

Connections

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER FOR GRAND TRAVERSE ACADEMY FAMILIES

Dates to remember

Friday, March 17 – *Midwinter Choir Concert, 6:00 pm, Big Gym*

Sunday, March 19 – *Regional Spelling Bee, 11:00 am-1:00 pm, City Opera House*

Monday-Friday, March 20-24 – *Elementary Reading Month Spirit Week (see details attached)*

Tuesday, March 21 – No “Tuesday Talk” Today

Tuesday, March 21 – *Kindergarten Spring Sing, 3:00 pm, Small Gym*

Thursday, March 23 – *Fill the Pantry Jeans Day (wear school-appropriate jeans with a uniform shirt for \$2; proceeds benefit the student lunch pantry)*

Friday, March 24 – *Family Council Movie Night, 6:30 pm, Big Gym (see details below and attached)*

Monday-Friday, March 27-31 – **NO SCHOOL**, Spring Break

Read-A-Thon concludes today!

The GTA Family Council is thrilled to announce that, as of this writing, GTA K-8 students have surpassed the goal of 100,000 minutes read, for a total of 131,989 (almost 2,200 hours!). And with the help of family, friends and the community, they have raised \$11,525 to support classroom libraries and activity funds!

Read-A-Thon officially ends today, so be sure that minutes read are logged by midnight tonight! To allow for friends and relatives who would still like to support our students with a donation, **fundraising will remain open through Saturday, March 25**. Winning classrooms and the top 10 readers will be announced in next Friday’s newsletter!

We’re so proud of our students!

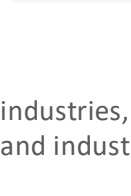
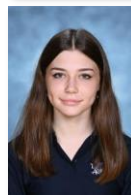
GTA student selected for 2023 Naval Academy Summer STEM program. Congratulations to 8th grader



Henry Hartl on his selection by the United States Naval Academy for their Summer STEM program in Annapolis, Maryland. He will explore, create, build and expand his critical thinking and collaboration skills at one of the country’s top engineering programs. Historically, the

program receives over 5,000 applications, of which only 280 are typically chosen to attend. Henry received the news from Mrs. Floering during advisory this week and was all smiles!

Six inducted into Career Tech National Technical Honor Society. Congratulations to the following GTA high



school students, who joined the National Technical Honor Society at an induction

ceremony at the Dennon Museum Center on March 15: (left/right from top) seniors **Andrew Pavwoski, Carson Hensley, Trindy Olsen, Ivy Thorson, Courtney Lick** and junior **Nathaniel Vang**. The NTHS is an educational non-profit that exists to honor, recognize and empower students and teachers in Career & Technical Education. It helps students to earn recognition for superior achievement, discover opportunities with leading businesses and

industries, serve in leadership roles in communities and industries and more.

Two GTA students graduate from Young Marines program. Congratulations to **Clarissa** and **Nathan Mannor**, grades 10 and 5, who recently became Young Marines. The two joined as recruits last fall and learned the importance of working together, helping others, recognizing and avoiding harmful drugs and other substances, and respect for themselves and others. Their training culminated with graduation to Private on March 3. Clarissa was chosen by instructors as the Honor Recruit and was promoted to Private First Class at the ceremony. Nathan's and Clarissa's father, Kevin, was a Young Marine in his youth and achieved the rank of Captain. This [national youth leadership organization](#) has been active in Traverse City since 1972.



Stephen Holcomb, Coleman Mroczkowski and Micah Jesse) finished in the top 10. Also competing were "The Fighting Geese" (**Petra Foote, Elly Froehlich, Aariyah Harmon**, and



Elizabeth Kornexl, not pictured).

Next week is Elementary Reading Month Spirit Week!

Elementary students are invited to celebrate Reading Month with a Spirit Week full of fun activities that culminate with a dress-up day on Friday: Monday – Reading Campout Day, Tuesday – Favorite Children's Book Day, Wednesday – Wacky Sock Wednesday, Thursday – Reading at the Beach Day and Friday – Dress Up as a Favorite Children's Book Character. See the attached for all the details.

