



Weekly GLA Family Newsletter
January 7, 2025

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Ms. Christina Harr - ESL Teacher/ELPT Coordinator

Tell us one of your proudest teacher moments.

One of my proudest moments as a teacher came in 2022 when my students voted me Teacher of the Year. They were a resilient group, navigating the challenges of returning to school after the pandemic, but in the end, it was incredibly rewarding to know I had made a meaningful impact on them—something I strive to do as an educator for every group of kids I work with. The following year, I had the privilege of giving a speech at their high school graduation, and I was content knowing

that 100% of my advisory students had post-secondary plans, whether that was college, trade school, or pursuing careers in fields like cosmetology.

What keeps you coming back to GLA every day?

I return to GLA every day because I am truly passionate about my job and the positive school environment that's been built here. Our school is filled with dedicated, supportive staff who are committed to fostering excellence, and our brilliant students are enthusiastic and eager to learn. It's a place where both students and staff are inspired to grow and succeed together.

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

I was born and raised in Chicago Heights in the south suburbs. What I love about the Heights is that my family is nearby, there's good food on every corner, and it shaped me into the person I am today!

What's your favorite thing to do in Chicago?

My favorite thing to do in Chicago is to visit all of the themed pop-ups.

What are your hidden or surprising talents?

My hidden talents are singing and cooking!

What's your dream vacation?

My dream vacation would be an all inclusive trip to either Fiji or Portugal.

PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

Happy New Year and welcome to Semester 2! We had an amazing first semester and we are hoping for an even better second semester. Parents, we have included some tips to help combat a mid-year slump. First, we encourage all parents to check their students' homework folders and make sure students are regularly completing assignments. It is also important to have nightly conversations with students about what they learned and are working on in school. For K-2 families, Paloma is a great resource to practice reading and math skills that students need through parents tutoring their students. Please do not hesitate to reach out to teachers for clarity on any academic concerns.

In an effort to help students arrive at school well rested, make sure that they have a consistent nighttime routine and get adequate amounts of sleep each night. It is also recommended that students do not use electronic devices within 2 hours of bedtime. A good night's rest improves learning, memory and behavior making it essential for a successful school day.

Looking ahead, please be advised that we will be holding "on track" meetings for students who are behind and may not meet standards for promotion to the next grade level.

Families, your partnership has been greatly appreciated. The GLA community has done an amazing job thus far and we are hoping to finish the school year strong!

With gratitude,



NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

Middle School Sexual Education

Great Lakes Academy will start its sexual education curriculum this week Wednesday, January 8th for grades 5-8th. If you would like to opt your scholar out of this course please contact Coach P (tperez@glachicago.org). Scholars will be sent home with a subject letter on Tuesday, January 7th that will outline all topics covered. No communication is required for your scholar to be opted in.

Middle School Yondr Pouch Policy

This is a reminder that all 5th - 8th-grade scholars must use a Yondr pouch if they bring a cell phone or other technology to school. Each scholar received a Yondr pouch at the start of the school year. If your scholar no longer has their pouch, please do not allow them to bring their device to school. Bringing a device without an operable Yondr pouch will result in a referral.

To replace a lost or damaged pouch, please pay the \$30 replacement fee at the front office. Once the fee is paid, your scholar will be issued a new pouch. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Ms. Williams at jwilliams@glachicago.org.

Reading Incentive: Book Vending Machines

GLA's Book Vending Machines are in full swing! The book vending machines are an incentive to celebrate students who are meeting or exceeding their Step and iReady goals for reading.

For students to participate they must earn 150 steps (K-4) or 14 passed iReady lessons (K-8). This is a continuous process so students also earn the token after 300 steps, 28 lessons, etc. ELA teachers award students meeting these requirements weekly with a reading ticket. Students redeem these tickets for a token and choose a book from the machine in the cafeteria or the link.

Students in K-4 who reach their Step goals are engaging in a wide range of reading both in and outside of school. Engaging in this wide range of reading is critical for students to develop the wide range of context and practice it takes to continually improve their reading skills and become critical readers. If students are staying on pace with their Step goals, they should receive a token around every 1.5 months.

For K-8 students, iReady is a program that supports students in developing their reading skills via an individualized, targeted pathway. iReady suggests that students who pass 2 or more lessons a week are significantly more likely to reach their reading goals. If students are staying on pace with their iReady lessons, they should receive a token around once every 1.5 months.

