

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

Thursday, January 27, 2022

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Approved February 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 will assist 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.

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:

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

ADVISORY POSITIONS:

Alanna Hayde, Faculty Advisor: Present

Vivienne Benjamin, Parent Cabinet Advisor: Present

Warren Whiteaker was in attendance.

Administrators Gavin Keller, Amanda Simmons, Shelley Kelley were present. Franci Sassin joined at 6:30 pm, Larry Tamayo joined for his items.

	AGENDA ITEM
1	Call to Order and Roll Call and review of Webinar procedures The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm.
2	Inspirational Passage Melissa Dahlin presented an inspirational passage on Adaptive Leadership from <i>Leadership on the Line</i> by Martin Linsky and Ronald A. Heifetz.
3	Approval of Agenda* NOTE: The order of the agenda may be changed without prior notice to the public. There was a motion to table Item 6A, and to approve the remainder of the agenda, which was seconded and approved unanimously via a roll call vote.
4	PUBLIC COMMENT: Members of the public may contribute public comment. Reminder: See policy above for time guidelines. Former Council member Warren Whiteaker was present and introduced himself to the Council. Warren shared that he brings a unique insight as a parent of Journey kids (who attended previously) and was a previous board member during challenging fiscal times. He hopes to provide value and to serve as a bridge until a Treasurer can be found. There were no other members of the public present and no comments were submitted.
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.

A. Approval of Minutes*: Minutes from regular meeting December 2 and special meeting on December 13.

B. School Accountability Report Card (SARC)*: Ratify annual SARC, reporting on 2020-21 school year, to be submitted and posted by February 1, 2022.

C. Updates to 2021-22 Staffing Plan*: Ratification of changes to the Staffing Plan to meet current needs.

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

6. **BOARD DEVELOPMENT and OVERSIGHT (Discussion/Action):**

A. Board Strategic Planning*: Topics: 1) Review student outcomes from charter. 2) Report out from attendance at Alliance conference with emphasis on best practices in Waldorf public schools. 3) Review mission and vision.

This item was tabled.

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.

The Board discussed the recent extension of the timeline to hold meetings via teleconference (such as Zoom) and indicated that for public health and safety, that would be the best option during any COVID surges.

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

C. Council Nominating Committee: Review of any updated search activities for vacant Council position.

Amy Capelle introduced Warren Whiteaker, who is currently employed as principal analyst for the OCTA. He is also a former Journey parent and Council member. She shared her thoughts about the value that Warren could bring to the Council during the budgeting process through a formal advisory position., especially since the Board Treasurer position is currently vacant.

There was a motion to approve Warren Whiteaker in an advisory position as a financial advisor to the Council, which was seconded and approved unanimously with a roll call vote.

INFORMATION ITEMS: Reports**A. *Financial Update**: Report on November and December financials and January Governor's Budget Proposal.**

Larry Tamayo presented the financial information. He reviewed the P1 ADA which covers the first four months of the school year. The attendance is lower than budgeted and will result in decreased LCFF funding. He has updated the forecast for P2 to align more with the actuals so far. The percentage of students who are low income has increased and this helps offset some of the reduced LCFF funding, via the supplemental portion of LCFF. He noted that there was a law (AB 579) in progress which would give charters a "hold harmless" on ADA funding based on the greater of 19-20 or current school year, but that still is not final yet. This would help the school since the 19-20 ADA was higher. The Board members expressed interest in helping to advocate for the bill to pass and could use CCSA as a resource. The board reviewed what they can and cannot do regarding advocacy work.

Larry reviewed the expenditures and that there are several areas where these are lower for several reasons. He reported the cash balance will be going down by year end as the school will be using reserves, however, the cash balance has been built up to a healthy point and so there are no concerns at this time.

Larry reviewed the Governor January budget proposal and that funding will likely be going up next year. Larry reviewed some of the new funding sources and the planning needed for them.

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

Faculty advisor Alanna Hayde provided an update on mid-year report cards. She reported on the amount of outdoor work the Kindergarten program is doing this year. There was a question about how the teacher morale is as COVID continues. Alanna reported that teachers are stretched and have been asked to take extra duties, and that they also have had a lot of students out of the classroom working from home, but that is better now. There are concerns about learning loss with a lot of students not able to come to class in person. There have been rolling absences of both students and staff and there has been a lot of support from the specialty teachers and administration. Students have been acting normally and don't seem to be too bothered by the changes needed to accommodate the flexible schedule.

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

Parent Cabinet advisor Vivienne Benjamin reported on the Parent Cabinet meetings which have taken place since the last report. She reported on the donations made towards teachers receiving funds to order supplies. There was a clothing drive last week that was very successful. Over 400 bags of

clothing was collected, and over \$1,800 was made. Fairy Market raised \$4,600 this year. Holding it in person was welcomed. The upcoming auction will be held on campus and the focus will be on community building and the event will be primarily parent focused. The auction will be mostly “big ticket” items, plus class projects. There will be a theme related to the school curriculum. Guests will dress up in a costume related to a topic being covered in the different grades, such as Roman or Greek costumes. The play (Midsummer Night Dream) was very successful and was held at an outdoor amphitheater at the regional park.