Elementary Spring Sing events scheduled

GTA students in grades K-4 will perform mini concerts in upcoming weeks to show what they have learned in their music classes. All performances will take place in the Small Gym. Dates and times are as follows:

Classes	Date	Time
Kindergarten	Tuesday, March 21	3:00 pm
Grades 1-2 Bohrer, Popp, Zak	Tuesday, April 18	6:00 pm
Grades 1-2 Gubbins, Gorton, Haines, Keenan	Tuesday, April 18	7:00 pm
Grades 3-4 Lazar, King, Drost	Thursday, April 20	6:00 pm
Grades 3-4 Cherup, Kipke, Olin, Wilson	Thursday, April 20	7:00 pm

GTA students qualify for regional spelling bee. Best of luck to **Sam Link**, grade 7, and **Bella Walden**, grade 8, who will compete in the regional spelling bee this **Sunday, March 19**, at the City Opera House in downtown Traverse City.



The event is open to the public and starts at 11:00 am. The winner is eligible to attend the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC on May 30.

High school students participate in Academic WorldQuest. Last Thursday, two teams from Grand



Traverse Academy competed at The International Affairs Forum's 10th annual Academic

WorldQuest regional competition! During the event, teams answered questions from 10 topics, ranging from Global Supply Chains and Autocracy & Democracy to the Arctic Council. "Team Dunsters" (**Isaac Dunson**,

students. Elementary teachers will communicate dates for their students directly.

Parents urged to contact lawmakers about charter school funding equity

According to the Michigan Association of Public School Academies (MAPSA), "The House School Aid appropriations subcommittee of lawmakers met recently in Lansing and MAPSA has confirmed that charter public schools will NOT be eligible for \$750 million in funding for future school infrastructure project needs." Find [details and information](#) about how you can take action to let your opinions be known to Michigan's lawmakers at the link above. ALL public school students deserve access to all the resources the governor outlined in her "MI Kids Back on Track" program.

Family Movie Night planned

Kick off Spring Break on **Friday, March 24**, with a Family Movie Night, hosted by the GTA Family Council! "Puss in Boots: The Last Wish" plays at **6:30 pm in the Big Gym**. Concessions will be available; please bring your own chairs or pillows and blankets. Parent volunteers are needed to help out with concessions, cleanup, etc. [Sign up here](#). We hope to see you there!

Girls Take Action reminder

Girls Take Action will start on **April 11, 2023**. Led by GTA teachers Ms. Kipke and Ms. Callahan, this program teaches girls in grades 3-8 to be self-confident and is based on the GTA character traits. Practices will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school until 5:00 pm. Please see the attached flier for more information. Forms are due back to school by April 7.



State initiative lowers the cost of college

This week, Governor Whitmer announced a new initiative offering Michigan students from families with income of \$70,000 or less a tuition-free degree from Wayne State University. The program will begin in the fall of 2023 and cover the full cost of tuition and standard fees. This is made possible thanks to the bipartisan Michigan Achievement Scholarship program, which was signed into law in 2022, saving students up to \$8,250 on their associate degree at a

community college, up to \$20,000 at a private college, or up to \$27,500 at a public university. Details and eligibility requirements are [available here](#).

Save the date: Father-Daughter Dance planned!

GTA elementary girls of all ages and their father, uncle or grandfather are invited to our biennial Father-Daughter Dance on **Friday, April 14 from 6:30-8:30 pm in the Big Gym**. The cost is \$15 for father and daughter or \$20 for father and multiple daughters. A 4x6" photo, a photo frame craft, music provided by a DJ and an ice cream sundae bar are included. A registration form is attached to this newsletter, as preregistration with payment are required. This is always a popular event, so don't delay!



