

GOUCHER CHARTER ACADEMY

Job Description

Last Updated: March 10, 2026

Elementary Principal

GENERAL SUMMARY

The Principal is the chief executive officer of Goucher Charter Academy (GCA) and is accountable to the Board of Directors for all aspects of school operations. As a public charter school, GCA operates independently of a traditional school district, requiring the Principal to exercise direct oversight of functions typically managed at the district level — including finance, facilities and maintenance, special education compliance, technology, human resources, and curriculum and instruction. The Principal provides visionary leadership to ensure GCA fulfills its charter mission, maintains fiscal integrity, delivers high-quality instruction, and cultivates a safe and inclusive school community.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

School Leadership

- Assumes full responsibility for the health, safety, and welfare of students, employees, and visitors.
- Supports, articulates, and perpetuates GCA's mission, vision, values, and goals as a public charter school.
- Develops and maintains operational, financial, and instructional sustainability using best-practice approaches.
- Empowers, motivates, evaluates, and provides professional growth opportunities for all instructional and non-instructional faculty and staff.
- Promotes an integrity-based, solutions-oriented work environment through effective delegation, honest evaluation of results, and transparent communication.
- Leads and models high standards and expectations for all students and staff in academic performance and behavioral responsibility.
- Establishes procedures that create and maintain attractive, organized, functional, healthy, clean, and safe facilities.
- Establishes and maintains an effective inventory system for all school supplies, materials, and equipment.

- Develops clearly understood emergency and disaster procedures and conducts regular drills.
- Establishes a schedule for and approves updates to the school website, social media, and other official communications.
- Ensures compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations related to the operational, financial, and instructional functions of a public charter school.
- Prepares and presents monthly financial, operations, and instructional progress reports to the Board.
- Communicates student assessment results and periodic financial and budgetary performance to the Board.

In Collaboration with the Board:

- Creates a sustainable operational model for the school.
- Establishes and monitors the annual budget.
- Develops and implements a School Renewal Plan as outlined by the SCDE.
- Seeks and attains school accreditation.
- Negotiates contracts and leases.
- Ensures charter renewal and compliance with current charter authorizer.
- Engages in ongoing Board development.
- Recommends faculty staffing levels, salary structures, and benefits packages.
- Develops and maintains all employee handbooks, parent/student handbooks, and other official school publications such as emergency operation handbooks.

Finance and Budget Management

As a charter school, GCA does not have access to district-level financial services. The Principal assumes direct accountability for all school finance functions, including:

- Develops, monitors, and manages the annual operating budget, ensuring alignment with the school's mission and strategic priorities.
- Oversees all revenue sources including state per-pupil funding, federal grants (Title I, IDEA, etc.), local funding, and supplemental revenue streams.

- Ensures proper application of grant compliance requirements, including supplement/not-supplant provisions for Title I and other federal funds.
- Supervises and reviews the work of the bookkeeper, including accounts payable/receivable, payroll, bank reconciliations, and monthly financial statements.
- Prepares financial reports for the Board and ensures timely completion of annual audits.
- Maintains appropriate internal controls and procurement procedures in compliance with school policy and state law.
- Pursues and manages grant opportunities to supplement school funding.
- Develops strategies to ensure the most effective and equitable use of available financial resources.
- Develops and maintains a system of long-term record keeping with redundancy and organization ensuring the timely retrieval of finance-related records.

Facilities and Maintenance Management

Without district facilities or maintenance departments, the Principal is responsible for ensuring GCA's physical environment is safe, functional, and conducive to learning:

- Oversees day-to-day facility operations, including building maintenance, custodial services, and grounds upkeep.
- Manages vendor and contractor relationships for repairs, maintenance contracts, and capital improvements.
- Ensures the school facility meets all applicable health, safety, fire, and building codes.
- Develops and implements a preventive maintenance schedule to protect school assets and minimize emergency repairs.
- Manages facility usage agreements for after-hours and community use of school facilities.
- Coordinates capital improvement projects in collaboration with the Board of Directors.
- Maintains compliance with ADA accessibility standards and other regulatory requirements.

- Develops and maintains a system of long-term record keeping with redundancy and organization ensuring the timely retrieval of facilities and maintenance-related records.

Special Education Oversight

The Principal serves as the local educational agency (LEA) representative for special education purposes and holds primary responsibility for IDEA compliance:

- Serves as the LEA representative at IEP meetings and ensures proper IEP development, implementation, and documentation in compliance with IDEA and SC state requirements.
- Works directly with the Special Education Lead Teacher to supervise and coordinate all special education services and programming.
- Ensures all students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE).
- Monitors compliance with all procedural safeguards, timelines, and documentation requirements under IDEA.
- Coordinates 504 plan development and implementation for students with disabilities not served under IDEA.
- Manages the Child Find process to identify students who may be in need of special education evaluations.
- Oversees the appropriate use of IDEA funds and coordinates with the SC Department of Education on special education reporting requirements.
- Provides training and support to general education teachers on differentiated instruction and inclusive practices.
- Develops and maintains a system of long-term record keeping with redundancy and organization ensuring the timely retrieval of special education-related records.
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Technology Management

Without district IT support, the Principal assumes oversight of all school technology systems and infrastructure:

- Oversees the procurement, deployment, maintenance, and security of all school technology hardware, software, and network infrastructure.

