

Journey School
A California Public Charter School

June 22, 2021

REGULAR (& ANNUAL) MEETING MINUTES

Approved August 30, 2021

6:00 p.m.

Via Zoom Webinar

This meeting was noticed and held in accordance with the guidelines and flexibility from the Governor's Executive Orders N-25-20 and N-29-20, due to a statewide public health emergency.

www.journeyschool.net

NOTE: Board members conducted the meeting via Zoom using the Webinar format. Members of the public wishing to observe and/or contribute were able to participate in the Zoom meeting by accessing the webinar.

BOARD MEMBERS:

Julie Chiaverini, Council President: Present

Amy Capelle, Council Treasurer: Present

Richard Martin, Council Secretary: Present

Jeannie Lee, Board Member: Present

Melissa Dahlin, Board Member : Present

ADVISORY POSITIONS:

Alanna Hayde, Faculty Advisor: Present, arrived at 6:09 pm

Vivienne Benjamin, Parent Cabinet Advisor: Present, arrived at 6:05 pm

Gavin Keller, Shelley Kelley were present, and Amanda Simmons arrived at 7:05 pm.

Franci Sassin and Larry Tamayo (for his items) administrative consultants were present.

AGENDA ITEM

1	<p>Call to Order and Roll Call and review of Webinar processes</p> <p>The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm.</p>
2	<p>Inspirational Passage</p> <p>Gavin read the “ABC’s of Life”, with thoughts for each day.</p>
3	<p>Approval of Agenda*</p> <p>NOTE: The order of the agenda may be changed without prior notice to the public.</p> <p>There was a motion to approve the agenda which was seconded and approved unanimously via a roll call vote.</p>
4	<p>PUBLIC COMMENT: Members of the public may contribute public comment via Zoom Webinar. <i>Reminder: See policy above for time guidelines which are subject to change if necessary due to time constraints. The Council will be using the “raise your hand” function in the webinar to call on those who wish to address the Council.</i></p> <p>Public Comment was held at 6:20 pm.</p> <p>Parent Jessica Monroe addressed the Board. She had some comments about the June Faire. She commented that the event was good and the photography was welcomed, but she felt parents could have participated more fully. She also commented that the school was early to bring some students back during the pandemic, but then towards the end of the school year, it seemed to fall behind other public schools. An example was the way PE/Games had to be conducted in a modified fashion. She also commented that she notices the difference between teachers who hold the Waldorf philosophy more strongly than others, especially coming out of the pandemic. She also reported that one teacher limited all email communication with parents to one day a week, which she feels is not conducive to the students’ best interests. She is interested in having some type of teacher review or feedback process for parents.</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*: Minutes from regular meeting of May 27, 2021 and special meetings on April 29 and June 9. B. Contract Renewal with ExEd*: Renew contract for back office and accounting services with Excellent Education. C. Administrative Consulting contract renewal*: Renewal of administrative consulting contract for 2021-22 school year. D. Job Description(s)*: Approval of job description(s) for various positions E. Consolidated Application*: Approval of application for Title funding and other reporting

through spring Con App.

F. Education Protection Account*: Approval of report on EPA spending for the 2020-21 school year.

Item B was tabled. There was a motion to approve the remaining consent agenda items, which was seconded and approved unanimously.

6

INFORMATION ITEMS: Reports

A. Faculty Update: Update on Faculty activities.

Advisor Alanna Hayde reported on various end of school activities, such as class plays, 8th grade presentations, and promotion ceremonies. Many items were conducted differently from the normal, such as being held outside or on Zoom. The end of year classroom switches and moving took place. The faculty had some end of year planning meetings. Teachers are working on end of year student narrative reports.

B. Parent Cabinet Update: Update on Parent Cabinet activities

Advisor Vivienne Benjamin reported on the final Parent Cabinet meeting of the year. She reported that the June Faire was well received, and the parents really enjoyed the videos and professional photographs. Parents would like to continue professional pictures for the event in the future so parents don't have to worry about taking their own pictures and could focus on the event itself. There is a volunteer or two already for leading the Harvest Faire for the fall. There was a lot of discussion about volunteering and how to get back into that in person next year and get the volunteer numbers up again. The PC had a clothing drive which was very successful and clothing was donated to a charity.

She reported that Karen Pan is the new President of PC. She has multiple students in the school and has a communications background. Cassie is now VP.

C. Administrative Update: Report from School Director, including such topics as end of year activities, summer work plans, hiring efforts, PPP loan forgiveness, enrollment and new family orientation, etc.

Gavin Keller reported on the end of school year activities and felt there was a lot of closure for the community for the year with the promotion ceremonies. These were in person and on campus, which seemed better than using the off campus venue. The 8th graders walked through the campus to receive a send off from students and staff. The June Faire was wonderful and Shelley Kelley did a great job putting that together and keeping aligned with safety guidelines. There was an in person Open House for new families where they had a chance to meet their teacher and see the classrooms and campus. This was new but will likely be continued. Some long time staff members who are retiring were honored.

