



GOLDEN VALLEY
CHARTER SCHOOLS

TK-8 Tuition-Free Public Waldorf Schools

2023-24 Annual Report

Serving Sacramento County since 1999



GVCS: Looking Towards 2030

Our Vision Expanding access for children and families to a community of public Waldorf Schools.

Our Mission We nurture a passion for learning through head, heart and hands experiences which prepare students to engage in a dynamic world.



Golden Valley Charter Schools offers two public TK-8th grade schools in the greater Sacramento area, providing a Waldorf curriculum that nurtures a passion for learning through experiences that engage the head, heart, and hands. Our classes, beginning in first grade, continue together in a cohort model from grade to grade, fostering strong bonds among students and their families. This approach not only creates a close-knit peer community but also forms a supportive network of parents who play an integral role in the educational journey of the students. With a strong emphasis on nature and art, we aim to expand access to a community of public Waldorf Schools where children are embraced and encouraged to explore their unique potential.

On January of 2024, Golden Valley River School was honored to host the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education Conference, where over 80 Waldorf teachers from across the country gathered to deepen their relationships and expand their knowledge together.

[Learn more about our schools](#)



Caleb Buckley
Executive Director



Geniel Bratton
Director of Special Education



Becky Page
Orchard School Principal



Ryan Sutton
River School Principal



Jennifer Hoover
Accountability & Compliance Manager

Dear Golden Valley Charter Schools Community,

This annual report is our way of staying accountable to you, our families, friends, and supporters. With public funding from the state and generous donations from our community, we are able to provide a meaningful education that blends the Waldorf approach with California State Standards.

As public charter schools, we face numerous expenses that traditional public schools do not. One of the most significant is rent to our charter authorizing district for the school sites. Because of these added costs, fundraising plays a critical role in sustaining our programs and enriching the student experience.

Each year, with the support of our parent volunteer foundation, we carry out a variety of fundraising efforts, including selling fireworks in the summer, running our annual giving campaign, and hosting events like the jog-a-thon (Eagle Chase) and auction. These efforts help us bridge the funding gap and ensure we can continue providing the high-quality, artistically rich education our community values.

As you read the 2023–24 Annual Report, we hope you feel appreciated and connected to all that we have built together. Soon, we will begin work on the 2024–25 report and prepare to welcome students back for the 2025–26 school year. Childhood moves quickly, and it is our honor to mark each transition with care, joy, and a strong sense of community.

Sincerely,

Caleb J. Buckley, EdD
Executive Director



Student art gallery at the Orangevale Badfish Coffee & Tea Cafe.
March 2024



GOLDEN VALLEY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2023-24 Board

Katie Gerski-Keller

Board Chair,
River School Parent

Meredith Willson

Board Vice Chair,
River School Parent

Ekaterina Khmelniker

Board Member,
River School Parent

AJ Lacoste

River School Faculty Chair

Heather Peery

Orchard School Faculty Chair

Stephen Quadro

Board Member,
Orchard School Parent

Adam Errington

Board Member,
Orchard School Parent



Our schools are governed collaboratively by our Board of Trustees, which is made up of parents and teachers. The Board of Trustees gives final approval to all budget and policy decisions and ensures that the schools' practices are consistent with the vision and mission of the schools. The Board of Trustees meets regularly on the second Wednesday of the month.

Meetings, agendas and minutes

Our Core Values



Curiosity

We live with enthusiasm and are open to the wonders that each day holds.



Commitment

We endeavor to act in integrity with our values and commitments, be accountable and take responsibility for our choices with grace.



Reverence

As lifelong learners we give our best to all we do and compassionately build honest relationships and appreciation of diversity.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee is comprised of faculty, staff and families working collaboratively to advocate, educate and support inclusiveness in our community. We encourage opportunities for students, staff, and faculty to grow in their own understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion. We actively promote equality of representation in the school and curriculum. We take a stand against discrimination, stereotyping, and prejudice. We offer opportunities and safety for all.

Parent Circle

The Parent Circle (PC) is dedicated to nurturing a strong and connected school community. As a hub for parent involvement, PC organizes volunteers for our beloved seasonal festivals and a variety of other school events and projects throughout the year. Whether on campus or from home, there are meaningful ways for every parent to contribute. Opportunities include serving as a class representative for PC, organizing Staff Gratitude Day (SGD), coordinating or contributing to the yearbook, welcoming new families, offering care and support for families in need, planning PC-hosted gatherings, supporting festival planning, and serving as a Golden Valley Educational Foundation (GVEF) liaison for fundraising. PC not only encourages service, it makes it accessible, welcoming all parents to get involved and discover the many ways to support our schools and students.



