

*Journey School  
A California Public Charter School*

*Thursday, October 28, 2021*

***REGULAR MEETING MINUTES***

*Approved December 2, 2021*

***7:00 p.m.***

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

*(949) 448-7232*

*[www.journeyschool.net](http://www.journeyschool.net)*

***Members of the public were able to participate in person or via Zoom Webinar.***

***NOTE: Board members conducted the meeting in person at the Journey School campus and also livestreamed the meeting via Zoom using the Webinar format. Members of the public wishing to observe and/or contribute were able to participate in person at the school OR via the Zoom meeting by accessing the webinar.***

***BOARD MEMBERS:***

*Amy Capelle, Council President: Present  
Melissa Dahlin, Board 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*

*Administrators Gavin Keller and Shelley Kelley and Amanda Simmons were present. Administrative consultants Franci Sassin and Larry Tamayo (for his items via Zooms) were present.*

	<b>AGENDA ITEM</b>
1	<p><b><i>Call to Order and Roll Call and review of Webinar processes</i></b></p> <p>The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm. The board was present in person and there was a webinar livecast as well. The procedures for the meeting were reviewed. It was noted that it was difficult to get the audio to work well so that all board members could be easily heard on the livestream.</p>
2	<p><b><i>Inspirational Passage</i></b></p> <p>Jeanne Lee read the poem “Faithfulness” by Rudolph Steiner.</p>
3	<p><b><i>Approval of Agenda*</i></b></p> <p><b><i>NOTE: The order of the agenda may be changed without prior notice to the public.</i></b></p> <p>There was a motion to approve the agenda which was seconded and approved unanimously.</p>
4	<p><b><i>PUBLIC COMMENT: Members of the public may contribute public comment either in person or via Zoom teleconference. Reminder: See policy above for time guidelines.</i></b></p> <p>Parent Teresa Risch played a recording of an FDA advisors who states that “we won’t learn how safe vaccine is until we start giving it.” She reviewed some statistics about the low risk of serious disease of COVID to children, but the potential risk of the vaccine. TShe stated that the voluntary consent of the subject is needed for a medical experiment. There is also a requirement for in person education. She cited codes that the school might be risking if it enforces a vaccine mandate. If Journey takes a stand it against government vaccine mandates, it will become the school that parents want to enroll at. She passed out a “notice of liability” and some information about the citations she referenced to the board members.</p> <p>Parent Meaghan Freiling put together some materials regarding the student vaccine mandate. It is related to gene therapy and the role of mRNA. She provided her description of how the mRNA vaccines work. She noted that these have not really been tested in humans. In her opinion this product is not a vaccine, it is gene therapy and therefore there are a lot of ways it could go wrong. TShe stated that this is a massive medical experiment in an uncontrolled setting</p> <p>Parent Joe Hirsch commented that he had some conversations with teachers regarding clubs and the ability to provide some funds to the student clubs. He also thinks there are opportunities to expand club options to some real world topics. He would like to see some funding put towards this and if not, he asked if a parent could be a fiscal sponsor for a club.</p>

5	<p><b>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.</b></p> <p><b>A. Approval of Minutes*:</b> Minutes from regular meeting of September 23</p> <p><b>B. Staffing Plan 2021-22*:</b> Updates to Staffing Plan needed for the start of school.</p> <p>There was a motion to approve the consent agenda items, which was seconded and approved unanimously .</p>
6	<p><b>INFORMATION ITEMS: Reports</b></p> <p><b>A. Faculty Update:</b> Update on Faculty activities.</p> <p>Alanna Hayde provided an update. She reported on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade this month and what has happened so far this year. This included participation and feedback on a community wide event. They are learning about revolutions now. Class sizes are lower than normal but this has helped with providing additional support for students. They have a variety of projects coming up including building a PC computer. She reported that getting more training with some of the curriculum might be helpful. It is a busy time coming up with conferences and the holidays. Teachers are stretched and busy but have been very resilient.</p> <p>Shelley Kelley acknowledged all the hard work of the teachers and how much of a challenge teaching has been during COVID. She stated that everyone is extending flexibility and understanding to teachers in the same way that is expected towards students.</p> <p><b>B. Parent Cabinet Update:</b> Update on Parent Cabinet activities</p> <p>Vivienne Benjamin reported that the Harvest Faire will be done in a modified way, bringing the autumn celebration to the students during school hours on Nov 8-10. It will be completely run by parent volunteers. Those who will be on campus will go through safety protocols. There will be booths and activities and snacks. There is a lot of excitement about being able to have this celebration. Fairy Market will take place in December. Overnight trips have started with COVID protocols in place. Parent Cabinet is going to revitalize the sand box in the front of campus. Discussions about the spring fundraising auction are underway, with a possibility of a more casual event on campus as an option.</p> <p><b>C. Administrative Update:</b> Report from School Director, including update on school re-opening, student assessment, field trips, DEI update, school festival, CA Shakeout, staffing update, etc.</p> <p>Gavin Keller provided an update to the Board. Gavin thanked the board for their service and for participating in the campus walk through. He also thanked the teachers for setting up their classrooms to</p>

