

Dear Donor,

As a long-time supporter, you are already aware of the important role that Garfield Park Academy plays in changing the lives of students with social, emotional, and learning challenges. Thank you for your commitment to our work.

While our educational and therapeutic work is funded through tuition paid by sending school districts, we rely on the support of generous donors and friends for capital improvements and other initiatives.

This year we're launching "Go Play," focusing on outdoor play, physical activity, and fitness. The effort begins with a major renovation of our playground. As we approach the start of the new school year and anticipate a "new normal" after the pandemic, the full return to school is a long-awaited and important milestone. A new playground will welcome our students back to school, back to their friends, and signal our commitment to wrap around growth and development.

At Garfield Park Academy, our playground serves a greater purpose. For many of our students, of all ages, outdoor physical activity is a crucial part of their school day and learning. Alone with a teacher or social worker, a visit to the playground helps a student take respite, calm themselves, and process difficult situations. In supervised small groups, the playground becomes an outdoor 'classroom' for students to use new social skills and build and maintain relationships.

The effort takes on new meaning this year as our school community mourns the loss of Michele Heinz, our school business manager of 14 years. While her title may capture her formal role, it does not capture who she was to us and to our students. She was a mentor, a friend, an advocate and a cornerstone of our leadership team. Always with a ready smile, Michele loved every student. A mother herself, she was deeply committed to outdoor learning, therapeutic well-being, fitness and play for our students. Our goal is to raise \$50,000 in her memory for a significant renovation of the Garfield Park Academy playground, with modern, engaging equipment, and meeting all contemporary accessibility and safety requirements. We plan to redesign, upgrade and dedicate a new playground and reflection garden in Michele's honor.

Can we count on you to help us? Your tax-deductible donation will directly support our efforts to help our students find success, not just in school, but at home, and in life. Additionally, you'll be recognized for your generosity on the Garfield Park Academy website, in social media, and in our newsletters. Dedication opportunities are also available.

Garfield Park Academy is depending on your assistance and generosity. Please visit our website at <https://garfieldparkacademy.org/gpas-go-play-capital-campaign/>. Your contribution will be put to effective use and will benefit the entire Garfield Park Academy community. Thank you for your consideration and continued support.

Regards,



Dr. Steven Morse,
Executive Director/Superintendent

Education... *for a Lifetime*