

The Gleaner

Celebrating God's Work At ISJ Academy

ISJ - At a Glance

Enrollment:

ECC- 32 students

Day School - 31 students



STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP FUND

\$17,000 given.

7 Students supported.

Countless opportunities to know Jesus.

Save the Date!

The ISJ Academy Gala is November 20, 2026 at Immanuel Lutheran Church. Details to come!

Want to get the GLEANER sent to your inbox?

Email
office@isjacademy.org to
get on the list!



The Gleaner- Back to School Edition

Welcome to this unexpected edition of The Gleaner!

While The Gleaner usually comes to you three times a year, there has simply been too much happening at ISJ Academy this summer to wait until our regular fall edition. Between summer updates, staffing changes, classroom preparations, curriculum planning, and all the work that happens behind the scenes, we have been busy getting ready for another exciting year.

And now...the students are back!

The halls are filled with voices, the classrooms are buzzing with activity, and there is a wonderful sense of joy throughout the building. Teachers are teaching, students are learning, friends are reconnecting, and we are reminded once again of what makes this place so special.

And you are a part of it.

To our donors and supporters, thank you for helping make these joyful classrooms and busy hallways possible. Your generosity allows us to invest in our students, support our teachers, and continue our mission of developing Christ-centered students and families for life and eternity. We are excited about the year ahead and grateful to have you walking alongside us. The students are here, the school is alive again, and we are ready to grow—rooted in Christ!

Campus updates

If you haven't stopped by ISJ Academy lately, you really should come see us! Our incredible volunteers have been hard at work caring for and improving our building, and the difference is easy to see.

Our freshly painted entryway now features the ISJ logo front and center—a great reminder of who we are and what we're about. The gray lockers are gone (but certainly not forgotten!), replaced by sleek new hooks. While it may seem like a small change, it has made a big difference in the cleanliness of our building and has opened up important lines of vision throughout the entryway.

St. James Lutheran Church also made a wonderful investment in our students with new pavement and parking lot lines, along with an awesome new crosswalk! This will help keep our students safe as they travel to and from chapel and the library.

And Immanuel Lutheran Church celebrated Labor Day in true ISJ fashion—with a day of labor! Volunteers came over to weed, trim bushes, finish painting projects, and give the building a little extra sprucing up as the school year begins.

These improvements may look like simple projects, but they represent something much bigger: a community of people who care deeply about our school and our students. Thank you to everyone who has rolled up their sleeves, picked up a paintbrush, pulled a weed, or supported these improvements in any way. We are grateful!



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ISJ Academy is so incredibly thankful for our faithful friends and families who consistently support our school. One important way is through the directing of **Thrivent choice dollars** to Immanuel St. James Lutheran School. Did you know that twenty-eight different families directed their choice dollars to ISJ? That is an amazing blessing for our small school. Those dollars allow us to enhance our curriculum, which directly impacts our students.

All Thrivent clients with membership can now direct Choice Dollars® to support organizations like ours. With every Choice Dollar directed, Thrivent provides \$1 in grant funding—helping generosity go even further. To learn more or to see if you have Choice Dollars available, visit thrivent.com/thriventchoice.

An Investment with Eternal Impact

Over the past year, ISJ Supporters have given **approximately \$17,000** to our Student Scholarship Fund. I want you to know just how meaningful that generosity has been. Because of these gifts, **seven students** are attending ISJ this school year who may not otherwise have had the opportunity to be here. Your generosity has done more than help a family meet the cost of tuition. You have helped give families the opportunity to choose Lutheran education—and you have given children the opportunity to hear about Jesus, grow in their faith, and be surrounded by a Christ-centered community each day. **Your impact is eternal.**

On behalf of these seven students and their families, thank you for choosing to invest in our students and their futures. Your generosity is making a very tangible difference in the lives of children and families at ISJ.

Now, as we begin a new school year, we have an important opportunity: it is time to rebuild our Scholarship Fund for the 2027–2028 school year. Would you prayerfully consider making a gift to the ISJ Student Scholarship Fund? Of all the ways you can support ISJ, this is one of the most direct ways your dollars can go straight to students and families who need a little help making a Lutheran education possible. The scholarship fund exists because people like you believe that a Christ-centered education is worth investing in. We cannot do this without you.

Thank you for helping us open the doors of ISJ to more children and families—and for being part of the work God is doing here, one student at a time.

A graphic featuring the words "Thank you" written in a large, black, cursive script. To the right of the text is a hand-drawn pink heart. The entire graphic is set against a white background, which is itself centered within a larger gold-colored rectangular area.

Summer Camp

During nine weeks of summer camp, ISJ students traveled around the world without ever leaving Grand Rapids! From Sweden to Australia and many places in between, students explored different cultures and learned about celebrations, food traditions, and the many ways people live their daily lives around God's beautiful world.

More than 50 students joined us throughout the summer, filling our days with learning, laughter, and plenty of memorable adventures. As always, some of the favorite days included water days, trips to Frosty Boy for ice cream, and bike days with friends.

But summer at ISJ was about more than fun—it was also an opportunity to serve others and share God's love. Each week, our summer campers collected food as part of their chapel services. Together, they donated more than 30 birthday bags to NECM, along with countless shelf-stable pantry items to help local families in need. Our campers learned that even small acts of kindness can make a big difference when we serve others in Jesus' name.

A special thank-you goes to Miss Welch for coordinating and overseeing another wonderful summer of camp. We are also incredibly grateful to all of our summer staff who gave their time, energy, and hearts to make this a summer to remember. What a blessing to see our students learning, serving, growing, and having fun together all summer long!



ROOTED IN CHRIST: A NEW SCHOOL YEAR BEGINS

You can see why we felt we needed a Back-to-School Edition of the Gleaner! So much has happened over the summer, and as we begin a new school year, we are excited to see how God continues to bless and grow ISJ Academy.

This year, our theme is "Rooted in Christ," from Colossians 2:6–7: "Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving."

That is our prayer for ISJ this year—that our students, families, and staff would sink their roots deeply into God's Word, His promises, and His unfailing love. From the classroom to the playground, from chapel to service, we want everything we do to point our students back to Christ.

We are incredibly grateful for the people who help make the ministry of ISJ possible. Thank you for your support, your help, your encouragement, and—most importantly—your prayers. We truly believe God has great things planned for ISJ Academy this year.

Thank you for being rooted with us. We are so thankful for your partnership in the ministry of ISJ Academy and for the opportunity to walk together in Christ as we begin another school year.

