

Journey School
A California Public Charter School

Thursday, March 30, 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

BOARD MEMBERS:

Amy Capelle, Council President - PRESENT
Melissa Dahlin, Council Vice President - NOT PRESENT
Margaret Moodian, Council Secretary - PRESENT
Jeannie Lee, Board Member - PRESENT
Michael Allbee, Board Treasurer - PRESENT

ADVISORY POSITIONS:

Faculty Advisor - Paul Breazeale - PRESENT
Cassie Kawling, Parent Cabinet Advisor - PRESENT

	AGENDA ITEM	SPONSOR	EST. TIME
1	<p>Call to Order and Roll Call: The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. Board members present: Amy Capelle, Margaret Moodian, Jeannie Lee, Michael Allbee.</p> <p>Jeannie made a motion to allow Melissa to Zoom in due to just cause. Margaret seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Melissa stated that her domestic partner was in another room at her location in Los Angeles County. Amy noted that Melissa is able to attend the meeting virtually, but is not permitted to vote.</p>		
2	<p>Shelley shared the following quote from Rudolf Steiner: "Love is higher than opinion. If people love one another the most varied opinions can be reconciled, thus one of the most important tasks for humankind today and in the future is that we should learn to live together and understand one another. If this human fellowship is not achieved, all talk of development is empty."</p>		
3	<p>Approval of Agenda* Margaret made a motion to approve the agenda. Jeannie seconded the motion. The agenda was unanimously approved.</p>		

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	NOTE: Order of the agenda may be changed without prior notice to the public.
4	PUBLIC COMMENT: No members of the public were in attendance.
5	<p>CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:</p> <p>Item 5D was pulled from the consent Agenda. Margaret made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda items A, B and C. Mike seconded the motion. All approved.</p> <p>A. Approval of Minutes*: Minutes from regular meeting March 2, 2023.</p> <p>B. Updates to 2022-23 Staffing Plan*: Ratification of changes to the Staffing Plan to meet current needs.</p> <p>C. Audit Engagement*: Approval of annual audit engagement for the 2022-23 fiscal year with CLA.</p> <p>D. Bank Resolution*: Approval of resolution naming bank officers [Pulled from Consent Agenda]</p>
6.	<p>BOARD DEVELOPMENT and OVERSIGHT (Discussion/Action):</p> <p>A. Board Strategic Planning*: Board Retreat - Amy asked what the board thinks about doing a retreat this year to make time for strategic planning. Jeannie, Melissa and Margaret both spoke in favor of a retreat as a productive method of planning. After Shelley learns more about the timeline from the Alliance, then the board will plan their retreat based on the Alliance timeline and the availability of relevant data and state budget. Margaret requested that we do a Doodle Pool to find dates that work for everyone. Shelley stated the time just before the start of the school year is particularly difficult for administration.</p> <p>Alumni Surveys: Melissa stated that it will take a few weeks to collect responses from the alumni surveys. Depending on the survey software used, it may be possible to ensure that participants do not complete it more than once. Melissa also noted that if the survey is posted on social media, then there will be unwanted responses from bots. We can include checks to make sure that only real people complete the survey. We do not have former student emails, but only have parent email addresses. Teachers could send the link to their former students. We will need someone to do follow up in order to get as many responses as possible. Board members would like to know if it's legal to email the survey to students under age 18. Response Rates: Shelley and Gavin noted that the survey for the rechartering was sent to hundreds of alumni families and we received only 18 responses. Melissa stated that a good response rate would be around 30%. She stated that we should emphasize to parents how important responses are to the school to be rechartered and be recognized as a Waldorf school. The board discussed offering an incentive such as an Amazon gift card.</p> <p>Melissa asked board members to email her input on the specific questions.</p> <p>Board members shared their top five favorite responses as follows: Jeannie: A, B, D, F, K Mike: D, F, H, K, N Amy: A, C, H, K, N Margaret: Likes them all Shelley: A, B, D, H, K</p>

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Cassie: C, E, F, H, I, K
Paul: A, B, E, G, N
Gavin: A, B, D, F, K, N

Margaret stated that some questions seem negatively biased. For example, "What would you change about your experience?" could be changed to, "Is there anything you would change about your experience?" Jeannie suggested that there be a question regarding what type of student they were while at Journey. Margaret suggested moving question 15 to the end, just before the demographic question. To test out the survey, it will be shared with parents of alumni who are on staff, and alumni who are currently working with Journey.

