

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

April 23, 2020

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Approved May 28, 2020

6:00 p.m.

Via Zoom (including call in to Zoom Teleconference)

This meeting is noticed and will be 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: The meeting was conducted via Zoom and Zoom teleconference. Members of the public had the opportunity to participate in the Zoom meeting by calling in to the Zoom teleconference number listed on the posted agenda.

BOARD MEMBERS:

*Anna Brown, Council President: Present
Julie Chiaverini, Council Vice President: Present
VACANT, Council Treasurer
Richard Martin, Council Secretary: Present
Jeannie Lee, Educational Trustee Member: Present
Meggan Bunce, Parent Cabinet Member: Present*

Staff members Gavin Keller, Amanda Simmons, Laura Bujjoni and Alanna Murphy, as well as administrative consultant Franci Sassin were present. Larry Tamayo of ExED joined for his items on the agenda.

AGENDA ITEM	
1	<i>Call to Order and Roll Call</i> <i>Gavin Keller reviewed the rules for participation via Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 6:13 pm. Roll call was taken. All participants were able to hear each other.</i>

2	<p><i>Inspirational Passage</i></p> <p>Anna read a passage from Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. about how to keep moving forward.</p>
3	<p><i>Approval of Agenda*</i></p> <p><i>NOTE: The order of the agenda may be changed without prior notice to the public.</i></p> <p>There was a motion to approve the agenda, which was seconded and approved unanimously. Jeannie Lee left the meeting for a few minutes after the vote, but returned for the next action item.</p>
4	<p><i>PUBLIC COMMENT: Members of the public may contribute public comment via Zoom teleconference. Reminder: See policy above for time guidelines</i></p> <p>No members of the public were present on the phone line and nothing was submitted.</p>
5	<p><i>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.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>A. Approval of Minutes*:</i> Minutes from regular Meeting of March 26, 2020. <i>B. Staffing Plan 2019-20*:</i> Approval of changes to the staffing plan, including possible changes to job duties as a result of COVID 19 situation. <i>C. Corporate Tax returns (990 and 199)*:</i> Review of tax returns and approval of submission by the extended due date. <i>D. Parent Involvement Policy Review*:</i> Review of updates to Parent Involvement Policy <p>ITEM 5B was pulled and moved to be an action item.</p> <p>There was a motion to approve the remainder of the items on the consent agenda, which was seconded and approved unanimously.</p> <p>Regarding item 5B, the board had a question on the front office duties during the office closure. Gavin clarified that Rachel Herman’s regular daily duties have been changed to temporarily to support of the office one day per week for mail, deliveries, etc. She is also working on some duties that are normally done at the end of the year, such as emergency supplies.</p> <p>There was a motion to approve item 5B, which was seconded and approved unanimously.</p>

INFORMATION ITEMS: Reports**A. Faculty Update: Update on Faculty activities.**

Jeannie Lee reported that the regular virtual meetings with the staff, have been effective, everyone is being very flexible, even though it is a stressful times, and this helps a lot. Shelly is meeting with the grade band levels and that has been going well.

Alanna Murphy presented some insight from her perspective. She reported that different groups, such as grade bands, meets weekly. Students are able to complete assignments at their own time, organized by “core” as well as “next level” and then extra enrichments for those students who need/want extra. Teachers are personalizing the learning to each student, as well as the level of technology the family has, with different situations for different households. Families are finding a rhythm and able to connect with teachers. Teachers are using audio recordings and also having daily synchronous lessons offered. The new expectations seemed daunting at first, but once it was worked into the schedule it has been better. Balance and flexibility by everyone are crucial.

B. Parent Cabinet Update: Update on Parent Cabinet activities

Meggan Bunce reported that PC is meeting using zoom including Gavin and Shelley. They are working on building virtual community since everyone feels so disconnected. They are also using Zoom to hold parent meetings. PC will be doing an online auction that will be over a period of time. PC is organizing a way to have May Faire events at home and share experiences, which was already done for Earth Day. The Facebook community page is being used to help share resources among the community. The situation is challenging but the creativity and giving nature of the community is amazing.

It has been really helped that Parent Square was already up and running, and this has helped with communication. Many parents fully embrace the Waldorf concepts and others don't have some of the skills needed, but the school is offering ways for students to get those things.

C. Administrative Update: Report from School Director, including update on school closure and provision of educational services, virtual lottery update, facilities, LCAP update, CAASPP and other state testing, certification training program, etc.

