

2018 Annual Report



GOLDEN VALLEY  
CHARTER SCHOOLS

TK-8 Tuition-Free Public Waldorf Schools

Serving the greater  
Sacramento area since 1999

## *Our Vision*

*We are a leading network of Waldorf inspired public charter schools*

## *Our Core Values*

*Developmentally Appropriate Learning*

*Respectful Relationships*

*Joyful Service*

*Cultivating Excellence*

*Resilience*

## OUR 3 SCHOOLS



# A Message from the Executive Director



Caleb Buckley as May Day Auctioneer

I am pleased to offer this annual report, which is based on our 2017-18 school year. The year was marked by many significant initiatives and changes to our program that have already made great improvements to the 2018-19 year. After a lightening quick effort with the Tahoe Community, Newcastle School District, and our central office at GVCS, a new charter was born in May 2018. The Golden Valley Tahoe School (GVTS) became charter number 1991 and enrolled its first 34 students in grades K-3 in Truckee, California. As our third school, GVTS is an example of how the model of being a Charter Management Organization (CMO) has given Golden Valley the ability to expand the opportunity of Public Waldorf Education in Northern California.

A second large initiative by Golden Valley this year came in the partnership with the Center for Anthroposophy and Antioch University's New England Graduate School. Working with Antioch's Dean of Education, Torin Finser, GVCS opened a teacher training program at its Orchard School for a cohort of 25 teachers. Our third initiative this year was to create a hybrid homestudy program to be a grade school companion to our outdoor kindergarten. The River School opened the grades 1-4 classroom with 22 students who meet three days a week and focus on practical arts and outdoor experiences with a credentialed Waldorf Teacher. Interest in the program has skyrocketed, and the new program has revealed a broad interest in the part of the homestudy community for Golden Valley's independent study programs.

At the Orchard School this past summer, we worked with the district to renovate the historic wing of the campus and create three new classrooms. We also converted two specialty positions to full-time, so that Orchard could have full-time Spanish and Practical Arts teachers on staff. While having lost four full-time teachers to Sacramento Unified last year, the school feels particularly strong with teacher training, great new hires, and expanded facilities and specialties.

None of these efforts could be sustained without the team approach to leadership at GVCS. With the departure of John Baker to another district after three years of service, Becky Page stepped in as of July 2018 to be the interim principal at Orchard. With Barbara Ames at River, Becky Page at Orchard, Bonnie River at Tahoe and Susan Gutierrez from special education and assessment, Golden Valley has a strong leadership team for the coming 2018-19 school year.

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

## 2018 Leadership Team

*Caleb Buckley, Executive Director*

*Susan Gutierrez, Director, Education Support and Special Education*

*Becky Page, Interim Orchard School Principal (July 2018)*

*Barbara Ames, River School Vice Principal*

*Bonnie River, Tahoe School Principal (July 2018)*

# Collaborative Governance

School decisions are conducted through shared responsibilities within the below established stakeholder groups. Faculty, staff, administration and the boards of Golden Valley Charter Schools collaborate to guide and lead the schools with input from each group. Decisions related to the educational program are the responsibility of the administrators, faculty and staff with knowledge and experience of Waldorf and Public Education insights. Governance and internal administration are implemented in a manner that cultivates active collaboration, supportive relationships, effective leadership, consequential action, and accountability with staff, faculty and parent volunteer board members. As a leader in the Public Waldorf Charter School movement, we are committed to studying and deepening our understanding of best practices of governance appropriate to stages of organizational development.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Approves school wide policies
- Evaluates the Executive Director
- Approves school budgets
- Receives academic performances
- Holds bi-annual community town halls

## CENTRAL OFFICE

- Provides back office functions for the schools
- Establishes the regulations and procedures in operations
- Is overseen by the Executive Director
- Creates rapport with the school districts to maintain compliance

## SCHOOL SITE OFFICE AND FACULTY

- Collaborates on school programs
- Curriculum support
- Oversees student relationship and development

## LEADERSHIP TEAM

- Consists of the Executive Director, the Director of Educational Support, and school principals
- Sets the direction for how to achieve strategic goals
- Advises our use of resources to support greatest needs
- Provides peer mentoring for new school principals