- Ensures the school's student information system (PowerSchool) is maintained accurately and used effectively for data-driven decision-making.
- Develops and enforces technology use policies for students, staff, and families, including acceptable use, data privacy, and cybersecurity protocols.
- Manages technology vendor relationships and service contracts.
- Ensures compliance with FERPA, COPPA, and other applicable student data privacy laws.
- Leverages technology to improve the efficiency of school operations and enhance student learning outcomes.
- Plans and manages technology budgets and replacement cycles.
- Coordinates with third-party IT support services as needed.

Human Resources Management

The Principal functions as the chief human resources officer for GCA, managing the full employment lifecycle without district HR support:

- Responsible for the full-cycle recruitment, hiring, onboarding, supervision, evaluation, and termination of all faculty and staff in compliance with applicable employment laws.
- Develops and maintains competitive compensation structures and benefits packages in collaboration with the Board of Directors.
- Manages employee relations, including performance improvement plans, grievance processes, and disciplinary actions.
- Maintains personnel files and HR records in compliance with state and federal regulations.
- Develops and maintains a system of long-term record keeping with redundancy and organization ensuring the timely retrieval of HR-related records.
- Ensures compliance with all applicable employment laws, including FLSA, FMLA, ADA, Title VII, and SC employment statutes.
- Manages staff leave and absence tracking in coordination with the bookkeeper for payroll accuracy.

- Develops and implements a comprehensive staff evaluation system aligned with SC educator evaluation requirements.
- Creates and maintains employee handbooks and all HR-related policies.
- Manages workers' compensation claims and coordinates with the school's insurance carriers.
- Coordinates employment benefits enrollment and administration.

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

- Serves as the instructional leader and spends regular time in classrooms to observe the level and quality of instruction across all grade levels (4K–8th grade).
- Establishes the annual master schedule for instructional programs, ensuring sequential learning experiences aligned with GCA's philosophy, mission, and instructional goals.
- Regularly evaluates the instructional program and makes strategic adjustments based on data.
- Supervises instructional programs, evaluates lesson plans, and encourages the use of varied, evidence-based instructional strategies and materials.
- Oversees the selection, adoption, and alignment of curriculum materials to SC academic standards.
- Leads data analysis of student performance data and coordinates with faculty to adjust curriculum and instruction in response to identified needs.
- Oversees all state-mandated assessments and uses results to drive school improvement planning.
- Develops and maintains a system of long-term record keeping with redundancy and organization ensuring the timely retrieval of student-related records.
- Addresses the challenges and opportunities of serving students with diverse ethnic, socio-economic, and academic backgrounds.
- Works directly with students to assist in problem-solving, understanding consequences, and developing positive solutions.

In Collaboration with Faculty:

- Plans and assesses curriculum and monitors student growth, including supervision of state testing and interpretation of testing data.
- Ensures consistency and alignment of instruction with GCA's current charter authorizer and the SCDE.
- Supports the growth and improvement of instruction through observation, feedback, coaching, and staff development.

Character Education – Scouting America

- Ensures the intentional implementation of Scouting America's curriculum and program as the school's primary character education framework, maintaining fidelity to its values, structure, and intended outcomes.
- Leads the integration of Scouting America's character education principles into the school's instructional program, daily routines, and student experiences while aligning with GCA's mission and educational philosophy.
- Provides oversight and accountability for the consistent delivery of the Scouting America program across grade levels, ensuring that staff understand expectations and implement the program as designed.
- Collaborates with faculty to align character education lessons, activities, and experiences derived from Scouting America with academic instruction, school culture, and behavioral expectations.
- Monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the Scouting America character education program using qualitative and quantitative data, adjusting implementation supports as needed to ensure program integrity.
- Coordinates professional development and ongoing support for staff to ensure accurate understanding and faithful execution of Scouting America's curriculum, methods, and leadership principles.
- Communicates expectations, progress, and outcomes related to the Scouting America character education program to students, families, and the Board, reinforcing its role as a cornerstone of student development.

Professional Development

- Designs a high-quality staff development and instructional training program that fulfills GCA's academic mission, including inviting outside educators, encouraging peer observation, and pursuing targeted training.
- Fosters faculty development through individual meetings, self-evaluations, peer observations, and classroom observations.
- Nurtures, supports, and mentors the faculty as a cohesive team.
- Provides for personal professional growth through ongoing reading, workshops, seminars, conferences, and advanced coursework.

