

Journey School
A California Public Charter School

January 26, 2017
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Approved February 23, 2017

6:00 p.m.

At Journey School
27102 Foxborough
Aliso Viejo, CA 92656
In the Journey School Office
(949) 448-7232
www.journeyschool.net

Michael Corbo, Council President :ABSENT
Susan Toma-Berge, Council Vice President: Present
Anna Brown, Council Treasurer: Present
Kara McCann, Council Secretary: Present
Judy Levinsohn, Council Member: Absent
Lisa O'Neill, Parent Cabinet Member: Present
Jill Murphy, Educational Trustee Member: Present
Julie Chiaverini, Council Member: Present

Administrator Gavin Keller was present. Administrative consultant Franci Sassin participated by phone. Larry Tamayo was present for his financial report.

	AGENDA ITEM
1	<i>Call to Order, Roll Call and Review of Norms/Roles and</i> The meeting was called to order at 6:08 pm. President Mike Corbo was absent, so Vice President Susan Toma-Berge chaired the meeting.
2	<i>Inspirational Passage</i> Jill Murphy read an inspirational quote by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
3	<i>Approval of Agenda*</i>

	<p>NOTE: The order of the agenda may be changed without prior notice to the public.</p> <p>The back-up materials for item 5 C were not available so Item 5C was tabled. There was a motion to approve the agenda as modified, which was seconded and approved.</p>
4	<p>PUBLIC COMMENT: <i>Reminder: Please fill-out a speaker card; see policy above for guidelines</i></p> <p>No members of the public were present and no comments were submitted.</p>
5	<p>CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS: 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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Approval of Minutes*: <i>Minutes from meeting of December 8, 2016.</i> B. School Accountability Report Card*: <i>Approval of SARC for 2015-16 school year, published in 2017. SARC link must be posted to CDE website by Feb 1.</i> C. Review of Corporate Tax Returns (Forms 990 and 199)*: <i>Review prior to submission of annual tax returns for Journey School corporation for tax year 2015-16.</i> D. Updated Staffing Plan*: <i>Updates to the 2016-17 staffing plan.</i> <p>Item C was tabled.</p> <p>Item A and D were moved to Action Items in order to be discussed.</p> <p>There was a motion to approve Item B which was seconded and approved unanimously.</p> <p>ITEMS MOVED FOR DISCUSSION:</p> <p>Item A: Board member Anna Brown would like to remove the name of the person who was present for public comment. She would also like to remove the total amount of profit (21K) made from the Parent Cabinet. She would like to have the reference to our “own food service” changed to “exploring additional food service options.” It was noted that members of the public are not required to give their name during public comment, but that historically the practice has been to list the name if it is given.</p> <p>The Board discussed the protocol for taking minutes and the amount of detail needed. They may want to discuss this further at a future meeting.</p> <p>The item was tabled until the next meeting to allow for revisions to the minutes.</p> <p>ITEM D: Board members asked about the format of the updates to the staffing plan as it was not clear exactly what was changed from the last plan approved. Gavin clarified what the changes were, including a new Kindergarten assistant and some changes from hourly pay to salary for two employees who have mixed job duties, which was only a change in how they are paid, not in the total budgetary impact.</p> <p>There are a couple of open positions also shown which the school is attempting to fill.</p>

There was a motion to approve Item D, which was seconded and approved unanimously.

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INFORMATION ITEMS: Reports

A. Faculty Update: Update on Faculty activities.

Jill presented an update. This is parent conference week. Faculty enjoy the week as it is a time to connect with parents, and they appreciate the schedule that allows sufficient time for conferences. Specialty classes are being held during conference week this year, which has been well received. Some teachers have had 100% participation in conferences.

The Alliance conference took place recently, 4 teachers attended and felt it was inspirational and were amazed at the growth of the conference. Jill also reported on trips and activities in various grades taking place this month. She also reported on activities of Pedagogical Council. Based on feedback from the Kindergarten staff, a decision was made that the school tours will only go through the Kindy rooms when the students are outside playing. One teacher will be available to answer questions for the tour while the other teacher supervises students.

The Board asked whether this type of solution might be used across all the grades. There was discussion about using videos or other technology and also possibly focusing certain tours on certain grade levels instead of trying to visit all grade levels. The goal is to allow prospective families to have a very good idea of the program before applying, while minimizing disruption to the current students. Safety concerns were also raised and are an important consideration.

B. Parent Cabinet Update: Update on Parent Cabinet activities

Lisa O’Neill reported on how Fairy Market went in December and how valuable the experience is. It is more of a challenge with the size of the school now, but a positive learning experience for all grade levels. The annual auction is now being planned, it will take place on March 25. The Parent Cabinet is working with administration to support improving attendance rates.

C. Administrative Update*: Report from School Director, additional analysis of CAASPP testing, etc.

A written update was provided. In addition, Gavin Keller reported that attendance has improved this year, and this is a result of the combined efforts of teaching staff, support staff and parents. As part of a new incentive program, 124 students received a perfect attendance certificate for the fall months. Enrollment dropped in December and January from some attrition, with a portion of this from withdrawals from the independent study program. The classes are still considered “open” for now, but typically will close soon as the mid-year mark approaches. The school conducts exit interviews with families who leave.

