

**Philippians 4:6-7:** Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.



# NEWSLETTER

March 2026

## School Contact

13000 Zekiah Dr  
Waldorf, MD 20601  
(301) 645-0406  
Office Hours: 7:30-4:00 M-F

## Message From the Office

**Parent coffees are back again this school year!** Parent coffees are an introduction to the next grade level for your student. We will discuss topics such as possible curriculum, differences in standards and practices, expectations, etc. This is not a Q&A about the current school year but rather a chance to receive insight for what will come in the Fall. The coffee sessions will be during the school day. We know this may be difficult for some parents to attend so the presentation used for discussion will be sent out. If there are any topics or questions you have for the following school year, feel free to email Megan Schaniel, Director of Education at [Megan.schaniel@graceknights.org](mailto:Megan.schaniel@graceknights.org) and we will try our best to have answers at the coffee.

## Important Dates:

- 3/3 - PK3 and Secondary Field Trip
- 3/4 - HALF DAY for Students
- 3/9-3/13 - Book Fair
- 3/17 - St. Patrick's Day
- 3/19 - End of Q3, **April Lunch Forms Due**
- 3/20 - NO SCHOOL for Students
- 3/23 - Q4 Begins
- 3/25 - HALF DAY for Students, Maryland Day
- 4/2 - Half Day, Grandparents Day Program
- 4/3-4/10 - NO SCHOOL for Easter Break

**Lunch Forms Found HERE!**

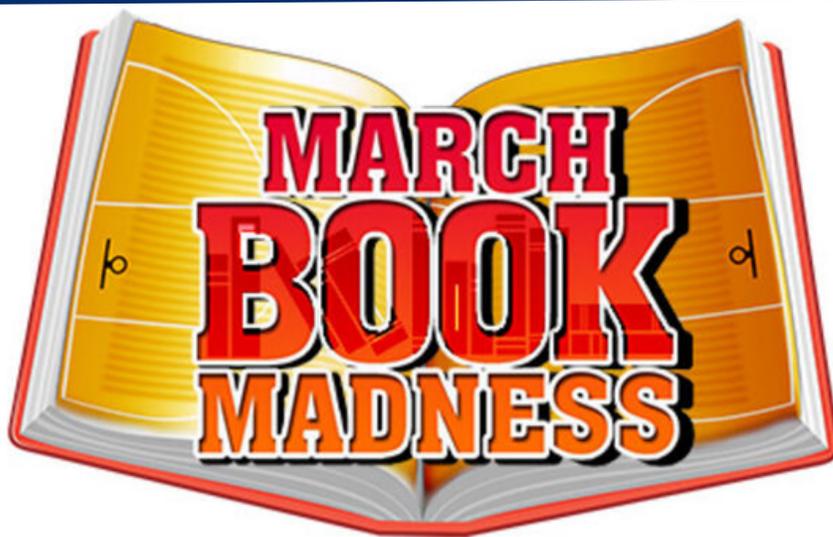
## Parent Coffees!



Going into Kinder 3/9 8:45AM  
Going into 1st Grade 3/9 10:30AM  
Going into 2nd Grade 3/9 1:30PM  
Going into 3rd Grade 3/11 8:45AM  
Going into 4th Grade 3/11 10:30AM  
Going into 5th Grade 3/11 1:30PM  
Going into 6th Grade 3/12 8:45AM  
Going into 7th Grade 3/12 10:30AM  
Going into 8th Grade 3/12 1:30PM  
Going into 9th-11th Grade 3/12 3:00PM



***Our Scholastic Book Fair begins on Monday, 3/9 and will run until Friday, 3/13! Students will have opportunities during the school day to visit the Book Fair. There will also be extended after school hours if parents would like to come shop with their student(s). Be on the lookout for an email this week from Mrs. Hornickel with more information!***



**We are also kicking off March Madness this week! Students were introduced to 16 books at the beginning of the school year and now the voting is open! Students will vote on their favorite books each week until we have an Elite 8, Final 4 and ultimately a winner per department!**

## ***Medication Authorization and When to Stay Home***

### **Medications:**

**Medication authorization forms are required for this for the school to administer prescriptions. The front desk WILL NOT accept medications without the proper forms. There is a general form and one specifically for students with allergies/anaphylaxis and/or asthma. All forms are found in Parents Web, under the Admissions tab on our website, or at the school office.**

**Students will be sent home on a case by case basis for illnesses such as diarrhea, vomiting, fever, respiratory illness, etc. Students may return to school when both are true for at least 24 hours.**

- Symptoms are better overall, and Fever free (without use of fever-reducing medication).**

# 2026-2027

## ENROLLMENT NOW OPEN!

*New families can now enroll for the  
2025-2026 school year!  
Enroll now to secure your spot in the  
Fall. Spots will not be held.*

