

Section H: GOVERNANCE

This section provides a description of the administrative structure of GCA: its operations, policies, governance, and relationship to its employees.

Charter schools are public schools of choice. They are tuition-free and financed the same way as other public schools with the exception that most of the charter schools need to fund all facilities costs out of their operating revenue. Governed locally by citizens, parents, and educators, charter schools are free to be innovative in their design and are highly accountable to the community. GCA will be operated by a Governing Board whose primary task is to set policy and clear standards for success with specific performance outcomes for achievement. The organization employs a multi-faceted assessment system that will include: CSAP scores, curriculum based assessments and student demonstration of skills on the NWEA MAPs assessment. Salary increases are tied to grade level and school-wide improvements in achievement as well as parent satisfaction and student retention. In other areas of the school program, School Continuous Improvement Plans are used to address other school goals and staff responsibility for achieving those goals.

GCA is operated by a board comprised of parents, community leaders, and experts in certain fields. The board has fiscal oversight responsibility and long-term decision making obligations. They create policy, review financial information, make key budgetary decisions, hire and evaluate the Executive Director, and set short and long-term educational goals. They evaluate the progress of the school (and the Executive Director).

Staff Design

<u>Position</u>	<u>Duties</u>
Executive Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports to the board (http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance/SchoolFinanceFundingFY2009-10.htm) • Operations and management • Financial plan execution • Reviews work of the Director of Academics and Director of Student Affairs
Director of Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development plan • Reviews student learning plans • Teacher instructional evaluation & coaching • Curriculum implementation • Text book adoption
Director of Student Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student discipline • Reviews student learning and behavior plans • Works with staff to design behavior plans that are effective for students • Develops community partnerships to meet student needs • Oversees advocacy
Content Teacher Positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content expertise • Work as an advocate for a maximum of 15 students

Board Duties & Obligations

The GCA organizing board believes that Mission and Vision statements should guide the day to day operation of the organization. It should drive and dictate every single decision made. Developing systems that ensure the schools mission is perpetuated during the schools growth will assist in maintaining continuity between the organizing board's vision and that of future governing boards.

President, Secretary and Treasurer. Officers shall serve one-year terms with no limitation as to number of terms served. Officers shall be selected at the last regular meeting of the calendar year. Secret ballots representing a majority of votes cast shall determine the selection of officers for a given term. Meetings shall be held monthly or at minimum, the last Thursday of the month. Minutes shall be noted and forwarded to the necessary parties.

The Board of Directors shall further the goals and objectives of GCA as reflected in the Mission Statement. The Board of Directors shall provide leadership, guidance, oversight, knowledge and experience to the administration, faculty, students and parents. The Board of Directors shall have power over and control of the business affairs as provided for in Colorado Law, the Colorado Nonprofit Corporation Act, the Articles of Incorporation.

Board Members shall perform their duties, including those as a member of any Board Committee, in good faith; in a manner reasonably believed to be in the best interests of the school; and with such care as an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would use under similar circumstances.

For purposes of encouraging full and knowledgeable participation of its Board of Directors, each Board Member is expected to fulfill the following duties and obligations:

- I. Be knowledgeable about essential documents binding or affecting the Academy, including the Charter School Application; the Charter School Contract and any amendments; the School budgets, Board and school policies and procedures.
- II. Maintain the confidentiality of discussions in executive session, and where necessary to preserve the confidentiality of personnel matters, parent and children matters, and school business.
- III. Respect and adhere to the lines of communication established by the Board as to any specific matter requiring an official spokesperson on issues involving the press, outside agencies, mediators/arbitrators, and/or attorneys. In the event individual Board Members are contacted for information, where an official spokesperson has been designated by the Board, members are requested to defer to the chosen spokesperson
- IV. Recognize and act in accordance with all Board-approved School policies, including those established to ensure the daily orderly operations of classrooms and class work.
- V. Board Members are expected to maintain discretion and act in a professional manner at all times when dealing with Board business or raising school issues.

- VI. Board Members are encouraged to discuss issues with one another, to treat each other, the Executive Director, members of the staff, the students and parents with the utmost respect and consideration.

Member Composition

There shall be from five (5) to seven (7) regular voting members of the Board of Directors consisting of parent and community representatives. A quorum of 2/3 of the Board of Directors is required for all meetings and/or votes. All Board of Directors members shall be required to complete 15 hours of professional development – Charter School Governing Board Training (developed by the League of Charter Schools, Colorado Department of Education and the Charter School Institute). The GCA Executive Director shall be a non-voting member of the Board of Directors.

Parent Representatives. Parent Representatives must be parents or legal guardians of student(s) enrolled in GCA (or of a student who has graduated within the past 12 months) at all times during their terms as parent representatives. Removal of the student(s) will disqualify the representative from the Board. On a (5) member governing board there will be two parent representatives, on a (7) member governing board there shall be (3) parent representatives. A parent of a graduating senior can remain on the governing board for one year post-graduation.

