

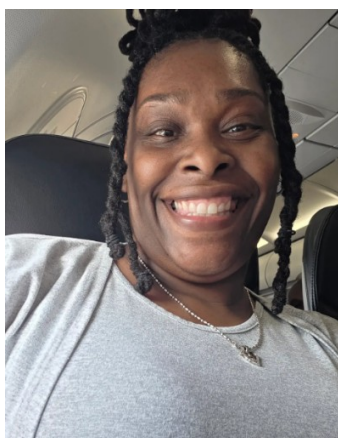


# The Weekly Wave

## Weekly GLA Family Newsletter

January 13, 2026

### STAFF SPOTLIGHT



**Ms. Hartman - Flex Teacher**

**Tell us one of your proudest teacher moments.**

One of my proudest moments working in a school was when I worked closely with one of my students so he could attend a field trip. We worked hard together, and seeing his excitement and pride when it finally happened was unforgettable. That moment reminded me how powerful support and encouragement can be—for both the student and me.

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

I wanted to become a teacher because I truly love helping students. Seeing them grow, gain confidence, and realize their own potential fills my heart. Knowing that I can make a difference in their lives—even in small ways—is what makes this work so meaningful to me.

**What keeps you coming back to GLA every day?**

What keeps me coming back to GLA every day is the students and my coworkers. The kids bring so much energy and heart, and working alongside people who truly care makes each day better. It really feels like a community I'm proud to be part of.

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

I'm from Chicago—born and raised on the South Side near 63rd and King Drive. That area raised me. The culture, the realness, and the strong sense of community taught me resilience and pride. It'll always have my heart.

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

After a busy day of teaching, my favorite way to unwind is just relaxing and binge-watching my favorite shows. It's my perfect way to recharge and escape for a little while!

**What's your dream vacation?**

My dream vacation would be somewhere outside the country where I can relax and explore—like Greece or Bali.

## PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

Hello GLA Families! Our 2nd Annual Family Fitness Night is just two days away! Last year, I had a blast participating in fitness activities with the students, family members, and staff who attended. As a school that believes in a holistic approach to education, this is one of many ways we reinforce the importance of physical fitness to overall health and well-being.



Join us on Thursday, January 15th from 4-6 pm for a night of fitness fun. Activities will include relay races, dodgeball, jump rope, basketball, soccer, and much more. All exercises and activities will be led by our two expert fitness teachers, Coach Ali and Coach Perez. We welcome all fitness levels and levels of participation, so grab your best workout gear and get ready to move. Come to GLA with your family to get fit with your GLA community!

Principal Miller

## NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **GLA x Bear Down!**

We're gearing up for the excitement of Chicago Bears Playoff season, and Great Lakes Academy will be joining in on the fun! On **Friday, January 16, 2026**, scholars are invited to participate in Chicago Bears Playoff Day by wearing:

- Chicago Bears gear or
- Navy blue and orange

This is a fun way for our GLA community to celebrate Chicago pride and the playoff energy together. We can't wait to see our scholars showing their Bears pride! Bear Down!



GREAT LAKES ACADEMY

# CHICAGO BEARS

**SPIRIT DAY**

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 2026

WEAR YOUR BEARS GEAR  
OR NAVY BLUE & ORANGE!

Family Curriculum Night



# Family Curriculum

## NIGHT

Join us for an exciting evening of hands-on learning and family fun! Explore what your child is learning through interactive activities like math challenges, literacy games, science experiments, and creative projects. Connect with teachers and enter to win raffle prizes throughout the night!

JAN. 30, 2026

FRI

2:30P-4:30P

Refreshments will be served from 2:10-2:30

SEE YOU THERE!

### **Kids First Chicago Invites You to Join the Conversation: The CPS Black Student Success Plan**

Join Kids First Chicago on Tuesday, January 20th (English) & January 21st (Spanish) from 6 pm to 7:30 p.m. for an interactive session on the Chicago Public Schools Black Student Success Plan (BSSP), a district-wide strategy focused on creating the systemic conditions for Black students to thrive. BSSP Director Eugene Robinson, Chicago Public Schools, and colleague Damaris Alvarado, Chicago Public Schools, will share progress on the plan and discuss how your roles and lived experiences align with this five-year path forward. We encourage you to attend to learn more about the Black Student Success plan and progress made since the launch of the Black Student Success Plan. Click [here](#) to RSVP

### **Career Day at GLA**

Great Lakes Academy's Career day is Friday, February 6th from 8:30 am-11am. Scholars will have the chance to meet real-world professionals, ask meaningful questions, and see firsthand the possibilities their futures can hold. Our future is calling, and our scholars

need you to show up for them! Your presence helps our students dream bigger, stay motivated, and understand the many paths available to them as they grow.

