

Journey School
A California Public Charter School

Thursday, September 26, 2024

6:00 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA MINUTES

Approved October 24, 2024

	AGENDA ITEM
1	<p>Call to Order and Roll Call: The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m.</p> <p>Amy Capelle, Council President - Present Melissa Dahlin, Board Member - Absent Margaret Moodian, Board Member - Present Jeannie Lee, Council Secretary - Present Michael Allbee, Board Treasurer - Present</p> <p>Cassie Kawling, PC Representative - Present Renalani Moodley, PC Member - Present Nicola Wellner, Faculty Representative - Present</p> <p>Jeannie departed at 6:06 p.m. to retrieve notes from her classroom. Jeannie returned at 6:08 p.m.</p>
2	<p>Inspirational Passage - Jeannie shared a passage by the Hopi Elders.</p>
3	<p>Approval of Agenda* - Gavin stated that he will present the financial update instead of Larry. Mike made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Margaret seconded and it was unanimously approved.</p>
4	<p>PUBLIC COMMENT: Alicia Cordova submitted a public comment which was read aloud at the meeting. A copy of her comment is attached to these minutes.</p>
5	<p>CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS: Items on Consent Agenda may be approved with one motion and vote for all but without discussion. If an item is to be discussed, it is removed from the Consent Agenda and moved to an Action Item immediately following the Consent Items.</p> <p>Amy requested to pull Item B from Consent. Jeannie requested to remove Item A from Consent.</p> <p>A. Approval of Minutes*: Minutes from regular meeting of August 22, 2024</p> <p>B. MOU with Concordia University*: Ratification of agreement to serve as a school site for counselors seeking fieldwork hours.</p>

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	<p>C. Revised Oversight Assurances for Charter (CUSD)*: Ratification of revisions to charter oversight assurances with CUSD. Changes are required due to the new special education SELPA and arrangement.</p> <p><i>Margaret made a motion to approve the Consent agenda as amended. Mike seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.</i></p> <p>Discussion on Item A: Jeannie stated that she should not be listed as secretary. It was clarified that Margaret Moodian is the council secretary, and the minutes should be changed. Jeannie made a motion to approve Item A with the change listing Margaret Moodian as council secretary. Margaret seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.</p> <p>Discussion on Item B: Amy asked if the agreement will cost the school anything or require additional insurance. She also asked if the school has space to accommodate student teachers. Gavin stated that there is no cost and additional insurance is not required. Mike made a motion to approve the MOU. Mike seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.</p>
6	<p>INFORMATION ITEMS: Reports</p> <p>A. Faculty Update: Nicola shared an update on the Handwork specialty classes. She explained the circular nature of the handwork curriculum as it moves through the grades. She shared how complicated and challenging handwork projects help to build the will forces of students. She is hopeful for a larger teaching space in the future, for handwork and other specialties.</p> <p>B. Parent Cabinet Update: Cassie shared an update on Parent Cabinet activities. She reported on Harvest Faire preparation, school calendars made from student art, and volunteerism. Renalani (Renal) Moodley was also present and is considering taking over the position as Parent Cabinet Representative.</p> <p>C. Administrative Update: Gavin and Shelley reported on school events, the Rose Ceremony, bonds formed through the buddies program, the RESPECT Tour, first weeks of school, Parent Advisory Council formation, enrollment, Special Education, Little Acorns programming, and Alliance for Public Waldorf Education accreditation.</p> <p><i>Enrollment of 619 is slightly lower than anticipated, but higher than what was calculated into the budget. Wait lists are shorter than usual. 19% of the student body have IEP's, including many new students. We have several McKinney Vento students this year. Administration has been assisting with housing and transportation resources such as EverDriven. Amy will share a resource that she knows of with Gavin. The board discussed various resources for transportation for McKinney Vento families. Gavin also shared an update on the Parent Advisory Committee that will help direct the school's LCAP.</i></p> <p><i>For accreditation, the Alliance site visit may happen on October 24th or 25th. Accreditation may be complete before the end of December 2024. Shelley noted that the Alliance conference is in Los Angeles this year.</i></p>

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	<p>D. Financial Update*: Gavin shared a report on budget updates for the 2024-2025 school year. Attendance has been strong so far this month. Our school counselors are helping with attendance follow up. There have been additional costs related to staffing including contracted healthcare professionals needed to assist with special needs of students, Little Acorns staffing, and additional paraprofessionals from Strategic Kids. Some funds that had been set aside were moved into the operating budget to assist with staffing costs. The State budget update includes a new requirement for the Learning Recovery Block Grant. Journey saved approximately \$160,000 of those funds, and the state has set new requirements for spending of this grant.</p>
7	<p>SCHOOL OPERATIONS: Discussion/Action</p> <p>A. Updates to Staffing Plan 2024-25*: Gavin reviewed updates to the Staffing Plan which includes a new contract with BrightStar Care for special education purposes and assistance with school nurse coverage. This contract was entered into in order to immediately comply with IEP requirements, including IEP students who need a 1:1 caregiver. The contract was reviewed by our attorneys. Gavin stated that the hiring committee is still seeking to employ an LVN directly, which would provide a cost savings. If we hire an LVN, then we could discontinue use of BrightStar staff.</p> <p>Gavin suggested bringing the Fiscal Policy to the next council meeting, in order to discuss if the policy should be revised to allow the administrator to enter into a contract without board approval in order to meet time-sensitive IEP needs.</p> <p>Jeannie made a motion to ratify the BrightStar Care contract. Mike seconded and the contract was unanimously ratified.</p> <p>Gavin explained that our caseloads for education specialists exceeds the ratio allowed by the state, so the school is seeking to hire another speech language pathologist. Caseloads for paraprofessionals were also too high, which is why the Strategic Kids staff has been increased. Gavin explained that our paraprofessionals have completed training by El Dorado SELPA. Special Education Director Caryn Kaufman has also been providing training and support to our paraprofessionals. We are still seeking a Games teacher, although Sergio Huerta has been filling this role. For additional Little Acorns staff recently hired, there is no effect on the budget because ELOP funds may be used for this cost. Estimated impact to the budget for these staffing costs are: Classified staff \$58k, certificated staff \$27k, and benefits \$17k.</p> <p>Margaret made a motion to approve the revised Staffing Plan for 2024-25. Mike seconded and it was unanimously approved.</p> <p>B. Amendment to Facilities Use Agreement with CUSD*: Ratification of Facilities Use Agreement (FUA) with CUSD. The three year extension of our FUA means that it will expire in June 2028, with no rent increase.</p> <p>Mike made a motion to approve the FUA. Margaret seconded and it was unanimously approved.</p>