2023-24 Leadership

Katie Alanis
Chair

Kelly Gratiot
Co-Chair Orchard School

Sherri Westbrook
Secretary Orchard School

Genevieve Buckley
Secretary River School

Samantha Bruton
Treasurer Orchard School

Laurie Gregg
Treasurer River School



Parent Circle lead annual Winter Gathering at the Orchard School



Beautifying the schools with yarn art



Empathy

We reflect on how our actions affect others and create spaces of safety and well-being.



Creating Community

We see ourselves as part of the larger world, honor the value and diversity of each individual and invest in a community where we have compassion for and trust one another, are inclusive, build strong relationships, appreciate differences, seek common ground, and resolve conflict peacefully.



Joyful Service

Teachers, students, staff, and volunteers willingly share our time, our talents, and our donations to serve our students and our community.



“These initiatives and milestones from the 2023-24 school year demonstrate Golden Valley Orchard School’s dedication to nurturing a vibrant, inclusive community where students thrive academically, emotionally, and socially. Through collaboration and a shared vision, the school continues to provide meaningful experiences that support the growth and development of every student.”



Grandparents Day

Mindfulness Room: Focused Fundraising

A dedicated fundraising effort this year allowed us to enrich the Mindfulness Room, providing an even more calming and supportive space for students to breath and have awareness. This initiative underscores our commitment to supporting emotional well-being and nurturing a vibrant, inclusive, and supportive environment where students can thrive in every aspect.

The 2023-24 school year at Golden Valley Orchard School was a year of growth, community engagement, and a renewed commitment to holistic, Waldorf-inspired education. Seasonal festivals such as Courage Day, the Winter Gathering/Bowls for Peace, the May Festival, and the Journey Around the World, a multi-cultural festival, brought the community together to celebrate diversity and promote global awareness. Events like the Goldenstock Talent Show and the Annual Concert further highlighted student creativity and teamwork, exemplifying the school’s Core Value of Creating Community.

A significant milestone of the year was the inaugural Ruby Bridges Walk, which honored the civil rights icon’s legacy and demonstrated the powerful impact that even young individuals can have. This event inspired students to embrace courage and social responsibility, reflecting the school’s dedication to fostering meaningful connections with history and values.

The school community also focused on enhancing the campus environment. A watershed grant allowed for the expansion of the school garden, giving students opportunities for hands-on learning in sustainability and nature. Meanwhile, a Chalk It Up grant transformed the playground into a more colorful and welcoming space for student enjoyment. A focused fundraising effort enriched the Mindfulness Room, creating a calm and supportive environment where students could practice emotional balance and self-awareness.

The implementation of the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system further reinforced the school’s nurturing atmosphere. Faculty and parents worked together to encourage respectful interactions and a shared sense of responsibility, fostering a positive and supportive environment for all.

These initiatives and milestones from the 2023-24 school year demonstrate Golden Valley Orchard School’s dedication to nurturing a vibrant, inclusive community where students thrive academically, emotionally, and socially. Through collaboration and a shared vision, the school continues to provide meaningful experiences that support the growth and development of every student.



Mindfulness Room

The 2023-24 school year at Golden Valley River School was a testament to growth, resilience, and the incredible spirit of our community. With a renewed commitment to parent and community engagement, the Parent Circle played a vital role in beautifying the campus. Their vibrant yarn art project transformed the school's fences into colorful displays of creativity and warmth. Popular events such as the clothing swap promoted sustainability, while Grandparents' Day celebrated family involvement and strengthened the bonds within our school community.

Improved attendance emerged as a key focus for the year. The "Being Present" campaign emphasized the importance of consistent attendance, fostering accountability and participation among students, parents, and teachers alike. This effort introduced a new tradition of new tradition of

the "Golden Lotus" award which is given to the class with the highest monthly attendance. The friendly competition brought excitement to the school and reinforced the significance of being present.

