

*Journey School
A California Public Charter School*

Monday, June 16, 2025

***REGULAR (and ANNUAL) MEETING MINUTES
Approved August 28, 2025***

6:00 p.m.

*Journey School
27102 Foxborough
Aliso Viejo, CA 92656*

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

NOTE: This meeting will be held in person on the Journey School campus and will be live streamed via Zoom. Members of the public are welcome to attend in person or online. Join Zoom Meeting:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86025029240?pwd=3Ww1qZ3nZAbuPqWnIC6wnsvu9uqK8j.1>

Meeting ID: 860 2502 9240 Passcode: 92629
One tap mobile +16694449171,,86025029240#,,,,*92629# US

BOARD MEMBERS:

*Amy Capelle, Council President
Melissa Dahlin, Council Vice President
Margaret Moodian, Council Secretary
Jeannie Lee, Board Member
Michael Allbee, Board Treasurer*

ADVISORY POSITIONS:

*Renalani Moddley, Parent Cabinet Advisor
Faculty Advisor, TBD*

Also present: Gavin Keller, Executive Director. Shelley Kelley, Education Director. Gaylen Corbett, clerical support. Mr. Moodley. Yvette Lavery (6:30 p.m.). There were eight participants on Zoom. Bettina Hooper from CharterSAFE joined the Zoom at 7:00 p.m.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRESENTATIONS TO THE COUNCIL BY PARENTS AND CITIZENS

Journey School welcomes your participation at the school's Council meetings. The purpose of a public meeting of the Council is to conduct the affairs of Journey School in public. We are pleased that you are in attendance. To assist you in the ease of speaking/participating in our meetings, the following guidelines are provided:

1. *Agendas are available to audience members during the meeting and on the school website.*
2. *“Request to Speak” cards are available for all audience members who wish to speak prior to an agenda item or under the general category of “Public Comment.” “Public Comment” time is set aside for members of the audience to raise issues that are not specifically on the agenda. However, due to public meeting laws, the Council can only listen to your issue, not discuss your issue, respond in substance or take action. These presentations are limited to five (5) minutes (ten (10) minutes if a translator is needed) and total time allotted to non-agenda items will not exceed thirty (30) minutes. The Council may give direction to staff to respond to your concern.*
3. *With regard to items that are on the agenda, you may specify that agenda item on your “Request to Speak” card and submit the card prior to an agenda item. The public comment period precedes presentations on that agenda item by staff and/or school committees, Council discussion, and deliberation. You will be given an opportunity to speak for up to five (5) minutes (ten (10) minutes if a translator is needed).*
4. *When addressing the Council, speakers are requested to state their name and adhere to the time limits set forth.*
5. *Audience members attending a meeting virtually are required to follow the guidelines specified in points 1 through 4 with the following exception noted: In lieu of a “Request to Speak” card, an audience member may utilize the chat function to indicate their name and a request to speak under the general category of “Public Comment” or at a specific agenda item. All other comments, questions, and dialogue entered into the chat will not be entered into public record and will not be responded to/addressed.*

Notices: *Journey does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment in employment in its programs or activities. Please notify the office at (949) 448-7232 twenty-four (24) hours prior to the date of the meeting for disability accommodations necessary in order to participate. Per California Government Code section 54957.5(b), Journey shall make materials that are part of the regular agenda packet available in the office and/or on the school’s website www.journeyschool.net, without delay and at the same time, they are distributed to the Council.*

AGENDA ITEM	
1	Call to Order and Roll Call - The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m.
2	Inspirational Passage: Mike shared an inspirational passage from the Parents Tao Te Ching.
3	Approval of Agenda* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NOTE: The order of the agenda may be changed without prior notice to the public. Jeannie made a motion to approve the agenda. Mike seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.
4	PUBLIC COMMENT: Members of the public may contribute public comment. Gaylen Corbett regarding misrepresentation of community sentiment about the Executive Director, attached to the minutes.
5	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 style="text-align: center;">A. Approval of Minutes*: Minutes from regular meeting May 27, 2025</p>

