

# GWYNNE VALLEY RURAL ACADEMY

## Summary: Public Info Meeting

**January 31, 2024**

Central Community Hall

7:30pm

Issued February 22, 2024

## Agenda:

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Charter Status Update
3. Charter Overview
4. Community Input
5. Summary & Next Steps

## Brief Recap

### **So, what is a Public Charter School?**

- Still a Public School
- Direct Involvement from Parents and Community
- There are some unique requirements that charter schools have to meet.

### **The Basics of Gwynne Valley Rural Academy**

- *Planned* September 2024 Start Date
- *Planned* Grades K–9 in Year One
- First-year Grade 8 and 9 students will be able to graduate Grade 12 at GVRA
- GVRA intends to add one grade per year: Gr. 10 in 2025, Gr. 11 in 2026, and completing our Grades K–12 offering in 2027.

### **Timeline Update:**

- 1) Conditional Approval for the GVRA Charter was granted by the education minister on April 26 of last year.
- 2) Previous efforts to open in September 2023 were simply a no-go with a provincial election and numerous bureaucratic hurdles.
- 3) At the invitation of Education Minister Demetrios Nicolaidis, a delegation from our board met with the Minister, our MLA Rick Wilson and senior staff at the Alberta Legislature in September.
- 4) The team is working tirelessly behind the scene with Government of Alberta employees in 3 different departments – Education, Capital, and Infrastructure to move this forward.

## Introducing Dr. Karen Penney

As an educator and deputy superintendent in Alberta schools for nearly 40 years, Dr. Karen Penney has served Alberta students with distinction.

When our Board approached her last Spring about the possibility of serving in GVRA, Dr. Penney was excited to come out of recent retirement to help us establish our public charter school, and we are so pleased to have her on the GVREA team.

*Dr. Penney made a brief presentation to group as outlined below.*



## Presentation – The 4 Pillars of EVE

Early Vocational Exposure is a Grades K–12 curriculum expansion that prioritizes the development of practical skills and vocational understanding throughout students' primary and secondary education.

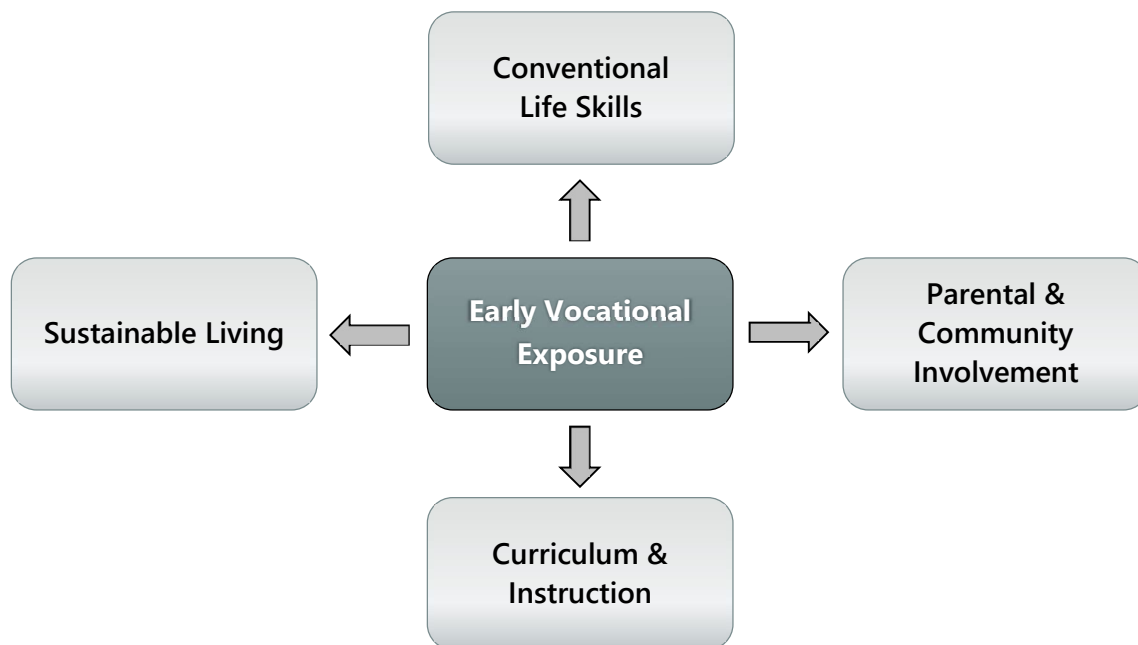
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*We boil EVE down to one phrase: "Vocational preparation begins in Kindergarten."*

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The following is a simple graph representing the connections of the four pillars of:

- 1) Parental & Community Involvement
- 2) Sustainable Living
- 3) Conventional Life Skills
- 4) Curriculum & Instruction



### EVE Key Components

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- Student interaction with variety of environments
- Tangible experiences including
  - Extensive hands-on
  - Visual-spatial learning tools
  - Kinesthetic development
- Emphasis on self sufficiency and resiliency
- Student ownership for practical skills
- Awareness of wide variety of vocations and post secondary options
- Community career engagement with parental involvement
- Where possible, onsite learning opportunities

## Parental & Community Involvement

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Parental involvement is a critical component of EVE. At GVRA, this can look like parents, community members and alumni:

- Serving as guest speakers
- Providing demonstrations and presentations in areas of expertise
- Acting as mentors and volunteers
- Supporting the school through various types of donations

### **Examples**

- Canning & pickling vegetables
- Gardening basics
- Managing kitchen appliances
- Using farm equipment
- Small engine repair and car maintenance
- Small business operations

## Sustainable Living

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Both a pillar and a subset of Conventional Life Skills, Sustainable Living is critical to the survival of small communities.

