

# The Gator Gazette



Holy Name of Jesus School Parent Newsletter

July 29, 2025

## Back to School Edition

### Principal's Perspective

Dear Holy Name of Jesus School Community,

Welcome back!

I hope this summer brought you rest, joy, and a few moments of wonder. As we prepare to open our doors for the 2025–2026 school year, I write to you filled with gratitude and anticipation. Our team has spent the summer months reflecting deeply, listening to feedback, and designing meaningful experiences that will continue to form our students academically, spiritually, and socially from infancy through 7th grade.

One of the most exciting developments this year is the launch of our **House System: Virtues in Action**, an initiative designed to strengthen spiritual formation, leadership, and connection across all grades. Each house is rooted in one of our school's four Core Beliefs and brings those values to life through monthly meetings, student-led reflections, and community challenges:

- **St. Ignatius – House of Reverence** (Find God in Everyone and Everything)
- **Mother McAuley – House of Service** (Boys and Girls for Others)
- **Mother Doyle – House of Excellence** (Strive for Personal Excellence)
- **St. Aloysius – House of Truth & Light** (Open Eyes with Faith, Open Ears with Truth, Open Hearts with Love)

Every student and faculty member in 2nd–7th grade is part of a house that they will remain in for their time at Holy Name. These mixed-grade groups are designed to deepen relationships and provide older students opportunities to mentor younger peers in the spirit of faith and virtue.

Academically, we are proud to continue building on the strong foundation laid over the past five years. Our newly redesigned learning goals reflect our ongoing commitment to excellence while evolving to meet the needs of today's learners.

1. **Empowering Student Agency** – We will guide students to regularly reflect on their academic, social, and spiritual growth through goal setting and personal data tracking.
2. **Cultivating Responsible Digital Citizens** – Students will engage with age-appropriate digital citizenship and AI ethics to prepare them for a connected and conscientious future.
3. **Building Stronger Home-School Partnerships** – We're doubling down on celebrating diverse cultures and strengthening parent involvement as co-educators in every child's journey.

Finally, it is important to read this newsletter in its entirety and complete all required back-to-school forms and action items. Your attention to these details ensures a smooth and joyful start for every child. Thank you for being an essential part of this vibrant community. I can't wait to see you all soon.

God Bless,  
Kirsch J. Williams



## Important Dates



### **Monday, August 11**

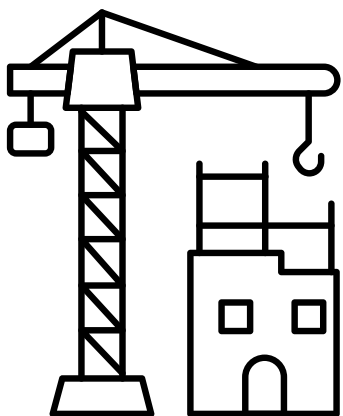
Meet and Greet (see flyer below)

### **Tuesday, August 12**

First Half Day for Group A  
(teachers will notify you of your child's group on 8/4/2025)  
12:00 Dismissal for All

### **Wednesday, August 13**

First Half Day for Group B  
(teachers will notify you of your child's group on 8/4/2025)  
12:00 Dismissal for All