Gavin presented his updated. He pointed out that without the creativity and dedication of the teachers the distance learning would not be working. The PC is working hard to keep the community going and re-imagine events such as festivals, which are being kept alive. Gavin went through some of the highlights of his written updates. The administrative budget committee will meet in May to draft the budget for 20-21 and everyone is anticipating cuts due to economic situation. All state fiscal info has been pushed back so budget revisions will also be needed in the summer and fall. The LCAP has been pushed out to December 2020. In June there will only be an LCAP “operations update” but the template is available on May 1 so

Gavin will share more information at the May board meeting on what will be in that. The teacher search committee will be interviewing candidates in mid-May. Staffing plans are being finalized now to determine vacancies. The interviews will take place on Zoom. Gavin reported that the timesheets for hourly employees are being taken care of as the school intends to compensate all employees for their regular hours. The school must track COVID hours separately, for any reason related to COVID vs. regular work hours. This will also help the administration share out the work load as much as possible. Gavin acknowledged that it is difficult to have accountability on actual hours worked with remote work. Many office staff members have assumed different duties. The office is open 5 days a week with rotating staff. The student and family support as well as logistical support for distance learning is what support staff are doing. The business office has changed some functions but is operating well. Refunds are being processed for cancelled school trips. There were several non-refundable deposits, which were initially going to be divided equally among all attendees and then the refund would deduct that. But instead the school ended up refunding all funds to parents. The total extent of all non-refundable payments is \$9000. The PC contribution will be able to cover this.

The first ever virtual lottery was held. It was smooth, there were 74 seats total in all grades except 3rd and 5th grades. There are 188 students now on wait list. All grades except 8th have a wait list. Class size should be full in all grades at 28, including middle school. There will be 25 in each 8th grade class. This means that 530 students will start in the seat based program. The Independent Study program will have its own virtual lottery soon. There are 90 applicants for 30 seats, capacity is 100 total, so that program will have a wait list also.

There is a COVID page on the school's website capturing all the school's messages. The parents are feeling supported, especially given the amount of flexibility being offered, and are very happy with the teachers and how much effort is being put into the distance learning program. For a community that usually has a 'slow tech' approach, there has been a recognition of the shift and that technology can be valuable and not just something to waste time and consume media, but rather that it can be an effective tool for learning. Teachers are still focusing on balance in the home, limiting screen time and allowing arts and outside activities to be done.

Teachers have been contacting all families. There is a very positive response from parents who have students in different schools and a lot of positive input about how well the school is doing with this. Student participation has been high, because basing education on relationships is proving to be huge with the required switch to distance learning.

*D. **Financial Report***: Review of March financials and discussion of current year budget as well update on the 20-21 financial implications to state budget. Review of P2 ADA as submitted.*

Larry Tamayo presented a brief recap of state and federal financial situation. There were COVID 19 funds from SB 117, of approximately \$8,000 was received already. These funds can help support distance learning and cleaning etc. The CARES Act will support schools, using the Title I formula to

distribute to schools. The school will likely get over \$20K from this, likely during this school year, but it can be carried over if it comes later. It can be used for support of low income students, professional development, coordinating long term closures, ed tech, mental health services, summer school, operations and employee existing staff. FEMA may provide a small amount funds that might be available but this is difficult for charters to access. It is mostly for things like housing emergency response centers.

The annual LCAP will be delayed until December. A new template will be developed, and an alternative will be due July 1, such as an annual update. The template for that is not released yet but is expected soon.

The P2 ADA for 19-20 funding cut off was earlier, the end of February. This means that there will be no loss for problems with attendance after February. The P2 is 556.59, which is 6 or so less than budget, mostly due to lower enrollment since attendance rates were actually good. Independent study ADA is about 14% of the ADA total for the school.

The new year end forecast has incorporated additional revenue and some of the cost savings from cancelled activities. The school should end about \$80K positive, which will help with the coming recession.

For 20-21 it is not going to be easy, the funding for next year and likely the following years will be affected significantly. The 2.2% COLA proposed in January may not be included. The state does not know its own revenues until August, so the actual funding to schools won't be known for a long time. The state will pass an updated budget in late summer. The school will have to use conservative budgeting, such as a flat rate or even a possible decrease in funding. It is expected that revenues will decrease significantly like in great recession. Larry will have some draft info for the May meeting with some different scenarios. The Governor's May revise is expected to be a "workload", so it will show mostly current funding. No new programs can be added. The cash position for Journey is better than it was in 2008, but it will still be challenging. The strong reserves will help get through the storm.