show the work of the students. He reviewed the facility projects that will be funded by Parent Cabinet, such as the theater space and an outdoor amphitheater. They are also supporting teacher professional development .

Gavin reported on the SBAC state tests that were administered last spring. At the December board meeting Gavin will report on the test results and an analysis of comparisons with other groups, such as CUSD. Illuminate Education assessments will be used throughout the year in the classroom and will be used to monitor student progression, as well as for goal setting. It is used at other Waldorf charter schools in California. It will help to “tell the story” for charter renewal as it will have been in place for several years by that time. Teacher representatives will be trained by the end of November and will then support other teachers. The first assessments have started and will be delivered before winter break. One of the benefits of this particular assessment system is that they are quick to administer and it is very user friendly. It also has a social-emotional assessment component. The teacher training focuses on using data to determine where each student is and where the gaps are, and then gives resources on how to support any gaps.

Field trips have started, including overnight trips for 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Last week there was an earthquake drill in coordination with the California Shake Out.

They have found a school counselor, Rachel Howser, who has been working with Journey already as a Strategic Kids site instructors. Gavin noted that one of the Strategic Kids site instructor is a former Journey student!

Shelley Kelley reported on the DEI work. There is an in person meeting coming up in November. So far the group has been meeting online with support of OC Human Relations. The group is now starting to work on its own. There will be a mission statement developed by leadership who will then get feedback from the group. The DEI group gave input on Halloween costume guidelines and the issues that can come from using costumes that may not be culturally sensitive. The Student Council created the themes for middle school costumes.

Bonnie River and Donna Newberg-Long with Gradalis are on campus this week working with teachers. There are two hours of observation and one hour of follow up per teacher. Bonnie also attended a faculty meeting and commented on the cohesiveness of the faculty. She also observed that Journey has one of the best Waldorf charter programs in the country and that the students are engaged and joyful.

Having the return of the festivals in person has been welcomed by everyone and is building community. There are also some off campus events that will be voluntary and organized by room parents.

D. **Financial Update\*:** Report on September financials.

Larry Tamayo presented the September financial dashboard . The ADA was reduced in the projections, and based on the attendance so far this year, it was dropped to 90%. The Month 1 and Month 2 ADA are now in, and Month 2 was at 90%. He reported on the fiscal impact of lower attendance rate and a lower enrollment number. Federal revenue will be higher. The “other” state revenue is higher because of the ability to defer some of the “in person” learning grant from last year to this fiscal year. There were some questions about the per student amount of funding, which is about \$10,000 per ADA as a rough estimate. He reminded the board that there are only 7 months of the school year that contribute to most of the funding sources, and so the first few months of the school year are crucial.

Regarding the expenditures he noted that the areas of cost savings on staffing are offset by the contracted services like Strategic Kids, although there are some cost savings due to reduced benefits costs.

The forecast is currently showing a projected net negative for the year, and if that happens, then the school would need to use reserves. The cash position is strong.

Larry reported on some additional grant funds, such as one for staff professional development. The state economic position is strong so next year’s budget for schools will likely be positive when the proposal is rolled out in January. Possibly there will be some funds put towards the impact on public schools of decreasing enrollment statewide.

