

BRIGHAM HILL
CONSULTANCY



Chattanooga, Tennessee

Director of Development

The School

Founded in 1906, Girls Preparatory School is a nationally recognized leader in girls education and nurtures each student in mind, body, and spirit to help her become her most fully realized self. At GPS, girls are given opportunities for leadership and are encouraged to express themselves and to find a sense of purpose. The school's values of honor, respect, curiosity, individuality, and relationships permeate every facet of the culture and create an environment in which high expectations blend with support and care as students find their own path. Girls thrive as they explore their interests, develop lifelong friendships, and come to understand the value of their voice. GPS graduates are not only well prepared for future academic success but also are equipped with the resilience, independence, confidence, and desire to make a positive impact that make them leaders in their professional fields and in their communities.

MISSION STATEMENT

Girls Preparatory School inspires each girl to lead a life of integrity and purpose by engaging her mind, cultivating her strengths, and nurturing her self-confidence and respect for others.



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GPS
AT A GLANCE

Head of School: Dr. Autumn A. Graves (since 2014)

Founded: 1906

Enrollment: 600
Upper School (9-12): 350
Middle School (6-8): 250

Students of Color: 17%

Faculty: 63 full-time faculty

Tuition: \$25,340

Financial Aid: \$2.9 million to 40% of students

Budget: \$14.5 million

Endowment: \$33 million

Annual Fund: \$ 1.15 million

Accreditation: Southern Association of Independent Schools and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Girls Preparatory School's curriculum is intentionally and purposefully designed to be challenging and to address the specific needs of girls. Beyond traditional courses in English, history, mathematics, science, and world languages, GPS offers 24 Advanced Placement courses and electives in computer science and engineering, fine and performing arts, health and wellness, and more. The well-rounded program ensures that girls develop the time management skills and work ethic necessary for success while also providing them with a safe environment in which to explore their interests and discover new skills. Small class sizes allow each student to receive individual attention and positive reinforcement from teachers, and girls feel known and loved by caring and dedicated faculty members. Learning specialists and counselors are available in both the Middle and High School to provide academic as well as social and emotional support, and the college counseling staff offers personalized guidance for both girls and their families beginning in the freshman year.

Through a robust arts program, girls discover new forms of expression and cultivate their creativity. In recognition of the positive impact of the program, the arts department was awarded the 2012 Southern Regional College Board Award for Excellence and Innovation. GPS has three major theatre productions per year, 28 fine arts and 20 visual arts offerings, and 3 dance, 6 instrumental music, and 4 vocal ensembles. Students

enjoy world-class facilities, including the second largest theater in Chattanooga, and the school hosts the first high school contemporary dance company in Tennessee.



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Extensive athletics offerings both promote physical health and cultivate mental toughness, discipline, positive self-image, and teamwork. Girls can take part in 15 varsity sports and 12 Middle School sports, including bowling, rowing, tennis, lacrosse, climbing, diving, track and field, volleyball, and soccer. Athletic facilities include three fields for soccer and lacrosse; a 113-foot, six-lane pool for swimming and diving; an eight-lane polyurethane Olympic-size track with discus cage and shotput throwing area; a modern rowing facility on the banks of the Tennessee river; and a training room that houses 18 machines and a cardio theater system.



Girls are encouraged to take ownership of their own learning and are exposed to far-ranging opportunities outside of the traditional school day. Week-long, intensive “Winterim” courses designed by faculty members allow students to delve into topics ranging from DNA to creative writing and amateur acting. In addition, faculty and alumnae lead domestic and international trips to locations including a Dude Ranch, India, and Japan. Middle school students participate in class trips that include a Civil Rights Tour and Space Camp.



A wide array of student clubs—such as Habitat for Humanity, Mock Trial, Model UN, fashion club, Junior Engineering Technical Society, GLAD, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and Science Olympiad—as well as numerous student organizations such as Student Council and Honor Council provide opportunities for girls to pursue their unique interests as well as hold positions of leadership and learn to be vocal proponents for themselves and others. GPS also partners with local organizations to show girls the importance of being change-makers in both

the school and global community. MBD, an annual conference hosted by GPS, brings together entrepreneurs and business leaders from the Greater Chattanooga area to share strategies for success and to amplify girls’ voices in the field. In addition, an extensive coordinate program with the all-boys McCallie School provides opportunities for girls and boys to interact through social events, community service, clubs, select academic activities, and the arts. The coordinate program allows both GPS and McCallie students to reap the benefits of a single-gender education while also working side-by-side and making lasting friendships with students of the other gender.

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Students come to GPS from 33 zip codes and 32 schools, but all join a sisterhood once on campus. A strong sense of community and belonging is a defining feature of the GPS experience and is enhanced through a number of traditions that create strong bonds between girls. One of the most important practices, the Honor Code, is rooted in the idea that “a girl’s honor is her most valuable possession.” Girls all commit to the Honor Code in a ceremony during which each student shakes hands with the Head of School and adds her signature to a sign that is displayed on campus. “Cat-Rat” is a treasured custom whereby an incoming sixth grader (the “rat”) is paired with a twelfth grade student (the “cat”) who serves as a friend, mentor, and big sister for the year. The close friendship shared by these pairs often lasts for years beyond GPS and brings alumnae back to campus to see their rats participate in May Day, Chapel Talks, and graduation. May Day, one of the most highly anticipated events of the year, is a celebration of inner beauty and community. Sophomore girls celebrate the halfway point of their journey through high school by wrapping the May Pole, while the senior court, elected by their peers, is represented by those students who exemplify the highest personal values of integrity, being a friend to all, and school spirit. Students share that this event brings out the true spirit of the school as girls rejoice in seeing the success of classmates.

