



GOLDEN VALLEY
CHARTER SCHOOLS

TK-8 Tuition-Free Public Waldorf Schools

2021 Annual Report



Serving Sacramento and
Placer Counties since 1999

OUR VISION We are a leading network of Waldorf inspired public charter schools.

OUR SCHOOLS



OUR GRATITUDE

We had two faithful community members retire last year and we wish to express our gratitude for their contribution to Golden Valley. We wish Susan and Ms. Geri the very best on their new journeys!



Susan Guterrez, Education Support Director, served the Golden Valley community since 2003.



Geri McCauley, Eagle's Nest Aftercare Specialist, served the Golden Valley community since 2001.

OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LETTER



Caleb J. Buckley, EdD
Executive Director
Golden Valley Charter Schools

Please accept this annual report as our accountability to you, our community, for the generous support you have shown to Golden Valley.

Last year we operated three schools during extraordinary times, moving from online enrichment, to live distance learning instruction, and back to in-person classes. Our faculty and staff demonstrated that they are nimble, flexible, creative, and highly dedicated. We made Waldorf-style education come to life through Zoom on a Chromebook. I never thought I would write that sentence in my whole life. The board, foundation, faculty, and families pulled together to bring our students back to in-person learning for everyone before March of 2020.

The strength of our budget is bittersweet because we were not able to employ many of our teachers and much of our classified staff was furloughed all year. Unspent revenue created a large surplus at all three schools. We face the challenge of 2022 with a very strong core organization and solid financials to weather whatever the pandemic throws at us next. This year we hope to rebuild our community relationships and focus on the social-emotional health of our students. Your generous support continues to provide quality supplies to our students, professional development to our teachers, and art teachers to our schools. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,
Caleb J. Buckley, EdD



Susan Gutierrez
Director, Education Support



Becky Page
Orchard School Principal



Barbara Ames
River School Principal



Jennifer Hoover
Interim Tahoe School Principal



GOLDEN VALLEY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2020-21 BOARD MEMBERS

Heather Fraser-Hurtt
Chair, River School Parent
Joined 2018

Brittany Kilby
River School Parent
Joined 2020

Jennifer Huetter
Vice Chair, Orchard School Parent
Joined 2018

Stephanie Parmely
River School Parent
Joined 2018

G'anna Burke
Secretary, Orchard School Parent, Joined 2016

Stephen Quadro
Orchard School Parent
Joined 2019

Suzanne Dick
Orchard School Parent
Joined 2020

Adrianna Wray
Tahoe School Parent
Joined 2020

The stewardship of Golden Valley Charter Schools is held by the Board of Trustees.

The 2020-21 school year was a complete departure from any other school year. We began the year in distance learning, with most schools in California closed to in-person learning under emergency orders due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout the year and with many additional special meetings, the Board addressed the priorities of safety, fiscal considerations, academic oversight, organizational operations, and community wellness. Efforts were focused on supporting our faculty and staff as they conducted academic engagement in as safe and equitable a manner possible for our students. The Board worked to address the emerging crisis and by the Spring had facilitated a plan for an eventual return to full time, in-person schooling. We finished the school year with a balanced budget, thanks to additional pandemic-targeted funding, and completed a COVID-19 Safety Plan that would bring all students back on campus in the Fall of 2021.



GOLDEN VALLEY
ORCHARD SCHOOL

Orchard faculty stayed alert over the summer to the changing requirements placed upon schools by the pandemic. Together we navigated the fluid landscape of distance learning. Teachers demonstrated creativity and resourcefulness, translating Waldorf curriculum

to an online platform. They used Zoom lessons accompanied by video presentations to bring Waldorf classrooms alive. Google Classrooms offered flexible access to lessons and a place to turn in assignments. Students received specialty lessons in Practical Arts, Spanish, and Music.

Our community reimagined traditional seasonal gatherings. Second grade performed a virtual puppet play to celebrate Courage Day. Our fun run "Eagle's Chase" was held at home and shared virtually. Orchard Parent Circle hosted "Bowls for Peace" on Zoom, including a seasonal verse and song presentation.

In March, students returned to campus. Though half of the class at a time, we were overjoyed to be together. Our 1st graders received a first day of school rose, classes stayed with their own cohort, and everyone stayed safe. In May, all students returned daily for instruction. We re-imagined our May Festival by gathering in song to exchange flowers. We bid farewell to our eighth graders at the Rose Ceremony during the day and graduation in the evening. While we didn't have the year one would have expected, all were joyful and proud of our oldest students. There were plenty of challenges throughout the year, yet we stayed together strong and true. We cared for each other and held onto our resolve to provide the children the best we could with the circumstances given.

