

Garfield Heights City Schools

Community Newsletter

Every Child | Every Day | *Together.*



Superintendent's Report



Dr. Richard D. Reynolds
Superintendent

Every Child... Every Day... *Together.* This specific charge will be the focus of the Garfield Heights City Schools family for the forthcoming year, and I am very excited to be your new Superintendent. On behalf of everyone in the Garfield Heights City School District, welcome to the 2022-2023 school year. The energy, excitement, and enthusiasm which has been stimulated by the first several weeks of the new school year is helping to shape and inform our approach with students. I invite everyone in our community to join the members of the staff and our students in pursuing success one child at a

time, each and every day of the entire year, in a collaborative way.

This edition of the school newsletter will share with the community some of the great news that has taken place since our first day of school on Thursday, August 25th. Inside, you will read an update from the Board of Education, and a summary of the important back-to-school events that have taken place.

Staff Welcomed Back During Annual Convocation

The Garfield Heights City Schools welcomed teachers and staff members back for the 2022-2023 school year with the annual convocation gathering at the High School. The morning's presentation included inspirational videos designed to encourage, nurture and celebrate our beloved school district staff. The High School Cheerleading squad led the spirit with a terrific performance as teachers and staff members entered the Center for Performing Arts. Members of the National Honor Society distributed T-shirts to the staff that reflected this year's message that "Every Child, Every Day, Together," will be a focus. Thank you to Board President Nichelle Daniels, who was also on-hand greeting staff members as well.

Students Return for the 2022-2023 School Year

Smiles, happiness, excitement and joy characterized the return of students on Thursday, August 25th as children of all ages came back to the glorious halls of the Garfield Heights City Schools. Touring the buildings on the first day was an informative and fun experience, and I thank the members of the Board of Education who joined in to

encourage our students. The transportation garage was an early visit, to encourage the valued bus drivers who transport students to and from school. The High Schoolers returned with energy and the Middle School students met their new principal, Mrs. Adrienne Clotman for the first time. Veteran GH administrator Leslie Tratner will be principal at Elmwood Elementary, and she was greeted by students along with similar excitement at Maple Leaf and William Foster Elementary School as well.

Special Thanks to Cleveland Browns Standout Joel Bitonio for School Supply Donation

Finally, the GHCS greatly appreciates the generosity of Cleveland Browns Guard Joel Bitonio, for his generous donation of fully-stocked bookbags and school supplies. Readers can learn more on Page 3 of this publication, but special thanks goes out to Mr. Bitonio and the Cleveland Browns for making the start of this school year so successful. I look forward to placing a focus on Every Child. Every Day. *Together.*

Sincerely,

Richard D. Reynolds, Ph.D.
Superintendent



Superintendent Dr. Richard Reynolds with students during the highly acclaimed Back-to-School Kick-off earlier this year!

Board Brief

Board of Education Report: 2022-2023 School Year



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The Board of Education of the Garfield Heights City Schools extends its sincerest wishes for a meaningful, compassionate, safe, and successful 2022-2023 school year. The first several weeks of school have unfolded with kindness and care for our students and our staff alike. With support from the community and our local partners and leaders, the Board of Education is expectantly looking forward to our new beginning in the district.

Much of this new beginning centers on the work of new Superintendent Dr. Richard Reynolds, who has immediately stepped in to begin assessing areas of focus, meeting with students, staff and stakeholders, and laying the groundwork for success. Many of the public events our community has seen were carefully planned behind-the-scenes under Dr. Reynolds' leadership. Among them were the annual Staff Convocation, which welcomed teachers and staff back to the district before the official launch of school. The Board of Education thanks the teachers and staff members for being the dedicated mentors who invest their professional careers and their personal time to cultivating the next generation of future leaders.

The Pupil Services Department deserves the praise and recognition of our community for planning, coordinating and successfully executing the first annual Back-to-School Kick-off during the first week of school. This community-oriented event featured free back-to-school supplies for our students, refreshments, games and activities of many sorts and overall fun. The partners and vendors who helped to make this successful are to be praised for setting a positive and successful tone for our families. Thank you also to the elected officials and public safety team members who attended as well.

These key events all made the first day of school in Garfield Heights, on Thursday, August 25th a pure joy, and overtly positive for everyone involved. We thank the families for their preparation and dedication to our community's children. We thank the staff for their readiness and their attention to detail. Of special note were the students and families who downloaded the first day of school flyer, enthusiastically took pictures and shared them on social media. The overflow of support for the start of the school year took on extraordinary proportion and helped add a sense of belonging.

