



Journeys School of Teton Science Schools

Academic Excellence · Extraordinary Relationships · Place-based Education · Global Citizenship

February 18, 2011

Dear Journeys School Parents:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Teton Science Schools, I want to thank you for your commitment to Journeys School. It is truly an extraordinary place with a program that is both innovative and challenging. As most independent schools struggle to diversify their program offerings to include more than just a primary or secondary level education, I am pleased to watch Journeys School operate as part of the six program Teton Science Schools. Our diversification already exists and provides resilience in a changing world.

The Board of Directors of Teton Science Schools consists of 24 voting members plus an additional 17 emeritus and ex officio members who serve in an advisory capacity. The school has been well-served by this board which appropriately focuses on fiduciary responsibility and preparing for the future. Journeys School parents, grandparents, and alumni parents are well-represented on the board with a total of 17 out of the 41 members. The three major committees (finance, executive, and development) are all chaired by Journeys School parents. Despite this, in recent months, questions regarding governance of the school, especially Journeys School, have arisen. During the January board meeting and a February Executive Committee Meeting, significant discussions revolved around governance. Subsequently, the following recommendations and decisions were made.

1. The Executive Committee approved the formation of an ad-hoc strategic planning group for Journeys School to provide input into the Teton Science Schools Strategic Plan. This group will be directed by the Head of School and meet three times over the course of the spring to help develop the strategic recommendations for Journeys School. Responsibilities will be to review parent surveys, faculty strategic planning work, and successes/challenges faced by the school. Membership will consist of parents, staff, students, board, and administration.
2. The Executive Committee approved the formation of a Governance Committee to help the board evaluate its structure, performance, and progress. Members of this committee will be selected at the March board meeting.
3. The Executive Committee has recommended for full board approval the following motions.
 - a. Create a formal process by which two Journeys School parents are nominated by the parent body for representation on the board.
 - b. Create a dedicated board sub-committee meeting which convenes in September of each year with a focus on Journeys School. Journeys School parents on the board will all be invited to participate in this sub-committee meeting.
 - c. Create an additional full board meeting in October of each year (increasing the number of meetings from four to five) that is focused on Journeys School and how the program interacts with the other parts of Teton Science Schools.
4. The Executive Committee approved the formation of a Communications and Marketing Committee to help the board and staff clearly articulate the mission and vision of the school.
5. The Board of Directors will increase communication with Journeys School parents.

I am thankful for the work that our board, a group of hard working volunteers, continues to do to help the staff achieve the mission of Teton Science Schools. Please contact me at any time with questions or suggestions.

Sincerely,

John Pierce, Chair of Teton Science Schools Board of Directors and Journeys School Parent (5th, 9th grade)
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