Golden Valley River School also stood out for its unique programs, such as the Renewal Room and the school garden. The Renewal Room provided a

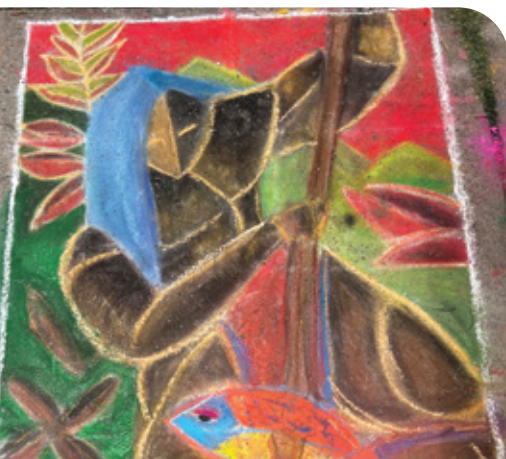
dedicated space for students' emotional well-being, helping them rejuvenate and find balance during the school day. The garden became a hub for hands-on learning, where students explored topics like science and sustainability while connecting with nature. These programs enriched the students' educational experience in ways that extend far beyond the classroom.

Under the steady leadership of Mr. Sutton and with the dedication of long-standing staff, River School fostered an inclusive and supportive culture. This unity was particularly evident during challenging times, as the community came together with strength and resilience. Students gathered to sing him a heartfelt farewell song, expressing gratitude for his contributions to the school.

Golden Valley River School has not only brought the community closer together but also reinforced its commitment to providing a warm, supportive, and accountable environment for students, staff, and families. The blend of cherished traditions and new efforts ensures a bright and promising future for the school.



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The 8th graders teamed up to create an art piece for the ChalkItUp! Festival in Fremont Park.



River School longtime custodian, Mr. Mark, received a handmade quilt and song as a retirement gift from all students and staff.



Kindergarten knighting ceremony for the day of courage.



GOLDEN VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOLS

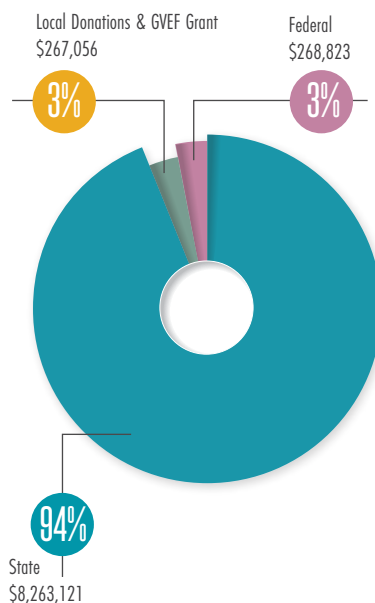
Revenue

State (attendance) \$8,263,121

Local Donations
& GVEF Grant \$267,056

Federal (SPED & meals) \$268,823

Total \$8,799,000



Ending Balance \$768,522

Expenses

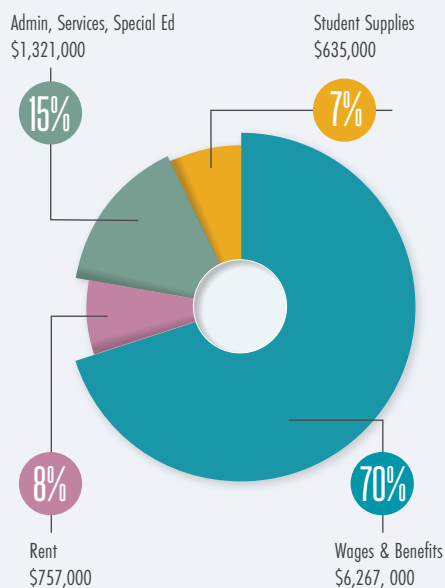
Wages & Benefits \$6,267,000

Admin, Services, Special Ed \$1,321,000

Rent \$757,000

Student Supplies \$635,000

Total \$8,980,000



[See the financial information](#)

Golden Valley Charter Schools operated on a budget of approximately \$9 million this year. Of our total revenue, 94% came from public funding, primarily from the State of California. Thanks to the expansion of our meal program, we also received increased federal reimbursements for providing meals to low-income families.

The remaining 3% of our revenue came from generous parent contributions, including donations through the Annual Giving Campaign and support from the Golden Valley Educational Foundation.

Like most nonprofit organizations, the majority of our expenses, 70%, were dedicated to employee wages, pensions, and health care. We also paid 8% of our budget in rent to San Juan Unified School District for the use of our school sites.

A hallmark of Waldorf education is the emphasis on hands-on, artistic learning, which necessitates a substantial investment in classroom materials. This year, we spent \$635,000 on student supplies. In addition, special education services, professional consultants, and other administrative costs totaled \$1.34 million.

