



Weekly GLA Family Newsletter

August 13, 2025

PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

Dear Parents,

The first day of school is almost here! This Friday we will welcome all Kindergarten and 1st Graders into the building. On Monday, August 18th, all students will be in session. Please remember that this Friday and next week we will have a special schedule (8:00am-1:50pm). It is very important that we get off to a strong start and have every student present for the start of the school year. Every day of school missed is a missed day of learning.

We also have special events coming up that we are hoping to see all families to attend. Tomorrow, August 13th will be our annual Back to School Block Party event. Please join us from 3:30pm-5:30pm to meet teachers and have fun with the family. See more information on the Back to School Block Party below.

We also want to invite families to attend our 2025-26 School Orientation sessions. We are changing the way we are doing orientation this year. All orientation sessions will be split by grade level bands this year to allow us to tailor information more specifically to student grade levels.. Join us in the Enrichment Center from 4:30pm-5:30pm for the orientation session(s) that correspond with your child(ren)'s grade level:

- Kindergarten-1st Grade: Monday, August 18th
- 2nd Grade-4th Grade: Tuesday, August 19th
- 5th Grade-6th Grade: Wednesday, August 20th
- 7th-8th Grade: Thursday, August 21st

We are looking forward to seeing you in the coming week!

With Gratitude,

SCHOOL ORIENTATION School Year 2025-2026	
Kindergarten & 1st Grade Monday, August 18, 2025 4:30pm-5:30pm	2nd - 4th Grades Tuesday, August 19, 2025 4:30pm-5:30pm
5th & 6th Grade Wednesday, August 20, 2025 4:30pm-5:30pm	7th & 8th Grade Thursday, August 21, 2025 4:30pm-5:30pm

NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

Join Us for The Great Back to School Block Party TODAY!

We're kicking off the 2025–2026 school year with a celebration you won't want to miss. Come meet your child's teachers, enjoy delicious food, play games, and connect with our school community. This free event takes place on **Wednesday, August 13, 2025, from 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM at 8401 S. Saginaw Ave, Chicago, IL 60617.**

RSVP today using the QR code on the flyer!





GLA Spirit Wear is Here!

We're excited to announce the launch of our very first GLA Spirit Wear Website! Show off your GLA pride with our unique collection of spirit wear.

⚠ *Please note: This is not for purchasing uniforms.*

NOTE: This is spirit wear only and if worn during the school day will be considered out of uniform for scholars.

Sale Dates: Now through **September 16, 2025**

Special Offer: Use code **SCHOOL25** at checkout for **25% off** all merchandise

Bonus: Enjoy **FREE shipping** on orders of **\$75 or more** – delivered right to your door!

[Click here to shop now!](#)

Or scan the QR code on the flyer to start shopping.

We're thrilled to finally offer spirit wear to our GLA families – don't miss out on this exciting opportunity!

Please reach out to Sheree Thunherst, sthunherst@glachicago.org, with any questions.



GLA Uniform T-Shirts – Pre-Order Now!

We're excited to offer **GLA uniform t-shirts** for pre-order! In addition to the **GLA polos** available in the front office, you can now pre-order:

- Short Sleeve Uniform T-Shirts – \$13
- Long Sleeve Uniform T-Shirts – \$16

Why Pre-Order?

Pre-ordering guarantees your scholar will receive their uniform t-shirts from our first shipment.

How to Order:

Please refer to the order form for available t-shirt options and sizing.

Don't miss out—pre-order now to make sure your scholar is fully prepared for the school year!

[Uniform Pre-order](#)

Please reach out to Sheree Thunherst, sthunherst@glachicago.org, with any questions.

GLA Polos Now Available!

GLA polos are now available for purchase at the GLA front office for just **\$16 each**. Available colors include **light blue, navy, and yellow**.

After-School Enrichment Programming

Wave One Sign-Ups are now open! [CLICK HERE!](#)



GLA will offer after-school enrichment programming that is instructor led by teachers, staff, and community partners. If you are interested in enrolling your scholar, click [here!](#)

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

Programs will only run in one wave, unless renewed and new programs will be offered each wave where you will have to re-sign up. The waves are as follows:

- Wave One: Monday, August 25th - Thursday, November 13th
- Wave Two: Monday, November 17th - Thursday, February 26th
- Wave Three: Monday, March 2nd - Thursday, May 28th

Sign ups will close on Tuesday, August 19th for Wave One. You will be notified if you get into the program by Wednesday, August 21st via letter and email.

All programs will run 3:15-5:00 pm. Cost: *\$175/each program/per wave.

Programs hired externally and that will be coming into GLA (i.e.; SkyArt, PTDYA, etc.), will be marked accordingly* as they are \$200.

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

Anchor's Up! Field Trip 08/22

GLA scholars will be starting the year strong by attending their first field trip on Friday, August 22nd! Grades 3rd through 8th will participate in team building programs outside of the building at ClimbZone and Windy City Fieldhouse! Kindergarten through 2nd grade will build relationships with staff and peers right here at GLA. We can't wait to pull our Anchor's Up!