The school normally collects the income form each fall and likely the number of families who qualify will be higher. There is interest from the board to see different versions of the 'basics' that must be included, and then building additional items into the budget when/if funds are available.

SCHOOL OPERATIONS (Discussion/Action):

- A. **Charter Renewal Memorandum Of Understanding***: Update on conditions for approval of charter renewal and documentation of the conditions in an MOU with CUSD for charter renewal.

The chart from the last board meeting summarized the required items, and now that has been incorporated into an MOU document. CUSD added an additional requirement for a policy around social media, which can be included in the handbook. Attorney revisions were suggested and incorporated, and so the next step after approval of this renewal MOU is to actually make the changes to charter, policies, and collecting any required documents.

There was a motion to approve the renewal MOU, which was seconded and approved unanimously

- B. **Facilities Use Agreement with CUSD for 20-21 and beyond***: Review of FUA for the use of the CUSD Foxborough campus

Gavin reported that he included the board suggestions into the lease document and CUSD did not want to have negotiations ,except through attorneys on both sides. There were some modifications made, such as item #G on adding classrooms and restrooms, subject to DSA approval. The fees are the same as prior, with some cost savings included. Item #G4 was problematic for the school in terms of the ability for CUSD to reduce space or recoup funding if the school had lower ADA than projected. However, CUSD has this language in other charter FUAs and so is not willing to change it and would actually prefer to do Prop 39 if we not able to agree to this clause. The termination clause was modified so that is only for cause and Journey can terminate without cause during the 5 year term. All of the relocation language was removed, and instead there are rights and safeguards in case of termination of this agreement. Overall it was a positive negotiation.

There was a motion to approve the FUA with CUSD for the Foxborough campus, which was seconded and approved unanimously.

- C. **Special Education Memorandum of Understanding***: Review of first draft of updated MOU with CUSD for provision of Special Education services to Journey School.

This MOU is to replace the 2010 Special Education MOU. The existing MOU was redlined and is included in the board materials. The CUSD attorney added more, and our attorney also added a few more things. Gavin still needs to clarify about admissions/enrollment barrier being imposed in Section B12. The “encroachment fee” would go up to \$500 per ADA of the school. This is an increase from \$400 in past years. This translates to a \$60K annual increase in cost. Journey is the last charter still a “school of district” for SpED. There is an option to exit and go to different SELPA which can be discussed for future years. This

process takes time and involves additional risk, due to possible increase expenses for both services and legal fees This is an information item for now and will be brought back for action later.

*D. **Distance Learning Plan***: Review of plans to implement distance learning during school closure, as well as flexibility regarding attendance.*

Gavin Keller presented a summary of the plan as presented in the accompanying board materials. Phase 2 of distance learning is now being put into effect. Based on teacher, student and parent input, plus administrative observation, more regularity among classes was needed to try to have uniform rhythm and communication across grade levels, so a weekly overview is provided each week for what will be happening that week. Specialty teachers include their items for the week as well. This go out Friday through Sunday for the next Monday. Flexibility is built in for the required elements, assignments are due a week at a time. Participation is now expected rather than voluntary, but teachers do not need to collect everything and are still working on personalized plans for each student. Mini assessments are sent home every 2 weeks to check in with how students are progressing. Teachers are documenting all outreach efforts and student participation. Some families do not want to use technology at all and so efforts are made to offer alternative, but the school is documenting that all of the program is offered. All grading is P/F. This is in alignment with the “do no harm” approach, so if a student was passing when closure happened, they won’t fail. If a student was failing they can raise their grade to get a passing P. Standardized testing was suspended by state. Parents are informed about which ‘power goals’ were covered already in school and which were not, so that families can understand the content still needed. Teachers will be contacting all families at least twice before the end of the school year. The main goal is to get an understanding of needs and how students are doing. The Board commented on how well developed the plan was and how balanced it is to focus on relationships and social emotional and also on how well the core values of the school are being maintained. There was a discussion regarding the state requirements (or lack of) for participation and attendance. There was a comment that at Journey, each teacher will really KNOW what each student missed because of the looping model. The participation rate is generally been very high so far. No students are “missing” even if some have limited ability to participate online. There was a discussion of how students will be assessed to see where students need to start in the fall. There was a discussion about what school might look like in the fall and what being “open” might look like. The board asked about how the 8th grade graduation might be conducted remotely.