Community Representatives. Community Representatives are those members from the community who may have no children, grandchildren, or legal guardianship over children attending the GCA. Community Representatives cannot be paid employees of GCA. “Community” is broadly defined to include but not limited to, business people, grass roots or civic activists or professionals, who may not have children attending the GCA. Community representatives, who enroll children in a the school after their appointments to the Board, may retain their Board representation

Procedures for Selection of New Board Members

Upon approval of the application the organizing board will transition into the Initial Board Members role. Initial Board members will establish which specific board members are on tied to which terms. The staggered terms will ensure that not all Board Members’ term limits end at the same time. Board members will have staggered terms as follows, dependent upon number of total Board Members. To begin with the term will be staggered to maintain organizational history and program continuity.

- i. Up to three (3) four-(4) year appointments
- ii. Up to one (1) three-(3) year appointments. (1) parent representative.
- iii. Up to one (1) two-(2) year appointments. (1) parent representative.

After the Initial Board Members have completed their specific terms all members will serve 4-year terms. The regular voting members of GCA Governing Board can serve two consecutive term limits; a total of 8 years.

Letters of Application will be accepted from Board candidates. Interviews will be conducted either by the entire GCA Governing Board, or an appointed committee of the Board. Board applicants

must be Parents and/or Community Members who exhibit and profess a strong desire to be involved in the success of the GCA. Board applicants must also exhibit strong moral behavior and be willing to give of their time, energy and abilities to help the school achieve its stated mission and purpose. Board applicants must demonstrate an ability and willingness to attend all Board meetings, and to work with other Board Members, staff and faculty, and others in achieving specific goals or completing projects adopted by the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors may designate a Board Nominating Committee that will be responsible for establishing the procedures and timeline for soliciting and interviewing candidates to fill new terms, prior to the expiration of the existing term, and/or vacancies for Parent and Community Representatives as they occur. If the Nominating Committee is not convened and/or fails to fulfill its duties, the Board itself shall be responsible.

New Board Members shall be voted on by the parents and faculty of GCA. Elections shall be held annually, beginning the first full week of November. Elections shall extend for a ten-day period beginning on the Wednesday of the first full week of November, until Friday of the following week. During this election period, the hours for voting shall be from the beginning of the school day until one half hour after the school day has ended. There shall be no less than two days in which the hours provided to vote extend until 7:00 p.m. Each GCA family will be accorded one vote per available position. Proxy voting is prohibited. In the event of a divided custody family, the following shall apply:

- The parent with whom the child resides the majority of the time shall be the voting member.
- In cases of shared custody, it shall be the responsibility of the parents to identify the voting parent prior to election.

In the event of a mid-term vacancy of a Board of Directors position, a replacement applicants shall be sought and shall follow the existing selection procedure described above.

Behavioral Expectations

Board members shall abide by the open meetings law [C.R.S. § 24-6-401]. The open meetings law states that discussing board business, policy, actions, resolutions, etc. between 3 or more board members except at regularly scheduled meetings, is illegal. "Meeting" with another board member is defined as communication through person, telephone, or any other means. Confidentiality law is also outlined in the section of the statute. Personnel matters, individual students, and negotiations are confidential by law.

Expectations include a professional demeanor at all board meetings. Issues being discussed shall not be personalized and directed toward any other board member, staff member, parent or anyone else. Discernment should be used in interpersonal relationships and communications. Board members shall respect and listen to ideas being presented by other board members. Board members fulfilling their responsibilities to their fullest potential shall be encouraged by each of the directors.

When receiving criticisms from parents or other interested parties about staff or other board members, the board member shall direct the speaker to the board member/staff member, which the

situation involves. Board members will never speak negatively about staff or other board members to the school community, or parties outside the school community.

Conflicts shall be resolved with the people with whom they were created. Board members will commit to resolving conflict directly with each other or with the appropriate staff member and not share the conflict with anyone outside of the conflict, including, but not limited to other parents, other staff members or the media. Board members shall exemplify integrity, honesty and respect. A dedication and commitment to the vision of GCA and the charter school movement shall be top priority for any board member. Any board members finding themselves involved in an irresolvable conflict shall put the vision of the school first.

A board member missing more than two consecutive board meetings without prior approval for their absence from at least two other board members, shall receive a notice of probation. Missing a third meeting without prior approval is considered a resignation by that board member. All board meetings shall be governed according to appropriate parliamentary procedure.

The Board may remove any Officer or Director with or without cause by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire Board of Directors at any regular or special meeting of the Board, provided that a statement of the reason(s) shall have been mailed by Registered Mail to the Officer or Director proposed for removal at least thirty (30) days before any final action is taken by the Board. This statement shall be accompanied by a notice of the time when, and the place where, the Board is to take action on the removal. The Officer or Director shall be given an opportunity to be heard and the matter considered by the Board at the time and place mentioned in the notice.

