

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.



School Contact

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

Important Dates:

- 11/3 Parent Teacher Conference - No School for Students
- 11/11 Veteran's Day - School Closed
- 11/14 Picture Retake/Make up Day
- 11/19 December Lunch Forms are Due
- 11/24-25 Asynchronous Learning Days
- 11/26-28 Thanksgiving Break
- School Reopens 12/01
- 12/02 GIVING TUESDAY

Lunch Forms Found [HERE!](#)

NEWSLETTER

November
2025

A Note From the Director:

Happy November!

One of my favorite holidays is Thanksgiving—it marks the beginning of the holiday season, a time filled with joy, reflection, and gratitude. I truly love everything about this time of year—the gatherings with family and friends, the festive lights, the celebrations, and the cherished moments we get to spend together. The break from the busyness of school gives us the opportunity to slow down and be present with our children, savoring the blessings God has given us.

This season is also one of gratitude. Throughout Scripture, we see men and women of faith pausing to remember all that God has done for them—to offer thanks and praise for His faithfulness. In that same spirit, I want to take a moment to share what I am deeply thankful for and what the Lord is doing here at GCA:

1. **Our incredible students and families** who make this community so special.
2. **The growth in our enrollment**, allowing us to be a brighter light in our community.
3. **Our dedicated and gifted teachers**, who genuinely love your children and are passionate about their craft.
4. **The provision of grant funding**, which has allowed us to repair and improve many areas of our campus, including roofs, doors, the network, gym floor, lighting, HVAC units, the parking lot, and much more.
5. **The beginning of growth in our high school**, as the Lord leads us in rebuilding and strengthening that program.
6. **The development of a vibrant parent network**, creating stronger partnerships between home and school.
7. **Most importantly, the presence of the Lord**, which continues to move powerfully within this place.

As Thanksgiving draws near, I pray that you and your family find time to reflect on all that God is doing—both in your homes and here at GCA. May this season remind us of His goodness and fill our hearts with gratitude.

Serving Him,
Mrs. Buhl

2026 God's Creation Wall Calendars



AVAILABLE NOW
IN FRONT OFFICE

\$9.00

No School/Half Day

November 3

Parent Teacher Conferences
No School for Students

November 11

Veteran's Day

November 26-28

Thanksgiving Break

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.**

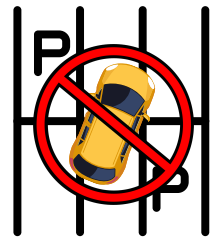


Do not use the farmhouse driveway as an entry or exit point for school traffic.



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

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.

Physical Education

As fall approaches with its cooler weather, we are all excited to wear our boots. Please be mindful of the days your student has PE. If your student does not have tennis shoes on for PE they will not be able to participate.



Lunch Form Due Dates

Chick-Fil-A & Papa Johns



Wednesday, November 19

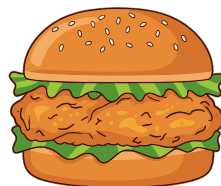
Friday, December 12

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.

Parent Conferences

November 3, 2025

Preschool & Elementary Parents

are required to schedule a conference in order to receive your student's first quarter report card. Teachers will email information about signing up for times.

Secondary Conferences

are optional. Parents may request a conference with one or multiple teachers. An email about how to sign up will be going out soon.

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!

#GIVINGTUESDAY
THANK YOU!



GCA will participate in a Giving Tuesday campaign, if you would like to give money towards GCA's ongoing needs to make the school better. These donations will be tax deductible. You can also indicate a department that you would like to give towards or top priority needs. Soon we will send out a list of the departments that you can give to, as well as a list of needs we are saving for. As always, GCA appreciates your generosity and support of our parents!



A huge thank-you to everyone who participated in this year's Trunk or Treat! We're so grateful to everyone who decorated trunks, donated candy, and came out to join the fun. Your creativity, generosity, and community spirit made the event a wonderful success. We couldn't have done it without you! 🍁

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).

PICTURE

Retake/Make Up

DAY

November 14, 2025



For Retake:

1. Please email your child's name , grade and homeroom teacher's name to

Julie.turner@graceknights.org

2. On November 14th - Send in your picture packet.
The packet will be turned in to the photographer.

For Make Up:

Please see the school office for an order form.