Overall, it cost approximately \$200,000 more to operate Golden Valley than we received in funding. Despite this gap, we ended the year with a positive balance of \$768,522 in our accounts, reflecting careful financial management and community support.

Annual Giving Campaign

Our Annual Giving Campaign (AGC) is our yearly cornerstone fundraiser and has a direct impact on our operations budget and program offerings. Financial contributions are vital in sustaining our depth and quality of programs. A high GVCS family participation percentage qualifies our schools to be considered for grants and loans and will assist us in our charter renewal.

Our Beloved Donors

We are deeply grateful to the families who gave to Golden Valley Charter Schools' 2023–24 Annual Giving Campaign. While we didn't meet our goal, every gift has played a vital role in supporting our mission to inspire learning through head, heart, and hands, preparing students for a dynamic world. Your generosity moves us closer to our vision of expanding access to public Waldorf education. Thank you for believing in our work and enriching the lives of our students.

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Aaron Pickard | Bryan Ahola | Go Moto | Karen Miles | Marya Sahota | Rie Kosugi |
| Adam Errington | Caleb Gibbs | Greg Delp | Karissa Soma | Matthew Hawkins | Riley Luz |
| Adam Landry | Calvin Perry | Hadasha Benoit | Katharine Gerski-Keller | Maxim Loktyukhin | Rockeno Shorrock |
| Adriane B Corbett | Casey Hopp | Hanna Dvorakovska | Kathleen Schleef | Meagan Kilpatrick | Ryan Miller |
| Ahmeer Lewis | Cassie Harner | Hilary Pollock | Katie & Pedro Alanis | Meagan Watson | Sandra LaMountain |
| Aleksandar Petkov | Cathy Conway | Hilda carpenter | Katja Chisholm | Megan Dunn | Sandra Rapp |
| Alexa Ganter | Charlotte Gibbs | Holly Henrich | Katrina Knittle | Meghan Lefkowitz | Sarah Chase |
| Alfred Lacoste | Christina England | Israel Cepeda-Benevity | Kelsey Carlson | Melissa Keaney | Sarah Moe |
| Alicia Heffington | Christine Bell | J Masters | Kerry OKeefe | Meredith Willsen | Sarah Schutter |
| Alisha Freedle | Christine Joy Bernardo | Jack & Cindy Love | Kevin Woo | Michael Mercado | Sarah Sefton |
| Allison Neria Muzzalupo | Christopher Peck | Jack & Ruth Dunlap | Kia Maddox | Michelle Kientz | Sasha Lussier |
| Allyson Jakubicka | Christy Dunn | Jacqline Robinson | Kimberly Blakley | Michelle Mann | Satya Welch |
| Amanda McCredie | Claudia Maniscalco | Jaime McClintock | Kirsten Asher | Michelle Radcliff | Sean Westbrook |
| Amanda Westbrook | Clayton Milburn | Jamie Innamorato | Kirsten Flores | Mike McGuffin | Shannon Berke |
| Amber Emery | Colleen McGee | Jamie Larson | Krista Reid | Miranda Clements | Sharon Howes |
| Amiee Hodgkinson | Colleen Snyder | Jamie Rives | Kristen Biernat | Miriam Cohen | Shauna Anderson |
| Andrea Hayworth | Corina Phillips | Janel Rigsby | Kristine Livecchi | Nancy Egloff | Sherrilyn Westbrook |
| Andrea Miller | Courtney Carlson | Janice Lumsden | Kristofer Adams | Natalie Marion | Silvano Juarez |
| Andrea Rogozinski | Craft & Everything Else | Janice Oliver-Iraci | Krystal McClellan | Nathaniel Perez | Simone Giachino |
| Angela Chang | Cristiane Pilger | Jason Gasser | Lacey Delp | Nena Weinstein | Sommer Thomas |
| Angela Kump | Danielle Jones | Jennifer Hilliard | Larissa Barth | Guzman | Spent Flora |
| Angela Loder | Danielle Palozzolo | Jennifer Kesler | Laura Gregg | Ngoc Nham & | Stephanie Godoy |
| Angelica Avalos | Danielle Roach | Jennifer Pratt | Laura Zanone | Jarded Nelson | Stephanie Parmely |
| Angelica LaMantain | David Kremer | Jenny Wroblicky | Lauren Edvalson | Nicholas Crew | Stephanie Tadlock |
| Anna Durling | Dawnelle Thomas | Jessica Haynes | Laurie Occhicone | Nicholas Talbert | Stephen Quadro |
| Anne David | Debbie Fisher-Abbott | Jessica Jaeger | Leslie Loy | Nicole Brann | Steven Barkey |
| Annemarie Fallai | Debi Lenny | Jessica Wren | Leticia Taylor | Nicole Kahl-Purcell | Tana Purdey |
| Aric Toon | Demetria Platz | Jessica Zwane | Linda Stechman | Olivia Durkee | Tara Latham |
| Arielle Yarbrough | Desirae Watson | Joanne Madams | Lindsay Murphy | Opeyemi Ayeni | Taryn Mcknight |
| Ashley Kearney | Desiree Peterson | Jocelyn Williams | Lisa Otto | Patricia Nelson | Tatyana Sandulyak |
| Audrey DeGraaf | Diana La Point | Joe Williams | Lisa Randall | Paul Chabot | Taylor DeSilva |
| Barbara Leiva | Elaine Atwell | John Grimm | Loren Johnson | Paulo Dos Reis | Thomas Purcell |
| Benjamin Rodriguez | Elisa Casale | Jonathan Newnam | Lynn Freund | Pepper Fong | Tonja Del Gatto |
| Blair Morrison | Emily Horn | Jonathan Schulz | Marco A Torres Yaya | Rachel Bonn | Trenise Madriz |
| Brad Dessonneck | Emily Phillips | Jordan Angell | Marcos Lopez | Racquel Rees | Tricia Maughan |
| Brandice Roberts | Erin Callaway | Joshua Langbehn | Maria Darden | Raina Schneider | Troy Weber |
| Breanna Galbraith | Erin Glines-Foorman | Josilyn Mitchell | Marie McKeeth | Randi Payton | Ursula Walker |
| Brian & Kristin Barna | Eve Seegmiller | Joyce Roderick | Marina Conriquez | Rebecca Aldinger | Valerie Ruhl |
| Brian Mintun | Fredella Stewart | Julia Koch | Marion Sheldon | Rebecca Bach | Vanessa Brown |
| Briana D'Agostini Cheek | Garrett Werner | Julie Gigery | Marisa Encarnacion | Rebecca Hanson | Veronica Madsen-Carter |
| Briar Corder | Genevieve Buckley | June Watson Sherman | Mark Peters | Rebecca Love | Walter Rogers |
| Brielle Halldorson | George Hudson | Justine Fling | Marlene Laughter | Rebecca Russo | Wayne Innamorato |
| Brittany Kilby | Gibbons | Kacy Carr | Marsha von Dessonneck | Ria Mariano | Yukiko Arimura |
| Brittney Linker | Glenn Kremer | Karen Martinez | Martha Robertson | Richard Cantzler | Zachary Griffith |
| | | | | | Zachary Woodard |

