

NOVEMBER 2023

NEWSLETTER



Welcome to Grace Christian Academy!

School Contact

13000 Zekiah Dr
Waldorf, MD 20601

(301) 645-0406

Office Hours: 7:30-4:00 M-F

Important Dates:

- 11/6 - Parent Conference Day (No School for students)
- 11/8 - Honor Roll Chapel
- 11/10 - NO SCHOOL for Veteran's Day
- 11/13 - MS Winter Tryouts Begin
- 11/14 - Picture Retake Day
- 11/21 - Dec. Lunch Forms Due
- 11/21 - Half Day for ALL - NO AFTERCARE
- 11/22 - 11/24 - NO SCHOOL Thanksgiving Break
- 11/27 - School Reopens
- 11/28 - Giving Tuesday

**Lunch Forms Found
HERE!**



Message From the Office

Greetings GCA Parents and Guardians,

Happy Quarter 2! We say this every month, but it is always crazy how fast time flies when you're having fun! This newsletter contains an abundance of very important information! A few highlights being Parent Conference Day on 11/6, honor roll information, Operation Christmas Child, winter sports tryouts, school policy reminders and more. We'd also like to update you on the October TAG Day fundraiser for Samaritan's Purse. We collected money to donate to relief efforts of the ongoing crisis in Israel. We are happy to say we raised approximately \$400 to donate to the relief effort. Thank you for participating in this fundraiser and please join us in continuing to pray for peace. Please read this newsletter thoroughly so that you don't miss any vital information for the month of November!

In His Service,
Megan Schaniel
Director of Education

New Temporary Nurse!

kylie.korn@graceknights.org

Congrats Mrs. Barber on your newest blessing, Chance Barber! Mrs. Barber will be on maternity leave until after the new year. Please know that Mrs. Barber has been preparing her temporary replacement for the last few weeks on getting to know our students and staff and her way around the building. We feel so blessed to have Mrs. Korn to fill in for Mrs. Baber during her absence. She can be reached at her email: Kylie.Korn@graceknights.org in you have any health questions concerning your student.

Parent Conference Day!

Monday, November 6th!

Preschool Conferences

Preschool parent conferences are optional! Preschool teachers will review your student's Fall Assessment during conference time. Teachers emailed out sign up information.

Elementary Conferences

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

Middle School Conferences

Middle school parent conferences are optional. Parents may request a conference with one or multiple teachers. Mrs. Jennifer Miller emailed out sign up information.

Spiritual Emphasis

stacie.buhl@graceknights.org

It has been a great start of a busy school year. Please remember if your child or you need a safe place to talk my office is always open. Please reach out to me at Stacie.buhl@graceknights.org

Here is a great devotion for us as parents to continue to train our students to love the Lord.

Fearless Parenting

GCA Athletics

john.somerville@graceknights.org

If you are signing up for Winter Sports (Basketball/Cheer)- please make sure you bring an updated physical to the Athletic Department & GCA participation form.

Winter Sports Tryouts will begin on
Monday, November 13th!

Go Knights!



Honor Roll Chapel

We are very excited to recognize our Quarter 1 Honor Roll students during Chapel on **Wednesday, November 8th!** Parents of students who made Honor Roll this quarter will receive an email invitation no later than the end of the day on 11/2 to attend Honor Roll chapel if you'd like to!



Honor Roll Pizza Party



Students who made Honor Roll this quarter will be invited to a Pizza Party at the end of the school day to celebrate their achievement!

Elementary Pizza Party - 11/13

Middle School Pizza Party - 11/14

Students who did not make Honor Roll this quarter will remain in their classrooms during the pizza party. However, we do want to acknowledge their hard work! For 1st quarter, all students will receive a treat in their classrooms and teachers will talk with students about their strengths and set goals for quarter 2! As a gradual release from always receiving a treat, starting 2nd quarter only grades 1-2 will receive a treat and 3rd quarter there will not be any classroom treats during this time.