**RESERVE YOUR SPOT NOW!**

301-645-0406  
[graceknights.org/admissions](http://graceknights.org/admissions)

## Lunch Form Due Dates

### Chick-Fil-A & Papa Johns



Wednesday, November 19

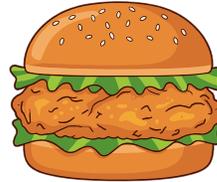
Friday, December 12

Thursday, January 22

Thursday, February 19

Thursday, March 19

Wednesday, April 15



## Not Cinderella

Slippers (e.g. UGG slippers) are not approved footwear for school. For safety and dress code reasons, all students must wear proper shoes that cover the foot and are suitable for school activities. Student who arrive to school with slippers will have to call home and parents will need to bring approved footwear for their student to attend class.

## GCA ATHLETICS

### GO KNIGHTS!

Spring Sports Tryouts Begin  
March 16th



[john.somerville@graceknights.org](mailto:john.somerville@graceknights.org)  
[nina.johnson2@graceknights.org](mailto:nina.johnson2@graceknights.org)

## A Kind Request to Parents and Guardians

*Hi families! We know it's fun to surprise your child with a special lunch now and then, but we kindly ask that outside food deliveries be kept to a minimum. It can be tricky finding staff to bring the food from the office, and calling into classrooms can interrupt learning time. Plus, when deliveries run late, it can throw off our schedule. Thanks so much for understanding and helping us keep the day running smoothly!*



**Ages: PK-7th Grade** (3 years of age by 1/1/26 (must be fully potty trained) through entering 8th grade)

- **Weekly Themes**
- **Field Trips**
- **Arts & Crafts**
- **Science Projects**
- **Water Fun**
- **Outside Play**



**Camp Tuition (9AM-3PM):**  
**\$215/week**  
**Daily Rate:**  
**\$65/day**

**Before Care (7-9AM):**  
**\$50/week**  
**or**  
**\$25/day**

**After Care (3-6PM)**  
**\$80/week**  
**or**  
**\$35/day**

**Early Arrival/Late Pickup Fees:**  
Arrival prior to 8:45AM will be charged the before care fee.  
Pickup after 3:00PM (camp) or 6:00PM (after care) - \$15.00/10 minutes.

**Registration requires a one-time non-refundable registration fee of \$50.**

**Registration requires a non-refundable, non-transferable deposit of \$50 per week to hold your spot.**

**Weekly Field Trips:**  
All campers will have at least 1 field trip per week, either off-campus or in-house. These field trips will require separate waivers.

**Multi-Child Discount:**  
**\$20** off per week for 2nd and 3rd child (in the same family).



Full payment is due the Friday prior to each camp week. Returned check fee: \$35 + court fees. Payments made by credit/debit card are subject to additional fees.

**All campers receive a free T-shirt. Additional shirts available for \$15.**



**GRACE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY**

13000 Zekiah Drive, Waldorf, MD 20601

[www.graceknights.org](http://www.graceknights.org)



# GCA Summer Camp-2026

Week	Dates	Theme
Week 1	June 8-12	 Summer Party 
Week 2	June 15-18 Camp Closed Friday, June 19th	 Under the Sea 
Week 3	June 22-26	 Sports  Party in the USA
Week 4	June 29- July 2 Camp Closed July 3rd	 
Week 5	July 6-10	 Camping 
Week 6	July 13-17	 Mad Science 
Week 7	July 20-24	 Pirate Adventure 
Week 8	July 27-31	 Space Explorers 
Week 9	August 3-7	 Animal Adventure 



# Unexcused Tardies

Student tardies have become very frequent. Please review the schools tardy policy from your handbook.

Student tardies to school and to classes can and will effect their enrollment and their class average. We need your help in getting students to school on time.

## 6CA Student Handbooks States:

Good attendance and punctuality are not only critical to the overall academic success of students, they are also important for the development of personal responsibility. Not only is the absent or tardy affected, but the teacher and the entire class may be affected by the need for adjusted instruction. Please join with us in training your child to possess these qualities.

- Students are expected to be in school every day that school is in session. If a student is absent twenty (20) days during the year, the school may either retain or not allow the student to return the following year. A student who achieves passing grades will be promoted if the parents withdraw and place their child in another school. Absences due to extenuating circumstances, such as extended illnesses, will not apply if the parents keep in constant communication with appropriate school personnel and provide the school with necessary medical documentation.

- An elementary student who has a total of forty (40) tardies to school (excused and unexcused) may not be permitted to return to Grace Christian Academy. Students will be counted as on time if they are with their teacher by the start time. Students leaving before 2:00 p.m. shall be credited with one-half day in attendance.



