

We Are Jasper

FUTURE READY

How GJCS Leads With AI in Education

NURTURING YOUNG MINDS

The Lasting Impact of Early Learning

REGISTRATION

Information for
Pre-Kindergarten
and Kindergarten

Volume 6
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FUTURE READY: HOW GJCS LEADS WITH AI IN EDUCATION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is providing an unprecedented opportunity to redefine and enhance education at Greater Jasper Consolidated Schools. At GJCS, we view this technology not as a passing trend, but as a powerful, transformative tool. Our approach has been strategic, ethical, and focused entirely on enhancing student learning and staff professional growth and efficiency. We are committed to fostering a culture of innovation that places student success and ethical AI use at the very core of this digital shift.

Our foundational AI journey began in the Spring of 2024. Superintendent Dr. Tracy Lorey recognized the critical need for dedicated leadership and created a new Technology Integration Specialist (TIS) position to develop our official AI framework and ethical use strategy for staff and students. This was our vital first step: establishing clear structure and guidance. Simultaneously, we created the Academic Integrity Guidelines for AI, a policy that gives our community transparent guidelines for the responsible use of all AI tools within GJCS.

The Summer of 2024 involved a rigorous evaluation of educational AI platforms. Our TIS, Mr. Pryor, assessed top market contenders, including SchoolAI, Magic School, Khanmigo, and Brisk. We selected SchoolAI as our primary platform due to its student-centered focus and its unique ability to allow teachers to create specialized, custom chatbots for classroom and curriculum objectives. This year, we also added Google's Gemini for Education Workspace, NotebookLM, and Snorkl. Gemini is our suggested large language model because of its vast security protocols and the safe environment it provides when students log in with their school accounts. NotebookLM takes any uploaded documents and creates learning materials only from those documents to accommodate multiple learning styles. Snorkl is a powerful formative assessment tool that gives teachers and students immediate feedback and gives insights on how to help each individual student.

FUTURE READY CONT.

Throughout the 2024/2025 school year, we focused heavily on Professional Development (PD) for staff. Mr. Pryor attended several conferences across the state, collaborating with leading national experts on AI education frameworks and policies. Within GJCS, we provided monthly PD opportunities at every building, offering practical, grade-level-specific examples of how AI can assist educators. We also hosted two expert educators, Mr. and Mrs. Baughman, whose school corporation successfully adopted AI, to share their compelling examples of enhanced learning.

The momentum continued into the 2025/2026 school year, where we completed our comprehensive AI framework (understanding it must be ever-evolving). This year, we launched the GJCS Certified AI Educator Initiative, a rigorous, four-tiered certification program. This program is designed to build deep competence in AI application, starting with foundational AI Literacy and culminating in creating individualized student action plans using data from our approved tools. This commitment ensures our educators are expertly prepared to leverage these new capabilities.

The urgency of this initiative was highlighted by a student survey confirming that over half of our high school population was already independently using Large Language Models (LLMs), such as ChatGPT, for school assignments. Prohibiting the technology is simply ineffective. Our clear mandate is to proactively teach responsible AI use and provide safe, approved platforms to replace unsanctioned tools. This ensures academic honesty is maintained while preparing students for a future where AI fluency is paramount.

To directly address this need, we launched comprehensive Student AI Literacy training. Mr. Pryor has presented to every high school student, emphasizing real-world examples of harmful AI misuse and highlighting the safe, age-appropriate AI tools available to them. The same training was presented to Jasper Middle School students during the second quarter. We are committed to providing safe, age-appropriate AI tools for all students and staff and will continue to educate our community on this rapidly changing landscape.

FUTURE READY CONT.

Dr. Tracy Lorey, GJCS Superintendent, commented, "We are preparing our students for a world where AI fluency will be essential. By providing safe, guided access to these tools, we're not only upholding academic honesty, but ensuring that every child, regardless of background, has the opportunity to learn, create, and succeed."

This integration is driven by our commitment to equity. By providing approved AI assistants within the school environment, we are offering readily available, personalized learning support to every student. This strategy is designed to level the playing field for those who may not have access to academic assistance at home. We support this further through Community Outreach, sharing AI literacy information for parents through newsletters and our dedicated AI Information webpage located on our GJCS website under the academics tab. We invite all parents and community members to explore these resources and join us in shaping a future where technology empowers all students to thrive.



