

***Journey School
A California Public Charter School***

Thursday, February 24, 2022

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Approved March 24, 2022

6:00 p.m.

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

(949) 448-7232

www.journeyschool.net

This meeting was noticed and held in accordance with the guidelines and flexibility of Governor's Executive Orders N-25-20, N-29-20, N-08-21 and N-1-22, as well as AB 361, due to a statewide public health emergency and in accordance with the rules for Regular Meetings. Journey School assists anyone wishing to observe or participate in the meeting, including making any needed reasonable modification or accommodations, upon request by any person with a disability.

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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:

*Amy Capelle, Council President: Present
Melissa Dahlin, Council Vice President: Present
Margaret Moodian, Council Secretary: Present
Jeannie Lee, Board Member: Absent
VACANT, Board Treasurer*

ADVISORY POSITIONS:

*Alanna Hayde, Faculty Advisor: Present
Viviene Benjamin, Parent Cabinet Advisor: Absent
Warren Whiteaker, Financial Advisor: Present*

Administrators Gavin Keller, Shelley Kelley and Amanda Simmons were present. Consultants Franci Sassin and Larry Tamayo (for his items) were present.

	AGENDA ITEM
1	<p>Call to Order and Roll Call and review of Webinar procedures</p> <p>The meeting was called to order at 6:09 pm. Franci Sassin reviewed the webinar rules, as well as the public comment process. Amanda Simmons volunteered to be the timekeeper for the meeting.</p>
2	<p>Inspirational Passage</p> <p>Shelley Kelley read a passage called “ A Verse for our Time” by Rudolph Steiner and gave some background about how Waldorf Education was created to help with healing communities over 100 years ago.</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. Reminder: See policy above for time guidelines.</p> <p>The following individuals provided public comment:</p> <p>Teresa Risch, a parent, spoke against mandatory masks for students and believes Journey School should do more as a Waldorf school to avoid detrimental effects of masks on children. She also wanted more information on how board members are selected and how the board supports the Waldorf model.</p> <p>Ben Hartsville, a parent, agreed with the comments by Ms. Risch and stated that if Journey School made masks optional for students, it might help with enrollment, and this is a way to frame this issue positively instead of negatively as something the school must do to align with the District.</p> <p>Katie Vanderveen, a parent, noted that mask mandates were being lifted in many places and wants to see Journey School end mandatory masks for students. She states that masks can be harmful and has emailed studies to administration about how they are also ineffective. She believes that since Journey School can operate independently from CUSD, the school should stand up for students and give students a choice.</p> <p>Janice Lee Holbrook and Marcus Holbrook, parents, noted that their student has expressed concerns over being able to see and hear people when wearing masks. They don’t think the school should wait to change the mask mandate but should act now and let students have a choice. They believe the</p>

	<p>sense of community is being lost and parents are disconnected from the school and feel isolated and are not inspired anymore .</p>
<p>5</p>	<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 January 27, 2022. B. Updates to 2021-22 Staffing Plan*: Ratification of changes to the Staffing Plan to meet current needs. C. School Safety Plan*: Annual review including any necessary updates to plan D. Annual Tax Returns*: Approval of federal (990) and state (199) tax returns for nonprofit corporation. E. Second Interim Financial Report*: Approval of second interim report, with fiscal information through January, 2022, due by March 15. F. Consolidated Application*: Approval of ConApp reports for winter reporting cycle. <p>Item D was removed from Consent.</p> <p>There was a motion to approve the remainder of the consent agenda items, which was seconded and approved unanimously via a roll call vote.</p> <p>ITEM D: Amy Capelle had a question related to Schedule O of the Form 990. The section on the board composition should be updated to reflect the updated bylaws. On Schedule R, she wondered if the Foundation need to be added as a “related tax exempt organization”. Franci Sassin commented that the audit firm is aware of both the Foundation as well as Journey’s separate PTO and they review the instructions carefully, therefore, this most likely mean sthat neither organization is reportable. Gavin Keller will double check and update the auditor to be sure they are aware and those two organizations do not need to be added. The Council does not need to approve the tax return prior to submittal as long as it has been reviewed. Gavin will follow up on the items and report back to Amy about the changes.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>BOARD DEVELOPMENT and OVERSIGHT (Discussion/Action):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Board Strategic Planning*: Topics: 1) Review 7 core principals of Waldorf Education 2) Review student outcomes from charter. 3) Review mission and vision. <p>The board had a discussion but also agreed to revisit this again when additional board members and advisors were present. Amy Capelle reviewed the guiding questions sent to the board and framed the discussion in terms of what will assist with short and long term planning for the board. There was a discussion about how the student outcomes were developed and the history of what came first. Gavin Keller commented that the way the student outcomes were measured did change significantly in the most recent charter renewal in 2020. There are some additional tools being used now that will help</p>

