



*Where education is
a journey, not a race.*

QUICK GUIDE FOR PROSPECTIVE PARENTS

OUR MISSION

Journey School is dedicated to the optimal development of the intellect, social-emotional well-being, and physical capacities of each student, by presenting core academic subjects artistically. Journey School will enable each student to read, write, speak, and calculate with clarity and precision. Furthermore, students will have the ability to think imaginatively, creatively and become competent, life-long learners.

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INTRODUCTION

This **Journey School Quick Guide** is a reference document containing what we think is the most important information you need to learn about Journey School. Our digital School Handbook has even more information and we encourage you to read it on our JourneySchool.net website to learn more.

SCHOOL PURPOSE AND CORE VALUES

The purpose of Journey School is to provide families of Southern California the option of a unique, pedagogically strong, public Waldorf education for their children. Journey School embraces public Waldorf education because of the following values:

Why Waldorf Education?	Why Public Waldorf?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developmentally appropriate and child-centered• Academically rigorous• Holistic and performance-based• Imaginative and art-based• Celebratory, soul-nourishing, and joyful• Community enhancing• Supportive of self-reliance, hard work, and responsibility• Encourages healthy and environmentally sound nutritional habits and living• Conducive to ethical decision-making, sharing, and generosity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diverse• Accessible• Transparent• Aligned with State Standards

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

At Journey School the teachers commit to educating the whole child and endeavour to foster the unfolding of each child’s full potential. They use pedagogical methods that nurture and inspire creativity, critical thinking, and motivated learning -- inspired by Austrian educator Dr. Rudolf Steiner. His methodology has come to be known in the United States as Waldorf Education, named after the first Waldorf School in Stuttgart, Germany. We hold these shared principles:

Reverence and Stewardship

A sense of reverence empowers students with the ability to develop an understanding and appreciation for the interdependence of all life. Students with a strong sense of reverence reflect this knowledge through conscientious respectful actions involving themselves, other people, and the world around them. They have

appreciation for truth, beauty and goodness in the world. They are compassionate, communicative, grateful, and strive to build interdependent relationships.

Creative and Imaginative Thinking

Creative and imaginative thinking empowers students with the ability to think unconventionally, to question assumptions, and to imagine new scenarios. Imaginative thinkers craft astonishing work because they recognize their creative capacities and celebrate them through a variety of artistic mediums. They also act on opportunities and show willingness to take reasonable risk.

Critical Thinking and Good Judgment

Critical thinking and sound decision-making empower students with the ability to assess the credibility, accuracy, and value of the large amount of information that they encounter on a daily basis. Critical thinkers and wise decision makers analyze and evaluate information while consciously using their intuitive capacities. They think through solutions and alternatives and explore new options. This often entails working well with diverse peoples to make reasoned, ethical decisions and take purposeful action. Research has shown that Waldorf students excel in the arenas of critical and ethical thinking skills

Literacy

While literacy includes the ability to read, write, listen, articulate, in compelling ways, and to employ mathematic skills with accuracy and contextual effectiveness, Journey School goes beyond the traditional meaning of literacy and includes courses that enhance literacy in a broader and deeper sense. Our **CyberCivics™ Digital Literacy** curriculum in grades 6-8 explores: principled ways of becoming a responsible Digital Citizen, how to use critical thinking skills to find and use online information, and culminates in utilizing the tools learned for ethical discussion and decision making online. Our innovative **Eco-Literacy Program** enhances and supports the students' ability to adopt a sustainable lifestyle with an attitude of stewardship toward earth. Our **Social Literacy activities of the Compassionate Campus Project** gives students the opportunity to practice honoring and caring for each other.

Responsibility and Self-Reliance

A strong sense of responsibility empowers students with the ability to be vital, disciplined, and hard-working individuals, individuals who develop strong physical skills and hygiene to support their own well-being. With this, they can be responsible people who take initiative, self-regulate, and are fully accountable for their own actions. They honor their capacities and have a can-do attitude. They follow-through on commitments and honor their word.

