

# JOURNEY School

A stylized green landscape graphic featuring a winding white path that leads from the bottom center towards the right side of the page. The path is set against a solid green background that represents hills or a field.

## **SCHOOL HANDBOOK\***

\*NOTE: Please refer to COVID-19 Safety Plan for detailed information regarding COVID-19 Safety mitigation measures.

27102 Foxborough  
Aliso Viejo, CA 92656  
(949) 448-7232-Phone  
(949) 448-7256-Fax

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

## CONTENTS

<b>Administrative Welcome .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>School Purpose, Mission and Core Values.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Parent Partnership Agreements.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PRACTICAL INFORMATION.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>School Hours .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Parking and Drop-off.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Late Arrival.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Dismissal/Pick-Up .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Minimum Days .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>After School Care .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>School Calendar .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>HISTORY OF JOURNEY SCHOOL .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>PHILOSOPHY .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>JOURNEY SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>SCHOOL INFORMATION.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<i>Aesthetics and School Environment.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Festivals and Celebrations .....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Enrollment Guidelines .....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Articulation.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>English Language Learners .....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Special Education Students with Disabilities.....</i>	<i>14</i>
<b>STUDENT ASSESSMENT .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<i>Measurable Student Outcomes.....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Standardized Testing .....</i>	<i>14</i>
<b>PARENT INVOLVEMENT .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<i>Support through Volunteering .....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Commitment to Educational Program and to Parent Education.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Support the School's Media Expectation.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Support the Snack and Lunch Guidelines.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Support Ecological Awareness.....</i>	<i>16</i>
<b>VOLUNTEERING AT JOURNEY.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<i>Governance.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Council Meetings.....</i>	<i>19</i>
<b>HEALTH RELATED ISSUES.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<i>Medication .....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Allergies.....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Contagious Illnesses .....</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Accidents/Emergencies.....</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Emergency Release Form.....</i>	<i>20</i>
<b>FIELD TRIPS.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>CAMPUS SAFETY .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<i>Classroom Observation Policy .....</i>	<i>21</i>
<b>POLICIES, PROCEDURES, and Guidelines .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<i>Media and Technology .....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Cell Phones/Electronic Devices.....</i>	<i>24</i>

Dress Code.....	24
Attendance .....	24
<b>EMERGENCY SITUATIONS.....</b>	<b>27</b>
Emergency School Closure .....	28
<b>DISCIPLINE and BEHAVIOR .....</b>	<b>28</b>
Discipline Guidelines FOR GRADES 1-8 .....	28
Bullying and Harassment Policy .....	29
Sending a Child Home (Suspension/Expulsion).....	32
<b>OTHER POLICIES.....</b>	<b>38</b>
Policy on Collection of Student INformation from Social Media.....	38
Journey School Free Speech .....	39
Journey School Pupil Fee Policy .....	40
Uniform Complaint Policy .....	43
<b>COMMUNICATION.....</b>	<b>49</b>
Communication Model.....	49
Email Policy and Procedures.....	50
<b>FUNDING/FUNDRAISING.....</b>	<b>51</b>

## **ADMINISTRATIVE WELCOME!**

The first and most important educators of children are their parents. Journey School honors this and intends to create powerful school-family partnerships each school year. After all, many years ago, a team of committed parents and educators launched Journey School on Valentine's Day—a true act of love and dedication on behalf of the children and families of southern California. We are dedicated to the realization of this initial impulse to create a thriving Waldorf-inspired public charter school for all children and look forward to striving towards success, together.

Sincerely

Gavin Keller  
Journey School Executive Director

## **SCHOOL PURPOSE, MISSION AND CORE VALUES**

**Purpose:** The purpose of Journey School is to provide the families of southern California the option of a Waldorf-inspired public-school education for their children.

**Mission:** Journey School is dedicated to the optimal development of the intellect, social-emotional well-being, and physical capacities of each student. Journey School will enable each student to read, write, speak, and calculate with clarity and precision. Furthermore, students will have the ability to think imaginatively, creatively and become competent, life-long learners.

**Core-Values:** Journey School embraces **public Waldorf-inspired education** because of the following values:

Why Waldorf-inspired Education?	Why the Public Sphere?
Developmentally appropriate and child-centered Rigorous Holistic and performance-based Imaginative and art-based Celebratory, soul-nourishing, and joyful Community enhancing Supportive of self-reliance, hard work, and responsibility Encouraging of healthy and environmentally sound nutritional habits and living Conducive to ethical decision-making, sharing, & generosity	Accountable Diverse Accessible Transparent Transformative

## **PARENT PARTNERSHIP**

Over thirty years of educational research shows that meaningful school-family partnerships improve student achievement and enhance the overall development of children in profound ways (Marzano, *What Works in Schools*, 2003). Simply put, students need their families to take an active role in their education if they are to reach their highest potential. This truth rings especially loud at Journey, a charter school of *choice* that is governed at the local level. We depend upon strong family involvement and partnerships in many ways—ranging from volunteerism to school governance to fundraising. Also, our unique Waldorf-inspired educational philosophy requires significant support and alignment from the home front.

In the interests of fulfilling our mission and actuating the potential of each child, the following Parent Partnership statements have been developed. As partners:

### **The School Will:**

- Provide a safe, positive, nurturing learning environment and program with an excellent team of educators committed to teaching Waldorf education.
- Respect all community members.
- Keep parents informed of their children's learning progress.
- Provide continuing parent development opportunities.
- Solicit needed and appropriate parent involvement in school and classroom activities.
- Follow the school's guidelines for open, direct, and effective communication.
- Work together with each other, parents, and students to solve concerns.
- Strive for excellence and continued improvement.
- Hold ourselves accountable to the highest ethical, professional, and teaching standards.

### **Parents Will:**

- Assure their child regularly attends the full day, only missing due to emergency or illness. Drop off and pick up on time—repeated tardies and chronic absenteeism are not acceptable.
- Follow the school's guidelines for open, direct communication.
- Work together with teachers, administration, and other parents to solve concerns.

### **The School Encourages Parents To:**

- Read the School Handbook and follow the school's policies, procedures, and practices, including the policies concerning snack and lunch expectations, media, homework, and dress code.
- Attend parent events or festivals, conferences, class and community meetings.
- Provide a home life for their child that supports the school's philosophy, including a rhythmic daily and weekly schedule, adequate sleep, a nutritious diet, minimal or no electronic media exposure as per the media guidelines, and positive discipline.
- Volunteer at the school, with the goal being a minimum of 5 hours per month on average.
- Participate in the school's "Annual Giving" program to the degree they are financially able so that the school can provide a full Waldorf program for all students.

## **PRACTICAL INFORMATION**

For additional explanation see section concerning Policies and Procedures.

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

#### **Kindergarten**

Regular Days are 9:00 am – 1:00 pm  
Minimum Days are 9:00 am – 12:30 pm  
First and Last Day of School 9:00 am – 11:00 am

#### **Grades 1-8**

Regular Days are 8:40 am – 3:05 pm  
Minimum Days are 8:40 am – 1:00 pm

### **PARKING AND DROP-OFF**

Parking is in the Journey School parking lot and student drop off is encouraged and available for all students. Detailed parking and drop-off policies can be found on the school website.

Supervision on the front playground will begin at 8:00 for students who arrive on campus early.

### **LATE ARRIVAL**

Please do everything in your power to help your child arrive at school on time. The beginning part of the instructional day is vital time and helps to set a calm rhythm and positive frame of mind. We want all students to participate in the important activities that occur at the beginning of the day and must minimize disruptions to important instructional time by latecomers. If your student arrives after the designated start time, please report to the office and our tardy protocol (see policies and procedures) will be followed. Thank you for fully embracing this responsibility.

### **DISMISSAL/PICK-UP**

Kindergarten students may be picked up at the designated pick-up areas at the front of the school. Grades students may be picked up at the designated pick-up location at the front and the back gate of the school. Students in grades 4-8 and siblings may also exit the back gate towards Woodfield Drive. Detailed parking lot locations and procedures can be found on the school website.

Please be timely in picking up your child after school. If you anticipate being late, it is important that you call the office so that we may notify your child's teacher prior to dismissal and the student may wait for you in the office. Please note, students who remain at pick up locations for more than 15 minutes after posted dismissal time will be escorted to the office and may be picked up there.

### **MINIMUM DAYS**

All Wednesdays are minimum days for Kindergarten through Grade 8 to promote effective staff collaboration in the afternoon hours. There will also be minimum days scheduled in the fall and in the spring to facilitate parent-teacher conferences. Please reference the school's master calendar for a listing of all minimum days.

### **AFTER SCHOOL CARE**

A variety of after school programs are currently offered on campus by outside providers. Journey School facilitates the opportunity for these programs but does not oversee them. Information regarding these programs is listed on the [School website](#).

### **SCHOOL CALENDAR**

Please visit [www.journeyschool.net](http://www.journeyschool.net) to access a current version of Journey School's coordinated master calendar, including first and last days of school, official school holidays, and parent-teacher conferences.

## **HISTORY OF JOURNEY SCHOOL:**

*“Childhood is a journey, not a race. Learning should be the same”*

– Karen Ray

The idea for Journey School was conceived in 1998 by a group of committed parents in South Orange County, who believed they could offer a distinct educational public alternative in Orange County by using teaching methods inspired by Rudolf Steiner. The school system known as Waldorf education (the fastest growing independent school movement in the world) has been guided by a philosophy stating that the development of a child’s critical thinking requires an active and creative imagination. Similarly, in the Journey School classroom, teachers masterfully blend academic and artistic disciplines so that the whole child is involved in every aspect of learning. This integration of the mind, body and heart allows each child to reach his full potential while preserving the natural joy of learning and developing a life-long love for it.

On February 14, 2000, Capistrano Unified School District (CUSD) approved Journey School’s Charter, making it the first public charter school in the district. It is Orange County’s fifth charter school and its first community-initiated charter. Journey School opened in September 2000 with two kindergarten classes and one class each of grades one through three. Journey School’s Charter must be renewed by CUSD every 5 years, and was renewed in 2005, 2010, 2015 and 2020.

Since its inception in 2000, Journey has leased its site from CUSD, having made its home on four different campuses in San Juan Capistrano, San Clemente and Aliso Viejo. Journey currently leases space from Capistrano Unified School District at the former Foxborough Elementary site. Journey School currently serves kindergarten through grade eight in a seat-based program and also offers home-based and hybrid independent study programs, with a total student enrollment of approximately 575 students. Please see the charter document on our website for more information about charter schools.

## **IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF JOURNEY SCHOOL**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

*“We shouldn’t ask: what does a person need to know or be able to do in order to fit into the existing social order? Instead, we should ask: what lives in each human being and what can be developed in him or her? Only then, will it be possible to direct the new qualities of each emerging generation... The society will become what young people, as whole human beings, make out of the existing social conditions. The new generation should not just be made to be what the present society wants it to become.”*

– Rudolf Steiner

Journey School teachers are committed to educating the whole child and endeavor to foster the unfolding of each child’s full potential. The primary objective of Journey School is to enable students to become self-motivated, competent, life-long learners. Our graduates will move forward on their lifelong journey equipped with an enthusiasm for learning and the courage to meet life’s challenges.

Journey School is based upon:

- A developmental approach
- A hands-on, creative, Steiner-inspired educational program
- A classical and innovative curriculum
- A strong sense of community
- A high degree of parent participation
- A close, long-term relationship with teachers
- A cooperative learning experience
- A strong focus on respect, responsibility and compassion



Please be sure to investigate our curriculum and instructional methods thoroughly so you know exactly what Journey School stands for and believes. The last thing we want is for you or your family to be disappointed as a result of unclear expectations. For this reason, Journey School strives to offer parent development and other learning opportunities for families throughout the school year.

## **JOURNEY SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

*“The need for imagination, a sense of truth and a feeling of responsibility – these are the three forces which are the very nerve of education.”*

– Rudolf Steiner

Journey School’s core curriculum includes Common Core State Standards (CCSS); however, there are differences in the scope and sequence in which they are presented. For example, under CCSS, explicit reading instruction begins in kindergarten. Journey School’s kindergarten language arts curriculum focuses on listening and memory skills of pre-reading with the teacher using oral storytelling. In first grade the students copy letters, words and sentences into their main lesson books. The teacher creates samples from stories that s/he tells as part of the curriculum. The reading experience then begins with the students reading their own writing. The curriculum introduces literature books as well and raises phonetic awareness while also building important vocabulary and background knowledge. Journey School’s educational methods are designed to provide a meaningful context within which learning can occur.

The academic curriculum is integrated with poetry recitation, drama, painting, music, sculpting, and drawing. This model of education through the arts awakens imagination and creativity bringing vitality and wholeness to learning, as well as building a strong foundation for the abstract thinking and intellectual challenges that are gradually and appropriately introduced throughout the grades.

The class teacher has the opportunity to teach the same children through multiple grade levels. This provides the child with a feeling of camaraderie and commitment and affords the teacher the opportunity to work closely with the children and their families. This model offers accelerated learning, stability, and continuing guidance to each child.

Textbooks are not typically used in the elementary grades. The teacher presents creative lessons from his or her own research, and the children make their individual main lesson books for each subject, recording and illustrating the substance of the lessons. These student-generated main lesson books are an important record of learning and allow the arts to be integrated into every subject. Multicultural content is woven throughout the curriculum by means of biography, storytelling, history, crafts, art, music, the practice of seasonal celebrations, and through foreign language.