NURTURING YOUNG MINDS: THE LASTING IMPACT OF EARLY LEARNING

The early years of a child's life are a critical period for brain development, as most neural connections are formed during this time. High-quality early childhood education has a profound influence on cognitive, social, and emotional growth. Through structured



Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten programs, children are exposed to environments that nurture brain development, language skills, and emotional intelligence, laying the foundation for lifelong learning.

Early learning also offers essential opportunities for socialization. Children interact with peers and adults, gaining the ability to manage emotions, build relationships, and develop empathy. Structured routines and hands-on experiences help children transition smoothly into formal schooling, fostering a love for learning and providing a positive first impression of the school environment.



Educators play a vital role in identifying developmental delays and supporting early intervention, which can greatly improve children's long-term outcomes. Access to quality early education helps close achievement gaps and offers a more equitable start for all children, regardless of background.

Family engagement, through activities like reading, conversation, music, and play, further reinforces skills learned at school and supports holistic development.

Investing in early childhood education is an investment in the future, leading to higher academic achievement, better health, and improved employment prospects later in life. By nurturing young minds during these formative years, schools and families set children on a path to success and well-being.

2026-2027 KINDERGARTEN AND PREKINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Kindergarten Registration for the 2026–2027 school year will open on January 12, 2026. To register, first click the SignUp Genius link to choose a time to attend In–Person Registration on February 4. Then, complete the PowerSchool link to be enrolled into our database system. Students must be 5 years old by August 1, 2026. Links will become available on January 12 and can be found on our website and social media pages.

PreKindergarten Registration will open on Tuesday, January 13, 2026. Registration will take place through a JotForm that will become available on January 13 at 6pm. A link to the form can be found on our website and social media pages. Students must be 4 years old by August 1, 2026. The cost is \$100 per month.

With questions, contact Jasper Elementary (812–556–3600) or Ireland Elementary School (812–482–7751).



El plazo de inscripciones para kínder del año escolar 2026–2027 empezará el 12 de enero de 2026. Para inscribirse, primero haga clic en el enlace de SignUp Genius para elegir una hora para asistir a la inscripción presencial el 4 de febrero. Después, complete el enlace de PowerSchool para inscribirse en nuestra base de datos. Los estudiantes deben tener 5 años cumplidos antes del 1 de agosto de 2026. Los enlaces estarán disponibles el 12 de enero y los podrá encontrar en nuestro sitio web y redes sociales.

El plazo de inscripciones para preescolar empezará el martes 13 de enero de 2026. Las inscripciones se realizarán a través de un formulario JotForm, disponible a partir del 13 de enero a las 6:00pm. Podrá encontrar el enlace al formulario en nuestro sitio web y redes sociales. Los estudiantes deben haber cumplido 4 años antes del 1 de agosto de 2026. El costo es de \$100 al mes.

Si tiene preguntas, comuníquese con la escuela Jasper Elementary (812–556–3600) o Ireland Elementary (812–482–7751).

PORTRAIT OF A WILDCAT

Portrait of a Wildcat: Adaysha Smiley

Current JHS Student

Adaysha Smiley will graduate from Jasper High School in 2026. Before JHS, she attended Fifth Street Elementary, Tenth Street Elementary and Jasper Middle School. Her biggest highlight has been being able to explore many different opportunities that will all benefit her in her future. Adaysha is currently on the Teaching graduation pathway and feels that GJCS offers so many different classes and programs that have given her the opportunity to see and explore different options for her future. She has been able to find what she wants to do for the rest of her life and has had classes to prepare her for anything. Following graduation, she plans to attend a four year college, play tennis, and double major in early childhood education and special education.

"It's great to be a Wildcat because we put 110% into anything and everything we do, and we are given so many opportunities and chances to become the best version of ourselves!"

Portrait of a Wildcat: Andrea Rillo

Jasper High School Class of 2017

Andrea Rillo graduated from Jasper High School in 2017. She also attended Jasper Middle School. Andrea is currently living her dream in New York City as the assistant to bestselling author Adriana Trigiani and producer of the "You Are What You Read" podcast. Andrea loves her job, especially since she has the opportunity to work for her favorite author, a position she's held for six years.

Andrea credits her time at GJCS, especially her Radio/TV classes, for laying a strong foundation in audio and video production. These skills prepared her for journalism school at Mizzou and continue to serve her well as a podcast producer. Her English classes at JHS also set her up for success, as she often edits Adriana's novels as part of her job.

Advice for Current GJCS Students: "Create your own opportunities! I have my current job because I wrote a fan letter to my favorite author. You can have your dream job if you get creative and put yourself out there."