## GOLDEN VALLEY EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION (GVEF)

- Raises funds that directly supplement the GVCS budget
- Coordinates Annual Giving Campaign and other all school fundraisers
- Maintains positive support from parents for school programs



# Board of Trustees

The stewardship of Golden Valley Charter Schools is held by the Board of Trustees. The Board is comprised of faculty and volunteer parents representing all schools. The governance of the schools includes: setting the overall direction for the schools through the establishment of our strategic plan, mission goals, approval of policies, budget and personnel matters, and custodianship of the charters. Regular Board meeting dates, times and locations are posted on the school calendars, typically monthly. All Board meetings are open to the public. Golden Valley community members are encouraged to attend and have a voice in the governance of our schools.

Sincerely,  
John Hanafee  
Chair, 2017-18 Board of Trustees [bot@gvcharter.org](mailto:bot@gvcharter.org)

## 2017-18 Board Members

Becky Page, *Board Member, Faculty*  
Rhoda Cortez, *Board Member, Faculty*  
Sarah Sullivan, *Board Member, Faculty*  
Tavia Pagan, *Board Member, Faculty*  
John Hanafee, *Chair, Parent*  
Allyson Jakubicka, *Vice-Chair, Parent*  
Joanne Ahola, *Board Member, Parent*  
Kim Crawford, *Board Member, Parent*  
G'anna Burke, *Board Member, Parent*  
Anh Nguyen, *Board Member, Parent*



WE ARE HAPPY TO ANNOUNCE  
THE OPENING OF



In May, the Newcastle Elementary School District approved the Golden Valley Tahoe School for a five-year charter. A large group of forty enthusiastic children and parents made the trek down from the Truckee area to the Newcastle Elementary School District office to show their passion, hard work, and love for public Waldorf school education. We would like to thank the Friends of Tahoe Truckee Waldorf (FOTTW) for their dedication and value of preserving and sharing the love for Waldorf education in this area. The school is temporarily located on 908 Northstar Drive, Truckee, CA 96161. An official permanent school location will be released in the next school year.