Gavin reported on the challenges of the many rainy days recently, with no large gathering place available for students. Students usually must stay in their classrooms. There has been some damage to the

campus, including some leaks. There was also flooding in the adjacent creek.

Gallery Walk and the Community Meeting will be held Feb 15. Board members are encouraged to attend.

Gavin also alerted the board to the new state accountability system, which will be a dashboard of performance indicators which is being rolled out this year.

D. *Financial Report: Review of November and December financials**

Larry Tamayo gave his report. The P1 ADA was 451, over 50 higher than this time last year. This first report to the state will modify the cash flow to the school. The budget is at approximately 445 ADA, and since attendance rate has been high so far, so that helps make up for slightly lower enrollment than budget. The school is now projected to finish in the positive, and this is a conservative estimate. Cash balances are healthy.

Larry reported on the release of the first draft of the state budget earlier this month. This is the beginning of the state's budget process for next fiscal year. The state overall is estimating lower revenue, and so the state budget is very conservative. Therefore, funding rates should be maintained but not increased. There will likely be another "one time" source of funds, but much lower than the past several years. The retirement program costs will continue to rise rapidly. The state is also proposing a June cash deferral for 2 weeks into July. There is still a lot of potential volatility and so changes may take place between now and May when the revised budget is released.

7 ***SCHOOL OPERATIONS (Discussion/Action):***

A. *Independent Study program: Discussion of expansion of Independent Study program for 2017-18, including additional offerings.*

The budget projections estimate 50 students in the Independent Study program next year. So far, the recruiting efforts have not led to high enrollment. The feeling is that there would be more interest in a program that offers some hybrid options, where students are on campus part of the week. Other options to address the issue include lowering the enrollment estimates over the multi-year budget. Journey is currently exploring a hybrid program for Kindergarten, where students would be on campus part of the week, but spend all that campus time outdoors. Therefore, the impact on facilities would be minimal since most activities would be outside. Currently, research on how to operate a Waldorf hybrid program is going on, and then the next step would be to develop a budget. How that would then be continued or expanded for the following year is still under discussion. Possible multi-age groupings might be used. The board encouraged Gavin to continue to build bridges between the independent study families and the rest of the school community. He commented that the IS families have been able to participate in various festivals and celebrations.

The decision about implementing a hybrid option within the IS program will need to be made in the next few months in order to hold a proper lottery for the program in the spring.

B. Proposal to use Prop 39 Energy Planning Funds*: *Consideration of contractor and proposal to prepare Energy Plan for state approval, using Prop 39 planning funds.*

Gavin reminded the board about the funds available under the Clean Energy Jobs Act. Journey received planning funds several years ago, and the planning funds must be spent this fiscal year. The planning funds are to be used to create a plan for approval by the state for energy savings projects on campus. Gavin has been working with several companies that do “turn-key” proposals for planning funds. Both are doing a lot of work with charter schools. Alliance does the work “in house” whereas First Finance manages the project but uses independent contractors. The main proposals would likely include upgrading the HVAC and lighting systems. This should result in savings in utility bills. Gavin also reminded the board that the district, as the landlord, must sign off on the proposals. He has reached out already to seek input from CUSD.

The Board would like Gavin to continue to get information on references before moving forward. The board did not need a presentation for the next board meeting, but would like to hear more about the references from schools that have worked with both companies.

C. Limited Use and Maintenance Agreement with Aliso Viejo Community Association*: *Further discussion regarding joint use of the adjacent park.*

Gavin reported that almost all the parks in Aliso Viejo are owned by the Community Association rather than the city. Gavin distributed an additional email that AVCA sent recently about park use. Students who live in Aliso Viejo pay association dues and have a right to the park, but not all Journey students live in Aliso Viejo. He noted that many of the items on the application do not apply to a school organization. The school’s use is very limited, so Gavin is hoping we can do a limited agreement which covers liability and possibly some maintenance fees, but not a pay-per-use fee. The Board encouraged Gavin to continue to negotiate with AVCA to find a mutually agreeable arrangement.

There was a motion to allow Gavin to enter into a LUMA with AVCA which will be brought back for later ratification by the board. There was a second and the motion was approved unanimously.

8 BOARD DEVELOPMENT (Discussion/Action):

A. Assessment of and planning for Board training needs, including upcoming CCSA opportunities

There was a discussion about the needs of the board for training.

Anna Brown and Julie Chiaverini are interested in the upcoming CCSA “Finance Academy”. The annual CCSA conference is in Sacramento, March 20-23. Kara McCann is interested in the annual conference. Other board members will let Gavin and Franci know if they are interested in attending so space can be reserved and travel arrangements made.

B. Board member recruitment update

Gavin updated the board on a prospective parent who might be interested if his child gets a space in the school during the lottery. Another possible board member being recruited works at the law school at UCI. Susan Toma-Berge volunteered to meet informally with the candidate. The ad hoc nominating committee will likely be formed soon, so board members may be asked to participate. Lisa O'Neill can help with the parent portion, but she recommends that the parent who serves on the committee should have a good understanding of the board and should have attended board meetings. She could put together a list of possible parents who could participate and are qualified.

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Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

**Items that are expected to have back up materials provided prior to or at the meeting are indicate with an asterisk. Other items may also have back up materials provided.*