

*Journey School*  
*A California Public Charter School*

**May 23, 2013**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Approved June 27, 2013**

**6:00 p.m.**

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

*In the Journey School Development Office*  
*And by teleconference at posted locations*  
*(949) 448-7232*

[www.journeyschool.net](http://www.journeyschool.net)

*Michael Corbo, Council President: Present*  
*Sue Vaughn, Council Vice-President: Present*  
*Jon Kaplan, Council Member: Present by Skype, arrived at 6:15pm*  
*Michelle Spieker, Council Member: Present*  
*Colleen Patterson, Council Member: Present*  
*Kara McCann, Council Member: Present*  
*Lisa O'Neill: Parent Cabinet Member: Present*  
*Alyson Smith: Secretary and Educational Trustee Member: Present*

*Staff members present: Shaheer Faltas, Patti Connolly, Franci Sassin*  
*Parents: Ben Savill, Marisol Giron, Marie Kenney*

<b>87AGENDA ITEM</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>Call to Order, Roll Call and Review of Norms/Roles</b>  The meeting was called to order at 6:10 pm.
<b>2</b>	<b>Inspirational Passage</b>  Mike Corbo read a poem "In the Hands of a Gifted Teacher".
<b>3</b>	<b>Approval of Agenda*</b>  <b>NOTE: The order of the agenda may be changed without prior notice to the public.</b>

	A motion was made to approve the agenda, seconded and approved unanimously.
4	<p><b>PUBLIC COMMENT:</b> <i>Reminder: Please fill-out a speaker card; see policy above for guidelines</i></p> <p>Parent Ben Savill presented written suggestions to the Council with several proposals for how the school can improve in various areas. He feels that the school may have difficulty living up to its charter, especially with budget constraints. The school is very vulnerable to what is said about it in the community.</p> <p>He recommends that the Council has one or more members dedicated to parent/family communication/advocate as there is a great need. He also believes a student/peer advocate on the Council would be helpful. These people would be separate from the Administration so parents feel comfortable talking to someone when they have issues.</p> <p>He commented that the school seems to be hostile to having parent observation in the classroom and he is not sure why that is the case. It would serve the school better to be more open in this regard and be more encouraging for parents to be in the classroom, as it will build trust.</p> <p>He believes the exit interviews with departing families are crucial.</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>The Council asked to remove all the items from consent and vote on them separately.</p> <p><b>A. Approval of Minutes*:</b> <i>Minutes from meetings of April 25, 2013.</i></p> <p>There was a correction to the minutes: Replace the sentence “Parent Cabinet has received a request to set up a fundraiser that uses a multi-level marketing company that donates back to the school.” With “Parent Cabinet has received a request to set up a fundraiser that uses an outside company which will donate back to the school from purchases by parents of green cleaning products.” It was noted that the terminology used in the original minutes was incorrect.</p> <p>A motion was made to approve the minutes with the change listed above, which was seconded and approved unanimously.</p> <p><b>B. Approval of 2013-14 School Calendar*:</b> <i>Approval of the school attendance and teacher calendar for 2013-14. The proposed calendar has been developed with staff and has been agreed to by Journey Teachers’ Association.</i></p> <p>The Council asked about the variance of calendar from CUSD. There was a discussion regarding the reasons to align as much as possible with CUSD for several reasons. The start and end dates are different, but the rest of the major breaks have been designed to line up with those of CUSD. There</p>

was a motion to approve the calendar which was seconded and approved unanimously.

**C. Ratification of 2013-14 Annual Charter School Information Survey\*:** Ratification of the annual survey which includes enrollment information and the status of the charter school for funding purposes.

The Council reviewed the information on the survey. There was a motion to ratify the survey, which was seconded and approved unanimously.

**D. Approval of STRS reporting with OCDE\*:** Approval of rates for STRS reporting from OCDE for 2013-14.

There was a question regarding the services received and the price. Franci Sassin commented on the reporting services and that the only options for charters are districts or the county office since charters are not allowed to submit reports directly to STRS. There was a motion to approve the STRS reporting with OCDE which was seconded and approved unanimously.

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**INFORMATION ITEMS: Reports**

**A. Administrative Update\*:** Include National Green Ribbon award, Facility Use Plan, 13-14 hiring update, update on 13-14 enrollment, school policies being developed for compliance, follow up on schoolwide Individual Professional Development Plans, STAR testing.

