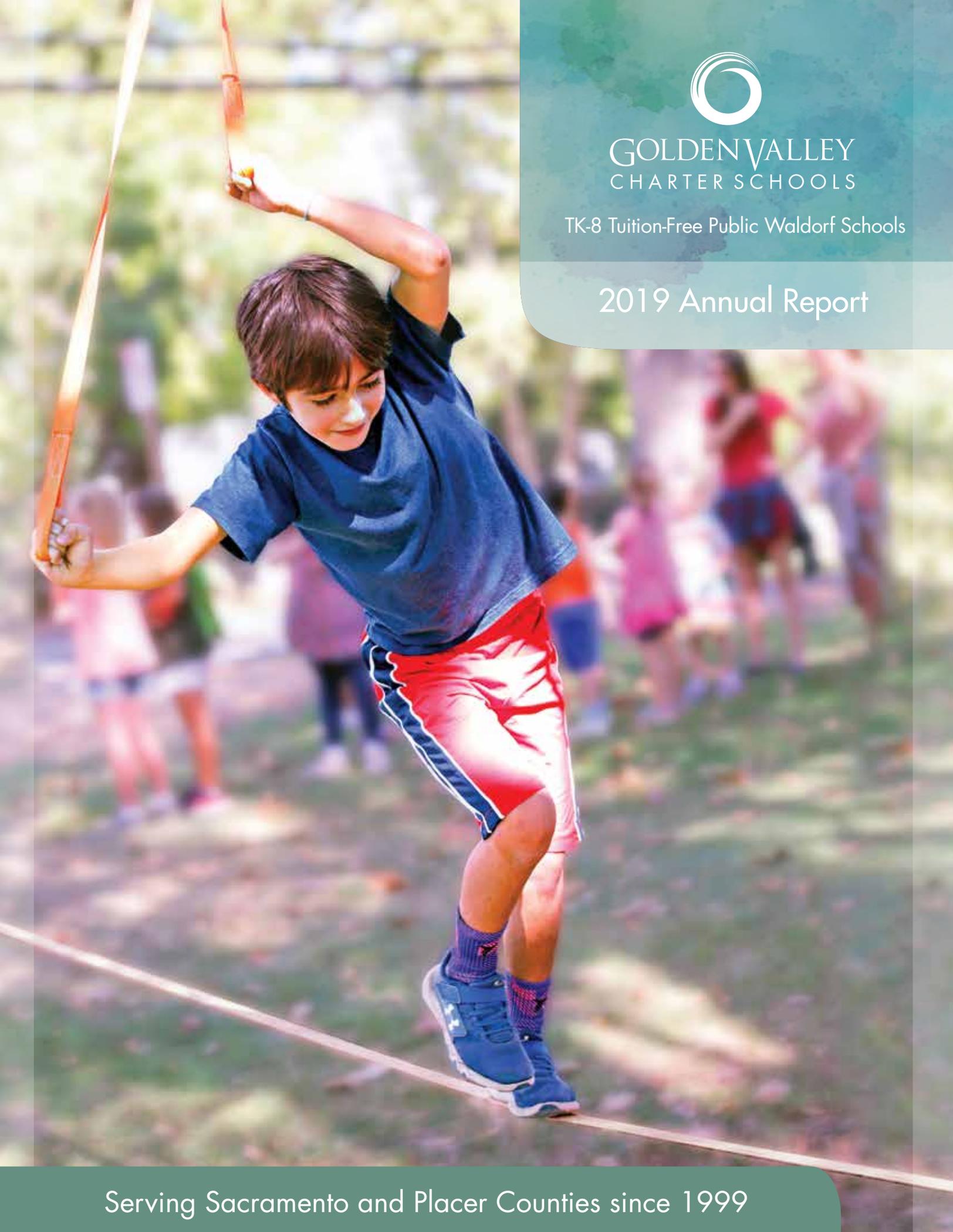




GOLDEN VALLEY  
CHARTER SCHOOLS

TK-8 Tuition-Free Public Waldorf Schools

## 2019 Annual Report



Serving Sacramento and Placer Counties since 1999

*Now in our 20th year...*

Golden Valley Charter Schools is a vital leader in growing the opportunity for Public Waldorf Education in Northern California. We support student learning environments that create ethical thinkers and practical achievements. Through developmentally appropriate learning, respectful relationships, joyful service, and excellence, Golden Valley continues to expand Waldorf teaching in a public setting.