Girls graduate confident in their academic knowledge and ability to lead and find great success beyond the walls of GPS. 100% of students matriculate to four-year colleges and universities and, since 2006, the school has had 49 national merit semifinalists, 63 commended, and 7 national achievement semifinalists or Hispanic scholars.

The Strategic Plan

Under the leadership of Dr. Autumn Graves, Head of School since 2014, the school recently completed a strategic plan, *Reaching Our Highest Potential*, which identified three priorities as GPS looks to the future:

- **Looking In:** In order to continue to be a premier girls school, GPS will evaluate and redesign its curriculum, programs, and facilities to ensure the institution is meeting the needs of 21st century girls. This will include aligning the curriculum between grades and divisions, expanding experiential learning opportunities, creating more professional development for teachers, and increasing program offerings to help students grow academically, socially, and emotionally.
- **Reaching Out:** GPS will build strategic partnerships locally and nationally to share its knowledge of girls education and increase its capacity to serve girls. The school will create a benchmark group made of organizations around the country invested in

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understanding how girls learn best. GPS will also partner with local business leaders, parents, alumnae, and other friends of the school to build mentorship and internship programs, design educational resources, and increase volunteer opportunities. Finally, a strategic marketing plan will inform how GPS reaches prospective families and students in the community.

- **Lifting Up:** By cultivating top talent and strategically utilizing resources, GPS will ensure the continued success of students, alumnae, faculty, staff, and the institution. The school will recruit and retain top talent and create opportunities for them to pursue projects that will enhance the GPS experience. Developing a consistent assessment strategy will allow the school to monitor program effectiveness and improve outcomes, and sound financial management will ensure institutional sustainability well into the future.

Development at GPS

Throughout its history, Girls Preparatory School has enjoyed the generous support of current and former parents, grandparents, and alumnae. Its endowment stands at \$33 million, and the annual Impact Fund raises over \$1.15 million to support the operating budget and to provide the flexibility to respond to the school's highest priorities throughout the year. Donors can direct Impact Fund gifts to one of six funds that reflect their personal priorities: Arts & Humanities, Athletics, Faculty & Staff, Financial Aid, Technology Integration, or Area of Greatest Need. In December 2016, GPS held its first annual Bruiser Bee, a fundraising and community-building event featuring an adult spelling bee and live and silent auctions. The Bruiser Bee attracts both friends of GPS and members of the broader Chattanooga community, and proceeds support the Impact Fund. In addition to Giving Societies that recognize one-time gifts to the Impact Fund, Girls Preparatory School has established eight Giving Circles, which honor donors who have committed to make a significant gift, ranging from \$7,500 to \$100,000, over the course of three years. The school is currently engaged in a \$2.5 million capital campaign for athletics, which is expected to be completed by December 2019, and anticipates launching a larger capital campaign in the coming years following the completion of its master plan.



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The new Director of Development will join a community that benefits from a strong sense of tradition as well as the energy and excitement surrounding the creation of the *Reaching Our Highest Potential* strategic plan. Building on the success of GPS's fundraising to date will be critical to securing the resources necessary for the achievement of the strategic plan and the continued pursuit of the school's vision: "GPS strives to stand among the nation's leading schools and is driven to educate and prepare our girls to be a strong force in the global community and to be recognized as models of active and ethical citizenship." Like many schools, GPS has a core of long-term, loyal donors who have been generous to the school for many years but have reached or are approaching their capacity for giving. Accordingly, a key priority for the future is expanding the current base of support by engaging the next generation of parents, grandparents, and alumnae. Identifying the varying needs of different constituents and tailoring approaches to communication, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship to meet donor expectations will be an important element of ensuring that both existing and new donors continue to make Girls Preparatory School a philanthropic priority for years to come. The school will also put a particular focus on creating more meaningful opportunities for alumnae to engage with each other as well as better communicating the ways in which GPS is educating, inspiring, and empowering girls in order to strengthen alumnae's commitment to the school itself. The fundraising firm Grenzebach Glier and Associates is currently conducting an audit of the entire development effort to identify additional opportunities for growth, to obtain data that will inform overall strategy as well as specific goals, and to suggest the ideal structure of the development staff.