Life-Long Learning

The qualities listed above culminate in an enthusiastic life-long learner. Journey students are joyful, confident, self-motivated, aware, inquisitive, resourceful, and

persistent people who know how to best learn and therefore thrive in an ever-changing world.

Similarly, Journey School's curriculum places **equal emphasis on a solid academic foundation, artistic expression, social development, and attention to the inner life of the child.** An integrated thematic approach to learning emphasizes a child's relationship to the natural world, promoting respect for the environment and humankind. Our teachers nurture the imagination in the early years in order to build a foundation for abstract thinking. The children experience wonder, reverence, and enthusiasm for learning throughout their years at Journey School, and as a result, emerge with a commitment to social responsibility and the potential to impart direction and purpose to their lives. The primary goal of Journey School is to nurture the whole child with the objective of enabling students to become self-motivated, competent, life-long learners, equipped with the courage to meet life's challenges.

We invite you to investigate our curriculum and instructional methods thoroughly so you know exactly what Journey School stands for and believes.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

“The greatest scientists are artists as well. Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination circles the world.”

- Albert Einstein

Introduction

Journey School's instructional program employs the innovative Waldorf educational model in meeting the California state standards. Our educational methods are designed to provide a meaningful context within which learning the school's academic curriculum can occur. Because we are committed to educating the whole child and fostering the unfolding of each child's true potential, we foster a solid academic foundation, an ability to render meaningful artistic expression of the curricular areas, and social development with attention to the inner life of a child.

The academic curriculum is integrated with poetry recitation, drama, painting, music, sculpting, and drawing, which awaken imagination and creativity and bring vitality and wholeness to learning. This builds a strong foundation for the abstract thinking and intellectual challenges that are gradually and appropriately introduced throughout the grades. Multicultural content is woven throughout the curriculum by means of biography, storytelling, history, crafts, art, music, the practice of seasonal celebrations, and through foreign language.

Main Lesson

The grades 1-8 school day begins with the **Main Lesson**, a two-hour period in which the Waldorf curriculum is presented. These main lessons are taught in three to four week blocks. Presenting core academic subjects within the Main Lesson block allows the students to have adequate time to follow through with all work projects, thus promoting in-depth, long-term learning. The students make their own main lesson books for each subject, recording and illustrating the substance of the lessons. These student-generated main lesson books are an important record of learning and allow the arts to be integrated into every subject.

Reading and writing are learned in the same way as they originated in the course of human history. First graders hear stories, draw pictures about the stories, and discover letters in the gesture of these pictures. Phonics instruction and the whole language approach are accompanied by the use of songs, poetry, eurythmy and games to help to establish a joyful experience of language. Through the grades, reading texts are taken from the classical humanities curriculum.

Our **Humanities curriculum** acknowledges that the cultures of the past continue to influence the values and morals of today's world. Children learn about religions and cultures from a historical perspective. In grade one, fairy tales are taught, in grade two fables and stories of extraordinary individuals, in grade three stories from the ancient Hebrew people, in grade four Norse Mythology, and in grade five the ancient cultures of India, Egypt, Persia, Mesopotamia and Greece. In the sixth through eighth grades, the students journey from Greece and Rome to medieval history, from the Renaissance to the Reformation, and from the Age of Exploration to the present day. With this exposure of cultures' legends and literature, the children gain flexibility and an appreciation for the diversity of humankind.

Mathematics begins with a study of the quality of numbers and their relationship with rhythm and music in grade one. Later in the year the students learn all four processes and begin to memorize their math facts in grade one and two. In grade three they are introduced to all kinds of measurement, long multiplication and division. They move on to fractions, prime numbers, and more complicated measurement in fourth grade, and decimal numbers and freehand geometry in fifth grade. Business math and geometry with a compass come in sixth grade and Algebra, perspective drawing, and the study of geometric solids in seventh and eighth grade.