Bonnie River  
*Tahoe School Principal*



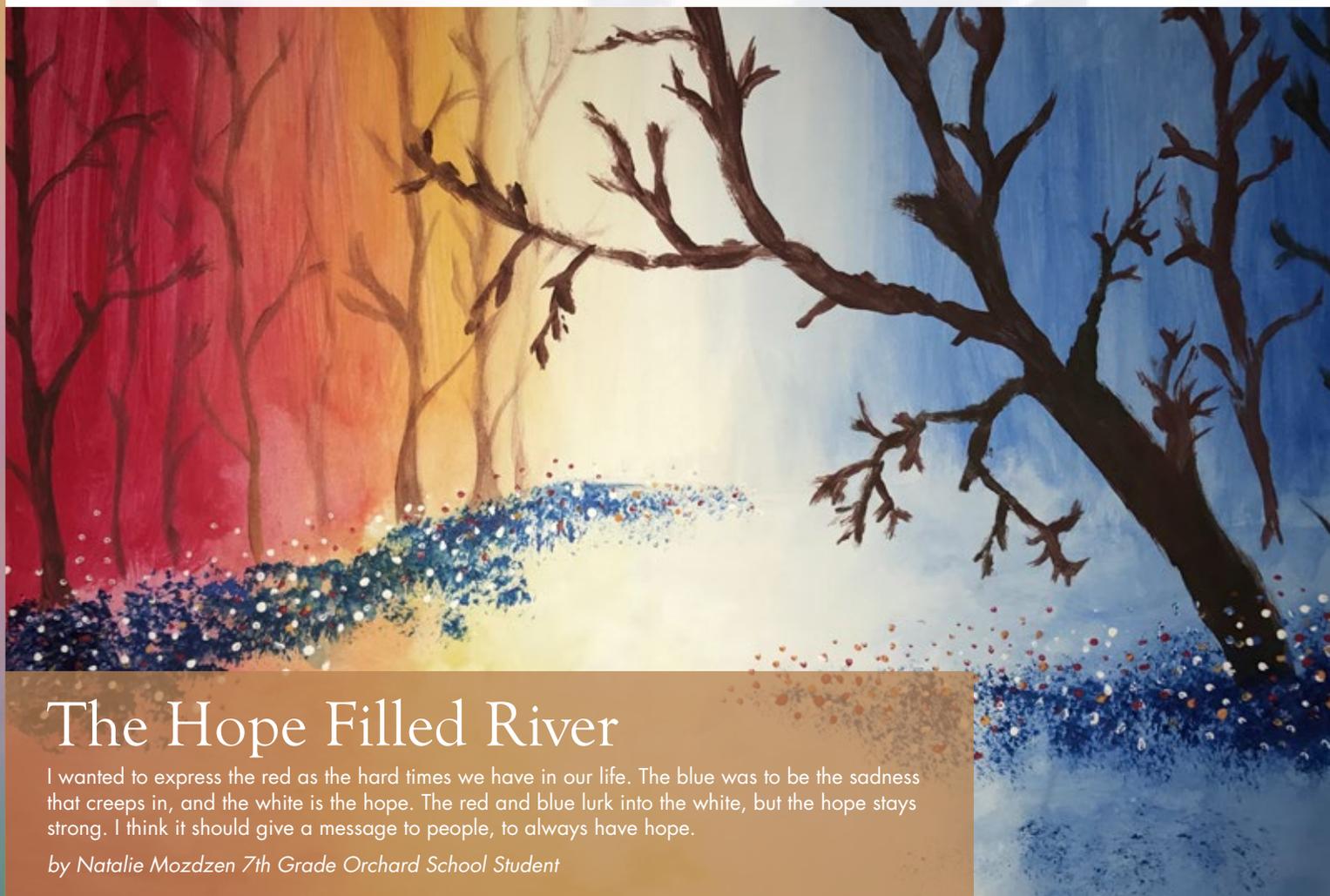


The 2017-18 year was a year of transition, resilience, and steadfastness in Orchard's continual growth. The community and faculty were involved in many collaborations to develop plans to ensure the school has a community building environment where the Waldorf curriculum can unfold naturally and beautifully for the students.

Students were immersed in many field trips which brought to life the lessons from the classrooms, such as Fully Belly Farms, Malakoff Diggins, Yosemite, and Ashland, Oregon. This year was the first year for Student Council, sixth and seventh graders. The group organized spirit week, a very successful book drive and managed the end of the year school event, Spirit Day.

Teachers continued to further their professional development. The upper grades began an online math program and were treated to learning German this year as part of the specialty program. News of a Waldorf teacher training program for the 18-19-year energized faculty and staff for furthering their knowledge of the Waldorf pedagogy and curriculum.

The holiday season was a time of fellowship. Parent Circle volunteers and faculty welcomed the school community at Bowls of Peace potluck, which culminated in a candlelit circle and singing. The year ended with the crowning event of May Day. The students came together to make their flower crowns for the festivities at the River School campus. Orchard School looks forward to having a full TK-8th grade school next year and hosting the May Festival.



## The Hope Filled River

I wanted to express the red as the hard times we have in our life. The blue was to be the sadness that creeps in, and the white is the hope. The red and blue lurk into the white, but the hope stays strong. I think it should give a message to people, to always have hope.

by Natalie Mozdzen 7th Grade Orchard School Student

# Pond of Dreams

I've always thought that ponds are peaceful.

by Jason Bersamin Eighth Grade River School Student



The 2017-2018 school year at Golden Valley River School was a year of joyful service and new beginnings. Our new Vice Principal, Barbara Ames, also served as class teacher while she finished her journey of teaching the Redwood Class. To support her dual role of teacher and principal, the Redwood class welcomed Maya Colondres as a supporting teacher. How fortunate for the River School to be able to support Mrs. Ames to finish her eight-year journey with the Redwood Class. We look forward to Mrs. Ames being the full-time principal in the upcoming school year.