## OUR 3 SCHOOLS



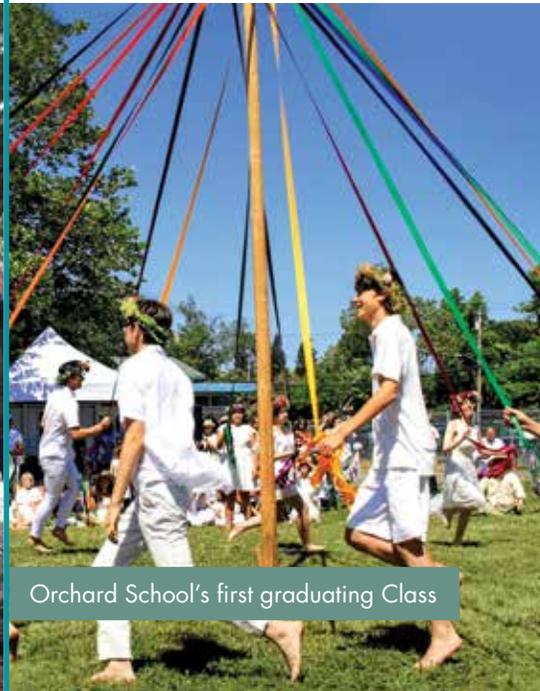
GOLDEN VALLEY  
TAHOE SCHOOL



Tahoe School's first school year



GOLDEN VALLEY  
ORCHARD SCHOOL



Orchard School's first graduating Class



GOLDEN VALLEY  
RIVER SCHOOL



Meadow Brook Program's first year

# A Message from the Executive Director

The biggest accomplishment of 2018-19 was our renewal of the Golden Valley River School's charter with the San Juan Unified School District. Golden Valley entered its 20th year, having completed two charter renewals and a new charter



Caleb Buckley with the Eagle Chase Mascot

in Truckee in the last three years. Our first year of providing services to the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education received good reviews and we are looking forward to expanding services with them next year. After several years of strong surpluses, 2018-19 saw a dip in revenues and an expense increase as we invested in our new school and expanded programs and square footage on our leases. Golden Valley Charter Schools ended the year with a strong \$1.2 million in reserve representing 20% of our operating budget. This would not have been possible without the strong support from the

parent community which raised \$50,000 for the Tahoe School and approximately \$180,000 for River and Orchard Schools.

Outdoor learning became a prominent component of our programs this year which you will see throughout this report. In Tahoe, students have a full day each week of eco-literacy, while at River we have an outdoor kindergarten year-round, and at Orchard we use the farms and parks to enrich our learning. As 2019 closes, we look to renew our strategic plan. Please accept this report as part of our accountability to you for how we receive public funds and private donations to produce a vibrant Public Waldorf community.

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

## Leadership Team



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



**Becky Page**  
*Orchard School Principal*



**Barbara Ames**  
*River School Principal*



**Bonnie River**  
*Tahoe School Principal*

# Nature Immersion

## TAHOE SCHOOL

At Golden Valley Tahoe School we value the importance of forming a connection to the natural world around us. The Ecological Literacy Program takes children into nature and presents them with experiences which allow them to feel wonder, practice the scientific process and explore the Next Generation Science Standards in detail. This year the children explored forests and meadows. They trained their senses, making observations and formulating their own questions from what they observed. In 2018, we also built a small school garden, explored Martis Valley, worked with the Donner Land Trust to prevent trail erosion, and picked up over 10 bags of trash off Northstar lands.



## ORCHARD SCHOOL

Kindergarten classes spend at least an hour every day outside breathing the fresh morning air and waking up their bodies completely. During outside play, the children are busy digging in the sand and finding worms and beautiful leaves. Being outside and connecting with the natural world relaxes the nerves and provides an opportunity for developmentally appropriate and free movement. Outside play continues into the grades with a variety of movement activities, games classes, weekly walks, and many field trips that bring to life the lessons from the classroom. Some of the trips are to places such as Full Belly Farms, Malakoff Diggins, Yosemite and Ashland, Oregon.

