



Dear Horizon (grades 3-4) families,

We hope that everyone has had a relaxing summer and that you are looking forward to returning as much as we are. Third and fourth grade is a special time of discovery, learning, and belonging within the group, as well as further developing the self, and we look forward to nurturing these young learners to feel safe, welcome, and loved as they navigate social dynamics, push themselves academically, and find a little bit more of themselves along the way.

We would like to start by telling you a bit about ourselves. Ana is excited to be returning for her second year at New Garden Friends in the Horizon class. Ana graduated from Guilford College in 2020 and began teaching Horizon in January of 2021. During this time, she was accepted to graduate school at Wake Forest University and began attending in August of that year. Ana was so excited to rejoin the team last January while finishing her masters program in Divinity. Ana works collaboratively to create a classroom where each child's voice is heard and uplifted while providing a stable environment that fosters mental, emotional, and social growth. She is excited to continue to work with Horizon students to co-create a community where they feel safe to express themselves as well as meet established academic goals. In her spare time, Ana enjoys exploring local coffee shops, eating lots of ice cream, and spending time with her partner and their dog.

Kaysha made a mid-year transition to New Garden Friends School from six years of public school education experience and is eagerly anticipating her first full year with NGFS. Kaysha brings an enthusiastic presence to the classroom by infusing her lessons with personality and energy that engage her students. She believes that learning should be an exciting journey and is dedicated to creating an environment where every student feels motivated and valued. Outside of the classroom, Kaysha is a master's student at North Carolina A&T State University where she is studying School Counseling. She has a passion for live music, sports, concerts, and dancing. She also enjoys game nights with friends and cherishing moments with her family.

Lanae is thrilled to be returning for their second full year at New Garden Friends, this year by way of Horizon. Previously in Sunrise (K) for a year and a half, they deeply enjoyed getting to build relationships with their students and co-teacher, Cara, and teaching new curriculum to eager new learners. Prior to New Garden, Lanae taught in Montessori private school for 4 years and is passionate about giving children the tools to discover their potential and thrive in their independence, while creating the safe space necessary for them to discover who they are. Parent to two cats, a huge and contented frog, and a lot of house plants, Lanae finds peace in caretaking and having their hands in dirt, as well as being in nature, playing board/video games, or reading non-stop. They are the Wellness Coordinator for their roller derby team and love to skate more than most things, enjoy walks, and going to shows or on adventures with their partner.

In addition to the Horizon teaching team, we will work closely with our Reading Specialists, Leslie and Christine and as well as our Math Specialists, Susan and Tracey. We are fortunate to also have Marci, our Learning Specialist, and Jen, our school counselor to provide resources and support for our students.

[Click here](#) for a note from Kim Freedman, Head of School, and Genny Smith, Head of Lower School.

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](#) that was 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

While our students use all three Horizon classroom spaces (Sky Classroom, Clouds Classroom, and Horizon Library), Horizon is divided into teacher contact groups, or homerooms, so each student gets to build close relationships and security with one teacher, as well as have a space to ground each morning with a smaller group of peers. For parents/guardians, your child's contact teacher will be your primary contact for communicating joys or concerns throughout the school year and will be the teacher you meet with for any conferences we have; see the Welcome Letter email, sent on August 9, for the Horizon contact groups. If you have any questions or just want to check in ahead of time to say hello, please feel free to email your child's contact teacher. In addition, you will soon receive an email with a Sign-Up Genius link from your child's contact teacher inviting you to our Hopes and Dreams conferences on Friday, August 30. This is an opportunity to share your hopes and dreams for your child so that we may best support them and partner with you for a successful school year.

Required School Supplies

Please bring these supplies to Classroom Welcome Night (Aug. 19) or on the first day of school (Aug. 21). All other student supplies will be provided.

- ☐ One 3-ring 1 ½ or 2 inch wide binder (We will provide tab dividers)
- ☐ A labeled refillable water bottle with spill-proof cap (no glass); bring the bottle daily
- ☐ Lunch box
- ☐ *For Art class:* one 9x12 spiral-bound sketchbook

These items are the only individual materials needed; all other classroom supplies will be provided. 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!

- ☐ Tissues
- ☐ Baby wipes (water-based for sensitive skin)
- ☐ Refillable hand sanitizer (we would love to be able to refill the one we have and cut down on plastic)
- ☐ [Healthy snacks](#) to share (in case of emergency)

Personal Possessions at School

We want to create a distraction-free learning environment for everyone and understand that there are various tools that support students in their learning. Fidgets and stuffies will be allowed as needed and must be used appropriately.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

- You will be given a name card to hang to display on your car visor. Please be sure to display the name card 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 7:45 a.m. for the regular school day. The school day begins at 8 a.m.
- 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. We ask our students to use the Galaxy (5th-6th) stairwell, next to the main office, to go to their classroom. A staff member will be there during arrival to let them into the building.
- 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 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.)
- 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 your child 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 7:30-7:45 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.

Allergy Information: Any classroom food allergy restrictions will be announced before school begins.

Important Dates:

- Monday, August 19 - Classroom Welcome Night (preschool-6th), 6-7 p.m.
- Wednesday, August 21 - First day of school
- Thursday, August 22 - New Parent Orientation (preschool-6th), 8-9 a.m.
- Friday, August 30 - half-day, Horizon dismisses at 12:15 p.m.; Hopes and Dreams Conferences in the afternoon
- Monday, September 2 - Labor Day, School closed
- Tuesday, September 10 - Lower School (preschool-6th) Parent Night, 6-7-30 p.m.
Begins with presentation in the Student Activity Center at 6 p.m. followed by class-level curriculum presentations in the classrooms.

Ana (she/her), ahuckins@ngfs.org

Kaysha (she/her), kalderman@ngfs.org

Lanae (they/them), Imedley@ngfs.org