*E. **COVID 19 Response**: Discussion and Actions related to response to COVID 19 public health situation, including but not limited to school closure, office schedule and functions, staff issues, scheduling, etc.*

Gavin Keller reviewed the various aspects of school closure. The office schedule was discussed earlier. The janitorial crew is doing special projects. Earthroots is still providing some distance learning lesson options by grade spans. Gavin recommends keeping both of these contracts in

place for the next month. Gavin is not recommending any further action by the Board at this time.

F. CARES Act – Paycheck Protection Program*: *Review and consideration of filing an application for short-term cash flow assistance to help cover operating expenses*

This funding source is available to non-profits but it is unclear whether charters are eligible because of their government funding. The intention of this item is so that Gavin will have authority to enter into this loan if that become available. Quick action will be needed if funds are made available. The loan can help to cover rent, payroll, utilities, etc. and the loans are very low interest and may even be completely forgiven. These loans are going through the school's regular bank with its commercial account. Currently Wells Fargo is limiting these loans to employers with less than 50 employees, but program overall was designed to serve businesses with 500 or less. The deadline to apply is sometime in June. There is a cap on how much each lender can loan. This could help a lot for the economic hardships coming.

There was a motion to authorize the Executive Director to apply for this program and designate him to complete any necessary paperwork, for any funding program that is made available. There was a second and the motion was approved unanimously by a roll call vote.

G. School Calendar*: *Approval of changes to school calendar resulting from COVID 19 response*

Gavin Keller explained that the proposed calendar extends the closure dates on the school calendar through June 12 or the board could consider the language "until further notice". There was a recommended to use the language "until action taken by the board to open". Ideally the school calendar will stay the same as CUSD with respect to most of their calendar. Normally the Special Education department of CUSD uses subs during times when the two calendars are 'off'. There is an interest in continuing to align with CUSD for a number of reasons. There has been some confusion because of the messaging that goes out to Journey families from CUSD.

There was a motion to authorize closure of Journey School, with continued distance learning, until action is taken by the board to re-open. This was seconded and approved unanimously by a roll call vote.

8 BOARD DEVELOPMENT and OVERSIGHT (Discussion/Action):

A. Council Nominating Committee*: *Update on Nominating Committee activity.*

Anna Brown reported that the nominating committee met and interviewed a potential board member candidate, Amy Capelle. The board treasurer position is open. Jill Murphy, Lisa O'Neill and Anna Brown constituted the committee. Amy has served in many different roles at Journey, including leadership and board roles, such as on the Journey Foundation. She has a financial background and a masters in leadership from UCB. The committee unanimously is recommending nomination of Amy Capelle to a position on the board. The next step would be to have her attend the next board meeting and also ask the board to vote at the next meeting.

B. Review of Executive Director Annual Evaluation Cycle*: Review of progress towards goals, plus updated timeline for annual evaluation and board input.

Gavin Keller presented the questions for the board that were used last year for his evaluation. This has been updated for this year's goals. Some of the wording will be revised to be more clear. Scoring is a 1 to 4 rating. Gavin completed a self-evaluation already, including some narrative, such as the most significant accomplishments. These include the charter renewal, the COVID 19 response, facility issues, and the Waldorf certification program development, as well as development and improvement of the independent study program. He reviewed what he thinks are the top three items to move forward with: SpED services, Waldorf certification and enhance math and ELA programming. He reported on the additional goals for his professional development, but unfortunately the Chicago Waldorf conference was cancelled, but he plans to attend the school's new training program this summer instead. There is a Waldorf administrators group that meets weekly virtually and he has been attending. He has worked to strengthen the community partnerships. Efforts have exceeded his hopes, as he has been able to reach out more, but has had to do a lot more collaboration for a lot of the reasons stated earlier. The board expressed appreciation for all of the hard work and the self-reflection on his work. The board expressed its support that Gavin attend the school's new summer Waldorf training.

The next steps are to send out the revised questionnaire to the board via survey monkey. The 360 review will be postponed due to the unusual current situation. Board members should complete the evaluation by May 10. The results will be reviewed at the May meeting.

C. Board Self Evaluation*: Discussion of board self-evaluation process and questions

The Board questionnaire was reviewed from last year. The deadline for board members to respond via survey monkey will be May 10. Others can also take it such as Franci, Gavin, Larry, and at least one other administrator.

9 Adjournment

The board adjourned at 9:12 pm

****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.***