→ If you have a 3rd or 4th grade scholar, complete this waiver by Wednesday, August 20th in order for your scholar to participate.

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

BEACON LEADS (Student Leadership Jobs)

Great Lakes Academy is excited to launch our Beacon Leads Program for the 2025–2026 school year! This program gives scholars the opportunity to take on leadership roles within our school community, build responsibility, and develop important life skills.

We ask that parents partner with us by assisting scholars in accurately completing their Beacon Leads application and helping them understand the importance of this opportunity. If selected, please note that this is a year-long commitment and scholars will be expected to consistently fulfill their responsibilities.

Visit the Culture & Climate Team table at the block party for an application. Your support will help our scholars take pride in their work and grow as leaders!

WIDA Screeners

Ms. Harr and Ms. Gonzalez will be administering the 2025-2026 WIDA Screener during the week of August 25–29. This assessment helps identify Multilingual learners who are eligible for services in the MLL program. Students who have been identified as needing to be screened will be pulled from class briefly to complete the screening. Thank you for your support as we ensure all students get the services they need to succeed!

Congratulations to Ms. Paull - MCA Teacher Institute Residency

We are thrilled to announce that Ms. Kathryn Paull has been selected for the prestigious Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) Teacher Institute Residency! This is a year-long professional development program specifically designed for art teachers, and it's a huge honor to be chosen. Ms. Paull will attend offsite sessions periodically through the year to learn new techniques and develop innovative ways to bring art education to our students. Congratulations, Ms. Paull!

Attention Kindergarten & 6th Grade Families!

Medical Compliance Deadline: Monday, October 13th

If your scholar still needs a school physical and/or immunizations, don't wait—sign up for Comer's Pediatric Medical Van, visiting GLA on Wednesday, September 24th!

This is a **free service** for families.

‡ **Only 12 scholars** can be seen—spots are limited!

Consent forms are required and available now at the **GLA front office**.

To secure your scholar's appointment, **complete your consent form as soon as possible**.

For questions or more information, please contact: Sheree Thunherst at sthunherst@glachicago.org



Does your scholar need a new school physical?



In partnership with Comer's Medical Van, GLA is providing no-cost, school physicals

Sign a consent form at the Front Desk to secure your appointment today!

Limited Seats Available



 **September 24, 2025**

 **Great Lakes Academy**  **School Hours**

8th grade HSAT Tutoring

GLA will be offering no-cost tutoring in conjunction with Test Prep Chicago to **8th grade students** only in preparation for the CPS HS Admission Test that is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, October 8th, 2025.

Scholars who participated in HSAT Test Prep at GLA scored an average of 70 points higher than scholars who did not participate. In order to enroll your scholar for this no-cost service, please fill out this form. Contact Ms. O'Leary (coleary@glachicago.org) for any questions!

Chicago Youth Opportunities

The YMCA of Metro Chicago is offering a 12-week Lifeguard Training & Swim Program at no cost to participants. Below are the program details:

- Program Length: 12 weeks
- Cost: Free
- Eligibility: Must reside in Illinois and be between the ages of 16–24
- Swim Attire: Provided to all participants
- Training: Includes swim instruction and lifeguard certification
- Stipend: Participants earn minimum wage while they train
- Job Opportunities: Possible job placement upon program completion



YMCA OF METROPOLITAN CHICAGO

WATER WORKS AT THE Y

WANT TO MAKE WAVES IN THE JOB MARKET AND GET PAID FOR IT?

Water Works dives into cool careers in and around water! From lifeguard to oceanographer and swim instructor to emergency responder, participants obtain first-hand discovery of a variety of water-related careers — all at no cost.

Water Works also includes:

- Swim lessons and training
- Industry-recognized certifications
- A minimum wage stipend, so you can “learn and earn”
- Career readiness for potential job placement post-program

**DON'T KNOW HOW TO SWIM? NO PROBLEM.
NO SWIMSUIT? WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED!**

Water Works is for career-seekers **ages 16 to 24** who meet eligibility requirements.

APPLY NOW! Learn more at ymcachicago.org/waterworks.
Questions? Email waterworks@ymcachicago.org

LOCATIONS

LAKE VIEW YMCA

3333 N. Marshfield Ave.
Chicago, IL 60657

SOUTH SIDE YMCA

6330 S. Stony Island Ave.
Chicago, IL 60637

12-WEEK SCHEDULE

Sep. 6 – Nov. 22, 2025

- Lake View YMCA
Tues. – Fri. | 4 – 7 p.m.
- South Side YMCA
Mon. – Thurs. | 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.
- Career exploration activities
every other Saturday from
9 a.m. – 3 p.m.



**APPLY NOW
USING THE QR CODE!**



GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

[2025-26 Student Walker Permission Form](#)



Scholars Must be in 5th-8th Grade in order to have permission to walk home. A new form must be completed and on file with the main office in order for your scholar to be released as a walker (**No Exceptions**). Please click [HERE](#) to complete this form and send it to Maria Jimenez at mjimenez@glachicago.org.

