

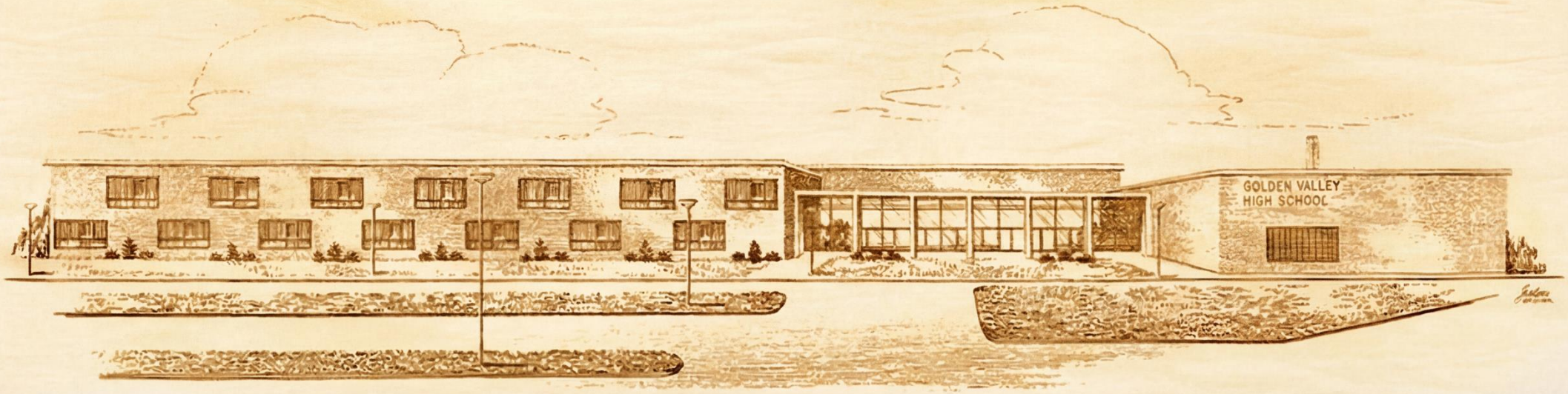
GOLDEN VALLEY VIKINGS

The Story of Independent School District No. 275

A documentary film by Joseph Stephans

THE STORY

A School Built on Optimism. A Community That Never Forgot.



Golden Valley High School

1957

Founded in postwar civic pride

23 Years

Heartbeat of the community

1980

Merged, but never forgotten

1957 → 1980

SYNOPSIS

Golden Valley Vikings tells the inspiring and bittersweet story of Independent School District 275, a small but ambitious public school district founded in 1957 in Golden Valley, Minnesota. Created in an era of postwar optimism, the district built its own high school and middle school, which quickly became a vibrant hub for education, community, and culture.

For 23 years, GVHS was home to spirited students, passionate teachers, and proud families. But by 1980, shifts in policy, demographics, and funding led to the school's closure. Yet the memories, experiences, and identity formed there continue to live on—at least for now.

Told through the voices of alumni, educators, and community members—and woven with archival footage, home movies, yearbooks, and ephemera—the film is a warm, whimsical, and culturally resonant portrait of a place and time that reflects the broader evolution of American public life.

Golden Valley Vikings traces the full arc of the school's brief but vibrant life. Spanning three decades, the film mirrors the evolution of American society: from the idealism of the 1950s, through the upheaval of the 1960s and '70s, to the economic shifts of the 1980s. At its heart, it's a story about a school—but also about community, memory, and the forces that shape us all.





THE ARCHIVE

One of the lasting impacts of this project beyond the documentary film will be the collection, restoration, and preservation of archival materials related to GVHS and District 275.

Digitized films, photos, documents, and oral histories will be donated to local historical societies and made available to the public, scholars, and future generations online and through regional institutions.

THE TEAM

JOSEPH STEPHANS

Writer / Director / Producer

A filmmaker with deep roots in Golden Valley. He was a student in ISD275 from 1971-1980 when it merged with Hopkins.

Joseph is an award winning producer of independent films including *Wildlike, The Outside Story, Last Night In Rozzie* and *Queen of Knives*. He has line produced, production managed and field produced for HBO, Apple, CNN, Warner Media with clients ranging from Expedia, Pfizer, Panera, Poland Springs, Stuart Weitzman, Mass Mutual, and T-Mobile.

Prior to producing, Joseph started out as an Assistant Director before turning most of his attention to Locations where he has served as Location Manager, ALM, and Scout on over 40 titles including Requiem For A Dream, Inside Amy Schumer, Lillyhammer and more.

KEVIN BAY

Producer

Kevin produces and directs documentaries and films that have appeared on MAX, Investigation Discovery, Discovery+, Amazon Prime and Peacock, and at premier festivals like Big Sky Documentary Film Festival and Camden International Film Festival.

Specializing as an archival producer, he has delivered hundreds of hours of documentary television over six years, cited for his problem-solving tenacity with sensitive public records.

He directed *This Land, Our Voices* and *Little Boy Loon*, both premiering at Camden International Film Festival.

ANDRE BASSO

Producer

For over a decade Andre has worked as a Flame/VFX artist, Post Supervisor, Colorist and Producer. His films have premiered at Venice, Toronto International, and Tribeca Film Festivals.

Andre is founder of 9th Street Films, an NYC creative studio serving advertising and filmmaking. He has worked as creative director for UNICEF, Girl Scouts, Pfizer, and MLB Players Association, and with filmmakers including Rhamin Bahrani and Mynette Louie. His short doc *Sixth of June* was a finalist for the 93rd Academy Awards.

He teaches at The Gotham Film & Media Institute.

A Local Story That Echoes Across America

FILM FESTIVALS — Sundance, Tribeca, Hot Docs, Full Frame, DOC NYC, MSP

BROADCAST & STREAMING — TPT/PBS, HBO Max, Netflix, Prime

EDUCATIONAL LICENSING — Schools & universities, public education & civics

COMMUNITY SCREENINGS — Minnesota premier events, alumni, gatherings, libraries

INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS — Historical societies & public libraries

Every school district that closed across America has alumni who remember.
This film speaks to all of them.

Help Us Tell This Story.

We are raising production funding to bring this film to completion.



RESEARCH & ARCHIVAL COLLECTION
Locating, gathering, and clearing remaining materials



FILMING
Interview production, location footage, B-roll



DIGITIZATION & RIGHTS
Scanning, restoring, and clearing archival media



POST-PRODUCTION & ANIMATION
Editing, color, sound design, animated sequences



OUTREACH & EDUCATION
Promotional materials, festival submissions, educational kit

Associate Producer & Executive Producer credits available - Naming rights on archive - Tax-deductible giving via nonprofit status


They built something worth remembering.
Contact Joseph Stephans for more information
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