



Weekly GLA Family Newsletter
April 1, 2025

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Jay Winters - Learning Behavior Specialist

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

One of my favorite memories from my time at GLA would have to be the lead-up to Beacon Football's championship game. It was the last game of the season, and the entire team had embraced a championship mindset. We had just defeated our crosstown rivals, Betty Shabazz, a few days prior, which added to the excitement and camaraderie. Although we ultimately lost the championship game, the experience of working together and the determination we shared made it one of my favorite memories from GLA. Despite the bittersweet ending, the journey and the bond we formed remain special to me.

What keeps you coming back to GLA every day?

The Bevi water station! But in all seriousness, it's the sense of alignment I feel here. I've never been part of a workforce so dedicated to pursuing a shared goal that perfectly aligns with my personal mission. The students are a huge part of why I keep coming back, they inspire me every day—but it's also the incredible staff I'm surrounded by that makes GLA feel like home. As long as I continue teaching, I can't imagine doing it anywhere else but here at GLA.

Where are you originally from? (If Chicago, tell us what neighborhood!) What do you love about that place?

I am originally from the south suburb of Homewood, Illinois. What I love most about Homewood is the strong sense of community. It has that charming, close-knit vibe that reminds me of the suburb from Home Alone, minus the thieves. I also have a deep appreciation for the football community there. The HF United Youth Football feeder program is where I first established my coaching roots, which played a big role in shaping who I am today.

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

Devour some baked goods! I have a major sweet tooth, and indulging in a tasty treat

is my favorite way to unwind.

What's your dream vacation?

I'm a simple man—if I could sit front row at both nights of WrestleMania, I'd be living the dream. Although my wife might not agree with that plan, I'd say Egypt would be another dream destination.

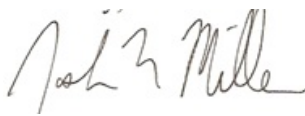
PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

Next week is an extra important week for our students and our school. All 3rd-8th graders will be taking the Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR). This is a required state assessment of grade level standards in English Language Arts and Math. There will be testing each morning from Monday, April 7th to Thursday, April 10th. It is extremely important for all students to be in attendance for this test each day. Please ensure your student is on time to school each day (no later than 8:00) and gets a good night's sleep each night so they can be their best!

For students, this state assessment is important because it tells us how students are progressing academically on state standards for their grade level. For GLA, the assessment is important because it is a major measure on GLA's [Illinois Report Card](#). Our students' performance last year helped improve our overall index score on the Illinois Report Card where we earned another "Commendable" rating (and just missed an "Exemplary" rating). Once again, Great Lakes Academy had the highest student proficiency rates in ELA and Math of all schools in South Chicago, South Shore, Woodlawn, and Hyde Park. GLA was also in the 79th and 94th percentile of schools for ELA and Math growth, respectively, and ranked as the 4th best elementary charter school in Illinois according to US News & World Report.

GLA's accomplishments are impossible without the help of you, our parents. Be sure to send your students well wishes and encouragement for testing!

With gratitude,



NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

GoCPS High School Results: Friday, April 4th Deadline

8th Grade scholars must accept a seat at a high school through the [GoCPS portal](#) by 5pm on Friday, April 4th. For assistance or questions please contact Ms. O'Leary (coleary@glachicago.org) or Ms. Robinson (brobinson@cjacademy.org).

GLA Madness 2025!

IAR state testing is coming up! 3rd-8th graders will be taking the Illinois Readiness Assessment (IAR) on April 7-April 10, 2025, but K-8 will all be a part of the MADNESS! In order to prep our students for testing, we will PUMP THEM UP with opening/closing ceremonies and friendly competition between homerooms the week of March 31-April 4. Homerooms will earn points through exit tickets, participation in dress down days, and other classroom academic competitions! Please see the below dress down days!

