



Weekly GLA Family Newsletter
February 25, 2025

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Shantae Hearst - Culture Specialist

Tell us one of your favorite memories from your time at GLA.

My favorite memory is having recess with our kindergartners. They are so much fun! I love running and playing with them. They are so sweet and they love me so much!! We have so much fun during our recess time everyday!!!

Tell us one of your proudest teacher moments.

Having a breakthrough moment with my 5th graders. We talked about being kind to each other and the class really opened up about things that bother them outside of school. They began to share their feelings and the class became emotional. Everyone began to hug, support, and love on each other. That was a very proud moment for me and I was so happy to

have witnessed such a beautiful interaction.

What made you want to become a teacher (or what made you want to work in a school)?

I have always had a joy and passion for working with children since I was a little girl. I want to make a difference. I want to impart wisdom into our youth because they are our future. I want to make sure they are well equipped with the tools they need to be successful!

What keeps you coming back to GLA every day?

The kids and the staff. GLA is my extended family. I love my kids and coworkers. We have fun together, we laugh together, we cry together, and we support each other. I love it here at GLA!!!

What's your favorite memory from elementary/middle school?

Calling my friends in the morning to meet me at the playground so we can jump rope everyday.

We all know teaching can be a stressful job! What's your favorite way to unwind?

My favorite way to unwind is spending time with my family and friends. I love a good movie to watch, I like exploring different places in Chicago and I love spending time with my nieces and nephews.

What are your hidden or surprising talents?

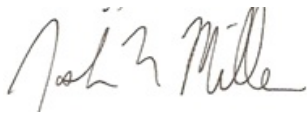
I can sing.

PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

Last Friday, we had an incredible time celebrating Black History Month during GLA's first school wide assembly! There were so many wonderful performances, including GLA Dancers, Butler College Prep Drumline and Majorettes, and Delta Sigma Theta CMAC step team. We also had special appearances by Princess Tiana and Black Panther. From captivating music and dance performances to Divine Nine Sorority and Fraternity presentations, our students were able to learn, experience, and reflect on important aspects of Black History. I want to give a huge thank you to Yana Long for putting together such an amazing assembly and to all of the students and staff that made it a memorable experience!

As we continue the celebration of Black History, we invite parents to join us for our K-4 Black History Month Performance on Thursday, February 27th at 1:00 PM. The students have been working hard, and we can't wait for you to see their incredible presentations. We encourage you to arrive by 12:50 pm to ensure you are seated before the performance begins.

We look forward to seeing you there!