## RIVER SCHOOL

The nature immersion of the Outdoor Home Study Kindergarten allows the children to experience the wonder and beauty that nature provides as well as offer plenty of opportunities for large motor development. The grades Meadow Brook Home Study Program includes weekly nature walks, sit spots for nature observation, and



tactile curriculum learning that brings core content to hands-on development. This includes nature journaling, social studies and science integration, and an opportunity for nature play that bridges imagination, learning, and social inclusion. Nature is brought indoors through the greening of space, a tactile seasonal table, nature books, and ongoing nature observation and study.



# Board of Trustees

## 2018-19 BOARD MEMBERS

**John Hanafee**  
*Chair, Parent*

**Heather Fraser Hurtt**  
*Vice-Chair, Parent*

**G'Anna Burke**  
*Board Secretary, Parent*

**Stephanie Parmely**  
*Board Member, Parent*

**Jennifer Huetter**  
*Board Member, Parent*

**Liz Sheppard**  
*Board Member, Parent*

The stewardship of Golden Valley Charter Schools is held by the Board of Trustees. The Board is comprised of 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 custodianship of the charters. Regular Board meeting dates, times, and locations are

posted on the school calendars and websites, typically monthly. All regular 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, 2018-19 Board of Trustees  
bot@gvcharter.org



## TAHOE SCHOOL

Golden Valley Tahoe School completed its first year in 2019 with 42 students in transitional kindergarten through third grade. Newcastle Elementary School District in Placer County is the authorizing district and the school is located on Northstar Drive in Truckee. This wonderful natural setting provides numerous outdoor learning opportunities including weekly field trips to promote “eco-literary” in all the classes.

The school community organized a Festival of Courage, Lantern Walk, and May Day. Parents from GVTS also support an event called the Elves Workshop as one of their main fundraisers. Children delight in creating gifts with elves and experiencing a special puppet play while parents engage together with good food and bid on silent auction items. Events and festivals have served to honor childhood as it unfolds at our new school.

Being our first year, the school could not have been successful without the support of the Friends of Tahoe Truckee Waldorf (FOTTW). This non-profit holds the lease to our facility that we pay \$50,000 for and then, in turn, donates the \$50,000 back to the school. By covering the cost of our facility, FOTTW allows all of our dollars to go directly into the program for the children. In 2018-19, the Golden Valley River School, Golden Valley Orchard School, and Charter Management Organization (CMO) all contributed time and resources to support year one of the pioneering phase of the new Tahoe School.

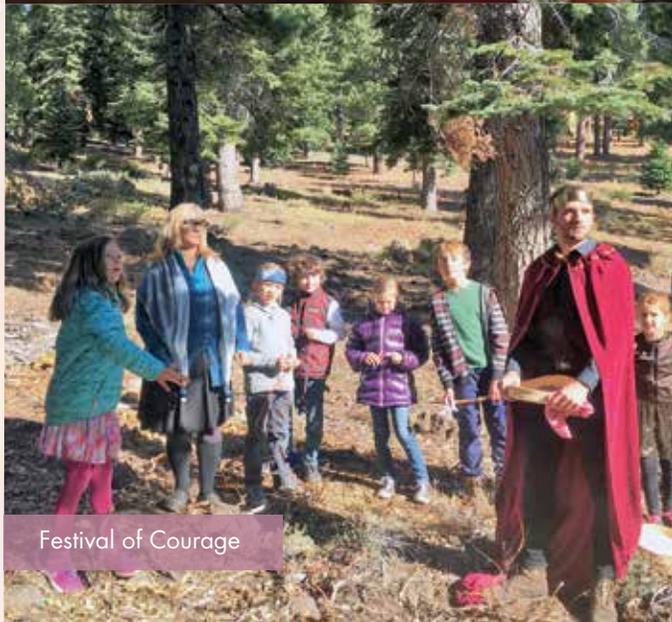
As 2019 closes, the school is looking to move to a permanent site in Truckee. FOTTW has begun a capital campaign to hold the mortgage on a site that GVTS will lease. The long range plan is to add a grade every year until 8th grade which will require a large site with ample natural surroundings to support the integration of science and wonder into the classes.



The third graders receive a map lesson in Eco-literacy class



Wet-on-wet painting in Kindergarten



Festival of Courage

## RIVER SCHOOL

Golden Valley River School continued the theme of joyful service and new beginnings for the 2018-19 school year. Mrs. Ames started her new position as the full-time principal, a new grades home study program opened to twenty students offering an extension to the already rich Outdoor Kindergarten, and many of our teachers and staff began Waldorf foundations study in the Building Bridges program through Antioch University.

