

September 10, 2025

Regular Meeting Minutes

1. **Vice Chair Meredith Willsen called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m.**
2. **Roll Call –**
Board Members Present: Meredith Willsen, Stephen Quadro, Ekaterina Khmelniker, Jessica Crew
Board Members Absent: Katie Gerski-Keller, James Stark
Jennifer Huetter has resigned from the Board, see resignation letter attached.
Guests: Brittany Galles, Jennifer Hoover, Becky Page (remote), Ryan Sutton, Tavia Pagan, Upekkha Evans, Eileen Worthing, Christine Bernardo, Marya Sahota, Bri D’Agostini, Alicia Ferguson, Ryan Miller, Sarah Miller
3. **Board Member Exigencies and Remote Attendance –**
Action: Shall the board approve any board members to participate in this board meeting from a remote location due to unexpected emergencies per AB 2449?
Information: Members must publicly disclose at the meeting before any action is taken, whether any other individuals 18 years of age or older are present in the room at the remote location with the member, and if so, the general nature of the member’s relationship with any such individuals; and ensure their meeting participation using both visual and audio technology.

TABLED. NO ACTION.
4. **Meredith Willsen read the Courage Virtue Card.**
5. **Public Comment –**

Addie made a comment regarding Agenda Item #9, Golden Valley Orchard School’s 8th grade Sequoia Class field trip.

Bri D’Agostini made a comment regarding Prop 28 funds.

Vice Chair Meredith Willsen closed public comment at 5:12 p.m.
6. **Minutes Approval –**
It was moved by Ekaterina Khmelniker and seconded by Stephen Quadro that the board approve the August 20, 2025, Annual Meeting Minutes.

(Ayes: 4, Noes: 0, Abstain: 0)
7. **Parsec Education Partnership –**
Stephen Quadro followed up with Parsec Education on cyber security questions.

Jennifer Hoover made a comment confirming that Title I funds will be used for the purchase of Parsec Education’s services, covering both campuses for GVCS.

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The Board was again presented with pricing of Parsec's services in both a two-year and three-year package breakdown, agreeing to the three-year option due to GVCS approaching a recharter year.

It was moved by Stephen Quadro and seconded by Meredith Willsen that the board approve of a three-year contract between GVCS and Parsec Education Partnership.

(Ayes: 4, Noes: 0, Abstain: 0)

8. School Report Cards –

Faculty Chair Tavia Pagan spoke on behalf of teachers in favor of moving from a trimester report card system to a semester report card system. Jennifer Hoover noted this would be incorporated in Golden Valley River School's rechartering document in the Fall.

It was moved by Stephen Quadro and seconded by Jessica Crew that the Board approve to transition from a trimester system to a semester system for school report cards moving forward starting with the 2026-2027 school year for GVOS and GVRS.

(Ayes: 4, Noes: 0, Abstain: 0)

9. Orchard 8th Grade Class Field Trip Quote –

Susan McCann presented a letter written to the BOT inquiring about the 8th grade Sequoia Class at GVOS to attend a field trip with Furthest Field Expeditions at the end of the school year. Susan provided the BOT with an overview of fundraisers to take place throughout the course of the school year to contribute to their class funds for this field trip.

Meredith Willsen had a question on the cancellation policy with Furthest Fields Expeditions and the number of contracting students.

Susan will follow up with the Furthest Field Expeditions representative about an updated contract due to the number of students attending has changed since she first inquired.

Sequoia Class parents have agreed to pay for the remainder of the cost that is not covered by fundraisers throughout this school year. They would need a payment plan established but asked for reassurance that the out-of-pocket remainder cost funds will go to this specific field trip with Furthest Field Expeditions and not to anything else.

Meredith Willsen clarified that the payment plan will be established now, along with fundraising throughout this school year.

The Board will vote to approve the quote at \$975.00 per student for 18 students, for a total of \$17,550.00. The Board agreed that if the number of students attending the field trip needs to be amended, it can be included in consent agenda moving forward if needed.

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It was moved by Stephen Quadro and seconded by Ekaterina Khmelniker that the Board approve the Furthest Field Expeditions Quote for 18 students at a total of \$17,550.00 for the GVOS 8th grade Sequoia Class end of year field trip.

(Ayes: 4, Noes: 0, Abstain: 0)

10. Probationary Period for all new GVCS Employees –

Eileen Worthing presented to the Board her proposal of establishing a probationary period for all new GVCS employees upon hiring moving forward. This would entail updating the GVCS employee handbook, GVCS contracts, and conducting probationary reviews. Revisions of the employee handbook and contracts will need to be Board approved.