### **Thursday, August 14**

Full day of school for all students  
No Early or Later Gators

### **Friday, August 15**

Full day of school for all students  
No Early or Later Gators



### **Monday, August 18**

First day of Early and Later Gators



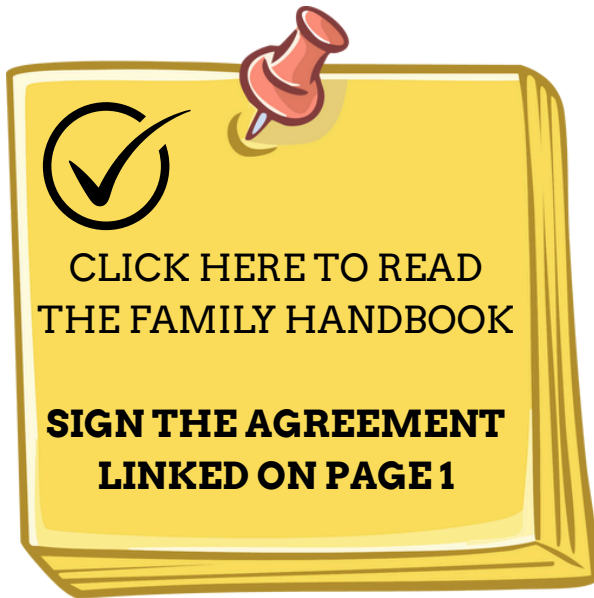
Click here to access  
our Google Calendar!



Click Here  
to see the  
August  
Lunch  
Menu!

# - To do -

The items on this page are required to be completed for each student **BEFORE** the first day of school





# NURSE'S NOTES

MELISSA CASTILLO,  
SCHOOL NURSE

[mcastillo@hnjschool.org](mailto:mcastillo@hnjschool.org)

Welcome to Healthy Gator's News for the 2025-2026 School Year!

Hi, my name is **Nurse Melissa**, and I will be the NEW school nurse here at HNJ. I am here to help keep our students safe by providing both first aid and triage care. I am also able to provide daily medications, booster doses, and any other interventions needed for those students with medical needs. I am the main point of contact for all health and medical information, and you can email me any time at [mcastillo@hnjschool.org](mailto:mcastillo@hnjschool.org). Nurse Caroline and Nurse Abby will still be around to help me out when needed. I know it is going to be a great school year and I am looking forward to meeting you all.

Before the start of school, all Gators must:

- Complete this HNJ Medical Form on the previous page (fill out one form for each student) by **Tuesday, August 5th**.
- Email Nurse Melissa a copy of each student's immunization record by **Friday, August 15th**.
- Make sure each student's contact information is up to date in the Family Portal.
  - Current emergency contact names and numbers are necessary to have on file throughout the school year in case of an emergency or illness.
  - If a contact, phone number, or address changes throughout the middle of the year please remember to update this information accordingly.

Health Reminders:

- If your child is diagnosed with a communicable illness or disease during the school year, you must email Nurse Melissa in order to notify the correct homerooms and classrooms of the case through email.
- These illnesses include: lice, pinworm and ringworm, hand foot and mouth, impetigo, scabies, rotavirus, norovirus, and RSV.

\* Please review the Health and Safety Policies Section of the Student/ Family Handbook [here](#) to further familiarize yourself with our policies regarding illness, medications, and immunizations for the school year.

Remember: MEDICATIONS (BOTH OVER-THE-COUNTER AND PRESCRIPTION) REQUIRE FORMS TO BE COMPLETED FOR ADMINISTRATION AT SCHOOL BY THE SCHOOL NURSE. MEDICATIONS ARE NEVER TO BE SENT IN A STUDENT'S BACKPACK. THEY MUST BE DROPPED OFF TO THE FRONT OFFICE AND CHECKED OFF BY THE NURSE.

I am excited to be a member of the GATOR community and for this new school year! It is my pleasure as the school nurse to care for all of our HNJ Gators and keep them healthy and well!



# Who's Who?

## School Leadership



**Principal**  
**Kirsch J. Williams**

- Head of School
- Jesuit Formation/Spiritual Leader
- Culture/Relationships
- Instructional Leader
- Operational Vitality
- Community Relations
- Academic Vision and Goals
- Capital Improvements
- Staffing



**Assistant  
Principal**  
**Brianna Begault**

- Assistant Head of School
- Student Formation
  - Student Values
  - Behavior Expectations
  - Behavior Goals & Plans
  - Discipline Committee Coordinator
- Student Support Team
  - School Counselor
  - Interventionists
  - Outside Support