GTA student art featured in exhibit

If you'll be home during Spring Break, and looking for a family activity, don't forget the Crooked Tree Arts Center's annual Youth Art Exhibit. It features the works of students in the Greater Grand Traverse Area, including many from GTA. The Center is located at 322 Sixth Street in Traverse City. The show will be open through April 15 during gallery hours and closed during Spring Break (March 27-31). An awards presentation will take place on March 19 from 1:00-3:00 pm. For more information, visit www.crookedtree.org/tc.

Simply the Best is back!

Nominations for the Record-Eagle's Simply the Best



2023 are underway. Grand Traverse Academy is in the running for Best School and several of our teachers

have been nominated for Best Teacher. If you are so inclined, we invite you to visit <https://www.record-eagle.com/simplythebest> and cast your votes in support of Grand Traverse Academy. Best School and Best Teacher can be found under the Children, Family & Education category. **Note that you may nominate an individual or organization once per day and**

nominations may be submitted until May 14. (If you submit at least 25 nominations, you might be one of three lucky winners to receive a \$100 Downtown Traverse City gift certificate!) Voting for the top three nominees in each subcategory will run from May 22-July 30 and winners will be announced in September.

Registration deadlines approaching for track & field

If your elementary or junior high children are interested in track & field, the deadline for registration is Wednesday, March 22. Registration forms for both [elementary](#) and [secondary](#) are available on the GTA website or on the rack outside the Secondary Office.

2023-24 secondary school registration in process

Our course catalog for junior high and high school classes offered in the 2023-24 school year has been published! You can find it on the GTA website under the Students tab by choosing [Secondary Course Catalog](#). Current 7th -11th graders and their parents should review the 2023-24 course catalog and select and register for classes via the registration portal on PowerSchool. The portal will remain open through the end of March. Mrs. Patrzik and Mrs. Wahl have been visiting classrooms to meet with students to provide guidance and answer questions.

Huffman Basketball Skills Camp returns

Huffman Basketball Skills Camp will return to Grand Traverse Academy on **Monday, June 19-Friday, June 23**. For details and registration information, see the attached flyer or visit www.trevorhuffman.com.

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: March 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 Secondary Doughnut Sales – *Every Friday in Multipurpose Rooms 1 & 2, 7:40-8:00 am, \$2 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: March 23, May 25 (\$2 per person to wear jeans with a uniform top)*

Reading Month Spirit Week (March 20-24)

<p>Monday March 20th</p>	<p>Reading Campout Day!</p>   <p>Bring in a flashlight and let's read by the campfire today.</p>
<p>Tuesday March 21st</p>	<p>Favorite Children's Book Day!</p>  <p>Bring in your favorite children's book to read in class or to someone else.</p>
<p>Wednesday March 22nd</p>	<p>Wacky Sock Wednesday!</p>  <p>Wear your favorite pair of wacky socks to read in today.</p>
<p>Thursday March 23rd</p>	<p>Reading At The Beach Day!</p>  <p>Bring in a towel to read on today, just like you're at the beach!</p>
<p>Friday March 24th</p>	<p>Dress Up as Your Favorite Children's Book Character!</p>  <p>Dress up today as your favorite school appropriate children's book character.</p>



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

March 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This spring, your school district will administer state tests designed to provide important information on student knowledge and student career- and college-ready progress upon graduation. Federal and state laws require these tests. Schools and districts use these test results, among others, for school improvement initiatives that benefit students. The data gathered from this year's state assessments and other data will help educators support students when they return to school in the fall and move forward with their education.

