

April 15, 2026

Regular Meeting Minutes

1. **Chair Katie Gerski-Keller called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.**

2. **Roll Call –**

Board Members Present: Katie Gerski-Keller, Meredith Willson, James Stark, Jessica Crew, Ekaterina Khmelniker (remote)

Board Members Absent: Stephen Quadro

Guests: Brittany Galles, Jennifer Hoover, Jessica Zwane, Becky Page, Tavia Pagan, Upekkha Evans, Nikki Freitas, Mindy Kiel, Ryan Sutton (remote)

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.

Ekaterina Khmelniker publicly disclosed that there were no other individuals present in the room at the remote location.

It was moved by Jessica Crew and seconded by Meredith Willson that the Board approve Ekaterina Khmelniker to participate in this board meeting from a remote location due to just cause exceptions per SB 707.

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

4. **Jessica Crew read the Steadfastness Virtue Card.**

5. **Public Comment –**

Jessica Costa made a public comment regarding alignment between families, school leadership and the Board.

Alba Vieira Benito made a public comment regarding a group of Golden Valley Orchard School parents recognizing the Board's authority over budget and policy decisions.

Chair Katie Gerski-Keller closed public comment at 5:11 p.m.

6. **Board Member Resignation –**

It was moved by Jessica Crew and seconded by Meredith Willson that the Board approve the resignation of Board Member James Stark effective April 9, 2026.

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

April 15, 2026

7. Voting of a Community Member to the Board of Trustees –

It was moved by Meredith Willsen and seconded by Jessica Crew that the Board approve to appoint James Stark as a community member to the Board of Trustees.

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

8. Consent Agenda –

It was moved by James Stark and seconded by Jessica Crew that the Board approve the following items by consent:

8.1 The Board approved the revised Golden Valley Orchard School Safety Plan.

8.2 The Board approved the revised Golden Valley River School Safety Plan.

(Ayes: 5, Noes: 0, Abstain: 0)

9. Employee Handbook (Third Read) –

Nikki Frietas reviewed all revisions made from the second read of the Employee Handbook. Revisions from the second read included details on the workplace violence prevention plan, further clarity on using school phone lines for long distance phone calls, personal cell phones and texting, connecting to school Wi-Fi, references added from the Electronic Media Acceptable Use Agreement, and references in the appendix. Nikki also clarified that the San Juan Unified School District M&O office is responsible for giving authorization for allowing personnel on campus after hours.

It was moved by Meredith Willsen and seconded by James Stark that the Board approve the Employee Handbook for GVCS.

(Ayes: 5, Noes: 0, Abstain: 0)

10. Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) Program –

Jessica Zwane presented an Eagle's Nest Proposal including nonparticipation in the ELO program moving forward with the 2026-2027 school year for Golden Valley Charter Schools (GVCS). The proposal includes transitioning to a 10-month program aligned with the full instructional calendar. There will no longer be a summer component to Eagle's Nest, and this shift is intended to increase accessibility for families, provide continuity for students, and align Eagle's Nest more closely with the school's academic calendar and community needs. Eagle's Nest will move away from a lottery-based enrollment system. Instead, participation will be contract-based, allowing families to secure a guaranteed space for their child(ren) through enrollment agreements.

The proposed fee structure is as follows:

- \$150 per month for one student
- \$275 per month for two to three students
- \$325 per month for four or more students

In addition, a \$75 annual registration fee per student will apply to all enrolled participants. This fee will help fund snack and materials costs for the program.

April 15, 2026

A reduced fee option will be available for families who demonstrate financial need. While tuition assistance will help ensure access, all participating families will contribute a monthly fee. Free participation will no longer be offered.

Jessica discussed the daily staffing structure to reflect as follows:

- 1 Site Supervisor: 9:30 AM – 6:00 PM
- 2 Program Assistants:
 - 11:30 AM – 5:00 PM
 - 12:00 PM – 5:30 PM

The proposed model will help avoid overspending at each site which has historically occurred in the past few school years. Eagle's Nest will utilize two spaces at each site – one kindergarten room and the MP room. Jessica explained program goals and benefits as well as pointing out that this new proposed model would not affect the morning early care from what it currently is now, this is not tied to ELO.

NOTE: attached to the Meeting Minutes is a full description of the Eagle's Nest Program Proposal for the 2026-2027 School Year provided by Jessica Zwane.

Moving forward, James would like a financial breakdown brought to the Finance Committee for bigger program movement such as this, to compare the old model to a new model and a comparison of similar schools for rate of care. Jennifer explained currently no other schools are declining ELO funds.

Katie made a comment that this model is more flexibility for the students.

Tavia commented that this model better aligns with Golden Valley's philosophy and not being so structured.

It was stated that the only full time benefitted positions will be the two leads at each site and they will be the personnel to stay until 6:00 p.m.

It was moved by Jessica Crew and seconded by Meredith Willsen to approve nonparticipation in the ELO Program moving forward with the 2026-2027 school year for GVCS.

(Ayes: 5, Noes: 0, Abstain: 0)

11. Minutes Approval –

It was moved by Jessica Crew and seconded by James Stark that the Board approve the March 11, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes.