In-person learning began in March 2020

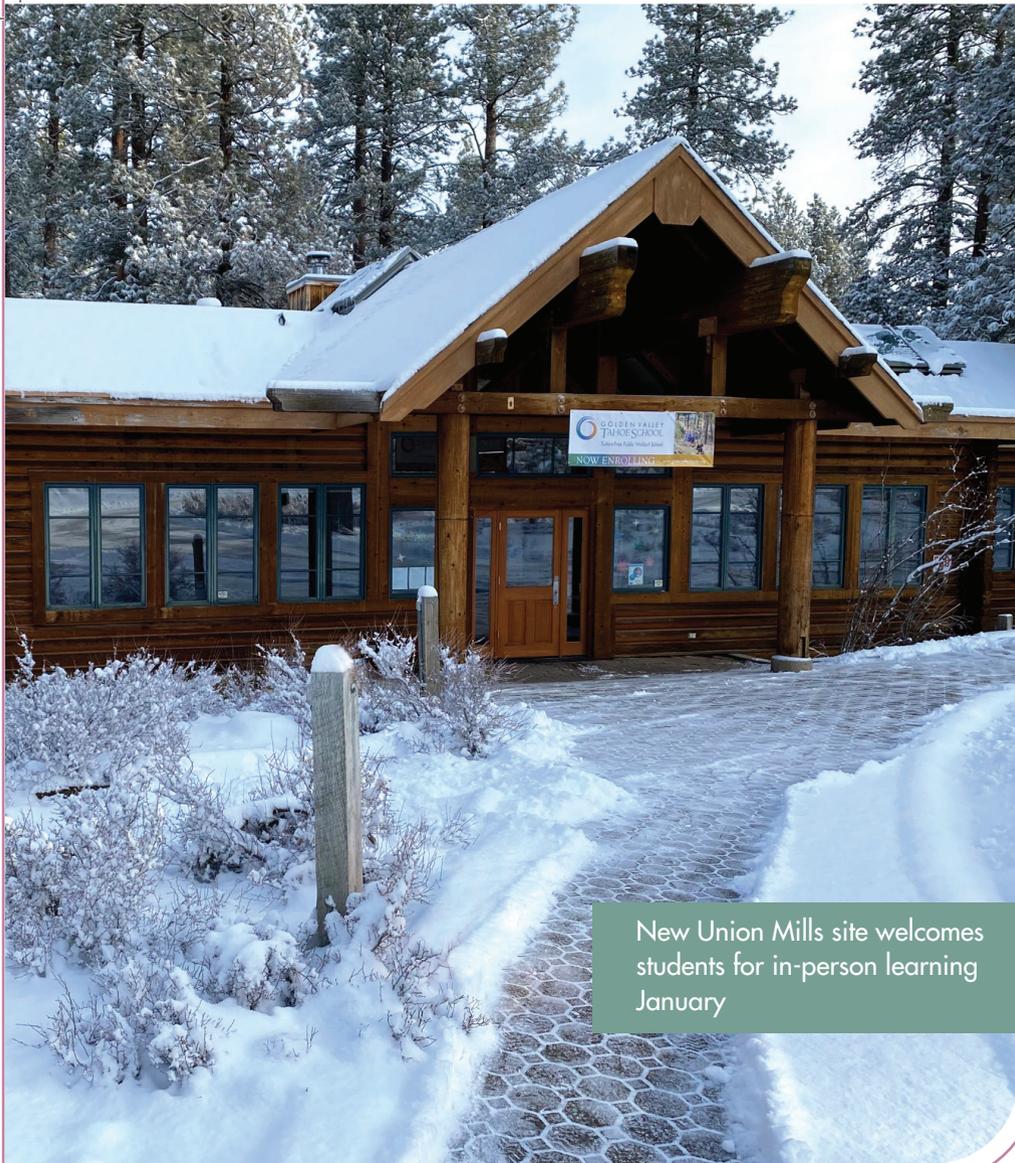




River School faculty and staff maintained an attitude of **gratitude** throughout the pandemic. When schools first closed, faculty never anticipated the full impact on our learning environment that would follow. Still, we leaned in together and worked to create a viable option for learning. Teachers became masters of Google Classroom, Zoom, and online instruction. Our technology was upgraded with new funding.