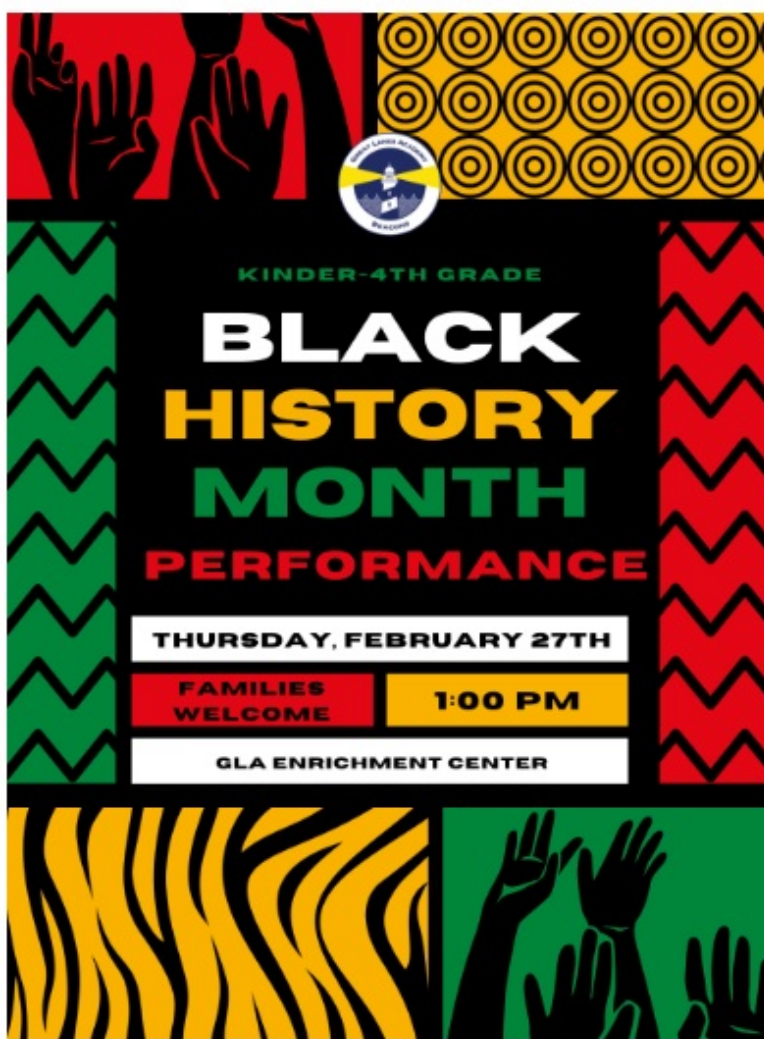




NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

THIS THURSDAY: K-4 Black History Month Performance

Join us this Thursday, February 27th at 1pm for the K-4 Black History Month Performance! Each K-4 homeroom will be practicing all month long to showcase their performance to families!



GLA Parent Advocacy Meeting

- Join us for our next meeting on Tuesday, March 11th, from 4:30-6:00 pm. There will be a presentation from Natural Path Nutrition on easy food hacks and ideas with free samples.

Google Meet joining info: Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/pks-zgka-hqf> or dial: (US) +1 314-474-2565 PIN: 886 654 647 #



Great Lakes Academy

★ PARENT ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

Tuesday

March 11th 2025

4:30pm - 6:00pm

In person or Google Meet

[Google Meet joining info](#)

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/pks-zgka-hqf>

Or dial: (US) +1 314-474-2565 PIN: 886 654 647#



**Natural Path Nutrition will present
healthy snack and drink ideas with free
samples!**

5th-8th Grade Spring Sports Sign Ups: NOW OPEN!

Sign ups for Spring sports are now open - [click here!](#)

Interested student-athletes must attend our athletic orientation with their parents/guardians in person on **Thursday, February 27th** at 5:30 pm. The meeting will be held on Zoom. The link will be provided upon sign up.

You **MUST** have a Sports/Athletic physical on file to participate in compliance with IESA.

The athletic fee per student is \$150/season, to be paid by Friday, April 4th.

Spring sports offered this year include:

Co-ed Track & Field and Co-ed Football

Season dates: Monday, March 3rd - Saturday, June 7th

Practice Times: Football: Monday & Wednesday. Track: Tuesday & Thursday, 3:15-6:00 pm

There will not be any late sign ups! Sign ups close on Friday, March 7th.

NOTE: Athletics and after school programs run on a different schedule. These programs do not coincide and after school programs may be full post athletic season. There is no guarantee to be able to enroll in after school programming after the sports season ends.

Last Chance! Wave Three After-School Enrichment Sign Ups: CLOSING TODAY

Sign ups for Wave Three After-School Enrichment programming are CLOSING TODAY: click [here](#).



The poster is titled "WAVE THREE After-School Enrichment March 3rd - May 29th". It is divided into two main sections: "MONDAY/WEDNESDAY" and "TUESDAY/THURSDAY". Each section lists various enrichment programs with their respective grade levels and teachers. The poster is decorated with colorful icons like a pencil, musical notes, a microscope, and a basketball. At the bottom, a pink banner says "SIGN UP W/ MS. O'LEARY BY 02/25".

WAVE THREE
After-School Enrichment
March 3rd - May 29th

MONDAY/WEDNESDAY

K-2 Science Explorers w/ Ms. Gaines	3-5 HW Help w/ Ms. Brandi	4-8 iPad Pros w/ Ms. Vicky
K-2 Pick Up a Book & Play w/ Ms. Pittman	4-8 Water Color w/ Mrs. Ford	4-8 Party Planners w/ Ms. Connor
3-4 Jr. Beacons w/ Coach P	4-8 Board Games w/ Ms. Hartman	6-8 Hair Academy w/ Ms. Hearst

3-8 Goddess Mentoring
w/ Ms. Scott

TUESDAY/THURSDAY

K-2 HW Help w/ Ms. Brandi	3-5 HW Help w/ Ms. Hartman	4-8 DIY Arts & Crafts w/ Ms. Connor
K-5 GLA Dancers w/ Ms. Gaines	3-5 Girls on the Run w/ Mrs. Ford	5-8 GLA Intramurals w/ Coach P
	3-5 Drama Free Drama Club w/ Ms. Stuckett	

SIGN UP W/ MS. O'LEARY BY 02/25

Programs meet twice weekly on Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday. If you want your scholar enrolled Monday-Thursday, you will have to sign them up for two programs on the respective days.