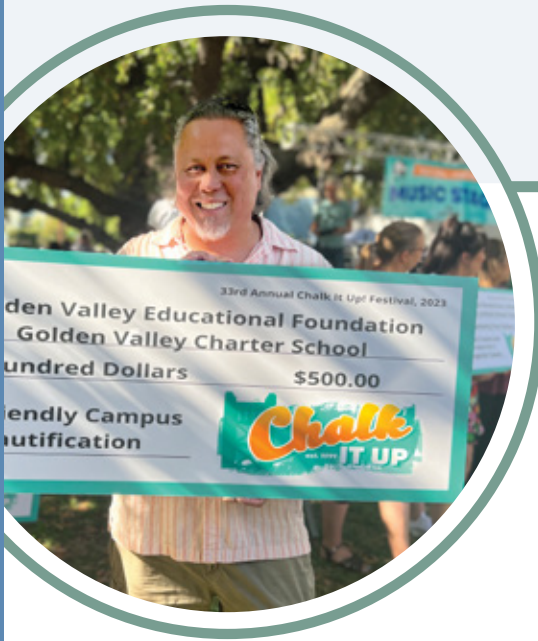
With your help, we raised **\$138,597**

Give Today



GOLDEN VALLEY
EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

Orchard and River fundraising foundation



Fundraisers

The Golden Valley Educational Foundation (GVEF) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit made up of dedicated volunteer parents from both Golden Valley schools. This group is committed to raising supplemental funds to support the operational budget of Golden Valley Charter Schools (GVCS). This year, through volunteer-created and supported fundraising efforts, GVEF raised a total of \$167,398, and granted GVCS \$128,459 for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. These funds help sustain Waldorf-inspired programs by covering key expenses such as rent, teacher training, and specialty classes in music, fine arts, handwork, and games. All funds are granted directly to the schools, with spending decisions made by the GVCS Board of Trustees. Signature fundraising events like the Eagle Chase jog-a-thon, Spring Art Auction & Gala, and Fireworks Booth continue to make this vital support possible.

