

JGEMS Board of Directors Meeting

Agenda

Tuesday, February 3, 2026 4:00. * JGEMS via Zoom

Attending: Mike Weddle, Kathleen Huun, Guy Hallman, Madhu Messenger, Steve Nelson, Ruth Ames (all by Zoom)

Call To Order – 4:00 PM Mike Weddle presiding

I. Approval of Minutes - Minutes from January 2026 were approved. Motion to approve by Madhu, second by Kathleen. Unanimously approved.

II. Communications from the Floor -
None

III. Finance Report -

The financial report was presented by Steve (see attached). George Carter (Merrill Lynch) provided an update on the portfolio's performance and market conditions. He noted that the portfolio was up around 7% last year and discussed concerns about interest rates and the dollar's devaluation. George recommended increasing the international allocation to 33% and being cautious with AI-related investments. He also explained that the portfolio manager has discretion to make immediate changes as needed.

The board discussed the endowment fund's current value of \$326,000. Steve questioned the status of the funds as it has been stable around this mark for several years. Mike explained the fund raising and frugality of earlier years and Ruth explained more recent years. Madhu asked if we should establish a threshold where we would need to be concerned. Kathleen suggested a threshold of \$250,000 for reassessment. The board concluded that they will visit the finances each meeting and always keep a watchful eye.

IV. Executive Director Report –

Ruth discussed updating the JGEMS student application google form. Steve suggested adding the JGEMS mission statement. Mike asked to bring back some of the questions related to willingness to participate outdoors, hands-on activities (e.g., getting cold, wet, muddy).

Ruth is also starting a new Google sheet to collect the student enrollment and/or application data. Steve asked about the ability to align with previous years data in case we wished to look at longitudinal data. Ruth stated she would copy the old data (and save). She indicated the new data could be easily integrated if needed to access longitudinal data.

Ruth will share the annual budget report with the board once completed.

V. Staff Report –

Ruth quickly discussed and showed images of the field trip to the water treatment plant. The outing was enjoyed by the students.

Roots and Shoots update is added at the end in a summary by Christi Olsen.

VI. Items for Discussion –

Mike will be in France for the next meeting. Kathleen will serve as chair for the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at: 5:05 PM

Next meeting: April 7th, 2026 4:00 PM Future meetings: 5/5/26

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Huun Vice Chair

Christi Olsen -

Here are some things to share:

Roots and Shoots students doing well to accomplish many things to care for the people, animals and environment. Izzy Mason has been a great addition to helping lead Roots & Shoots - making field trips and outreach possible since I am now in the classroom. We now have 55 students that go the extra mile to help our world. We also have students that have taken Roots & Shoots to their high schools and have started programs! The early college program, individual students at West and Sprague.

During my advisory, students work on their individual projects. We also now meet monthly, via Zoom, with the R&S base camp leader for Oregon, Washo Shadowhawk.

In January, students went to Salem Friends of Felines and delivered hand made toys, and the food bag kits they put together for fosters and people needing cat food in our community and volunteered as well. They are working on writing a grant to get money to help support humane traps for spaying and neutering. We have a 6th grade student now whose mom works for Friends of Felines and is our current contact. Very handy!

Students volunteered in January and will go on their monthly volunteering at Green Acres Farm Sanctuary in February and are continuing to collect towels.

Our garden team has been instrumental in planting native plants in our community and working in our greenhouse. They will be planting at Lee Park this month.

Feederwatch Team takes weekly data out my classroom window watching our birdfeeders for Cornel Lab. Izzy reports the data we collect.

Our Bird team members are learning from an expert in the field to identify birds with the support of Izzy.

The annual Leukemia/Lymphoma coin drive is happening this month.

We have a shoe drive in March upcoming to help youth get shoes. Students familiar with the 1000 Soles program and the City of Salem Shoe Battles that JGEMS was very instrumental in supporting, has stopped. So we decided to do a small drive at JGEMS. Students will be cleaning them in my classes before spring break and we will be donating. So save your shoes - especially athletic shoes!

Our Valentine team is making handmade cards for our entire school. They will hang them on cubbies the night before!

Classroom -

ESP Project is off to a good start. Had our second zoo field trip that went well that our mentors attended with us. Mentors visit the classroom on Wednesdays. So great! This month we will have two Sea Otter Zoom calls with scientists through Field Notes and one with a Condor scientist.

It has been suggested that we purchase the ticket for me to fly to the Arctic this summer for the field notes PD, before end of March for best deals.

Attending $\frac{2}{3}$ in Bend, a PD about how to teach nature journaling. Attended a PD in the summer about collecting data through art and journaling and now a different one focused on winter. I have used this method of data collection with students at Drift Creek that went well.

LOVING starting class with ten minutes of quite silent reading. The quiet is so good for their brains and the reading of course! I cut short reading one time for an extra time need in class and I was met with such unhappiness - not ever messing with the 10 minutes again. I read conservation chapter books to start ConBio! Love it.

This year, cooking class I combined with games class. Cooking is a huge project in a short period and no kitchen! But they did upgrade smoke detectors so we now can cook inside!! Kids love it though - but half a trimester saved money and my love of still offering cooking!!