**Assistant  
Principal of  
Academics**  
**Christina Calderaro**

- Academics
- Teacher Support
- Classroom Support
- Curriculum
- Academic Data
- Gradebook/Report Cards
- Testing Coordinator
- High School Applications



**Director of  
Student Affairs  
and Outreach**  
**Kaitlin Southwick**

- Admissions
- Student Life Coordinator
- Special Schedules/Events
- Loyola Liaison
- Communications and Marketing



**Director of  
Advancement and  
Alumni Relations**  
**Amy Nolan**

- Capital Campaign
- Communications Strategy
- Media Relations
- School Development
- Grant Writing
- Donor Relations & Database
- Fundraising Events
- Parish Communications
- Alumni Relations
- Grand Gators Liaison

# Who's Who?

## Department Leadership



### Athletic Director

Langston Terrel  
"Coach T"



### Director of Spiritual Life

Patti Waddell



### Lead School Nurse

Melissa Castillo



### Director of Technology

Sammy Merritt



### Director of Early Childhood

Maya Scheuermann



### Little Gators Director

Stephanie Rios



### Director of Facilities and Capital Improvements

Jeremiah Smith

# Introducing Our New Faculty!



**Leslie Clanton**  
Middle School  
Learning Specialist



**Melissa Castillo**  
Lead School Nurse



**Izzy Copes**  
PK-4 Co-Teacher  
(PK4-F)



**Ashleigh Jambon**  
4th Grade Science and  
Social Studies Teacher  
(4J)



**Michael Lehmann**  
“Coach Mike”  
PE Teacher



**Erin McCleery**  
PK-4 Co-Teacher  
(PK4-S)



**Caelan O'Connor**  
6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Science Teacher  
(6O)



**Lizzie Rulh**  
PK-3 Co-Teacher  
(PK3-A)



**Patti Waddell**  
Director of Spiritual Life  
6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Religion Teacher



**Kaylei Wilcox**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Math and  
Science Teacher  
(3W)

Plus! Look who's back but in  
new lead roles this year!



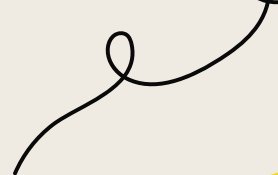
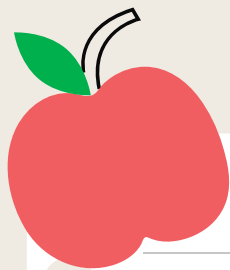
**Melanie Corass**  
1<sup>st</sup> Grade Lead Teacher  
(1C)



**Rose LaBay**  
Kindergarten Lead  
Teacher  
(KL)



**Alexie Sanchez**  
PK-4 Lead Teacher  
(PK4-S)



**HOLY NAME OF  
JESUS SCHOOL**  
A LOYOLA UNIVERSITY PARTNER

HNJ School Invites You To Our Annual

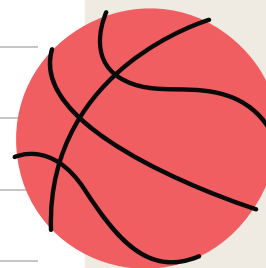
# MEET AND GREET

August 11, 2025

Families are invited to bring  
their students to find their  
classrooms and meet their  
teachers before school starts!

4:30 -  
6:30 PM

Don't miss the tables in the basement  
where you can speak to members of the  
PTC and Grandparent's Club to find out  
how you can get involved this school year!







We're thrilled to return to Holy Name of Jesus School for another amazing year! Messina's Catering is proud to once again partner with the school to provide a delicious and nutritious lunch program your students will love.

## WHAT'S ON THE MENU?

Our school lunch program features a variety of meal options to keep your child excited about lunchtime, including:

HOT LUNCH

HANDHELD LUNCH

FRESH SALAD

HAMBURGER

CHEESEBURGER

## PRICING

PK3 - K: \$5.75/ meal

1<sup>st</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> Grade: \$6.25/meal (*larger portion*)

All meals include a choice of  
white milk or chocolate milk.