The **science blocks** are taught in the lower grades through observation and experience of our natural environment. Through nature studies, gardening, and environmentally conscious practices, the children develop reverence and a sense of guardianship for the earth and all of its inhabitants. Zoology and botany are shared in grades 4 and 5 respectively, and in grades 6-8, the teacher shares experiments in physics, astronomy, chemistry, and physiology and calls upon the children to observe, ponder, discuss, and write up their observations. The students draw their

own conclusions. Through this process, rigorous independent thinking and sound judgment are trained.

Classes after Main Lesson

After Main Lesson, the children are engaged in a number of different subjects. Each grade 1-8 have a number of Mathematics and English-Language Arts practice periods in the week. During these periods, the students are focused on specific skill-building within these core academic subject areas. Journey supports a research-based approach to effective teaching practices through providing for repeated exposure to and practice of skills in these classes.

Additionally, a variety of Specialty Subject classes are offered after Main Lesson to ensure a rich, balanced educational program including:

Music (singing and instrumental), **foreign language**, **Handwork** (knitting, crocheting, sewing, and woodworking), **games**, **eurythmy**, **watercolor painting**, **performing arts**, **clay and beeswax modeling**, and **form drawing** are traditionally offered.

Music is an integral part of the curriculum. Daily singing begins in Kindergarten and continues through the grades. Beginning in first grade, children are taught to play a musical instrument, usually the pentatonic flute. Strings are typically introduced in third grade and other instruments, including the recorder and violin, are usually played in later grades.

A **foreign language**, Spanish in our school's case, is taught to grades 1-8, giving the children an experience of another culture. The students learn songs, games, and poems in the early grades and then the program expands into conversing, reading, writing and grammar.

Handwork and crafts are also fundamental aspects of our school's curriculum from Kindergarten through the eighth grade. Research confirms that optimal brain development is founded on refined motor development. Learning to knit and crochet, carve wood, and build with our hands develops the motor skills that enhance intellectual development, coordination, patience, perseverance, and imagination. These activities give the children an understanding of and respect for how things work in the world.

A reverence and sense of guardianship for the earth and all her inhabitants are nurtured through **seasonal festivals**, **classroom activities**, **gardening**, **recycling**, and **field trips**. The teachers strive to awaken the children's senses to the wonder of the natural world around them.

HISTORY

“Childhood is a journey, not a race. Learning should be the same.”

– Karen Ray

The idea for Journey School was conceived in 1998 by a group of committed parents in South Orange County, who believed they could offer a distinct public education alternative in Orange County by using teaching methods inspired by Rudolf Steiner.

The school system known as Waldorf education (the fastest growing independent school movement in the world) has been guided by a philosophy stating that the development of a child’s critical thinking requires an active and creative imagination. Similarly, in the Journey School classroom, teachers masterfully blend academic and artistic disciplines so that the whole child is involved in every aspect of learning. This integration of the mind, body and heart allows each child to reach his full potential while preserving the natural joy of learning and developing a life-long love for it.

On February 14, 2000, Capistrano Unified School District (CUSD) approved Journey School’s Charter, making it the first public charter school in the district. It is Orange County’s fifth charter school and its first community-initiated charter. Journey School opened in September 2000 with two Kindergarten classes and one class each of grades one through three and currently serves Kindergarten through grade eight, with a total student enrollment of approximately 330.

WHAT IS A CHARTER SCHOOL?

A charter school is a publicly funded school that is freed up from most laws and regulations governing traditional public schools in exchange for a performance-based accountability contract known as the school’s charter. The school is accountable to its sponsoring district, the state Department of Education, and the taxpayers of California. Charter schools, like all public schools, shall not charge tuition, and shall not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability. A charter school must be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. Waldorf education, and its anthroposophical roots, has been deemed by the courts to be spiritual versus religious in nature, and therefore this type of pedagogy is not considered sectarian, and is allowable for a public school.