Students in grades 3-10 will participate in the following assessments:

- M-STEP English language arts (ELA) and mathematics (grades 3-7)
- PSAT 8/9 (grade 8)
- M-STEP science and social studies (grades 5 and 8)
- PSAT 8/9 (grade 9)
- PSAT 10 (grade 10)

Grade 11 students will participate in the Michigan Merit Examination (MME), which has three required components:

- SAT with Essay college entrance exam that also measures student knowledge of Michigan's ELA and mathematics standards
- ACT WorkKeys work skills assessment
- M-STEP science and social studies

MI-Access, Michigan's Alternate Assessment Program

MI-Access (www.michigan.gov/mi-access) is Michigan's alternate assessment system for grades 3-8 and 11. It is designed for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities whose instruction is targeted to Michigan's alternate content expectations (known as essential elements) and whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams have determined that general assessments, even with accommodations, are not appropriate. MI-Access satisfies the federal requirement that all students with disabilities be assessed at the state level.

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Additional Information

We want your child's state testing experience to be as stress-free as possible. Your positive outlook will help support your child's experience. State assessment results do not affect your student's grades in any way.

On average, a student will spend no more than three hours on M-STEP mathematics and ELA tests. Students in grades 5, 8, and 11 will spend an additional two and one-half hours on science and social studies testing.

While we support parents in making choices for their children, there is no "opt-out" of state assessments under state or federal law. Students who are not assessed will count against their school's required 95 percent participation rate, which will create an incomplete picture of their school's performance.

Assessment results help target support and resources to students and schools that need them most. The test results may also inform future state education programs and policies to help Michigan students catch up on learning that was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

You can find information about Michigan's state assessment system on our website, www.michigan.gov/oeaa. An excellent place to start is with the handout "Michigan's State Assessment System: What It Is, What It Means, and What It Offers." Additional information, including how to help your child prepare for M-STEP testing, is available at www.michigan.gov/mstep.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael F. Rice". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Michael F. Rice, Ph.D.
State Superintendent



Friday, March 24th **6:30PM**
in the Big Gym



Concessions available.
Bring chairs, blankets
and/or pillows.



Girls Take Action is an after school program for 3rd-8th grade girls offered at Grand Traverse Academy. This program will focus on all the things that girls can be empowered to take action on in their lives. The framework of the program will be the character traits taught at GTA. Girls will be split into groups of 3rd-6th grade and 7th-8th grade.

The program will begin at Grand Traverse Academy on Tuesday, April 11, 2023. Practices will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:00-5:00 pm. We will meet in the classroom and will run in various locations around the school. The final run will be held on Friday, May 26th at 1:00 at GTA.

If you have any questions, please contact Coach Courtney Kipke at kipkec@mygta.us or Annie Callahan at callahana@mygta.us.

DUE: April 7, 2023

Keep Running!

Ms. Kipke and Ms. Callahan

Registration for Girls Take Action

Name _____ Age _____ Date of Birth _____

Parent's/Guardian's Name _____ Grade _____

Mailing Address _____ City _____

State _____ ZIP: _____ Phone _____ T-SHIRT SIZE: Youth M L or Adult S M L XL 2XL

I, _____ give permission for _____
(parent/guardian) (daughter)

to participate in the Girls Take Action program. I understand this is a non-competitive running program designed for girls in 3rd-8th grades. Along with physical workouts, coaches provide focused and age-appropriate discussions on certain areas based on the GTA character traits in order to prepare girls for a lifetime of self-respect and healthy living. The registration fee for Girls Take action is \$30 and includes a t-shirt and the final run.

☐ Enclosed is my \$30. Checks should be payable to Grand Traverse Academy. Please return the completed form, with payment, to the school office.

Father-Daughter Dance

Show her how special she really is! Fathers, uncles, grandfathers with a special girl are invited to spend a semi-formal evening on

Friday, April 14, 2023

6:30-8:30 pm

Grand Traverse Academy Gymnasium

\$15 for Father and One Daughter

\$20 for Father and Daughters

Includes one 4 x 6 photo and one photo frame craft per daughter

œ DJ

œ Ice cream sundae bar

œ Photographer

Please Return This Portion to the Elementary Office No Later Than April 10

*****pre-registration and payment are required*****

☐ Father and one daughter \$15

☐ Father and daughters \$20

Names of Attendees _____