2023-24 Net Revenue

| | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| Eagle Chase | \$49,196.00 |
| Gala & Auction | \$22,000.00 |
| Fireworks Booth | \$49,334.73 |
| Other | \$500.00 |

Total \$121,030.73

2023-2024 GVEF Board Members

Darryl Cragun
Board President

Nick Talbert
Board Treasurer

Laurie Gregg
Board Secretary

Nic Crew
Board Member

Stephanie Parmely
Board Member

Caleb Buckley
GVCS Board Member

Chelsea Nealy
Orchard School Faculty Liaison

Teresa Thorman
River School Faculty Liaison

Katie Alanis
PC Liaison

Marlene Laughter
Central Office Liaison

[More info about GVEF](#)

Enchanted Evening Gala

Thank you to everyone who attended, donated, sponsored, and volunteered! Our Spring Art Auction & Gala was a success because of your incredible support. This year, we raised a total of \$37,944, with \$22,000 directly benefiting Golden Valley Charter Schools. Your participation made a meaningful impact on our schools and students, thank you!

[Learn about our Gala](#)



Receive the child in Reverence. Educate them in Love. Let them go forth in Freedom

—Rudolf Steiner



There are so many countless reasons why I give. I will sum it up by saying I love that our school strives to meet the needs of each individual student and nurture their minds, hearts, and souls instead of focusing on test scores. And both our parent and faculty communities are simply the best. I am so happy my family is part of this school!.

— Angela Loder, Orchard School Parent



I give because the giving is multiplied threefold. When I see the students embrace the values, use creativity, and think outside the box. I know the give is manifesting.

— Janice Oliver-Iraci (Mrs. Oi), Orchard School Madrona Tree Teacher



We became a Golden Valley family last year when our daughters Camilla and Danika joined the Orchard school. Our girls have truly blossomed at GVOS and that is thanks to the unique sense of community and belonging that is carefully fostered by faculty and the parent community. We give to the Annual Giving Campaign so that we can contribute, at least in a small way, towards the lifelong foundation of learning and belonging that Golden Valley is helping us build in our children. Thank you Golden Valley!

— Jacqline Robinson, Orchard School Parent



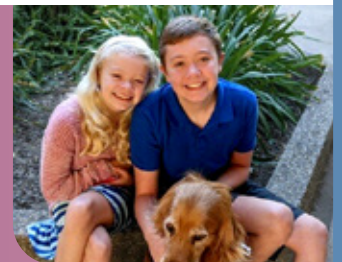
It's important to our family that we support Golden Valley in any way we can. We give our time volunteering and financial support because every time my children tell someone about their school we hear, "you are so lucky!" And we think so too! I am so grateful they come home every day having had a school day full of arts, values and nature.

— Kristin Barna, River School Parent



I give because I appreciate the love and attention my kids get from their teachers, and I want the teachers to know that we love and appreciate them.

—Jamie Rives, River School Parent since 2015



Give Today

2025-26 Golden Valley Charter Schools Calendar

Aug 5 River School Registration

Sept 29 In-service Day, No School

Aug 7 Orchard School Registration

Nov 1 Festival of Light

Aug 14 First Day of School

Nov 10-11 Fall Break, No School

Aug 30 8th Grade Chalk Art Team at ChalkItUp! at Fremont Park

Nov 17-21 Conference Days, Minimum Days

Sept 1 Labor Day, No School

Dec 22-Jan 2 Winter Break, No School

Sept 18 Community Picnic & Parent Enrichment

[See the calendar](#)



I AM
PRESENT

Look to this day

For it is life

The very life of life

In its brief course lie all the realities
and truths of existence

The joy of growth

The glory of action

For yesterday is but a memory

And tomorrow is only a vision

But today, well lived, makes every
yesterday a dream of happiness

And every tomorrow a vision of hope

Look well, therefore, to this day

Such is the salutation to the
ever-new dawn.

Ancient India--Kalidasa



GOLDEN VALLEY
CHARTER SCHOOLS

TK-8 Tuition-Free Public Waldorf Schools

916-597-1478



[Learn More](#)

Cover Art by Orchard School
6th grade students using
Gouache Value