The virtual classroom transitioned to in-person learning by Spring and everyone was grateful to be back on campus. There were many hurts and losses during the pandemic. Our goal has been to recover, grow stronger, and keep the River School Community together.



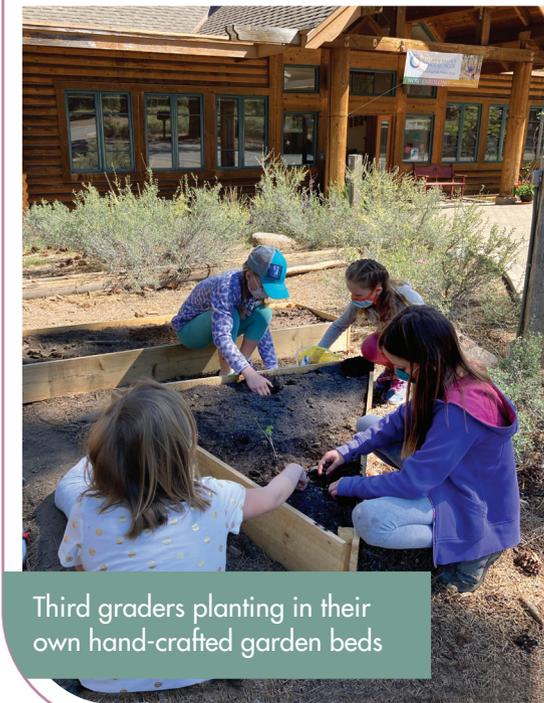
New Union Mills site welcomes students for in-person learning January

The full use site permit application was filed by Friends of Tahoe Truckee Waldorf and is still in process. Only 44 students are allowed on campus until the final permit is issued which presents various challenges in alternating times and dates students can be present. Despite adversity, the pioneering spirit carried the day and 96 students finished out the year in grades K-5.



Tahoe School moved from Northstar Drive to the Union Mills site for the second semester, welcoming students back for in-person instruction. Through a combination of half days in-person and distance learning, teachers were able to preserve the Waldorf charter curriculum. Chromebooks and supplies were distributed throughout the year. Specialty teachers in handwork, music, and Spanish provided video content that was both educational and entertaining. Because each class could only have one teacher in-person, we became islands of learning, surrounded by a community of support at home.

Jennifer Hoover stepped in as the interim Principal while students were on campus.



Third graders planting in their own hand-crafted garden beds

ADAPTING PUBLIC WALDORF EDUCATION TO MEET THE UNIQUE CHALLENGES OF THE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR

By Stephanie Lorenz
Education Support Specialist / Assessment Coordinator



Golden Valley's community maintained connection through digital spaces. Conquering the limitations of online school with resilience and ingenuity was the overarching theme I witnessed throughout the 2020-21 school year.

Through rich storytelling, fostering engagement was pure and beautiful. The 1st grade teacher opened the Main Lesson Zoom session singing the sweetest greeting to each student individually by name. One by one, the students would un-mute themselves and respond in song "Good Morning, Mrs. Walthard." Each student eagerly waited for their turn to respond. Maintaining a familiar rhythm provided the loving safety and security for class unity and structure.

Class teachers were able to guide their students daily in song, verse, and movement, just as would be done in-person. Witnessing these digital barriers transcended by warmth and consistency allowed students to maintain vital connection. The art of teaching is continually providing each student an opportunity to be seen and heard, whether through an interactive game or creating engaging video content for families to stream while their students painted, danced, sang, played the flute, crafted handwork, and recited Spanish poetry. Online art galleries were created in Google Classroom.





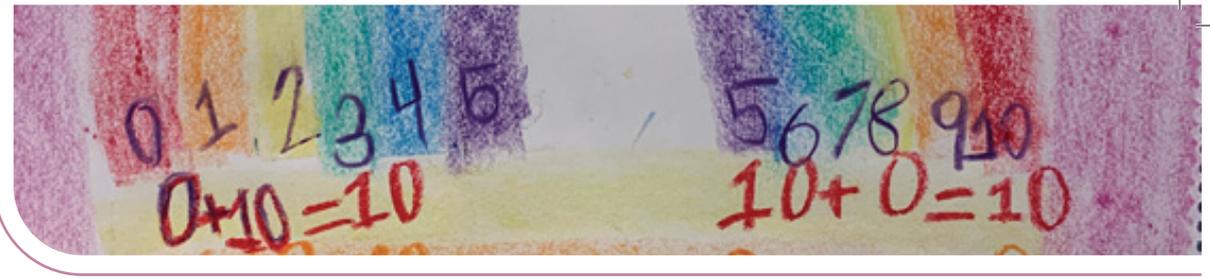
Chats and streams were a hit in the upper grades. In my middle school math group, the private chat feature enabled the student to respond to me in the very moment with their answer. This provided a quick check for understanding throughout the lesson. Seventh grade chemistry demonstrations offered students the same phenomenological experience as in-person. Students were left to ponder for the evening why the substances Mr. Sutton had placed in test tubes were able to be arranged in a color spectrum from the brightest red to the faintest yellow.