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 Healthnotes 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.



Picture Makeup & Retake Day

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2023

STUDENTS ARE TO WEAR A WHITE OR NAVY POLO UNIFORM SHIRT FOR PICTURES (NO SWEATSHIRTS)

REMINDER

School Pictures are Ready to View and Order!

View and order at <https://shop.jostenspix.com/login>

- GRACE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY OF MARYLAND
- Event Code: FE281523
- Secure access code distributed by school

Hair Color Policy

debbie.collignon@graceknights.org

Per GCA's student handbook, on page 50, students may not have un-natural hair color. If your student does have an un-natural hair color (I.e. pink, blue, purple, etc.), please make arrangements at your earliest convenience to remove that color. Thank you!



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

This month kicks off Operation Christmas Child here at GCA, this is an awesome ministry that uses a shoebox as a tool to reach others for Christ. The boxes are filled with basic hygiene items, school supplies, and toys. Students have an opportunity to participate in several ways; by bringing in shoeboxes that they have packed at home, participating in the Middle School Packing party at the end of the month, contributing supplies through an Amazon wish list or bringing donations in.

Students can use any standard size shoebox that they may have at home, or they can get boxes from me, they will receive information on what is appropriate to put in the box. We will gather donations all month for a 'packing party', this is where the supplies are laid out and students have an opportunity to pack in class. This will take place during their history class time. In order for this to be successful we need donations. I have included a link for an Amazon wish list that will delivery items directly to the school for me or you can purchase items and bring them in. **All shoeboxes are due by Nov. 17, 2023**

There is a lot of information on-line and this is a global ministry that we take part in during the year. If you would like more information, please see the link Operation Christmas Child | Shoebox Outreach of Samaritan's Purse (samaritanspurse.org). If you would like more information on how to get your church involved, please let me know!

Thanks for your support and have a blessed day!

Jennifer Miller

jennifer.miller@graceknights.org



We ♥ our Volunteers

amanda.reed@graceknights.org

Thank you to all of our parents who have stepped up and volunteered when we had a need. We appreciate the time you have put in! If you would like to get on our volunteer list, please complete the Volunteer Form on our [website](#).

FUNDRAISER SURVEY

Thank you to all families who have completed the Fundraiser Survey! Before admin sits down and discuss all of the results, we would like to give families one more opportunity to participate. [CLICK HERE](#) to take a couple minutes to share your thoughts on our fundraiser program.

Giving Tuesday

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!

stacie.buhl@graceknights.org

#GI♥INGTUESDAY
THANK YOU!

FOLLOW US ON



Instagram

We have kicked off a new Instagram page for Grace. Follow us to see more of the great things that happen during the school day!

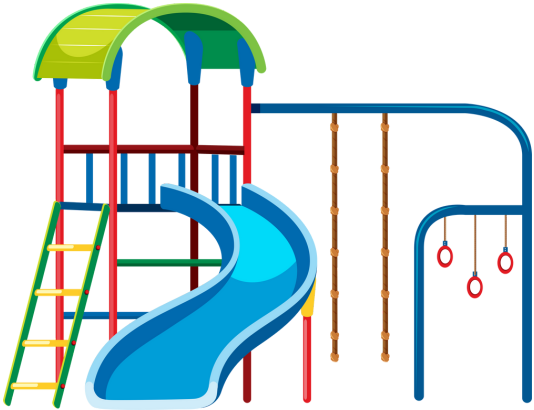


School Spirit

Spirit Shirt Fridays

We are bringing back our spirit shirt Fridays! Students are allowed to wear a Grace shirt with their school uniform bottoms. The shirt can be from a club, sport, camp, or any GCA related event!

Let's see that school spirit!



Outdoor Recess

Elementary students will continue to go outside for recess if the wind chill is above 36 degrees. Please dress your students for school appropriately for the weather.



