

*Journey School
A California Public Charter School*

*Thursday, April 27, 2023
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
APPROVED May 25, 2023*

6:00 p.m.

*At Journey School
27102 Foxborough
Aliso Viejo, CA 92656*

*(949) 448-7232
www.journeyschool.net*

This meeting was held in person on the Journey School campus.

	AGENDA ITEM
1	<p>Call to Order and Roll Call - Called to order at 6:09 p.m. Amy Capelle, Council President - PRESENT Melissa Dahlin, Council Vice President - PRESENT Margaret Moodian, Council Secretary - PRESENT Jeannie Lee, Board Member - PRESENT Michael Allbee, Board Treasurer - PRESENT</p> <p>ADVISORY POSITIONS: Faculty Advisor - Hellene Brodsky - PRESENT Cassie Kauwling, Parent Cabinet Advisor - PRESENT</p>
2	<p>Inspirational Passage: Gavin shared the following quote by Rudolf Steiner: "To educate the whole child, his heart and his will must be reached, as well as the mind. If a child has been able in his play to give up his whole loving being to the world around him, he will be able, in the serious tasks of later life, to devote himself with confidence and power to the service of the world."</p>
3	<p>Approval of Agenda*: Updates to agenda: The employee handbook will be removed from the agenda. Review of the 2023-24 draft budget will be moved to follow 7A. Margaret made a motion to approve the agenda with changes. Melissa seconded. The motion was passed.</p>
4	<p>PUBLIC COMMENT: Three members of the public were present who requested to speak. Cindy Brown spoke regarding campus safety concerns. She requested that the fence around campus be replaced with one that is 6' tall, especially the back gate which is only 3'. She requested that the school have a staff member or parent volunteer at the back gate when it is unlocked. She cited a Brookings Institute study indicating that mental health issues need attention including bullying prevention programs. She suggested using the Knowledge</p>

	<p><i>Saves Lives program which is being used by CUSD. She would like more information about the school's protocol during a possible threat, and more information about what happens when a student is suspended.</i></p> <p><i>Elizabeth Fairchild also spoke regarding communication during the recent shelter-in-place incident on April 24th. She was concerned that Journey did not receive updates from the sheriff or other schools. She asked that the school work to close this communication gap when there is a potential threat.</i></p> <p><i>Renalani Moodley spoke regarding her work with Journey's DEIJ committee. She spoke in favor of creating a more inclusive community for neuro diverse students. She encouraged the school to utilize conscious discipline and offer teachers more training for working with neuro diverse students.</i></p>
5	<p>BOARD DEVELOPMENT and OVERSIGHT (Discussion/Action):</p> <p>A. Alumni Survey* - <i>Melissa is seeking assistance on this subcommittee. Amy suggested Enrollment Director, Kris Reynolds. Shelley offered to serve on the committee. Margaret is also willing to assist. Board members agreed on having the surveys complete by the next board meeting. They asked that the estimated time for participants to complete the survey be noted.</i></p> <p>B. Executive Director Performance Feedback Survey* - <i>Gavin stated that questions 34 & 35 need to be changed to the current goals before the survey is sent out.</i></p> <p>C. Board Retreat Date and Agenda - <i>Board members agreed to hold an initial retreat from 4-6pm on June 15th, prior to the Annual Meeting.</i></p> <p>Retreat Agenda: <i>SWOT, Illuminate Ed data, Prior Year CAASPP scores, Fastbridge Results, Parent Survey results, Big Rocks, Alliance Principles. Board members should share any other requested topics with Amy and she will prepare a draft of the agenda.</i></p> <p>D. CCSA Conference Notes - <i>Margaret shared that there are conflicting politics surrounding charter school support and it was interesting to hear both sides. She appreciated the perspective that ultimately the funding always goes to students, whether they are in standard public schools or public charter schools. Amy learned more about having all of our records stored and searchable. Gavin stated that our attorneys are drafting a records retention policy and storage protocols.</i></p> <p><i>Michael liked the suggestion of having a "board pipeline" for new board members. He requested more information on financial obligations that come up throughout the year.</i></p> <p><i>Amy learned that it's important that we are aware of the timeline for talking to our legislative representatives. Michael learned that of the 2,746 bills introduced in Congress, most had no significant impact on charter schools. It appears that the attacks on charter schools are lessening.</i></p>
6	<p>CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:</p> <p>A. Approval of Minutes*: Minutes from regular meeting – March 30, 2023. PULLED FROM CONSENT.</p> <p>B. Approval of Minutes*: <i>Minutes from Special Meeting, March 30, 2023.</i></p> <p>C. Updates to 2022-23 Staffing Plan*: <i>Ratification of changes to the Staffing Plan to meet current needs.</i></p>