Hot, Handheld, Cheeseburger, and Hamburger Lunches include daily sides of: Vegetable, Starch or Fruit/ Dessert

### 1ST SEMESTER PAYMENT:

PK3 - Kindergarten: \$465.75

1st - 7th Grade: \$506.25

### FULL YEAR PAYMENT:

PK3 - Kindergarten: \$977.50

1st - 7th Grade: \$1,062.50

Take Advantage of Our Convenient Pre-Payment Options! Semester or full-year payments must be made by check only and are due by August 15. Please make checks payable to Messina's Catering & Events and include your child's name and grade in the memo line.

For daily lunch purchases, please create an account through MySchoolBucks at [myschoolbucks.com](https://myschoolbucks.com). Instructions to follow soon.



# Thank You

## **MEN'S CLUB!**

HNJ School wants to take a moment to thank our Men's Club for their incredible work this summer!

The members of the Men's Club painted the entry-way at the red canopy door and helped move many boxes of school supplies to their classrooms so they were ready to go for our teachers this week.

We are so thankful to have such a supportive group of dads!





# Holy Name of Jesus School

## UNIFORM GUIDELINES

### LITTLE GATORS GIRLS

- Navy Land's End polo dress with embroidered LG logo
- Navy Land's End jumper with embroidered LG logo
- Bloomers to be worn under dresses (any brand)
- Peter Pan collar with embroidered Little Gator logo.
- Any red, navy, or blue solid or gingham shorts, leggings, or bloomers.
- White socks or leggings
- Velcro-only sneakers in white, red, black, or navy.

### LITTLE GATORS BOYS

- Land's End T-shirt with embroidered Little Gator logo
- Little Gators onesie purchased through HNJ Front Office.
- Any red, navy, or blue solid or gingham shorts or pants
- White socks
- Velcro-only sneakers in white, red, black, or navy.

### PK3-KINDER GIRLS

- Red Young Fashions gingham dress and bloomers with logo on collar
- Optional initial embroidery on opposite collar)
- HNJ Socks



### PK3-KINDER BOYS

- Khaki Land's End shorts or pants
- Red Land's End t-shirt with embroidered logo
- HNJ Socks



### 1ST-4TH GRADE GIRLS

- Land's End plaid skirt, skort, or jumper
- Land's End cotton Peter Pan collar shirt with embroidered logo (long or short sleeve)
- HNJ Socks
- PE Shorts from SquadLocker are required under girls' skirts. **Any** style of shorts may be purchased from the shop, with **any** of our HNJ logos applied. Shorts without a logo are not allowed.



### 1ST-7TH GRADE BOYS

- Khaki Land's End shorts or pants
- White Land's End oxford shirt (short or long sleeve) with embroidered logo
- HNJ Socks
- Black or brown belt



### OUTERWEAR

Student's name is required to be embroidered on all outerwear pieces and tote bags. Name embroidery can be done by Land's End or by another vendor. Logo embroidery must be done by Land's End. All Land's End outerwear and tote bags have the option to add the Classic HNJ logo or the Little Gators logo.

- Red button-down cardigan with embroidered logo
- Red V-neck pullover cardigan with embroidered logo
- Navy ¾ zip sweatshirt with embroidered logo
- Navy full zip fleece with embroidered logo
- Little Gators and Early Childhood red tote bags with embroidered logo

HNJ Spirit Shop items can be purchased periodically throughout the school year.

**Note: Spirit Shop sweatshirts and hoodies may not be worn at Masses, picture days, field trips, and special events determined by the school. Only Land's End outerwear is allowed on these days.**

### MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS

- Land's End plaid skirt or skirt
- White Land's End oxford shirt with embroidered logo (long or short sleeve)
- HNJ Socks
- PE Shorts from SquadLocker are required under girls' skirts. **Any** style of shorts may be purchased from the shop, with **any** of our HNJ logos applied. Shorts without a logo are not allowed.



