THE SCHENCK SCHOOL

Atlanta, Georgia

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

Head of School Search · Beginning July 2027

PREPARED BY

EDUCATORS COLLABORATIVE

THE OPPORTUNITY

A LEGACY OF TRANSFORMATION

Educators Collaborative is honored to assist The Schenck School in Atlanta, Georgia, in its search for a visionary, mission-driven Head of School to begin service in July 2027.

1959	K–6	250	2–3 yrs
Year Founded	Grades Served	students	Typical Length of Stay

For more than 65 years, The Schenck School has changed the trajectory of children's lives. Founded in 1959 by David T. Schenck on the belief that dyslexic learners can thrive academically with the right support, The Schenck School has grown into one of the oldest and most respected elementary schools dedicated to remediating students with dyslexia. Families describe Schenck as more than a school—it is a place where children rediscover their confidence, curiosity, and belief in themselves.

> "This school has been a miracle for our son, who has gone from difficulty reading comics to comfortably reading chapter books on his own." **— Schenck Parent**

Students collaborate on a classroom activity at The Schenck School.

Campus visitors are immediately struck by the beautiful, mid-century style spaces that integrate naturally into the surrounding landscape and neighborhood. A joyful sense of purpose can be felt throughout the School, where student learning is visible, each child is known and valued, and accomplishments are celebrated. The multisensory room, student work displayed throughout the building, and the courtyard lined with years of bas-relief self-portraits make student effort and progress visible across campus. While students may only spend a few years of intensive remediation at Schenck, the impact of their time in this community is outsized and alters the course of their lifelong educational journey. In conversations and on surveys, parents credit Schenck with helping their child find their joyful confidence.

> "Our daughter's confidence has been preserved; she has been in the most loving and supportive environment we could ever hope for." **— Schenck Parent**

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

BUILDING READERS. BUILDING CONFIDENCE.

The Schenck School's mission is to build a solid educational foundation for dyslexic students and develop their rich potential.

The School offers a comprehensive educational program for students in kindergarten through sixth grade, who typically attend for two to three years of focused, accelerated remediation. At the heart of the curriculum is the Schenck School Reading Model, a highly diagnostic and prescriptive method anchored in the Orton-Gillingham Approach to teaching literacy. Through individualized, multisensory instruction, Schenck addresses each child's specific needs, nurtures individual strengths, and equips students with the skills and confidence to thrive in their next school.

Unlike many schools, Schenck defines success by a student's eventual departure. Families and faculty alike celebrate when a child is ready to "*soar on*" to a mainstream school, typically after two to three years of intensive remediation, though the range for enrollment is between one and four years. In 1997, David Schenck became one of the founding fellows of The Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators. In 2013, the School launched a nonprofit outreach arm — now ReadSource — to extend Schenck's expertise to educators and struggling readers throughout greater Atlanta, including a partnership with Purpose Built Schools Atlanta to bring evidence-based literacy instruction into Atlanta Public Schools.

A Schenck teacher works one-on-one with a student during a small-group lesson.

VOICES OF THE COMMUNITY

WHAT FAMILIES AND EDUCATORS SAY

Two independent research efforts — a 2024 strategic study and a 2026 community feedback survey — paint a remarkably consistent picture: a school that restores and strengthens

children's confidence, delivers expert, research-based instruction, and creates a devoted community. This powerful, emboldening commitment is palpable in every conversation with parents and alumni about the school and animates every action taken by educators. The result? Confident, capable students who understand how they learn, recognize their strengths, and leave Schenck prepared for the academic challenges ahead.

> "Schenck is the gold standard and my first recommendation for students with dyslexia." **— Referring Educational Consultant**

Multisensory, tactile learning is central to every Schenck lesson.

A Schenck third-grade teacher works with students in a small-group session.