ESSENTIAL COMMITTEES

Facilities Committee

The Facilities Committee will work to identify needs and implement a plan for the financing and construction of the GCA school facilities and maintenance of the school. The Committee will report any recommended actions, costs and associated timelines to the Board of Directors for its review, approval and action. The Executive Director of GCA will be the Chair of this Committee. The Board of Directors will appoint the Facilities Committee, two (2) of whom will be Board members.

Accountability Committee

The accountability committee will meet all of the statutory requirements and will work to provide academic oversight to the school. Duties of the committee shall include: 1) Adopting building goals and objectives for the improvement of education in the building; 2) Adopting a plan to improve education achievement, reduce the gaps in performance of groups within the school, increase the ratings on the state accountability report, and assure the school's accreditation status; 3) Making recommendations to the principal regarding the prioritization of expenditures of school monies; 4) Determining whether decisions affecting the educational process are advancing or impeding student achievement; 5) Reporting to students, parents, and the Board of Education on the

educational performance of the school and providing data for the appraisal of such performance; 6) Making recommendations to the principal on the expenditure of all school grants; 7) Making recommendations to the principal on safety issues related to the school environment.

The committee will be made up the following: The Executive Director of the school or their designee; At least one teacher who provides instruction at the school elected by a vote of all licensed professionals who provide instruction at the school or have an office in the school; Three parents or legal guardians of students enrolled in the school who are elected by a vote of the parents and legal guardians of students enrolled in the school; one adult member designated by an organization of parents, teachers and students recognized by the school; a person from the community who is involved in business and who is appointed by the Executive Director.

Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee will work with the Executive Director, Director of Academic Affairs and staff members to review, modify, exchange, correct or otherwise adapt all curricula to standards and needs. Board Member(s) will be appointed to this committee by the Board of Directors. The Director of Academic Affairs will serve as the Chair of the Committee, and the rest of the committee will be chosen by the Board of Directors.

Committee Meetings

Each Committee shall meet on a regular basis throughout the school year. The Committee meetings are to be held at the date, time and place designated in the notice of the meeting as determined by the Committee Chair or Board President. Notice of the date, time, place and agenda of each Committee meeting shall be given to each Committee Member either in person, by mail, e-mail, or telephone, no later than two (2) days prior to the meeting. The Committee shall keep regular minutes of its meetings and proceedings pursuant to Colorado statutes.

Legal Status

GCA will have non-profit status. GCA is currently in the process of applying for non-profit status for the organization.

School Management Contracts

There are currently no contracts for services planned from either a non-profit or for-profit education management organization.

Grievance Process

Every board meeting of GCA will be open to the public. There will be monthly board meetings where time will be set aside at the beginning of the meeting for input by the community of the school. The community will have the opportunity to address any governing board policy, administrative procedure or practice of the school at that time. It should be noted that GCA governing board will not be willing to discuss an employee's evaluation, a student specific issue, or other issues that are allowed for executive sessions of the board.

Community Partnerships

Because GCA is an educational outreach of Goals, Inc., and is designed to serve the community and place students successfully in the community as contributors, community partnerships will play a critical role in the success of the academy. Goals, Inc., however, shall have no governing role in GCA; they shall remain two separate entities. Partnerships will be sought with social service agencies that can assist students in eliminating barriers, including social workers, probation officers, local law enforcement and businesses and faith communities surrounding the school. This will increase not only the resources available to the students, but also increase the value of the school and its mission in the eyes of the community. A community volunteer will be sought to serve as a part of each Advocacy group to help facilitate community engagement.

DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

Date	Action
September/ October 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize Board of Directors Develop Search criteria for Academic and Student Support Directors Apply for separate 501c3 for GCA Press strategy to alert community and funders of approval Facility specifications submitted to district and potential sources
October 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facility search Website place holder up
November 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facility identified – preparation list made Needed renovations determined Academic and Student Support Directors hired End of year funding campaign Website donation enabled Board meetings begin (continue monthly)
December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orientation for Academic & Student Support Directors Technology plan finalized based on location and facility Certificate of Occupancy applied for Teacher/Advocate hiring plan developed Enrollment lottery plans announced Website expanded with school information and enabled to accept teacher applications Year end funding campaign continues
January 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher/Advocate positions announced, resumes/applications accepted via the web Student/faculty/volunteer handbooks finalized Enrollment lottery plans announced
February 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher/Advocate hiring underway School materials & technology purchasing plans in place
March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrollment lottery held Finalize enrollment process Teacher/Advocate hiring completed Student recruitment plans continue Certificate of Occupancy obtained
April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community meetings campaign with staff & local community Meeting of community partners to support school needs begins (occurs monthly)
May 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move in to facility Student notification/enrollment/intake process begins and continues
June 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facility preparations continue/additional materials/supplies ordered

July 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student meetings & intake processes• Initial scheduling and teacher/advocate assignments• Teachers on-site for prep and professional development 3 weeks ahead
August 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student enrollment finalized• Initial Professional development completed with a schedule for Professional development that will continue throughout the year.

Section I: EMPLOYEES

Organizational Chart