Gavin Keller commented that the annual giving fundraising campaign is actually a bit ahead of where it normally is, and there is another push coming up at Thanksgiving. There was a discussion of looking into corporations that might match parent donations on “Giving Tuesday” after Thanksgiving.

7 **SCHOOL OPERATIONS: Discussion/Action**

The Board took a short break at 8:35 pm

A. **Enrollment Update:** Update on enrollment projections.

Gavin Keller reported that enrollment has been stable the last month, however it does include around 30 new students who have been added, but others have left. There are efforts underway to recruit new families, including local magazines and a social media campaign. There will be an open house on Dec 1 and Jan 19 in the afternoons after school is out, where teachers will be available to talk with parents. There is a booth at a community faire this weekend. There will be outreach to local preschools for prospective kindergarten students. The school is also encouraging word of mouth networking. They are encouraging families to take any open seats now vs. waiting for the lottery, in those grades when there are currently open spaces. The school does have significant cash reserves for this year, but the bigger issue will be in future years if enrollment does not bounce back. There was a discussion regarding the interest levels, which has been about the same, but because there are not in person tours taking place, the actual applications seem to be lower. It might be possible to hold tours on Wednesday afternoons

after students are gone to see if that helps. There does appear to be a lot more mobility of students due to COVID related issues. There was a discussion about attendance. A lot more absences are happening due to keeping students home even with very mild symptoms. There was a discussion about possible board advocacy efforts that might be helpful going into the next state budget cycle.

**B. *School Re-opening\**: Update on school reopening**

Gavin Keller reported that there have been several quarantines. There are no suggested changes to the operational structure at this time. The logistics of the quarantines are going well, however, using the independent study model to try to recoup ADA is a challenge as it is hard to get the cooperation of the families.

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

There have been seven cases of COVID in October among students and also one staff member. All have been isolated cases, so there is no evidence of it spreading on campus. Although there were some active cases, the protocols that include a modified quarantine resulted in no additional cases. Gavin Keller reported that as of October 15 the staff “test or vaccinate” program has to be in place. The current vaccination status for staff is approximately 80%. There is another part of the Safety Plan to discuss how to return “essential” volunteers using new safety protocols. The school will not be able to provide the testing for unvaccinated parents, but will allow parents to provide evidence of a negative test result.

The school community has been vocal about the pending state vaccine mandates for students and staff. There is not a lot of information for schools from the state at this time.

Gavin reported that the surveillance testing is available free to any student or staff member who would like to use it, for example, after the holidays or if someone is feeling ill. Students are only tested with parental permission.

There was a motion to approve the updates to the COVID Safety Plan/Safe Return to In Person Instruction Plan, which was seconded and approved unanimously.

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

There was nothing that needed to be approved, so this item was tabled.

**E. *Volunteer Policy\**: Review and approval of updates to Volunteer Policy and associated procedures and applications.**

The proposal is linked to the language in the COVID Safety Plan. Revisions are also proposed to update the policy overall. A lot of it has been simplified and streamlined. If someone wants to be a driver or an overnight chaperone there would be increased requirements. There was a observation that it may be difficult to get volunteers and that will be monitored.

There was a motion to approve the revised Volunteer Policy, which was seconded and approved unanimously .

**F. *ESSER III Expenditure Plan\**: Review and approval of plan required for federal ESSER funds.**

Gavin Keller reported on the community input in developing this required plan. This is the third round of federal funding under the COVID relief funding sources. Journey will get more than \$200,000. At least 20% of that must be for addressing lost instructional time. The proposed plan is for well over that threshold. Much of the funds will be used for additional staffing to better support students in a variety of settings, such as afterschool and with staff who provide mental health supports. Some of the funds will be used for the COVID Safety measures as well. It is being tracked carefully so that expenditures are only charged to one grant. There was a discussion about the types of learning loss that Journey students experienced, as well as the types of mental health needs being discovered. The Strategic Kids support staff have been effective in supporting these areas.

There was a motion to approve the ESSER III Expenditure Plan, which was seconded and approved unanimously .