> "The teachers and administrators are incredibly knowledgeable and supportive. These kids, who struggle and could easily be discouraged, are taught confidence and skills and really learn to shine!" **— Schenck Parent**

LIFE AT SCHENCK

A JOYFUL, SPIRITED COMMUNITY

While students come to Schenck for intensive remediation, their experience is also filled with opportunities to play, create, celebrate, and belong. School-wide traditions such as Founder's Day, BAMFest, and Field Day bring the community together throughout the year.

The House System builds connections across grade levels, with every student belonging to Tempus, Solis, Terra, or Ignis. At the beginning of their first year at Schenck, students are enthusiastically welcomed into one of the four Houses during the Sorting Ceremony. Throughout the year, they earn "marbles" for demonstrating good character and citizenship. The friendly competition culminates at an assembly on the last day of school, when one House is named House Champion.

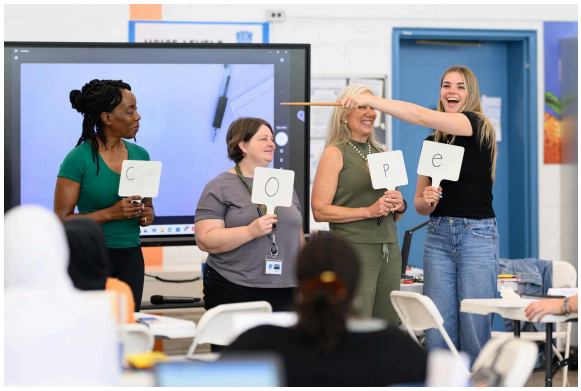
That sense of community continues beyond the school day through Phoenix Fun, the School's after-school program, which offers activities ranging from Horseback Riding to Chess to Phoenix Flyers Cheerleading. Together, these experiences allow students to explore new interests, build friendships, and take part in the full life of the School.

The beloved *Sorting Ceremony,* where new students are sorted into their houses, is celebrated by all.

REACH BEYOND SCHENCK

ReadSource

That same spirit extends beyond the School's own campus. ReadSource, Schenck's outreach nonprofit, has become the gold standard for teacher training in structured literacy — sharing the School's expertise with educators across the region and, through its partnership with Purpose Built Schools Atlanta, with public-school students throughout the city. Founded in 2014, ReadSource builds on the legacy of David T. Schenck, extending the life-changing work of the school one child and one teacher at a time.



Educators participate in a hands-on ReadSource teacher-training workshop.

Together, the School and ReadSource share the same powerful goal: to ensure that every struggling reader receives the remediation necessary to thrive as a learner.

THE LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

A FOUNDATION OF STRENGTH

The Schenck School occupies a distinctive place in the educational landscape. For generations, it has changed the trajectories of bright, dyslexic students, equipping them with the skills to become successful readers and learners while helping them recognize their strengths, build confidence, and embrace their potential.

The combination of educator competence and student confidence may be Schenck's greatest strength. Students are surrounded by peers who learn as they do, and dyslexia becomes normalized and celebrated rather than stigmatized. With an average of 10 students and two teachers in each classroom, students receive close, individualized attention throughout the school day. This low student-teacher ratio, combined with intensive instruction, expert faculty, and a positive school culture, gives students the support they need to tackle difficult work while developing resilience, self-awareness, and self-advocacy. Parents and alumni often describe Schenck as changing not only a student's academic path, but also what a family believes is possible for their child.

Unwavering Commitment to Core Beliefs

At Schenck, seven core beliefs guide its educators, curriculum, and community:

#1: Unlocking Potential – Dyslexic students possess tremendous potential in school and throughout life.

#2: Success Through Research-Based Practice – Academic milestones are reached by utilizing evidence-based teaching methodologies, specifically centered around the Orton-Gillingham Approach.

#3: Optimal Learning Environments – An ideal educational setting requires small class sizes, low student-to-teacher ratios, and multi-sensory instruction.

#4: Expert Educators – The faculty is intentionally trained to deeply understand dyslexia, believe wholeheartedly in their students, and adapt to their individual educational needs.

#5: Building Independence – A priority is placed on helping students cultivate high self-esteem, become strong self-advocates, and view themselves as capable, independent learners.