Students are loving their new books. We hope that this program encourages students to keep making progress with their academic ELA goals and continues to grow their love for reading.



Join us next Thursday for Family Fitness Night!

Come out and enjoy a night of fitness fun with your scholar! This two hour event is a great way to get moving and engage with the GLA community. We welcome all fitness levels to join us!



Join Us!

FAMILY FITNESS NIGHT

Thursday, January 16, 2025

4-6 PM

Engage in fun fitness activities with your student.

All Fitness Levels welcome!

Save the Date! Join us for Family Curriculum Night!

Come explore your child's educational journey! You'll have the opportunity to:

- Learn strategies to support learning at home
- Get important information about upcoming state testing (IAR)
- Discover valuable educational resources for families
- Connect with other parents in our school community

Plus, don't miss your chance to win exciting prizes, including gift cards and gift baskets!



GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Parent Advocacy Committee Meeting

- **Tuesday, Jan. 14, from 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM.** This is an excellent opportunity to stay engaged and advocate for our school community.

The meeting will be held in **person** at the school (*with snacks*). Zoom is available for those who prefer to join virtually.

Zoom Details:

- **Meeting Link:** Join [Here](#)
- **Meeting ID:** 834 0726 2516
- **Passcode:** 524232

We look forward to seeing you there and working together to make a difference!

Immediate Kindergarten Enrollment

We have an exciting update! Great Lakes Academy currently has five open Kindergarten seats available for immediate enrollment! If you know a family looking for a high-quality, supportive learning environment for their child, this is a great

opportunity to join the GLA community. Feel free to share this message and flyer with friends, neighbors, and anyone you know who might be interested. Let's bring more amazing families into our GLA family!



Great Lakes Academy

Looking for a high-quality, supportive learning environment for your child?
Great Lakes Academy has five kindergarten seats open for immediate enrollment!

Why Choose GLA?

- ✓ Free and open admission to all
- ✓ Full-day kindergarten with early entry for 4-year-olds
- ✓ Free 7AM drop-off and daily meals provided
- ✓ State-of-the-art campus featuring an enrichment center
- ✓ Full athletic facility and turf field

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Career Day

We are excited to host our Career Day Friday, February 7, 2025. Please share with your networks.

CAREER CHOICE

CAREER DAY 2025

SAVE THE DATE

Friday February 7th

8401 S SAGINAW AVE

[HTTPS://GLACHICAGO.ORG](https://glachicago.org)

@GLA_CHICAGO 773-530-3040

JOIN US

Chicago Bulls Black History Family Outing

JOIN US!

CHICAGO BULLS
BLACK HISTORY MONTH GAME

TICKETS AS LOW AS

\$66



VS



CHICAGO BULLS

DETROIT PISTONS

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2025
UNITED CENTER

PRE-SHOW: 5:45 PM

TIP-OFF: 7:00 PM

TO PURCHASE TICKETS VISIT:

[HTTPS://FEVO-ENTERPRISE.COM/EVENT/GROUPLAKESACADEMY](https://fevo-enterprise.com/event/grouplakesacademy)



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

January 6 - January 31st, 2025

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
6 No School, Staff PD	7 HOME Girls Basketball Game vs. Chicago Lab, 4:30 pm AWAY Boys Basketball Game vs. Chicago Lab (JV & Varsity), 4:30 pm/5:30 pm	8 HOME Boys Basketball Game vs. Morgan Park Academy (JV & Varsity), 4:30 pm/5:30 pm HOME Cheer Game, 4:30 pm	9	10
13 HOME Girls Basketball Game vs. Morgan Park, 5:00 pm HOME Cheer Game, 5:00 pm	14 Parent Advocacy Meeting, 4:30-6:00 pm	15 GLA Community Conversation, 8:00-9:00 am	16 Family Fitness Night, 4:00-6:00 pm	17
20 MLK Day, Building Closed	21	22	23 IA #3 (Kinder)	24 IA #3 (Kinder) Comer Pediatric Medical Van
27 IA #3 (2nd Grade) HOME Boys Basketball Game vs. Chicago Lab (JV & V), 4:30 pm HOME Cheer Game, 4:30 pm AWAY Girls Basketball Game vs. Chicago Lab, 4:30 pm	28 IA #3 (2nd Grade) IA #3 (3rd Grade)	29 IA #3 (3rd Grade)	30 Family Curriculum Night, 4:00-5:00 pm	31 K-4th Sneaker Ball, 4:00-6:00 pm

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