If you are interested in participating as a Career Day presenter, please RSVP here by Friday, 1/23: <https://forms.gle/9xrdpPg7N1Um8AMp7>



**Great Lakes Academy**

# **OUR FUTURE IS CALLING!**

**SHOW UP FOR THEM!**



**Friday, February 6, 2026  
8:30am - 11:00am**

**Join us for Career Day at Great Lakes Academy on Friday, February 6, 2026! We're bringing real world careers to our kids. Come inspire the next generation. Complete the attached form to RSVP by January 23, 2026.**

**Spread the Word: GLA Spring Open House**

Families, help us share the news! Great Lakes Academy will host our **Spring Open House on Tuesday, March 3rd, from 5:00–7:00 PM**. This is a chance for prospective families to tour our campus, meet our staff, and see why GLA is one of the top schools in Illinois. Additionally, applications are now open for the 2026-27 school year. Any applications completed by Wednesday, March 18th will be eligible for the March 19th lottery.



GREAT LAKES ACADEMY



2026-2027

# OPEN HOUSE

*Our mission is to empower children today to change the world tomorrow.*



**Tuesday,  
March 3, 2026**

**5pm-7pm**

8401 S. Saginaw Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60617

- ✓ Tour the school
- ✓ Meet staff
- ✓ Learn about our academic, enrichment and student support
- ✓ Ask questions



For more info:

**773-530-3040**



Visit us:

**[www.glachicago.org](http://www.glachicago.org)**

**2026-27 Applications are now open!**

**You're invited: Great Lakes Academy Kindergarten Prom**

Calling our future and current scholars! Celebrate with us on Saturday, March 7th as we create a magical day for our Pre-K AND current Kindergarten stars! Put on your best formal fit and walk the red carpet like the royalty you are! Dancing, memories, and unforgettable moments await. [RSVP](#) today and let's make it a day to remember.



**Great Lakes Academy**

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE

# Kindergarten Prom

**For grades Pre-K- Kindergarten**

**Formal attire encouraged!**

**FREE**

**SATURDAY, March 7, 2026**

**12pm- 3pm**

**Great Lakes  
Academy**

**8401 S. Saginaw Ave**

**RSVP:**

**<https://bit.ly/3LjhGaE>**



### **PAC Meeting**

Families are invited to be part of the conversation at our next Parent Advocacy Committee meeting on February 18, 2026, from 5:00–6:30 PM. This is a space for parents and caregivers to share ideas, discuss needs, and advocate for resources that support our scholars and strengthen our school community. Attend in person or via Google Meet. Refreshments and childcare will be provided. Scan the QR code to join us!



Great Lakes Academy

# PARENT ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

The Parent Advocacy Committee is a space where families can use their voices to strengthen and support our school community. Together, we share ideas, discuss needs, and advocate for resources that help every child succeed. Join us to partner with Great Lakes Academy in shaping the best experience for our scholars.



February 18, 2026

All meetings start at 5pm-6:30pm.  
In person or Google Meet

Refreshments will be served & Child care provided!

## GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIMITED EDITION: Kinder-Fourth Grade Sneaker Ball!

**K-4TH** Limited Edition

# SNEAKER BALL

FRIDAY  
**JAN 23**  
4:00-6:00 PM



## Requirements

0 Referrals < 3 Absences to School  
< 2 Resets Guardian (18+) at Event

Marking Period: 01/12-01/22

CANDY BAR & PRICE RAFFLE!



Mark your calendars for Friday, January 23rd from 4:00-6:00pm for the annual Kinder-Fourth Grade Sneaker Ball! Each scholar must have a guardian (18 years old+) present in order to attend. In addition, please see the participation requirements for attending:

- Marking Period: 01/12-01/22
  - 0 Referrals
  - < 2 Resets
  - < 3 Absences to School

## Culture & Climate Incentives

Scholars who maintain **zero** Resets and Referrals from January 6–January 9 will be rewarded with a Dress Down Pass on January 16!