SGA-SPONSORED CANNED FOOD DRIVE

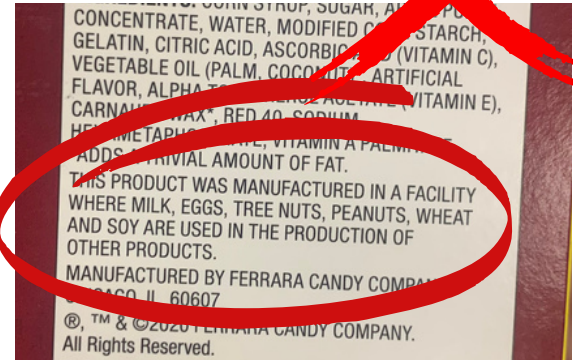
GCA is collecting non-perishable items to donate to our local community that could be in need of additional help. Middle School students should drop off canned food items to their homeroom teachers. Preschool and elementary students can bring their items to the main office.



GCA is looking to hire a couple additional substitute teachers and aftercare workers. If you are interested in more information, please reach out to megan.schaniel@graceknights.org.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Birthday Parties



Want to celebrate your student's birthday at school? Treats such as cupcakes or cookies are allowed and must abide by the following:

- **A notice must be made to the homeroom teacher a week in advance to include what will be brought in and when.**
- The homeroom teacher will email a notice out to parents of what is being brought in and when. If your student is not allowed to consume the birthday treats, please notify the teacher.
- **All food and/or drinks MUST be SEALED from a STORE AND MUST have a NUT FREE Label.**
- All food/drinks must be brought to the office, not given to the teacher directly or sent in with the student.
- NO balloons or treat bags. The school cannot be held responsible for any items that may contain an allergen in a treat bag, nor can we search each bag that is brought in.

If your student has allergies or diet restrictions such as nuts, dairy, eggs, soy, wheat, vegan, etc. You may send in a separate treat with your child to be enjoyed on that day.

TARDY!

Student tardies are becoming very frequent. Please review the school's tardy policy from our handbook. Student tardies to school and to classes can and will effect their enrollment at Grace and their class averages. We need your help in getting students to school on time.

ATTENDANCE

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.

Unexcused Tardy to Class (Middle School)

Students are expected to be in their seats, ready to work at the start of the period. Students who fail to reach their next class period during the allotted time without a valid pass, note from teacher, or note from office, will be unexcused tardy. The student should not argue with the teacher or try to explain the tardiness. One point will be deducted from the student overall class average at the end of the quarter for every 3 unexcused tardies to class.

Note From the Nurse

kylie.korn@graceknights.org

Did you receive an email from the nurse?

If you have received an email from the nurse requesting health documents such as updated vaccine records, health inventory, blood lead results, medications, etc. please accomplish these requests ASAP. It is important to ensure your child's record is up to date as we prepare for an inspection from the Health Department.

Vaccines Requirements:

- 7th Grade (must be 11 yrs old to receive): Meningococcal, Tdap
- Kindergarten: Second dose of MMR & Varicella
- Pre-K3 & Pre-K4: DTaP/DTP/DT (4 Doses) Polio (3 Doses) Hib (at least 1 dose given after 10 mos of age) MMR (at least 1 dose) Varicella (at least 1 dose) Hepatitis B (3 doses) PCV (1 dose). If your child turns 5 within the school year, the second MMR dose is required within 20 days of their birthdate.

Medications:

New medication authorization forms are required for this school year. 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.

COVID-19 Guidance:

As many of you know, COVID-19 seems to be on the rise again. Per MSDE guidance your child should complete a 5 day isolation period following a positive COVID-19 test. Day 0 is considered the day symptoms started in symptomatic persons or the day of the positive test if asymptomatic. After day 5, if your child has no symptoms OR if symptoms are improved and they have had no fever for at least 24hrs without medication, they may return to school if they wear a well-fitting mask for 5 additional days (day 6-day10).