Fathers and father-figures in our school family were encouraged to show their support for the children in our community and for education, through the participation in the annual Father's Walk held on Thursday, September 22nd. During this occasion, fathers and other male mentors showcased their support to be involved in their child(ren)s education throughout the school year! The Garfield Heights City Schools proudly salutes the hundreds of fathers, uncles, grandfathers, stepfathers, foster fathers, brothers and mentors who stepped up on this day, to be involved in their children's lives. Thank you all.

As we continue with the 2022-2023 school year, your Board of Education is here to serve and respond. Please reach out to us at anytime with inquiries, concerns or other matters of importance. We wish everyone a blessed school year.



Allen Sluka,
Treasurer

Talking Finance\$ With Garfield Heights City Schools Treasurer and Business Director Allen Sluka

From a financial and operations standpoint, the Garfield Heights City Schools has kicked off the new school year with success. Our team is working hard to ensure that financial matters are discussed and posted in a transparent manner, and that the community has access to information and questions answered on a frequent basis. One such active measure will be the creation of the Community Finance and Facilities Review Committee, which will become a citizens-oriented group who will review district finances and the conditions of our facilities. The district is calling upon parents, active citizens, business leaders, stakeholders, and local elected leaders to participate. With the intention of organizing by November 1st, the Community Finance and Facilities Review Committee will conduct walk-throughs of our buildings and facilities with district leaders and with our architectural and engineering team. Participants will also obtain a true understanding of financial operations, the 5-Year forecasts, and help with overall transparency. Ultimately, the district envisions the CFFRC to report information to the Board of Education and the community-at-large. If you are interested in joining the CFFRC, please go to the website to learn more about participating.

Without a doubt, one area of focus from a facilities and operations standpoint will be the needed renovations of Garfield Heights Middle School and our Athletic Complex at Garfield Heights High School. Of all the facilities in the district, including the high school and our elementary buildings, these two areas have emerged as 'untouched' from an upgrade and enhancement standpoint over the years. At the Middle School, the building can no longer accommodate significant infrastructure upgrades in the areas of heating, ventilation, and currently offers no air conditioning. Boilers are old. Electrical wiring has reached capacity. At the High School's athletic complex, anyone who has attended contests and competitions there of various sorts recognizes the dire need for improvement. These two areas will be primary focuses for the Community Finance and Facilities Review Committee. Once again, please be sure to visit the website for more information.

While the recent and new construction of amenities such as the Transportation Center were able to be completed without the need of taxpayer support, and through the diligence of the finance team, Board of Education and district leadership, upgrades of significant magnitude will require serious community involvement and a commitment by all.

The Garfield Heights City Schools leadership team looks forward to keeping the community informed about the creation and launch of the Community Finance and Facilities Review Committee, and other important financial matters as the school year progresses. Thank you for your continued support. Go Bulldogs!



Great News from Around the District!



Garfield Heights City Schools Welcomes Cleveland Browns Standout Joel Bitonio Donates Backpacks, School Supplies, and in the Process, Follows Personal Passion

K-5 students in the Garfield Heights City Schools received an extra boost in energy and excitement earlier this year courtesy of the generosity and charity of Cleveland Browns standout Joel Bitonio, who recently visited Garfield Heights High School on Monday, August 22nd to donate back-to-school supplies and backpacks. Bitonio's goodwill emanates from a deep desire to help and support students in an effort to prepare them as best as possible for the upcoming year. While on campus, he graciously donated backpacks filled with school supplies to approximately 100 children in grades Kindergarten through fifth. Bitonio, a standout Guard on the Cleveland Browns' line, wanted to express his gratitude to the teachers, staff members, students and the entire Garfield Heights City Schools family for their upcoming hard work this coming year. His visit is, in part, part of the collaboration with the Cleveland Browns' Stay in the Game network, that helps to prioritize student attendance by connecting resources aimed at tackling absenteeism. On behalf of everyone in the Garfield Heights City Schools, thank you to Joel Bitonio and the Cleveland Browns organization, for your kindness and support of the Bulldog students in our district.



Joel Bitonio donated more than 100 fully supplied backpacks during the first week of school. Thank you for your generosity!

Staff Welcomed with Enthusiasm to Annual Convocation Gathering at the High School



National Honor Society students distributed shirts during convocation welcoming back staff members!