**JANUARY**

**BEACON DASH PASS**

**BE GREAT Jeopardy LIVE!**

**Eligibility Window: January 6 - January 28, 2026**

**HOW TO QUALIFY:**

- ✓ Less than 3 absences (Excused or Unexcused)
- ✓ Less than 2 referrals
- ✓ Less than 3 resets
- ✓ Less than 3 uniform violations

**QUALIFY & EARN A CHANCE TO WIN THESE AWESOME PRIZES!**

**\$50 ADDED TO YOUR PAYCHECK!**

**Dress Down PASS!**

**FREE SNACK!**

**GAME SHOW FUN! ELA • MATH • SPORTS • ENTERTAINMENT**

**WORK HARD. BE GREAT!**

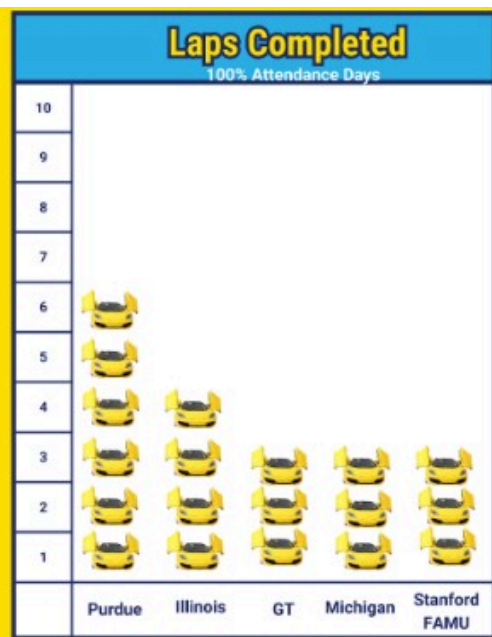
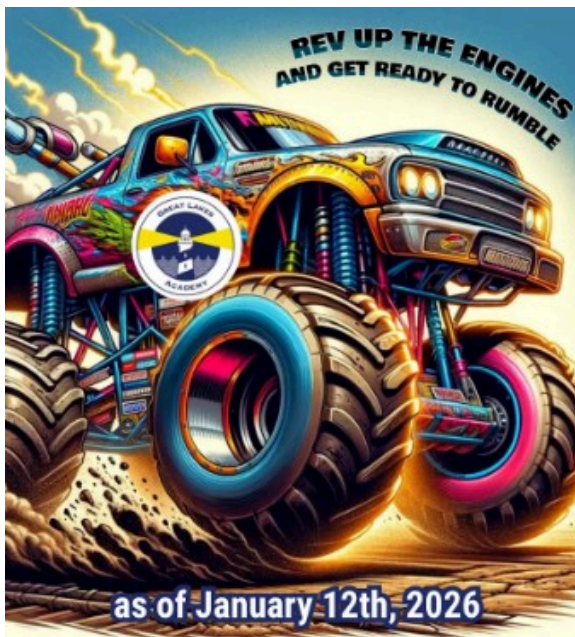
Gratitude • Respect • Excellence • Accountability • Truthfulness

### **Race to 10 is On!**

GLA's Race to 10 Attendance Initiative started on August 25th. In four months, we have awarded three homerooms with a field trip of their choice and have had six parent raffle winners. **Purdue** visited Up Your Alley for Esports, **Illinois** took a trip to Navy Pier's Winter Wonderfest, and **Howard** spent today at Ninja Kidz Action Park.

As a reminder, the first homeroom to achieve 100% attendance 10 times will win a free field trip. Parents will also have the chance to win raffled gas or Uber gift cards as an added bonus. Our fourth race started Friday, December 5th and all homerooms were reset to 0 days. The Race to 10 tracker shows our progress and highlights the top 5 homerooms

as of January 12th. Let's keep working together to make every day count! Attendance matters!



### 2025-26 School Calendar

The 2025-26 school calendar has been posted to GLA's website. Please [view it here](#).

### 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

## IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

January 12 - February 6, 2026

12	13	14	15 Family Fitness Night 4:00-6:00 PM	16
19 MLK Day School Closed	20 JV and Varsity Boys Basketball HOME vs. Chicago Lab, 4:30 & 5:30 pm	21	22	23 K-4th Sneaker Ball 4:00-6:00 PM
26	27	28	29	30 K-8th Family Curriculum Night 2:30 - 4:30 PM
2 Black History Month → JV and Varsity Boys Basketball AWAY @ Chicago Lab, 4:30 & 5:30 pm	3	4	5 100th Day of School! NJHS Induction Ceremony, 6:00 pm	6 Career Day

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