# 2026 God's Creation Wall Calendars



**AVAILABLE NOW**  
**IN FRONT OFFICE**

**\$9.00**

## No School/Half Day

- March 4**
- March 20**
- March 25**

Half Day for Students - Teachers Professional Development  
No School for Students-Teacher Workday  
Half Day for Students - Teachers Planning Day

# Parking Lot Rules

**Please drive slowly.** There are many students and adults walking through the parking lot, and it's essential that we remain alert and cautious at all times. **The speed limit is 10 MPH.**



**Do not use the farmhouse driveway** as an entry or exit point for school traffic.



**Don't block entrances & exits.**

**Do not drive across parking spaces.** Please avoid cutting through rows of parked cars when moving through the lot, because it is illegal.



**Use the crosswalk** to drop off and pick up your students.



**Stay to the right at all times** when driving through the parking lot to allow for two way traffic.



**IMPORTANT**

## Drop-Off & Pick-Up Procedures

- All parents and students must use the designated crosswalks** when walking across the parking lot for both drop-off and pick-up. This is to ensure the safety of all students and families.
- For Pre-K and Elementary School parents:** If you are not at the pick-up area by **3:15 PM**, you will need to go to the main office to sign your child out.
- For Middle School parents:** If you arrive after **3:30 PM**, you will need to go to the main office to sign your child out.

# Reminder



We would like to provide a reminder that weekly Reading Logs are required for elementary and middle school students. Parents must verify that their student is reading the required number of minutes each night and initial. These are due weekly and worth 10% of students' Reading grade. Also, Khan Academy is required for all 3rd - 8th grade students. Students must complete 45 minutes of active learning minutes each week. Grades are taken weekly and worth 10% of students' Math grade. Please reach out to your student's teachers if you have any questions. Thank you!!

## 2025-2026 Tag Days

### Thursdays

November 20  
December 18  
January 15  
February 19  
March 19  
April 23  
May 14



## OUTDOOR RECESS

Elementary students will continue to go outside for recess if the wind chill is above 36 degrees (without precipitation). Please dress your students for school appropriately for the weather.



## Student Illnesses/Appointments, etc.

Now that we are back to school, viruses and such will begin to make its way through the school sooner than later. Please express importance of handwashing, cough/sneeze etiquette, consuming enough water, eating a healthy diet, and getting a good nights rest to your student.

Doctor's notes can be sent to [healthnotes@graceknights.org](mailto:healthnotes@graceknights.org)

Please be sure to inform Health Notes as well as your student's teacher if your child is receiving a surgical or medical procedure, or have any changes to their health during the school year. This is to ensure they are properly cared for in the event complications arise.

# 2025-2026 ACADEMIC SCHOOL GOAL:



## *Active Learning*

Academic Goal: We are thrilled to announce that our Academic Excellence Initiative this school year will be focused on active learning! Teachers have been provided ample training and PD on brain-research, engagement, and creating effective and engaging active learning lessons.

This means students will do more active lessons, such as centers, task cards, relay races, scavenger hunts, whiteboards, games, use of manipulatives, etc. and less worksheets.

Teachers will be assessing student understanding during these activities and may take grades to go into Renweb.

Renweb grades will reflect active learning activities and traditional worksheet assignments.

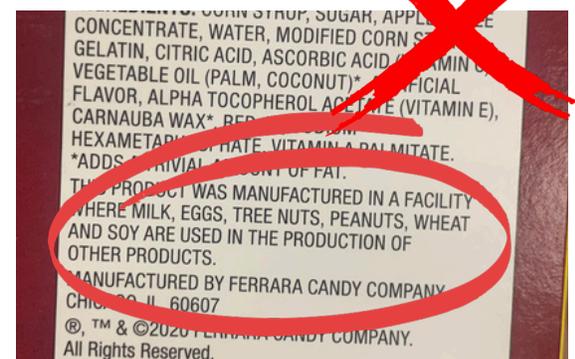
# HAPPY BIRTHDAY from GCA

## Important Birthday Celebration Guidelines

To keep all our students safe and healthy during birthday celebrations, please follow these guidelines when bringing treats to school:

- Only **store-bought cupcakes** are allowed.
- Cupcakes must be **nut-free** and come from a **nut-free facility**.
- Treats must be **sealed and unopened** when brought to school.
- No goodie bags with food or candy are permitted.
- No balloons are allowed in the classroom.
- All cupcakes must be brought to the front office for approval before distribution.
- The school cannot be held responsible for any allergic reactions caused by food brought from outside.

Thank you for helping us maintain a safe environment for all children!