measure some of these outcomes, such as the SEL tool and the various surveys on school climate. It would be good to find out more about whether the school is able to get the data needed to actually be able to determine if outcomes are being met. The board is interested in where resources would be helpful to achieve the charter outcomes. The board was interested in how the various outcomes would be prioritized and how that might be different during the pandemic. There was a comment about additional data collection from alumni and finding out more about how the educational program has set up students for success, and where are areas of growth as seen by alumni. Alumni are a strong testament to the student outcomes in action.

The Board asked the administration and advisory team to consider how the outcomes could be prioritized.

There is continuing interest in planning a longer dedicated time, such as through a Board retreat, to be able to discuss these topics in depth.

B. *Board Meeting Location/Method of meeting: Review of updated rules under AB 361 for meetings, including teleconference locations, and consideration of Resolution regarding the current State of Emergency per AB 361.**

Franci Sassin gave an update on the more recent Executive Order that now doesn't expire until the end of March. It was noted that currently some of the community seems to prefer the virtual board meetings as it is more accessible. The Council will use that flexibility for the March meeting and holding the meeting via Zoom, then revisit at the March meeting. There was a discussion regarding options such as hybrid options and possible pending legislation that might help in the future.

C. *Council Composition*: Review of board and advisory positions and any update on search for vacant position.

Amy Capelle has another potential board candidate identified, a former Journey School parent. If she is interested Amy will bring her to the Nominating Committee. Amy was also interested in getting feedback regarding the advisory roles and whether we are making the most of these roles and if the positions are effectively able to bring the "voices" of the community to the board. The board commented on how valuable the input of the advisory positions has been. Alanna Hayde commented that she can assist with comments on Waldorf pedagogy, and that she would appreciate any specific guidance or questions that the Board would like to hear from faculty. If there was something more structured she can bring faculty that might make it more approachable. Vivienne Benjamin has spoken to Amy ahead of time and would also appreciate more guidance on the role and how it can better represent the input of the parent community. The board asked about ways to better get to know the faculty and for faculty to know who the board members are. The board asked to have an item on a future agenda regarding making better use of the advisory positions.

D. *School Director Evaluation Cycle*: Review of informal goals for 2021-22 and check in regarding support needed to achieve goals.

Gavin Keller reported that the approved evaluation cycle was working well until the pandemic started, but now there may be an opportunity to start back up again with the upcoming school year. Gavin reported that he has been working on informal goals this year, and he summarized his focus this year as follows: 1. Make resources and tools available to support SEL during the pandemic. 2. Learn more about the opportunities to bring to the school which would support

academic achievement and further his education in Waldorf education by attending the teacher training when able to. 3. Acquiring more skills in marketing to assist with enrollment, such as learning more about advertising techniques.

Amy Capelle commented that while it was important to understand the goals for purposes of the annual evaluation, it is even more important to be sure that Gavin has the support he needs to reach his goals while he is providing support to the rest of the organization.

E. **Conflict of Interest Form 700***: *Reminder of upcoming deadline for filing annual Form 700s.*

Franci Sassin reported briefly on the changes to the Form 700 this year, which are minimal, and that the reporting deadline is April 1 as usual, and if anyone has questions accessing or completing the form to reach out to her directly.

7 **INFORMATION ITEMS: Reports**

A. **Financial Update***: *Report on January financials*

Larry Tamayo reported that the ADA and attendance rates for January were lower, due to the pandemic surge impact, however the enrollment numbers went up quite a bit so that will help with the P2 forecast. That forecast is still lower than originally budgeted, but is trending in the right direction. Larry reviewed the revenue sources again, which haven't changed much. He reported on the trends with expenditures, and that staff salaries and the additional staff support from Strategic Kids are the main areas to be watching. The cash balance is healthy but will dip by year end, however there are no cash flow issues identified. Larry provided an update on pending legislation especially regarding the January budget proposal, and the analysts are actually projecting an even more positive trend to the COLA than the Governor's proposal. Additional programs are also being considered for funding. SB 579 is still moving along, it has passed the Senate at this time, and this would help with funding if the school experiences a decline in enrollment. Advisor Warren Whiteaker commented that it would be good to look at both worst and best case scenarios during the budget process.

