

January 14, 2026

Regular Meeting Minutes

1. **Chair Katie Gerski-Keller called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m.**
2. **Roll Call –**
Board Members Present: Katie Gerski-Keller, Meredith Willsen, James Stark, Jessica Crew
Board Members Absent: Ekaterina Khmelniker, Stephen Quadro
Guests: Brittany Galles, Jennifer Hoover, Becky Page (remote), Upekkha Evans, Tavia Pagan, Ryan Sutton, Mindy Kiel
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 just cause exceptions per SB 707?
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. **Jessica Crew read the Self-Discipline Virtue Card.**
5. **Public Comment –**
There were no public comments.

Chair Katie Gerski-Keller closed public comment at 5:10 p.m.
6. **Consent Agenda –**
It was moved by Meredith Willsen and seconded by James Stark that the Board approve the following items by consent:
 - 6.1 The Board approved the December 10, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes.
 - 6.2 The Board approved the 2024-2025 Golden Valley Orchard School School Accountability Report Card (SARC).
 - 6.3 The Board approved the 2024-2025 Golden Valley River School School Accountability Report Card (SARC).
 - 6.4 The Board approved closing 2025-2026 enrollment for Golden Valley Charter Schools for all classes TK through grade 8 on February 27th, 2026.
(Ayes: 4, Noes: 0, Abstain: 0)

7. **Fiscal Policy (First Read) –**
The Board reviewed the revised Fiscal Policy for Golden Valley Charter Schools (GVCS).

James Stark explained reviewed and revised areas of the policy that the Finance Committee has helped influence. Revisions include adding verbiage surrounding signature authority, details

January 14, 2026

regarding spending thresholds, record retention and electronic records. Items about auditing have remained the same. Procurement policies in terms of signature authority, amounts and the threshold moving from \$10,000 to \$25,000 are outlined on page 10. A process around paying something in an emergency instance and notifying the Board immediately is described on page 11. The expense reimbursements timeline can be found on page 12.

The Board discussed the following revisions to the Fiscal Policy:

1. Add routine travel or repeated travel within a month period for meal transportation from Casa Roble to GVCS then expense it in the following month.
2. Page 19 payroll payment – has a control objective but needs to list more controls and procedures.
3. Page 17 bullet E, bullet G – vacation and sick leave being tracked in Paycom. Take out 'spreadsheet'.
4. Can add – framework within procedures of the Finance Committee meeting to discuss and review before it goes to the Board. The Board would like to cross reference the Governance Policy to review for any overlap regarding this matter.
5. Katie has concerns regarding high charges for consultants in the past. Is there a process where if the Board approves a contract, does the amount approved get added to the budget? The Finance Committee will clarify with Susan Lefkowitz at the next Finance Committee Meeting.
6. Page 22 control section – add in the process or procedure to explain the Executive Director (ED) or the Board can adjust a teacher's CalCard spending limit then immediately bring it back down in circumstances. Add what threshold the ED can approve and a threshold for what the Board needs to approve. Note that on Page 4 a \$25,000 spending limit is referenced for the ED at Wells Fargo.
7. Page 4 – there are two teacher references and needs to be corrected.
8. Adjust purchasing for kindergarten classes threshold to possibly \$1,000. Both faculty chairs will check in with kindergarten teachers to get feedback, numbers or a general consensus and will email this information to Jennifer.
9. Page 16 controlled objective – take out 'absolutely needs'. Add verbiage to include full or part time, within budget, and exerts tight control over hiring new employees.

TABLED. NO ACTION.

8. Executive Director Evaluation Policy (Second Read) –

Katie Gerski-Keller reviewed the revised Executive Director (ED) Evaluation Policy.

The Board discussed the following revisions to the ED Policy:

1. Add page numbers.
2. First table is to be omitted. The new table is on page 3.
3. Page 5 – add both faculty delegates.
4. Katie will fix formatting so that tables are all on one page.
5. Survey questions were pulled from standard of elements that are listed as an evaluation criteria; Katie will add these to the third read. Survey questions should be standardized across the entire year and not just at the end of the year.

TABLED. NO ACTION.

January 14, 2026

9. **Student & Parent Handbook for GVCS (Second Read)** –

The Board reviewed the revised Student & Parent Handbook for GVCS.

Policies that were added were new policies straight from CSDC samples.

Jennifer asked the Board for thoughts on verbiage for when changes are needed in such things as phone numbers, ELO, etc. The Board agreed that in these instances, the ED send and notify the Board of changes within the handbook but does not need to come to the Board for approval every time an edit is made. Note: possibly make an administrative regulation and address this in governance.

James has notes that he could not access during the meeting and will send to Jennifer for feedback.

Jennifer explained that page 10 spells out details of the fundraising committee.

Revision needed:

1. Cell phone policy is repetitive on page 63 second bullet and seventh bullet. Possibly change to 'cell phones and other electronic devices'.

Jennifer explained the specifics surrounding new cell phone laws. Leadership will need to get creative with faculty as a team on details they want in the verbiage within the policy. Students' watches will need to come off during testing.

Within the Code of Conduct GVCS refers to the Suspension and Expulsion Policy. Deadlines or cut-offs for birthdates will be updated on an annual basis.

Upekkha advised she can collaborate with faculty and will email Jennifer any details that faculty would like the Board to be aware of while revising the Student & Parent Handbook.

Upekkha asked about guidelines surrounding what to do if ICE were to come on school campus. GVCS has been given guidance from both the state and charter organizations that Jennifer can share out with the faculty chairs, and they will pass on to their faculty.

TABLED. NO ACTION.

10. **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.

11. **Executive Reports** –

Board Chair Report: Board of Trustees Chair, Katie Gerski-Keller, presented items of interest to the board.

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

January 14, 2026

12. Closed Session –

The Board went into closed session at 6:41 p.m. to discuss the appointment of a public employee for the position of Executive Director, including discussion of specific applicants and their qualifications pursuant to § 54957(b)(1).

a. Public Employee Appointment

Title: Executive Director

13. Resume Open Session –

The Board resumed Open Session at 7:54 p.m. The Board reported that, in Closed Session, action was taken to select the top three candidates to advance to the interview phase for the Executive Director position.

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

15. Chair Katie Gerski-Keller adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Brittany Galles.

Katie Gerski-Keller, Chair

Date