KEY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

MEDIA

The philosophy of Journey School is based upon an understanding of the developing child. While television and other media can serve as a source of information and entertainment for adults, children do not experience life on the same developmental stage as adults. Research confirms our view that exposure to media entertainment for children has a detrimental effect upon their self- image, their ability to concentrate and develop attention span, their relationship skills, values, reading skills, physical skills, energy levels, psychological health, creativity and social behavior.

Because electronic media has detrimental effects on a child's healthy growth and development, we encourage families to incorporate our media free philosophy into their children's daily lives. To that end, we expect that **our families significantly reduce or eliminate the use of media – television, video games, computer games, i-pods, wii, movies – for their children.** We ask for complete elimination of electronic media during the school week, from Sunday evening to Friday after school, for grades K-5.

We realize that limiting or eliminating media from your child's life might feel like a tall order. However, with the support of continuing parent education and working together as a community, our families find that more free time means more creative and quality time together. We also believe in educating our middle school students in the ethical use of media through our Digital Literacy program.

Research on the Effects of Media

Concerns about the effects of television have centered almost exclusively on the content of the programs children watch. Many might argue that watching a nature program is educational and good for the child. However, as Marie Winn states in her book, *The Plug-In Drug*, that certain specific physiological mechanisms of the eyes, ears, and brain respond to the stimuli emanating from the screen regardless of the cognitive content of the programs. The sedentary mode of watching television does not match the active internal experience that occurs in response to what is being viewed. For example, one would not jump out of the way of an oncoming car that is on the screen, yet one may feel the anxiety, fear, and panic of the situation being viewed.

Frequent use of electronic media can be counterproductive to the development of brain functions needed to master skills such as reading, writing, arithmetic, and language development. It works against the natural development of analytical thinking. Joseph Chilton Pearce, Ph.D., an internationally renowned educator, author

and lecturer, states that the child's first seven years are devoted to development of the symbolic, metaphoric language structure in the mid-brain and that all future cognitive development rests on the integrated functioning of the right and left sides of the brain. Television viewing disrupts this development and can cause a child to be easily distracted and bored.

Real multi-sensory experiences are the seeds of imagination and creativity. It is important that your child be able to absorb the curriculum of the day – without electronic interference – in order to integrate and process it during sleeping hours. This is how learning becomes an integral part of life. Allowing your child to attend to the tasks of growing and learning without the stimulation of electronic media will enhance their ability to focus and become immersed in the day's curriculum.

We encourage you to speak with your child's teachers or other parents in the school for suggestions, support and resources that you might find helpful on this subject.

AESTHETICS AND THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

We strive to create and maintain a unique and creative environment that expresses appreciation for ethnic and cultural diversity. Classroom motifs change throughout the school year to reflect seasonal and curricular themes.

The lower grade classrooms have a **nurturing and magical ambience**, which supports the younger children's transition from home to school. Pastel colors, softened lighting and play spaces that integrate folklore and the natural elements of the season are used to accomplish this. The upper grade classrooms richly reflect the ongoing **cultural, historical and academic themes** of the curriculum. Journey School is committed to using natural and eco-friendly products in every area of the school to support and enhance the children's inner connection with and their responsibility as caretakers of the earth.

FESTIVALS AND CELEBRATIONS

We celebrate seasonal festivals at Journey School as a way of observing the recurring rhythms and cycles in nature. As the earth makes its way around the sun, the solstices and equinoxes become the four cornerstones of the year's rhythm. Sharing in the school's festival life is deeply nourishing to our individual inner lives and contributes to the integration and stability of the entire community.

DRESS CODE

The Dress Code is established to promote the school's mission and to avoid disruptions in the classroom:

- Dress should be conducive to the work/activities of school and should be weather appropriate.
- At school, all clothing, backpacks, lunch boxes/baskets and any other accessories must be free of media advertisements, references to drugs, alcohol, racism, sexism and or violence, slogans, cartoons, and caricatures at school.
- Any and all commercial logos should be smaller than standard shirt pocket size. Sports jerseys are not allowed at school.
- Tops and dresses with straps at least 1" wide are acceptable.
- Midriff tops and undergarments that "show" are prohibited.
- Dresses, skirts, skorts and shorts may be no shorter than mid-thigh.
- Shorts need to be worn under dresses and skirts in grades K-3 for active play.
- Jackets and sweaters should be labeled with first and last name.
- Hats are acceptable when worn outside.
- Sandals must have a heel strap and all footwear must be as flat as possible. Shoes with wheels are prohibited.
- All students in grades 1 to 8 should wear, bring daily, or keep in class a pair of closed toe, closed heel athletic or sneaker type shoes for games classes. Shoes with laces are preferred in kindergarten.
- Lipstick, make-up, tattoos (permanent and temporary) and body piercing other than ear piercing are prohibited with the following exceptions: grades 5 and up may wear plain colored nail polish without images and grades 7 and 8 may wear light make-up.
- Stud type earrings are allowed in all grades. Grades 7 and 8 may wear other jewelry and/or dye their hair (so long as the color is not considered an educational disruption by school officials).

Decisions regarding the appropriateness of clothing and accessories are at the discretion of the Journey School Faculty and Administration. In case your child arrives at the school dressed inappropriately, we will give you a courtesy call so that you may bring replacement clothes or the staff may loan the student appropriate attire to wear for the day. If persistent violations of the dress code occur, the Faculty and or the Administrator may take further action including, but not limited to, meeting with the parent(s) to discuss and review Dress Code Policy. We thank you for your support in ensuring a wholesome and age-appropriate educational setting for our children.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

To sustain our high quality educational experience, we ask each family to contribute to our school community. There are a number of ways to be involved in the life of the school:

COMMIT TO OUR EDUCATION PROGRAM

- Create daily and weekly rhythms for your child at home; share meals together.
- Provide open-ended toys and tasks to allow your child to explore, build, create and imagine.
- Follow and support the policies and procedures of the school.
- Learn more about Journey School and parenting by attending parent

VOLUNTEER

- Help in classes, such as make and/or prep materials, classroom cleaning, laundry, bring flowers or food, sew costumes, assist on nature walks, chaperone trips.
- Improve playgrounds, garden and school site.
- Help with fundraising, festivals, and grant writing with the Parent Cabinet and School Council.

SUPPORT OUR SNACK AND LUNCH GUIDELINES

- Send wholesome ingredients, fruits and vegetables, and as little sugar as possible. Pack only water to drink. No gum, candy, soda, juices, unhealthy foods.
- Send snacks and lunches in reusable containers with reusable utensils in lunch baskets or boxes void of media or commercial images.

SUPPORT ECOLOGICAL AWARENESS

- Become a Garden team volunteer.
- Promote recycling, reusing, repairing and sustainability with your child.
- Participate in our Thursday recycling program.

SUPPORT OUR MEDIA EXPECTATION

- Completely eliminate all electronic media from Sunday late afternoon to Friday after school, for grades K-5.
- Dialogue with your children in grades 6 -8 about the appropriate use of electronic media, specifically as study aides and for word processing.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Journey School works through a four-fold governance structure (faculty, administrative staff, school council, and parent community,) that allows for community decision-making and open communication. Please refer to the School Handbook for more information.