Reading and writing are learned in the same way as they originated in the course of human history. First graders hear stories, draw pictures about a detail of the stories, and discover letters in the gesture of these pictures. Phonics, whole language and spelling instruction are accompanied by the use of songs, poetry, eurhythmy and games that help to establish a joyful experience of language. Through the grades, reading texts are taken from the classical humanities curriculum.

The Humanities curriculum acknowledges that the cultures of the past have influenced humanity throughout time and continue to influence the values and morals of today’s world. Children learn about several religions and cultures from a historical perspective. In grade one, fairy tales are taught, in grade two fables and stories of extraordinary individuals, in grade three stories from the ancient Hebrew people, in grade four Norse Mythology, and in grade five the ancient cultures of India, Egypt, Persia, Mesopotamia and Greece. In the sixth through eighth grades, the students journey from Greece and Rome to medieval history, from the Renaissance to the Reformation, and from the Age of Exploration to the present day. With this exposure through cultures’ legends and literature, the children gain flexibility and an appreciation for the diversity of humankind.

Each school day begins with the “Main Lesson”, a two-hour period in which the core curriculum is presented. Presenting core academic subjects in the “Main Lesson” block allows the students to have adequate time to follow through with all work projects, thus promoting in-depth, long term learning. The main lesson subject is taught in three-to-four-week blocks. A number of blocks are continued later in the term.

After Main Lesson, the children are engaged in Mathematics and English-Language Arts practice periods as well as special subject classes. Handwork (knitting, crocheting, sewing, and woodworking), music, foreign language, games, farming, digital media literacy, civics, watercolor painting, performing arts, modeling and/ or form drawing are courses traditionally offered.

Music is an integral part of the curriculum. Beginning in first grade, children are taught to play a musical instrument, usually the pentatonic flute. Violin is introduced in fourth grade and other instruments, including the ukulele, recorder and guitar, are electives in later grades. Daily singing begins in Kindergarten and continues through the grades.

A foreign language is taught, giving the children an experience of another culture. The students learn songs, games, and poems in the early grades and then the program expands into conversing, reading, writing and grammar.

Science is taught in the lower grades through observation and experience of our natural environment. Through nature studies, gardening, and environmentally conscious practices, the children develop reverence and a sense of guardianship for the earth and all of its inhabitants. In the upper grades, the teacher sets up experiments, calls upon the children to observe, ponder, discuss, and write up their observations. The students are then drawn to their own conclusions. Through this process, rigorous independent thinking and sound judgment are trained. Zoology, botany, chemistry, physics, astronomy and physiology are examples of science blocks presented in the upper grades.

Practical work such as crafts and handwork are integral parts of the required curriculum from Kindergarten through the eighth grade. Research confirms that optimal brain development is founded on refined motor development. Learning to knit and crochet in the early grades develops the motor skills that enhance intellectual development, coordination, patience, perseverance, and imagination. Activities like woodworking, house building, and gardening are included in the curriculum to give the children an understanding of and respect for how things work in the world. In addition, these subjects support practical applications of Math.

Digital Media Literacy is taught in grades 6-8. This is a pro-active program that provides students with the skills and guidance necessary to make ethical choices in an era marked by powerful technology and ever-changing forms of media.

A reverence and sense of guardianship for the earth and all her inhabitants are nurtured through seasonal festivals, classroom activities, gardening, recycling, field trips, and specifically through our eco-literacy program. Journey School offers a sound eco-education where critical and ethical thinking are inherent in the curriculum, where nature and the environment are the larger classroom, where service is a natural extension of educational activities. Journey’s public Waldorf-based education is known to foster cross-disciplinary learning, high levels of social and emotional intelligence, and creative problem solving, along with global awareness and environmental stewardship in students. Journey School prepares children to become innovative and inspired leaders needed to sustain the world.

### ***Aesthetics***

Children live in rhythm and beauty and so thrive in aesthetically pleasing environments, both in the classroom and out of doors. We strive to create and maintain a unique and creative environment that expresses appreciation for ethnic and cultural diversity. Classroom motifs change throughout the school year to reflect seasonal and curricular themes.

## **Festivals and Celebrations**

Celebrating seasonal festivals at Journey School is a way of observing the recurring rhythms and cycles in nature; as the earth makes its way around the sun, the solstices and equinoxes become the four cornerstones of the year's rhythm. Sharing in the school's festival life is deeply nourishing to our individual inner lives and contributes to the integration and stability of the entire community.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are taken throughout the year by all classes. These trips are conducted in conjunction with the curriculum and offer the students an opportunity to experience a deepening of their studies in a different environment. The class teacher will arrange for field trip permission slips (including liability release forms) to be sent to the parents at least one week prior to the field trip. These need to be signed and returned one week before the event.

Field trip transportation/carpools will depart from Journey School at a specified time designated by the teacher. Timing will be clearly communicated to parents and displayed on permission slips. Please arrive at school prior to the departure time; transportation will not wait to accommodate latecomers. If you are delayed, field trip transportation becomes your responsibility.

Chaperones and drivers are required to complete a "School Volunteer Application Form," and must have a criminal background check and fingerprinting completed prior to volunteering. A tuberculosis screening may also be required.

## **ENROLLMENT**

As a public charter school, Journey School is open to any child residing in Orange County or adjacent counties. We provide enrollment preference to continuing students, siblings of currently enrolled students, children of full-time staff, and students residing in Capistrano Unified School District (CUSD). No student will be denied admission to Journey School based on race, ethnicity, national origin, gender or disability. If the number of eligible candidates exceeds the school's capacity, a public random drawing/lottery will be held.

The application process requires parents to submit their child's application during an open enrollment window for one of our three programs (Independent study, in-person, and a hybrid of these two options). Additionally, we expect that a family will attend an enrollment tour and read this handbook and acknowledge they have read the information and have made an informed choice when choosing Journey School.

## **No Shows (For New Students)**

The Administration uses the following guidelines to determine when a student is a "No Show":

- a. Student does not attend school for three (3) consecutive days including and immediately after the first day the student is expected to be in attendance at Journey School and such absences are unexcused
- b. Student is not ill and did not experience a death in the immediate family.
- c. Parents/guardians did not give the school prior notice of the student's absence and receive approval from the school.

The School will attempt to reach the Parent/Guardian on a daily basis for each of the first three days to determine whether the student has an excused absence. If the student has a basis for an excused absence, parents must notify the school of the absence and provide documentation.

If a student is designated as a "No Show", then his/her space will be forfeited and offered to the next student on the waiting list if the class is not closed. A notice of non-attending student will be sent to the district of residence.

## **Age Requirements**

Age requirements as per the school's charter, for children entering Journey School are:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Age Requirements</b>
Transitional Kindergarten (TK)/Kindergarten	Must turn 5 years old prior to September 1 <sup>st</sup> or for TK turn 5 years old between September 1 <sup>st</sup> and April 2 <sup>nd</sup> .
1 <sup>st</sup>	Must turn 6 years old prior to June 1 <sup>st</sup>
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Must turn 7 years old prior to June 1 <sup>st</sup>
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Must turn 8 years old prior to June 1 <sup>st</sup>
4 <sup>th</sup>	Must turn 9 years old prior to June 1 <sup>st</sup>
5 <sup>th</sup>	Must turn 10 years old prior to June 1 <sup>st</sup>
6 <sup>th</sup>	Must turn 11 years old prior to June 1 <sup>st</sup>
7 <sup>th</sup>	Must turn 12 years old prior to June 1 <sup>st</sup>
8 <sup>th</sup>	Must turn 13 years old prior to June 1 <sup>st</sup>

Exceptions may be made to these age cutoffs only with the consent of the class teacher, administration, and after an enrollment placement meeting occurs.

***Articulation***

As a charter school, Journey is a school of choice for families. Journey School bases its curriculum on Steiner methods of instruction. For this reason, it may not be easy for a student to readily transfer between Journey School and other schools, including CUSD schools.

In particular, because of the developmental approach at Journey School, students in the primary grades will have been presented academic material in different ways than in schools using only the traditional public-school curriculum. Especially prior to fourth grade, students may find it challenging to articulate from Journey to a traditional school. In the later years, students transferring into Journey School from other schools may need assistance to successfully integrate into the classroom environment and be able to participate in a variety of lessons (e.g., music, art, foreign language, crafts, etc.) offered at Journey School. Journey School's intention is to clearly communicate these issues to all families prior to enrollment. Parents are informed of the importance of staying in the Journey School program to completion. If at any time you have questions regarding articulation or transferring, please contact your child's teacher or administration.

***English Language Learners (ELs)***

The Home Language Survey is completed upon entry into Journey School. Those students whose primary language at home is other than English will be given the English Language Proficiency Assessment of California (ELPAC) to determine their English fluency. If a student is identified as an English Language Learner, s/he will be provided English Language Development (ELD) support within the general education classroom and will annually take the ELPAC test until they are reclassified as fluent in English.

***Special Education Students with Disabilities***

Journey School complies with all applicable State and Federal laws in serving students with disabilities, including but not limited to Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA). Journey School functions as a public school of CUSD for purposes of providing special education and related services to students identified with special needs. As such, CUSD and Journey School will collaboratively develop and implement Individualized Education Programs (IEP) for Journey School students with special needs and ensure

that special education students receive services in a manner that is consistent with their IEP and applicable laws and regulations. This may include placement in specialized programs available at other school sites in CUSD.

## **STUDENT ASSESSMENT**

### ***Measurable Student Outcomes***

The exit outcomes for Journey School graduates are designed to reflect the school's emphasis on educating the whole child. Exit outcomes are also developed for a successful transition into a ninth-grade program. Outcomes related to the intellectual, physical and social/emotional capacity of the student are detailed thoroughly in the Charter document. Multiple assessment methods are used to accurately determine if students are meeting the school's stated performance standards and their own individual potential.

Regular comprehensive assessments will be completed for children of all grades and uniformly sent home to parents on designated dates. Each student's academic performance, social and emotional development, and progress in the artistic realm will be addressed in these specific and timely progress reports. In addition, these complementary assessments are in place as well:

- Parent Conferences for all students take place at least once a year, or more if requested by the parents, teachers or students.
- Comprehensive student main lesson books and portfolios include student work samples, practice papers, written work, reports, artwork, etc.
- Oral recitations, presentations, reports, performances or demonstrations occur regularly beginning in first grade, by both individuals and groups.
- Letter grades for academic content (based on tests, written or oral reports, etc.) will be reserved for students at the middle school level when deemed appropriate by the Faculty.
- Illuminate Education benchmark testing for all students in grades 3-8 to monitor ongoing progress on Common Core State Standards.

### ***Standardized Testing***

Journey School students participate in annual California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) assessments in English language arts/literacy (ELA/literacy) and mathematics for grades 3-8 and Science in grades 5 and 8. These tests are taken on computers as the test delivery system utilizes computer adaptive testing technologies.

It is expected that Journey School students will perform at a level that meets the state's standards. However, Journey School recognizes that differences in the educational program and curriculum sequence may be reflected in variations in scores in specific areas of the state standardized test in the early grades. As students progress towards the exit outcomes, these variations will diminish.

Journey School needs all parents and guardians to support their children participation in the state testing to maintain Journey's charter status. If you have questions regarding this, please speak with administration.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

To sustain the high-quality educational experience provided at Journey, each family is encouraged to contribute to our school community. There are a number of ways to be involved in the life of the school.

### ***Support through Volunteering***

Both in-school and out-of-school volunteerism is encouraged. Volunteer activities include making/prepping crafts, special classroom cleaning, doing laundry, bringing flowers or food, sewing and making costumes, prepping classroom materials, chaperoning outdoor education trips, and assisting in specialty classes such as foreign language or art and others. Playground, garden and

site beautification are also important tasks affecting the quality of classroom life and in need of parent support. Participation in class projects, phone tree communication, and parent education events also offer opportunities to work with and interact with other Journey School families.

Parent participation is also needed on the Journey School Council and Parent Cabinet and on various committees as diverse as festivals, gardening, fundraising, marketing, grant writing, budgeting and facilities planning. These committees are important for carrying out day-to-day operations of the school outside the classroom and for conducting the long-range planning and work that will secure the success of our school.

Please see volunteer guidelines below for more information and requirements to be a volunteer.

### ***Commitment to Educational Program and to Parent Education***

Parents are encouraged to provide a home life for their child that supports the school's philosophy, including a rhythmic daily and weekly schedule, adequate sleep, a nutritious diet, minimal or no electronic media exposure as per the media guidelines, and positive discipline.

Parent education seminars, which allow parents to learn more about Journey School and parenting, are held throughout the year. These may occur as part of community meetings, class meetings or other special functions. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend as many seminars as possible. Local Waldorf conferences are another opportunity for parents to learn more about Journey School's educational philosophy. Please refer to the Journey School website for specific events and dates.

### ***Support the School's Media Expectation***

Our philosophy includes a commitment to understanding and nurturing each child's unique inner development. For reasons thoroughly defined in the Media section of this handbook, we believe that significantly reducing or eliminating children's screen-time will further enhance their ability to fully develop. We request that our families significantly reduce or eliminate the use of media (television, videos, video games, computer games, tablets, recorded music, movies, etc.) for their children. We encourage the complete elimination of electronic media during the school week, from Sunday late afternoon to Friday after school, for grades K-2. We support the use of media and/or technologies for educational purposes for students enrolled in grades 3-8 and for all students who rely on technologies as an accommodation determined appropriate by a team including the student's teachers, administration and parents.