The Festival Committee and Parent Circle implemented first annual celebrations and continued to support many ongoing traditions. The Festival of Light renewed activities traditionally held in the past, such as candle-dipping, storytelling, paper star folding, and the Harvest Moon Café. In December, the stage was transformed into a beautiful, magical Children's Store. Our community generously donated hand-made offerings for the children to "shop." Thanks to Festival Committee, school leadership, and volunteers, this event was a HUGE success. Parent Circle's hospitality at Rose Ceremonies is generous, beautiful, nourishing, and elegant. Our school's annual concert gives an effective picture of our music and arts curriculum across the grades. These events are widely attended by alumni and families.

The middle school students were thrilled to receive adequate seating in their grotto, after a hard-working Eagle Scout made four new benches. Another Eagle Scout contributed four new picnic tables for the front of the school. They all are well built and made of sturdy, long-lasting materials. Their beauty adds to the environment and provides needed seating for snack and small group work.

On the first Saturday of May, River School celebrated our annual May Festival and Picnic. This year, with one 8th grade class performing, the festivities were scaled back down to one May Pole and held a more intimate community event. Goldenstock returned to River School at the end of May. This talent concert took the form of an "in house" festival, celebrated during school hours for the children to enjoy.



Meadow Brook Home Study Program at the nearby river



Kindergarten Lantern Walk



Holiday Children's Store



## ORCHARD SCHOOL

The 2018-2019 year at Golden Valley Orchard School centered upon revitalizing the school through unity and rebuilding. The school began this task over the summer as our Historic Wing, which was originally built in the 1937, was refurbished. This allowed space for Orchard School to expand to full capacity as a TK–8th grade school, add a dedicated handwork room and add our own library. In addition, River kindergarten teacher, Becky Page, took a year sabbatical to serve as Interim Principal during this year of growth.

Our parent group, Parent Circle, rallied around students, teachers and community with a variety of offerings through the year. They created a Holiday “Children’s Store” where students entered a magical woodland setting to choose handmade items to gift to family and friends. Parent Circle also supported teachers by coordinating four teacher luncheons as well as creating care packages for teachers enrolled in Waldorf teacher training through Antioch University’s Building Bridges Program.

Orchard teachers continue to show commitment and dedication through excellence in teaching and provide innovative initiatives through the year. One such action this winter was our Warm Scarves Project lead by our Practical Arts department chair, Deanna Ronningen. Students, teachers and parents knitted, crocheted and sewed 140 scarves to donate to local charities in need. The excellence of our teachers was recognized by the Orangevale Chamber of Commerce and Parks and Recreation as our 5th grade teacher, Zachary Phillips, was honored as Orangevale Teacher of the Year.

We celebrated throughout the year as our first 8th grade class practiced many virtues forging their way through Waldorf 8th grade activities. Two of our Orchard School 8th graders made it to the San Francisco German finals, the class astounded us with their knowledge and creativity during their 8th grade presentations, they danced with joy and unity at Orchard’s first May Festival; they showed humility, courage, and respect as each reflected upon their many years here at Golden Valley; and through self-discipline and perseverance they graduated with grace.



Warm Scarves Project



Teacher of the Year, Zachary Phillips



Orchard School's first May Festival



Golden Valley Charter Schools is a Charter Management Organization (CMO) and is a non-profit dedicated to supporting and increasing the availability of Public Waldorf Education. Golden Valley currently operates three schools with a central office team providing back office functions and is the formal administrative organization of the schools. This past year, the central office also provided business services for the Alliance for Public Waldorf Schools. Faculty, staff, administration and the board of Golden Valley Charter Schools collaborate to guide and lead the schools with input from each group. As we enter the 20th year of Golden Valley Charter Schools, these groups will collaborate even more to set our strategic goals with Town Hall meetings.

