

*Journey School
A California Public Charter School*

March 25, 2021

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Approved April 22, 2021

6:00 p.m.

Via Zoom Webinar

This meeting was noticed and 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: Board members conducted the meeting via Zoom using the Webinar format. Members of the public wishing to observe and/or contribute participated in the Zoom meeting by accessing the webinar.

BOARD MEMBERS:

Julie Chiaverini, Council President: Present

Amy Capelle, Council Treasurer: Present

Richard Martin, Council Secretary: Present

Jeannie Lee, Board Member: Present

Melissa Dahlin, Board Member: Present

ADVISORY POSITIONS:

Alanna Hayde, Faculty Advisory: Present

Vivienne Benjamin, Parent Cabinet Advisor: Present, arrived at 6:10 pm

Administrators Gavin Keller, Shelley Kelley and Amanda Simmons (arrived at 7:05 pm) were present.

Administrative consultant Franci Sassin was present.

AGENDA ITEM	
1	<p><i>Call to Order and Roll Call and review of Webinar processes</i></p> <p>The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm. Julie Chiaverini reviewed the webinar protocols.</p>
2	<p><i>Inspirational Passage</i></p> <p>Richard Martin read a passage from Thoreau about truth.</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 through a roll call vote.</p>
4	<p><i>PUBLIC COMMENT: Members of the public may contribute public comment via Zoom Webinar. Reminder: See policy above for time guidelines which are subject to change if necessary due to time constraints. The Council will be using the “raise your hand” function in the webinar to call on those who wish to address the Council.</i></p> <p>There was no public comment at this time.</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 meeting of February 25, 2021. <i>B. Update to Conflict of Interest Code*:</i> Ratification of Journey School Conflict of Interest Code, with no proposed changes <i>C. Limited Use Agreement with Aliso Viejo Community Association*:</i> Review of annual agreement for use of park spaces and parking. <p>There was a motion to approve the consent agenda, which was seconded and approved unanimously through a roll call vote.</p>

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

Alanna Hayde provided an update. There is a general excitement among the faculty for the return of in person learning. Generally the planning has been accepted and participatory. The internet connectivity is working well so far. The faculty appreciate the safety guidelines and have noted that the students are very responsive to these guidelines and reminders. It feels like the first day of school, as everyone is in the process of returning to campus. The teachers are taking advantage of the allotted days to prepare the classrooms. Janet Gates in the office has been providing tech support to faculty. Jeannie Lee commented that some teachers are finding that their own personal computers work better and are set up better than the school issued employee computers. This might be an item for consideration for the future. There are some logistics still being worked out about the set up and classroom furniture.

B. Parent Cabinet Update: Update on Parent Cabinet activities

Vivienne Benjamin provided an update. The Parent Cabinet wanted to relay to the Board that they are looking for donations and sponsors and are also trying to get the word out about purchasing tickets for the annual auction. Some members of the community may not realize the event is fully virtual. Vivienne reported that there are some questions coming from parents, such as: when can cohorts from one class be combined, when can the specialty teachers come back in person, when will the plans for the fall be available, and will remote learning be available in the fall. There have been requests for carpeting replacement from parents. Some parents have noted some classroom furniture needing repair. The students are responding well to the return to campus. The gardens are looking good and students are enjoying those a lot. Many of the concerns that parents had are not actually causing issues during the return to campus, and students have been very adaptable.

C. Administrative Update: Report from School Director, facilities, diversity, equity and inclusion working group, 21-22 enrollment, Strategic Kids partnership, Collective Bargaining Agreement with Journey Teachers Association, etc.

Gavin Keller gave an update. The Facilities Use Agreement allows for Journey to have an option to be able to add or modify the portable buildings. Given the potential for funding there might support for these efforts. A modular building company came to assess the situation. All but 4 of the portable buildings are made of steel, so these actually have a longer "life" than previously expected. Siding and roofing might need to be replaced but the frame is extremely long lasting. There are also options to resurface the outside if needed. One big need is for a larger gathering/performance space. There is a possibility of adding an additional building to join with the existing MPR to double the space. There is also space available to add additional classrooms or bathrooms. Gavin will be seeking out additional companies to give estimates and ideas.

The admissions lottery took place last week. Gavin shared the results. For the seat based

program, there were 225 applications, and the school offered 147 spaces, of which 67 are kindergarten and the remainder will go on a wait list. There are only wait lists in about half of the grade levels, of a total of about 75 students. There are 21 empty seats across 4 grade levels, so applications will continue to be accepted on a first come first serve basis for those grades. A number of students who applied are returning after withdrawing in the past. The lottery for the Independent Study (IS) program will take place next week. There are 82 applications, however half of those just were offered space in the classroom program, so they will likely accept those spaces. The school is on target to meet the 585 target enrollment. Once all of this is better known, budget adjustments can be made. He noted that there are a lot of options for home based study right now so the interest seems lower in the IS program. There was a discussion regarding the class sizes, the projections and the goals and the maximum sizes. There was a discussion about an increased need for onboarding if more new families are coming in next fall compared to a normal year. An in depth orientation this spring is a possibility.