### ***Support the Snack and Lunch Guidelines***

Journey School partners with Capistrano Unified School District Food and Nutrition services to provide students access to a daily breakfast and daily lunch.

If you send lunch from home, please send healthy foods and as little sugar as possible. Gum, candy, soda, juices, other drinks, as well as other unhealthy foods are not permitted for consumption at school. Please pack only water for your child to drink at school. Drinking fountains and purified water are also available at school.

Lastly, Journey School is considered an "Allergy Aware" campus. Nut-free snacks and nut-free lunches are encouraged in order to decrease the likelihood of allergen exposure on campus for students with life-threatening allergies. More detail can be found within the Health-Related Issues section below.

### ***Support Ecological Awareness***

The school strives to teach children to develop love and respect for the earth. Children come to learn that we are part of a much larger macrocosm that needs to be kept in balance while they learn about life cycles and the seasons through planting and composting in our school garden. We promote recycling, reusing, repairing and sustainability with the students. As this philosophy is respected at home, the awe and wonder evoked in our children will serve to promote a desire for wholesome living, and the development of ecological awareness.



## **VOLUNTEERING AT JOURNEY SCHOOL**

**(Please review the Journey Volunteer Handbook and application process, which is available in the office and on the school website.)**

Volunteering at Journey School is not required; however, each Journey School family is encouraged to become involved in the school and volunteer if they are able to support the school. We recognize that volunteerism can be time consuming and challenging, however, without the past parent volunteers, Journey School would not exist today. Our charter school emphasizes service and children benefit from experiencing their parents' community service. The intention is to focus on the joy of service while recognizing that Journey School truly needs and appreciates the active support and gifts of its volunteers.

Volunteer participation may occur in a classroom setting during the school day, outside the classroom on the school campus, or outside the school setting as part of an extracurricular activity. A person who comes to the school for a **one-time special event** in the role of a guest speaker, presenter, observer, or visitor is considered a guest and does not need to complete a volunteer application. School policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, or any other protected status as defined by federal, state or local law.

Volunteers do not receive compensation or employee benefits from Journey School, except worker's compensation as provided for non-professional volunteers in Labor Code Section 3364.5

### **Supervised Volunteer Opportunities include:**

- Classroom assistance
- School/classroom events and field trips
- Non-classroom (main office, development office, etc.) assistance
- Site maintenance and beautification
- Hospitality
- Special projects
- Fundraising
- Committees/working groups

### **Unsupervised Volunteer Opportunities include:**

- Playground supervision (Additional process, training and orientation are required)
- Driver
- Field trip chaperone

As a public school, we must screen school volunteers.

### **Screening Requirements for ALL volunteers**

- Complete and submit for approval the Journey Volunteer Application
- Present or provide copy of current government-issued photo identification (driver's license, passport, military ID, US or other government identification).
- Be checked by designated site personnel against the California Department of Justice, Sexual Offender (Megan's Law) website (<http://www.meganslaw.ca.gov>).
- If performing volunteer work, sign in/out on the "Volunteer Sign-in Sheet" located at the main office.
- Display a volunteer or visitor identification badge when volunteering or visiting.
- The school reserves the right to ask all Volunteers with direct student contact, even if supervised, to get TB clearance. Upon request, such volunteers must present a

Tuberculosis clearance card. (Valid for 4 years.)

### **Further Screening Requirements for Unsupervised Volunteers**

- Be fingerprinted by taking a completed Request for [Livescan form](#) to any DOJ-approved [Livescan location](#) with photo I.D. and payment. (In cases of financial hardship, Journey may subsidize the “rolling fee” of Livescan fingerprinting. Inquire at the school office.)
- This process may take up to two weeks to obtain results; please plan accordingly if you wish to be approved prior to chaperoning or driving students during an upcoming field trip.
- Proof of current automobile insurance is required for field trip carpool drivers

### **Health Requirements**

- Volunteers showing symptoms consistent with any infectious disease will follow the suggested quarantine guidelines outlined by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH)
- Volunteers who are in close contact to an individual confirmed to have an infectious disease will not be permitted to volunteer on campus during the potential infectious period as outlined by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH)

### **Acceptance as a volunteer is based on factors including, but not limited to:**

- Complete a volunteer application and screening requirements detailed above as appropriate for the duty/role you are volunteering for.
- No record of a serious or violent felony conviction (pursuant to Ed Code 45122.1) or requirement to register as a sex offender under California law (Penal Code 290)
- When requested, Tuberculosis (TB) Clearance
- Positive attitude and ability to work cooperatively with school personnel.
- Good communication skills, moral character, dependability, and health.

The school reserves the right to restrict or disallow any person from volunteering or visiting the school campus. If the Executive Director finds reasonable cause to believe that any person has disrupted or intends to interfere with the orderly and peaceful operation of the school campus, or if a person’s presence disrupts the school or its pupils, s/he may direct the disruptive person to leave the campus and notify such person that consent to remain on campus has been withdrawn. (California Penal Code Sections 626.4, 626.7, and 626.8)

The complete Volunteer Handbook and required forms are available on the website and at the school office.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

### **Governance**

Journey School is organized and operated as a California non-profit public benefit corporation and is legally and operationally independent from its sponsor, Capistrano Unified School District. Journey School is a 501(c) (3) organization. The governance structure is composed of the Journey School Council, Journey staff, and the Parent Cabinet. These three interactive groups are all responsible for upholding the mission and vision of Journey School.

The School Council is responsible for the legal and financial stability of the school. It specifically oversees charter compliance, the school budget and policies, and the school site. Ideally, the composition of the Council reflects a balance of parents, educators and community members who reflect a diversity of expertise and experience. The school is always interested in finding experienced members from the community at large to serve on the Council. The Council includes at least one representative from the parent body at large chosen by the Parent Cabinet and at least one



representative from the Faculty as chosen by the Faculty. Capistrano Unified School District may appoint a representative to the Journey School Council.

Journey Staff includes an Executive Director, the Education Director, Administrative Consultants, Administrative Support Staff, teaching staff and other designated roles. The Executive Director is responsible for oversight of the program, implements a long-term strategic plan, serves as the liaison between Journey School and CUSD, oversees day-to-day operations of the school, implements educational policies and procedures, and provides oversight and leadership to the school staff as a whole.

The Parent Cabinet (PC) promotes and supports the school's educational programs, conducts fundraising efforts and coordinates volunteers for festivals and events. All parents are considered part of Parent Cabinet and are encouraged to participate at all PC meetings.

### **Council Meetings**

Council Meetings are held at least once each month. Regular meetings are announced in advance, and written agendas are posted outside of the office 72 hours prior to the meeting. Special meetings may be called when needed and will have at least 24 hours public notice. Legal and financial matters are discussed and voted on when needed. Important issues are brought up and there are opportunities for members of the community to voice concerns, questions, make statements, etc. For dates and information please ask the office or check the school's master calendar. You are invited to any council meeting.

## ***HEALTH RELATED ISSUES***

### ***Medication***

Parent permission is needed for children requiring medication during the school day. This process and permission are completed through the school nurse. The A form (available in the front office and through the school nurse) must be filled out in order for medications to be taken on campus. Please supply clearly written instructions for administering the medications consistent with the label, including the time and amount of medication needed. Please include how the medication is to be stored. Parents are responsible for keeping the medication current. The school is prohibited from administering over the counter medications (e.g., Tylenol, aspirin, cough medicines, etc.) to any student. Unused medications will be returned to you at the end of the school year.

### ***Allergies***

Please provide the school with pertinent allergy information on the student's Emergency Forms and school records, also please communicate with the class teacher regarding any allergies.

At the current time, we have not declared Journey School a "Nut Free" campus. "Allergy Aware Campus", "Nut Free Classroom(s)" and allergy management procedures are the phrases and controls that best describe Journey School's efforts to keep allergic students safe. However, Journey School shall be considered a "Nut Free" campus for the purposes of all school/whole school events and festivals.

### ***Contagious Illnesses***

In the event of a contagious illness other than routine colds and flu, parents will be notified of the concern if the school determines that their child has been exposed. Children may be asked to stay home until they are determined to no longer be contagious. Children who are not vaccinated due to an exemption may be excluded from school in the event of an outbreak of one of the contagious illnesses that vaccines are required for. The school will follow health guidelines issued by the California Department of Education for potential outbreaks of flu virus. The following guidelines are recommended to parents to assist the school in minimizing outbreaks of flu:

- All individuals with an influenza-like illness or symptoms should remain home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications (like acetaminophen or ibuprofen) and should avoid contact with others.
- Flu-like symptoms include fever (over 100 degrees F), feverishness, cough, sore throat, runny nose, or stuffy nose. Additional symptoms may be experienced with swine flu, including body aches, feeling very tired, and sometimes vomiting or diarrhea.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Wash hands often, with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds (that is about as long as it takes to sing the “Happy Birthday” song twice). Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective in reducing the spread of the flu.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow. Wash hands after blowing nose or coughing into a tissue and dispose of tissues after use.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth to prevent the spread of germs.

### ***Accidents/Emergencies***

In case of an accident or emergency requiring immediate medical care, we will immediately call 911 and then contact a parent. If we are unable to reach you, we will contact the person listed on the child's emergency card.

### ***Emergency Release Form***

Your child will only be released to those people indicated on the Emergency Card. Proof of identification will be required. Those NOT identified on the emergency card can only pick-up the child with a written and signed note from the child's parent. Journey School may call the parent of the child for confirmation. The Emergency Card is kept on file in the office and must be updated at the beginning of each school year and whenever a change occurs such as address or phone number changes during the school year.

### ***CAMPUS SAFETY***

The safety of our students is of the highest priority. Therefore, any visitor to the campus, including parents, must sign in and out in the office and wear a visitor badge whether they are visiting or performing volunteer services on campus.

Students may only be released to adults listed on the emergency information card, unless a signed note from the parent(s)/guardian is present and identification is verified (See Emergency Release Form). In the case of early student departure, a parent/guardian must check in at the office and officially sign the student out.

The school reserves the right to restrict or disallow any person from volunteering or visiting the school campus. If the Executive Director finds reasonable cause to believe that any person has disrupted or intends to interfere with the orderly and peaceful operation of the school campus, or if a person's presence disrupts the school or its pupils, s/he may direct the disruptive person to leave the campus and notify such person that consent to remain on campus has been withdrawn. (California Penal Code Sections 626.4, 626.7, and 626.8)

### ***ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR CLASSROOM OBSERVATION***

1. Please arrange a mutually agreed upon date and time with the Executive Director in advance of the requested classroom observation.
2. All observation sessions must be planned in advance so as to not create conflict with the teacher and student schedule. Therefore, arrangements must be made at least 48 hours prior to the time of the classroom visit or observation.
3. Observations will be limited to one time per month for no more than sixty (20) minutes per visit in order to avoid distraction or disruption to the teacher's schedule and classroom atmosphere. However, under certain circumstances, such as evaluation, upcoming IEP meeting, crisis intervention

etc., a parent or provider may request additional days or time for observation. Under these circumstances, the Executive Director will use his or her discretion to either approve or decline such requests.

4. Formal observation does not include times when parents are invited to a classroom for a special event or presentation, serve as a volunteer with a teacher, or to enjoy lunch with their student.

5. The Executive Director reserves the right to decline any request for or terminate a classroom observation if it is determined that such an observation would or has caused undue disruption in the educational process.

6. For security reasons, all visitors are required to sign in at the school office, to receive a visitor's badge, and indicate the name of the teacher and destination before proceeding to the class. All visitors are asked to sign out when leaving the building.

7. To protect the learning environment, the parent/guardian or outside provider will be the only visitor in the classroom during the observation. Any observer, other than the parent/guardian, must be approved by the Executive Director and have written consent from the parent/guardian describing the reason for the visit/observation.

8. Out of respect for the teaching environment, parents/guardians may not bring younger siblings or children while observing in the classroom or to utilize any electronic equipment such as cell phones while in the classroom. Observers should not disrupt the learning environment by engaging students or the teacher in conversation. A follow-up meeting may be scheduled as needed to answer questions or concerns.

9. During the observation, the Executive Director or his/her designee may be present in the observed setting in order to accommodate follow-up discussion or clarify questions that may arise.

10. No electronic listening or recording device (including video) may be used in a classroom (Education Code 51512)

## **POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES**

### ***MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY***

*“Joy and happiness in living, a love of all existence, a power and energy for work – such are among the lifelong results of a right cultivation of the feeling for beauty and art.”*

*– Rudolf Steiner*

#### **Background**

The philosophy of Journey School is based upon an understanding of the developing child. While television and other media can serve as a source of information and entertainment for adults, children do not think and process images at the same developmental ability level as adults. Children need hands-on, real, multi-sensory experiences to build their thinking capacities and these activities are the seeds of imagination and creativity.

Extensive research has shown that exposure to entertainment media for children has a detrimental effect upon their self- image, their ability to concentrate and develop attention span, their relationship skills, values, reading skills, physical skills, energy levels, psychological health, creativity and social behavior. It is important to limit this exposure so that your children be able to absorb the rich artistic Journey School curriculum each day

#### **Agreements**

As a school community, we agree that the impact of the electronic media has detrimental effects on a child's healthy growth and development, and thus we expect that our families significantly reduce or

eliminate the use of media (television, movies, video games, computer games, recorded music, radio, etc.) for their children. We ask for **complete elimination of non-school related electronic media during the school week, from Sunday evening to Friday after school, for grades K-5.** We realize that limiting or eliminating media from your child's life might feel like a tall order. However, with support and reassurance, families find that more free time means more creative and quality time together. We encourage you to speak with staff or other parents in the school for suggestions, support and resources that you might find helpful on this subject.

