



Weekly GLA Family Newsletter

September 16, 2025

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Ms. Gonzalez - Bilingual Teacher

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

There have been many great moments here at GLA. I think if I had to pick one moment, it would be seeing my students at the block party after my first year teaching. They ran to say hi, seeing the students excited to not only see me but to be back in school warms my heart and reassures me that I'm in the right place ♥

Tell us one of your proudest teacher moments.

One of my proudest teacher moments was during my first year of teaching. My students had a presentation about their family, before I could even ask who wanted to present first, my quietest student raised his hand and volunteered to go first. As a teacher I felt extremely

proud of him and his bravery for overcoming his fear of public speaking.

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

I've always wanted to be a teacher, growing up I would "teach" my younger cousins when they came over to my house. We would practice letters, writing and math. Although I ended up studying Psychology, that love for teaching never stopped. I recently returned to school and now have a Masters Degree in Elementary Education, with a Bilingual endorsement.

What keeps you coming back to GLA every day?

My students and colleagues keep me coming back to GLA every day. Our school has a strong community and it is felt throughout the building.

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

I was born and raised here in Chicago. I love the diversity throughout the city and the food in Chicago is unmatched.

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

My favorite memory has to be when I was in kindergarten. I went into school without knowing English, I only knew Spanish and when the teacher asked me to say the abc's I would respond by saying "a, b, no" because I didn't know them 🤔

What's your dream vacation?

My dream vacation would be to stay in Mexico for an entire summer and visit as many Pueblos Mágicos (Magical Towns) as possible. I love exploring new places, especially places that preserve their history and beauty.

PRINCIPAL'S CORNER



On Monday, GLA kicked off Hispanic Heritage Month. From September 15th through October 15th, GLA will learn and celebrate the rich culture of Hispanics and their continuous contributions to our society. This year's theme is Collective Heritage: Honoring the Past, Inspiring the Future. We are observing this month as a community celebrating the triumphs and influence of Hispanic heritage.

South Chicago, the neighborhood in which GLA is located, has had a vibrant Latino community for over a century. In the early 1900's, people of Mexican descent began moving to the area to work in the South Works steel foundry owned by the U.S. Steel Corporation. Over the next couple of decades, the Mexican-American community grew and developed deep social bonds in the area. Their influence in South Chicago was strong and remains strong today. In fact, the very building that houses our gym, cafeteria, and kitchen was not long ago a Catholic church that was home to mostly Mexican-American parishioners, including parents and grandparents of some of our GLA scholars!

We have curated events and special programs to help students observe this important month. In the classrooms, students will be participating in lessons that highlight and commemorate Hispanic culture. GLA will host its first Annual Hispanic Heritage Assembly at the end of the month. This event will feature a variety of performances and presentations that celebrate the historical roots of the Hispanic community and honor their culture.

Please join the students and staff at GLA in celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month and the rich tapestry of cultures that enrich our school community!

With Gratitude,

NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

Paloma Learning K-2nd Grade

PALOMA LEARNING
Personalized At-Home Tutoring

FOR KINDERGARTEN TO 2ND GRADE FAMILIES

Empower yourself as your child's most effective learning partner with personalized tutoring!

- Easy Mobile Access**
Receive a text link that works on any phone or tablet
- Just 10-15 Minutes Daily**
Short, focused sessions that fit busy family schedules
- Personalized Learning**
Custom reading & math activities tailored for your child
- Parent-Guided**
Step-by-step coaching to help you become an effective tutor

SCHOOL CHALLENGE
Current participation: 46%
GOAL: 85%
First class to reach 85% wins an ice cream party!

READY TO GET STARTED?
For more information, reach out to your child's teacher or Ms. Johnson. Visit our website for access details. Together, we can boost your child's reading and math success!

GLA Spirit Wear Sale – Ends Today, September 16th!

Show off your GLA pride with our unique collection of spirit wear.

⚠ **Please note: This sale is for spirit wear only. Items are not part of the school uniform and will be considered out of uniform if worn during the school day.**

Special Offer: Use code SCHOOL25 at checkout for 25% off all merchandise
Bonus: FREE shipping on orders of \$75 or more – delivered right to your door!
Don't wait—today, September 16th, is the last day to order and save 25%!
Click the link 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!



GoCPS High School Admissions Application - Opens 09/23 10am

The GoCPS High School Admissions Application opens Tuesday, September 23rd at 10am. The application will remain open until Friday, November 14th at 5pm. Please [click here](#) to create an account and begin working on the application. For any questions, please email coleary@glachicago.org.

Keep Warm in Style – Pre-Order Your GLA Crewneck Sweater Today!

GLA Crewneck Sweaters are here—perfect for cooler weather and approved as part of the GLA uniform!

Why pre-order?

- Guaranteed first access from our initial delivery (expected after September 22nd).
- Be the first to know when your sweater is ready for pick-up—notifications will be sent straight to your email.
- Ensure your scholar is ready for chilly mornings in style and comfort.
- Available now at the low price of just \$20 each!

Don't miss out—our first batch will go quickly!

Pre-order now using this [form](#).

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



Comer's Pediatric Medical Van is visiting GLA

Comer's Pediatric Medical Van will be visiting GLA on **Friday, October 31st**. All consent forms need to be completed by **Tuesday, September 30th**.

If you would like your scholar to be seen during this visit, **a consent form must be completed**. You may:

- Come to GLA to complete a consent form in person, or
- Request a consent form by calling/emailing Ms. Thunherst at **773-530-3040** or sthunherst@glachicago.org. Forms can also be sent home with your scholar upon request.



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

URGENT



October 31, 2025



Great Lakes Academy



School Hours

GLA Online Uniform Store

We are excited to announce that the GLA Online Uniform Store is now open and accepting orders starting today!

You can now conveniently order GLA t-shirts, long sleeves, and polos online. Please see the details below:

GLA Online Uniform Store

- Orders placed **Monday–Thursday** → ready the following Wednesday
- Pick-up: **Monday–Thursday 8:30 AM–2:00 PM | Friday 8:30 AM–1:00 PM**
- Shop now: [GLA Uniform Store](#)
- Questions? Call the front office at **773-530-3040**

CPS Family Income Information Form

We are strongly encouraging all families to complete the CPS Family Income Information Form for the 2025–2026 school year. This form is required annually and helps determine school funding, which supports important programs at GLA, including our free lunch program.

- ✓ Only **one form per household** is needed
- ✓ Takes just **2–3 minutes** to complete

Forms were sent home last week. If you did not receive one, please contact the front office to have a form emailed to you, sent home with your scholar, or stop by the office to complete one today.

Completed forms may be:

- Sent back with your scholar, or
- Emailed to sthunherst@glachicago.org

Thank you for your prompt attention and continued support of GLA!

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner - Full-Size Bags of Chips

- Students may bring their own lunch.
- Lunch must be peanut free.
- Students are not allowed to bring full-size bags of chips into school to eat, they will be confiscated and tossed.

Save the Date: GLA High School & Scholarship Fair

GLA is excited to invite Chicago High Schools and Scholarship organizations into the building to meet with the 6th-8th grade scholars!

On October 1st, 6th-8th grade scholars will have dedicated time during the school day to explore high schools, meet representatives, and learn more about the opportunities available to them.

GLA families are invited to participate in the event from 3:30-4:30 in the gym.





HIGH SCHOOL FAIR

<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Connect with HS Counselors✓ Learn About Scholarships✓ Discover Programs	WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 1st 1:30-4:30pm SAVE THE DATE
MORE INFORMATION  coleary@glachicago.org  glachicago.org	

Please reach out to Ms. O'Leary, coleary@glachicago.org, for any questions.

Free Piano Lessons

Latin School of Chicago student offers free piano lessons. See information below:



NOTED PIANO

Free piano lessons for
young students offered by
Sydney Katz

About me

- I am a junior at the Latin School of Chicago
- I've played piano my whole life
- I am an experienced piano teacher who is currently teaching students weekly
- I have additional experience working with kids through babysitting and school tutoring

Where and When

- Lessons will take place after school
- Lessons can be at my house or at your school

Contact Me
773-573-4261
skatz@soc.org

My Website
notedpiano.com

Race to 10 is On!

We're excited to launch our Race to 10 Attendance Challenge. 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. Let's work together to make every day count! Attendance matters!



We are excited to kick off

Race to 10

the homeroom that achieves
100% attendance 10 times wins
a FREE field trip & 2 raffled
parent gas/Uber gift cards.

PAC Meeting

Join us for our 1st Parent Advocacy Committee meeting of the year. We will meet Wednesday, September 17th at 5pm. Refreshments and child care will be provided. If you can't make it in person, scan the QR code for the Zoom link.



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.

September 17, 2025

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



Refreshments will be served & Child care provided!

Fall Jamboree

Join us for Great Lakes Academy's annual Fall Jamboree on Saturday, October 11, 2025, from 12–3 PM at our campus (8401 S. Saginaw Ave). Families with children ages 0–9 are invited to enjoy a free afternoon of fun with a petting zoo, pony rides, games, and more!



GREAT LAKES ACADEMY

FALL JAMBOREE

PETTING ZOO - PONY RIDES - GAMES

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2025

12:00PM - 3:00PM

THIS EVENT IS FOR CHILDREN AGES 0-9,
&

PARENTS GET TO COME ALONG TOO!

THIS EVENT IS FREE!!!

RSVP



8401 S. SAGINAW AVE. CHICAGO, IL 60617

773-530-3040

2025-26 5th - 8th grade parents YONDR Policy

All 5th–8th grade scholars must bring their Yondr pouch to school daily (even if they don't bring technology). This is required for entry. Phones, watches, and earbuds must be placed in the pouch each day. Scholars without a pouch will receive a deduction. After 5 times, a \$25 fee will be charged to their account. Thank you for helping us maintain a focused, phone-free environment.

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

Sept 15 - October 10, 2025

8	9	10	11	12 Family Curriculum Night, 2:30-4:30 pm
15 Hispanic Heritage Month → Virtual 8th Grade GoCPS Family Night, 5:30 pm	16	17 Parent Advocacy Committee (PAC) Meeting, 5:00-6:30 pm	18	19
22 Girls Volleyball, 4:30 PM - AWAY Girls Volleyball Game (JV & V) @ Morgan Park Academy	23 8th Grade GoCPS Application Opens	24	25	26 Staff PD, No Classes
29	30 Boys Football JV HOME @ 4:30 pm	1 High School Fair, 1:30-4:30 pm	2 Lockdown Drill Boys Football JV HOME @ 4:30 pm	3
6	7	8	9 Boys Football JV HOME @ 4:30 pm	10

Follow Us on Social Media!



Share This Email



Share This Email



Share This Email

Great Lakes Academy Charter School | 8401 S. Saginaw Ave | Chicago, IL 60617 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!