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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

### LEADERSHIP TEAM

- Consists of the Executive Director, Director of Education Support and Special Education, 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



### SCHOOL SITE OFFICE AND FACULTY

- Collaborates on school programs
- Curriculum support
- Oversees student relationship and development
- Connects with the parent body

### 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
- Maintains compliance with local, state, and federal regulations

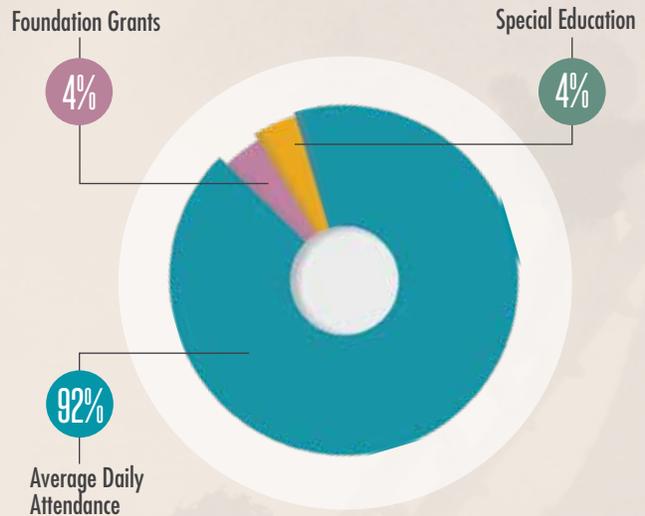
## Finances 2018-2019

Attendance and donations at Golden Valley schools generated over \$5.5 Million of revenue in the 2018-19 school year. After several years with a strong surplus, GVCS made substantial investments in starting a new school and expanding programs, staff, benefits, and classroom space. Through generous donations, we are able to offer classes beyond the California Common Core as well as beautiful student supplies. As a Charter Management Organization (CMO) we are able to offer many levels of support that a single school would not be able to afford, such as an array of educational support and special education, expertise in human resources and payroll, benefits administration, student assessment tracking, marketing, and overall compliance with California's complex education code. Like most non-profits, our primary expense is in salaries and benefits, totaling two-thirds of our budget. Rent on our three campuses and office space is creeping up to a half million dollars. Our annual budget is approved by the Board with input from faculty, staff, and parents through the finance committee.

### Revenue

Average Daily Attendance (ADA)	\$5,091,000
Special Education	\$221,000
Foundation Grants	\$230,000

**Total** **\$5,542,000**

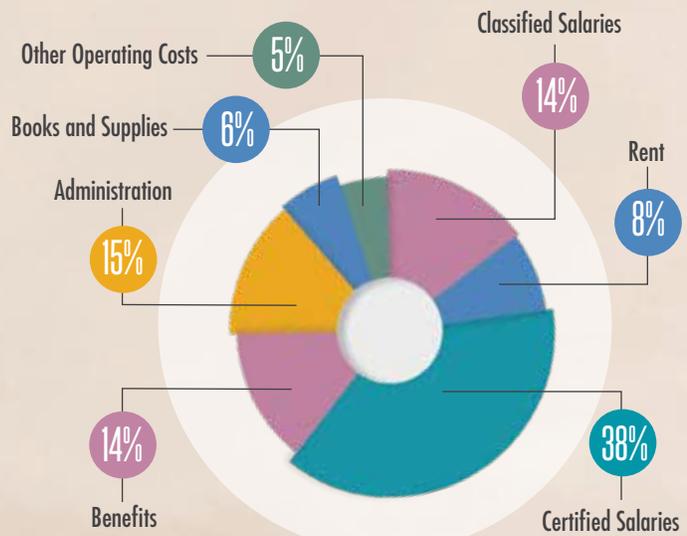


One-time operating deficit of \$191,700 • Ending fund balance: \$1.2 million

### Expenses

Certified Salaries	\$2,177,300
Classified Salaries	\$788,900
Benefits	\$800,000
Books and Supplies	\$369,800
Other Operating Costs	\$293,800
Administration	\$837,300
Rent	\$466,600

**Total** **\$5,733,700**





2018-2019 GVEF Members

- Jonathan Locy, *President*
- Annie Bosque, *Faculty Liaison*
- Michelle Campbell, *Director of AGC*
- Lacey Coleman, *Secretary*
- Jason Coleman, *Treasurer*
- Julia Janssen, *member*
- Lara Sansen, *member*

One of the great things about Golden Valley Charter Schools (GVCS) is the unique Waldorf experience that is offered. From the creative curriculum such as practical arts classes, to the Waldorf training that enriches the teaching staff, this community is dedicated to provide a creative, nurturing, and educational environment that is inspired by Waldorf education.

