

JGEMS Board of Directors Meeting

Agenda

Tuesday, November 4, 2025 3:30 P.M. * JGEMS via Zoom

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

Call To Order – 3:32 PM Mike Weddle presiding

I. Approval of Minutes - Minutes from October 2025 were approved. Motion to approve by Guy, second by Madhu. Unanimously approved.

II. Communications from the Floor -

None

III. Finance Report -

The financial report, presented by Steve, showed a slight loss in overall investment but an increase in checking account balances. Overall investments at \$309,630.70 (Merrill Lynch). Pioneer Trust accounts: Legacy, \$4,186.28; Expedition, \$8297.63; School Lunch, \$1,971.54. Ruth inquired about the relationship between the Merrill Lynch account and the school district's funding reports, which Steve clarified was completely separate. The board discussed the use of the JGEMS reserve fund, with Steve noting that about 10% of the balance is typically used each year for various needs, such as technology or hiring additional staff. The possibility of using some of this fund for teacher professional development was also mentioned. There was a slight decrease today.

IV. Executive Director Report –

Ruth presented the Executive Director Annual Report, updating enrollment numbers to 98 students and 121 applicants from 40 schools. She discussed the transition to QuickBooks and the focus on completing audit documents. Ruth also reviewed the school's mission, vision, and focus, as well as staff and board positions. The group made adjustments to phone numbers in the report, and Ruth mentioned she would update the PDF and send it out again. She also discussed the school's goals, including the need to spend more of the SIA funding. Ruth explained the current state of the school's finances, noting that they had spent about \$50,000 of the available SIA funding and had slightly reduced reserves.

Ruth discussed the complexities of tracking school finances, particularly regarding accounts managed through Pioneer Trust and Merrill Lynch, which are not included in the MUNIS document provided by Salem-Kaiser. She emphasized the need for a complete financial overview, including income from field trips and grants, which are separate from Salem-Kaiser funds. Kathleen and Mike advised against mentioning the Pioneer Trust accounts in the report, citing security concerns, while Ruth clarified that these accounts are separate from the school budget. Steven inquired about the report's distribution, and Ruth explained it is intended for the board,

with some uncertainty about whether it reaches the Oregon Department of Education through Salem-Kaiser.

Ruth noted that JGEMS is meeting goals she will add state testing scores for science when available. She will also run a discipline report. Ruth noted that attendance is improving.

Ruth presented the annual budget report, noting that while the actual numbers ended up different, the document remained largely unchanged. She highlighted the completion of a new district agreement until 2030 and discussed the need to clarify requirements for state documents due to the Oregon Department of Education. Madhu inquired about partnerships and student attendance impacts on funding, with Steven explaining that while the district loses funding for lower attendance, individual schools are not penalized. Ruth acknowledged uncertainty about how attendance affects funding calculations and agreed to investigate further. The conversation ended with Ruth reporting positive outcomes for recent field trips and research activities.

Ruth reported strong attendance at conferences with 83% participation across grades, noting they were unable to accommodate all 99 students due to time constraints. She discussed challenges in her new role, including managing multiple responsibilities and complex student situations, while Mike expressed support for her performance. The team discussed the upcoming Jane Goodall Memorial Event scheduled for November 25th at 2:30 PM, which will include a tree planting ceremony with both student and family participation. Professional development opportunities were mentioned but staff appeared hesitant to commit, with Ruth noting people were generally busy.

Mike suggested considering smaller conferences as an option for professional development. Kathleen inquired about the use of remaining SIA funds, and Ruth explained the budget constraints and plans to reallocate funds. Mike and Ruth discussed the need to access demographic data for JGEMS applicants, with Ruth offering to share the application data for review.

V. Staff Report –

Mike noted that field research and the endangered species project are going well. Collaboration with the Oregon Zoo has been amped up.

Ruth noted a lot of recent illness among faculty/staff (Vanessa). And the impact is substantial due to the small size of the school.

VI. Items for Discussion –

Meeting adjourned at: 4:30 PM

Next meeting: January 6th, 2026 Future meetings: 2/3/26, 4/7/26, 5/5/26

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Huun Vice Chair