

Connections

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER FOR GRAND TRAVERSE ACADEMY FAMILIES

Dates to remember

Monday, December 19-Monday, January 2, 2023 – **NO SCHOOL, Holiday Break**

Tuesday, January 3 – **School Resumes for a Full Day**

Tuesday, January 3-Thursday, March 9 – 2023-24 Open Enrollment Period

Important information for elementary parents regarding 2023-24 school year

We are considering a change to the Monday-Friday start and dismissal times for K-6 classes to better align with those of our secondary students. The current and proposed elementary times are shown below.

	K-6 Current	K-6 Proposed
Monday-Thursday	8:30 am-3:50 pm	8:05 am-3:15 pm
Friday	8:30 am-11:50 am	8:05 am-12:00 pm

There are several benefits to such a change, including:

- Giving working parents an earlier arrival time to work and shortening the wait time for students to begin instruction in the morning.
- Allowing parents to make children's doctor, dentist and other appointments earlier in the afternoon to avoid missing school time during the day.
- Allowing students to participate in activities or lessons that start earlier in the afternoon.
- Providing more time for GTA to offer clubs and other after-school opportunities.
- Supporting teachers with more time in the afternoon to provide the best customer service.

We find that the majority of elementary students arrive by 8:00 am, but don't want to assume that an earlier start and release time would benefit everyone. We know that any change in your routine may require an adjustment. Watch for an email survey coming soon that will help us gauge the response to such a change.

GTA robotics team invited to event

Congratulations to our Mustangs VEX Robotics Team



7567A, "Some Assembly Required" (Isaac Deneau, Ashton Cherup and Coleman Mroczkowski), on their invitation to participate in the CREATE 2023 US Open

Robotics VRC High School Championship, an amazing accomplishment! The invitation was based on their performance at the recent Benzie tournament, where they won the Design Award. The championship will be held in Council Bluffs, Iowa on **March 23-25, 2023**. Stay tuned for livestream information as the date approaches!

Upper Elementary Robotics Club begins next month

GTA's Upper Elementary Robotics Club is starting soon. This year, 5th and 6th graders will learn coding skills and language through www.Code.org and will use their new knowledge to program a micro:bit robot to complete tasks and challenges. Club Meetings will be held **after school on Thursdays in Purple 1, from January 5-March 23** at a cost of \$20, which includes a Robotics Club t-shirt. Because students will be working with a partner and building on skills each week, attendance is important at each of the 12 sessions. Call the Elementary Office at (231) 995-0665 to register. Payment may be made with a credit card, or cash/check (dropped off in the office). If cost is an issue, please let us know when you register. Students will need to be picked up at South Carpool promptly at 5:00 or be registered for Quality Care to participate. Class size is limited to 30, so don't delay!

New board member elected

Congratulations to **Amy Ettawageshik**, who was named to the Grand Traverse Academy Board of Directors at their November 17 meeting. Amy has been a part of the GTA community for over 15 years. She and her husband, Joe, have eight children, five of whom currently attend GTA.



Their oldest graduated in 2021, and two young ones are not yet in school. Amy is a native of Traverse City and a graduate of the University of Dallas, Texas, where she majored in English Language & Literature. She is a self-employed writer and editor. Welcome, Amy!

Soccer begins in January



Saturday soccer instruction for grades 3-12 begins the first week that students return from Winter Break. Schedules for the two levels are as follows:

Grades 3-5 Four Sessions

January 7, 21, 28; February 4

10:00-11:30 am, Big Gym

Cost: \$50

(Registration form attached and due in the Secondary Office by January 6)

Grades 6-12 Drop-In

January 7, 21, 28; February 4, 11; March 4, 11

12:00-2:00 pm, Big Gym

Cost: \$10 per session

(Waiver form to be signed by a parent at the door)

Calling all 4th & 5th grade girls!