- B. **Conflict of Interest Form 700*:** Gaylen reported on the status of our Form 700 filings. All filers have completed their filings. The OC Board of Supervisors will review our Code Amendment changes at their meeting on April 25th. They will notify us after April 12th if a representative from Journey should attend the meeting.
- C. **Report out from CCSA conference: This item was tabled.**
- D. **Bank Resolutions (pulled from Consent Agenda).** Gavin explained issues with signers on file with Wells Fargo bank. After meeting with Wells Fargo, it was determined that the typical resolution that we have been using for many years was not acceptable to the bank representative. The banker also stated Journey School Community Council is the name on our bank account and this should appear at the top of the resolution. Gavin is still researching this discrepancy in the account name. Gavin shared two revised versions of the bank resolution that meet the new requirements.

Margaret made a motion to approve "version 1" of the bank resolution with the addition of Amy and Gavin as signers. Mike seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion was passed.

Margaret made a motion to approve "version 2" of the bank resolution with the addition of Amy and Gavin as signers. Mike seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion was passed.

7 INFORMATION ITEMS: Reports

- A. **Financial Update*:** Report on February financials by Larry Tamayo.

Net Income: Journey School is projected to achieve a net income of \$922,429 in FY22-23 compared to \$59,260 in the board-approved budget. This is \$863,170 more than the board-approved budget. We cannot carry over the ADA Hold-Harmless funds. If they are not spent, they will go into reserves.

Balance Sheet: As of February 28, 2023, the school's cash balance was \$1.49M. By June 30, 2023, the school's cash balance is projected to be \$2.39M. As of February 28, 2023, the Accounts Receivable balance was \$7,485. As of February 28, 2023, the Accounts Payable balance, including payroll liabilities, totaled \$203,668.

Income Statement - Revenue: Total revenue for FY22-23 is projected to be \$7.28M, which is \$999,733 more than the budgeted amount. This increase in revenue is due to approval of the Hold-Harmless ADA which increased revenue by approximately \$1M. LCFF is projected to be \$434,765 over budget

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per P1 certified results. Mandate Block Grant is projected to be \$287,697 under budget as the state reallocated the discretionary funds to the Learning Recovery Block Grant and Arts and Music

Instructional Materials Block Grant: Other State Revenue is projected to be \$793,827 over budget primarily due to the Declining Enrollment Relief funds in the amount of \$623,432. Grants are projected to be \$20,000 over budget due to additional funds from the Parent Cabinet.

Expenses: Total expenses for FY22-23 are projected to be \$6.36M, which is \$136,563 more than the budgeted amount. Classified Salaries are projected to be \$95,422 over budget as additional staff was hired and hours were increased. Workers' Compensation is projected to be \$38,135 under budget due to a refund from the prior year and lower costs for the year. Non Capitalized Equipment is projected to be \$30,496 over budget as additional Chromebooks will be purchased this year. ESSER II funds will cover a portion of this. Forecast variances of \$25,000 and 10% of budget will be discussed in this report. Contracted Substitute Teachers are projected to be \$22,085 over budget due to the services from Strategic Kids. The Learning Recovery Block grant will offset this expenditure. Depreciation is projected to be \$22,573 over budget due to the purchase of shade structures and copiers.

ADA: The budgeted P2 ADA is 516.15 based on an enrollment of 555 and a 93.0% attendance rate.

Month 1 ADA: 547.72 Month 5: 536.74

Month 2 ADA: 547.80

Month 3 ADA: 516.54

Month 4 ADA: 528.00

P1 ADA: 537.53

In response to a question from Cassie, Larry stated that last year the school ended the year negative \$271,000. The year prior we were \$313,00 positive. Cash reserves are typically recommended to be at three months worth of cash reserves, although since we are in Orange County, 45-60 days cash on hand is sufficient. Larry stated that we currently have 86 days cash on hand. Amy requested more forecasting for the coming years. Larry stated that he can prepare that information to the board.

B. Faculty Update: *Second grade teacher Paul Breazele provided an update on Faculty activities. There have been a lot of changes in staffing lately for various reasons. Faculty is enjoying having COVID in the rear view mirror for the first time. Margaret asked if anything is needed by faculty. Paul requested more training on how to implement Investigations and All About Reading curriculums, and how to balance those with Waldorf methods. Paul is working on a format for this in his Action Research Project for the Waldorf Teacher Training Program. Jeannie echoed the need for this training, as it was offered when the curriculum was originally selected, but has not been offered lately. Paul feels that without the training, the curriculum is under-utilized.*

Amy asked if the assessment data from Illuminate Ed is helpful. Paul stated that it is not used in grades 1 and 2. Jeannie shared that in middle school, it has been challenging to take the time to do the assessments, but understanding how useful the data is makes teachers more willing to find the time. Jeannie stated that she is

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most interested in the mental health data from the assessments. She enjoys seeing all of the data over time and seeing the growth of the students. Jeannie explained that they are done in fall, winter and spring. Amy noted that the assessment data is necessary for rechartering, but it's even more valuable to inform our teaching.