The CBA in effect now for the main class teachers is due to expire at the end of this school year. The JTA agreed to extend the agreement one more year since this would be a challenging time to go into bargaining sessions now, with reopening and planning for next year happening now. The JTA would like JS to share how the salary schedule would be extended and so that will be the next step.

The Strategic Kids (SK) partnership is going well, they have staff on campus 5 days a week, they are supervising the outdoor classrooms for classes where teachers have returned, and supervising indoor for the classes where teachers have not returned yet. They have started staffing the new campus supervisor role and it is going very well. They support safety and behavior and are able to provide breaks to other staff members, all of which is key to the reopening plan. Adam Brody of SK provided a brief written update which was provided to the board in their materials.

Shelley Kelley shared an update about the DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) working group. The main update is that at the last faculty meeting there was a way offered to ask questions of an OC Human Relations contact person, in particular for anyone who was uncertain about the process or has questions that they may not want to share with the whole group. OC Human Relations staff will be coming to the faculty meeting to share out the survey results. There was already a parent town hall and there will be additional parent sessions, which are scheduled for after spring break. There are also activities with the middle school teachers and students related to their survey results. Some of the 8th grade students are working on 8th grade projects related to these topics. The DEI group is working on increasing their social media presence. Amy Capelle and Hellene Brodsky Blake have been taking a very active role in leadership for the DEI group. Amy added that CUSD is experiencing controversy related to their cultural competency curriculum which they have been developing for grades K-12 over the past few years. It is likely that similar issues will arise when Journey is at that point in the future. Shelley commented that there is a lot of work currently within the greater Waldorf community to expand the reflection of diversity within the specific areas that Waldorf education focuses on. The group Alma specializes in this type of work in the Waldorf sector and the school is working with them on how Journey can get this support. There was a discussion about whether Journey should adopt

an official statement on anti-racism. It was noted that Board candidate Margaret Moodian participates on the CUSD task force working on their cultural curriculum.

Gavin commented that the school does have some additional technology is available to staff.

Gavin reviewed which grades have teachers on campus and which grades still have teachers remotely working. Next week 7th grade teachers will return, and then the week after spring break the remainder of the teachers will be returning. Most of the staff who want a vaccine have been able to receive it already.

Gavin reported an update on state testing. The school is planning for administering CAASPP over a 3 week period in May. Resources have been provided to teachers and administration is monitoring the situation at the state. There is an option to administer the test remotely. There was a discussion about what the test results will be used for and what they may be able to demonstrate. The use of technology this year during the distance learning will likely help students be more familiar with the technology needed for state testing. There was a discussion regarding the use of other internal assessments to gauge student progress.

The board took a 10 minute break at 7:23.

D. Financial Update*: *Report on February financials*

Larry Tamayo was not able to join the meeting. Gavin Keller provided an financial update to the Board and reviewed the summary of the funds coming in related to COVID. He commented on the reclassification of the PPP loan to a grant and to “local” vs. federal funds. They are still anticipating the loan forgiveness letter from Wells Fargo soon. There was a discussion about the reduction in reserves this year, and that it had built up slowly over many years prior to the pandemic.

Gavin reviewed the summary of the funding received or anticipated to be received under the various stimulus packages from the state and federal government. Some of the sources require a board approved spending plan. One plan required under AB 86 will use the state’s template and will be brought to the board no later than the May board meeting. Gavin reported on some of the requirements that the AB 86 funds carry. Since the funding is short term, there may be increased staffing needs and possibly some temporary or short term positions may need to be created. There may be a way to use some of the funds for facility needs. There was a discussion of what needs there may be for any summer programming. The most prevalent need expressed by students and parents are the social emotional needs of the students.

7 ***SCHOOL OPERATIONS (Discussion/Action):***

A. School Re-opening*: *Update on school reopening, updates to COVID-19 Safety Plan and any additional plans for the 2020-21 school year.*

Gavin Keller presented an update to the board related to the Reopening Plan and the COVID Safety

Plan. Since Orange County moved out of the purple tier, changes can be made to the plan as long as those changes are posted to the school website, the changes do not need to go to the county health department. 7th and 8th grade has now been able to open because the county is in the red tier, so appropriate updates have been made. Those students returned to campus last week. The lower grades returned in late February as per the plan. The plan is being implemented very smoothly. While the program is not ideal for operation, given the constraints and circumstances, it is very effective.

Gavin highlighted that the Kindergarten model shifted from the livestream plan because there was enough students to form a full remote class with one full time teacher. The other three teachers are operating fully outdoor Kindergarten classes using the same rhythms as usual which eliminates the needs for cohorts because the students are not indoors. The students bring their own snacks but eat together. There was a reporter from NPR recently doing a story on holding school outdoors.