Summer projects will be starting, including summer maintenance projects, carpet cleaning, a new shade structure, and building an outdoor amphitheatre which will be funded through the PC auction.

Planning for school operations are underway, scheduling and staffing are a high priority. Leadership groups are working on the various events for the upcoming year.

The overall Waldorf Curriculum, including the English and math curricula, are being reviewed for inclusion of various viewpoints that support the DEI initiatives.

The school is looking at internal assessments to be implemented, especially ones which may be useful for collecting data for charter renewal under the new laws.

Gavin noted that some of the special positions and the temporary positions may be difficult to fill. Depending on how hiring is going, they may still need to use Strategic Kids to fill in some positions, in addition to the supervisor positions they will be providing.

The PPP loan has been an important source of funds and has now been fully converted to a grant. This is more than \$565K.

Enrollment for 21-22 is targeted at 570 in person, however, what the fall enrollment actually will be is tied to what the COVID restrictions and safety measures are in place.

Final report cards are due to parents June 28. These include an extensive narrative section.

Shelley Kelley provided an update in the DEI working committee meetings. They worked on a mission and vision statement. The next step was given to a smaller group who will work on it and bring back to the larger group. They also broke up into 4 areas of focus, such as discipline and curriculum. The small group discussions were then shared with the whole group. A representative from OC Human Relations did an implicit bias training with staff. They also reviewed ways to address implicit bias. There was a comment that OC Human Relations offers a number of free seminars on various DEI topics for anyone to access. This might be helpful for board training.

There was a comment about how much of the DEI work was starting to be present on campus this year, such as celebrating Pride month in June. This may be an ongoing celebration each year. It was noted that this also helps students, and can help with suicide prevention. There was some active discussion in the community about what to do to celebrate Pride month. Priscilla was the person who led the Pride month efforts.

D. Financial Update*: Report on May financials and state budget update

Larry Tamayo reported on the May financial information that the board received. The in person instruction grant must be booked for this fiscal year so that is reflected now, bringing the state revenue up by about \$158K. Some expenses were incurred during this year. The PPP funds have also been converted to grant funding now. He reviewed the total revenue and expenditures. The increased expenditures above budget are mostly from the Strategic Kids contract but this was covered by one time funds from pandemic relief. He reviewed the ending cash balance projections.

Larry reviewed the status of the state budget. While there was an initial state budget passed, negotiations on

multiple items are still ongoing but are expected before June 30. The differences proposed in the legislative budget would all benefit Journey School.

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

A. **Local Control and Accountability Plan*:** *Review of LCAP, including annual update, Budget Overview for Parents and 2021-22 LCAP*

Gavin Keller reviewed the LCAP and its components with the board. Larry reviewed the Budget Overview for Parents section. The LCAP was developed to be a three year rolling plan starting in the 2021-22 school year. There are three goals which were shared with the board previously. He reviewed the metrics and the targets for performance for each goal plus the baseline numbers, and briefly addressed the actions for each goal. The growth targets have been developed based on historical information on growth on various metrics, but can be adjusted annually. Gavin reviewed the new expenditure tables which were designed to be more user friendly.

There was discussion with the board on some of the goals and actions. The board asked about whether the funding allocated for some items was sufficient. Larry noted that some expenditures are spread out across several goals and actions. He also noted that the actuals can be reported next year if the priorities change, such as allocating additional professional development to certain actions vs. others. For example, an increase in training and mentoring for staff for academic topics could be considered. The expenditures listed are only estimates. The way the budget feeds into the LCAP will cause some areas to look like they have large expenditures when certain things, such as staff salaries, are included as a whole rather than trying to only do a small percentage of salaries. It was noted that the new LCAP template only shows the total expenditures per action without each portion being broken down.

There was a question regarding chronic absenteeism and what the data shows. Gavin reported that many of these absences are due to long term illness. He also commented that there have been cultural changes at the school to improve attendance rates over the past few years. If a student starts to have multiple absences or tardies, they are supported by the Care Stream programs.

There was a suggestion for future LCAPs that student retention would be a good metric to include, and could be included to track progress under one or more goals. Gavin reported that student attrition has been included in the past LCAPs and could be included in the future, however, with the pandemic, the data is not typical so it is hard to establish a baseline to start from. Perhaps gathering more data about exit reasons when students leave might be useful as well. The Board agreed that it would be prudent to wait and revisit this next year and asked Administration to monitor this metric and report back on it.