- Food security has become an urgent concern worldwide. The skills our parents and grandparents used from birth to death to feed their families and communities have been lost in our rapid-paced, technology driven world.
- Food costs have doubled or tripled in recent years, which emphasizes the need for students to know how to grow their own food at a fraction of the cost of purchasing them.
- Not only will students be empowered to provide nutritious foods for their families, but they will be confident to teach these skills worldwide, wherever life should take them. Sustainable living is a practical, hands-on lifestyle, kind to our environment and future generations. Been lost in our rapid-paced, technology-driven world.

## Conventional Life Skills

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8 Key Categories for Essential Required Learning:

1. Sustainable Living
2. Health & Wellness
3. Personal & Interpersonal Development
4. Household Management
5. Construction And Design
6. Transportation & Driving
7. Basic Technologies
8. Emergency Preparedness

### **CLS Sustainable Living** (*Expanded – Draft*):

- a) Growing Healthy Produce
  - i. Composting & Building Healthy Soil
  - ii. Saving and growing seeds (vegetables)
  - iii. Transplanting seedlings (garden and orchard)
  - iv. Proper garden maintenance (watering, weeding & feeding)
  - v. Identification of Edible Garden and Native Plants

- vi. Identifying Weeds and Best Weeding Practices
- vii. Harvesting, preserving and safe food storage
- b) Food Preparation Practices
  - i. Oven and Stove Operation
  - ii. Food Safety Certification
  - iii. Safe Use of BBQ
  - iv. Maintaining Safe Food Temperatures
  - v. Safe use of Kitchen Utensils and Appliances
- c) Basic Home Economics and Sewing

## Curriculum & Instruction

Public Charter Schools follow Alberta Curriculum. As such, curriculum outcomes will be mapped to align with each presentation/demonstration and or activity offered at the school.

### **Topics include:**

- English Language Arts and Literature
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Physical Education and Wellness
- Music and Fine Arts
- CTS/Registered Apprenticeship Program / Work Experience in high school

## Community Input and Responses

In inviting parents and community members to the Info Meeting on January 31, the purpose of the event was threefold: 1) to provide an update on the status of the charter school application, 2) to provide an overview of the Early Vocational Exposure (EVE) model, and, 3) to solicit input from the community on skills and/or talents they could bring to Gwynne Valley Rural Academy.

**Attendees split into groups of 6 to 8 for about 35 minutes to discuss three important questions posed by the GVREA Board.**

GVREA Directors hosted the small groups and recorded responses. The team was very encouraged by the initial feedback to the questions asked of the community!

The diversity of skillset and experiences in the greater Gwynne area is a strong indication of how important parental and community involvement will be to GVRA's success.

After the small groups regathered, a quick summary of the Community Input was shared by the Directors with the whole group. Subsequently, the information was compiled.



**Here are the questions asked and themes that emerged from the community input:**

1) How would you describe GVRA to other people?

- Rural school
- Small school
- Focus on teaching of practical skills
- Community input and involvement
- Early and broad exposure to life skills

2) What do you feel are the most important things for students to learn at GVRA?

- Practical, hands-on skills
- People skills
- Relationship skills
- Learning to be respectful and kind people
- Resilience
- Communication skills

3) As a member of the school community, what resources or skills do you see yourself contributing to GVRA?

Sustainable Living	Fine/Performing Arts	Trades	Miscellaneous
Beekeeping	Pottery & general arts	Welding & pipe fitting	Governance & management
Veterinary care	Comedy	Instrumentation	General troubleshooting
Gardening	Dance	Fibre optics/tower	Driving school bus
Baking	Hand crafts	Contractor skills	Public speaking
Holistic health	Music: cello, violin, piano,	Horseback riding	Finances
Self defence	Drama	Mechanics	Municipal government
Psychology/therapy		Auto body	Registered nurse
Archery		Dental assistant	Volunteering
German language		Large industrial farming	Artificial Intelligence
Green Eggs & Ham Program		Carpentry	
Green certificate		Painting	
Hunting & butchering		Wood working	

## Summary and Next Steps

### Conventional Life Skills Summary

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Attached on the next page is a Listing of 30 areas of focus for Conventional Life Skills – derived from a larger draft document that will be shared with the community once it is beyond the draft stage.

The GVREA is asking for parents and community members to fill out the document and submit it to [info@growwithgwynnevalley.ca](mailto:info@growwithgwynnevalley.ca).