B. **Faculty Update**: *Update on Faculty activities.*

Alanna Hayde checked with Ms. Hellene from Kindergarten to provide her perspective to the board this month. She commented on the number of new students that have come in mid-year and many of the Kindergarten students are not used to being in school. Faculty understand that there is a need to increase enrollment, but it is a lot of work for them. Also onboarding new parents is important and takes a lot of effort. There is interest in how to help parents have some more structured forms of communication to help with some of the consequences of multiple online forums being used by parents and the lack of ability to have as much in-person networking by parents. She reported that there are a lot of classes being held outdoors, which can create some issues with the space, so creative solutions are being sought. Faculty will be looking at the "essentials" of Waldorf education and which activities should happen annually and which can be done less often. There are a lot of opinions among

the faculty regarding the COVID requirements. Alanna reported that her class is finally back to having ALL students present since there have been multiple student absences since the fall.

C. **Parent Cabinet Update:** *Update on Parent Cabinet activities*

Amy Capelle reported on behalf of Vivienne Benjamin. The Read a Thon was successful with a new parent leader, and it is raising a lot of funds so far. There is a new design for Journey socks. The tickets for the upcoming auction are available and the theme is related to the roots of Journey. Donations and sponsors are being collected now. Parent Cabinet committed \$150K to teacher training in addition to \$60K general donations. There were discussions about masking at the PC meeting, which are being addressed by administration. The PC Executive team discussed the role of the PC Advisor to the board and will be bringing some recommendations forward soon.

D. **Administrative Update:** *Report from School Director, including update on COVID cases and response, DEI work update, school events, CCSA conference, first grade teacher transition, report cards and parent conferences, etc.*

Gavin Keller reported on the COVID cases, these have gone down quite a bit in February. January presented many staffing issues and a lot of students absent due to Omicron, but February has been much better and there have been no cases since mid-February. The regularly scheduled spring events such as Pentathlon will take place, but will not be multi-school events like historically. Parents will most likely be able to attend. They are also looking into ways to have the May Faire. The school will be sending three people to the CCSA conference. Board members are invited to attend one day or the whole conference. There was a transition for one of the first grade teachers who is moving out of state. Aside from this, all other teachers are intending to stay next year.

The quarterly report cards were issued. Gavin reported on the differences in the report cards in the different grade levels. He reported on the mid-year parent teacher conferences which are scheduled as needed this week (with a minimum day calendar) to review student progress. He commented on the fact that substitutes teachers are very scarce now.

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SCHOOL OPERATIONS: Discussion/Action

A. **Assessment Updates*:** *Including State Testing Results from Spring 2021, plus other relevant student assessments*

Gavin Keller reviewed the report that he prepared regarding student assessment results. He had reviewed report cards earlier in the meeting and noted this is one assessment tool being used. They are planning to try to compile more data from the report cards using Excel. He also commented that the Illuminate assessments are proceeding but they have not been able to get the full three assessments this year in all grades, but baselines have been established and there will be a second test in the spring. He reviewed the various types of assessment incorporated in

this program. He reported on the performance ranges in the different grade levels. He will be compiling the data and will review it again as the administrative team complete their analysis.

Gavin reviewed the student subgroup data from the state standardized testing (CAASPP). He noted if any student group is less than 30 students, data is not available, so the ones which are considered numerically significant are shown, such as students with disabilities. If a group is more than 10% different from the overall scores, that is considered a performance gap. He made additional comments regarding the areas where there are performance gaps. There was some discussion regarding various efforts underway or potential supplements to help close these gaps. The DEIJ group is also analyzing the equity in the curriculum and the data related to student race and ethnicity.