OUR PARENT CABINET - www.JourneySchoolPC.net

OUR 2013-14 FACULTY

NAME	TITLE
Hellene Brodsky-Blake	Sunflower Kindergarten Teacher
Dillingham, Karen	Sunflower Kindergarten Assistant
Jennifer Hopps	Morning Glory Kindergarten Teacher
Cameron, Julia	Morning Glory Kindergarten Assistant
Jill Murphy	Snapdragon Kindergarten Teacher
Sotebeer, Elisabeth	Snapdragon Kindergarten Assistant
Laura Bujjoni	Dandelion Kindergarten Teacher
Corbet, Gaylen	Dandelion Kindergarten Assistant
Arias Collins	First Grade Teacher
Yara Brighton	First Grade Assistant
Monique Nicholson	First Grade Teacher
Sylvia Sandefur	First Grade Assistant/Handwork Assistant
Jayme Barger	Second Grade Teacher
Robin Davis	Second Grade Teacher
Kim Torrey	Third Grade Teacher
Amanda Simmons	Fourth Grade Teacher
Alyson Smith	Fifth Grade Teacher
Shelley Kelley	Sixth Grade Teacher
Elliot Calloway	Seventh Grade Teacher
Kerry Townley-Smith	Eighth Grade Teacher
Clare Knauss	Middle School Main Lesson Teacher
Richard Martin	Middle School Main Lesson Teacher
Billy Alexander	Guitar Teacher
Sandra Blanco	Spanish Teacher (Grades 4-8)
Liz Clark	Handwork Teacher
Diana Corbo	Creative Arts Coordinator/Music Teacher
Joy Halverson	Games Teacher
Elijah "Storm" Dye	Games Teacher
Jan Poth	Strings Teacher
Todd Skidmore	Ukelele Teacher
Tammra Tanner	Cooking Specialty Teacher

Holly Telford-Rioux	Theatre Arts Teacher/RSP aide
Stacey De Salvo	RSP Teacher
Jann Noyes	RSP Teacher
Suzanna Bortz	Title I Teacher

OUR 2012-13 ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

NAME	TITLE
Shaheer Faltas	Executive Director
Gavin Keller	Assistant Director
Franci Sassin	Administrative Consultant
Shoon Ortiz	Registration Specialist
Cindy Barry	Business Specialist/HR
Kris Reynolds	Enrollment Coordinator
Rachael Herman	Administrative Assistant
Sara Beebe	Crossing Guard

OUR SCHOOL COUNCIL

NAME	TITLE
Michael Corbo	President
Sue Vaughn	Vice President
Warren Whiteaker	Treasurer
Jon Kaplan	Member
Colleen Patterson	Member
Kara McCann	Member
Lisa O'Neill	Parent Cabinet Member
Alyson Smith	Educational Trustee/ Secretary

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

SCHOOL HOURS

Kindergarten: 8:45 am – 12:45 pm

Grades Regular Days: 8:30 am - 3:00 pm

Minimum Days (Grades only): 8:30 am - 12:30 pm

ARRIVAL

School begins at 8:30 promptly for all Grades classes and at 8:45 for Kindergarten.

Please bring your child to school no earlier than 8:15 when supervision begins.

Kindergarten students must be accompanied to and from the Kindergarten by a parent or guardian each day. Grades 1-8 parents, your system is two-fold:

Drop off:

1st grade: Back Gate or Yellow 'Drop Off' lane

2nd-8th: Yellow 'Drop Off' lane

Pick up:

1st grade: Back Gate or Yellow 'Drop Off' lane

2nd-4th: Yellow 'Drop Off' lane

5th-8th: Foxborough gate

COMMUNICATION

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 encourages parties who have concerns or who are involved in a conflict to reach either resolution or agree to disagree. The administrative staff will be able to help you know to whom to speak to concerning a specific question or concern. They look forward to supporting you and the faculty.

If you have...

General Questions concerning daily operations, policy or procedural issues, events, committee work, carpooling, etc., ask the Executive Director, Assistant Director or Registration Specialist. They can help direct you to the appropriate person since parent and teacher committees handle many of the support functions of the school.

Questions concerning your child, talk to your child's teacher first. 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, send an email or leave a message at the office to schedule an appointment. Although a teacher's phone number 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 the next school day. If yes, please do so. If you feel that your question has not been addressed to your satisfaction please speak with the Assistant Director.

Questions related to educational issues such as curriculum, teaching methods, classroom management, and teacher-student relationships, speak to the Assistant Director.

Questions concerning enrollment, school newsletter, afterschool programs, address these to the Enrollment Coordinator.

Questions pertaining to legal or financial issues are taken to the Executive Director, Business Specialist or the Journey School Council. Contacting your class Parent Cabinet Representative to the Council is the first step to contacting the Council.

Questions regarding Capistrano Unified School District, speak to the Executive Director.