Jeannie asked Paul how he feels about classroom furniture. Paul explained that he and 4th grade teacher Katie Blacker would like the school to have a uniform look for all of the classrooms, which are currently very "eclectic." This would help teachers know what to expect when they move into a new classroom each year, and would make the school more presentable. Margaret suggested that we inquire with other Waldorf schools regarding their furniture.

C. **Parent Cabinet Update:** Cassie provided an update on Parent Cabinet activities. The auction is scheduled for April 15th. PC has sold 100 tickets so far. The Community Social was a big success and families appreciated not being asked to volunteer or donate money. 300-400 people attended the event. PC is discussing how to get new families integrated, and how to provide a chance for the healing that is needed in the community. Board members suggested having work days, tracking volunteer hours, and offering parent education (although Shelley noted that parent ed not been well attended in the past). Cassie stated that they had more parents willing to serve on the Parent Cabinet board than there were positions. Cassie asked that someone be stationed at the back gate until 9:10 a.m. when the gate is locked. Also she asked that the gate be unlocked by 8:00 a.m. on PC meeting dates.

D. **Administrative Update:** Gavin provided a report as follows:
Enrollment lotteries went very well. Seat based classes will be full. Attendance continues to be lower than a typical year due to illness and travel. Plans will be drafted for next year to address chronic absenteeism. There have also been many staff illnesses.

Staffing update: Nurse Amanda Girard will not be returning following her maternity leave. We have hired a new school nurse named Tia. 7th grade teacher Alanna Hayde will be leaving on maternity leave next month. A long term sub is being interviewed tomorrow. The other 7th grade teacher has resigned for medical reasons and a long term sub, Cathrine Ji, has been hired for the remainder of the year. The rainy weather has been a challenge for teachers with students inside, and there have been many roof leaks. CUSD will evaluate the damage and repair/remediate as needed.

Overnight field trips: We had to cancel our 6th grade overnight trip to Running Springs due to a snow storm. It has been rescheduled for September.

Universal Transitional Kindergarten: The school has some funds for planning UTK next year. After discussing numerous models, we have decided to keep our existing two-year kindergarten model. We limited the number of TK seats in each class to two per class.

Graduation will be held at Sea Country Senior and Community Center on Saturday, June 17th.

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8	<p>SCHOOL OPERATIONS: Discussion/Action</p> <p>A. Executive Director evaluation cycle*: Amy asked Gavin if there are any questions on the evaluation that are not relevant to his day-to-day work, or if there is anything missing. Gavin stated that questions 31 and 35 need to be updated. Shelley noted that communication is an important part of the Director's job. Mike noted that question 31 is related to communication. Amy asked that board members review the questions and send her their input. She will prepare a revised survey for review and approval at the April board meeting. Once approved, the survey will be sent out in May. The survey will be sent to the following stakeholders: Council, Administrative Support Team, PC Execs, PEDCO, and Administration.</p> <p>B. Staffing Plan 2023-24*: Gavin presented the first draft of the staffing plan for next year. This plan will go before budgeting prior to being submitted for board approval. He notes that we will return to having two counselors, as there is a great need for this among students. All main class teachers are returning with the exception of Alanna Hayde. We hope to include a Spanish teacher for the upper grades, if the budget allows. We currently do not have Strategic Kids paraeducators funded for next year. This will present staffing challenges. Money for substitute teachers has been included in the budget. Extra duty stipends for Waldorf Teacher Certification program is being included in the budget, with up to 40 hours/month for mentorship and other services.</p> <p>C. Employee Handbook*: Admin has communicated with our attorneys to help limit the number of employee grievances. The changes to the Employee Handbook are recommendations from the attorneys, including a clause setting boundaries for professional expectations while interacting with a student. Amy noted that the verbiage lacks a clear definition of some of the terms. Cassie expressed concern regarding the placement of the sentence on page 19, where it has been placed next to verbiage about a teacher having an inappropriate relationship with a student. The board discussed the meaning of the sentence. Cassie shared concern that it only applies to certain members of the population. Jeannie pointed out that the sentence seems to prohibit teachers from sharing what their pronouns are with students. Board members agreed that it is important to set boundaries, but that the wording of the sentence and its location in the document should be reconsidered. Jeannie suggested incorporating language that specifically prohibits teachers from giving advice or information on sexual orientation or sexual education outside of a parent-authorized sex ed class.</p>
9	<p>Adjournment: Jeannie made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Margaret seconded the motion. All approved. The meeting was adjourned at 9:19 p.m.</p>

****Items that have back up materials provided prior to or at the meeting are indicated with an asterisk.***