#6: Community-Driven Success – Students achieve their highest outcomes when supported by an active, unified community of parents, educators, specialists, administrators, and trustees.

#7: Foundations for Lifelong Learning – The typical two-to-four-year student placement is designed to establish a permanent, firm foundation for all future mainstream academic learning.

Exceptional Faculty Expertise

Schenck's faculty are at the heart of the School's success. Every faculty member either holds or is actively working toward an Orton-Gillingham Academy credential, and 60 percent hold advanced degrees. Their expertise allows Schenck to provide intensive, evidence-based remediation within a full elementary school experience. That expertise is strengthened by decades of institutional knowledge, long-serving educators, alumni who have returned to teach, and a strong culture of ongoing professional development.

An Enduring Community

Although most students attend Schenck for only a few years, the relationships formed here often last for generations. This is especially evident among Schenck's legacy families, whose current students follow parents, aunts, uncles, and other relatives who once attended the School given the strong genetic correlation of dyslexia. Many seek out Schenck for their own children because they experienced its impact firsthand and trust the School to provide that same strong foundation for another generation. They are also among Schenck's greatest advocates.

The Alumni Board offers adult alumni an opportunity to remain active in the Schenck community, while the Young Alumni Advisory Council gives younger graduates a voice and a way to stay connected. Former parents also remain involved in the life of the School and support Schenck philanthropically. Together, these relationships provide an important source of continuity and strength for the School.

Financial Strength and Tailored Facilities

The School enters this leadership transition from a position of considerable strength, including a strong endowment, no debt, robust annual giving, and a community with a deep tradition of generosity. These resources give the next Head the opportunity to think ambitiously about faculty support, program excellence, accessibility, philanthropy, and Schenck's influence in the broader field.

The beauty of the facility and campus, noteworthy to the first-time visitor, is appreciated by all. Purposefully designed indoor and outdoor spaces support multisensory instruction, small-group learning, play, and community gatherings. Set within its wooded Buckhead neighborhood, the campus is carefully maintained and continues to evolve alongside the School's programs.

THE LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The next Head of The Schenck School will inherit an institution of extraordinary strength. Schenck enjoys a national reputation for excellence in remediating dyslexic students, an exceptionally talented and committed faculty and staff, deep loyalty from families and alumni, strong financial resources, and a mission that has changed the trajectory of thousands of young lives.

The central leadership task will be to distinguish between what should be preserved because it is essential to Schenck and which aspects of the school experience must evolve as needs change. The next Head will have the opportunity to engage the community in several important areas.

Uphold Excellence in Dyslexia Education within a Full Academic Experience

Schenck's highly trained faculty, small classes, multisensory instruction, and research-informed approach to reading have established the School as a leader in dyslexia education for generations. Families consistently describe transformational academic growth accompanied by equally important gains in confidence, independence, and self-understanding.

The next Head will partner with an accomplished faculty to preserve what Schenck does exceptionally well while fostering thoughtful inquiry, collaboration, continuous academic improvement, and professional growth to remain best in class.

Nurture, Attract, and Develop an Extraordinary Faculty

Extraordinary faculty are at the heart of Schenck's mission, bringing deep expertise and continuity to their work. The School invests heavily in developing excellent teachers - compensation, benefits, family needs, flexibility, leadership opportunities, and workplace culture remain critical to the mission. And like at schools across the nation, faculty recruitment and retention remain critical to the mission. The next Head will need to understand what attracts excellent educators to Schenck, what enables them to remain, and how to develop the next generation of teacher-leaders and administrators though meaningful collaboration.

Preserve the Unique Attributes of Schenck

Again and again, members of the Schenck community describe the School in deeply personal terms. Students gain confidence and are celebrated; families find hope and community; and faculty and staff are united by their work that changes children's lives. The community deeply values the warmth, trust, optimism, expertise, and joy that have long characterized Schenck.