GTA girls in grades 4 and 5 are invited to help round out our elementary girls' basketball team at the YMCA. The season runs from **January 14-February 18, 2023** and practices will take place once or twice a week with games on Saturdays at the YMCA South location (Racquet Club Drive). Parents of interested players should sign them up for [Elementary basketball with GTA](#), so we may create teams. In addition, please sign up for the appropriate Youth Basketball session on the [YMCA basketball](#) website. The only cost is the YMCA fee, payable on their registration page. **Registration closes on December 23, 2022.**

Help wanted

GTA is in need of a boys' 3rd grade YMCA basketball coach. The season runs from **January 14-February 18, 2023** and practices will take place once or twice a week, with games on Saturdays at the YMCA South location (Racquet Club Drive). If interested, contact Mrs. Alejandro at alejandros@mygta.us.

Concert videos available

A full house enjoyed both our band and choir Holiday



Concerts last week! A big thanks to our musicians, directors,

accompanist, decorators and everyone else involved in making these wonderful



performances possible. Below are concert videos if you missed them or want to share the performances with family or friends:

[Secondary Bands Holiday Concert](#)

[Elementary & Secondary Choirs Holiday Concert](#)

Welcome to our newest future Mustang!

Congratulations to Secondary Math Teacher **Emily**



Wenger and her husband, Joel, on the birth of their daughter, Evalynn Joy, on

Tuesday, December 13. Both mom and baby are doing great! Emily's math department colleague, **Mrs. Dix**, hosted a shower at GTA, where she was presented with an "M is for Mustangs" onesie, along with plenty of pink!

GTA water bottles for sale

Did you know that our brains are composed of 73 percent water and need proper hydration to function normally? One study even found that drinking water improves memory and helps focus our attention. That's why we encourage students to bring a water bottle to school each day to stay hydrated! Water bottle fillers are located throughout the school for refills. And right now, 27-ounce easy grip water bottles with the GTA logo are available for sale in either office for just \$3 each. Parents may buy them too, to promote our school wherever you go!



Yearbook class accepting ads

Do you own a business and want to show your support for GTA? Yearbook advertising also gives your business exposure to GTA families, as they tend to look at the books often. Now is the time to place an ad in the 2023 Secondary yearbook! Prices are as follows: Business card size \$45, ¼ page \$65, ½ page \$150, full page \$300. If interested, contact **Reed Hudson**, editor-in-chief, at hudsonr23@mygta.us. He'll be happy to answer your questions and get your business in front of our Secondary students and their parents!



Outdoor Club is back!

Upper Elementary teacher **Justin Lazar** is pleased to be bringing back the Outdoor Club for students who have a passion for the outdoors and are interested in Michigan's natural resources. *Go Wild for Wildlife* (grades 3-5), *A Year in the Life of a Michigan Black Bear* (grades 6-8) and *Elk University* (grades 9-12) will be offered next month. Details and a registration form are attached to this newsletter. Please complete the form

and have your child **return it to Mr. Lazar in Purple 3 no later than January 4, 2023.**

Ongoing events

Med Club Muffin Sales (Secondary) – Every Monday from 7:45-8:00 am, \$2.00 each for several varieties, Multi-Purpose Room

Sophomore Class Bagel Sales – Every Wednesday from 7:40-8:00 am, \$2.00 each for several varieties, Multipurpose Room 4 and the Intention Room (Mrs. VanHouzen's office)

Elementary Pizza Days – Every other Wednesday, as follows: January 11 & 25, February 8 & 22, March 8 & 22, April 12 & 26 and May 10 & 24 (order and pay by the preceding Monday using forms sent home on off weeks), \$1.50 per slice of pepperoni or cheese

Secondary Pizza Days – Every Thursday (order and pay by Tuesdays using forms provided in Advisory classrooms), \$1.50 per slice of cheese or pepperoni

NHS Elementary Doughnut Sales – Every Friday in the Intention Room (at the entrance to the Elementary Wing), 7:50-8:05 am, \$1 each for several varieties

NHS Secondary Doughnut Sales – Every Friday in Multipurpose Rooms 1 & 2, 7:40-8:00 am, \$1 each for several varieties

Secondary Beverage Sales – Monday-Thursday at Lunch in Bronze 1, \$1.50 each for Snapple fruit drinks

Fill the Pantry Jeans Days – Thursdays: January 12, March 23, May 25 (\$2 per person to wear jeans with a uniform top)



Grand Traverse Academy Elementary Athletics Registration Form

Athlete Name _____ Grade (circle) 3 4 5 Gender (circle) F M

Teacher Name _____

Co-Ed: ☐ Cross Country ☐ Soccer ☐ Volleyball ☐ Track & Field ☐ Girls' Basketball ☐ Boys' Basketball

Eligible Grade Levels: All students enrolled in grades 3-6 are eligible to participate in an elementary sport, with the exception of Track & Field, due to league restrictions, only grades 4-6 are eligible.