	<p>B. Education Protection Account*: Approval of plan and report on EPA spending for the 2024-25 school year</p> <p>C. Consolidated Application*: Annual approval of the spring Consolidated Application (ConApp), used by the California Department of Education (CDE) to distribute categorical funds from various state and federal programs to direct-funded charter schools throughout California.</p> <p>Mike made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Melissa seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.</p>
6	<p>INFORMATION ITEMS: Reports</p> <p>A. Faculty Update: Update on Faculty activities. Shelley shared feedback from gardening teacher Brandon Wickes regarding ways to improve communication between faculty and specialty teachers. Shelley and Jeannie also shared positive reflections on 8th grade graduation. Gavin shared plans for teacher training over summer.</p> <p>B. Parent Cabinet Update: Renalani shared an update on Parent Cabinet activities. It was a successful year with good volunteer turnout. The next auction will be March 28th at El Adobe with a "Midsummer Night" theme. Harvest Faire will be held on Sunday, November 2nd. PC will be donating to PEDCO up to \$1,000 for their expenses. PC has a new team with Ashley Rowell as President, Emily Nelson as VP, Mollie Dumas as Secretary, Amy Caldwell as Treasurer, Holly Robinson as Communication Coordinator, Erica Mort as Events Coordinator, and Renalani as PC representative to the board. A suggestion of having a more elaborate alumni booth or panel at Harvest Faire was made. Amy requested that Renal share the board's appreciation for the work that PC does.</p> <p>C. Administrative Update: Gavin shared an update on summer projects, audit progress, summer programming, professional development, middle school scheduling, and other updates. Meetings with the teachers concluded today. The administration offered suggestions to teachers for areas to focus on during summer training including interventions, ESL progress and tracking, and authentic writing practice as required by state testing in grades 3-8. The process for students to access support services such as counselors is being reviewed for next year. An outdoor teacher space will be created with funds raised by the Parent Cabinet auction. Strategic Kids will provide an ELOP-funded summer program that will be free to Journey families. Journey is hosting an Art of Teaching summer training for our teachers as well as some from other Waldorf schools. Amy extended the board's gratitude to the administrative staff for their work. Jeannie and Shelley stated that there was also much gratitude from faculty to the admin staff.</p>
7	<p>SCHOOL OPERATIONS: Discussion/Action</p> <p>A. Collective Bargaining Agreement*: Gavin reviewed the three-year agreement with Journey Teacher Association which includes a step-and-column salary schedule. It includes a tentative agreement allowing the school to schedule teachers for one recess supervision duty per week. The agreement applies to all faculty members. Margaret noted the need to fundraise to support the increased salaries. Amy would like to know CUSD's salary schedule for reference. Margaret made a motion to</p>

ratify the contract. Melissa seconded the motion. Jeannie abstained. It was unanimously approved by Amy, Mike, Melissa and Margaret.

- B. Local Indicator Report*:** Gavin shared the school performance and progress on CDE Local Indicators. We are required to report on 5 of the 8 priorities. Priorities 1, 2, 3 6 and 7 are noted as met. Mike made a motion to approve the Local Indicator Report. Margaret seconded the motion and the Local Indicator Report was unanimously approved.
- C. Staffing Plan 2025-26*:** There were no changes to the staffing plan since it was last submitted to the board. Administration is very happy with the teachers hired for grades 2 and 5, and the return of June Hamlin as an interventionist to support the behavior and guidance team, and Marlena Ambrose as a new member of the special education team. We are still seeking a replacement for music teacher Samira.
- D. Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)*:** Gavin read aloud LCAP input from the PAC regarding the SST process, training for Games teachers, tracking progress of the LCAP, and DEIJ actions on prior LCAPs. He responded to the items as follows: On a prior LCAP there was a small amount of funding for DEIJ guest speakers. Currently that cost would be part of parent engagement. PEDCO has taken on DEIJ work, so there is no longer a separate committee. In regards to LCAP progress tracking, the administrator reviews the metrics spreadsheets on a monthly basis to track progress. In January there is mid-year LCAP update where progress is reported. Games teacher training: Mr. Sergio 3 day training at Waldorf School of Orange County and he is mentored by our other movement teacher, Joy Halverson. He will continue to receive training. Renalani stated that it was PAC's understanding that the SST included the pedagogy framework. She asked if there is a way to bring it into alignment with the Waldorf philosophy. Jeannie clarified that it is a very involved process taking three weeks with multiple faculty and administrators working together. Shelley clarified that parents of the student are deeply involved in the Child Study process since personal information is required about the child. Renalani requested some literature regarding the SST process. Shelley will share the three-fold process with Renalani.
- E. Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)*:** Gavin reviewed the 2024-25 LCAP Annual Update and 2025-26 LCAP. Margaret made a motion to approve the LCAP. Mike seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Yvette and Renalani thanked the board for taking their feedback into consideration.
- F. Preliminary Budget 2025-26*:** Larry Tamayo reviewed the preliminary budget. The revenue COLA is set at 2.3%. One time funds that have been carried over from past years must be used by the end of next year. The preliminary budget includes nutrition revenue from state and federal funds The program will operate at a loss of approximately \$40k the first year. The budget for future years will be planned accordingly. Amy suggested that PC consider helping to fund the lunch program. Renalani asked if volunteers could help serve the food. Gavin will inquire with the provider.