Gavin reviewed the annual update portion of the LCAP and commented on the pandemic related effects that happened at the end of 2019-20. He noted that the metrics included in that LCAP were difficult to measure because of modifications that were the result of the pandemic, such as to state testing and attendance. This section also reports on differences with planned expenses vs. actual expenses. Gavin expressed his appreciation for the entire staff in successfully implementing the school's Learning Continuity Plan during

2020-21 and noted the successes of the past year, such as meals served, curriculum delivered and no COVID cases that originated at the school site. He also commented on the challenges such as technology, student engagement, specialty program delivery, etc.

Parent Jessica Monroe made a public comment regarding student attrition; she commented that many families have left over the past year. She believes many were due to the pandemic and the effects of remote learning, but some were due to changes in the curriculum that result in a “less traditional Waldorf” and that some families are also concerned about school conversations on LGBTQ topics and that these be developmentally appropriate.

There was a motion to approve all portion of the 2021-22 LCAP, which was seconded and approved unanimously via a roll call vote.

B. 2021-22 School Budget*: *Approval of budget for upcoming school year.*

Larry Tamayo presented an overview of the preliminary budget for 2021-22. He reviewed the enrollment and attendance assumptions. It includes the “one time” funding which goes away in the future years. It does NOT include any of the state legislative proposals but is based on the Governor’s May revise. Any changes will be brought back for a budget revision ,but all of those changes should be positive to revenue. The ending net is shown as positive and the ending cash balance will also go up.

There was a discussion about the pros and cons and the timing of budget revisions.

There was a motion to approve the budget as presented, which was seconded and approved unanimously via a roll call vote.

C. Fiscal Policies*: *Approval of updates to the Fiscal Policies*

Gavin Keller presented a summary of the updates to the Fiscal Policies. This includes the ability to make ACH payments to vendors through an online portal and would capture the ability for approval of payments through an online tracking system. Larry noted that there has been an increase in fraud with paper checks, so this is more secure. The internal controls are the same, but are done electronically. These are enhancements that help, especially with large vendors and those that are time sensitive, such as health benefits or utilities. There was a discussion about when Council officers would need to approve large purchases. There was interest in using an electronic approval (such as through the online portal) by a board member, rather than as a second signature on a physical check.

Following discussion, the board agreed that all non-recurring purchases or checks over \$5K should have Council approval, which can be given electronically.

There was a motion to approve the revised Fiscal Policies with the changes discussed, with Council member review through electronic approval rather than a signature. The motion was seconded and approved

unanimously via a roll call vote.

The Council took a ten minute break at 8:10 pm.

D. Local Indicator Report*: Report to the Board on state's Local Indicators

Gavin Keller reviewed the Local Indicator Report. The results will be reported through the School Dashboard in order to show that the school has "met" all the Local Indicators. There are 5 indicators to report on. Gavin noted the tools being used for each Local Indicator. Some are school specific like the facilities report or the school culture survey, while others are provided by CDE as self-reflection tools. Franci Sassin commented that to have a "met" on each, the information needs to be presented to the board and then reported through the Dashboard. The actual results of the measurement tools do not play into whether an indicator has been "met".

E. School Re-opening*: Update on school reopening, plus updates to COVID-19 Safety Plan and any additional plans for the 2021-22 school year.

Gavin Keller updated the board. The COVID Safety plan does not have significant changes as the school is waiting for further guidance from federal, state and local health authorities. Plans are to fully reopen in the fall, but with a remote learning option which would look like independent study. He commented on the state's reopening announcement and that there is continuing guidance from the state that masks are still required for all staff and students when indoors. There is a change for any outdoor activities which would mean that masks are not needed. However, further updates will be made after summer changes occur to guidance for K-12 schools. Gavin did not request approval from the board at this time.

F. Staffing Plan 2021-22*: Review of any changes to the initial staffing plan for 2021-22 school year

Gavin Keller reviewed the staffing plan and will ask for board approval. There were some additional recent changes, such as the resignation of the school counselor. One 8th grade teacher will be rotating back to 1st grade. Gavin reported on the assignments for Main Class Teachers in different grades. There are many vacant positions to fill, some of which may be hard to fill. There will be assistants hired at grades 2-8. He reviewed again the pros and cons of using Journey employees vs. contracted support through Strategic Kids. Gavin noted that Strategic Kids has agreed to allow the school to have more input into the hiring process for staff assigned to Journey.

Adam Brody from Strategic Kids addressed the board. He expressed appreciation for the partnership over the past year. He is offering a reduced hourly rate if more than 5 of their staff are hired regularly. Several of the assistants would be able to return. If Journey knows who Administration wants to have back, the sooner SK can see if that person is available and provide an offer the better.

Gavin is recommending that the board consider that some of the assistants are Strategic Kids employees while others would be Journey employees. The school will also use Strategic Kids to sub for

the assistants.

There was a discussion about the advantages for using returning SK staff who have already worked successfully with JS students.