GREAT LAKES ACADEMY PRESENTS

Student/Staff **WEEK** *Spirit*

MARCH 31ST - APRIL 4TH

• *Monday*

Class Clash Day

Dress in your homeroom colors

• *Tuesday*

Staff or Student Day

Students dress like staff and staff dress like students

• *Wednesday*

Pajama Day

Wear your favorite pajamas

• *Thursday*

Vacation Day

Dress like you're going on vacations

• *Friday*

Game Day

Wear your favorite jersey or team shirt

GLA MADNESS PUMP-UP NOTES

We are excited to support our scholars as they prepare for the upcoming IAR testing! To encourage and motivate them, we've created the "Scholar Shoutout Submission Form," allowing parents to send personalized messages of support. Parents of K-2 scholars are also invited to submit pump-up notes to boost their child's confidence. Your heartfelt messages will be shared with your scholars to inspire them during this important time. Please submit your messages by 4/4/25 at noon to ensure timely delivery. Access the form here: [SCHOLAR PUMP UP NOTE SUBMISSION](#). Thank you for being a vital part of our school community and uplifting our scholars!

3rd Annual Art Showcase- Thursday, April 17th- 4:00-6:00 pm



GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

GLA Parent Advocacy Committee

- There will be no PAC meeting in April.
- We will meet again on Tuesday, May 13th from 4:45-5:30.

Great Lakes Academy Spring Benefit

Join us for a night of fun, networking and FUNraising! The 10th Annual I Be Great Spring Benefit will be held Thursday Apr 3, 2025 from 6pm- 10pm. We are excited to have our GLA families come celebrate with us. Use the promo code GLAFamily25 for your discounted ticket of \$100

Great Lakes Academy
10th Annual Be Great Benefit

IMPACT BEYOND 10

Celebrating 10 Years of Excellence

COCKTAIL RECEPTION • SILENT AUCTION • DINNER • PROGRAM

THURSDAY,
APRIL 3, 2025
6:00PM-10:00PM

CITY HALL RECESS
838 W. KINZIE ST.
CHICAGO, IL

FOOD & DRINKS BY **BRONZEVILLE
WINERY**

2025 BE GREAT LEADERSHIP
AWARD HONOREE

Larissa Silberberg

BENEFIT CHAIR

Brad Karsh

BENEFIT SPONSORS

BEACON

Andrews
FAMILY
FOUNDATION

ANCHOR

Just A Dash
CATERING

HARBOR

**BULLEY &
ANDREWS**

S Seyfarth

SAIL


FIFTH THIRD

ORBA
Accounting | Tax | Advisory

 Growth Point
Consulting Inc.

2025 BE GREAT BENEFIT COMMITTEE

Christine Chen
Ebony Durham

Aniyah Fisher
Zoe Hughes

Lisa Karsh

Yana Long
Katie McClay

Larissa Silberberg
Kirsten Villers

Spring Fest



Join us for Great Spring Fest at Great Lakes Academy on April 25, 2025, from 5 PM to 7 PM. Open to Preschool to 3rd Grade families, this fun-filled event will feature games, activities, food, and school tours. Don't miss out—RSVP today

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

March 31 - April 25, 2025

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| 31 Student and Staff Spirit Week | 1 Student and Staff Spirit Week | 2 Student and Staff Spirit Week | 3 Student and Staff Spirit Week GLA Spring Benefit, 6:00 pm | 4 Student and Staff Spirit Week |
| 7 3rd-8th IAR State Testing! | 8 3rd-8th IAR State Testing! | 9 3rd-8th IAR State Testing! | 10 3rd-8th IAR State Testing! | 11 |
| 14 5th-8th Cultivate Survey | 15 5th-8th Cultivate Survey | 16 GLA Community Conversation, 8:00 am | 17 Spring Art Showcase, 4:00-6:00 pm | 18 Wellness Day, No Classes |
| 21 5th-8th Illinois Science Assessment | 22 5th-8th Illinois Science Assessment | 23 | 24 HOME: Varsity Boys Flag Football Game- 4:45 pm | 25 8th Grade Cap and Gown Photos K-3rd Spring Fest, 5:00-7:00 pm |

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