The joy in the eyes of students returning to campus last spring was unmeasurable. Golden Valley teachers pivoted once again to bring hybrid classes, using document cameras. Teachers would Zoom their live instruction for the students who remained at home in distance learning while having many of their students back in the classroom.





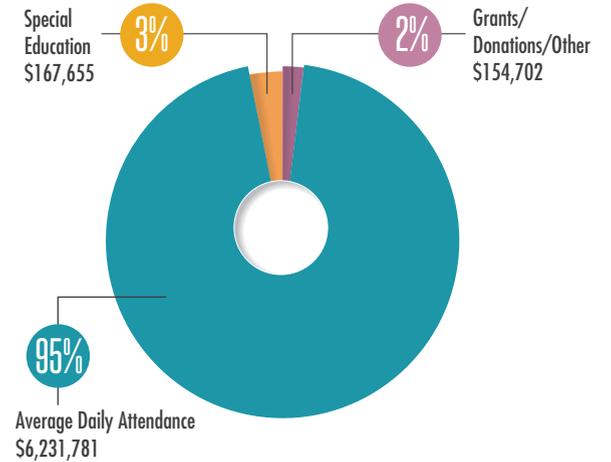
2020-21 was an unusual year for public school funding due to the pandemic and schools coming out of a distance learning model. Attendance was funded based on the 2019-20 enrollment numbers which benefitted River and Orchard Schools but did not benefit the Tahoe School. Since so many classified employees had to be furloughed, there was a large surplus of unspent salary money. In addition, as employees retired or left, they were not replaced due to the uncertainties of the year. State grants gave an incentive in the Spring to open schools up safely by providing Personal Protective Equipment and technology money. This all resulted in the largest surplus GVCS has ever had. Reserves nearly doubled with annual revenue of \$1 million over expenses.



Revenue

Grants/Donations/Other	\$154,702
Special Education	\$167,655
Average Daily Attendance	\$6,231,781

Total \$6,554,138



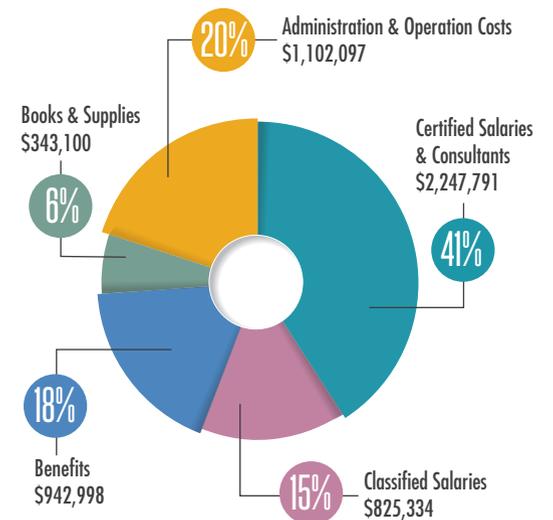
Net Income \$1,092,818

Ending Fund Balance \$2,058,223

Expenses

Certified salaries and consultants	\$2,247,791
Classified salaries	\$825,334
Benefits	\$942,998
Books and supplies	\$343,100
Administration and operating Costs	\$1,102,097

Total \$5,461,320



SUPPORT OUR SCHOOLS

Annual Giving Campaign

Annual giving is at the heart of what makes Golden Valley Charter Schools thrive. We depend upon funds raised to support Waldorf training for our teachers, high quality supplies for every child, rent for our school sites, and specialty teachers such as music, eco-literacy, language, and arts. 2020-21 brought continual support of our Annual Giving campaigns. Golden Valley Educational Foundation (GVEF) managed the campaigns for our Orchard and River campuses. At our Tahoe school, the foundation for Annual Giving was established and \$9,050 was fundraised. We would like to thank everyone who supported and continues to support our whole child Waldorf education.