Larry noted that enrollment has been increased in the next two years in order to maintain positive cash flow. Gavin stated that our enrollment cap is variable due to Independent Study, but 615 is a good approximation. Regarding depreciation, Larry explained that some capital investments are expiring and can no longer be depreciated. The budget is aligned with the LCAP. Larry stated that the budget does not include some discretionary one-time funds including a student support grant that will be approximately \$55-\$60k, or \$20k from the Learning Recovery Block Grant. Those funds will be included after the state approves its budget.

Amy asked about the possibility of increasing salaries to meet CUSD's rates, and how much would be needed to fund those types of increases. Larry will communicate with Gavin regarding this and present different scenarios. Mike suggested the possibility of providing annual bonuses in lieu of salary increases since fundraising may vary from year to year, for faculty and staff members.

Mike made a motion to approve the preliminary budget for 2025-26 fiscal year. Margaret seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

- G. Charter Safe Insurance Presentation*:** Bettina Hooper shared a presentation and explained the services they offer. They are not an insurance company, but rather a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) serving California charter schools exclusively. They collectively self-insure for smaller, more frequent claims for up to \$5 million. They also purchase insurance as a pool for the charter schools that they represent, up to \$50 million. CharterSAFE is a nonprofit, member-owned entity. They provide a wide variety of resources tailored to charter schools including all insurance needs, as well as staff training, risk assessment, contract reviews, personnel policies, and more. Joining CharterSAFE is a two-year commitment.

Bettina explained the various coverages needed for an entity that rents its facilities, such as insurance for the contents of buildings, relocation cost coverage, and transportation to temporary facilities. Bettina stated that their cost is called a member contribution and is based on 565 students, 83 employees, and school equipment. CharterSAFE's estimated cost is \$114,000, plus WC at \$46,000, for a total of \$160,331. The cost changes each year based on student count, etc. A new application is required each year. Average increase is 5.6% per year. CharterSAFE gets paid by a 14% share of member contributions. There is no brokerage fee in addition to that.

CharterSAFE does an annual audit every year. They are regulated by the Department of Industrial Relations. Their board of directors are charter school leaders. Bettina will share their most recent audited financial statements.

Gavin noted that schools under the CharterSAFE umbrella who were affected by the recent wildfires had positive feedback. Other schools he has spoken with repeatedly renew their memberships with CharterSAFE. He added that the training examples provided are much better than those offered by our current provider. He has spoken with CharterSAFE representatives many times over the past 10 years at CCSA conferences. The formal quote, documentation and financials will be reviewed by Gavin, Mike Allbee, and our attorneys. Gavin explained the challenges that we have faced with our current insurance and his concerns with their ability to perform.

Jeannie made a motion to conditionally approve a resolution for Journey School to become a member CharterSAFE Insurance with a member contribution cost not to exceed \$163,000 per year, with no red flags in review of their audited financials, and that coverage will exceed our current insurance coverage. If any of these conditions are not met, then a special meeting by the board will be called in July. Margaret seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

- H. Title I Parental Involvement Policy*:** Gavin reviewed changes to the Title I Parental Involvement Policy as required for receipt of Targeted Assistance funding. He explained how the funds received are utilized to pay for our reading program which is led by Suzanna Bortz. The revised policy provides clarification about our targeted assistance, and clarification that we are not a Title I school.