Schedules/Registration Deadlines: Visit the GTA website - <https://www.mygta.us/elementaryschedule> to view schedules for elementary athletics.

Athletic Fees: There is a \$50 fee for each sport.

Athlete Acknowledgement: I understand that it is important to have good sportsmanship and to be a positive person in my community. I also understand that being an athlete will give me the chance to be a role model for other people. I know that competition builds character and will help shape me into who I will be after school. Integrity, reflection, and respect for athletics are all pieces of good sportsmanship that I hope to achieve. I will commit to the sports season, respect the coaches, athletes and equipment, and have a positive attitude each time I represent my school. I will listen, work hard and have fun while learning my sport.

Athlete Signature _____ Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Remind Service/Emergency Contact: The athletic department uses the Remind texting service to communicate with athletes and families about schedules and team information. Please indicate any phone numbers that you would like to use for this purpose.

Parent Name _____ Cell # _____ Other Contact # _____

Parent Name _____ Cell # _____ Other Contact # _____

Allergies/Other Notes _____

Medical Authorization & Release: I hereby hold Grand Traverse Academy, its employees, and agents harmless for injuries sustained as a result of participation in the sports program. I agree to and assume financial responsibility for medical treatment as a result of any such injury. By signing, you hereby grant to the child's team coach/administration the responsibility for the care of the child if a parent/guardian is unavailable. This involves the required consent and authorizations for the delivery of medical care, diagnosis, and treatment if necessary, on behalf of my minor child named above. In making any such decisions, the persons hereby authorized to make the decisions may rely on the advice of available medical advisors, which may include physicians, nurses, EMT's, or other apparently qualified persons. In connection with such decisions, I hereby release the school, and their representatives, from any liability for the results of such treatment and care. It is my understanding that the school will use its best efforts to promptly contact one of us in the event medical treatment or care is considered necessary or appropriate.

Concussion Awareness Educational Material Acknowledgement: I acknowledge, in accordance with Michigan's Sports Concussion Laws (Public Acts 342 and 343 of 2012) that I have received the Concussion Fact Sheet for Parent and/or the Concussion Fact sheet for Students (as applicable) provided by the Grand Traverse Academy Athletic Department. I am aware of the signs of concussions and proper reporting procedures. I understand that state law requires the immediate removal of a student athlete from physical participation if a concussion is suspected. I further understand that state law

requires that a student athlete suspected of a concussion not return to physical activity until s/he receives written clearance from an appropriate health professional.

Photo Release: Grand Traverse Academy likes to celebrate the achievements of our students and staff. Throughout the sports season, the Athletic Department may take photographs of athletes during practice and competition to celebrate their hard work. These photographs may appear in various school materials and platforms and will be used in a celebratory nature. If you do not wish for your student's photograph to be released by GTA, please promptly submit a completed copy of the GTA opt-out form to the Main Office pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 USC 1232g, 34 part 99, and Michigan's Student Privacy Law, MCL 380.1136.

Inherent Risks & Dangers. I fully understand that there are risks inherent in athletic training, practices, competitions and events (collectively, "athletic related activities) and ground transportation that include risks and dangers of serious bodily injury and property damage, including but not limited to, permanent disability, paralysis and even death ("risks"). These risks may be caused by the Athlete's own actions or inactions, by the actions or in actions of others participating in the athletic related activities, and/or by the conditions in which the athletic related activities take place.

Assumption Of Risk. I freely and voluntarily assume any and all risks arising out of, or relating to, the athlete's participation in the athletic related activities. I understand that it is my responsibility to evaluate carefully the risks inherent in the athletic related activities and, in signing this form, represent that I have taken such steps as I deem necessary and appropriate to obtain information and clarification on any questions or concerns. I represent and warrant that there are no physical or other health related problems that would render the Athlete's participation in the athletic related activities dangerous or harmful to others or the athlete. I understand that GTA does not provide medical, health, or other insurance for students participating in athletic related activities and that it is my responsibility to maintain such insurance as I deem necessary or appropriate. Knowing the risks associated with the athletic related activities, and with sufficient knowledge of the athlete's physical condition and limitation(s), if any, I voluntarily assume all responsibility and risk of loss, damage, illness, and/or injury to the participating athlete or property in any way associated with the student's participation in the athletic related activities.