### SHOES

- Solid white or solid black all-leather, low-top athletic tennis shoes are required.
- Students who are unable to tie their shoes must wear a shoe with a velcro closure.
- The entire shoe must be one solid color, including the sole.



Holy Name of Jesus uniforms are available as follows:

- Most uniform pieces are ordered online at the Land's End website using their school finder.
- School socks are purchased through the HNJ Front Office using your FACTS account.
- Early Childhood Girls' dresses are purchased through Young Fashions.
- 1st-7th Grade girls PE shorts are purchased through SquadLocker

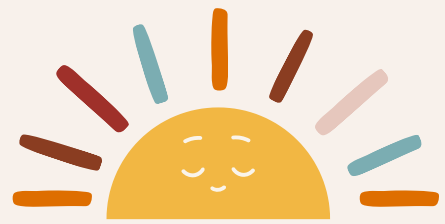
**Uniform pieces previously purchased from Skobel's may be worn for the 2025-2026 school year.**

To wonder... to achieve... to make a difference... together!



# EARLY CHILDHOOD

# SCHOOL READINESS SUMMER 2025



## Early Childhood Families

As summer gets closer, we want to take a moment to say thank you for an amazing school year. It's been such a joy to watch your child learn, grow, and shine!

☀ Summer is a Time to:

- Slow down
- Enjoy special family moments
- Keep little minds learning through play and everyday fun

Whether you're reading a bedtime story, going for a walk, or building with blocks, you are helping your child grow in big ways.

## Readiness Skills Checklist

We're excited to share a simple, helpful tool with you. It shows the skills we focus on in class and gives you easy ideas to support your child at home.

Here's a peek at what's inside:

🧼 **Self-Care Skills:** getting dressed, using the bathroom, and taking care of personal belongings

🗣️ **Language & Communication:** Listening, asking for help, and following directions

🧠 **Thinking & Learning Skills:** Knowing colors, counting, sorting, and solving small problems

🏃 **Movement & Motor Skills:** Running, jumping, using scissors, and drawing shapes



## Little Moments Make a Big Difference!

You don't need a formal lesson plan, just everyday fun!

Try things like:

- Letting your child help set the table
- Practicing buttons and zippers
- Making up silly stories together
- Playing "I Spy" in the car or grocery store

## Daily Spiritual Practices

Practicing faith at this young age helps your child grow in love, kindness, and a sense of God's presence in everyday life.

- **Morning Prayer Routine:** Begin each day with a short prayer (e.g., "Good morning, God!" or a Hail Mary).
- **Prayer Before Meals:** Teach a simple version of grace before meals.
- **End-of-Day Blessing:** A short reflection or "Thank you, God" prayer or "Now I lay me down to sleep" before bed.

## We Appreciate You!

Thank you for all the love, care, and encouragement you give your child. We can't wait to welcome them back, ready to learn, laugh, and explore!

Wishing you a joyful, restful summer,

Your Early Childhood Team at Holy Name



# **EARLY CHILDHOOD READINESS CHECKLISTS**

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**RISING PK-3  
CLICK HERE**

A red notepad with a white tab at the top and a folded bottom-right corner.

**RISING PK-4  
CLICK HERE**

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**RISING  
KINDERGARTEN  
CLICK HERE**

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**HAVE A GREAT  
SUMMER!**

# 1<sup>ST</sup> - 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE



## SUMMER PACKETS

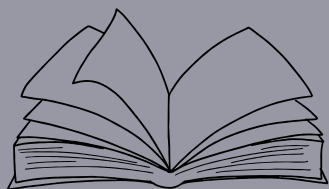
SUMMER  
2025

As we prepare for the upcoming 2025–2026 school year, we want to share important information regarding required summer assignments for students entering 1st through 7th grade.