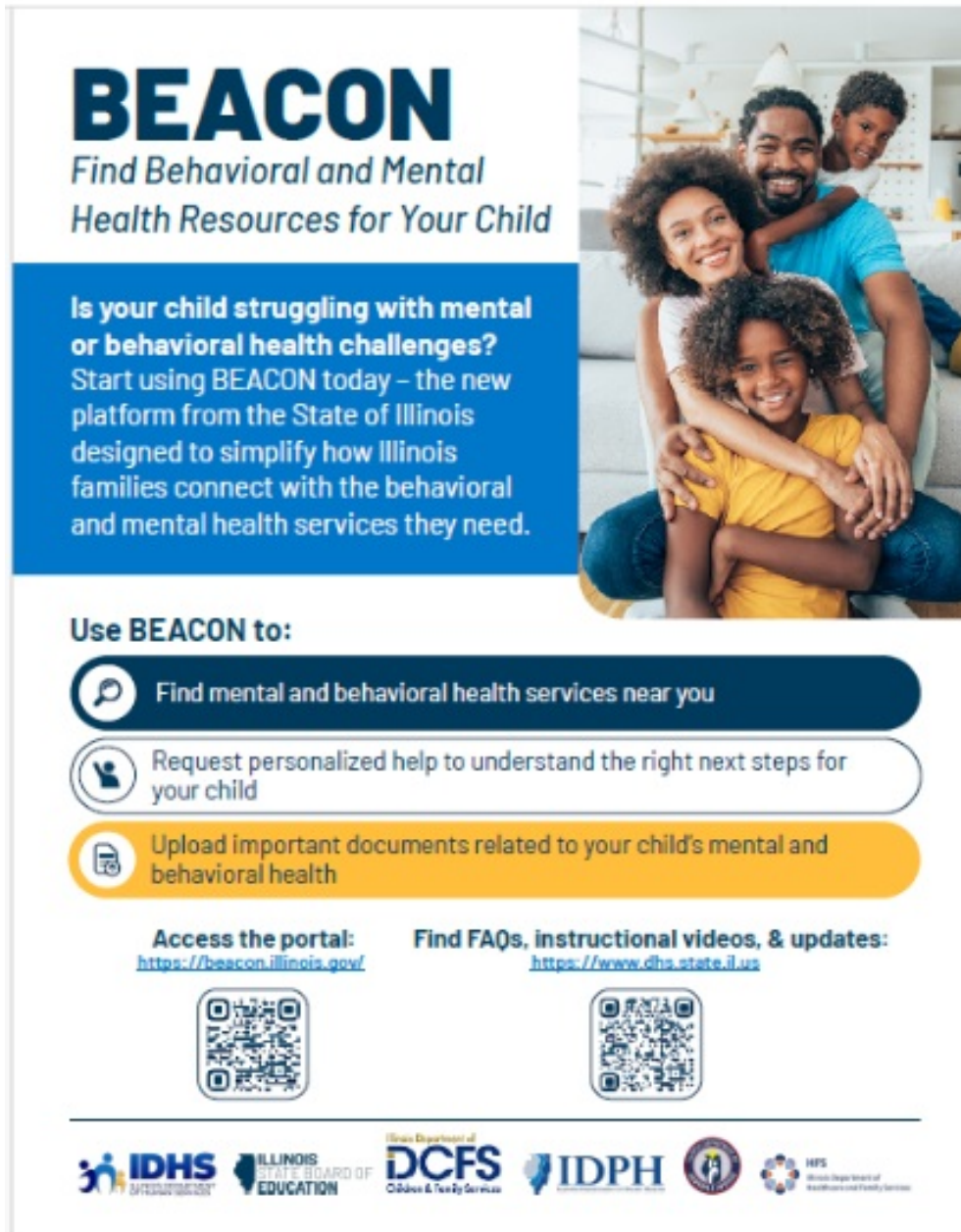
- Wave Three: Monday, March 3rd - Thursday, May 29th
- All programs will run 3:15-5:00 pm. Cost: *\$175/each program/per wave unless

otherwise noted. Programs require 10 scholars enrolled in order to run. You may be asked to enroll in an alternative program in the event of low enrollment.