# SCHOOL UNIFORMS

We know that many parents are waiting for uniforms to arrive in the mail or be returned to the school with the school logo. Grace will be extended the first few weeks of school. However, when you are purchasing uniform bottoms please be aware of GCA uniform guidelines. A school uniform pant has a 'welt' pocket, not a *pocket on the outside*. Girls are **not** to wear *jegging style or stretchy pants* that are khaki or navy in color. We will be enforcing our dress code soon and will send parents an email if their child is out of dress code. *This goes for all students*. Many girls are wearing stretchy material pants. *Cargo shorts* are not a school uniform bottom.

Below are pictures of approved pants/shorts. Our SCHOOL WEBSITE has more detailed information about GCA's school uniform. **Red polos** and **GCA t-shirts** are allowed on Friday's only.





## 2025-2026 Academy Calendar

Date	Day	Event
08/14/2025	Th	Binder Orientation and Study Skills, 6pm (All 3 <sup>rd</sup> and new 4 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> Students)
08/18/2025	M	Meet & Greet, 4pm – 6pm
08/20/2025	W	First Day of School – Quarter 1 Begins
08/29/2025	F	<b>NO AFTER CARE</b>
09/01/2025	M	School Closed – <b>Labor Day</b>
09/12/2025	F	Half Day for Students ( <i>Teacher Professional Development</i> ) <b>NO AFTER CARE</b>
10/10/2025	F	<b>NO AFTER CARE</b>
10/13/2025	M	School Closed – <b>Columbus Day</b>
10/22/2025	W	End of Q1 (44 Days)
10/23/2025	Th	No School for Students ( <i>Teacher Workday</i> )
10/24/2025	F	No School for Students ( <i>Teacher Professional Development</i> )
10/27/2025	M	Begin Q2
10/29/2025	W	Half Day for Students ( <i>Teacher Planning Day</i> ) <b>NO AFTER CARE</b>
10/31/2025	F	<b>NO AFTER CARE</b>
11/03/2025	M	No School for Students – <b>Parent Conference Day</b> ( <i>Teacher Workday</i> )
11/11/2025	T	School Closed – <b>Veterans' Day</b>
11/24/2025	M	Asynchronous Learning Day
11/25/2025	T	Asynchronous Learning Day
11/26/2025	W	No School – Begin Thanksgiving Break
11/28/2025	F	No School – End Thanksgiving Break
12/01/2025	M	School Reopens
12/02/2025	T	<b>GIVING TUESDAY – Please consider Donating to GCA. Thank You.</b>
12/19/2025	F	Half Day for All <b>NO AFTER CARE</b>
12/22/2025	M	No School – <b>Christmas Break Begins</b>
01/02/2026	F	No School – <b>Christmas Break Ends</b>
01/05/2026	M	School Reopens – <b>HAPPY NEW YEAR!</b>
01/15/2026	Th	End of Q2 (44 Days)
01/16/2026	F	No School for Students ( <i>Teacher Workday</i> )
01/19/2026	M	School Closed – <b>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</b>
01/20/2026	Tu	Begin Q3
01/21/2026	W	Half Day for Students ( <i>Teacher Planning Day</i> ) <b>NO AFTER CARE</b>
02/13/2026	F	Half Day for Students ( <i>Teacher Professional Development</i> ) <b>NO AFTER CARE</b>
02/16/2026	M	No School – <b>Presidents' Day</b>
03/04/2026	W	Half Day for Students ( <i>Teacher Professional Development</i> ) <b>NO AFTER CARE</b>
03/19/2026	Th	End of Q3 (42 Days)
03/20/2026	F	No School for Students ( <i>Teacher Workday</i> )
03/25/2026	W	Half Day for Students ( <i>Teacher Planning Day</i> ) <b>NO AFTER CARE</b>
04/02/2026	Th	<i>Grandparents Day Program</i> – Half Day for All – <b>NO AFTER CARE</b>
04/03/2026	F	No School – <b>Good Friday</b>
04/06/2026	M	No School – <b>Easter Break Begins</b>
04/10/2026	F	No School – <b>Easter Break Ends</b>
04/13/2026	M	School Reopens
05/01/2026	F	No School Spring Break <b>NO AFTER CARE</b>
05/25/2026	M	No School – <b>Memorial Day</b>
05/26/2026	Tu	Half Day for Students ( <i>Teacher Workday</i> ) <b>NO AFTER CARE</b>
05/27/2026	W	Half Day for Students ( <i>Teacher Workday</i> ) <b>NO AFTER CARE</b>
05/28/2026	Th	Half Day for Students ( <i>Teacher Workday</i> ) <b>NO AFTER CARE</b>
05/29/2026	F	Half Day for Students – <b>LAST DAY</b> ( <i>Teacher Workday</i> ) <b>NO AFTER CARE</b> End of Q4