D. ***Administrative Update: Report from School Director, including update on CUSD oversight visit, LCAP mid-year update, DEI work update, etc.***

Gavin Keller presented his administrative update verbally. The last month has been very challenging due to the COVID surge. There are also more student needs, both academic and behavioral, coming up. However, the Journey staff is very cohesive and is working together to provide the best environment for the students. There are many different groups who all come together in support. He reported on the supports of the three Care Streams, however they have been stretched thin due to staffing shortages. He noted that the students who usually are ahead of their class, who are accelerated, also have increased needs. The school has been developing a more structured program, especially for grades 1-3 students showing this need, to provide additional enrichment with an extension program. Shelly Kelley reported more in depth on this, and how it relates to the new literacy curriculum. Approximately 4-6 students in each class are being pulled out a few times a week to do accelerated math or ELA lessons. There is a lot of positive feedback so far. They are also looking at other ways to have “honors” or special projects for students in higher grades.

Gavin reported on the COVID case count, which jumped up a lot. Amanda Simmons has been supporting the students who must stay home on short term independent study contracts. Amanda reported on the growth of the independent study program; there have been new students since the start of the calendar year. Every day there is a list of student who are on quarantine or isolation and are invited to use the short term independent study to allow the students to continue school work. Amanda is helping to coordinate submission of the work samples and signatures. All of this should allow the school to recoup some of the ADA.

Gavin reported that the CUSD oversight visit was rescheduled again for February. Amy and possibly other board members are interested in participating in that visit. He reminded the board that they will see the LCAP mid-year update in February, which is a new requirement. The DEI working group is finalizing the mission statement and has been working with the social media staff member, especially around the upcoming Black History month. The group has added to its name, adding “Justice” so it will be referred to as DEIJ.

SCHOOL OPERATIONS: Discussion/Action**A. State Testing Results from 2021*:** *Summary of results of Journey School on state assessments taken Spring of 2021.*

Gavin Keller reviewed the data available and that was provided in the board materials. He has not had time to do a deeper analysis yet but hopes to be able to do that prior to the February meeting. He noted that Journey School outperformed the state average. Journey outperformed charters state wide, as well as CUSD charters. When compared to CUSD non charters Journey was somewhat below. He reviewed the comparison for 5th through 8th graders from the last time they took the test, in the 2018-19 school year, to the scores for the 2020-21 school year and there were improvements at all grade levels, despite the school closures and distance learning last year. He will bring back more data on student subgroups and areas for focus in the future.

There were comments about the comparison schools because many schools did not take the test last year, but used their own internal assessments. Journey had about 10% of students opt out, vs. about 4% in a normal year, so there is an impact from that as well. It was also noted that the percentage of Special Education students was higher from one year to the other.

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

Gavin Keller reported that there has been growth recently in enrollment. In January there are 530 students, an increase from 512 in December. It is challenging to add this many students mid-year, and the outreach efforts are more like a new school would have, but this has been a successful strategy. In the past, the school closed enrollment in December, but this year classes with space will stay open into February. The lottery for the 2022-23 school year will be held on March 9. The deadline to apply is February 24. So far there are 78 applications across grades K-4, with a lower number in 5-8. They expect a lot of applications to come in late February.

For the independent study program, 20 applications have come in, most are for Kindergarten. They will have a separate lottery later in March. This allows families to apply for that program if they don't get a spot from the classroom lottery. There was some discussion about which strategies have been effective and the reasons families are interested. The Open Houses on Wednesday afternoons have been particularly successful.

C. 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 commented on the COVID case counts. There were 18 cases over winter break, and the month of January there have been 63 cases, 8 of which were staff members. 46

	<p>cases needed contact tracing due to campus exposure. Most cases, likely 75% or more, are through household exposure, where the entire household becomes positive and students were on campus during the incubation period. The school received rapid tests, masks, and some cleaning supplies from the CDE but additional supplies will likely need to be purchased. He noted that using the PCR tests has not been that useful lately because the results take so long to get back. There was a comment that it may be helpful for families to take advantage of offers for free tests and masks and that individual insurance will also reimburse for individually purchased tests. This may reduce the demand on the school.</p> <p>D. <i>Safe Return to In Person Instruction Plan*</i>: (Formerly known as COVID-19 Safety Plan) <i>Review and approval of updates to the required plan.</i></p> <p>Gavin Keller reviewed the updates to the Plan. The main changes are due to the revised quarantine and isolation and the group contact tracing. The school is requiring a negative test and symptoms improving. They do not require tests for everyone exposed but they highly recommend it. CUSD is now using an action chart rather than a flow chart diagram. There were comments about how well the parent community has helped and supported each other.</p> <p>There was a motion to approve the updates to the Safe Return to In Person Instruction Plan, 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>Gavin Keller and Franci Sassin were invited into closed session based on their work in the matter. The board entered closed session at 8:25 pm.</p> <p>A. Pursuant to Government Code §54956.9 (d)(1): Existing Litigation: OAH CASE NUMBER 2021120905</p> <p>RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION: <i>The meeting was reconvened to open session at: 8:40 pm.</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>Adjournment</p> <p>The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 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.*