### **Technology Guidelines**

During the school day and for homework, we support the use of appropriate technologies for study aids, word processing, and online research for grades 3 to 8 as determined appropriate by their teachers. We also support the use of technologies for all students who need such accommodations as determined by the student's teachers, in conjunction with parents. Additionally, in grades 3-8, mandatory standardized testing is driven by computer adaptive testing technologies. Students will access the test through computers, using a secure online browser that disables all other websites and computer functionality. Screen time will be limited to a few hours and occur under the close guidance and support of teaching staff.

### **Some Helpful Media and Technology Tips:**

**Teach kids the skills they need to use technology wisely and well.** It's hard to be a gatekeeper in a world with no fences. Parents have little control over the flow of information to their kids, who see too much, too soon. We no longer hear conversations or see what our kids create and share with others. Since we cannot cover their eyes, or shadow them everywhere they go, we need to teach them how to behave responsibly in the digital world.

**Keep an open mind.** We don't see the world the way our kids do. And we don't help our kids when we judge their lives through the lens of a non-digital world. It's important for us to understand that our kids will spend much of their lives in a connected world, where everyone creates and communicates.

**Don't be afraid.** Parents can't afford to be technophobic. Our kids adopt technologies faster than we do. That means they're often way out in front of us. This fact can upset the parent-child relationship. So, get in the game. Have your kids show you how to do something online if you don't already know.

**Share wisdom.** Kids often don't understand the implications of their actions. But we do. So, we have to remember to extend our basic parenting wisdom to the digital world. We teach kids to choose their words carefully, play nicely with others, and respect their teachers. Now we have to extend those lessons to a vast, invisible world.

**Pass along your values.** One of the most important jobs of parenting is instilling in your kids the values you cherish. But in a digital world where actions are often divorced from consequences, where kids can be anonymous, and where they aren't face to face with the people they communicate with, they can lose their way. As parents, we have to be able to translate our values into the digital world and help kids understand the implications of their actions.

**Seek balance.** It's hard to know how much freedom to give kids. We want them to explore, enjoy, communicate, and create. We also want to be sure they are protected or know how to protect themselves. If our kids are going to thrive with digital media, we must balance the negative with the positive, privacy with protection. As our children grow, they need more independence and privacy. But parents have to be sure their kids know how to be safe and responsible before letting them loose. Kids need to see both the possibilities and the perils of digital life, so they can act responsibly and seize all that is wondrous about digital media to enrich their lives.

—Adapted from Common Sense Media (Common Sense Media's website is an exceptional resource for parents)

## **CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Middle School students (Grades 6-8) may bring cell phones onto campus. With teacher approval, cell phones may be used for emergency purposes or for arranging transportation after school. Otherwise, cell phones must remain turned off and remain in backpacks or within designated baskets during the school day.

Parents – please use personal cell phones sparingly while on campus. Please note: several areas on campus are cell-phone free zones, including classrooms, kindergarten yard and all garden areas – cell phone use is not permitted in these areas at any time.

## **DRESS CODE**

The Dress Code is established to support students' outward expression as well as establish courtesy and respect that all members of the school community have for one another. Our intention is to minimize distractions in an effort to ensure students remain focused on their education. Please hold these thoughts in your consciousness and review these guidelines as you and your child are making wardrobe selections.

### CLOTHING (TOPS/DRESSES/BOTTOMS) and HATS

- Journey logo shirts and sweatshirts are recommended
- Alternatively, clothing with inspirational, positive, and non-violent images/phrases are permissible
- Clothing with media advertisements and logos are not encouraged and may be disallowed if they are determined to be a distraction for the student or classmates
- Middle School students (grades 6-8) may wear t-shirts and jackets with band/artists name and related imagery – if inspirational, positive, and non-violent
- Clothes must cover undergarments
- Clothes should be weather appropriate

### SHOES

- Footwear must be flat (No heels, wedges, wheels.)
- Sandals must have a heel strap
- Students must wear athletic or sneaker shoes for Games classes

### ACCESSORIES/MAKE-UP/JEWELRY

- Stud earrings are allowed in all grades
- Light make-up and hair dye are allowed in grade 6 and up
- Jewelry should be kept at a minimum and is often a cause for student distraction

Decisions regarding the appropriateness of clothing and accessories are at the discretion of the Journey School Faculty and Administration. In case your child arrives at the school dressed inappropriately, we will give you a courtesy call so that you may bring replacement clothes, or the staff may loan the student appropriate attire to wear for the day. If persistent violations of the dress code occur, the Faculty and or the Administrator may take further action including, but not limited to, meeting with the parent(s) to discuss and review Dress Code Policy. We thank you for your support in protecting a safe, wholesome, and age-appropriate educational setting for our children.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

At Journey School, students are taught in carefully designed, complete units known as Main Lesson blocks which last 3-4 weeks each. Missing a portion of a block will affect full comprehension of that block as well as future lessons. When school is missed, rhythm is disrupted, lessons cannot be

replicated and missed work becomes a burden to complete while staying caught up on current assignments. Regular attendance is extremely important for many additional reasons, including:

- Attendance at school is mandatory by law. Note that the school is required to keep accurate attendance records. The school office must “verify” all absences with the parent, regardless of the reason. Regular attendance shows a commitment by the family to the school and to the student’s education.
- Regular attendance helps to ensure each student can reach his/her full educational potential.
- As a charter school, Journey School is accountable for overall student performance. A low attendance rate generally has a negative effect on student performance and can therefore impact the school as a whole.
- Journey School depends on student attendance for funding. When a student is absent, school funding is reduced, regardless of the reason for the absence. This can harm our education program as a whole and the educational experience for other students.
- Temporary Independent study may be available for students experiencing long periods of consecutive absences (more than 5 days, but no more than 14 days) pursuant to EC sections 51745-51749.3. For travel related independent study, placement must be requested by parents/guardians at least 5 business days in advance of the 1<sup>st</sup> missed school day. All placements in temporary independent study, regardless of reasoning, are subject to the administration team’s approval of a placement and finalization of a master agreement per the Independent Study board policy. Various factors may be considered by administration, including but not limited to availability in the independent study program, academic performance of the student prior to the absence, number of previous absences, Special Education status, English learner status, nature of travel/absence and other factors that may be relevant to supporting a student effectively in an independent study placement.

#### *Excused Absence*

Absences for the following reasons will be considered excused:

- Illness or situations when a physician recommends a student miss school
- Medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic appointments which cannot be scheduled outside the school day
- Religious Holidays
- Court ordered absences
- Death in the student’s immediate family
- To spend time with a member of the student’s immediate family, who is an active-duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from, deployment to a combat zone or combat support position
- Other unusual circumstances when approved by the Executive Director or his/her designee and requested in advance

At the school’s discretion, a physician’s statement of diagnosis may be required at any point to excuse an absence or extended absence related to illness. Generally, a physician’s statement will be requested on the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive day of a student’s medical absence or when a student’s total days of medical related absence reach seven (7).

#### *Unexcused Absence*

Absences for the following reasons will be considered unexcused:

- “Long weekends” and vacations
- Moving days (change of residence)
- Transportation problems
- Appointments for non-essential activities such as haircuts



### *Tardy to School*

Students who arrive at school after the start of the school day are considered tardy. Tardy students must come to the office where they will be marked tardy and receive a pass that will permit them into the classroom. If a pattern of late arrival develops, administration will schedule a parent conference at which additional measures for compliance will be discussed and during which placement at the school and/or other additional actions may be considered.

Excused tardies are those that are verified in writing by the director and or his/her designee.

### *Leaving Early/Early Departure*

Students leaving school before the end of the school day must be picked up in the office and officially signed out. Please avoid picking up students before the dismissal time if at all possible. It is important to honor every class and all instructional time at Journey School. If a pattern of early departure develops, administration will schedule a parent conference at which additional measures for compliance will be discussed and during which placement at the school and/ or other additional actions may be considered.

Please note, Journey School will send students home early from school for certain illnesses/injuries, including, but not limited to student's temperature is 100 degrees or higher, vomiting, pain in the chest or stomach, fainting, live nits or lice found in hair, injury other than minor cuts or bruises, etc. Please have current emergency contacts listed on your child's Emergency Forms. Please contact the school immediately if these numbers change during the year.

### **Procedure for Excessive Unexcused Absences**

The following procedure will be followed to manage Unexcused Absences:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Unexcused Absence – A staff or faculty member will call home to verify the student's attendance record, review this policy and discuss how the school can help to resolve the problem.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Unexcused Absence – A staff or faculty member will call the family to verify the student's absence and a notice of excessive unexcused absences will be sent home and placed within the student's cumulative record.
- 7<sup>th</sup> Unexcused Absence - Upon reaching eight (7) unexcused absences, the parent/guardian will receive a notification letter and will be required to meet with the Executive Director. It is Journey School's intent to identify and remove all barriers to the student's success and will explore every possible option to address student attendance issues with the family. The Executive Director will discuss the absence problem with the parent/guardian to work on solutions, develop strategies, discuss appropriate support services for the student and his/her family, and establish a plan to resolve the attendance issue.
- 10<sup>th</sup> Unexcused Absence – The Executive Director will connect with pertinent staff to determine appropriate next steps to address the chronic nature of unexcused absences. The Executive Director may issue a letter informing the parent/guardian of Journey School's decision and intent to disenroll the student due to excessive absenteeism. Known as a "Five Day Letter", this notice will explain the parent's/student's due process rights to request a neutral hearing on the Executive Director's decision to disenroll the student for failure to comply with this policy. If the parent/student does not respond to the "Five Day Letter" or otherwise does not elect to request a hearing, the student shall be disenrolled and notification will be sent to the district of residence of a non-attending student. After disenrollment, the student can apply to Journey School the following school year.

### **Procedure for Excessive Consecutive Unexcused Absences**

Journey School will use the contact information provided by the parent/guardian in the registration packet to reach out to families if students are absent for consecutive days without a valid excuse. If student is absent ten (10) or more consecutive school days without a valid excuse, it may not be possible to schedule meetings and phone calls detailed in the process above, given the condensed time frame. In this scenario, the school reserves the right to disenroll a student in accordance with Education Code and shall provide a "Five Day Letter" as described above for a disenrollment with ten or more unexcused absences.

### **Chronic Absenteeism**

Students who miss more than 10% of the school year for a combination of unexcused and/or excused reasons are considered chronic absentees according to the California Department of Education. Steps to support chronic absentees may include:

- Student Study Team
- School Attendance Review Team
- Possible Qualification under section 504
- Requirements to excuse further absences
- Home/hospital instruction
- Transitioning student into Independent Study

### **Procedure for Excessive Tardies and/or Early Departures**

The following procedure will be followed:

- Teachers will conference with the parent if a pattern develops.
- 10<sup>th</sup> unexcused tardy and/or unexcused early departure – Teachers will call home to discuss the violations in an effort to develop solutions.
- 20<sup>th</sup> unexcused tardy and/or early departure – The parent/guardian will receive a notification letter and will be required to meet with the Executive Director to discuss the tardiness with the parent/guardian to work on solutions, develop strategies, discuss appropriate support services for the student and his/her family, and establish a plan to resolve the attendance issue. It is the School's intent to identify and remove all barriers to the student's success and will explore every possible option to address student attendance issues with the family.
- 30<sup>th</sup> unexcused tardy and/or early departure – A 2<sup>nd</sup> conference will be scheduled with the parent to discuss the attendance trend.
- 35<sup>th</sup> unexcused tardy and/or early departure - The Executive Director may issue a letter informing the parent/guardian of Journey School's decision and intent to disenroll the student due to excessive tardiness/early departures. Known as a "Five Day Letter", this notice will explain the parent's/student's due process rights to request a neutral hearing on the Executive Director's decision to disenroll the student for failure to comply with this policy. If the parent/student does not respond to the "Five Day Letter" or otherwise does not elect to request a hearing, the student shall be disenrolled and notification will be sent to the district of residence of a non-attending student. After disenrollment, the student can apply to Journey School the following school year.

All attendance policies will be enforced fairly, uniformly, and consistently without regard to any protected classification, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.

### **Reporting Absences and Tardies to School**

Parents are to notify the school office of a student's absence (regardless of the reason – excused or unexcused) as soon as possible, ideally before 9:30 am when attendance is entered. Physician, dental, counseling and other appointments should be scheduled after school hours whenever possible. If unavoidable, please notify the office and have the child attend classes both before and



after the scheduled appointments. Absences will remain unexcused and accumulate as such unless they are excused for a valid reason (see above). A child's absence may be verified/excused up to five (5) days after your child has been absent. Absences that are not verified within the time allowed will be considered unexcused.

## **EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

Emergency cards/forms must be updated and/or filled out at the beginning of each new school year – they will be filed in a confidential nature within each student's cumulative file.

Journey School has a comprehensive safety plan in place, which coordinates emergency response with Capistrano Unified School District. All staff and teachers are aware of their specific duties, responsibilities, and procedures. As a routine part of our plan, students participate in periodic and random safety drills (lockdown/earthquake/fire etc.).