Shaheer Faltas commented on the fact that the “family community” of the school is one of the greatest attributes of the school, but that is also can be the source of challenges since families are so passionate about the school. The school has a lot of good work happening, but also has room for improvement especially in how criticisms of the school are handled. Shaheer reported on the eighth grade projects, including how they use an apprenticeship model and how the projects allow the students to go in depth into a topic that they are very interested in. These went very well and really show the best of what Waldorf education has to offer.

Shaheer reported on enrollment and the new information coming from the state budget process that will impact the class size as the state sets new targets for class size reduction funds. The school will need to keep close track of this and start to plan for it.

The facility use plan for next year is being worked on, including staggered start times and the best use of the entire facility. There are plans for undertaking a parent survey to get feedback about how this may impact the families.

**B. Education Director Update:** Report regarding aspects and activities of the educational program

Patti Connolly reported a summary from the school year. She reported that the teachers worked very hard, especially as most of them were also in the Hybrid training program which helped their work but was challenging while teaching. It was also very beneficial for the school that all the teachers had returned from the previous year. She noted that the work on integrating the Specialty program with

the rest of the educational program was very important and great strides have been made. This work must continue and especially the work on discipline strategies. Patti is an advocate for bringing at least the three main specialty teacher positions (handwork, games and Spanish) to full time positions rather than hourly so that the employees can fully commit to the training and preparation needed. The school takes Compassionate Campus seriously and everyone is committed to zero bullying, however there can be improvements especially in communication with the parents regarding the individual way that situations are handled. There have been strong efforts to embed the Eco-Literacy program into the rest of the program and this is very important. The Digital Literacy program also went well this year and they are working on transitioning the program so that it also becomes embedded into the rest of the program. Parent education on this topic should take place annually. The school will be looking at increasing amounts of education for middle school students on the use of computers. Much of the work that Patti did with the teachers this year was in leadership, in particular using a consensus model. She also did a lot of work reviewing the culture of the school with the faculty and what the culture was and areas that they believe are not coming up to their expectations.

### ***C. Faculty Update***

Alyson Smith reported that STAR testing went very well. Teachers are finishing or preparing for their class plays. The plays incorporate some aspect of the curriculum for that grade, and the students really enjoy this aspect of the school. The school will be covering the majority of the costs for Art of Teaching for teachers, which will really help the teachers take advantage of the opportunity. Many of the teachers will then also do the final in-person portion of their Master's program in Waldorf, and are grateful for the fact that the school offered this and sees how important it is. Most will be graduating this summer from the program. She also reported that the school will be able to send a delegation to Washington to accept the Green Ribbon award, including a designee from faculty, and that thanks to several very generous donations the trip will not cost the school additional money.

### ***D. Parent Cabinet Update\*: Update on activities and finances***

Lisa O'Neill reported that there should be a PC rep for each class for next year. They have been functioning fairly well without a PC Chair although they found that they need to be very vigilant with communication.

They have more committees being formed and they are doing well with volunteer sign ups for next year, and making better use of the volunteer skills.

They are meeting this week regarding the finances for next year.

Marie Kenney reported on the finances of the PC for the year. PC raised approximately the same amount as last year despite their predictions that they would raise more because the school was growing. As an example, the auction had less funds raised through the auction process. They have been discussing whether there is a "ceiling" on fundraising goals and that as the school size increases there may not be the ability to increase fundraising by the same proportion.

The main areas PC will be planning to fund for next year is the teacher training, the garden program

and funding field trip costs.

*E. Report on **Follow-up for Previous Board Items***

Aly Smith will work to update the follow up items since she was not present at the last two meetings.

*F. **Financial Report\***: Review of April financials, May budget revise, and discussion of year end forecasts and cash flow*

Franci Sassin reviewed the May revise and summarized the elements, as well as what was predicted for the budget approval at the state level. She also noted that the school should be receiving additional funds applied specifically to the Common Core implementation, estimated at approximately \$52,000.

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**DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

*A. **Adoption of Preliminary Budget 2013-14 and Approval of Resolution for state's Education Protection Account\***: Presentation of preliminary 2013-14 budget and adoption, and approval of resolution for compliance with the new Education Protection Account regarding expenditures of EPA funds for 12-13 and 13-14.*

Mike Corbo presented the summary of the preliminary budget as presented to the Council. He noted that there is a conservative estimate for Close the Gap and for Development fundraising and activities. He reviewed the expenditure assumptions and staffing model. The budget does not include any Local Control Funding Formula funds, and those will need to be included eventually if LCFF is adopted by the state.