The Garfield Heights City Schools welcomed teachers and staff members back for the 2022-2023 school year with the annual convocation gathering at the High School. Beginning with a light breakfast and refreshments in the morning, Superintendent Dr. Richard Reynolds shared inspirational videos as part of his presentation to encourage, nurture and celebrate our school district staff. The High School Cheerleading squad led the spirit with a terrific performance as teachers and staff members entered the Center for Performing Arts. Members of the National Honor Society distributed T-shirts to the staff that reflected this year's message that "Every Child, Every Day, Together," will be a focus. Thank you to Board President Nichelle Daniels, who was also on-hand greeting staff members as well. Convocation represented the start to a busy week in the Garfield Heights City Schools, where the following Tuesday a Back to School Kick-off took place and that was followed by the return of students on Thursday, August 25th. Let's work together to make sure every child, every day, together, matters most this school year!

Back to School Kick-off Welcomes Students with School Supply Donations and Excitement

Thousands of individuals filled the outdoor lots of Garfield Heights High School on Tuesday, August 23rd, as students, families, elected officials, public safety members and more attended the first annual Back-to-School Kick-off. Superintendent Dr. Richard Reynolds greeted smiling students of all ages upon entering the festive gathering, introducing himself and welcoming those in attendance. Markers, pencils, pens, notebooks, protective sleeves, and other educational resources were available for students to pick up in preparation for the start of school on Thursday, August 25th, 2022. Refreshments were available. Fun activities and games were being played all evening. In addition, a special surprise guest appearance by Chomps, the Cleveland Browns mascot, who circulated the tents, tables and activities to give a high five to students and encourage them to Stay in the Game and attend school this year. A very dedicated team of people participated in making this Back-to-School Kick-off possible, including Dr. Gordon Dupree, Gina Wilson and Maria Gambino, and others, so on behalf of the district, thank you to all involved. Your energy for this event has kicked off the year in a successful way. Go Bulldogs!



The Back to School Kick-off helped students have fun, obtain free school supplies and meet new Superintendent Dr. Reynolds



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District Spotlight: Middle School Principal Adrienne Clotman

The Garfield Heights City Schools is excited to introduce Mrs. Adrienne Clotman to our school family as the incoming Middle School principal beginning with the 2022-2023 school year. Mrs. Clotman is enthused to be in this new role and brings a lifetime of educational experience and compassion for middle school-aged students as well. She is our district spotlight for this first edition of the school year, and the district encourages you to learn a little more about Mrs. Clotman.

Mrs. Clotman possesses a significant background in middle school education, fulfilling a wide variety of roles and capacities over more than twenty years. She most recently served as Assistant Principal at John Dewey Elementary School in Warrensville Heights, where she became responsible for important initiatives such as being Career Day Chairwoman, Open House Coordinator, Community Day Coordinator, Team Leader and serving in other valuable family engagement roles. In addition, Mrs. Clotman also served as a Middle School Volleyball Coach for 7th and 8th grade girls, imparting them with important teamwork, leadership, communications and hard work characteristics.

Yet Mrs. Clotman cites her classroom experiences as among the most valuable one can have prior to becoming an administrator, since the lessons learned daily with students can help to inform her role as a principal. Specifically, Mrs. Clotman taught 7th and 8th grade mathematics in various teaching roles in the Cleveland Metropolitan Schools and the Warrensville Heights City Schools before becoming an assistant principal. She truly affirms the long-renowned belief that *it takes a village to raise a child*, and that as educators, the adults in school settings play a critical role in helping students for present and future success. While no one has all the right answers, a school family must have the trust and willingness to lean on one another for help in sharpening the skills of our middle school students. Mrs. Clotman also believes in the requisite amount of character and discipline among the emerging young adults in middle school, and that it's ok to be told 'no,' if the circumstances warrant. In all, Mrs. Clotman has a compassionate heart for students of this grade level and is excited to be working with Garfield Heights middle school students.

On a personal note, Mrs. Clotman is originally from Evansville, Indiana, and graduated from Tuskegee University for her undergraduate degree. She holds a master's degree in Mathematics and Administration from John Carroll University. Mrs. Clotman's husband, Jason, is also an administrator in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. She has two children, an 8th grade son, Jordan, and a 4th grade daughter, Aubrey.

On behalf of everyone in the Garfield Heights City Schools, please join the district in welcoming Mrs. Adrienne Clotman to the role of Middle School principal.



*The GHCS Welcomes Mrs. Adrienne Clotman
as Middle School Principal*