Fun Fact: The photo is of Andrea and her boss, Adriana Trigiani, from their recent appearance on Good Morning America to promote Adriana's latest New York Times best selling novel, The View from Lake Como.

"It's great to be a Wildcat because the values from a Jasper education stay with you for a lifetime."

PORTRAIT OF A WILDCAT

Adaysha Smiley
Jasper High School, Class of 2026
Teaching Pathway
Also attended Jasper Middle School,
Fifth Street and Tenth Street



"It's great to be a Wildcat because we put 110% into anything and everything we do, and we are given so many opportunities and chances to become the best version of ourselves!"

PORTRAIT OF A WILDCAT

Andrea Rillo
Jasper High School, Class of 2017
Attended Jasper Middle School
Assistant for author Adriana
Trigiani and podcast producer



"It's Great to be a Wildcat because the values from a Jasper education stay with you for a lifetime."

INTERACT CLUB

at Jasper High School

The Jasper High School Interact Club, partnered with the Dubois County Rotary Club, continues to strengthen its role as a student-led force for community service and leadership development.

Leadership growth is central to the club's mission. Three students—Kaia Hamlin, Bairon Arroyo Ramos, and Khloe Byrd—were invited to attend the RYLA leadership camp, representing Jasper High School at the regional program.

FIRST SEMESTER

This fall, members organized a food drive supporting The Little Pantry at the Jasper Public Library and delivered handwritten gratitude letters to teachers before Thanksgiving Break. The club is currently leading a Toys for Tots drive, encouraging students to donate new toys for local children during the holiday season.

Interact

PEOPLE OF ACTION



In January, Interact will host the school's first Student Leadership Summit, an event designed to help young leaders develop the skills needed to positively impact their communities now and in the future.

Through February and March, the club will sponsor a blanket and donation drive to support Swicacc.

Through each project, the Interact Club continues to show how dedicated students can make a meaningful difference at Jasper High School and throughout Dubois County.

Finding Our Voice: Performing Arts at JMS

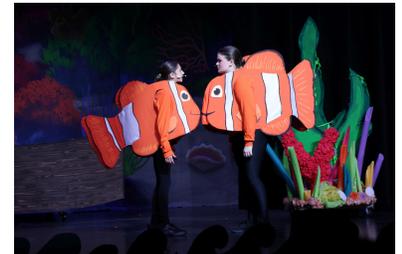
BY: Courtney Heberer

When I began teaching at Jasper Middle School fourteen years ago, the choir consisted of just twenty-nine enthusiastic students who loved to sing. Today, that same program has evolved into a thriving Performing Arts community of 138 young musicians, actors, and technicians. Witnessing this transformation has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my career – a testament to what can be achieved when students are encouraged to express themselves creatively and take pride in their accomplishments.

Each year, our students share their talents during the Winter Festival, an event that grew out of what was once known as the Fall Creative Arts Showcase. Although the name has changed, the mission remains the same: to celebrate creativity in all its forms. The festival features a student art exhibition, a baking contest, and a choir concert showcasing the work of our Performing Arts students. This open-house style event has become a cherished tradition for both the school and the community, offering families a chance to experience the energy, artistry, and collaboration that define our program.

A highlight of the year is our annual musical production, which provides students the opportunity to bring a story to life on stage. This year's show, *Seussical JR.*, is a whimsical and imaginative celebration of friendship, courage, and creativity. Students are involved in every facet of the production—from acting and singing to constructing sets, designing props, and assisting with staging. In class, they also explore sound design, lighting design, and music technology, developing a comprehensive understanding of what it takes to make a performance come alive behind the scenes. Beyond the stage, our students perform for their peers in the elementary and middle schools and take an annual field trip to the Kentucky Center for the Performing Arts to experience a Broadway musical. This experience inspires students and connects classroom learning to the professional world of theatre.

The success of our program is built on the foundation of strong administrative support, dedicated parent involvement, and the incredible efforts of our adult and student assistants. Their encouragement and collaboration make it possible for our students to shine both on and off the stage. Reflecting on the journey from that first small choir to the dynamic program we have today, I am continually reminded of the transformative power of the arts. The Performing Arts give students a voice and help them discover confidence, creativity, and community in the process.



JASPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPELL BOWL

The Jasper Elementary Spell Bowl team has a long-standing reputation for hard work, talent, and teamwork and the past two years have proven just how strong that tradition is. With dedicated coaches, motivated students, and hours of preparation, our teams have thrived at the annual Cedar Crest Intermediate School competition.