Our festival life was renewed by the kindergarten teachers leading a collaboration with Orchard kindergarten teachers. After a stakeholders meeting, the teachers developed a festival new to River school: The Festival of Light. This new offering will be held in the fall of 2018. We look forward to this multi-cultural event that will serve the schools and greater community.

Parent volunteers and the teachers carried forth the impulse of our first Winter Faire. Held the last school day before Winter break, the Winter Faire provided classes the opportunity to celebrate in community with an all-school sing along and a variety of activities. Day of Courage in September and Spirit Day in June are other annual celebrations marking the seasonal change and immerse all the grades.

The school year closed with River school concluding our dual tracked 8th grade class. This was the last year for River school to experience two eighth grades attending the track meet, give 8th grade presentations, dance in tandem around the May pole and attend their final graduation. The River School is now a single-track TK-8th grade school and has welcomed a new program called the Meadow Brook Homeschool Hybrid program, which is a grades companion to the current outdoor Kindergarten homeschool program.



# GOLDEN VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOLS

Golden Valley Charter Schools is a Charter Management Organization (CMO) and currently operates three schools. The CMO consists of a central office team providing back office functions and is the formal administrative organization of the schools. The central office (CO) staff provides administrative, student services, special education, enrollment, IT, financial, HR & payroll, marketing & communications, and training support to Golden Valley schools. This group establishes the regulations and procedures and takes advantage of economies of scale by providing support and administrative guidance in areas that need to be uniform and consistent across all schools. They create and maintain rapport with school districts, manage state and federal reporting and hold the Local Accountability Plan (LCAP). They work together to collaboratively achieve our mission, vision, values and goals.



**Top Row:** Brittnie Carr, *Enrollment/Outreach Coordinator*; Paula Watson, *Human Resource Manager*; Susan Gutierrez, *Director of Educational Support*; Caleb Buckley, *Executive Director*; Bob Holt, *IT Manager*; Melanie Neal, *Educational Support Executive Assistant*

**Bottom Row:** Amala Easton, *Executive Assistant*; Marlene Laughter, *Marketing & Communications Coordinator*; Carol Evans, *Business Services Representative*; Samantha Crippin, *Business Services Specialist*; Becky Schwartz, *Student Services Coordinator*

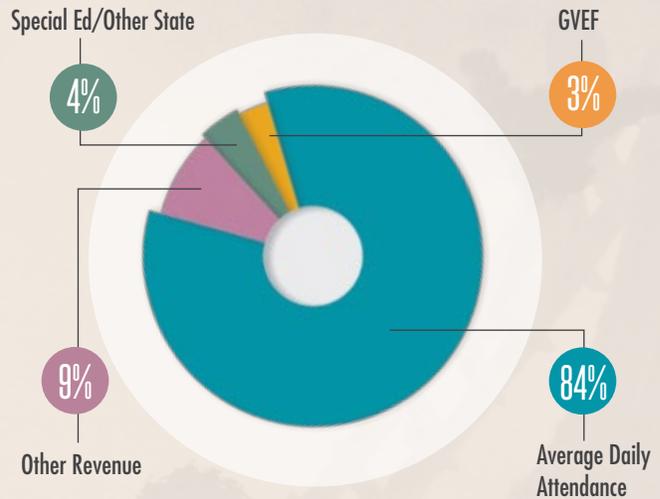
## Finances 2017-2018

In 2017/18, it took just over \$5 million to operate Golden Valley Charter Schools. Our board is comprised of teachers and parents from the schools who sit down together and decide how to best allocate those funds. We ended the year with an annual operating surplus, a cash reserve of about 34% of our total budget, and we were able to give a 6% salary increase to all returning employees. Like most public schools, we are funded primarily by students attending school and all of the smaller grants associated with enrollment. The majority of our expenses are salaries and benefits, with 10% going to our local district for rent. This year, we put a premium on professional development for our teachers and supplies and equipment for our students. As annual giving increases, we are able to expand these two areas of the budget to better serve our students. The central office provides the back office functions of the schools and has an operational cost of \$776,000. Most expenses are salaries, employees, business services, and consultants that support the work of the schools. Other expended funds are insurance, rentals, legal costs, marketing and organizational memberships.