Should there be an emergency event requiring parents to pick-up their children, we request that you:

- Please enter the school at the designated entrance only.
- Please remain calm and follow staff directions, a systematic process for student release is currently in place

### **Emergency School Closure**

In the event of a natural disaster or other emergency requiring school closure, the school will contact families via email and will post a notice at the school site. Journey School will typically conform to CUSD guidance on school closure.

## **BEHAVIOR POLICY**

Journey School staff is committed to creating a safe and nurturing environment for every child. We are equally committed to maintaining a respectful environment conducive to learning.

Through this Student Behavior Policy and within our day-to-day practice, our intention is to discourage misbehavior, guide children towards positive choice making and develop positive contributors within our school community. Our approach emphasizes *compassion, consistency, and responsibility*.

To that end, Journey School students are expected to adhere to the values, which form our behavior motto - **RESPECT** (Respect, Empathy, Service, Participation, Effort, Courage, Trustworthiness) and the following behavior guidelines:

### **Behavior Expectations**

- 1. Student will support a good learning environment.** Children are expected to do their best and cooperate with teachers and classmates. This includes, but is not limited to, quietly focusing their attention on the teacher when asked to do so, completing class assignments, observing class starting and ending times, completing classroom chores, and lining up promptly and quietly when requested to do so. Student defiance and disruption to the learning environment will not be permitted, and discipline for such behavior shall be administered in accordance with Education Code section 48901.1.
- 2. Students will treat all adults and children with respect.** Respectful, courteous language is expected towards teachers, children and parents. Inappropriate behavior such as rudeness, teasing, mimicking, unkind or inappropriate words, swearing and lying are not permitted.

Students are expected to comply whenever an adult or peer asks for the inappropriate behavior to stop.

3. **Students will treat all personal and school property with respect.** Lost, stolen, defaced or destroyed property will be repaired or replaced by the parents of those responsible in accordance with applicable law.
4. **Students will follow all classroom and playground rules.** Teachers will help their students understand and integrate the school-wide behavior policy into their daily activities. Additionally, individual teachers may have unique expectations, which they will communicate to their classes.
5. **Students will contribute to supporting a safe, positive, productive and nurturing educational environment.** Harassment, intimidation, bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing toward any member of the school community, whether by or against any student, staff, or other third parties, is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Examples of such prohibited behavior include, but are not limited to, stalking, bullying/cyber bullying, intimidating, menacing, coercion, taunting, making threats, and hazing. This prohibition includes aggressive behavior; physical, verbal, and psychological abuse. *A full copy of the Journey School Bullying and Harassment Policy can be found on the school website and on page 29 of the School Handbook.*
6. **An expectation for “Gentle Hands” is in place.** Rough housing, fighting, shoving, spitting, pushing, hitting, kicking, or biting is cause for immediate intervention.
7. **An expectation that “All Are Welcome” is in place.** Conversations, activities and games that exclude peers from participating are not permitted.

### **Consequences for Misbehavior**

Classroom management techniques, positive behavior intervention strategies (PBIS) and disciplinary interventions will be employed by school staff as a primary measure to correct behavior. Disciplinary interventions may include but are not limited to advising and counseling students, conferring with parents/guardians, assigning tasks to students for completion during recess/lunch recess, mandating a short break, etc. Staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students.

In the event that primary efforts are not sufficient in our attempts to correct disruptive/disrespectful behavior OR a pattern of misbehavior emerges OR the severity of an incident/infraction is significant, one or more of the following actions will be taken as determined appropriate by the school’s educational team (administration and/or teachers involved).

1. An office referral that involves parent/guardian contact. In this scenario, a student is spoken to by administrative staff and sent back into class when they are ready to contribute to a respectful learning environment. Administration will inform the parent/guardian of the incident.
2. **Incident Report:** A document describing the specifics of an incident or infraction written by those school staff directly involved. This report is placed within the student’s cumulative school record *and* a copy will be sent home to the student’s parents for review. The class teacher and/or administration will notify the student’s parents about the incident or infraction. The class teacher, administrator and possibly the student, will determine the corrective course of action.
3. **Student Support Plan/Behavior Contract:** May be developed when a child habitually fails to follow the school or classroom behavior guidelines or a pattern of behavior develops that

undermines a healthy learning environment, endangers others, oneself or property. The plan/contract will be drafted at a parent conference with our Behavior and Guidance team. The plan will describe the behavior(s), the antecedent/setting event for those behaviors, the intervention/support methods employed by Journey School moving forward, and an articulation of the specific escalation of discipline should the behavior continue, which may include removal from Journey School.

4. **Potential Suspension:** A mandatory leave may be assigned to a student in response to an isolated incident/infraction or a pattern of misconduct. The student shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension. A suspension notice will be filed within the student's cumulative school record *and* a copy will be sent home to the student's parents. *A full copy of the Journey School Expulsion/Suspension/Exclusion and Due Process Policy can be found on the school website and on page 32 of the School Handbook.*
  
5. **Potential Removal from Enrollment:** A significant incident or pattern of misbehavior may result in an administrative recommendation to disenroll the student from Journey School. In this scenario, the Executive Director will issue a letter informing the parent/guardian of Journey School's decision and intent to disenroll the student due to a pattern of misbehavior and/or a significant incident. Known as a "Five Day Letter", this notice will explain the parent's/student's due process rights to request a neutral hearing on the Executive Director's decision to disenroll the student for failure to comply with this policy. If the parent/student does not respond to the "Five Day Letter" or otherwise does not elect to request a hearing, the student shall be disenrolled and notification will be sent to the district of residence of the student.
  
6. **Potential Expulsion:** If a student commits a suspendable or an expellable offense; expulsion from Journey School may be recommended at the discretion of administration. Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. Unless postponed for good cause, the hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days and the student will be considered suspended from Journey school until that hearing takes place. A recommendation for expulsion notice will be filed within the student's cumulative school record *and* a copy will be sent home to the student's parents. *A full copy of the Journey School Expulsion/Suspension/Exclusion and Due Process Policy can be found on the school website and on page 32 of the School Handbook.*

## ***BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY***

Journey School is committed to providing a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment for all of its students, and encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations among members of the school community.

Harassment, intimidation, bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing toward any member of the school community, whether by or against any student, staff, or other third parties, is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Examples of such prohibited behavior include, but are not limited to, stalking, bullying/cyber bullying, intimidating, menacing, coercion, taunting, making threats, and hazing. This prohibition includes aggressive behavior; physical, verbal, and psychological abuse; and violence within a dating relationship. These types of behavior are forms of intimidation and harassment and are strictly prohibited, regardless of whether or not the target of the prohibited behavior are members of a legally protected group, such as, but not limited to, sex, sexual orientation, race, color, national origin, religion, gender, marital status, or disability.

The following definitions are intended to provide guidance in assessing whether a particular behavior is a prohibited behavior. They are not exhaustive in their scope and are not intended to replace the

intuition of the individual. When in doubt as to whether or not a particular suspected behavior is a prohibited behavior, you are urged to rule on the side of caution and report your concerns to the appropriate authority, as provided for in this policy.

*Harassment* - any intentional behavior or course of conduct (whether written, verbal, graphic, or physical) directed at a specific person or group of persons that causes substantial physical and/or emotional distress or harm and is sufficiently severe, persistent, and/or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, and/or abusive educational environment for the other person(s) and serves no legitimate purpose.

*Bullying* – a course of abusive treatment (whether written, verbal, graphic, or physical) that typically involves the use of force or coercion to affect others, particularly when habitual and involving an imbalance of power. It may involve verbal, written or cyber harassment, physical assault or coercion and may be directed persistently towards particular victims.

*Cyber-bullying* – the use of information and communication technologies, such as, but not limited to, cell phone, email, instant messaging, social media websites, Twitter, etc., to support deliberate and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that (i) is intended to harm others or (ii) that an objectively reasonable person would expect to cause harm to others. Cyber-bullying includes the posting or other transmission of text, video, or images that are embarrassing, demeaning, or threatening in nature, regardless of whether the subject of such text, video, or images directed, consented to or otherwise acquiesced in the at issue posting or other transmission.

*Hazing* – the use of ritual and other activities involving harassment, bullying, cyber-bullying, intimidation, abuse or humiliation for the purpose of initiating a person or persons into a group, regardless of whether such person(s) consented to or otherwise acquiesced in the at issue behavior(s) and action(s).

*Intimidation* – a course of behavior that instills fear or a sense of inadequacy.

*Violence within a dating relationship* - any behavior by a student exhibited towards that student's dating partner that is an attempt to gain and/or maintain power and/or control over a dating partner through violence, threats of violence, and/or physical, verbal, psychological, and/or mental abuse.

*Sexting* - knowingly using a computer, or any other device capable of electronic data transmission or distribution, to transmit or distribute to another person any photograph or video which depicts nudity and/or text message that is sexually explicit and/or is harmful to minors. Knowingly possessing a photograph or video that was transmitted or distributed by another person as described above.

**Prohibited behaviors include all of the above.**

The school Administration and School Council will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which (i) cause, threaten to cause, or an objective and reasoned third-party would find was intended to cause, bodily harm or personal degradation, or (ii) creates, or an objective and reasoned third-party would determine was intended to create, an intimidating, threatening, or abusive environment for any student, staff member, member of the administration, parent or guardian, or other third-party.

This policy applies to all school-related activities and/or engagements, including, but not limited to classroom activities, recess or lunch activities, participation in clubs and activities, email messages, text messages, discussions, telephonic communications, or online forums related to school activities, field trips, open houses, school performances, school athletic competitions, and any other in-person school-related activities on school property. This policy also applies to those activities or engagements which occur off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved, or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or events where students are under the school's control, in a school vehicle, where an employee is engaged in school business, or where the prohibited behavior is facilitated through the use of any school property or resources.

Any student or student's Parent/Guardian/Caretaker, who believes that student, any other student, or other third-party, has been or is the recipient of any of the above-described prohibited behaviors should immediately report the situation to the School Administration. The student may also report concerns to teachers and other school staff who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate school administrator or Board official. Complaints about prohibited behavior against the school administrator(s) should be first brought to the attention of the School Administration, as mentioned above, for investigation and remedy as described below. If this is not sufficient, further complaints may be filed in accordance with the School's Uniform Complaint Policy.

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be prohibited behavior. Reports may be made to those identified above. If a student or other individual believes there has been prohibited behavior, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action. Any teacher, school administrator, or school staff member who does not make a timely written report of an incident of prohibited behavior shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the school's disciplinary process (found in the School Handbook).

All complaints about prohibited behavior shall be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible and will be promptly investigated. The school Executive Director or designee shall prepare a written report of the investigation upon completion. Such report shall include findings of fact, a determination of whether any prohibited behavior(s) were verified, and, when prohibited acts are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action. Where appropriate, written witness statements shall be attached to the report. When the target of the prohibited behavior is a student, the school shall provide that student with a written copy of the rights, protections, and support services available to him/her. If there is any evidence that the student has experienced physical harm as a result of the prohibited behavior, the school shall promptly communicate that information to the appropriate personnel, including, but not limited to, emergency personnel and /or law enforcement.

If the investigation finds an instance of harassment, intimidation, bullying, dating violence, or any other prohibited behavior has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action in accordance with the school's disciplinary process. This may include expulsion for students, discharge for employees, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers, and contractors, and removal from any official position and/or a request for a Board member(s) to resign. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials. Remedial and/or disciplinary action for employees will follow the procedures outlined in the Employee Handbook. Remedial and/or disciplinary action for students will follow the procedures outlined in the School Handbook.

When appropriate, the target(s) of the prohibited behavior (and/or such target(s)' Parent/Guardian/Caretaker(s)) shall be notified of the findings of the investigation, and, when appropriate, that action has been taken. In providing such notification, care shall be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the accused perpetrator of such harassment, intimidation, bullying, and/or dating violence.

If after investigation the act(s) of prohibited behavior by a specific student is/are verified, the school Executive Director or designee shall notify in writing the Parent/Guardian/Caretaker of the perpetrator of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline shall be included in the notification.

Retaliation against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of harassment, intimidation, bullying, dating violence, or any other prohibited behavior will not be tolerated, independent of whether a complaint is substantiated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of school policy, and suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as prohibited behavior. Making intentionally false reports about prohibited behavior will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

This policy shall not be interpreted as infringing upon the First Amendment rights of students or parents (i.e., to prohibit a reasoned and civil exchange of opinions, or debate, that is conducted at appropriate times and places during the school day and is protected by State or Federal law and by the School's Free Speech Policy).

### **Formal Complaints**

Students and/or their Caretakers may file written reports regarding any suspected prohibited behavior by completing the forms found in the Uniform Complaint Policy and sending this to the school. Such reports should be reasonably specific including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of the suspected prohibited behavior(s), and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses.

Students and/or their Parent/Guardian/Caretakers may make informal complaints of conduct that they consider to be prohibited behavior(s) by verbal report to a teacher, school administrator, or other school personnel. Such informal complaints should be reasonably specific, including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of suspected prohibited behavior, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. A school staff member or administrator who receives an informal complaint shall promptly document the complaint in writing by completing the appropriate forms. This written report shall be promptly forwarded by the school staff member and/or administrator to the Executive Director or designee for review, investigation, and appropriate action.

### **Privacy/Confidentiality**

The School will respect the privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the school's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform to any discovery or disclosure obligations. All records generated under this policy and its related administrative guidelines shall be maintained as confidential to the extent permitted by law.

