



**MILWAUKEE  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



October 2020

Dear Fernwood Families,

Welcome back to what is shaping up to be an interesting year. While the 2019 - 2020 school year closed with the disappointment that comes from ending school at home, and the cancelation of Beers and Cheers, we are looking to the future and how we can help.

The cancelation of Beers and Cheers and the ongoing issues in our community caused by the pandemic have forced the Fernwood Fund to rethink priorities. The annual Beers and Cheers event brought in most of the funding used for the ongoing projects on the west playground, field trips to the Urban Ecology Center and Schiltz Audbon center, as well as funding arts enrichments by purchasing musical instruments and other music programs. Much of that funding came from the awe inspiring support by the local businesses, many of whom at this time cannot afford to support us the same as they have done in the past.

The Fernwood Fund remains committed to support the school and the students in their eventual return to the classroom. Given the economic pinch, the near term plans have been scaled to a more sustainable level but still include continued enhancements on the west playground, improvements inside the school, and looking at what is next for the greenhouse space.

In the past you may not have had much to give and passed on the opportunity. However with the present situation and the refocus of the Fernwood Fund's plans, every dollar is more important than ever. The Fernwood Fund is grateful for every donation. Giving is easy, simply point a browser at <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/WebLink.aspx?name=E252729&id=1> and decide how much you want to give. Please be sure to indicate that your gift is for Fernwood on the donation page. The Fernwood Fund puts every dollar right back into the school.

Thank you for your continued support. We invite you all to pop into a board meeting so we can thank you in person!

Benjamin Stocks  
Fernwood Parent  
Fernwood Fund Board President

John A. Sanchez  
Fernwood Principal  
Fernwood Fund Board Member



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## **Fernwood Fund FAQ**

### **What are the Fernwood Fund's goals?**

The Fernwood Montessori School Fund is dedicated to enriching the education of children attending Fernwood Montessori School by supporting projects and programs that enhance the educational community and support the mission of Fernwood Montessori School. The Fernwood Fund will raise support for "large-scale" programs, Montessori-based classroom materials – and potentially for capital improvements for the school. This does not replace or diminish the great work by our PTO; rather it adds another dimension to our ability to ask for large gifts and pursue grants.

### **How is the fund structured?**

The Fernwood Montessori School Fund has been established as a dedicated fund within the MPS Foundation, a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation in accordance with Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code for educational and charitable purposes. The Fund was established under the MPS Foundation to utilize its tax-exempt status, organizational efficiencies and liability insurance. A board has been established to lead this effort.

### **What are some examples of how money will be raised?**

The Fernwood Fund has focused on three primary vehicles for raising contributions to support the school – funding appeals to parents & friends of Fernwood, and the annual Beers and Cheers fundraiser.

### **How will funds be allocated and who is responsible for making decisions about funding?**

Input for school funding needs will come from Fernwood administration, staff and parents. A board of parents and school administration has been put in place to oversee the funding allocation. This year we are continuing our focus on landscaping and site structures that support Montessori curriculum. The Fund also reviews grant applications to support specific Fernwood projects.

### **Will meeting minutes be made available?**

Yes, meeting minutes will be made available following meetings at [www.fernwoodfund.org](http://www.fernwoodfund.org) as well as our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/FernwoodFund/> (be sure to "like" us!). Meetings are open to parents or other interested parties.

### **How can I get involved?**

If you are interested in helping with Fund efforts, please contact Ben Stocks (BenjaminMStocks@gmail.com). Meetings are open and future dates available at: <http://www.fernwoodfund.org/board-meetings.html>

### **How do I donate to the Fernwood Fund?**

Donations to the Fund are made through the MPS Foundation, just follow this link and be sure to select Fernwood: <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/WebLink.aspx?name=E252729&id=1>

### **Can I give through my employer's United Way/Combined Giving Campaign?**

You can provide a donation to the MPS Foundation but giving specifically for the Fernwood Fund through the United Way giving is challenging. Please contact the board for assistance by sending a note to [FernwoodFundInfo@gmail.com](mailto:FernwoodFundInfo@gmail.com).