Please note the following:

- My student will be dismissed at 3:20 pm Monday-Thursday and 1:50 pm on Fridays to walk home and if they are picking up a younger scholar, they must come to the “Walker Side” to pick them up.
- GLA does not release students to rideshare services (eg. Lyft, Uber) and will not accept liability for any student walker who gets in a rideshare vehicle.
- If my 5th-8th grader is picking up their younger sibling, they cannot then join the car pick-up line (i.e. if I am picking up my students by car, K-3rd graders must be picked up in the GLA driveway only). Older students cannot take their younger siblings on Marquette to wait for their ride, they must start walking off the campus.
- If I plan to pick-up my student(s) from school instead, I must notify the front office no later than 1:00 pm, Monday-Friday.
- If the 5th-8th grade sibling is absent from school or is not walking home, the younger scholars will not be permitted to walk alone.

Start the Day Right with School Breakfast!

Did you know that a healthy breakfast helps fuel your child’s success? Great Lakes Academy offers nutritious and delicious breakfast options for all students **FREE OF CHARGE!** Whether it’s whole grains, fresh fruit, or protein-packed meals, school breakfast provides the energy your child needs to thrive.

Get breakfast in our school cafeteria daily from 7:00-7:40 am when school is in session.



Please note this [non-discrimination statement](#).

2025-26 School Calendar

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

2025-26 School Supply List

Here is the [school supply list](#). Please do not label any supplies with your students name, unless otherwise noted.

GLA Annual Fee: 2025-26

We will be sending out invoices for the 2025-65 annual fee soon. The annual fee is \$90. For clarity, we wanted to define what this fee covers for each scholar during the school year:

Lower School (K-4)	Middle School (5-8)
<p>Access to Technology All students will have access to Chromebooks to support personalized learning, provide quick feedback, and track student progress over time with data-driven insights.</p> <p>Student Platform and Software Licenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GoGuardian: Student safety and security platform. i-Ready: Math and reading platform that targets individual student needs. Wayfinder: Social Emotional Learning Curriculum. ANET: Assessment platform used to monitor student progress and ensure students are on-track. ARC: ARC Core helps meet the literacy needs of all students in any learning environment. 	<p>Access to Technology All students will have access to Chromebooks to support personalized learning, provide quick feedback, and track student progress over time with data-driven insights.</p> <p>Student Platform and Software Licenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GoGuardian: Student safety and security platform. i-Ready: Math and reading platform that targets individual student needs. Wayfinder: Social Emotional Learning Curriculum. ANET: Assessment platform used to monitor student progress and ensure students are on-track. <p>Middle School Planner All 5th-8th grade students will be given an agenda planner to promote organization and responsibility.</p>

This year, we will be offering sibling discounts and early payment incentives! Please see the table below for sibling/household discounts. Natural, step-siblings, and members of the same household are eligible.

Scholars Enrolled	Discount	Fee Price Per Scholar	Due by August 30
ONE	0%	\$90	\$90
TWO	10%	\$81	\$162
THREE	20%	\$72	\$216
FOUR	30%	\$63	\$252
FIVE	40%	\$54	\$270
SIX	50%	\$45	\$270

In addition to sibling/household discounts, we are happy to offer early payment incentives, including a free GLA polo if payment is made in full and submitted by August 29th! No payment plans are accepted for this incentive.

Please pay with the PayPal invoice provided at the front office or by phone as soon as possible.

If you have any questions, please call our 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

Aug 11 - Sept 5, 2025

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
11	12	13	14	15
		K-8th Back to School Block Party 3:30-5:30		First Day of School K-1 Grade 8 am -1:50 pm
18	19	20	21	22
First Day of School - All 1:50 Dismissal K-1st Orientation 4:30-5:30 pm iReady Diagnostics and SOY IRLA	1:50 Dismissal- All Grades 2nd-4th Orientation 4:30-5:30 iReady Diagnostics and SOY IRLA	1:50 Dismissal- All Grades 5th-6th Orientation 4:30-5:30 iReady Diagnostics and SOY IRLA	1:50 Dismissal- All Grades 7th-8th Orientation 4:30-5:30 iReady Diagnostics and SOY IRLA	Anchors Up! Event (during school hours for students) iReady Diagnostics and SOY IRLA
25	26	27	28	29
iReady Diagnostics and SOY IRLA ARC IRLA Assessments (new students)	iReady Diagnostics and SOY IRLA ARC IRLA Assessments (new students)	iReady Diagnostics and SOY IRLA ARC IRLA Assessments (new students)	iReady Diagnostics and SOY IRLA ARC IRLA Assessments (new students)	iReady Diagnostics and SOY IRLA ARC IRLA Assessments (new students)
1	2	3	4	5
Suicide Awareness Month → Labor Day- Building Closed	ARC IRLA Assessments (new students)	ARC IRLA Assessments (new students)	ARC IRLA Assessments (new students)	ARC IRLA Assessments (new students)

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