**G. *JTA Proposed Articles for Collective Bargaining Negotiation \**: Review to “sunshine” Proposal from Journey Teachers’ Association of articles for negotiation during 2021-22.**

Gavin Keller reported that this is the first step for collective bargaining. The full contract will be negotiated this year, after an extra year extension due to COVID. The contract is working relatively well for both parties. This document indicates that only the listed articles will likely need to be negotiated. No action is needed on this item. The Journey School proposal will be presented at the next board meeting.

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

**A. *Board Strategic Planning\**: Review of items modified from board retreat for strategic planning at upcoming board meeting agendas.**

Amy Capelle updated the board on the revised proposal for the originally proposed schedule. She is proposing that the work that was originally going to be on November 5 would instead be split up over the next three meetings. This will allow the budget cycle to be based on the priorities set by the Board. The publication “Charter School Board University” by Brian Carpenter would be the basis for some of the

planning intended. In addition the book “The 7 Outs”, which reviews the strategic planning cycle may be a useful resource.

Amy reviewed the roles of the Parent Cabinet and the Journey School Foundation in the fundraising efforts, and asked about involving representatives from those groups when the board is discussing those aspects of the organization, or asked about other ways to gather input from these groups. There was also a discussion about the relationship of strategic planning to the school’s LCAP.

**B. Board Meeting Locations\*:** Discussion regarding updated rules for meetings, including teleconference locations, and consideration of Resolution of State of Emergency per AB 361.

Franci Sassin presented the various options for the board regarding the type of meetings, including: holding board meetings in person again, holding board meetings remotely with all addresses posted publicly, as well as keeping a phone line open for the public at the school, or adopting a resolution that would be valid for 30 days and that confirms the ongoing public health risks and allows telephonic or remote meetings without the usual posting requirements. It could also be possible for some board members to attend in person and others to attend remotely, and allow members of the public to participate either way as well. She noted that to use option 3 with the resolution, due to the timing of the upcoming board meetings, it would be necessary to schedule two special meetings.

After discussion, the Board opted to hold the next regular board meeting in person at the Journey School campus, and keep this item on the agenda each month to decide the location of the next upcoming meeting.

**C. Board Meeting Calendar/Schedule\*:** Updates to Board meeting calendar and time of meetings.

The proposal is to remove the November 5 meeting which was recently added. There is also a proposal to consider earlier start times for board meetings. The pros and cons of a 4:30 start time were discussed.

The board also discussed moving certain agenda items around so that certain items which require more discussion and thought are presented earlier during the meeting. There was interest in potentially starting the next three board meetings at an earlier time in order to accommodate the board strategic planning work.

Finally, the date of the June board meeting was revisited as some have conflicts for the original meeting date.

There was a motion to remove the November 5 board meeting from the schedule, and change the June 23 board meeting to June 15. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

**D. Council Nominating Committee:** Review of search activities and potential candidates for vacant Council position.

There is a potential board candidate who has fiscal experience, however the person can only attend if the board meetings are earlier. There will continue to be search efforts while the board tries out an earlier start time the next few meetings.



9	<p><b>CLOSED SESSION:</b> <i>The meeting will now convene to closed session to discuss the matters described below:</i></p> <p>The meeting moved into closed session at 10:30 pm.</p> <p>Franci Sassin and Gavin Keller were invited into closed session based on their work in the matter. Jeannie Lee left closed session at 10:40 before item #2.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Pursuant to Government Code §54956.9 (1)(d): Potential Litigation: 1 case</b></li> <li>2. <b>Pursuant to Government Code §54957.6: CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS:</b> <i>Review of articles for 2021-22 negotiations</i></li> </ol> <p><b>Employee organization:</b> <i>Journey Teachers' Association/CTA</i></p> <p><b>Agency designated representative:</b> <i>Gavin Keller</i></p> <p><b>RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION:</b> <i>The meeting was reconvened to open session at: 10:53 p.m.</i></p> <p><b>PUBLIC REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN IN CLOSED SESSION</b> <i>(includes the vote or abstention of every member present)</i></p> <p>During closed session, the board took action ratify the settlement agreement for OAH case #2021060511, and approve the related MOU with CUSD, with delegation to Gavin Keller to execute the MOU on behalf of the Board. The vote was via a roll call and was approved unanimously.</p>
10	<p><b>Adjournment</b></p> <p>The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 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.*