The next Head of School will have the opportunity to lean in and listen deeply, strengthen communication and organizational systems, and continue to foster confidence and trust within the community. This leader will bring the clarity, communication, and accountability expected of a thriving independent school while ensuring that the structure serves the warmth, joy, collegiality, and shared purpose that make Schenck distinctive.

Articulate Schenck's Distinctive Value and Deepen Impact

Schenck's reputation has been built over generations through the success of its students, the expertise of its teachers, and the stories of families whose lives have been transformed. That reputation remains a tremendous asset. At the same time, the landscape of dyslexia education is changing. More schools are developing stronger learning-support programs, adopting

evidence-based approaches, and expanding their capacity to serve students with dyslexia. Schenck therefore cannot rely on reputation alone; it must continue to deepen, demonstrate, and clearly articulate the distinctive value of a Schenck education.

That value extends well beyond Orton-Gillingham instruction. It includes the intensity and focus of remediation, the expertise of teachers, the carefully defined student profile, the experience of learning alongside other bright students with dyslexia, and the confidence, self-understanding, and the independence that students develop during their time at Schenck. The School has an opportunity to pair these powerful elements with increasingly sophisticated evidence of impact, including longitudinal information about students after outplacement, academic and social-emotional outcomes, the effectiveness of teacher training, and the reach and influence of ReadSource.

The next Head will help cultivate a culture in which data, research, experience, and professional judgment work together—not simply to demonstrate that Schenck's approach works, but to understand why it works, where it is most effective, and how it can continue to improve. This work will enable Schenck to sharpen its educational model, strengthen its position in an increasingly sophisticated marketplace, and extend what it is learning to improve the lives of children far beyond its campus.

This same lens should extend across the full student and family experience. Enrollment, affordability, admissions, financial aid, student experience, and outplacement are deeply interconnected and should be understood as parts of a coherent whole. Schenck fulfills its mission when students are ready to leave campus and "soar on," making outplacement both an important measure of success and a complex, deeply personal process for families. The next Head will ensure that transitions remain highly individualized, well communicated, and grounded in a shared understanding of student success; strengthen partnerships with receiving schools; and build the systems needed to understand and document the longer-term success of Schenck graduates.

Together, these efforts will help Schenck preserve what has made it exceptional while continuing to evolve—more clearly defining its distinctive value within the marketplace, strengthening the experience it offers families, and sustaining its leadership in the education of dyslexic students.

Define the Relationship with ReadSource

For decades, Schenck has explored answers to the inspiring question: how can the extraordinary expertise concentrated within the School benefit far more children than can ever attend Schenck itself? ReadSource offers a potentially powerful answer. Its connection to Schenck gives it access to exceptional expertise and credibility, and its teacher-training programs respond to growing interest in structured literacy and the science of reading.

The continued evolution of ReadSource creates an opportunity for the Board and next Head to clarify that relationship and determine how Schenck can continue to extend its influence without diluting the Head's essential responsibility for the School.

Deepen Relationships with Alumni, Former Teachers and Parents, and other Community Partners

Schenck benefits from remarkable connections and has the opportunity to engage with those who share a deep appreciation for its mission and the transformative impact the Schenck approach provides to dyslexic learners, whether enrolled at Schenck or beyond.

The next Head will need to be an enthusiastic advancement partner — building relationships, articulating institutional aspirations, cultivating donors, and connecting philanthropy to priorities such as faculty excellence, accessibility, and program strength. The Head will also play an important external role in maintaining strong relationships with Atlanta schools,

admission leaders, psychologists, educational consultants, public-school partners, and leaders in the wider field of dyslexia education.

For the next Head of School, these challenges represent an exciting and unique opportunity: to steward a beloved and highly successful institution while helping it become an even stronger school, a more cohesive organization, and an increasingly influential force in the education of dyslexic students.

THE LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

LEADERSHIP PROFILE

The Schenck community seeks an experienced educational leader who will understand that this is fundamentally a stewardship-and-servant leadership opportunity, not a turnaround assignment. The next Head must have the confidence to lead and the humility to seek first to understand; the ability to honor an extraordinary legacy while helping Schenck respond thoughtfully to a changing educational landscape.