## ***SENDING A CHILD HOME AND/OR REMOVAL FROM ENROLLMENT***

In the interest of maintaining a safe and courteous environment for all members of Journey School, there are certain behaviors that will not be tolerated and may result in immediate removal (suspension) of the child from the school setting.

### ***EXPULSION/SUSPENSION/EXCLUSION AND DUE PROCESS POLICY\****

The school had adopted Pupil Suspension and Expulsion Policies in order to promote learning and protect the safety and wellbeing of students and staff members at Journey School. When the policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. The policy and procedures detailed herein are in alignment with California Education Code and have also been prepared to provide due process to all students. The list of offenses and procedures provide adequate safety for students, staff, and visitors to the school and serves the best interests of the school's pupils and their parents/guardians.

Staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students. Discipline includes but is not limited to advising and counseling students, conferring with parents/guardians, detention during and after school hours, use of alternative educational environments, suspension and expulsion. Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension or expulsion. Students will be provided access to school work for any suspension greater than 2 days.

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property.

A student identified as an individual with disabilities (or for whom the charter school has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability) pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education



Improvement Act of 2004 (“IDEA”) or who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”) is subject to the same grounds for suspension and expulsion and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to regular education students, except when federal and state law mandates procedural safeguards and/or additional procedures, such as a manifestation determination.

## **A. Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion of Students**

A student may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring at the School or at any other school or a School sponsored event, occurring at any time, including but not limited to: a) while on school grounds; b) while going to or coming from school; c) during the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus; d) during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

## **B. Suspension Offenses**

### **1. Discretionary Suspension Offenses:**

Students may be suspended for any of the following acts when it is determined that the student:

- a) Willfully caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
- b) Willfully used force of violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
- c) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
- d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
- e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
- f) Willfully caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
- g) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
- h) Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of his/her own prescription products by a pupil in accordance with school policy.
- i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- j) Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11014.5.
- k) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
- l) Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.

- m) Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal code 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code 243.4.
- n) Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
- o) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- p) Engaged in or attempted to engage in hazing. For the purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" means a method of initiation or pre-initiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, "hazing" does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
- q) Made terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property. For purposes of this section, "terroristic threat" shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family's safety, or for the protection of school property, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.
- r) Committed sexual harassment, as defined in Education Code Section 212.5. For the purposes of this section, the conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 8, inclusive.
- s) Caused, attempted to cause, threaten to cause or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 8, inclusive.
- t) Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 8, inclusive.
- u) Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act, as defined in subdivisions (f) and (g) of Section 32261 of the Education Code, directed specifically toward pupil or school personnel.
- v) A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in [Section 31 of the Penal Code](#), the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant to subdivision (1).

## **2. Non- Discretionary Suspension Offenses:**

Students must be suspended and recommended for expulsion by school administration if found to have committed any of the following acts:



- (A) Causing serious physical injury to another person, except in self-defense.
- (B) Possession of any knife or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the pupil.
- (C) Unlawful possession of any controlled substance except for first offense of possession of not more than one ounce of marijuana, or possession of over-the-counter medication for use by the student for medical purposes or medication prescribed for the student by a physician.
- (D) Robbery or extortion.
- (E) Assault or battery upon any school employee.

### C. Suspension Procedures

Suspensions shall be initiated in accordance with the procedures in the school's Suspension and Expulsion Policy as detailed below:

1. A conference with the student and administration, which will also include the parent and other school staff as possible. This step may be omitted in case of an emergency situation.
2. Written notice to Parents/Guardians will be given at the time of suspension. The notice will include the offense and the date of return of the student.
3. Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five (5) consecutive school days per suspension.

If recommendation for Expulsion has been made, a conference will be held to determine if the suspension for the pupil should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. This determination will be made by the Director or designee upon either of the following determinations: 1) the pupil's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or 2) the pupil poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the pupil's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

### D. Expellable Offenses

1. **Discretionary Expellable Offenses:** Students may be expelled if found to have committed any of the offenses listed above under Sections B (1) and (2). A mandatory recommendation for expulsion is required from the Executive Director for all offenses listed in Section B (2). (See section above)
2. **Non -Discretionary Expellable Offenses:** Students **must be expelled** if found to have committed any of the following acts, regardless of the recommendation of the Executive Director:
  - (a) Possessing, selling, or otherwise furnishing a firearm. This subdivision does not apply to an act of possessing a firearm if the student had obtained prior written permission to possess the firearm from the Director or designee.
  - (b) Brandishing a knife at another person.
  - (c) Unlawfully selling a controlled substance.
  - (d) Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or sexual battery.
  - (e) Possession of an explosive.

### E. Authority to Expel

A student who has committed an expellable offense may be expelled by an Administrative Panel to be assigned by the Executive Director. The Administrative Panel should consist of at least three neutral members who are certificated and neither a teacher of the pupil, Executive Director, or a Council member of the School's governing board.

## **F. Expulsion Procedures**

As required by Education Code section 47605(b)(5)(J)(ii), students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing before a neutral Administrative Panel to determine whether the student should be expelled. Unless postponed for good cause, the hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after the Executive Director or designee determines that the Pupil has committed an expellable offense.

The expulsion procedures/process, as detailed herein, will also be followed where appropriate for a student who receives a "5 day" disenrollment notice for attendance, immunization noncompliance, etc.

Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian at least ten (10) calendar days before the date of the hearing. Upon mailing the notice, it shall be deemed served upon the pupil.

The notice shall include:

1. The date and place of the expulsion hearing.
2. A statement of the specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based.
3. A copy of the School's disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation.
4. Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status at the School to any other school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment.
5. The opportunity for the student and/or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor.
6. The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing.
7. The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing.
8. The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses.

## **G. Students with Disabilities**

A pupil identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the Charter School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act ("IDEA") or who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") is subject to the same grounds for disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion, and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to regular education pupils except when federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures. The following is a summary of the current procedures to be followed when a student with a disability is considered for suspension or expulsion. These procedures will be updated if there is a change in the law.

1. Notification of SELPA
2. Services During Suspension/11<sup>th</sup> day services

Students suspended for more than ten (10) school days for behaviors deemed substantially similar, and within a given school year, shall continue to receive services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP. These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

3. Procedural Safeguards/Manifestation Determination

Within ten (10) school days of a recommendation for expulsion or any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability (including 11<sup>th</sup> day services) because of a violation of a code of student conduct, all relevant information will be reviewed to reach a determination whether the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability. Depending on the outcome of this determination, additional steps are taken. Detailed information about how this procedure occurs and what additional steps are taken is found in the complete Suspension and Expulsion Policy.

#### 4. Due Process Appeals

The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or the Charter School believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, may request an expedited administrative hearing through the Special Education Unit of the Office of Administrative Hearings.

When an appeal relating to the placement of the student or the manifestation determination has been requested by either the parent or the Charter school, the student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the forty-five (45) daytime period provided for in an interim alternative educational setting, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the Charter School agree otherwise.

#### 5. Special Circumstances

Charter School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct. The student's IEP team must be involved in any determination regarding change in placement for a student with a disability in accordance with applicable state and federal law.

#### 6. Interim Alternative Educational Setting

The student's IEP team shall determine the student's interim alternative educational setting.

### **Procedures for Students Not Yet Eligible for Special Education Services**

A student who has not been identified as an individual with disabilities pursuant to IDEA and who has violated the district's disciplinary procedures may assert the procedural safeguards granted under this administrative regulation only if the Charter School had knowledge that the student was or may be disabled before the behavior occurred. Details about how to determine if the charter school had such knowledge can be found in the complete Suspension and Expulsion Policy.

## **H. Record of Hearing**

A record of the hearing shall be made and may be maintained by any means, including electronic recording, as long as a reasonably accurate and complete written transcription of the proceedings can be made.

### **I. Presentation of Evidence**

While technical rules of evidence do not apply to expulsion hearings, evidence may be admitted and used as proof only if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs.

The final decision by the Administrative Panel shall be made within ten (10) school days following the conclusion of the hearing. The decision of the Administrative Panel is final.

If the Administrative Panel decides not to expel a pupil, the pupil shall immediately be returned to his/her educational program.

#### **J. Written Notice to Expel**

The Director or designee following a decision by the Administrative Panel to expel shall send written notice of the decision to expel, including the Administrative Panel's adopted findings of fact, to the student or parent/guardian.

The Director or designee shall send a copy of the written notice of the decision to expel to the authorizing district.

#### **K. Disciplinary Records**

The School shall maintain records of all student suspensions and expulsions at the School. Such records shall be made available to oversight agencies upon request.

#### **L. Expelled Pupils/Alternative Education**

Pupils who are expelled shall be responsible for seeking alternative education programs including, but not limited to, programs within the County or their school district of residence.

#### **M. Rehabilitation Plans**

Students who are expelled from the School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Administrative Panel, in consultation with the Executive Director, at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. The rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may reapply to the School for readmission.

#### **N. Readmission**

The decision to readmit a pupil or to admit a previously expelled pupil from another school district or charter school shall be in the sole discretion of the Council following a meeting with the Executive Director and the pupil and guardian or representative to determine whether the pupil has successfully completed the rehabilitation plan and to determine whether the pupil poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. The Executive Director shall make a recommendation to the Council following the meeting regarding his or her determination. The pupil's readmission is also contingent upon the School's capacity at the time the student seeks readmission.

#### **O. Involuntary Removal**

No student shall be involuntarily removed by the School for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the student has been provided written notice of intent to remove the student no less than five schooldays before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian or, if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student's educational rights holder, and shall inform him or her of the right to timely, written notice and a hearing before the effective date of the action. If the student's parent, guardian, or educational rights holder requests a hearing, the student shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the School issues a final decision. As used herein, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions or expulsions pursuant to the suspension and expulsion procedures described herein.

### ***POLICY ON COLLECTION OF STUDENT INFORMATION FROM SOCIAL MEDIA***

In accordance with Ed Code 47903.6, Journey School may collect information on students from social media in order to gather and maintain information that pertains directly to school safety or to pupil safety, and for no other purpose. In addition, the school will:

1. Provide a pupil with access to any information about the pupil gathered or maintained by the charter school that was obtained from social media, and an opportunity to correct or delete such information.
2. Destroy information gathered from social media and maintained in pupil records within one year after a pupil turns 18 years of age or within one year after the pupil is no longer enrolled in the charter school, whichever occurs first.
3. Notify each parent or guardian of a pupil subject to this policy that the pupil's information is being gathered from social media and that any information subject to this section maintained in the charter school's records with regard to the pupil shall be destroyed in accordance with the process described in Number 2 above. The notification shall include, but is not limited to, all of the following:
  - (i) An explanation of the process by which a pupil or a pupil's parent or guardian may access the pupil's records for examination of the information gathered or maintained pursuant to this section.
  - (ii) An explanation of the process by which a pupil or a pupil's parent or guardian may request the removal of information or make corrections to information gathered or maintained pursuant to this section.

If Journey School contracts with a third party to gather information from social media on an enrolled pupil, the school will require the contract to do all of the following:

- (i) Prohibit the third party from using the information for purposes other than to satisfy the terms of the contract.
- (ii) Prohibit the third party from selling or sharing the information with any person or entity other than the school, or the pupil or his or her parent or guardian.
- (iii) Require the third party to destroy the information immediately upon satisfying the terms of the contract.
- (iv) Require the third party, upon notice and a reasonable opportunity to act, to destroy information pertaining to a pupil when the pupil turns 18 years of age or is no longer enrolled in Journey School, whichever occurs first. Journey School shall provide notice to the third party when a pupil turns 18 years of age or is no longer enrolled with Journey School.

Social media, for purpose of this policy, is defined to mean an electronic service or account, or electronic content, including, but not limited to, videos, still photographs, blogs, video blogs, podcasts, instant and text messages, email, online services or accounts, or Internet Web site profiles or locations. Social media, for purposes of this policy, shall not include an electronic service or account used exclusively for educational purposes. (Ed Code 49073.6(a)(2)(A).)

## ***JOURNEY SCHOOL FREE SPEECH POLICY***

**BACKGROUND:** This policy has been developed to ensure Journey School is compliant with California Ed Code sections 48907 (B) and 48950 regarding freedom of speech.

Journey School respects students' rights to express ideas and opinions, take stands, and support causes – whether controversial or not – through their speech, writings, printed materials and/or the wearing of buttons, badges and other insignia. The school will limit students' freedom of expression as allowed by law, in order to maintain an orderly school environment and to protect the rights, health

and safety of all members of the school community. In addition to the school site itself, any venue where a school event is held, including but not limited to such places as school athletic events venues, field trip locations, school social event venues, school dance venues or graduation venues, will also be considered “school premises” while that school activity is taking place and while school personnel and students are there.

### **LIMITATIONS ON STUDENT EXPRESSION:**

Limitations on student expression include the following:

- Students are prohibited from expressing ideas, or distributing or posting any materials, which are obscene, libelous, or slanderous.
- Students are prohibited from expressing ideas, or distributing or posting any materials, which demonstrably incite students to commit unlawful acts.
- Students are prohibited from expressing ideas, or distributing or posting any materials, which violate school rules or substantially disrupt the orderly operation of the school.
- Students are prohibited from engaging in conduct in any school setting or activity, which for any reason materially disrupts schoolwork or involves substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others.
- The use of "fighting words" or epithets is not constitutionally protected if the speech, considered objectively, is abusive and insulting rather than a communication of ideas, and the speech is used in an abusive manner in a situation that presents a danger that it will cause a breach of the peace.

