



This letter was sent via email on Friday, 8/4/2023, to Horizon (grades 3-4) families.

Dear Horizon families,

We hope that everyone is enjoying the last few weeks of summer break! We look forward to a great year in Horizon. We love working with this age group and enjoy watching students grow as learners.

We would like to tell you a bit about ourselves. Mary Ellen joined us from Charleston SC, where she taught at Highlands Latin School after completing her undergraduate in Music Composition and Classics. She is a fan of fantastical stories on screen and page (and also in games) and sometimes tries to write them as well. She is excited to be a part of the team! Kathy is a recent graduate from Guilford College where she studied Early Education. Last year she was a lead teacher at Childcare Network. Kathy loves gardening and cooking for her loved ones. Christian returns to the Horizon team this year. She loves to share her love for humor with children, making learning a fun and safe environment. Christian also enjoys working with kids outside the classroom as she coaches volleyball year round, helping them to develop connections and their love for the sport. In addition to the Horizon teaching team, we will work closely with our Reading and Math Specialists. Our students will use all three Horizon classroom spaces (Sky Classroom, Clouds Classroom, and Horizon Library).

Horizon Summer Assignment

As a reminder, we ask that when your child returns to school, they come prepared to discuss one of the chapter books they recently read and loved (or didn't like - it happens). We encourage them to select a book from one of the links included in the [summer reading letter](#) sent in June. The links are intended to be helpful resources to discover a variety of diverse reading options, but students are not required to read a book from one of these links.

Please have your child bring the book that they read to school (if they read a book in a digital form, they can bring in a picture of the cover). They should be ready to discuss the characters, setting, action, theme, or message from the book. If they chose non-fiction, they should be able to discuss some main ideas from the book as well as things learned and/or questions they still have about the topic. We will have small "book discussions" the first week of school. Sharing about summer reading choices is a great way for students to discover common reading interests and new books they want to try.

Contact Groups

If you have any information or questions that may help to ensure a successful start to the school year for your child, please feel free to email your child's contact teacher. In addition, you will have an opportunity to share the Hopes and Dreams that you have for your child's school year with their contact teacher at our conferences held on Friday, September 1. Look for a Sign-Up Genius to be emailed prior to the start of school from your child's contact teacher. Your child's contact teacher will be meeting and communicating with you throughout the year.

For the list of contact groups, please see the Welcome Letter email, sent on 8/4/23 from Carolyn Howes, Head of Lower School, chowes@ngfs.org

Required School Supplies

Please bring the listed supplies to Classroom Welcome Night or on the first day of school. All other student supplies will be provided.

- One 3-ring (1-1 ½ inch wide) binder for unit study (returning 4th graders can reuse a binder from last year if it is in good condition)
- Any *necessary* alternative writing utensils (mechanical pencils, etc.)
- A labeled refillable water bottle with spill-proof cap (no glass); bring the bottle daily
- Lunch box
- One 9x12 spiral-bound sketchbook for Art class

These items are the only individual materials needed. Please do not bring in any additional supplies or belongings without permission.

Wish List Items

In addition to the items on the required supply list, if you have any of the following items on hand that you can spare for the Horizon classrooms, we would greatly appreciate them. Thank you!

- Plain name tag stickers
- Band Aids (various sizes)
- Quart sized Ziploc bags

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures:

- You will be given a name card to display on your car window visor. Please be sure to clearly display this card on the visor in the morning and afternoon; we appreciate your assistance in helping drop-off and pick-up run smoothly and efficiently.
- Drop-off begins at 7:30 a.m. for Extended Care and 8 a.m. for the regular school day and continues until 8:25 a.m. Please plan to arrive during this window of time.
- At arrival, staff will direct you through the carpool line to drop off your child. Students will use the sidewalk to walk to their classroom and will be assisted by staff. At arrival, we ask our students to use the Galaxy stairwell, next to the main office, which will be clearly marked.
- If your child arrives late, please bring your child to the office and sign them in. An adult needs to accompany your child to the office. Your child will be escorted by staff to their classroom.
- Dismissal is at 3:10 p.m. Staff will direct parents/guardians through the carpool line, and teachers will bring students to the carpool line. If someone other than the parent/guardian is picking up, please make sure the person you send is on your authorized pick-up list in ParentsWeb (FACTS Family Portal). Instruct them to have identification with them; staff will check the ID of anyone unknown to them. (Please note that changes in ParentsWeb may take up to 48 hours to update.) Students who are not picked up by 3:20 will go to Extended Care.
- If you must pick your child up before school is over, please go to the office to sign your child out. If early pick-up is for a scheduled appointment, please coordinate with your student's teacher in advance so they will have their belongings packed and ready to go at the designated time. If someone other than the parent/guardian is picking up early, please make sure the person you send is on your authorized pick up list in ParentsWeb.

- Please email your student's contact teacher if they will be absent. If an extended absence from school is necessary, prior permission (at least a week in advance) must be obtained from the Division Head so that arrangements can be made for work. After contacting the Division Head concerning a protracted absence, parents/guardians of students in K-6th grades should contact teachers for assignments.

Extended Care (see [Extended Care page](#) for information)

- Morning care will be provided from 7:30-8 a.m.
- Afternoon extended care runs until 6 p.m.

Snack and Lunch

- Each day your child will need a lunch box containing a snack, lunch, and drinks (including a refillable water bottle with a spill-proof cap).
- **Sodas and candy are not allowed.**
- We cannot refrigerate or heat items. Please use ice packs for cold items and a thermos for warm items.
- There is an option to order hot lunch through My Hot Lunchbox; see [Back to School page](#) for more information and directions for ordering.
- Please remember to send a snack and water daily, even when ordering hot lunch.
- **Horizon is a nut-free level.** Please do not send your child in with peanut or nut butter, nuts, or foods, such as granola bars, containing nuts. Sun Butter is a great alternative to peanut butter.

Important Upcoming Dates

- Monday, August 21 - Classroom Welcome Night, 6 p.m.
- Wednesday, August 23 - First Day of School
- Friday, September 1 - Hopes and Dreams Conferences; no school, Extended Care is offered
- Monday, September 4 - Labor Day; no school, Extended Care is closed
- Tuesday, September 12 - Lower School Parent Night, including a presentation about the Horizon curriculum, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Please let us know if you have any questions. Mary Ellen and Kathy do not yet have access to school email, but you can send any early communications to Christian or to Carolyn, Head of Lower School (chowes@ngfs.org). We are looking forward to seeing everyone soon!

In peace,
Christian, Mary Ellen, and Kathy
Horizon Teaching Team

Christian (she,her), critter@ngfs.org
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