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.



Athletic Director: John Somerville

● Assist. Athletic Director: Nina Johnson

john.somerville@graceknights.org

● nina.johnson2@graceknights.org

Basketball

NO LIMITS JUST BUCKETS



openGYM

WITH COACH KING



GCA STUDENTS ONLY
MIDDLE SCHOOL & UP
BOYS & GIRLS

@GCA GYM
3:30-5:00 PM

Volleyball

11/3

JV & Varsity Volleyball Games

(HOSTED BY GCA -5:30PM & 7PM)

ENTRY FEE : \$10 STUDENTS, \$15

PARENTS



Hello,

Operation Christmas Child is a ministry of Samaritan's Purse and is an excellent way to touch the life a child in so many ways. You pack a shoebox (virtually or an actual shoebox) with basic items and the box goes to a child somewhere around the world that may be in a war-torn country, political unrest, extreme poverty, or an area closed off to the Gospel. Boxes travel all around the world with shoebox gifts full of school supplies, hygiene items, and toys...things that we often take for granted. In addition, they learn about the gift of salvation, receive the opportunity for discipleship classes, and receive a Bible in their native language. The link below will give you some ideas and suggestions if you are unsure what to pack. In addition, many of the classrooms will have a packing party each year in my classroom, and you can contribute to that by purchasing items from our Amazon link below. You can find suggested items to donate on-line.

In the past, GCA has packed several hundred boxes and last year boxes from this area have reached children in eSwatini (former Swaziland), Lesotho, Tanzania, Haiti, Ukraine, Columbia, and Honduras! This year, you have two ways of packing a box. If you choose to pack a virtual box using a link that will be available soon. You can also turn in an actual shoebox! We will have some at school that you can use for this purpose, but any standard size shoebox will work! It doesn't have to be wrapped. If you have an actual box to turn in, please make arrangements with me (Mrs. Miller) to drop off your box(es) or bring them to the main office. You can also find a local church (drop-off location) that can accept your box during National Collection Week Nov. 17-24.

If you would like more information about OCC, I have also placed a link for that as well. I work with Samaritan's Purse and Operation Christmas Child all year and am the Logistic Coordinator for Charles County and will be happy to answer any questions that you may have! Happy Packing!!!