(Ayes: 4, Noes: 0, Abstain: 1, K. Gerski-Keller)

12. Governance Policies & Procedures (Third Read) –

Katie explained the format of the document will be adjusted once she converts it on Microsoft Word.

April 15, 2026

Meredith suggested reviewing the Board's bylaws at the BOT Retreat and after the River Renewal has been submitted.

It was moved by James Stark and seconded by Jessica Crew that the Board approve the Governance Policies & Procedures for GVCS.

(Ayes: 5, Noes: 0, Abstain: 0)

13. Executive Director Evaluation Policy (Fourth Read) –

Katie explained the format of the document will be adjusted once she converts it on Microsoft Word. Throughout the policy and survey questions will reflect verbiage addressing the Executive Director as "Interim Executive Director and/or Executive Director".

It was moved by James Stark and seconded by Jessica Crew that with the addition of adding "Interim Executive Director and/or Executive Director" the Board approve the Executive Director Evaluation Policy for GVCS.

(Ayes: 5, 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 Chair, Katie Gerski-Keller, presented items of interest to the board.

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

16. Closed Session –

The Board went into closed session at 6:26 p.m. to discuss public employee performance evaluations for the annual review of the school principals and the special education director of GVCS pursuant to § 54957.

The Board came out of closed session at 8:32 p.m.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

17. Closed Session –

The Board went into closed session at 8:32 p.m. to discuss public employee performance evaluation for the annual review of the executive director of GVCS pursuant to § 54957.

The Board came out of closed session at 9:27 p.m.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

April 15, 2026

18. **The Board recited the Motto of the Social Ethic.**
19. **Chair Katie Gerski-Keller adjourned the meeting at 9:27 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by Brittany Galles.

Katie Gerski-Keller, Chair

Date

DRAFT



Eagle's Nest Program Proposal 2026–2027 School Year

For the 2026–2027 school year, Eagle's Nest will transition to a 10-month program aligned with the full instructional calendar. The program will operate on all regular school days, providing consistent care and supervision for enrolled students. The only exceptions will be two designated preservice days, during which programming will be limited to students of GVCS staff only. There will no longer be a summer component of the Eagle's Nest program.

This shift is intended to increase accessibility for families, provide continuity for students, and align Eagle's Nest more closely with the school's academic calendar and community needs.

Enrollment Model

Eagle's Nest will move away from a lottery-based enrollment system. Instead, participation will be contract-based, allowing families to secure a guaranteed space for their child(ren) through enrollment agreements.

Proposed Fee Structure:

- \$150 per month for one student
- \$275 per month for two to three students
- \$325 per month for four or more students

In addition, a \$75 annual registration fee per student will apply to all enrolled participants. This fee will help fund snack and materials costs for the program.

A reduced fee option will be available for families who demonstrate financial need. While tuition assistance will help ensure access, all participating families will contribute a monthly fee. Free participation will no longer be offered.

This flat-rate model is designed to:

- Simplify the enrollment process for families
- Provide predictable revenue for program sustainability
- Increase equitable access by removing barriers associated with lottery selection while maintaining shared program investment

Financial Sustainability

Based on current projections, enrollment of approximately 100 students paying the monthly program fees will generate sufficient revenue to fully cover the personnel costs of Eagle's Nest employees. This enrollment target supports a financially self-sustaining program while maintaining appropriate staffing levels and program quality.

Over the past several years, each school site has exceeded its allocated Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELO-P) funding by approximately \$100,000 annually. This proposal is intended to address that structural deficit by establishing a more sustainable funding model that reduces reliance on supplemental general funds while preserving program quality and access for families.

Staffing Structure

Each Eagle's Nest site will be staffed to ensure appropriate supervision, program quality, and operational consistency.

Daily Staffing Model (per site):

- 1 Site Supervisor: 9:30 AM – 6:00 PM
- 2 Program Assistants:
 - 11:30 AM – 5:00 PM
 - 12:00 PM – 5:30 PM

Additionally, one staff member will be designated as backup to the Site Supervisor. This individual will receive targeted training to support program leadership and will be prepared to step into the supervisor role or adjust shifts as needed to ensure continuity of operations.

This structure supports:

- Safe student-to-staff ratios
- Reliable coverage during peak hours
- Leadership continuity in the event of staff absence

Facilities Use

To support program operations, each site will utilize two designated spaces:

- Kindergarten Room:

- Orchard Site: Orange Blossom Room
- River Site: Peach Blossom Room
- Multi-Purpose (MP) Room:
 - Shared use at both campuses

This dual-space model allows for age-appropriate programming, flexibility in activities, and efficient use of campus facilities.

Program Goals and Benefits

The proposed changes to Eagle's Nest are designed to:

- Provide consistent, reliable after-school care for families
- Strengthen program sustainability through a predictable financial model
- Maintain a nurturing, developmentally appropriate environment aligned with Waldorf-inspired principles
- Support working families by aligning with the full instructional calendar
- Ensure safe, well-supervised, and engaging programming for all participants

Conclusion

The 2026–2027 Eagle's Nest program redesign reflects a thoughtful approach to meeting the evolving needs of Golden Valley families while maintaining program quality and operational efficiency. This proposal establishes a clear structure for enrollment, staffing, facilities, and financial sustainability, ensuring a stable and sustainable program moving forward.