Golden Valley Charter Schools
Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees
1000 River Rock Dr. Ste 118
Folsom, CA 95630

June 24, 2026

Special Meeting Minutes

1. **Vice Chair Meredith Willsen called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.**

2. **Roll Call** –
Board Members Present: Katie Gerski-Keller, Meredith Willsen, Ekaterina Khmelniker, James Stark, Jessica Crew
Board Members Absent: Stephen Quadro
Guests: Brittany Galles, Jennifer Hoover, Becky Page (remote), Nikki Freitas

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.

TABELED. NO ACTION.

4. **James Stark read the Helpfulness Virtue Card.**

5. **Public Comment** –
There were no public comments.
Chair Katie Gerski-Keller closed public comment at 5:08 p.m.

6. **Datacate Cybersecurity Services –**
Datacate leadership members Ed LaFrance and Emory Hayes presented an update on Datacate's recent cybersecurity services as a result from a recent security breach that occurred to a client unrelated to Golden Valley Charter Schools (GVCS). Datacate provided an update regarding the school's cybersecurity software. The school has historically used Trend Micro; however, the product is being phased out due to its limited ability to address evolving cybersecurity threats and changing industry requirements.
Datacate vetted, reviewed and selected Guardz, a comprehensive cybersecurity platform that provides enhanced protection, including email and spam security, dark web monitoring, identity protection, cybersecurity awareness training, 24/7 security monitoring, and automated response capabilities. The platform also includes Sentinel One, a modern endpoint detection and response (EDR) solution designed to address current cybersecurity threats.
Datacate noted that the transition to Guardz had been planned prior to the recent cybersecurity incident involving another client, which further demonstrated the limitations of the legacy Trend Micro product. Datacate was able to fully restore the affected client using existing backup systems.
The transition to Guardz is also intended to better align the school with increasingly stringent cybersecurity insurance requirements. Datacate explained that Trend Micro protections may no longer meet current cybersecurity insurance standards, while Guardz is designed to support compliance with those requirements. Overall, transitioning to Guardz will provide GVCS with a

significantly higher level of protection and better alignment with the current cybersecurity threat environment. Ed and Emory answered questions surrounding faceless accounts, monitoring, phishing and security training.

The Board made note of the current monthly contract price between GVCS and Datacate being $4,100. Emory explained the discounted price of Guardz from $20 to $12/unit and that this will maintain the locked in price point moving forward including when GVCS renews their contract with Datacate. Jennifer made note that the Datacate monthly contract cost is split between both sites, as would the new fee of $1,200 equaling $600 per site.

It was moved by James Stark and seconded by Jessica Crew that the Board approve an additional monthly cybersecurity service fee associated with Datacate's cybersecurity service transition.

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

7. **Certificate of Amendment –**
Human Resources Specialist Nikki Freitas provided an update regarding CalSTRS compliance requirements affecting charter schools. Following the Board's June 3rd meeting, GVCS worked with legal counsel at YMC Legal to review the organization's governing documents and structure, including the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, charter language, and organizational certifications required by CalSTRS. Legal counsel prepared recommended revisions to address the applicable CalSTRS requirements. The Board was provided with an update on the progress made and the proposed governance revisions. Although CalSTRS does not specifically require Board approval of the certification form, the related governance matters were brought before the Board to ensure transparency, proper authorization, and continued compliance with CalSTRS requirements.

YMC Legal determined that amendments to GVCS Articles of Incorporation are necessary to align with CalSTRS Employer Directive 2026-01 and Form 0765. The proposed Certificate of Amendment updates the dissolution provisions to ensure that any remaining assets upon dissolution are distributed in accordance with CalSTRS requirements and applicable law. Upon Board approval, the amendment will be executed by the Board President and Corporate Secretary and filed with the California Secretary of State. Copies will subsequently be provided to the Internal Revenue Service and California Franchise Tax Board for organizational records. YMC Legal prepared the amendment and will assist with the filing process.

It was moved by Jessica Crew and seconded by Meredith Willsen that the Board approve the Certificate of Amendment of the Articles of Incorporation for purposes of compliance with CalSTRS Form 0765 and Directive.

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

8. **Revised GVCS Bylaws –**
Nikki presented revisions to GVCS Bylaws to ensure compliance with CalSTRS Form 0765 and Directive. YMC Legal recommended revisions to GVCS Bylaws to ensure consistency with the amended Articles of Incorporation and CalSTRS requirements. Specifically, Article V, Section 1,

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regarding dissolution and distribution of assets, was revised to incorporate the recommended language. Upon Board approval, the revised Bylaws will become part of the corporation's official governance records and will not require filing with a governmental agency. YMC Legal also reviewed the language in the school's approved charters and determined that the existing language sufficiently addresses CalSTRS requirements by deferring to the Articles of Incorporation regarding the distribution of assets upon dissolution. Following Board approval of the amendments, administration will notify San Juan Unified School District as recommended by legal counsel.