The successful candidate will be deeply drawn to Schenck's mission and to the children and families it serves. The Head need not arrive as an Orton-Gillingham practitioner or dyslexia specialist — constituents consistently placed broader leadership capacity ahead of technical specialization. The successful Head must, however, understand learning differences sufficiently to deeply appreciate the journey Schenck students and families undertake, and possess the curiosity to become fluent in Schenck's educational model, the science of reading, and emerging research in the field.

Professional Experience and Education/Training

The strongest candidates will offer a compelling combination of the following:

- Significant senior educational leadership experience, ideally as a Head of School, Associate/Assistant Head, Principal, or comparable senior leader with broad responsibility for people, programs, strategy, and operations.
- Meaningful experience with students who learn differently, whether in a specialized school, learning-support setting, or through other sustained professional or personal experience.
- Strong grounding in teaching and learning, including the ability to engage credibly with educators and parents about curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional development, and student growth.
- While knowledge of dyslexia, structured literacy remediation, the science of reading and Orton-Gillingham certification is not required, the Head must become sufficiently fluent to understand and represent Schenck's program credibly.
- Demonstrated success developing and retaining talented faculty and leaders, including identifying leadership potential and creating conditions in which excellent professionals can thrive.
- Strategic and organizational leadership experience, including enrollment management, financial stewardship, organizational systems, data-informed decision-making, and long-range planning.
- Experience working effectively with a governing Board, including an understanding of the distinct responsibilities of governance and management.
- Experience with philanthropy and advancement, including donor cultivation, institutional storytelling, and community partnership.

- Independent-school experience is highly desirable, given the complexities of parent relationships, tuition-driven economics, enrollment, philanthropy, and Board partnership.

Experience with an outreach organization, professional-development enterprise, nonprofit subsidiary, or other mission-extending initiatives would be particularly relevant as Schenck considers the future of ReadSource and potential partnerships.

An advanced degree in education, educational leadership, specialized education, learning sciences, nonprofit management, or a related field would be valued, although demonstrated leadership effectiveness and relevant experience will matter more than any particular credential.

Leadership and Personal Attributes

Above all, the Schenck community emphasized the human qualities of leadership. The next Head should be:

Mission-Driven and Student-Centered

The Head will be deeply moved by Schenck's purpose and focused on what best serves students, taking genuine pleasure in student growth and keeping the student experience at the center of institutional decisions. This leader will understand that Schenck's work is simultaneously academic and deeply human — teaching children while helping them recognize their "superpowers." The Head will have the discipline to ask whether new opportunities advance the mission, and the courage to say no when they do not.

A Collaborative Communicator

The Head will empower Schenck's community of professionals, invite their expertise into decision-making, and delegate meaningfully — neither leading Schenck by consensus nor from the top down, but knowing when consultation improves a decision and welcoming thoughtful dissent. Having listened carefully, the Head must also be able to make decisions, explain them, and move the organization forward, while holding every employee to the high standards students and families deserve: providing meaningful feedback, developing emerging leaders, and addressing performance concerns directly and constructively.

The next Head will communicate frequently, candidly, promptly, and with good judgment. The community will benefit from a leader who brings clarity — listening well, explaining decisions clearly, providing appropriate transparency, and ensuring that policies and expectations are applied consistently.

A Servant-Leader

The next Head will bring humble confidence: asking good questions, learning from others, acknowledging mistakes, and giving credit generously. Schenck possesses deep expertise, and its leader must draw upon it rather than needing to be the expert in the room.

The leader will understand both the emotional journey families take to Schenck and the importance of relationships within the School. The Head will be calm, self-aware, warm, and capable of navigating difficult conversations, reading people and situations well, and managing conflict constructively.

An Authentic Ambassador

Schenck wants a Head who is part of the daily life of the School — at carpool, in classrooms and hallways, and in conversation with students, faculty, and families. This will be a leader who listens, seeks to understand multiple perspectives, communicates candidly, follows through on commitments, and develops trust over time. Visibility is not ceremonial; it is how trust is built.