Please reach out to Caitlin O'Leary, coleary@glachicago.org with any questions!

RESOURCES

BEACON is the state's new online portal designed to help Illinois families connect to behavioral health resources. It streamlines the process of finding and accessing behavioral health services to help ensure that every child in Illinois can receive the support they need.



BEACON
Find Behavioral and Mental Health Resources for Your Child

Is your child struggling with mental or behavioral health challenges?
Start using BEACON today – the new platform from the State of Illinois designed to simplify how Illinois families connect with the behavioral and mental health services they need.

Use BEACON to:

- Find mental and behavioral health services near you
- Request personalized help to understand the right next steps for your child
- Upload important documents related to your child's mental and behavioral health

Access the portal: <https://beacon.illinois.gov/>

Find FAQs, instructional videos, & updates: <https://www.dhs.state.il.us>

Logos for IDHS, Illinois State Board of Education, DCFS, IDPH, and HHS are displayed at the bottom.

Anti-Bullying Message

Parents, we have noticed an increase in harmful and inflammatory language use among our students, which can lead to bullying and hurtful behaviors. Language plays a vital role in shaping how students interact with each other, and fostering positive communication at home and school is key to creating a supportive environment.

We encourage you to help your child understand the impact of their words by modeling respectful language, setting clear expectations for kindness, and reinforcing the importance of empathy at home. It is our goal to teach students how

to verbally express themselves without hurting others. At school, we are working to create an inclusive atmosphere, but we need your support. Together, we can guide students toward becoming more compassionate communicators, both at school and at home.

As always, students who repeatedly use language that is harmful to others in our community will be issued increasingly severe consequences according to our Student Code of Conduct. Additionally, parents will be invited to conference with school leaders to discuss how they will address the inappropriate language their students are using. Thank you for your partnership in this effort.

Parents: We Need Your Feedback - Deadline Extended to 2/28!

Your voice matters! Help us continue building a thriving school community by sharing your thoughts in our brief survey. It only takes a few minutes, but your feedback makes a big impact!

<https://www.weeklypossip.com/surveys/survey-20250121-72d4?position=1>

If you've not yet done so, please click the link above to take the survey before Friday, February 28th. Thank you for partnering with us to support all students!

Open House

We are hosting Open House for the 2025-26 school year. Help us spread the word!

GREAT LAKES ACADEMY
CHARTER SCHOOL

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE
APPLY ONLINE!

GREAT LAKES ACADEMY
OPEN HOUSE
SATURDAY, MARCH 8th
12:00 PM - 2:00 PM

What We Offer

- ✓ Free and Open Admission to ALL
- ✓ Free 7AM Drop-off and Daily Meals Provided
- ✓ Full-Day Kindergarten (4-Year-Old Early Entry Available)
- ✓ State-of-the-art campus featuring an Enrichment Center
- ✓ Full Athletic Facility and Turf Field

APPLY ONLINE

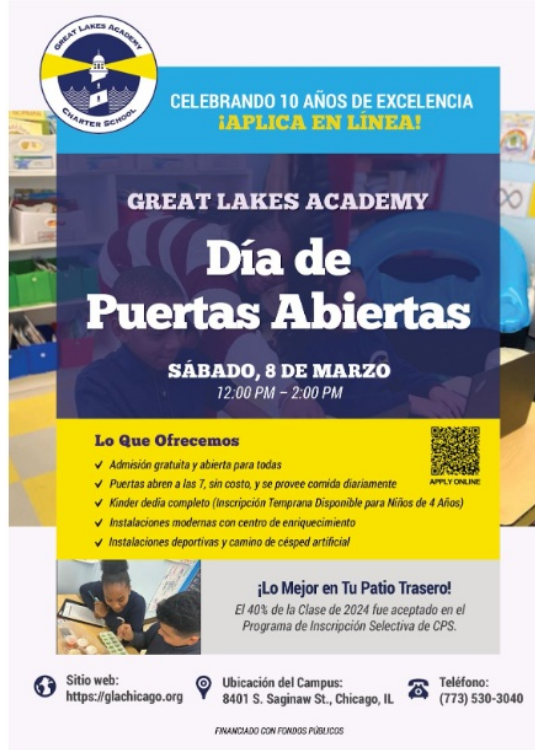
The Best in Your Backyard!
40% of the Class of 2024 was accepted to
CPS Selective Enrollment