Jennifer Hoover made a comment explaining this could help avoid severances in the future.

Meredith Willsen asked that more onboarding support be included during the probationary period.

Tavia Pagan made a comment explaining that a probationary period is usually very common at other establishments. She noted this is best practice, it could help retain employees and provide clarification on supporting new employees.

Stephen Quadro commented that pretty much every company has a probationary period.

It was moved by Stephen Quadro and seconded by Ekaterina Khmelniker that the Board approve a 6-month probationary period for classified employees and a one school year probationary period for faculty for all new GVCS hired employees moving forward.

(Ayes: 4, Noes: 0, Abstain: 0)

11. Employee Benefit Contributions –

Eileen Worthing presented to the Board her proposal of a tiered benefit contribution plan for all employees due to increases in all health care benefits. She is recommending a tiered structure. Eileen explained that the increases severely impact those employees with dependents. Eileen gave examples of contributions on the rate sheet provided to the Board, as well as providing examples from other schools.

This item was discussed but will need action at a Special Board Meeting to be held. Stephen Quadro asked that Eileen provides a comparison of what is paid and/or contributed in terms of benefits when the Board votes on a proposed tiered plan at the future Special Board meeting.

TABLED. NO ACTION.

12. 2024-2025 Unaudited Actuals, GVOS –

Susan Lefkowitz presented the 2024-2025 Unaudited Actuals for Golden Valley Orchard School (GVOS).

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Stephen Quadro stated he is happy to write on behalf of the Finance Committee discovering the third interim budget did not match variances, and that cashflow was tight, when submitting the budget to San Juan Unified School District and will be signed on behalf of the Board. CSMC will also submit a narrative. GVCS will have to adjust their budgets from April to June from what was presented – a misrepresentation of funds from third interim versus actuals.

Eileen Worthing reviewed 2024-2025 school year spending on SPED services and compared savings on current costs of services as well as projected saving moving forward. Recruitment efforts for internal contracting were not high in the past, which is why GVCS was contracting out for services. Eileen explained to the Board that it is better to contract internally to save costs.

Meredith Willsen requested that Susan Lefkowitz provide SPED budgeted and actual expenditures over time, by fiscal year. Susan agreed to run a report reflecting this data for SPED only, covering the past few years, and will share it with the Board.

It was moved by Ekaterina Khmelniker and seconded by Jessica Crew that the Board approve the 2024-2025 Unaudited Actuals for Golden Valley Orchard School (GVOS).

(Ayes: 4, Noes: 0, Abstain: 0)

13. 2024-2025 Unaudited Actuals, GVOS) –

Susan Lefkowitz presented the 2024-2025 Unaudited Actuals for Golden Valley River School (GVRs).

Jennifer Hoover provided a breakdown of student enrollment for both GVOS and GVRs as of today's date September 10, 2025, showing 2025-2026 budget assumptions as well as revenue lost or gained. Both schools are enrolled with over 300 students. See attached student enrollment totals.

It was moved by Jessica Crew and seconded by Ekaterina Khmelniker that the Board approve the 2024-2025 Unaudited Actuals for Golden Valley River School (GVRs).

(Ayes: 4, Noes: 0, Abstain: 0)

14. Faculty Reports –

Faculty Chair Report, Orchard: Orchard Faculty Chair, Jennifer Evans, presented items of interest to the board.

Faculty Chair Report, River: River Faculty Chair, Tavia Pagan, presented items of interest to the board.

15. Executive Reports –

Board Chair Report: Board of Trustees Vice Chair, Meredith Willsen, presented items of interest to the board.

Executive Director Report: Interim Executive Director, Jennifer Hoover, presented items of interest to the board.

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16. The Board recited the Motto of the Social Ethic.

17. Vice Chair Meredith Willsen adjourned the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Brittany Galles.

Meredith Willsen, Vice Chair

Date

Golden Valley Charter School
Board of Trustees

Dearest Katie and Meredith,

It has been an honor to continue to work and grow Golden Valley and I am deeply honored that I was able to join the Board in the organizations time of need. I recently have had a lot of changes that affect my availability to serve on the Board, specifically my ability to attend Wednesday meetings due to my new work schedule downtown. This is a rather difficult decision, but I must resign from the Board, effective today 08/29/2025, as I can not fulfill my obligations as an effective Board member.