The Head of The Schenck School will represent an institution whose influence extends well beyond its enrollment. This leader should be a compelling communicator who can articulate Schenck's mission and expertise to families, educators, donors, partner organizations, and the broader community — building relationships across Atlanta and within the national dyslexia and independent-school communities, and convening others around the important work of improving outcomes for children who learn differently.

Intellectually Curious and Grounded in Evidence

The next Head need not be an expert in dyslexia, but must be eager to learn from those who are, and bring genuine curiosity about neuroscience, structured literacy, educational research, and the rapidly evolving understanding of how children learn.

Strategic and Future-Oriented

The School's challenge is to determine its strategic priorities and which opportunities deserve the institution's attention and resources. The next Head should be able to identify priorities, establish a small number of important goals, align people and resources behind them, and sustain attention through implementation — while seeing beyond the daily life of an already successful school to understand the forces shaping Schenck's future: changing demographics, stronger learning-support offerings elsewhere, affordability, faculty workforce issues, and the evolving science of reading.

Joyful and Gracious

Schenck is serious about its mission without being solemn about childhood. The community hopes for a Head who contributes personally to the fun, optimism, warmth, and human connection that characterize Schenck at its best.

THE LOCATION

ATLANTA

Atlanta, the capital of Georgia and home to more than 500,000 residents (5.8 million across the metropolitan area), is one of the nation's fastest-growing and most dynamic

cities. A global center for business, innovation, healthcare, and education, Atlanta is home to one of the nation's largest concentrations of Fortune 500 companies, including Coca-Cola, Delta Air Lines, The Home Depot, and UPS, as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, the world's busiest airport, connects the city to destinations around the globe and makes Atlanta an accessible hub for business and travel.

Education is central to Atlanta's identity. More than 30 colleges and universities call the city home, including Emory University, Georgia Institute of Technology, and Georgia State University. The Atlanta University Center is the nation's oldest and largest consortium of historically Black colleges and universities, including Spelman College, Morehouse College, Clark Atlanta University, Morehouse School of Medicine, and the Interdenominational Theological Center. The city is also known for its strong independent school community and longstanding tradition of philanthropic and civic leadership.

Known as the "City in a Forest" for its expansive tree canopy, Atlanta offers a unique blend of urban energy and natural beauty. Residents enjoy cultural institutions such as the High Museum of Art, the Atlanta History Center, the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park, Fernbank Museum of Natural History, the National Center for Civil and Human Rights, and The Carter Center, along with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Atlanta Opera, and Atlanta Ballet. Atlanta's thriving film and television industry has earned it the nickname "Hollywood of the South," while professional sports teams representing MLB, NFL, NBA, WNBA, and MLS contribute to the city's vibrant cultural life.

The city's neighborhoods are connected by parks, trails, and the Atlanta BeltLine, while destinations such as Piedmont Park and Centennial Olympic Park provide gathering places for festivals, recreation, and community events throughout the year.

Together, these qualities make Atlanta a city that is both globally connected and deeply rooted in community, offering an exceptional quality of life for those who choose to call it home.

HOW TO APPLY

APPLICATION PROCESS

Candidates interested in this position are invited to have a preliminary conversation with the Educators Collaborative consultants leading this search. Interested and qualified candidates should submit the following materials, in the order listed, in a single merged PDF document.

- EC Candidate Summary Sheet (contact Lisa Lyle or Joan Beauregard for this document)
- Letter of Interest addressed to the Head of School Search Committee
- Current resume
- Statement of Educational Leadership Philosophy

- A list of five or more professional references, with contact information (name, relationship to candidate, phone, and email); references will not be contacted until a candidate is considered for the finalist round
- EC Disclosure Statement (contact Lisa Lyle or Joan Beauregard for this document)

Timeline

Application Deadline: 16 October 2026

Compensation: Compensation and benefits are competitive in the Atlanta market and will be commensurate with experience.

Contact

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