To support your child's continued growth in reading and math, each student will be expected to complete the following over the summer:

### Summer Reading – REQUIRED

- Each grade level has selected a required book or novel. (Rising 1st should choose a book to read each night.)
- Students must complete the accompanying assignment, which will be used for a formative assessment grade in the 1st Trimester.
- Middle school students who may qualify for advanced ELA will be assigned additional summer work at the beginning of July.



### Summer Math – REQUIRED

- Each student will complete a math review packet based on content from the current school year.
- All students must show their work on the packet to receive full credit.
- This assignment will also be used as a formative assessment grade in the 1st Trimester.
- Middle school students who may qualify for advanced Math will be assigned additional summer work at the beginning of July.

### DUE DATE

- All summer assignments—both reading and math—are due on Monday, August 18, 2025.
- Please ensure your child brings completed work with them on the first Monday of school.
- Late assignments will receive a grade of 50 and must still be completed.



### ADDITIONAL NOTES

- All assignments will be emailed to families and posted on the school website here.
- Printed copies will not be sent home, but families may pick up a printed version from the school office if needed.
- If you choose, i-Ready is still available this summer for returning students.

# 1<sup>ST</sup> - 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE SUMMER PACKETS

CLICK THE READING AND MATH PACKET FOR THE GRADE YOUR CHILD WILL BE IN FOR  
THE 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR

1<sup>ST</sup> GRADE READING

2<sup>ND</sup> GRADE READING

3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE READING

1<sup>ST</sup> GRADE MATH

2<sup>ND</sup> GRADE MATH

3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE MATH

4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE READING

5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE READING

6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE READING

4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE MATH

5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE MATH

6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE MATH

7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE READING

8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE READING

7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE MATH

8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE MATH



WE APPRECIATE YOUR PARTNERSHIP IN HELPING YOUR CHILD STAY ENGAGED AND PREPARED OVER THE SUMMER. IF  
YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR NEED SUPPORT ACCESSING THE MATERIALS, PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO REACH OUT.

WARM REGARDS,  
KIRSCH WILLIAMS, PRINCIPAL



# Save the Date

HNJ GRANDPARENTS AND  
GRAND-FRIENDS WEEK 2025

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

*Family Mass, 10:30 am at HNJ Church*

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

*PK3 and 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Lunch with Grandparents*

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

*PK4 and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Lunch with Grandparents*

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

*K and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Lunch with Grandparents*

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

*1<sup>st</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Lunch with Grandparents*

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

*2<sup>nd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Lunch with Grandparents*

*Grandparents Movie Night, 6:00 PM*

MORE DETAILS TO FOLLOW





# HOLY NAME OF JESUS SCHOOL

A LOYOLA UNIVERSITY PARTNER

## Mission

**Holy Name of Jesus School is an inclusive community dedicated to teaching children confidence, compassion, and integrity while staying committed to academic excellence and the Catholic faith.**

## Core Beliefs

- Find God in everyone and everything
- Strive for personal excellence
- Are boys and girls for others
- Open eyes with faith, open ears with truth, and open hearts with love

## Academic Vision

Holy Name of Jesus School fosters academic excellence in an inclusive environment where our community celebrates and supports all members through student development, innovation, and social justice.

**Motto:** To wonder, to achieve, to make a difference, together

**Decisions:** Student-centered

In implementing this academic vision, Holy Name of Jesus School is committed to:

**2025-2026**

### GOAL #1

Empower Student  
Agency through  
Data-Driven  
Reflection

**2025-2026**

### GOAL #2

Cultivate  
Responsible, Ethical  
Learners in a  
Digital World

**2025-2026**

### GOAL #3

Build on Home-School  
Partnerships Rooted  
in Cultural  
Celebration

**Learn more about Holy Name of Jesus School**

**[www.hnjschool.org](http://www.hnjschool.org)**

**504-861-1466**

**To wonder... to achieve... to make a difference... together!**