### A Note on Pre-Registration

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The GVREA has received about 135 Pre-Registrations (and Declarations of Intent) to date. If you're considering enrolling your children, we must emphasize the importance of submitting a Pre-Registration Form sooner than later. The date and order of submission will be a primary factor in determining who will be attending GVRA on Day 1 and who might be on a waiting list.

Pre-Registration Forms can be found at [growwithgwynnevalley.ca](http://growwithgwynnevalley.ca) or on the last page of this document.



# CONVENTIONAL LIFE SKILLS

## 30-Point Summary

### Sustainable Living

- 1 Growing Healthy Produce [Thrive]
- 2 Food Preparation and Cooking Techniques
- 3 Appliances and Utensils – Uses and Safety
- 4 Food Safety Certification
- 5 Basic Home Economics

### Health & Wellness

- 6 Self-Regulation and Stress Management
- 7 Neuroscience and Digital Stewardship
- 8 Nutrition and Exercise
- 9 Healthy Relationships

### Personal and Interpersonal Development

- 10 Goals, Planning and Organizational Skills
- 11 Personal Finance
- 12 Communication, Public Speaking & Presenting

### Household Management

- 13 Fundamentals and Utilities
- 14 Basic Electrical, Plumbing and HVAC
- 15 Exteriors and Outdoors
- 16 Upkeep and Maintenance

### Construction and Design

- 17 Basic Tools – Identification, Uses & Safe Operation
- 18 Materials, Fasteners and Adhesives
- 19 Heights, Ladders, Stools and Scaffolding
- 20 Design, Engineering, and Architectural Basics

### Transportation and Driving

- 21 Automobile Principles & Maintenance
- 22 Driving Skills & Rules of the Road
- 23 Trailers, ATVs, Motorcycles & Boats
- 24 Class 7 Learner's License

### Basic Technologies

- 25 Personal Device & Electronics Management
- 26 Computer Concepts and Networking
- 27 Audio Visual Systems & Basic PA Principles

### Emergency Preparedness

- 28 First Aid and CPR Certification
- 29 Incident Management and Survival Skills
- 30 Fire Smart Skills

Forms can be submitted to [info@growwithgwynnevalley.ca](mailto:info@growwithgwynnevalley.ca)

Name (Optional)

## Community Feedback Form

*At GVRA, Conventional Life Skills (CLS) will be core to the wholistic education of a student. Almost all of the listed Skills will be made Essential learning with only a couple categorized as Optional.*

*Note that while many of these items are offered in other schools, they are often in the form of optional courses/content. We see Conventional Life Skills as important enough for all students to learn, and that is one the biggest differences about GVRA.*

*The list is an overall Summary – details to follow.*

1. What do you see in CLS as significantly different from other school offerings in our area?

2. Which Conventional Life Skills would you say are the **most** important for students to learn?

3. Which Conventional Life Skills would you say are the **least** important for students to learn?

4. What other Skills might you be interested in seeing added to EVE Conventional Life Skills?





**PROPOSED PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL**

The Gwynne Valley Rural Education Association is seeking additional information for the purposes of planning and communication with regards to the projected opening of our public charter school.

**FIRST PARENT/GUARDIAN:**

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First & Last Name	Phone Number	E-Mail
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I authorize Gwynne Valley Rural Academy and its Society to contact me by the provided phone number and email address.

**SECOND PARENT/GUARDIAN (if applicable):**

\_\_\_\_\_

First & Last Name	Phone Number	E-Mail
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I authorize Gwynne Valley Rural Academy and its Society to contact me by the provided phone number and email address.

	CHILD'S FIRST & LAST NAME	AGE as of 31-Dec-24	GRADE in September 2024
Child 1			
Child 2			
Child 3			
Child 4			
Child 5			

Please check this box if any of the children being listed above were included in a previously submitted Declaration of Intent.

Main Physical Location for Future Bussing Determination – Address, Legal Land Description, Blue Sign or GPS Coordinates

\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE - 1st Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE - 2nd Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed

\_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed

**Please submit completed forms to [info@growwithgwynnevalley.ca](mailto:info@growwithgwynnevalley.ca) or GVRA, Box 10, Gwynne, AB T0C 1L0.**

- 1) This Pre-Registration Form does not qualify as a Declaration of Intent to Enroll. Priority Enrollment will be given to students who were included in Declarations of Intent submitted before February 28, 2023.
- 2) An official Gwynne Valley Rural Academy Registration Form will be made available at a later date.

The personal information collected through this Pre-Registration Form is for the planning and communication purposes of the Gwynne Valley Rural Education Association (GVREA). By signing this document, you consent to the collection of the personal information provided for the aforementioned purposes. Questions about the collection of personal information may be directed to the GVREA by email at [chair@growwithgwynnevalley.ca](mailto:chair@growwithgwynnevalley.ca) or mail to Box 10, Gwynne, AB T0C 1L0.

**ADMINISTRATION USE ONLY**

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Accepted by [Name & Title]

\_\_\_\_\_

Date Received

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature