



The Weekly Wave

Weekly GLA Family Newsletter

December 16, 2025

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Ms. Catrina Reynolds - Learning Behavior Specialist

Tell us one of your favorite memories from your time at GLA. After wrapping up IAR testing, my students decided we all needed a chance to celebrate and unwind, so we held a small classroom party. They showed off some of today's popular dance moves, and I shared a few favorites from the early 2000s. We even turned the room into a makeshift fashion runway, where students and myself took turns strutting like supermodels and cheering one another on. It was a lighthearted, memorable way to end a long week of testing.

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

Growing up as a Black child in Chicago, I faced challenges that deeply shaped my school experience. For many Black children, school can feel like an act of survival while still trying to find ways to thrive, and those experiences inspired me to become a teacher. I wanted to help students recognize their self-worth and their unique brilliance, empowering them to rise above their circumstances and find opportunity even in difficult moments. Many of the things I was once criticized for, often influenced by racism, ultimately became the key to my own success. Now, I'm committed to helping my students see the strengths within themselves and discover the "key" they already have to unlock their full potential.

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

One of my favorite memories from elementary and middle school was playing basketball and running track. For my early years (K–3rd grade), I attended St. Sabina Academy on the South Side of Chicago, where I had the unforgettable experience of meeting Chaka Khan and T'Keyah Crystal, the actress from *In Living Color* and *That's So Raven*.

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

I enjoy traveling, staying active through exercise, and indulging in spa days with massages, facials, and everything else that lets me embrace the diva that everyone knows me, Ms. Reynolds, to be.

What are your hidden or surprising talents?

One of my hidden talents is my passion for fashion. I have a keen eye for style and enjoy keeping up with the latest trends in the fashion world. I'm also an athlete and stay active by lifting weights in the gym.

PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

Winter break begins Monday, December 22nd and I would like to wish all students and families a safe, restful, and enjoyable time. This break is a valuable opportunity to relax, spend time with loved ones, and recharge after a busy first semester. We encourage everyone to take care of their health and well-being during the winter months, especially as cold weather and changing conditions can impact routines.

Please remember that Semester 2 will begin immediately following the break with classes resuming on Tuesday, January 6th (January 5th is a Staff Professional Development Day - No Students). We look forward to welcoming students back and continuing the important learning that takes place each day. Regular attendance is essential to student success, and this remains true even during winter weather. Being present and on time helps students stay connected to their learning, maintain academic momentum, and build strong habits for the remainder of the school year.

Families are encouraged to plan ahead for winter conditions by allowing extra travel time and ensuring students are dressed appropriately for the weather. School updates regarding weather-related changes will be communicated if necessary.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. We wish you a joyful holiday season and look forward to a strong and successful start to Semester 2.



Principal Miller

NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

Race to 10 Semester 1 Recap!










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's trip will be shortly after our return from winter break.

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 December 15th. Let's keep working together to make every day count! Attendance matters!



RACE TO 10



Laps Completed	
100% Attendance Days	
10	
9	
8	
7	
6	
5	
4	
3	
2	   
1	    
	Illinois Michigan Purdue GT UIC MS

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Winter Fest & Spirit Week

December 15th-December 19th is Winter Spirit Week at GLA! We will celebrate with Winter Fest on Friday, December 19th! View the dress down days and Winter Fest requirements below:

- Monday, December 15th - Monochrome Monday
- Tuesday, December 16th - Time Travel Tuesday (70s/80s/90s/00s/2010s)
- Wednesday, December 17th - Wild Wednesday (Animal Print)
- Thursday, December 18th - Dress Down Day for Semester 1 Incentive Events
- Friday, December 19th - Holiday Spirit @ Winter Fest!

Winter Fest Requirements:

- Marking Period: Mon. 12/08 - Thurs. 12/18
 - 0 Referrals
 - < 2 Resets
 - < 2 Tardies to Class
 - < 4 Absences to School



Congratulations to our FOUNDING Student Voice Committee Members, DEADLINE EXTENDED to DEC 19th

Congratulations to Symone Jackson, Nubia Jones, and Jleeah Hayes on being the founding members of the first Charter Student Voice Committee in the district! Our Student Voice Committee will give students a meaningful platform to contribute their perspectives, help guide school initiatives, and shape GLA. There are still spots available and the deadline to apply is extended to December 19th. If your child is interested, please encourage them to apply [here](#).



Congratulations STUDENT VOICE COMMITTEE

FOUNDING MEMBERS



Symone Jackson



Nubia Jones



Jleeah Hayes

**DEADLINE EXTENDED DECEMBER 19th
APPLY TODAY!**

[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/GLASVC](https://tinyurl.com/GLASVC)

Understanding TIF & What it means for our schools

We're excited to invite you to a special webinar hosted by Kids First Chicago (K1C), The Civic Federation, and Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community: Understanding TIF & What It Means for Our Schools.

- Date & Time: December 16, 2025 • 5:30 PM–7:00 PM
- Virtual (Zoom)
- Languages: English with Spanish and Chinese (Mandarin) interpretation provided

The program will feature a panel discussion, moderated by Nell Salzman from The New York Times, to help Chicago parents, educators, and community members better understand how Tax Increment Financing (TIF) works and how TIF decisions directly affect CPS budgets, classroom funding, and long-term school resources.

What you'll gain:

- A clear explanation of how TIFs function
- Insight into how TIF dollars impact CPS funding
- Perspectives from our panel of civic leaders
- Tools to advocate for a fair TIF surplus to protect school budgets

Upcoming Webinar


Understanding TIF & What It Means for Our Schools


What You Need To Know


**VIRTUAL ZOOM WEBINAR
DEC 16 | 5:30 PM**



Scan to RSVP







Helpful Community Resources: Food Pantries

We want to make sure families know about local food pantries available in our community. Here is a list of organizations, their locations, and hours of operation so you can easily access support when needed. If you need more options, please visit www.findhelp.org.

Food Pantry Resources



Trinity Resurrection United
9046 S Mackinaw
773-768-9645
Wednesdays, 8:30-10:30 am
Service Area: Cook County

King of Glory Tabernacle
2253 E 83rd St
773-375-3537
Thursdays, 4-7pm
Fridays, 10am-1pm

Giving Others Dreams
8832 S Commercial Ave
Mondays, 4-6pm
Tuesdays, 11am-1pm
Service Area: 60617

Christ Life Church
8927 S Houston Ave
773-936-1348
Saturdays, 10am-12pm
Service Area: 60617, 60633

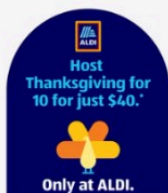
Pilsen Wellness Center, Inc
2938 E 89th Street
312-217-1831
Wednesdays, 3-6pm
Thursdays, 11-2pm
Service Area: 60617

Christ Bible Church of God
7877 S Coles
773-734-2933
Saturdays, 10am-2pm
Service Area: Cook County
Bring Photo ID!



Need more options? Visit: www.findhelp.org

Additionally, Aldi has created a promotion that provides dinner for 10 for \$40. See what is included below.



- Whole Turkey
- Chicken Broth
- Condensed Cream of Mushroom Soup
- Evaporated Milk
- Hawaiian Sweet Rolls
- Miniature Marshmallows
- Cut Green Beans (x2)
- 100% Pure Canned Pumpkin
- Shells & Cheese (x2)
- Brown Gravy Mix (x3)
- Poultry Spices & Herbs
- French Fried Onions
- Pie Crust
- Chicken or Cornbread Stuffing (x2)
- Whipped Dairy Topping
- Yellow Onions (3 lbs.)
- Baby Peeled Carrots
- Celery
- Cranberries
- Sweet Potatoes (3 lbs.)
- Russet Potatoes (10 lbs.)

Free Homework Help through the University of Chicago

The University of Chicago is offering free Homework Help on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4-6pm. This program is designed to support K-12th grade students with their schoolwork in a welcoming, collaborative environment. Tutoring is provided by UChicago students and covers all core subjects areas. The sessions are in person with few virtual sessions available. If interested, sign up for a 30-minute time slot via the QR code below.



STUDENTS K-12
MAXIMIZE YOUR POTENTIAL

HOMESCHOOL HELP

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS | 4PM-6PM

HOW TO JOIN:
Students will need to register using QR Code to secure their time & tutor.

WHAT TO EXPECT:
Tutoring is provided by UChicago students, covering all core subject areas

STUDENTS MUST PROVIDE THEIR OWN MATERIALS

SIGN UP HERE

APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF GOD
5320 SOUTH DORCHESTER AVE CHICAGO, IL 60637

UNIVERSITY CHURCH
5655 SOUTH UNIVERSITY AVENUE CHICAGO, IL 60637

LIMITED VIRTUAL SESSIONS AVAILABLE

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

December 15 - January 9, 2026

15 K-8th Winter Spirit Week iReady MOY Assessments	16 K-8th Winter Spirit Week iReady MOY Assessments	17 K-8th Winter Spirit Week iReady MOY Assessments Make Ups	18 K-8th Winter Spirit Week	19 K-8th Winter Spirit Week
22 Winter Break, No School	23 Winter Break, No School	24 Winter Break, No School	25 Winter Break, No School	26 Winter Break, No School
29 Winter Break, No School	30 Winter Break, No School	31 Winter Break, No School	1 Winter Break, No School	2 Winter Break, No School
5 Staff PD, No Classes	6 Scholars Return from Winter Break!	7	8	9

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