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Responsibilities

Reporting to the Head of School and working closely with the Board of Trustees' Development Committee, the Director of Development is responsible for creating and implementing strategies, goals, and programs that generate philanthropic support and promote alumnae, parent, and grandparent engagement. He or she will ensure the success of all development efforts, including the Impact Fund, major and planned giving, and capital and endowment campaigns. The Director of Development manages a department that will consist of seven staff members. The current department structure includes the Director of the Impact Fund, the Assistant Director of the Impact Fund, the Director of Alumnae and Community Engagement, the Director of Parent Engagement and Special Events, a Major Gifts Officer, the Database Manager, and the Advancement Office Manager. Specific duties include the following:

- Creating and executing strategic development plans to meet long- and short-term fundraising goals, including growing both the number of donors and the giving level of current donors and otherwise strengthening the culture of philanthropy among GPS constituents.
- Acting as a key spokesperson on behalf of Girls Preparatory School and building relationships both with school constituents and in the broader Chattanooga region.
- Cultivating and soliciting major donors both directly and by supporting the fundraising work of the Head of School, trustees, and other volunteers.
- Partnering closely with the Director of Strategic Communications and Marketing, as well as with the Director of Admission, to maintain accurate and consistent messaging to both internal and external constituencies regarding GPS's mission, vision, values, and accomplishments.
- Continually seeking new avenues of funding, such as approaching families new to the school or the area and reestablishing or strengthening relationships with alumnae and past parents.
- Providing philanthropy education programs for trustees, parent volunteers, and alumnae volunteers so that all community members understand the importance of giving and have the training and tools necessary to support the school's fundraising goals.
- Overseeing the day-to-day operations of the development office, including ensuring that processes and systems are efficient and effective, that donor histories and gift reporting are accurate, and that stewardship is timely.
- Cultivating an ethos of collaboration and communication in the development department, mentoring and guiding staff members with clear goals and regular feedback, and ensuring that the office is optimally structured and staffed.

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- Strengthening connections with alumnae and alumnae parents by developing multiple and varied avenues through which graduates and their families can engage with GPS and with each other.
- Being an active and visible presence in the life of GPS in order both to build relationships and to maintain a first-hand understanding of the school's programs and students' achievements.
- Maintaining ongoing communication and an effective partnership with the business office.
- Fostering a strong sense of community through special events and relationship building, and ensuring that all donors and volunteers feel valued and appreciated.

Candidate Qualifications

Leadership

- A strategic and systems-oriented thinker who sees the “big picture” and has the organizational skills, attention to detail, follow-through, and high standards for quality necessary to balance the externally facing responsibilities of the Director of Development role with effective day-to-day management of the development effort.
- An executive whose combination of gravitas, confidence, intellect, warmth, and genuine care for others allows him or her both to command an audience and to build and sustain individual relationships with a wide variety of constituents.
- A team-oriented manager who sets clear goals, delegates to and empowers staff and volunteers, generates a sense of ownership, and maintains ultimate accountability for success.

Experience, Skills, and Knowledge

- At least ten years of experience in nonprofit fundraising in positions of increasing responsibility.
- An understanding of both the art and the science of fundraising, including the ability to use quantitative and qualitative data to envision, plan, and execute within a complex institutional environment.
- Exceptional communication skills that allow one to speak and write compellingly about Girls Preparatory School.

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- Ideally, significant direct involvement with annual and major giving programs, special events, alumnae and parent relations programs, and multimillion-dollar capital campaigns.
- A successful track record of raising large gifts directly and of coaching and otherwise supporting other professionals and volunteers in cultivation and solicitation.
- Knowledge of issues pertaining to women and philanthropy, including factors that influence giving as well as specific strategies to engage, empower, and steward female donors.
- Skill in assessing existing fundraising strategies, creating plans to strengthen areas of need, and building new programs as required to access new avenues of giving, to increase numbers of donors as well as contributions from current donors, and to build a sense of community that permeates development efforts.
- The perceptive skills necessary to understand donor preferences and expectations and the creativity and flexibility to personalize both giving opportunities and stewardship programs.
- Background in hiring, managing, and supporting committed development staff members and ensuring that they have both the professional training and resources to perform their duties effectively.
- The ability to recruit, train, guide, and motivate volunteers in pursuit of a common goal, and an understanding of how best to leverage volunteers to support a comprehensive development effort.
- An understanding of the relationships between fundraising and other key administrative areas—such as communications, marketing, admissions, and the business office—and the ability to collaborate successfully with administrators across the school.

Personal Attributes

- A person of unquestioned honesty and integrity.
- A confident and authentic leader who is comfortable in his or her own skin, is secure in his or her own abilities and intellect, and who relishes being part of a high-performing team.
- A hardworking, determined, and flexible professional who projects a sense of calm and is graceful and unflappable under pressure.

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- A creative and entrepreneurial thinker who continually seeks avenues for improvement while simultaneously embracing and respecting tradition.
- A “people person” who values personal communication and a high-touch approach to stewardship and engagement.
- An observant and empathetic person who understands the spoken and unspoken needs and motivations of others.
- A positive and egalitarian person who recognizes the unique contributions of each individual and brings an attitude of gratitude to every facet of fundraising.
- One who is passionate about the mission of Girls Preparatory School and is excited about raising funds to support the school’s advancement.



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Other Considerations

Compensation:	Highly competitive among comparable organizations in the region.
Travel:	Light to moderate.
Education:	Bachelor's degree required.
Website:	www.gps.edu

For more information, contact:

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