Website:
<https://glchicago.org>

Campus Location:
8401 S. Saginaw St., Chicago, IL

Telephone:
(773) 530-3040

PAID FOR BY PUBLIC FUNDS






CELEBRANDO 10 AÑOS DE EXCELENCIA
¡APLICA EN LINEA!

GREAT LAKES ACADEMY
Día de Puertas Abiertas
SÁBADO, 8 DE MARZO
 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Lo Que Ofrecemos

- ✓ Admisión gratuita y abierta para todas
- ✓ Puertas abren a las 7, sin costo, y se provee comida diariamente
- ✓ Kinder de día completo (Inscripción Temprana Disponible para Niños de 4 Años)
- ✓ Instalaciones modernas con centro de enriquecimiento
- ✓ Instalaciones deportivas y camino de césped artificial


APPLY ONLINE


¡Lo Mejor en Tu Patio Trasero!
El 40% de la Clase de 2024 fue aceptado en el Programa de Inscripción Selectiva de CPS.

Sitio web: <https://glchicago.org>
 Ubicación del Campus: 8401 S. Saginaw St., Chicago, IL
 Teléfono: (773) 530-3040

FINANCIADO CON FONDOS PÚBLICOS

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

School Calendar Change

- Since we had to cancel school due to cold weather on Tuesday, January 28th, we must make up a day of school as we have the minimum number of attendance days required by the state.
- We have changed the “Wellness Day” scheduled for May 1st to a student attendance day. Though it is a Thursday, we will follow a Friday schedule with a 1:50 dismissal. **We will only run after-care until 4:00 pm this day.** There will be no athletics or enrichment.
- The following day, Friday, May 2nd will remain a “Wellness Day.”
- Please plan to have your students here on Thursday, May 1st.

Intent to Return 2025-26

- To help us plan our enrollment for the 2024-25 school year, we ask all families to confirm if their scholar(s) will be returning to Great Lakes Academy next year by filling out our annual Intent to Return Form.
- **This year, the form will be completed online in the platform “Powerschool Enrollment”.**
- You should have received an email with instructions; if you have any questions, please contact the front office at 773-530-3040.

School Year Office Hours

Monday-Thursday, 7:30-4:30 pm

Friday, 7:30-2:00 pm

GLA Breakfast, Lunch and Supper Menus

Click [here](#) to access (these are also linked on our website’s [Parent and Student Resource Page](#))

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

February 24 - March 21, 2025

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
24 Fire Drill #3	25 IA#3- 3rd Grade	26 IA#3- 3rd Grade Boys Basketball HOME vs. Betty Shabazz, JV (4 pm) and Varsity (6 pm) HOME Cheer game, 4:00-7:00 pm	27 K-4th Black History Month Performances, 1:00 pm	28 HOME Boys Basketball Game (JV & Varsity) vs. CJA, 4:00 pm
3	4	5	6 IA #3 (4th-8th grade)	7 IA #3 (4th-8th grade) 2025-2026 Intent to Return Due Pre-K Prom, 5:30-7:30 pm
10 5Essentials Survey Comer Med Van Visit	11 5Essentials Survey IA#3 (4th Grade) Parent Advocacy Meeting, 4:30 pm	12 IA#3 (4th Grade)	13 End of Q3- Report Card Distribution	14 Parent Teacher Conferences, No School 8th Grade GoCPS: High School Results Released
17 Wellness Day, No School	18	19 GLA: Community Conversation, 8:00 am	20	21 2025-2026 Lottery

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