### Revenue

Average Daily Attendance (ADA)	\$4,300,000
Special Ed/Other State	\$210,000
Other Revenue	\$455,000
GVEF	\$182,000

**Total \$5,147,000**

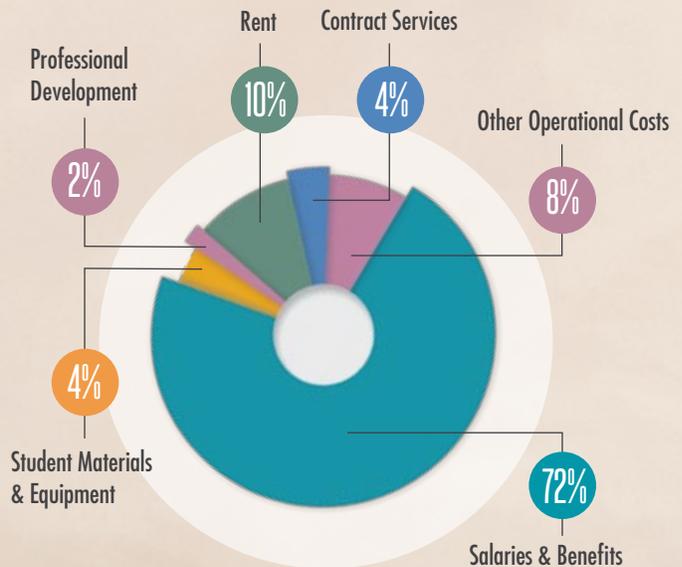


CMO Cost: \$776,000 • Ending Balance: \$126,000 • 34% of Operating Budget in Reserve

### Expenses

Salaries & Benefits	\$3,600,000
Student Materials & Equipment	\$219,000
Professional Development	\$72,000
Rent	\$500,000
Contract Services	\$226,000
Other Operating Costs	\$404,000

**Total \$5,021,000**



**2017-2018 GVEF Members**

I would first like to express my sincere gratitude to the Golden Valley Charter Schools (GVCS) community. I believe we are very lucky to have children be a part of the GVCS educational model. I have been involved with this community for over two years now and am happy to state that my son is thriving and blossoming in the culture of Golden Valley. GVEF is part of that culture and greatly appreciates the contributions made by the schools' families, faculty, and staff in a multitude of ways. All of our GVEF members are honored to contribute what we can in efforts to support extracurricular activities for our students, ongoing training for our teachers, and support physical improvements at our schools. The Annual Giving Campaign provides the vast majority of GVEF funds and we are so appreciative of the collective effort that goes into ensuring those vital resources.

At GVEF, we strive to have an even greater impact in our community and would like for more people to learn about how our schools are cultivating the next generation of leaders, innovators, and contributors. We encourage you to share this annual report with family members, friends, and others in your network that may want to learn about and support our creative and interactive education.

Thank you,  
Jonathan Locy, 2018-2019 GVEF President  
gvef@gvcharter.org

- Chris Aguirre, President*
- Monica Eisel, Vice-President*
- Jason Coleman, Treasurer*
- Michelle Campbell, Director of AGC*
- Lacey Coleman, Secretary*
- Annie Bosque, Faculty Liaison*
- Michelle Campbell, Board Member*
- Lacey Coleman, Board Member*
- Berry Crawford, Board Member*
- Tracey Ikemire, Board Member*
- Johnathan Locy, Board member*