The CDC guidelines were revised to allow students to be 3 feet apart inside and the Orange County health department has followed along. The plan will incorporate that new guidance and so this will likely allow all students interested in being on campus to be indoors with the 3 foot distancing. They are going to try it out with 7th grade when they return next week. The plan is to implement this for all grades by mid-April. The outdoor classroom space will be utilized still, for example, during breaks or small group work. The site instructors will remain and will do more “push in” and support work as well as supervising any students who are working outdoors. With the livestream model, the teacher needs to stay stationary, so the site instructors can circulate around the room. Regarding the specialty teacher instruction, there are still issues with the same adult rotating through multiple different groups of students, so this will not happen for the near future, possibly not this school year. Some alternatives will be explored.

Plans for the fall are still very uncertain, but the administration is looking at different scenarios—best and worst case and something in the middle, depending on what the public health guidance looks like over summer.

There was some discussion regarding acquiring more “single” desks and the challenges of backlogs on supply of furniture.

If all of a class can meet inside, and if there are sufficient numbers to support it, there may be the possibility of moving to 5 days a week on campus. If this happened the schedule may need to change , such as adding back a minimum day to allow a weekly faculty meeting.

There was a motion to approve the updated School Reopening Plan and ratify the updated COVID Safety Plan, which was seconded and approved unanimously through a roll call vote.

B. COVID 19 Response: Discussion and any necessary Actions related to response to COVID 19 public health situation, if any.

There was no need for action on this item.

C. School Calendar 21-22*: Review of opening date for 2021-22 school year and draft of attendance calendar.

Gavin Keller presented the draft of the calendar, which has been developed with the Calendar Committee. The start date of the Wednesday after Labor Day in September has been historically the same, when it is a late start this means that the end date of the school year is in June, and that conflicts with the annual Art of Teaching training which takes place in June. It was noted that CUSD starts August 17 next fall. One effect of a late end to the school year is that the last couple weeks of school substitute Special Education teachers are needed and this does have a negative impact. The majority of teachers are in favor of the earlier start date.

There was a motion to approve the start date of school for 21-22 school year as September 1, which was seconded and approved unanimously through a roll call vote.

8 BOARD DEVELOPMENT and OVERSIGHT (Discussion/Action):

A. Board Composition: Updates on search for possible Council candidates for 21-22 and introduction to potential candidate.

A board candidate, Margaret Moodian, was in attendance at the meeting. She has been through several steps in the board nomination process. The Board introduced themselves to her. Next steps would be to bring an action item with the Nominating Committee recommendation for a vote at the next meeting and the term would start in July.

B. Conflict of Interest: Reminder about upcoming deadline to file annual Form 700s online.

Franci Sassin reported that all board members have completed their Forms.

C. Executive Director Evaluation Cycle*: Review of survey(s) to be done and next steps in annual cycle.

Franci Sassin reviewed the cycle and next steps. The survey to complete the Executive Director evaluation should go out soon. The board discussed with Gavin who to send the survey to. Gavin will also complete it as part of his self-evaluation. Gavin commented that the goals this year have been all focused on COVID planning and implementation. He recommends that the group attending the board meeting would be a good reflection of different stakeholders. No changes are recommended to the actual questions. At the next board meeting there would be a closed session

	<p>item to discuss the results of the survey. There was a discussion regarding the 360 aspect of the survey. There was a discussion regarding the effect of the pandemic on how different stakeholders would respond this year. One idea is to select several questions for faculty to respond to. If the Council advisors respond it was clarified that they would respond as individual representatives of their stakeholder groups, using their judgement and would not need to gather input in order to respond.</p> <p>After the discussion it was agreed that the group that will respond to the evaluation survey will be: all board members, the 2 advisory positions, Gavin and the two other school administrators.</p> <p>Franci will arrange for the survey to be sent via emails to these stakeholders prior to the next board meeting.</p>
9	<p>CLOSED SESSION: <i>The meeting will now convene to closed session to discuss the matters described below:</i></p> <p>The board entered closed session at 9:15 pm. Gavin Keller and Franci Sassin were invited to attend closed session based on their work in the matter. All participants confirmed they were able to participate privately.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pursuant to Government Code §54956.9 (d)(1): Existing Litigation: <i>WCAB Case No ADJ13330775</i> 2. Pursuant to Government Code §54956.9 (d)(2): Anticipated Litigation: <i>1 case</i> <p>RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION: <i>The meeting was reconvened to open session at: 9:30 p.m.</i></p> <p>PUBLIC REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN IN CLOSED SESSION <i>(includes the vote or abstention of every member present)</i> There was no action taken in closed session.</p>
10	<p>Adjournment</p> <p>The meeting was adjourned at 9:33 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.*