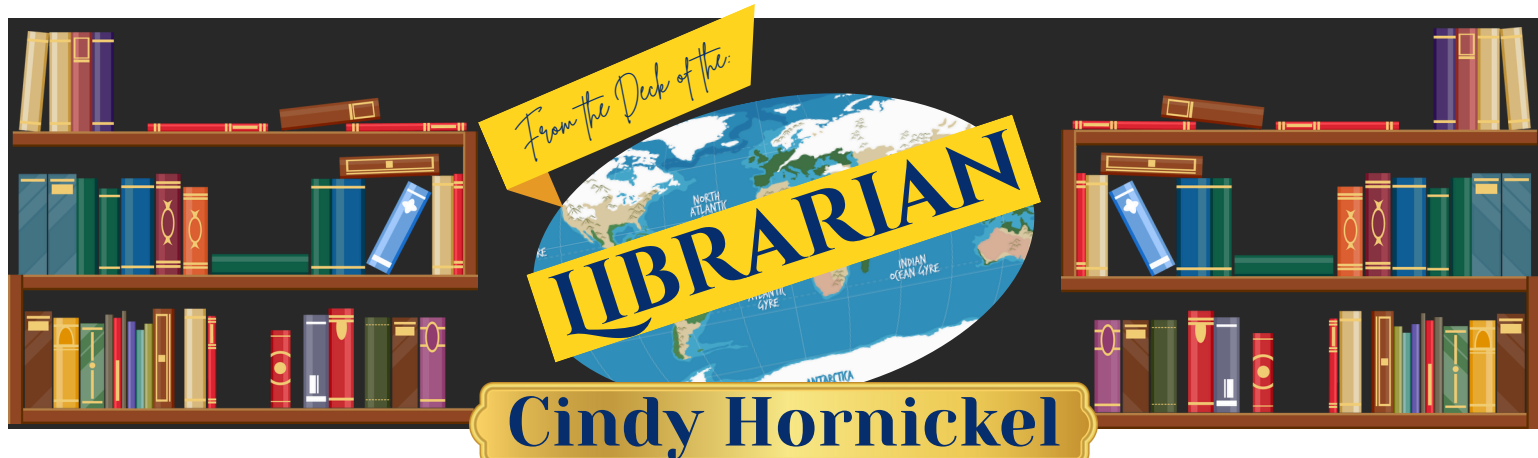
Jennifer Miller

Operation Christmas Child Information and Drop Off Locations
Operation Christmas Child | Shoebox Outreach of Samaritan's Purse

Amazon wish list

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/5K4S2KKYJBM6?ref=wl_share





A poster titled 'BOOK BLAST' is pinned to a brown clipboard. The poster has a blue diagonal banner in the top left corner that says 'COMING SOON!'. At the top center of the poster is a small logo that says 'Books ARE FUN'. The main title 'BOOK BLAST' is in large, bold, red, distressed capital letters. Below the title, the text 'Help your student grow their at-home book library.' is written in red. A black horizontal bar contains the text 'Our mission begins on Monday, November 3rd' in white. Below this, the text 'We're teaming up with Books Are Fun and the Book Blast program to put brand-new books into the hands of every student.' is written in black. A section titled 'Why We Love Book Blast:' in red is followed by a bulleted list: '• Every student receives age-appropriate books they'll love', '• 100% of contributions go directly to books and classroom needs', and '• The book list is fantastic - curated and exciting'. Below this is a red heading 'KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRINCIPAL WITH MORE DETAILS.' followed by the text 'Your student will also bring home a printed Treasure Map - completing it is the key to joining the fun and earning prizes and books. More info coming soon!'. An image of a 'Treasure Map' is shown, which is a 'TOP SECRET' map from 'Books Are Fun' with instructions for students. A QR code is located in the bottom right corner of the poster. At the very bottom of the poster, it says 'Learn more about Books Are Fun & the Book Blast Program HERE:'.

<https://booksarefun.com/>



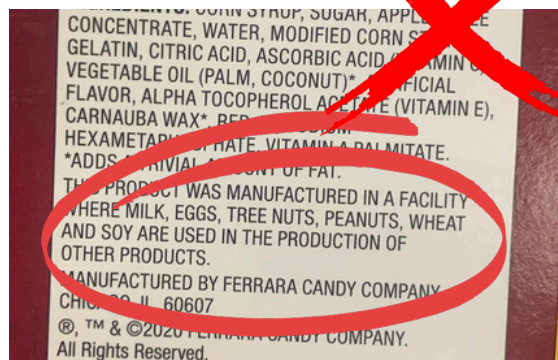


Important Birthday Celebration Guidelines

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!



WHO DO I CONTACT?

TEACHER

Questions about:

- Assignments
- Gradebook
- Classroom Management
- AR

- Your student's behavior and habits in class
- Agenda/Notebook (Grades 3 -8)
- Anything classroom specific

PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR, S.T.E.P. CENTER/TESTING MICHELLE GOODSON

Questions about:

- Learning Lab
- MAPS Testing

- Entrance Testing
- IEPs, 504s, Educational Services
- Preschool Educational policies and procedures

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION MEGAN SCHANIEL

Questions about:

- Curriculum
- School Events
- Kindergarten - 10th Grade Educational policies and procedures

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS JOHN SOMERVILLE

Questions about:

- School security measures
- School-wide discipline policies
- Athletics
- Building and grounds questions

DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL STACIE BUHL

Questions about:

- School mission and vision
- School culture and values

OTHER QUESTIONS?

- Enrollment, FACTS login - **Lisa Johnson**
- Tuition, Payments, Financial - **Nancy Kemmerer**
- Forms, Attendance, Records - **Julie Turner**
- Employment - **Nina Johnson**
- Medications, Student Illness - **Josephine Bailey**
- Extended Care, Summer Camp - **Michelle Goodson**
- Parent Liaison - **Lisa Johnson**
- Homeschool - **Michelle Goodson**

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.

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