As a parent that values the Waldorf approach, I am pleased that my son is a part of this community. Many of you may not know that much of the extra-curricular programs and activities offered at GVCS are funded through private donations into our Golden Valley Educational Foundation (GVEF). This non-profit arm of the school is dedicated to raising revenue to help fund all the "extras" that help give our children that Waldorf experience we hold dear.

Art supplies, specialty programs, gardens, teacher training and so much more are only possible thanks to the support of GVEF. On behalf of the GVEF Board, I want to extend my deepest gratitude for all of the family support we receive. If not for your generosity, our children would miss out on the wonderful opportunities our schools offer. We hope you continue to support these efforts this year by participating in our Annual Giving Campaign or by contributing to our many fundraisers throughout the school year.

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



Practical arts through the curriculum



Gardening Teacher, Farmer Matt



Eagle Chase fundraiser

## Finances 2018-2019

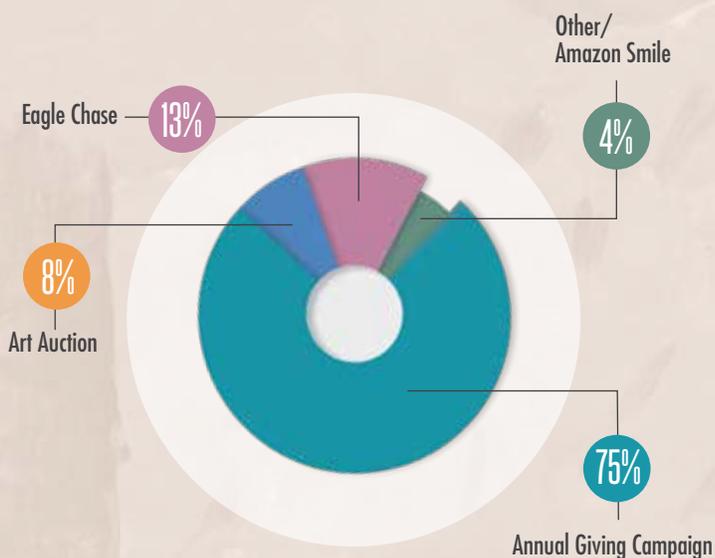
The Golden Valley Educational Foundation raises money for Golden Valley Charter Schools primarily through an annual giving fund drive which comprises 75% of its revenue. Families make a monthly tax-deductable pledge to the schools and all of the money is transferred to GVCS. Two big events also raise money during the year, the Eagle Chase and the art auction. The first is a jog-a-thon that kids receive donations for and the latter is a sale of student art work at the May Festival. An area of growth for the future is to improve the corporate matching gifts and to increase the "passive income" such as the Amazon Smile account. In total, it took \$9500 to run the foundation including bookkeeping and insurance. Last year Orchard and River received funds directly into their field trip funds from the foundation.

### GVEF Revenue

Annual Giving	\$144,000
Art Auction	\$15,000
Eagle Chase	\$24,000
Other/Amazon Smile	\$7,000

The GVEF gross funds raised \$190,000

Grant to GVCS: \$180,000



Wet-on-wet painting



Ukulele Music Program



Two eighth graders qualified for the German competition finals, San Francisco

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# Important Dates 2019-2020

## River and Orchard Schools

**Dec 23-Jan 3**  
Holiday Break

**Jan 20**  
Martin Luther King Day/No School

**Feb 17-21**  
President's Day/Winter Break

**Feb 27**  
Parent Enrichment

**March 10-12**  
Parent Teacher Conferences

**April 6-13**  
Spring Break

**May 25**  
Memorial Day

**May 28**  
Last Day of School

Front Cover Photography by Suzanne Dick

## Tahoe School

**Dec 8**  
Elves Workshop

**Dec 9**  
No School

**Dec 23-Jan 3**  
Holiday Break

**Jan 20**  
Martin Luther King Day/No School

**Feb 17-21**  
President's Day/Winter Break

**March 10-12**  
Parent Teacher Conferences

**April 10-17**  
Spring Break

**May 25**  
Memorial Day

**June 18-25\***  
Last Day of School  
\*contingent on snow days



Artwork by Kendra Seagraves  
6th grade, Golden Valley Orchard School

916 597-1478

[www.goldenvalleycharter.org](http://www.goldenvalleycharter.org)



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