D. Parent Involvement Policy Review*: Review of updates to Parent Involvement Policy

E. Uniform Complaint Procedure Update*: Review of updates to UCP

F. Homeless Policy Review*: Annual review of Homeless Policy

G. Suicide Prevention Policy*: Annual review of policy

Melissa made a motion to approve Items 6-B through 6-G. Michael seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Hellene noted that the term "homeless" is more often referred to as "unhoused." Jeannie stated that we may be bound by certain terminology and this should be considered before changing the document title.

7 **INFORMATION ITEMS: Reports**

A. Financial Update*: Report on March financials and P2 ADA

Larry shared that our P2 number was higher than budgeted. 533.23 through the end of March. They start funding the next fiscal year in July. ADA is a little bit lower, at 92% vs. 93%. LCFF is \$390,000 more than what was budgeted due to additional ADA.

Hold Harmless funding was passed. School received \$623,000 additional. Some discretionary funds will be used in other years, such as the Arts & Music grant. Annual Giving amount is coming in lower than expected \$60k instead of \$118,000.

The school currently has over 100 days cash on end.

Budget for 2023-24 fiscal year*: *Larry reminds the board that they will need to approve the budget at the June meeting. The 23-24 draft budget is based on 580 students with ADA at 93.1%, a conservative ADA estimate. Revenue COLA is based on the governor's January proposal at 8.15%. One time funds have been included are the ELOP, Educator Effectiveness, ESSER, and strategic planning funds. There is another arts & music grant of \$71,000 from Prop 28, that would require a new program and staff, which will be included in the revision next month. Larry lowered the Parent Cabinet donation of \$60k. Annual Giving was lowered to \$55,000 based on this year's donations.*

Gavin notes that there will be a push to improve attendance next year as this will be important to our rechartering. Amy and Cassie asked about having our COVID policy updated based on current conditions, as this may help attendance.

Staffing is the same as this year with a 3.5% COLA. There is one new position for a Spanish teacher.

Facility and Security Enhancements were higher this year and next due to site improvements. It will go down in future years. Amy suggested adding more funds to non-capitalized equipment.

Professional Development: *Amy asked about increasing funding for professional development and mentoring. Shelley noted that we are considering training for Conscious Discipline. Hellene added that*

she would like to see more support for parent education. Jeannie noted that many teachers are almost one with Waldorf Teacher Training, allowing them more time for other trainings. Amy noted that we should include funding for substitutes while main class teachers are attending trainings.

Amanda Simmons mentioned that there are often topics that rise up during the year, so perhaps non-specific funds could be reserved to fund those unexpected topics. Cassie stated that Parent Cabinet is considering reserving funds to hire a communication consultant. Amy suggested that if a certain amount is put as a line item in the budget, board members could approve specific amounts for each item during the retreat in June.

B. **Faculty Update:** Hellene shared that the needs of the children are greater than usual including issues with toileting, separation anxiety, divorces, and home life. The students are painting, pressing flowers with Earthroots, sanding wooden swords, finger-knitting and doing tasks that require fine motor and gross motor skills. The children go outside every single day, no matter the weather. Teachers' focus has been on social emotional needs this year. They had a parent work day on Earth Day.