There was a motion to approve the Staffing Plan for 2021-22, with the additional flexibility to fill some positions with Strategic Kids employees, which was seconded and approved unanimously via a roll call vote.

G. *Declaration of Need: Approval of form to allow hiring of teachers under certain types of credentials for the 2021-22 school year.**

Gavin Keller reported to the board on the reason for the Declaration of Need and the assignment of teachers which might be outside of the teacher's current credentials. This form would be submitted to CTC and then the additional process that was approved last month for the Local Assignment Option would also be followed. Gavin reviewed the estimates for various needs for Limited Assignment Permits that are included in the Declaration of Need. There was a discussion about how Gavin arrived at the estimates included.

There was a motion to approve the Declaration of Need as presented, which was seconded and approved unanimously via a roll call vote.

8 BOARD DEVELOPMENT and OVERSIGHT (Discussion/Action):

A. *Regular Meeting Schedule: Consideration of schedule and format of regular board meetings for 2021-22 school year and discussion about board retreat.**

Franci Sassin presented the proposed schedule, and considerations for a board retreat and for the format of future board meetings. Several options were considered, including in person meetings, continuing Zoom webinar meetings and having some type of hybrid. There was a comment that Zoom seems to allow increased participation from the community. The pros and cons of the hybrid format were discussed. There was an interest in figuring out how to allow public comment using video function for the public. There was an option considered for holding one or two meetings held in person and the rest via Zoom.

The Council discussed the options for a board retreat and agreed that since there are new board members

coming on it would be a good idea. August and October were considered for in person retreats.

There was a discussion about adding July board meeting vs. skipping and holding a special meeting if needed. The July and August meetings could be combined and do one at a different time frame.

The Council agreed that August 19 would work for August, and not to hold a regular meeting in July but instead hold special meeting if needed.

The Council agreed that October would be best for a retreat, and that it would ideally be held in person and in conjunction with some board training. October would also be a good time to decide when the next in person board meeting should be held. Until then, Board meetings will be held via Zoom otherwise.

There was a motion to approve the regular board meeting schedule with changes as discussed. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously via a roll call vote.

B. *Board Composition: Discussion of recruitment for board openings for 2021-22 and consideration of new board role**

There was a discussion about a role for an ombudsmen, and the pros and cons of the board President holding this role

There was a discussion about possible board candidates, including potentially having Anna Brown come back for next year. Shelley Kelley also has a potential candidate who has Waldorf experience.

C. *Board Terms: Consideration of extension of expiring board terms**

Jeannie Lee and Richard Martin are willing to take on additional terms. Jeannie is willing to take another term for one year while Richard is willing to stay on until October but would leave earlier if a replacement is found

There was a motion to extend the term for Jeannie Lee by one year, and the term for Richard Martin until the end of October, which was seconded and approved unanimously via a roll call vote.

D. *Board Officers: Nomination of board officers for 2021-22**

The Board discussed the different positions and how to fill them. The President role will be vacant after this meeting. Richard Martin is willing to continue in his office and then it would be handed over when he leaves. The Council decided to Leave all officers the same for now with the office of President vacant, and revisit this agenda item next month .

E. *Bank Account Signers: Approval of Resolution to add new officers as signers on all school bank accounts, if needed, and effective immediately.**

	<p>Julie Chiaverini would be removed from the signers as she is leaving office.</p> <p>There was a motion to approve the updates to the bank signers as discussed, which was seconded and approved unanimously via a roll call vote.</p>
9	<p>CLOSED SESSION: <i>The meeting will now convene to closed session to discuss the matters described below:</i></p> <p>The board entered closed session at 9:55 pm. Franci Sassin was invited in to closed session based on her work on the item. Gavin Keller entered closed session at 10:15 to review the item with the board.</p> <p>1. Pursuant to Government Code §54957: Public Employment, Title: School Executive Director</p> <p>RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION: <i>The meeting was reconvened to open session at: 10:25 p.m.</i></p> <p>PUBLIC REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN IN CLOSED SESSION <i>(includes the vote or abstention of every member present)</i></p> <p>There was no action taken in closed session.</p>
10	<p>Executive Director Compensation*: <i>Consideration of compensation package for Executive Director.</i></p> <p>The board reviewed the comparable salaries for charter school leaders in the Southern California area. The board considered compensation and discussed it with Gavin Keller during closed session. The Board expressed its interest in a multi-year commitment and salary offer.</p> <p>There was a motion to approve an increase in compensation for Gavin Keller, Executive Director, of approximately 3% for the 21-22 school year, with an additional 4% for 22-23 and 5% for 23-24, plus a one-time payment for additional responsibilities due to COVID of \$5,000 to be paid out at the end of the 2020-21 school year. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously via a roll call vote.</p>
11	<p>Adjournment</p> <p>The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 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.***