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	<p>C. Arts, Music, Instructional Materials Block Grant*: Discussion and approval of plan for expenditure of AMIM funds received. Gavin recommended using \$134,671 of this grant to assist with retirement costs for our teachers, who provide arts and music instruction, which is in direct alignment with expenditure terms of the grant. Our total allotment for this grant is \$308k, to be used up by 2028-29. Margaret made a motion to approve the expenditure of \$134,671 for retirement costs. Jeannie seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.</p>
8	<p>BOARD DEVELOPMENT and OVERSIGHT (Discussion/Action):</p> <p>A. Board Strategic Planning: Create agenda and prep materials needed ahead of November’s strategic planning session. Attendees: Council members, Gavin, Shelley, the JTA Board President, SPED Director Caryn Kaufman, representatives from Early Childhood, Independent Study, Specialties, Parent Cabinet, and possibly Strategic Kids.</p> <p>A draft agenda for the retreat will be included in the October council meeting.</p> <p>B. Schedule of Meetings*: Review & discuss schedule of regular meetings. The board changed the date of the April 24th meeting to May 1st, with April 30th as a backup date. The June meeting was changed to June 16th. Jeannie approved the meeting schedule as described. Margaret seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.</p> <p>C. Annual Brown Act Training*: Review and discussion of Brown Act - Prior to the board meeting, please review the slides and webinar at this site https://www.ca-ilg.org/webinar/brown-act.</p>
9	<p>CLOSED SESSION: Jeannie made a motion to enter Closed Session. Margaret seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. The audio recording was muted for Closed Session which convened at 8:13 p.m. to discuss the matter described below:</p> <p>1. Pursuant to Government Code 54957.6 - Executive Director Compensation -</p> <p>Report from Closed Session: The Council agreed on compensation, terms of the contract, and a term of 3 years for the Executive Director. The contract will be ratified at the next Council Meeting.</p>
10	<p>Adjournment: Margaret made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mike seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.</p>

PUBLIC COMMENT APPENDICE:

Alicia Cordova

September 26, 2024

Journey School Council
27102 Foxborough

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Aliso Viejo, CA 92656

Re: Public Comment

Dear Esteemed Members of the Board,

Thank you for the important work you do in governing our school.

I am a parent of two children at Journey School grade 3 and grade 7. I am a K-8 California Credentialed Teacher holding a Master of Educational Psychology degree, a Certified Waldorf Educator and co-founder of Sycamore Creek Waldorf Charter School in Huntington Beach. I am presently in service of the school and parent body as a Parent Cabinet Rep for the last two years and present year.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Brown Act

Today's meeting materials were made not made available to the public until 1pm. It is unclear if this is the same time the materials were made available to the Board itself but in any case, please be aware that it is not feasible for the public to review the materials and prepare comments in such a short period of time. I would encourage the Board to direct Mr. Keller, as Secretary to the Board, to ensure that our public meetings are supportive of public participation in the future.

Institute for Multi-sensory Education: Comprehensive Orton-Gillingham Training

I would like to express gratitude to the Administrative Team for being responsive to expressed public concern regarding the inconsistent quality of instruction and assessment. As it relates to literacy, it is expected that credentialed educators should understand the structure and foundation of the English Language as well as the research behind the Science of Reading however it is apparent that professional practices vary widely at Journey School.

Teacher effectiveness will continue to be a variable in the success of this highly proven program, and it bears mentioning that there remains serious public concern regarding the reasonable consistency of teacher quality at Journey School.

I would encourage the administration to take a closer look at teacher effectiveness, considering this and other trainings, early and often; to collect start of year baseline assessments and compare these to ongoing assessments to monitor teacher effectiveness and utilize this information to evaluate teachers' performance, implement support and inform retention.

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It is also my hope that this training will continue annually, particularly to prepare the incoming first grade teachers to build continuity and capacity.

Thank you, again, for your governance. Please include a copy of my letter and the Board's response, if any, in the minutes of your next meeting.

With gratitude,
Alicia Cordova

Agenda publicly posted on the school website at www.journeyschool.net on September 23, 2024.

**Items that are expected to have back up materials provided prior to or at the meeting are indicated with an asterisk. Other items may also have back up materials provided.*