### **Written Publications Code**

Students are free to post or distribute handbills, leaflets and other printed or electronic material, as long as they comply with the above guidelines, and bear the name and the address or contact location of the sponsoring organization or individual. Students may collect signatures on petitions concerning either school or out-of-school issues.

Printed materials or petitions may be distributed only:

- Before or after any school sponsored activity;
- In locations that do not obstruct the normal flow of traffic to or from any school sponsored activity; and
- Without undue noise.

Students must not use any form of coercion to convince students or any other person to accept printed matter or to sign petitions. No funds or donations shall be collected for any material distributed.

Students have a right to express their opinions in school publications such as yearbooks, newsletters, written assignments, and other school publications that are distributed, but must follow the limitations listed above regarding the legally allowable limits on student expression in a school setting. Pupil editors of official school publications may be responsible for assigning and editing the news, but journalism advisers (school employees) remain ultimately responsible to supervise and maintain professional standards of English and journalism. There shall be no undue delay on publishing student materials unless there are valid concerns that the material violates these guidelines.

### **Clothing/Buttons and Badges**

Buttons, badges, armbands or clothing bearing slogans or sayings may be worn in accordance with the above, and in accordance with the Journey School Dress Code, unless their message falls within the categories prohibited above. No teacher or administrator shall interfere with this practice on the grounds that the message may be unpopular with students or faculty.

## **Discipline and Appeals**

Students or employees may be disciplined for speech, which constitutes harassment, threats, bullying, or intimidation.

Students and employees will not be disciplined solely for activities, which are considered to be constitutionally protected speech or communication, which is nevertheless subject to the restrictions in this policy.

Should disputes arise regarding student freedom of expression, the Executive Director or designee will ensure that due process, as outlined in this handbook, is followed in order to resolve the issue. The school has also adopted a Uniform Complaint Policy, which may be used for formal complaints that are not resolved through initial efforts by the school.

## ***JOURNEY SCHOOL PUPIL FEE POLICY***

**BACKGROUND:** EC Section 47605(d) specifically prohibits a charter school from charging tuition but does not mention fees or other charges. Charter schools are exempt from many laws governing school districts (EC Section 47610). However, the California Constitution, which is the highest law of the state, cannot be rendered inapplicable by the Legislature. Therefore, the free school guarantee of the California Constitution, Article IX, Section 5, applies to charter schools. The EC, as amended by AB 1575 in 2012, makes clear that the prohibition on pupil fees applies to charter schools. Pupil fee laws are contained in Education Code 49010 to 49013.

**OVERVIEW:** Journey School shall not charge student or pupil fees for any educational activities or programs except as permissible by state law.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

“Educational activity” is defined as an activity offered by the charter school that constitutes an integral fundamental part of the educational program, including, but not limited to, curricular and extracurricular activities.

“Pupil fee” is defined as a fee, deposit or charge imposed on pupils, or a pupil’s parents or guardians, including but not limited to:

1. A fee charged to a pupil as a condition for registering for school or classes, or as a condition for participation in a class or an extracurricular activity, regardless of whether the class or activity is elective or compulsory or is for credit.
2. A security deposit, or other payment, that a pupil is required to make to obtain a lock, locker, book, class apparatus, musical instrument, uniform, or other materials or equipment.
3. A purchase that a pupil is required to make to obtain materials, supplies, equipment, or uniforms associated with an educational activity

### **PROHIBITION ON PUPIL FEES**

All of the following apply to the prohibition on pupil fees described above:

1. All supplies, materials and equipment needed to participate in educational activities shall be provided to pupils free of charge.
2. A fee waiver or “scholarship” policy shall not make a pupil fee permissible.
3. The school shall not create a program that pupils may only obtain through payment of a fee or purchase of additional supplies that the school does not provide.
4. The school shall not offer credit or privileges related to educational activities in exchange for money or donations of goods or services from a pupil or a pupil’s parents or guardians, and the school shall not remove credit or privileges related to educational activities, or



otherwise discriminate against a pupil, because the pupil's parents or guardians did not or will not provide money or donations of goods or services to the school district or school.

## **FUNDRAISING AND DONATIONS**

The school may still solicit voluntary donations of funds or property and may solicit voluntary participation in fundraising activities. This includes voluntary participation in "scholarship funds" to assist the school in raising money to support educational activities. The school may also award student prizes for participation in fundraising activities.

## **ALLOWABLE FEES**

Some fees are permissible by law. It is noted that much of the Education Code ("EC" or "Ed Code") does not apply to charter schools; however, Ed Code references are included herein to provide more detail about permissible fees. Some of the allowable fees, which may apply to Journey School, include:

### **Materials and equipment:**

1. Reimbursement for the direct cost of materials provided to a pupil for property the pupil has fabricated from such materials to take home for his/her own possession and use, such as wood shop, art, or sewing projects kept by the pupil. (EC Section 17551.)
2. Charges for safety glasses, for a pupil to keep, so long as the school provides them free of charge for use in specified courses or activities involving the use of hazardous substances likely to cause injury to the eyes. (EC Sections 32030-32033.)

### **Transportation:**

Fees for transportation to and from school, with some limited exceptions. (EC Section 39807.5(b), (d), and (f).)

### **Food:**

Charges for food served to pupils, subject to free and reduced-price meal program eligibility and other restrictions specified in law. (EC Sections 38082 and 38084.) Currently all school meals are served free to student regardless of socioeconomic designation.

### **Lost or Damaged Property:**

Payment for the replacement cost for the school's books, supplies, musical equipment or property loaned to a pupil that the pupil fails to return, or that are willfully cut, defaced or otherwise damaged, up to an amount not to exceed \$10,000, adjusted annually for inflation. (EC Sections 19911 and 48904.)

### **Field Trips:**

1. Fees for field trips and excursions in connection with school-related social, educational, cultural, or athletic activities so long as no pupil is prevented from making the field trip or excursion because of lack of sufficient funds. (EC Section 35330(b).)
2. The school will not require that (but may solicit a donation for) a student pay an admission charge to an exhibit, fair, theater or similar activity for instruction or extracurricular purposes when a visit to such places is part of the school's educational program. (Ops. Cal. Atty. Gen. No. NS 2469 (1940).)



Fees for outdoor science school camp programs, so long as no pupil is denied the opportunity to participate because of non-payment of the fee. (EC Section 35335.)

**Child Care and Development:**

1. Fees for childcare and development services, with some exceptions (EC Sections 8487 and 8488.)
2. Fees for After School Education and Safety Programs, so long as no eligible student is denied the ability to participate because of an inability to pay the fee. (EC Section 8482.6)

**Duplication of Records:**

Fees for the actual cost of duplicating public records, pupil records, or a prospectus of the school curriculum. (Government Code Section 6253; EC Sections 49063(h) and 49091.14.) There are two exceptions: First, no charge shall be made for furnishing up to two transcripts of former pupils' records or up to two verifications of various records of former pupils. (EC Section 49065.) Second, if the cost would effectively prevent the parent of a special education pupil from exercising the right to receive copies of pupil records, the copies shall be reproduced at no cost. (EC Section 56504.)

**School Sponsored Events:**

Charges for optional attendance as a spectator at a school sponsored activity.

**Physical Education Apparel:**

Charge for standardized physical education attire of a certain color and/or style as long as the school does not require purchase from the school and as long as the grade of a pupil participating in a physical education class is not adversely affected due to the fact that the pupil does not wear standardized physical education apparel where the failure to wear such apparel arises from circumstances beyond the control of the pupil. (EC Section 49066(c))

**NON-ALLOWABLE FEES:**

Based on the opinion of the Attorney General, the following are examples of fees that are specifically not allowable:

- A. A deposit in the nature of a guarantee that the school would be reimbursed for loss to the district on account of breakage, damage to, or loss of school property.
- B. An admission charge to an exhibit, fair, theater or similar activity for instruction or extracurricular purposes when a visit to such places is part of the district's educational program.
- C. A tuition fee or charge as a condition of enrollment in any class or course of instruction, including a fee for attendance in a summer or vacation school, a registration fee, a late registration or program change fee, or a fee for the issuance of a diploma or certificate, among others.
- D. Membership fees in a student body or any student organization as a condition for enrollment or participation in athletic or other curricular or extracurricular activities sponsored by the school.
- E. Charges for textbooks and workbooks. (EC Sections 60070 and 60410.)
- F. Reimbursement for lost Average Daily Attendance revenue for absences from school.

**COMPLAINTS:**

Complaints regarding this policy or its implementation should be filed in accordance with the school's Uniform Complaint Policy, following inquiry with Administration regarding an alleged violation. Complaints must be filed within one year after the date the alleged violation occurred.

## **UNIFORM COMPLAINT POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

The Journey School Council, in its capacity as the Governing Board (hereafter referred to as "Board") of Journey School (hereafter referred to as the "Charter") is committed to compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs. Most issues are best handled informally and proactively, and the Board encourages the early resolution of complaints with direct communication whenever possible. Additional information about the school's communication protocols is found on the school website ([www.journeyschool.net](http://www.journeyschool.net)) and School Handbook (also found on the school website). If you have a concern, you can always come and talk to a staff member or the designated Board member liaison (the Board liaison can be found on the school website). If you find that for some reason this informal resolution is not adequate, you can follow our formal complaint policy and procedure set out herein.

The Charter will investigate any complaints alleging failure to comply with applicable laws and will seek to resolve those complaints in accordance with the Charter's Uniform Complaint Policy. This is a formal complaint procedure to provide a uniform system of complaint processing for the following types of complaints:

(1) Any complaints alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying in the Charter's programs and activities based on actual or perceived race or ethnicity, color, ancestry, national origin, nationality, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, mental or physical disability, sex or sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or gender expression; the perception of one or more of such characteristics; or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

(2) Any complaints regarding the Charter's failure to comply with the prohibition against requiring students to pay fees, deposits or other charges for participation in educational activities, the requirements for the development and adoption of a school plan under state funding models, the requirements for the development and adoption of a school safety plan, child nutrition programs and special education programs, or other legal requirements for charter schools.

Any form of retaliation against any complainant in the complaint process is prohibited. Participation in the complaint process shall not in any way affect the status, grades or work assignments of any student.

In investigating complaints, the confidentiality of the parties involved, and the integrity of the process shall be protected. As appropriate, the Executive Director or designee may keep the identity of a complainant confidential to the extent that the investigation of the complaint is not obstructed, or as otherwise permitted by law.

### **PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Compliance Officer(s)**

The following Compliance Officer(s) shall receive and investigate complaints and shall ensure the Charter's compliance with law:

Gavin Keller, Executive Director  
Journey School  
27102 Foxborough  
Aliso Viejo, CA 92656  
949-448-7232

The Compliance Officer or designee shall ensure that individuals designated to investigate complaints are knowledgeable about the laws and programs for which they are responsible. Such individuals may have access to legal counsel as determined by the Compliance Officer or designee.

### **Notifications**

The Compliance Officer or designee shall annually provide written notification of the Charter's uniform complaint procedures to students, employees, parents/guardians, any applicable advisory committees, and other interested parties. If fifteen (15) percent or more of the students enrolled at the Charter speak a single primary language other than English, this policy and the notice shall be translated into that language.

The notice shall:

1. Identify the person(s), position(s), or unit(s) responsible for receiving complaints.
2. Include information about complaints that may be related to pupil fees, pursuant to the requirements of Section 1, Article 5.5 of Title 2 of the Education Code.
3. Advise the complainant of any civil law remedies that may be available to him/her under state or federal discrimination laws, if applicable.
4. Advise the complainant of the appeal process, including the complainant's right to take a complaint directly to the California Department of Education (CDE) or to pursue remedies before civil courts or other public agencies; and
5. Include statements that:
  - a. The Charter is primarily responsible to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations governing education programs.
  - b. The complaint review and resolution shall be completed within sixty (60) calendar days from the date of receipt of the complaint by the Compliance Officer, unless the complainant agrees in writing to an extension of the timeline.
  - c. A complaint alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying must be filed not later than six (6) months from the date it occurred or six (6) months from the date the complainant first obtains knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying.
  - d. The complainant has a right to appeal the Charter's decision to the CDE by filing a written appeal within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving the Charter's decision.
  - e. The appeal to the CDE must include a copy of the complaint filed with the Charter and a copy of the Charter's decision; and
  - f. Copies of the Charter's uniform complaint procedures are available free of charge.

### **Procedures**

All complaints shall be investigated and resolved within sixty (60) calendar days of the Charter's receipt of the complaint, as measured by the date of receipt of the complaint by the Compliance Officer.

The Compliance Officer or designee shall maintain a record of each complaint and subsequent related actions, including all information required for compliance with 5 CCR 4631 and 4633.

All parties involved in the allegations shall be notified when a complaint is filed, when a complaint meeting or hearing is scheduled and when a decision or ruling is made.

### **Step 1: Filing of Complaint**

Any individual, public agency or organization may file a written complaint of alleged noncompliance by the Charter.

A complaint alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying may be filed by a person who alleges that he/she personally suffered unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying or by a person who believes that an individual or any specific class of individuals has been subjected to unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying. The complaint shall be initiated no later than six (6) months from the date when the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying occurred, or six months from the date when the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying. Upon written request by the complainant, the Compliance Officer or designee may choose to extend the filing period for up to ninety (90) calendar days.