B. *Enrollment and Attendance Update:* *Update on enrollment projections and attendance rates.*

Gavin Keller reported on the total enrollment of 537, 10 of which were added since the January board meeting. Attendance has increased so it will help with the final P2 funded ADA. The application window closed today for next year. There are 155 applications for next year, which is down from a normal year, however, many applicants have been offered a spot immediately rather than waiting until the fall. About 100 of the applications are for Kindergarten.

C. *LCAP Mid-Year Supplement*:* *Review and approval of the mid-year supplement which provides an update required for the 2021-22 school year.*

Gavin Keller reported on the new LCAP Supplement, which must be reported on to the board this month. It is primarily to provide information on the additional funds received this year and how those are being used. The primary uses are to keep school open, to keep student to staff ratio low, and to provide extra support for learning loss and mental health. He explained the three sections required in the supplement. There was a discussion regarding the LCAP goals and the data presented in the mid-year update. Additional actions may be added during the annual LCAP update.

There was a motion to approve the LCAP mid-year supplement, which was seconded and approved unanimously via a roll call vote.

The Board took a 5 minute break at 8:40 pm.

D. *COVID 19 Response:* *Discussion and any necessary Actions related to response to COVID 19 public health situation, including relevant updates and/or purchases.*

Gavin Keller did not have further updates on this item beyond what was discussed earlier in the meeting, so this item was tabled.

E. *Safe Return to In Person Instruction Plan: (Formerly known as **COVID-19 Safety Plan**) Review and approval of updates to the required plan.**

Gavin Keller reported on the changes to the plan since the last update. The COVID mitigation measures are included. He reported to the board that face coverings are still required in school settings, however, there is guidance expected from the state at the end of February. There is an effort to allow the face covering decisions to be made at the local level. He made the board aware that Journey follows its own COVID 19 Safety Plan vs. that of the authorizing district, Capistrano Unified School District, however, there is a lot of alignment because much of the guidance follows the state and local requirements. CUSD does have oversight responsibility to make sure Journey School is following all applicable rules including public health guidance. He reminded the board of some of the many potential consequences of defying the orders would make the school liable, and the educators could be personally penalized related to their credentials and possibly even personally liable. In addition, investigations could be done by the county public health agency which has authority to close the school for health reasons. He is recommending waiting to see what the state guidance is and that the school adheres to it once it is released. If the state and local authorities did allow local discretion that would in turn allow Journey to exercise more flexibility.

The Council inquired about the level of parent and staff support for masks vs. opposition to masks. Administration believes it is fairly evenly divided but it is difficult to say for sure without a survey. It noted that during a state of emergency, these mandates and orders have the force of law, and the school must adhere to that as a public charter school.

Gavin recommended that the board consider updating the plan to proactively incorporate the state guidance when it comes out, but the board could also hold a special meeting to discuss it once it is released.

There was a motion to approve the COVID Safety Plan as written, which was seconded and approved unanimously via a roll call vote.

F. *School Calendar: Review of draft school calendar for 2022-23 school year.**

Gavin Keller reviewed the proposed draft calendar for input. He noted that this was developed by the Calendar Committee. The current proposal does not include the number of instructional minutes, which will be added later. The calendar has 175 student days and 191 teacher days. The first day is proposed as Sept. 7 and the last day would be June 16. The calendar matches all the CUSD breaks, including "in-service" dates. This strategy helps increase attendance and helps families. The board could approve the first day of school if the rest of the details are not ready yet for a vote. The board was interested in getting additional input from Parent Cabinet.

	<p>There was a motion to approve the first day of school for the 2022-23 school year as September 7, which was seconded and approved unanimously via a roll call vote.</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>CLOSED SESSION: <i>The meeting will now convene to closed session to discuss the matters described below:</i></p> <p>The meeting adjourned into closed session at 9:15 pm. Gavin Keller and Franci Sassin were invited based on their work in the matters.</p> <p>A. Pursuant to Government Code §54956.9 (d)(1): Existing Litigation: OAH CASE NUMBER 2021120905</p> <p>B. Pursuant to Government Code §54957.6: CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS: <i>Update on the negotiations for 2022-23 CBA</i></p> <p>Employee organization: <i>Journey Teachers' Association/CTA</i></p> <p>Agency designated representative: <i>Gavin Keller</i></p> <p>RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION: <i>The meeting was reconvened to open session at: 10:07 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>No reportable action taken.</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Adjournment</p> <p>The meeting was adjourned at 10:08 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.*