Colleen Patterson commented that the teacher training in the summer and other teacher training opportunities may be applicable to the Common Core fund expenditures.

There was a motion to adopt the budget and EPA resolution, which was seconded and approved unanimously.

*B. **Uniform Complaint Policy**: Discussion of development of Uniform Complaint Policy and Procedures to be posted on Journey School website.*

The school will be developing a policy that can be adopted and implemented for next school year. The school will use templates from other schools and the Department of Education but attempt to create a policy that is compliant as well as useful.

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**DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS: Financial Development**

*A. **Development and Grant Projects**: Update on Development and Journey School Foundation activities, including matching donation for 13-14 and update on board and staffing.*

The Foundation just completed the 2012 taxes and the total income was over \$35,000; all of that went

back to the school budget so the Development Department/Foundation did not end up with much of an increase. This was made up of a lot of small grants and donations and programs. Next year they will need to focus more on building the Foundation's own budget. The Foundation is working on a video to highlight the Journey program and will launch a campaign to raise \$50,000, which will have several messages about ways to support the school. The Foundation met with a consultant and she is sending a proposal and gave valuable insight into where the Foundation is currently.

**B. Strategic Planning:** *Discussion of role of Board in process and update on timeline*

Shaheer reported on the importance of completing at least an initial plan. The Council and Administration must hold responsibility for vision and for leadership succession. The consultants have all said that having this is a requirement to move forward. There was a discussion regarding how to move forward and if the school should use a consultant or a committee.

9 **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS: Board Training and Development**

**A. Board Composition Policy\*:** *Consideration of composition policy to guide Nominating Committee in recruiting and nomination of Board candidates.*

The Council reviewed the Composition policy and discussed the various positions. There was a motion to approve the policy which was seconded and approved unanimously.

**B. Board Nomination Committee and Board vacancies\*:** *Update on timeline for continuing work of Nomination Committee and recruitment for vacancies coming up in 2013-14.*

The Nominating Committee has been recruiting and interviewing possible candidates. One candidate who works with financial planning in the transportation field. He works with budgeting, strategic planning and other financial issues. He has experience with boards and with communications with community. He is a parent and his wife is active in the community, especially in the Eco-Literacy area and with school communications. They have additional leads. One is the Chair of the Art Department at Sage Hill. Another is a leader at the OCDE teacher training program.

**C. Board Officers:** *Review of officer positions and considerations for nomination of officers to be approved at the June annual meeting.*

The Council reviewed the officer positions and the duties and polled the officers regarding their intentions to return in their offices. The officers will be nominated and voted on at the annual meeting.

10 **CLOSED SESSION:** *The meeting will now convene to closed session to discuss the matters described below:*

The Council made a motion to enter into closed session. It was seconded and approved unanimously. The council entered into closed session at 8:30 pm to discuss the matters listed below. Shaheer Faltas and Franci Sassin were invited into closed session based on their work in these matters. Alyson Smith

	<p>left the meeting at 9:15 pm prior to discussion of the union negotiation item.</p> <p><b>A. Pursuant to Government Code §54957.6: CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS:</b> Update on negotiations</p> <p><b>Employee organization: Journey Teachers' Association/CTA/NEA</b></p> <p><b>Agency designated representative: Colleen Patterson</b></p> <p><b>B. Pursuant to Government Code §54957: Public Employment, Titles: Main Class Teacher, Specialty Teacher</b></p> <p><b>C. RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION:</b> The meeting was reconvened to open session at: 9:35 p.m.</p> <p><b>PUBLIC REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN IN CLOSED SESSION</b> (includes the vote or abstention of every member present)</p> <p>There were no actions taken in closed session.</p>
11	<p><b>DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS</b></p> <p><b>A. Staffing Plan for 2013-14*:</b> Discussion and approval of proposed staffing plan for 2013-14, including additional Main Class Teachers.</p> <p>The Council commented on the ways that Common Core funds may be spent. There was a discussion of the increase of paid positions on recess duty and some increase to the specialty program. Other changes to compensation were noted.</p> <p>There was a motion to approve the staffing plan for 2013-14 which was seconded and approved unanimously.</p>
12	<p><b>Adjournment</b></p> <p>The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.</p>

***\*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.***