If they are unable to wear a mask, they may return if they have a negative test at day 5 or later. These test results must be provided to the school via healthnotes@graceknights.org. Otherwise, they should remain at home for day 6-day 10.

Parents are required per the Department of Health to report all positive at home COVID tests at onestop.md.gov

For more info, please visit [Guidance to Support Safe In-Person Operations for PreK-12 Schools and Child Care Programs \(marylandpublicschools.org\)](https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/Guidance-to-Support-Safe-In-Person-Operations-for-PreK-12-Schools-and-Child-Care-Programs).

GCA is looking for a wheelchair in good condition! Do you have one you are ready to donate? If so, please contact Nurse Barber at kristin.barber@graceknights.org.

Date	Day	Event
08/17/2023	Th	Binder Orientation and Study Skills, 6pm (All 3rd graders and new 4th-8th graders)
08/21/2023	M	Meet and Greet, 4pm – 6pm
08/23/2023	W	First Day of School – Begin 2023 – 2024 School Year – Q1
09/04/2023	M	School Closed – Labor Day
09/15/2023	F	Half Day for Students (Teacher Professional Development) AFTER CARE OPEN
10/06/2023	F	Full Day for All – NO AFTER CARE
10/09/2023	M	School Closed – Columbus Day
10/25/2023	W	End of Q1 for 2023 – 2024 (44 days)
10/26/2023	Th	No School for Students (Teacher Professional Development)
10/27/2023	F	No School for Students (Teacher Professional Development)
10/30/2023	M	Begin Q2 for 2023 – 2024
11/06/2023	M	No School for Students – Parent Conference Day (Teacher Workday)
11/10/2023	F	School Closed – Veterans’ Day
11/21/2023	T	Half Day for All – NO AFTER CARE
11/22/2023	W	No School – Thanksgiving Break Begins
11/24/2023	F	No School – Thanksgiving Break Ends
11/27/2023	M	School Reopens
11/28/2023	T	Giving Tuesday – Please consider Donating to GCA
12/20/2023	W	Half Day for Students (Teacher Workday) NO AFTER CARE
12/21/2023	Th	No School – Christmas Break Begins
01/02/2024	T	No School – Christmas Break Ends
01/03/2024	W	School Reopens
01/12/2024	F	Full Day – NO AFTER CARE
01/15/2024	M	School Closed – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
01/18/2024	Th	End of Q2 for 2023-2024 (44 days)
01/19/2024	F	No School (Teacher Workday)
01/22/2024	M	Begin Q3 for 2023 – 2024
02/16/2024	F	Half Day for Students (Teacher Professional Development) NO AFTER CARE
02/19/2024	M	School Closed – Presidents’ Day
03/21/2024	Th	End of Q3 for 2023 – 2024 (43 days)
03/22/2024	F	No School (Teacher Workday)
03/25/2024	M	Begin Q4 for 2023 – 2024
03/28/2024	Th	Elementary Grandparents Day – Half Day for All – NO AFTER CARE
03/29/2024	F	No School – Easter Break Begins
04/05/2024	F	No School – Easter Break Ends
04/08/2024	M	School Reopens
05/03/2024	F	Half Day for All - Quarter Break NO AFTER CARE
05/06/2024	M	No School – Quarter Break
05/24/2024	F	Full Day for All – NO AFTER CARE
05/27/2024	M	No School – Memorial Day
05/28/2024	T	Half Day for Students (Teacher Workday)
05/29/2024	W	Half Day for Students (Teacher Workday)
05/30/2024	Th	Half Day for Students (Teacher Workday)
05/31/2024	F	Half Day for Students – Last Day for Students – NO AFTER CARE
05/31/2024	F	End of Q4 for 2023 – 2024 (Teacher Workday) (42 days)

Three inclement weather/snow days have been built into the school calendar.

After two inclement weather days are used, the following will modify the school year:

- June 3, 2024 (Snow day number four)
- June 4, 2024 (Snow day number five)
- June 5, 2024 (Snow day number six)