It was moved by Meredith Willsen and seconded by James Stark that the Board approve the revised Bylaws for Golden Valley Charter Schools (GVCS) to ensure compliance with CalSTRS Form 0765 and Directive

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

9. **CalSTRS Form 0765, GVOS –**
Nikki presented CalSTRS Form 0765 for Golden Valley Charter Schools' River and Orchard campuses. The certification requires representations regarding governance, organizational structure, and ongoing compliance, including a commitment to maintain publicly available written contractual agreements by January 31, 2027.
Legal counsel advised that the forms should be executed only after the Board approves the governing document amendments and the Certificate of Amendment is filed with the California Secretary of State. Following completion of these steps, administration will execute and submit Form 0765 for each applicable school to CalSTRS.
Nikki recommended selecting Option 2 on Page 2 of Form 0765, consistent with legal counsel's guidance and Golden Valley's organizational structure and governance documentation. The Board was asked to authorize the execution and submission of the forms following the filing of the approved Certificate of Amendment.

It was moved by Ekaterina Khmelniker and seconded by James Stark that the Board approve authorizing execution of CalSTRS Form 0765 for Golden Valley Orchard School (GVOS) upon filing of the Certificate of Amendment of Articles of Incorporation.

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

10. **CalSTRS Form 0765, GVRS –**
Nikki provided information regarding the execution of Form 0765 for GVRS.

It was moved by Ekaterina Khmelniker and seconded by Jessica Crew that the Board approve authorizing execution of CalSTRS Form 0765 for Golden Valley River School (GVRS) upon filing of the Certificate of Amendment of Articles of Incorporation.

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

11. **Review of Comparable Compensation Data for Charter School Executive Directors/CEOs/Superintendents/Teachers** –
Nikki presented an updated teacher compensation study requested by the Board at the June 3rd meeting. The study compared GVCS teacher compensation with similar charter schools using publicly available salary schedules, organizational size, enrollment, and staffing data. The study found that most comparable charter schools use step-and-column salary schedules based on experience, education, or both, with additional compensation opportunities such as advanced-degree stipends, longevity incentives, and specialized assignments. GVCS compensation structure differs by utilizing a base salary with additional compensation tied to years of service, credentials, educational attainment, and specialized certifications.
The study also found that starting salaries among comparable charter schools were relatively consistent, while greater differences existed in long-term earning potential through salary progression, longevity incentives, and educational stipends. The study was provided as a current market comparison to support the Board's ongoing discussions regarding employee compensation and future budget planning.

Nikki clarified that GVCS is on the lower end for Executive Director (ED) salary when compared to charter schools due to the compensation listed reflecting the range on the compensation study that was publicly posted for the ED position in the beginning of the year.
Jessica explained that GVCS is more aligned with River Charter Schools and Sacramento Valley Charter schools in comparison especially with their teachers' salaries.
The Board would like to edit the ED range that GVCS currently has to reflect something like $145,000-$175,000. The Board discussed the purpose of establishing compensation ranges. Ranges provide a framework for evaluating an employee's position relative to the market median and can help inform appropriate pay increases based on an employee's placement within the range. Compensation ranges also provide guidance when recruiting and refilling positions by establishing a published range while allowing offers to be adjusted based on a candidate's experience and qualifications.

Meredith clarified the annual salary increase for all staff of 3% is applied at the beginning of their new contract year and explained that Jennifer would also receive the 3% annual increase. The range will be updated and the 3% will be applied regarding the new ED contract.

12. **Executive Compensation –**
The Board discussed Executive Director compensation. Executive Director compensation effective July 1, 2026, will be $153,963.

It was moved by Jessica Crew and seconded by Meredith Willsen that the Board approve Executive Compensation paid to the Executive Director for the 2026-2027 school year.

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

13. **Nutrition Services MOU –**
Jennifer Hoover presented the proposed Nutrition Services Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from San Juan Unified School District (SJUSD). This MOU is essentially the same MOU with regard to the slight increase in rates for breakfast and lunch. Jennifer explained every year the state increases the reimbursement rate. Breakfast costs have increased by twenty cents and

lunch costs have increased by twenty-five cents. All other components of the proposed MOU are the same as the current.

It was moved by James Stark and seconded by Ekaterina Khmelniker that the Board approve the Nutrition Services Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from San Juan Unified School District (SJUSD).

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

14. **Minutes Approval –**
It was moved by Ekaterina Khmelniker and seconded by Jessica Crew that the Board approve the June 3, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes.

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

15. **The Board recited the Motto of the Social Ethic**.

16. **Chair Katie Gerski-Keller adjourned the meeting at 6:13 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by Brittany Galles.

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Katie Gerski-Keller, Chair **Date**

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