Last Year's Competition – November 18, 2024

Team Members: 4th Grade: Grant Blackman, Tristan Catt, Tanner Greene, Mackenzie Morton, & Jack Zink. **5th Grade:** Lila Greene, Zella Haywood, Layla Kreiger, Korlan Mumma, Elise Mundy, Blaine Rohleder, & Carys Voegerl. **Coaches:** Mrs. Elkins & Ms. Hurst.

The 2024 competition, at Cedar Crest Intermediate School, showcased the team's dedication and preparation. Their hard work paid off as they earned 1st place in the Orange Class at the host site and 1st place out of the nine schools competing locally. On the statewide level, Jasper Elementary shined as well. Out of 99 schools in the Orange Class, the team earned State Runner-Up, scoring an impressive 52 out of 56 words correctly, missing only four. The team celebrated five perfect spellers and two near-perfect spellers, a remarkable achievement for such a challenging event. To honor their success, Mr. Taylor treated the team to lunch at Legacy Steakhouse and Dilly Bars from Dairy Queen. The celebration continued with a trip to a rescue farm owned by his daughter, Dr. Lindsay Taylor, where students learned about the animals cared for there. The day concluded with participation in the Marshall Mile back at school, a well-deserved reward for a truly outstanding season.

This Year's Competition – November 17, 2025

Team Members: 4th Grade: Auggie Buchta, Paxton Buchta, Vivien Rudloff, & Garrett Werner. **5th Grade:** Grant Blackman, Oaklie Buchta, Tristan Catt, Alex Estes, Sophie Gates, Tanner Greene, Mackenzie Morton, Grayson Olsen, & Jack Zink. **Coaches:** Mrs. Elkins & Ms. Hurst.

Returning once again to Cedar Crest Intermediate School, this year's team displayed the same determination and spirit that our program is known for. The results were outstanding. Jasper Elementary placed 1st in the Orange Class and 1st among the 10 schools competing locally. Competition across the state was strong, with 101 teams participating in the Orange Class. Jasper Elementary finished 5th overall in Indiana, proudly matching last year's score by spelling 52 out of 56 words correctly. Every team member earned either a perfect or near-perfect score, a testament to their preparation and commitment.

About the Spell Bowl

- Students study 750 words to prepare for the season.
- A perfect score means spelling all assigned words correctly.
- A near-perfect score means missing only one word.
- Eight spellers compete on behalf of the team each night.
- Each speller competes individually, spelling seven words.
- Competitors have 20 seconds to spell each word presented.



Both last year and this year, our students have shown incredible effort, teamwork, and enthusiasm. Congratulations to every member of the Jasper Elementary Spell Bowl team and a special thank you to Mrs. Elkins and Ms. Hurst for their guidance and leadership. We look forward to continuing this tradition of excellence!

ROCK YOUR SCHOOL AT IRELAND ELEMENTARY

Get Your Teach On's annual Rock Your School initiative encourages K-12 educators to energize their classrooms with innovative, engaging experiences each September. Ireland Elementary embraced this initiative, transforming learning into something memorable and exciting across several grade levels.

Pre-K classrooms became "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" world, using green leaf tablecloths, hanging foods from the story, and giant caterpillars above the door. Throughout the week, students enjoyed themed brain breaks and songs, and created a human caterpillar parade. Students developed fine motor skills by making caterpillar hats, painting, and molding clay caterpillars. They practiced sequencing with felt pieces, solved food and shadow puzzles, matched magnetic letters, played a caterpillar board game, and built math patterns. Students also colored cotton balls with watercolors and traced lines on themed pages, further developing coordination.

Mrs. Vollmer's class celebrated Cozy Day, inviting students to wear pajamas, bring stuffed animals, and enjoy a relaxed learning environment. Activities included Words with Blends Bingo, color-by-code sight word practice, category sorting, and writing about their favorite stuffed animals. Students shared stories about their stuffed animals, fostering speaking and listening skills. The day ended with mini muffins, blending comfort and engagement.

Second grade transformed for football Friday, featuring a STEAM Football Challenge, Football Addition Puzzles, reading about football history, and themed snacks. Students collaborated to solve design challenges and practiced teamwork during group activities. The focus was on teamwork, problem-solving, and hands-on fun.

Third grade glowed with excitement during Glow Day, as black lights and neon decor set the stage for cross-curricular activities. Students read about the history of glow sticks, used invisible ink pens in language arts, and solved math problems with glow stick bottle-flipping challenges. They also described their favorite book characters using neon markers and participated in glowing group games.