Monica Eisel shows off an auction item



GVEF presents a check to Caleb Buckley for GVCS

# Finances 2017-2018

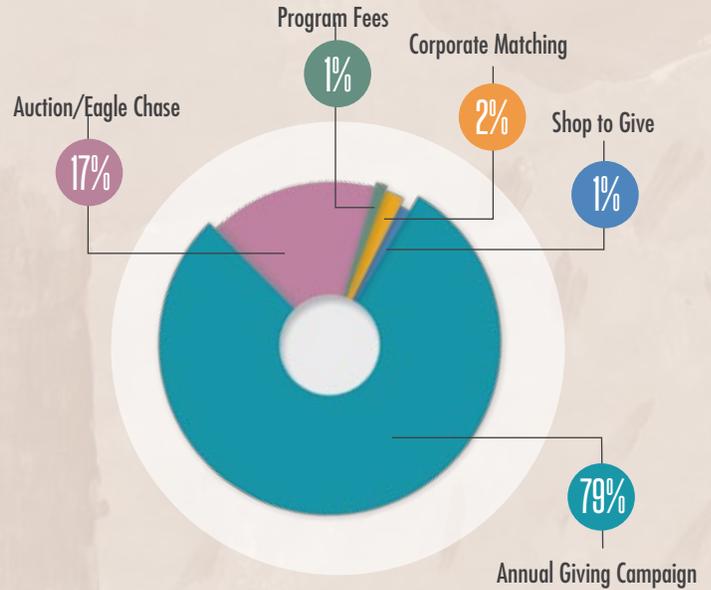
The Golden Valley Educational Foundation is a volunteer based, non-profit fundraising group which makes annual awards to GVCS to support programs in the schools. Their largest effort is a monthly pledge campaign that encourages parents to make regular contributions through direct debits. Eagle Chase is our jog-a-thon fundraiser and provided 17% of all funds raised. In some cases, parents can direct corporate matching gifts to the foundation. On-line shopping and smaller giving campaigns have provided additional revenue. Everything granted to the school is based on parent-to-parent solicitations. Although GVEF is staffed by parent volunteers, there are operational expenses. These expenses are subtracted from funds raised along with a reserve to begin the new fiscal year.

## GVEF Revenue

Annual Giving Campaign	\$183,361
Auction/Eagle Chase	\$40,333
Program Fees	\$2,738
Corporate Matching	\$3,411
Shop to Give	\$3,712

**GVEF Gross Funds Raised: \$232,555**

Grant to GVCS: \$182,000



May Festival & Picnic



Eagle Chase is an all school jog-a-thon to raise money for the specialty programs such as Spanish, music, handwork, gardening and continuing education for our teachers.



2016 Eagle Chase Jog-a-thon

# Important Dates 2018-2019

## River and Orchard Schools

**Nov 26-30:** Parent Teacher Conferences

**Dec 24-Jan 4:** Holiday Break

**Jan 21:** Martin Luther King Day/No School

**Feb 18-22:** President's Day/Winter Break

**Feb 28:** Parent Enrichment

**March 4:** Staff Development/No School

**March 13-14:** Parent Teacher Conferences

**April 15-22:** Spring Break

**May 4:** River School May Festival & Picnic

**May 11:** Orchard School May Festival & Picnic

**May 27:** Memorial Day/No School

**June 8:** Last Day of School

## Tahoe School

**Nov 19-20:** Parent Teacher Conferences

**Nov 21-23:** Thanksgiving Break

**Dec 9:** Elves Workshop Fundraiser

**Dec 24-Jan 3:** Holiday Break

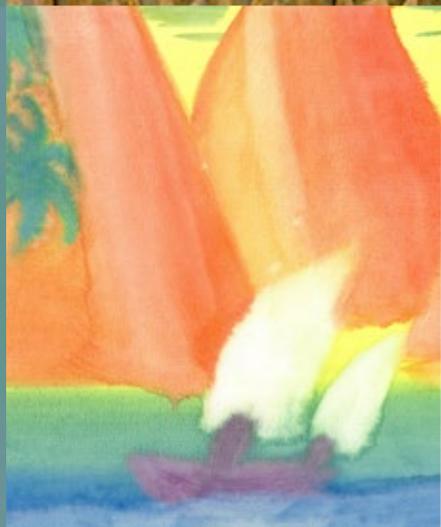
**Jan 21:** Martin Luther King Day/No School

**Feb 18-22:** President's Day/Winter Break

**April 15-19:** Spring Break

**May 27:** Memorial Day/No School

**June 19:** Last Day of School



Cover photo by parent Ana Moreno of a class fieldtrip to Zittel Farms.



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