Orchard and River fundraising foundation

Fireworks Booth

The annual Educational Foundation fireworks booth was initiated in 2020 and has become the single, largest fundraising event for GVCS. This fundraiser is unique in that it yields the majority (90%+) of its profits from the public at large and not our parent body. It takes many hands to implement, yet we hope to build upon the past year experience and add a second booth location for 2022.



Income

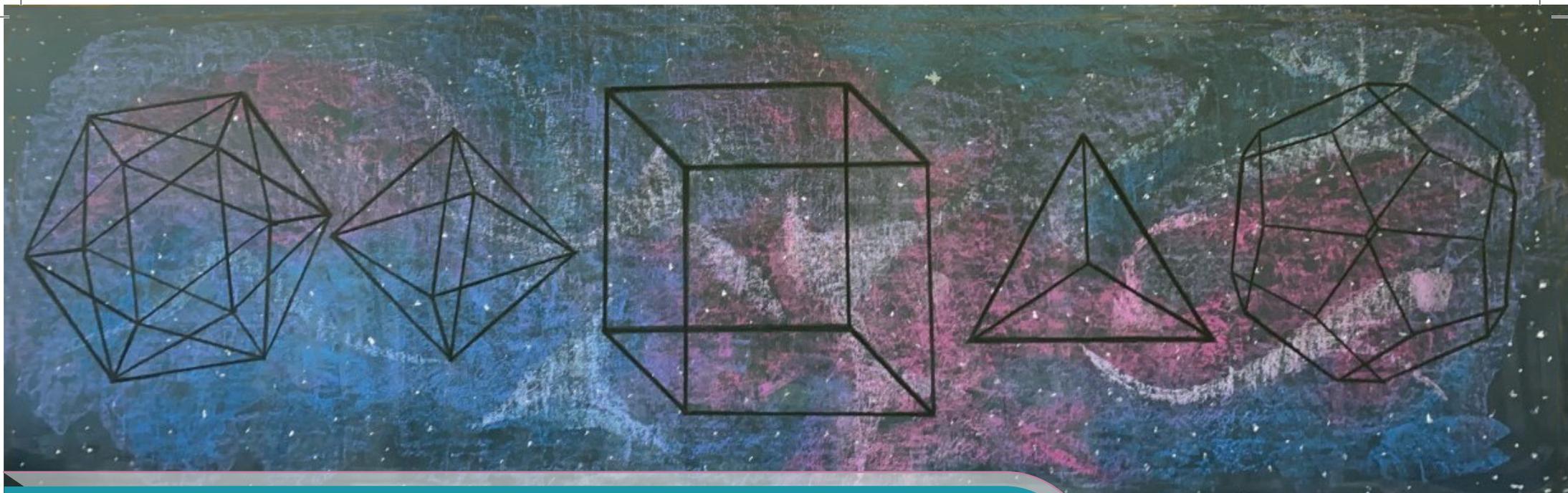
Eagle Chase	\$10,673
Pie Drive	\$1,300
Art Auction	\$3,230
Fireworks	\$46,962
Holiday Store	\$8,746
Scrip & Amazon	\$2,007
Annual River & Orchard Giving	\$101,043

Total \$173,961

Eagle Chase

The Eagle Chase, hosted by the Educational Foundation, is Golden Valley's jog-a-thon event in which the students are directly involved in raising funds to support their education. For the event, students in grades 1-8 run laps on campus to win individual and class prizes. The event is in its eleventh year and has become a well-loved tradition on campus.





IMPORTANT DATES 2021 - 2022

River and Orchard Schools

Dec 20 – Jan 3
Holiday Break

Jan 17
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Feb 21 – 25
President's Day & Winter Break

March 15 – 17
Parent Teacher Conferences

April 11 – 18
Spring Break

May 27
Last Day of School

Cover chalk drawing:
First grade teacher, Jordan Todd
Back cover chalk drawing:
Eighth grade teacher, Jessie Wadkins

Tahoe School

Dec 7
Local Holiday

Dec 20 – 31
Holiday Break

Jan 17
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Feb 21 – 25
President's Day & Winter Break

March 15 – 17
Parent Teacher Conferences

April 11 – 18
Spring Break

May 31
Memorial Day

June 17
Last Day of School

June 24 (snow days)



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www.goldenvalleycharter.org