C. **Parent Cabinet Update** by Cassie. PC raised an estimated \$45-\$50k net from auction. Upcoming events include May Faire, teacher appreciation & Talent Share. PC's focus continues to be on increasing and recapturing the community, healing from the pandemic, and connecting newer families in the grades, as well as increasing communication and improving the website. She sees a need for more parent education regarding child development. She said PC is working on how to pass down traditions from grade to grade. Amy will share "the book" with Cassie.

D. **Administrative Update** by Gavin Keller. He offers gratitude to PC for the beautiful auction. He summarized the bomb threat at a neighboring high school which was a hoax, but a good learning experience for Journey, the sheriff's department and CUSD, revealing communication gaps. In conversations with the other entities, they recognized that we are very close to the high school and share the same road to the high school, so better communication is necessary. A new process has been initiated with CUSD. During any nearby school crisis, we will be informed as if we are staff at that school. Three people - Gavin, Shelley and Grace - will be informed via cell phones and email. CUSD will implement this process with all charter schools in the district.

Administration would like more support from a sheriff's department resource officer and would like more than one contact in that role. Shelley noted that a fruitful conversation on this topic took place at the faculty meeting in days after the event.

Gavin notes that reserves are healthy, and the Employee Retention Credit is in the works. If ERC comes through, Journey will have more than \$2 million in reserves.

Teachers are performing their third Fastbridge assessment. CAASPP testing will be in May. ELPAC testing is progressing well. Our tutoring program for 4th-8th grade students started three weeks ago

using ELOP funds. We are gauging the effectiveness of this program and will determine if it will be implemented for 2023-24. Illuminate Ed data will be helpful in determining the effectiveness.

Upcoming events: Teacher in-service Monday, May 1st, student-free day. May Faire on Wednesday. Middle school dance coming up. 8th grade overnight trip in June, Rainbow Bridge 6/15, Reverse Rose Ceremony, and many class plays. Our Annual Site Visit with CUSD on May 19th.

Independent Study update by Amanda Simmons: I.S. held two lotteries, for hybrid & home based students. The program is full and over-enrolled with 104 students.

I.S. Parent Survey Results: Parents like the flexibility of not having to come to school, having time at home with their children, participating in lessons, time outside, Waldorf philosophy, specialty classes. Challenges: Circle time at home with only one child; Balancing and keeping good rhythms at home; Canceled class when it rains; Time management; Supply pick up. All families responded that they are very likely to recommend the program to a friend. Families really appreciate the school-sponsored field trips as an added benefit. I.S. faculty are working on creating assessments that parents can use at home. They also plan to offer an asynchronous Spanish offering that families could access on their own time. These would be recorded lessons by Kelli Garcia that could be used year after year.

8

SCHOOL OPERATIONS: Discussion/Action

A. **Budget for 2023-24 fiscal year*:** This item was moved to follow Item 7-A.

B. **Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)*:**

Gavin shared that they finished negotiations with JTA and we have a tentative agreement. Changes to the agreement include adjusting how sick leave is available and rolled over for JTA members. Gavin stated that a conservative estimate of how much leave will be utilized has been included in the budget. Margaret made a motion to approve the CBA tentative agreement. Melissa seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

C. **ELOP Funding and program consideration*:** Review of funding, required program elements and consideration of approving Little Acorns as a partner to provide extended learning programming. Gavin explained that we have a surplus of ELOP funds and Little Acorns meets the required program elements for this funding. Shelley explained that there is an important relationship with the kindergarteners and the Little Acorns staff. The ELOP funded program by Little Acorns would be free to the specified number of participants. Amy asked if a survey is typically sent out following the program to determine its success. Gavin stated that this had not been done, but could be implemented this year.

Michael made a motion to approve a partnership with Little Acorns for their ELOP-funded summer camp for kindergarteners. Melissa seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

D. **Employee Handbook*:** This item was removed from the agenda.

9	Adjournment: Jeannie made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Melissa seconded the motion. It was passed and the meeting was adjourned at 9:13 p.m.
---	---

*Agenda publicly posted at Journey School on April 24, 2023.
And on the school website at www.journeyschool.net*

**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.*