Release, Waiver, Covenant Not To Sue. In consideration of the student being allowed to participate in the athletic related activities, and to the fullest extent permitted by law, I waive, release and forever discharge and agree not to sue, and to indemnify and hold harmless, Grand Traverse Academy, its Board Of Directors, each director, its officers, administrators, employees, agents, contracted service providers, volunteers, representatives, and assigns their successors, heirs or estates ("releases") from and against any and all financial obligations, liabilities, claims, demands, and causes of action of any kind, on account of any loss, damage, illness or injury to person or property alleged to be caused, in whole or in partly, by the releases, in any way arising out of, or relating to, the student's participation in the athletic related activities, whether due to negligence or other action or inaction of the releases, excluding claims for intentional misconduct or gross negligence. No part of this consent form shall be deemed or constructed as a relinquishment or waiver of the immunity from Tort Liability provided in section 7 of ACT NO 170 of the Michigan Public Acts of 1964, as amended, being sections 691.1407 ET SEQ of the Michigan Compiled Laws. If despite this release and waiver of liability, assumption of risk and indemnity, I or anyone acting on my behalf or on behalf of the now-minor participating athlete, makes a claim against any of the releases, I will indemnify, save, and hold harmless each of the releases from any litigation expenses, attorney fees, loss, liability, damages, or costs of any kind as may incur as a result of any such claim.

By printing and signing your name below, you agree to all athletic policies outlined above.

Parent Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

2023 Outdoor Club Registration Form

We are happy to announce the return of the GTA Outdoor Club! If your child has a passion for the outdoors and loves to learn about things related to Michigan's natural resources, this opportunity may be for them. Please read the information below and if your child is interested and committed, ***please have them return the slip at the bottom of this form to Mr. Lazar in the Purple 3 classroom by January 4, 2023.***

- **Go Wild for Wildlife, Grades 3-5.** This course will cover basic needs of our wildlife in Michigan. This course will be offered on January 9 and 11 from 4-5 pm in Mr. Lazar's classroom (Purple 3). On day one, we will cover the needs of many organisms native to Michigan. On day two, we will take a walk around GTA's property, looking for evidence of wildlife and habitat (boots recommended).
- **A Year in the Life of a Michigan Black Bear, Grades 6-8.** This course will include data analysis of bear characteristics, understanding the purpose of den checks, and carrying capacity for areas in which they live. This course will be offered January 16 and 18, from 4-5:00 pm in Mr. Lazar's room (Purple 3). On day one, we will cover the purpose of den checks and analyze data collected from them, and on day two, we will analyze survival needs for bears within the areas in which they live.
- **Elk University, Grades 9-12.** This course will cover the population and impact of elk in our state. This course will be offered January 23, 25, and 30, from 4-5:00 pm in Mr. Lazar's classroom (Purple 3). On the first day, we will do a simulated population analysis (which is done from an airplane). On the second day, we will research the impact of elk in Michigan. On the final day, we will have a mock town hall meeting, where students will play the role of various stakeholders.

If your child is interested, please be sure they can commit to all dates. Students attending will be expected to consistently participate in all activities. All courses will be limited to 20 participants. Please have them arrive a few minutes before 4:00 pm so we can collect attendance and get started promptly. Elementary students can come to my classroom right after school at 3:45 pm. Afterwards, please pick up your child at the north entrance (Secondary Wing) at 5:00 pm or communicate with me that they will be going to Quality Care. If you have any questions, please reach out to me at lazarj@mygta.us.

Best Regards,

Justin Lazar

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Student Name	Go Wild for Wildlife (Grades 3-5)	A Year in the Life of a Michigan Black Bear (Grades 6-8)	Elk University (Grades 9-12)

Contact Information

Student Homeroom Teacher _____ Parent Name _____

Parent Phone _____ Parent Email Address _____