I wish for the continued success of Golden Valley for years to come. This community will always have a special place in my heart.

Respectfully,
Jennifer Huetter
Board of Trustee Member

To: The Board of Trustees

From: Parents of Sequoia Tree Class

Date: 9/10/2025

Subject: Request for Approval – 8th Grade Field Trip with Furthest Field Outfitters

Dear Members of the Board,

We, the parents of the Sequoia Tree students, are writing in hopes to get your approval for our students' spring field trip: a multi-day float on the Eel River with Furthest Field Outfitters.

This trip represents more than just a memorable outdoor experience—it is an opportunity to honor the culmination of our children's Waldorf journey. We hope to offer the students a transformative and bonding experience that reflects both their resilience and their final year together at Golden Valley.

We have chosen Furthest Field Outfitters for their experience, safety protocols, and their values, which are in alignment with Waldorf principles: reverence for nature, experiential learning, and social cohesion through shared challenge. Floating the Eel River provides a hands-on immersion in California's natural landscape, while fostering deepened peer relationships, teamwork, and independence—critical elements of the 8th grade year.

To make this trip financially accessible to all families, we have formed a dedicated fundraising committee that has already planned our five allotted school-wide fundraising events. In addition, the students themselves will take an active role in participating in smaller fundraising efforts. For any remaining costs, we are prepared to organize a manageable payment plan to ensure that every student can attend, regardless of financial circumstance.

We understand that this request requires board approval before we can move forward with signing a contract with Furthest Field Outfitters, and we are hopeful that you will be able to expedite your review so we can secure our reservation and begin moving forward with logistical planning.

Thank you for your ongoing support of our students and for recognizing the importance of these rites of passage that so beautifully reflect Waldorf values and our community's commitment to them.

Warm regards,

The Parents of the 8th Grade Sequoia Tree Class

Christine Bernardo
Christine Bernardo
Miranda Clements
Miranda Clements
Crista Brown
Crista Brown
Joe Brown
Joe Brown
Andrew Craven
Andrew Craven
Marya X Sakota
Marya X Sakota
Mark Dyer
Mark Dyer

Fundraisers

- Dairy Queen X3 \$150 average \$450 est
- Skate night \$900
- Holiday grams x3 800= \$2400 est
- Valentines dance 700,
- Bake sales 225 small, 2000 school wide- festival and gathering
-
- Total est. $\$6,675 + \$11,879 = \$18,554.00$
- -20,000 + -2000 charter bus
- Out of pocket less than \$200.

ORCHARD Enrollment as of 9/10/25					
Grade	Enrollment as of 9/10/25	25-26 Budget Assumption	Difference	Per Pupil Funding	Revenue lost or gained
TK	30	28	2	\$ 16,868.00	\$ 33,736.00
K	30	32	-2	\$ 10,411.00	\$ (20,822.00)
1	28	31	-3	\$ 10,411.00	\$ (31,233.00)
2	42	41	1	\$ 10,411.00	\$ 10,411.00
3	45	45	0	\$ 10,411.00	\$ -
4	27	29	-2	\$ 10,719.00	\$ (21,438.00)
5	31	31	0	\$ 10,719.00	\$ -
6	30	31	-1	\$ 10,719.00	\$ (10,719.00)
7	28	29	-1	\$ 12,746.00	\$ (12,746.00)
8	20	22	-2	\$ 12,746.00	\$ (25,492.00)
Total	311	319	-8		\$ (78,303.00)

RIVER Enrollment as of 9/10/25					
Grade	Enrollment as of 9/10/25	25-26 Budget Assumption	Difference	Per Pupil Funding	Revenue lost or gained
TK	37	30	7	\$ 16,868.00	\$ 118,076.00
K	42	34	8	\$ 10,411.00	\$ 83,288.00
1	47	56	-9	\$ 10,411.00	\$ (93,699.00)
2	32	34	-2	\$ 10,411.00	\$ (20,822.00)
3	30	34	-4	\$ 10,411.00	\$ (41,644.00)
4	30	33	-3	\$ 10,719.00	\$ (32,157.00)
5	30	32	-2	\$ 10,719.00	\$ (21,438.00)
6	30	32	-2	\$ 10,719.00	\$ (21,438.00)
7	24	29	-5	\$ 12,746.00	\$ (63,730.00)
8	21	20	1	\$ 12,746.00	\$ 12,746.00
Total	323	334	-11		\$ (80,818.00)