The complaint shall be presented to the Compliance Officer who shall maintain a log of complaints received, providing each with a date stamp. Complaints related to pupil fees for participation in educational activities may also be presented to the school's Executive Director, if that person is not the Compliance Officer. Complaints related to pupil fees for participation in educational activities may be filed anonymously if the complaint provides evidence or information leading to evidence to support an allegation of noncompliance with the requirements of Education Code sections 49010 et seq. (Pupil Fees).

If a complainant is unable to put a complaint in writing due to conditions such as illiteracy or other disabilities, Charter staff shall assist him/her to file the complaint.

If a complaint is filed that describes alleged conduct of the Compliance Officer, the Executive Director will be notified immediately and will designate an alternative Compliance Officer for processing and investigating the complaint. If a complaint is filed that describes alleged conduct of the Executive Director, the Council President will be notified immediately and will designate an alternative Compliance Officer for processing and investigating the complaint.

## **Step 2: Mediation**

Within fourteen (14) days of receiving the complaint, the Compliance Officer may informally discuss with all the parties the possibility of using mediation. If the parties agree to mediation, the Compliance Officer shall make all arrangements for this process.

Before initiating the mediation of a complaint alleging discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying, the Compliance Officer shall ensure that all parties agree to make the mediator a party to related confidential information.

If the mediation process does not resolve the problem within the parameters of law, the Compliance Officer shall proceed with his/her investigation of the complaint in order to reach resolution within the required timelines.

The use of mediation does not extend the Charter's 60-day timeline for investigating and resolving the complaint unless the complainant agrees in writing to such an extension of time.

## **Step 3: Investigation of Complaint**

Within fourteen days of receiving the complaint, the Compliance Officer shall provide the complainant (if not anonymous) and/or his/her representative an opportunity to present the complaint and any evidence, or information leading to evidence, orally, to support the allegations in the complaint. The Compliance Officer also shall collect all documents and interview all witnesses with information pertinent to the complaint.

A complainant's refusal to provide the Charter's Compliance Officer or other designated investigator with documents or other evidence related to the allegations in the complaint, failure or refusal to cooperate in the investigation or engaging in any other obstruction of the investigation may result in the dismissal of the complaint because of lack of evidence to support the allegation; provided, however, that complaints permissibly made anonymously shall be investigated by the Charter to the extent possible without participation by the complainant.

In accordance with law, the Charter shall provide the Compliance Officer or other designated investigator with access to records and other information related to the allegation in the complaint and shall not in any way obstruct the investigation. Failure or refusal to cooperate in the investigation may result in a finding, based on evidence collected, that a violation has occurred and may result in the imposition of a remedy in favor of the complainant.

#### **Step 4: Response**

Within thirty (30) days of receiving the complaint, the Compliance Officer shall prepare and send to the complainant a written response of the Charter's investigation and decision, as described in Step #5 below. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Compliance Officer's decision, he/she may, within five days, file his/her complaint in writing with the Board.

The Board may consider the matter at its next regular Board meeting or at a special Board meeting convened in order to meet the sixty (60) calendar day total time limit within which the complaint must be answered. The Board may also decide not to hear the complaint, in which case the Compliance Officer's decision shall be final.

If the Board hears the complaint, the Compliance Officer shall send the Board's decision to the complainant within sixty (60) calendar days of the Charter initially receiving the complaint, as measured by the date of receipt of the complaint by the Compliance Officer, or within the time period that has been specified in a written agreement with the complainant.

#### **Step 5: Final Written Decision**

The Charter's decision shall be in writing and sent to the complainant. The Compliance Officer is responsible for preparing or delegating the preparation of the written decision.

The Charter's decision shall be written in English and in the primary language of the complainant whenever required by law.

For all complaints, the decision shall include:

- The findings of fact based on the evidence gathered.
- The conclusion(s) of law.
- Disposition of the complaint.
- Rationale for such disposition.
- Corrective actions, if any are warranted; and
- Notice of the complainant's right to appeal the Charter's decision within 15 calendar days to the CDE, and procedures to be followed for initiating such an appeal.

In addition, any decision on a complaint of discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying based on state law shall include a notice that the complainant must wait until 60 calendar days have elapsed from the filing of an appeal with the CDE before pursuing civil law remedies.

If the investigation of a complaint results in discipline to a student or an employee, the decision shall simply state that effective action was taken, and that the student or employee was informed of appropriate expectations. The report shall not give any further information as to the nature of the disciplinary action.

If a complaint alleging noncompliance with the laws regarding student fees, deposits and other charges are found to have merit, the Charter shall provide a remedy to all affected students and parents/guardians, which, where applicable, shall include reasonable efforts to ensure full reimbursement to them.

## **Appeals to the California Department of Education**

If dissatisfied with the Charter's decision, the complainant may appeal in writing to the CDE. The complainant shall file his/her appeal within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving the Charter's decision and the appeal shall specify the basis for the appeal of the Charter's decision and whether the facts are incorrect and/or the law has been misapplied. The appeal shall be accompanied by a copy of the locally filed complaint and the Charter's decision.

Upon notification by the CDE that the complainant has appealed the Charter's decision, the Compliance Officer or designee shall forward the following documents to the CDE:

- A copy of the original complaint.
- A copy of the decision.
- A summary of the nature and extent of the investigation conducted by the Charter, if not covered by the decision.
- A copy of the investigation file including, but not limited to, all notes, interviews and documents submitted by the parties and gathered by the Compliance Officer or another designated investigator(s).
- A report of any action taken to resolve the complaint.
- A copy of the Charter's complaint procedures; and
- Other relevant information requested by CDE.

The CDE may directly intervene in the complaint without waiting for action by the Charter when one of the conditions listed in 5 CCR 4650 exists, including when the Charter has not taken action within sixty (60) calendar days of the date the complaint was filed with the Charter. A direct complaint to the CDE must identify the basis for direct filing of the complaint, which must include clear and convincing evidence that supports such a basis.

## **Civil Law Remedies**

A complainant may pursue available civil law remedies outside the Charter's complaint procedures. Complainants may seek assistance from mediation centers or public/private interest attorneys. Civil law remedies that may be imposed by a court include, but are not limited to, injunctions and restraining orders.

For complaints alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying based on state law, a complainant shall wait until sixty (60) calendar days have elapsed from the filing of an appeal with the CDE before pursuing civil law remedies, provided the Charter has appropriately and in a timely manner apprised the complainant of his/her right to file a complaint in accordance with 5 CCR 4622. The moratorium does not apply to injunctive relief and to discrimination based on federal law.

## **COMMUNICATION MODEL**

**Direct communication lines** are the vehicles that Journey School uses to foster understanding and to resolve conflicts as they arise. These pathways form a structure and process that encourage parties who have concerns or who are involved in a conflict to reach either resolution or agree to disagree.

### ***To Whom Do I Speak?***

Please review the following to know whom to speak to concerning a specific question or concern:

**General Questions** concerning daily operations, policy or procedural issues, events, committee work, enrollment, childcare, carpooling, school newsletter, etc. should be addressed to an Administrative Assistant or designated office staff.

**Questions Concerning Your Child** should be addressed to your child's teacher. We feel that healthy, open communication between parent and teacher is essential for your child's educational experience. If you need to relay a message to the teacher, sending a simple note with your child is best or utilizing the messaging function in ParentSquare. In the event that the message requires in person dialogue, communicate directly with the teacher after school or schedule an appointment directly with the teacher. Although a teacher may provide a cell/home phone number, we respectfully request that courtesy be given to the teacher's home life. Ask yourself if the matter can wait until the next school day. If yes, please do so.

**Questions Related to Educational Issues** such as curriculum, teaching methods, classroom management, and teacher-student relationships should be addressed to the Education Director and/or teacher when appropriate.

**Questions Regarding Capistrano Unified School District** should be addressed to the Executive Director.

**Questions Pertaining to Legal or Financial Issues** should be addressed to the Executive Director, School Business Manager, or the Journey School Council. Public comment is also available at every council meeting and the public is encouraged to attend.

### **Conflict Resolution and Grievances**

Journey School encourages conflict resolution in our community that starts with direct communication with the involved parties.

1. **Direct Resolution** If you have a question or concern, go directly to the person(s) listed under the "To whom do I speak?" categories.
2. **Administrative Resolution** the Administrative Resolution process consists of a meeting between the parties involved mediated by school administration. This attempt is to be done prior to requesting formal resolution.
3. **Arbitrated Resolution** In extreme and rare cases, an Arbitrated Resolution can be used, consisting of a meeting or meetings between the involved parties with an impartial third party. After hearing both parties, the arbitrator will then render his or her decision, which will be binding on both parties. This is the final step in the Conflict Resolution/Grievance process.

Note: complaints alleging failure to comply with applicable laws are subject to the Uniform Complaint Procedures, rather than Conflict Resolution.

### **ONLINE COMMUNICATION, EMAIL POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Online communication (including email, social media, WhatsApp, Parent Square and other platforms) can be an efficient, useful method of communication that can be tremendously helpful in transmitting large amounts of information, and in expediting process. The following policies and procedures will aid us in healthy working together as online communication presents unique challenges.

### **Confidentiality**

Any request for confidentiality is to be honored. In discussion groups, online communication within the specified discussion groups should remain within those groups and confidential unless the group agrees to approve the sharing of such communication to external bodies or individuals. In this spirit of confidentiality, it is best to carefully consider the intentions of the sender as well as the possible implications prior to forwarding email to any other recipients.



### **Prohibited content**

Online communication is not to be used for the creation or distribution of any offensive, or disruptive messages, including messages containing offensive comments about race, gender, age, sexual orientation, pornography, religious or political beliefs, national origin, or disability. Employees who receive any emails with this content should report the matter to school administration.

### **Tone of communication**

As people sometimes write that which they might not feel comfortable saying in person, it is important that people take time to reflect on the content and tone of online communications. This is particularly important when emotions are high, as it is easy to hit 'Reply' and send an immediate response to something another person has written. Sometimes an immediate response doesn't *really* reflect the complexities of the emotions involved.

If a particular piece of writing evokes a powerful, passionate response, it can be helpful to pause and reflect on where that reaction comes from -- is the response particularly influenced by your own thoughts, assumptions, previous experiences, feelings or beliefs, over and above what the other person has actually written?

### **Group Emails and REPLY ALL**

Ask your teacher or administration for approval PRIOR to sending a group message to all parents in the school or class. Class email lists are not available for parent's personal communications and use. This is important to ensure that appropriate, accurate and productive information is being disseminated to a broad audience.

### **WhatsApp or Similar Communication Threads**

These threads can be helpful in staying abreast of events, asking clarifying questions, scheduling playdates and activities that are not school sponsored, etc. This is not an appropriate platform to discuss school operations, concerns regarding the school and or students who attend, and or grievances with staff members or school operations. These topics are best directed to your teacher or administration in accordance with the guidelines detailed in the "To whom do I speak?" section of this handbook.

### **Journey School Council E-mail Correspondence**

The members of the Journey School Council may not engage in e-mail correspondence that may be regarded as constituting a "board meeting" under the Brown Act. In particular, one-way correspondence from staff members or parents to the council members is typically appropriate, but e-mail interaction between council members or "Reply All" interactions are typically not appropriate. This section is not intended to limit e-mail correspondence that is not about school business or operational issues or decisions.

## **FUNDING/FUNDRAISING**

### **STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING**

As a public charter school, Journey School receives money from local taxes as well as the State, and occasionally from the Federal government. The majority of the school's revenue is based on our school's average daily attendance (ADA); therefore, it is extremely important that students attend school regularly and maintain high attendance rates.

As you may know, government-funding sources are typically not sufficient to cover all school costs.

### **FUNDRAISERS**

It is our belief that children should not be involved in the selling of commercial goods for large fundraising purposes. Instead of students soliciting sales of magazines, candy, or gift wrap, Journey School (via Parent Cabinet) coordinates Auctions, Fairy Market, Festivals, etc., as well as other fundraising methods discussed below.

### ***PARENT DONATIONS***

The money that charter schools receive from state and federal sources is inadequate to maintain the educational offerings of Journey School. Parents should be aware that our school pays for staff compensation, operational costs, instructional supplies, liability insurance, as well as utilities and rent for our school space. These are only a few of our many expenses.

In order to support a curriculum that is taught through the arts, all families of Journey School are encouraged to make an annual per-student pledge through our “Annual Giving” campaign. Donations through “Annual Giving” are purely voluntary and are not required.

“Annual Giving” donations help to support with costs associated with offering a broad course of study and provision of high-quality classroom materials (e.g., main lesson books, colored pencils, watercolor paper and paints, wool yarn, etc.) among other things. The monies from this fund are not allocated to a particular expense, grade, class, or child, but are distributed to best benefit all students. Journey School is a 501c3 corporation. Donations are tax-deductible, greatly needed and appreciated. Contact the school office for the corporate tax identification number.

### ***MATCHING FUNDS***

Journey School accepts matching funds from your employer, so please inquire with your employer whenever you want to donate or pledge money to Journey School. Your employer may match whatever you are giving, thus doubling the donation! Please inform the office if you have, or someone you know has a potential donation in another form (stocks, notes etc.).

### ***POTENTIAL INVESTORS***

Journey School is seeking a permanent campus solution. We currently lease the facility from CUSD but remain hopeful to own our own site. If you know of potential investors, or donors of larger capacity, please speak to the Executive Director or any Journey School Council member.