Parent Involvement and Community Partnership

- Actively promotes GCA within the community and maintains or exceeds student enrollment goals.
- Oversee and manage all aspects of student enrollment, including marketing, recruitment, the enrollment lottery process, waitlist management, and retention initiatives to support stable and growing enrollment.
- Creates and sustains a culture of inclusion for parents and students, making parental communication and involvement a consistent priority.
- Communicates regularly with parents, seeking their support and advice to foster cooperative relationships that support all students.
- Positively represents GCA to visitors, educators, and community members interested in the school model.
- Establishes and maintains relationships with community organizations, businesses, and agencies to expand resources and opportunities for GCA students.

GENERAL JOB FUNCTIONS

- Assists the administrative team in providing an atmosphere conducive to learning and teaching.
- Is punctual and maintains regular attendance.
- Has the ability to plan, organize, and prioritize daily assignments and work activities.
- Maintains a clean and orderly work environment.
- Assists in upholding and enforcing school rules, administrative regulations, and board policies.

- Recognizes and follows the appropriate chain of command as designated by board policies and administrative procedures.
- Presents a positive image of Goucher Charter Academy at all times.
- Operates a variety of equipment such as a computer, printer, two-way radio, telephone, calculator, etc.
- Willingly performs other related duties as assigned by the Board of Directors.

JOB SPECIFICATIONS

Days of Employment per School Year

- 240 days of employment per school year

Education and Experience

- Master's degree in elementary leadership (or higher) with a minimum of three to five years of successful leadership experience, or equivalent combination of education and experience that provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Valid S.C. Licensure in the area of Elementary Principal and/or Supervisor.
- Experience managing school budgets or financial operations strongly preferred.
- Experience in a charter school environment preferred.
- Demonstrated knowledge of IDEA, special education compliance, and IEP processes.
- Experience with human resources functions including hiring, evaluation, and employment law compliance preferred.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS OR STANDARDS REQUIRED TO PERFORM ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Knowledge

- Knowledge of elementary curriculum, instruction, and administration across grade levels 4K through 8th grade.
- Knowledge of the methods, policies, procedures, and activities of GCA pertaining to the specific duties and responsibilities of the position.
- Knowledge of SC content standards, regulations, and laws relating to educational activities and charter school operations.

- Knowledge of school finance, budgeting, grant management, and public fund compliance requirements.
- Knowledge of IDEA, Section 504, ADA, and all applicable special education laws and regulations.
- Knowledge of human resources practices, employment law, and staff evaluation systems.
- Knowledge of technology systems used in school operations, including student information systems, network infrastructure, and data privacy requirements.
- Knowledge of facilities management, maintenance practices, and applicable building and safety codes.
- Knowledge of the records, forms, and reports that must be prepared and maintained.
- Keeps abreast of changes in policy, standards, procedures, and regulations pertinent to the school and in keeping with best administrative practices.

Skills and Abilities

- Ability to develop and maintain effective working relationships with school staff, students, families, community partners, and the Board of Directors.
- Ability to instruct others through explanation, demonstration, and supervised practice, and to make informed recommendations based on data and professional judgment.
- Ability to complete, process, and maintain required records, reports, and other documentation.
- Ability to manage multiple operational domains simultaneously with accuracy and accountability.
- Ability to leverage current technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness of school operations and student performance.
- Ability to communicate effectively — in writing and orally — using clear, professional English.
- Maintains an enthusiastic, self-reliant, and self-starting approach to meeting job functions.

- Anticipates work to be accomplished and initiates appropriate actions with minimal supervision.
- Demonstrates sound fiscal judgment and the ability to manage public funds responsibly.
- Ability to navigate complex compliance requirements across multiple regulatory domains (finance, special education, employment, facilities, technology).

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Conducts duties in a school environment with some exposure to environmental conditions.
- Requires ability to work under a degree of stress related to duties that demand constant attention and accountability across multiple operational domains.
- Physical demands include walking, standing, and lifting/moving of items related to the job on a recurring basis.
- Occasional local travel is required; occasional overnight travel for conferences, professional development, or board-related activities is required.
- Job requires the operation of standard office equipment.
- The information contained in this job description is for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and is not an exhaustive list of the duties performed for this position. Additional duties may be added or altered at any time.

DISCLAIMER STATEMENT

This job description is not intended as an employment agreement or contract. Job duties may be altered at the discretion of the Board of Directors at any time without notice.

Goucher Charter Academy believes it has the obligation to provide the best administrative and supervisory personnel available for the school regardless of race, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions), sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or any other status protected by applicable state or federal law.