- I. **Adoption of Reading Difficulties Screener***: Review of new CA requirement to screen for reading difficulties in kindergarten and adoption of a screener for use in the 25-26 school year. Gavin stated that Suzanna Bortz, who has a very long list of qualifications in this area, did in-depth research into the reading difficulties screeners available. Based on this, the school recommends that we adopt a program called Multitudes to conduct assessments. It is a free program. Margaret made a motion to approve the Title I Parental Involvement Policy. Melissa seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.
- J. **School Handbook***: Review and approval of 25-26 School Handbook, inclusive of adjustments to related policies. Mike made a motion to approve the 2025-26 School Handbook. Melissa seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.
- K. **Comprehensive School Safety Plan (CSSP)***: Gavin reviewed additions to existing CSSP, including the required Instructional Continuity Plan. He explained the backup options to provide continuity of instruction in the event of a disaster. Margaret made a motion to approve the CSSP. Melissa seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.
- L. **CUSD Food and Nutrition Services***: Gavin shared a proposal to contract CUSD as a vendor for the 25-26 school year for provision of food and nutrition services at Journey School. Gavin stated that we could change to another vendor at a later date, if desired. The contract is not yet available. Margaret made a motion to provide a provisional approval to contract CUSD Food and Nutrition Services for 2025-26 school year. Melissa seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.
- M. **Declaration of Need***: Approval of form to allow hiring of teachers under certain types of credentials for the 2025-26 school year. Margaret made a motion to approve the Declaration of Need. Mike seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.
- N. **Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) Policy***: Update and approval of policy for Journey School to guide staff and parents through the IEE process in Special Education. Our attorneys at YM&C and Procopio reviewed the policy and have suggested the changes noted on the draft. Jeannie made a motion to approve the IEE Policy. Mike seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

8 **BOARD DEVELOPMENT and OVERSIGHT: Discussion/Action**

- A. **Board Strategic Planning**: The summer reading list will be created for the board retreat in August.
- B. **Board Meeting Schedule***: Review and approval of schedule of regular meetings for the 2025-26 school year. Mike made a motion to approve the 2025-26 JS Council Meeting Schedule. Melissa seconded the motion and it was unanimously.
- C. **Board Nomination Committee, Board Terms and Officers***: Report from Nomination Committee regarding potential new board members, succession planning discussion, approval of renewal of board terms and election of board Officers for 25-26 school year. The board interviewed Cassie Kawling and Lisa Murray for board positions. Both interviews went very well. Mike shared information about their backgrounds and qualifications. He recommended that they both be invited to join the board.

Both are comfortable with the standard two-year term of service. Mike nominated Cassie Kawling and Lisa Murray to join the Journey School Council. Jeannie made a motion to accept the nominations. Margaret seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

	<p><i>Margaret made a motion to extend Jeannie Lee's term to June 2027. Mike seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.</i></p> <p><i>The board thanked Amy and Melissa for their many years of service.</i></p> <p><i>Melissa made a motion to move into closed session. Jeannie seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. The board entered closed session at 9:36 p.m.</i></p>
9	<p>CLOSED SESSION: <i>The meeting will now convene to closed session to discuss the matters described below:</i></p> <p>1. Pursuant to Government Code §54957: Public Employee Performance Evaluation, Title: School Executive Director</p> <p>RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION: <i>The meeting was reconvened to open session at 10:26 p.m.</i></p> <p>PUBLIC REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN IN CLOSED SESSION <i>The board approved the Executive Director's positive annual evaluation and also approved a one-time performance bonus in recognition of his tremendous work in implementing three new programs, with all members voting in favor.</i></p>
10	<p>Adjournment: <i>The meeting was adjourned at 10:28 p.m.</i></p>

*Agenda publicly posted at Journey School on June 12, 2025.
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 indicated with an asterisk. Other items may also have back up materials provided.*

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dear Council Members,

As a member of the Journey School community for 20 years, I would like to share the following public comment. During the past two decades I have been the proud parent of two Journey alumni, a kindergarten assistant, and a specialty teacher. I currently have the honor of serving as the Business Officer and clerk of the board. I feel compelled to speak up because recent public comments do not accurately reflect the sentiments of the larger parent body, faculty or staff which I observe on a daily basis. Although those comments often use the misleading phrase "Journey parents" to deliver one person's own personal criticism and allegations, her derogatory portrayal of our Executive Director is not consistent with my personal observations on campus. In my daily duties, I interact with many parents, faculty and staff members. In those interactions, I frequently hear community members share their praise of Mr. Keller's leadership. As part of the administrative staff, I have observed Mr. Keller's ability to maintain positive relationships with faculty, staff, parents and students, while simultaneously overseeing school operations and keeping us in compliance with state and federal regulations. Evidence of this can be seen and heard throughout campus on any given day.

Respectfully submitted,

Gaylen Corbett