



## School Spotlight: Goucher Charter Academy



Goucher Charter Academy is the very definition of a community school. When parents learned their local elementary school was closing, everyone was devastated. Many parents had graduated from that school themselves and were excited to send their

children there. Unfortunately, all children in the community were about to be bused more than 20 minutes away across the district. When parents and community leaders asked what could be done, they were told that there was nothing they could do. That didn't sit right with a few community leaders, ultimately lead by former Fire Chief and current Board Chair, Jimmy Lamb. Community members began meeting, sharing ideas, providing resources, and working together. Hardly anyone knew what a charter school even was at first, but they researched, put a plan together, and applied to be a new charter. They were approved! Jimmy Lamb and the rest of the planning committee got to work. They purchase the old elementary building that was closed, hired administrators and staff (many from the local community), and welcomed back all the children who were sent away for the last 2 years. Those same students who had previously tested below state standards, have seen their scores climb every year since the charter school opened. Cub Scouts helped shape the school's values, culture, leadership development, and STEM programming. They may even be the first school-run pack in Scouting America. The innovation, grit, and involvement seen throughout Goucher Charter Academy's short history truly makes it a school *in, for, and by* its community.



### Charter School Transportation Survey

This past Fall, the SCDE surveyed 24 different charter schools to uncover what was being done regarding student transportation. We found lots of interesting information.

Of the 24 schools surveyed  
10 were using buses to some degree  
5 organized school-wide carpools  
3 utilized public transportation

Of the 14 schools not utilizing buses  
ALL cited cost as being the primary reason  
8 cited organizational concerns

Speaking with school leaders revealed numerous challenges facing charter transportation, but none quite as daunting as school bus costs. Newer buses are prohibitively expensive. Older buses break down often and are costly to repair. The SCDE will continue its observations throughout the rest of the school year and will launch a Charter School Transportation Pilot with a few schools in the Fall of 2026 to determine what resources and support would be the most useful. One exciting offering already resulting from this work is that the Transportation Department is offering diesel fuel at the state-secured rate starting in January 2026 for all charter schools. To participate, complete the [Diesel Fuel Interest Form](#).