Mrs. Pfister's fifth graders dove into football-themed learning, decorating their room with football fields, jerseys, and gear. Students solved math problems using concession stand scenarios and Foam Finger task cards. In reading, they compared American football and soccer and practiced context clues through competitive paper football games. Discussion and debate over similarities and differences between the sports encouraged critical thinking. P.E. featured Hoopball, combining football and basketball for energetic teamwork.

Through Rock Your School, students at Ireland Elementary experienced learning in new and memorable ways, demonstrating that education can be both engaging and fun.



JASPER HIGH SCHOOL

First Semester Highlights



Above: JHS Seniors competed in the We the People Regional Competition at the University of Evansville. They advanced to the State Competition!

Below: Students in Mrs. Ingram's class did polygraph testing.



Right: 9th grade students visited local businesses within the career clusters as part of the Tour of Opportunity.



Left: The JHS FFA prepared and delivered meals to local farmers as part of the Meals in the Fields project.



Left: JHS staff members participated in the 'roller coaster' during the first day of school pep session.



Above: Natural Helpers completed an activity focusing on labeling other people.

JASPER MIDDLE SCHOOL

First Semester Highlights



Above: The JMS Spell Bowl team did great at the Regional Competition and advanced to the State Competition at Purdue University.

Below: Students listened intently to Mr. Hubster on the first day of school.



Above: The JMS Fishing Club bundled up for a chilly fishing club event.



Above: A new staple at JMS has been the salad bar in the cafeteria.



Left: Mr. Pryor gave presentations about AI Literacy to all JMS students.



Left: FACS students cooked eggs in their first foods lab.

Right: Mr. Schipp's class completed a 3-week "What's in the Box" microelectronics unit.



JASPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

First Semester Highlights



Above: On Western Day, students arrived to school and were greeted by Mr. Erny and Mrs. Jahn on horseback.

Below: The garden was in full bloom back in August and has been utilized by many teachers this semester.



Below: Wildcat Snack Shack students have been preparing and delivering delicious treats to the JES staff.



Right: The Zaxby's Wordy Bird Program is back and rewards students with top AR points in each grade.



Below: Skye rested before greeting students on the first day of school.



Left: 5th grade students had the opportunity to learn about archery.



IRELAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

First Semester Highlights



Above: To wrap up the Fun Run fundraiser, 5th grade students got to participate in the color run.

Below: Mrs. Vollmer's 1st grade class did an apple tasting activity.



Below: Mrs. Shields transformed her classroom into a glow room on Halloween.



Above: Mrs. Freeman's class created poppy artwork to be displayed on their Veterans Day bulletin board.

Below: As a fun run reward, a student dumped soda on Mr. Mark's head.



Above: Fourth grade students got to showcase their artistic skills in the annual pumpkin decorating contest.



School & Building Directory



Jasper Elementary School

(812) 556-3600

jes.gjcs.k12.in.us

3799 N Portersville Rd.
Jasper, IN 47546

School Day: 8am-3pm



Ireland Elementary School

(812) 482-7751

ies.gjcs.k12.in.us

2386 N. 500 W.
Jasper, IN 47546

School Day: 7:50am-2:50pm



Jasper Middle School

(812) 482-6454

jms.gjcs.k12.in.us

3600 Portersville Rd.
Jasper, IN 47546

School Day: 8am-3pm



Jasper High School

(812) 482-6050

jhs.gjcs.k12.in.us

1600 St. Charles St.
Jasper, IN 47546

School Day: 8am-3pm



Greater Jasper Consolidated School Corporation Central Office

(812) 482-1801

gjcs.k12.in.us

1520 St. Charles St, Jasper, IN 47546

Office Hours: 8am-4pm



Greater Jasper

CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS

1520 Saint Charles Street, Jasper, IN 47546

IMPORTANT SECOND SEMESTER DATES

-  January 5 - School Resumes
-  January 19 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Snow Make-Up Day
-  February 4 - Professional Development Day
No School
-  February 16 - Presidents' Day
Snow Make-Up Day
-  March 6 - End 3rd Quarter
-  March 23-27 - Spring Break, No School
-  April 3 - Good Friday, No School
-  April 6 - Snow Make-Up Day
-  May 21 - End 4th Quarter, End 2nd Semester
-  May 22 - Commencement, No School
-  May 26-29 - Snow Make-Up Days

We Are Jasper Magazine is published by the
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Find us on social media and online at
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