

**C. Analysis of Student Outcomes from charter\*: Examination and discussion of Student Outcomes #3 and #4.**

**Focus Question: As you study the outcomes, what would be the best method to document evidence of student success for that outcome?**

The Council wanted to take the direction of a focus on the 3L's:

Compassionate campus (Social Literacy) outcomes

Eco-literacy outcomes

Digital literacy outcomes

Ideally, Administration can weave these together and directly relate them to the

	<p><i>student outcomes from the charter.</i></p> <p><b>D. Board Job Description*: Plan to develop Job Description for the Council, and references to charter Governance section</b></p> <p><i>Kris Powell recommends that all Council members read the Job Description in the EdTec material and compare it to what is in the charter’s governance section. Then, next meeting decide if charter document needs any augmentation.</i></p>
10	<p><b>CLOSED SESSION: The meeting will now convene to closed session to discuss the matters described below:</b></p> <p><b>A. Pursuant to Government Code §54957: Public Employee Performance Evaluation, Title(s): Administrator</b></p> <p><i>M Corbo made a motion to go into closed session, it was seconded by J Kaplan and approved unanimously. Bonnie River and Franci Sassin were invited to participate due to their Administrative roles in this matter.</i></p> <p><i>The Council entered closed session at 9:45 pm then resumed the open session meeting at 9:55 pm. No action was taken during closed session.</i></p>
11	<p><b>Adjournment at 10:00 pm.</b></p>