

Felicity School

Winter Newsletter- 2024

OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND AT FELICITY!



In early 2025, a new food eatery will open in Terminal 5 at O’Hare airport called *Loves from Felicity @ O’Hare!* How cool is that? Felicity will explode its Transition Program with amazing opportunities highlighted by a strong presence at one of the busiest airports in the world. We will have full time jobs for our graduates and many part-time positions for our current students who are ready to transition to the work force. This new store is the culmination of months of work creating partnerships that will benefit students for years to come. Food for the ‘grab and go’ store will be made in Felicity’s kitchen, in part, by students and jobs throughout the airport will be available. The picture above shows Felicity students/staff with Terminal 5 leadership and executives from *Love from USA* in the exact spot of the future home of the Felicity School inspired store. Additional announcements regarding our new and improved transition program coming soon!

MEET SOME STAFF

We are proud of our staff and have continued to add amazing people to our staff. Learn a bit more about a few of our student-centered faculty.

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STUDENT GROUPS

Felicity students have multiple new committees to demonstrate their leadership and positively impact the programs and culture at school.

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Felicity students enjoy a behind the scenes tour of the control towers at O’Hare Airport.

OUR VISION

Cultivating the mind, body, and spirit: Felicity School will be the premiere private therapeutic day school leveraging superior staff and facilities to provide a curriculum and experience focused on the individual. Felicity School will create successful students and citizens with unique, relevant, and appropriate experiences.



Felicia Nekritz- 1971-1998



O'HARE AIRPORT & LOVE FROM FELICITY

SECOND CITY SNACKS: Felicity School has partnered with Second City Snacks, a business that provides grab and go food items to stores throughout Chicago. This unique business-school relationship creates amazing jobs and transition opportunities for our students. With a focus for job training and transitioning, Felicity has an on-site business where students learn on the job skills, prepare to better enter the work force, earn

money for their time, earn credit when appropriate, and prepare for work beyond the comforts of our school. To officially join the kitchen staff, students work with a job coach, craft resumes, pass a food safety course, and train specifically for the kitchen. This new model for transition services enables students to have their first work experience in a safe and friendly environment while developing skills that will immediately transfer to other future jobs and work environment.



Students prepare for the creation of high-quality grab and go sandwiches.

O'HARE (Cont.): Part of the partnership with *Love from USA, Inc.* involves job opportunities at the store including positions like sales associates, cashier, porter, supervisor, and management (eventually). It also provides inroads into the thousands of available positions throughout the airport which should ultimately include jobs ranging from TSA to baggage handling. At the tour of the airport designed for Felicity School students, we were able to learn about the behind-the-scenes structure of O'Hare. Without exception, the staff and students were incredibly impressed viewing the activity and learning the importance of the air traffic control tower. A special thanks to Love's and Westfield for making this special visit so welcoming.

FOXTROT: *So... if I am not in the airport, where else can I enjoy the products created by Felicity students?* Thanks, great question! Throughout Chicago there are five Foxtrot Market locations serving grab and go treats for the communities of the Gold Coast, Old Town, Wicker Park, Fulton Market, and River North. Enjoy our sandwiches, salads, acai bowls,

yogurt parfaits, fruit cups and more. Deliveries go out from Felicity every morning to ensure customers have the freshest available food as possible. Occasionally, students not working in the kitchen enjoy product that was left over from the bulk orders. These are 'good eatin' days!



CURRICULAR ENHANCEMENTS

Independent Projects, School Reads, and Interventions

Happenings @ FELICITY

CLC: Felicity students have met multiple times with a College of Lake County representative to learn about the campus and various program opportunities. The College and Career Navigator assisted students with opening student accounts and the registration process. Students discussed dual enrollment, apprenticeship opportunities and available scholarships. We are excited that so many of our Juniors and Seniors are college bound and our close relationship with CLC.



AVAILABLE THERAPY & SUPPORTS:

Felicity School prides itself on the myriads of supports offered to students in their individual journey to success. In addition to the traditional time students spend with a social worker, Felicity is able to provide other opportunities. With four unique clinicians, students have access to a variety of personalities and approaches. With multiple specialties including Art Therapy and addictions counseling, students can receive the services most relevant and comfortable for them. Groups and classroom art-therapy help round out the emotional supports. Other services include individual/group speech, occupational therapy and Wilson Reading.

STUDENT GROUPS: To add to the positive peer culture and provide avenues to impact the school environment, we offer opportunities for real student voice! These organizations meet weekly and successfully help us improve our school. Felicity staff appreciates the work of our student leaders in the following areas:

GENEROSITY: This group emphasizes giving back to the community. We are currently collecting pop tops for the Ronald McDonald House and recently visited the Whitehall Senior Center to distribute candy to residents. They have organized a winter clothing drive and plan to volunteer at the Northern Illinois Food Bank later this semester.

OPERATIONS: This cadre of students is dedicated to improving programs within the school. They are currently gathering suggestions from students and are considering new activities such as boxing, yoga, and fencing demonstrations for the next semester.

BELONGING: This team focuses on fostering a positive community atmosphere through activities that celebrate significant events and awareness campaigns. This year, they planned events recognizing 9/11, Halloween, Hispanic Heritage Month, and Mental Health Awareness.



Art Therapy room provides unique opportunities for students!

MEET SOME STAFF

Scott Gielow: ‘Gielow’ as the kids call him is always available for a chat or a session. Armed with a wealth of experience, a devotion to students, and a proponent of healthy choices, Mr. Gielow is the ‘go to’ guy for many Felicity students. Many seek guidance with tough life decisions and conflicts with drugs or alcohol. Mr. Gielow has been with Felicity School since its creation, beginning his tenure as a member of the Advisory Board. We all wish we had the ability to reach such diverse groups of adolescence. Let us not forget a shout out to Gielow for his leadership and commitment to the Felicity Yearbook.

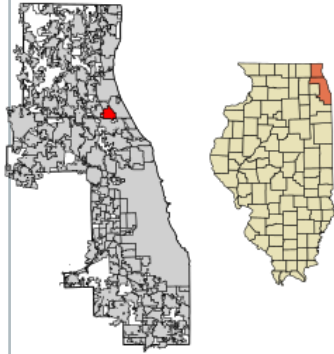


Larry Patrick: Mr. Patrick joined Felicity after a successful career teaching in Highland Park. Now his passion for students is evident at Felicity where he leads our Physical Education program and the writing/journaling initiative. When not working in small groups with students, Mr. Patrick can be seen leading a meditation, arranging our recycling program or creating ecology experiences for all. Mr. Patrick brings his sunny disposition and high energy every day!

Cheryl Wright: Ms. Wright began at Felicity over ten years ago and serves as the lead teacher. Her patience and deep care for students is evident daily in her classroom culture, teaching style and organization. About a month ago, a good number of Felicity alumni visited to speak with current students about overcoming their struggles and creating opportunities for growth. It was amazing to hear these adults discuss their dreams and current successes while reflecting so positively on their time with Ms. Wright and Felicity School. These stories make all the hard work so worthwhile. Well done Ms. Wright.



Sue Barker: Dr. Barker transitioned to the Principal of Felicity last year after decades of special education leadership at some nearby public schools. Her expertise in best special education practices and her commitment to students has benefited our ability to develop goals, establish structures and create protocols. Combining Felicity’s commitment to meeting students where they are at with the demands of IEPs, Dr. Barker ensures the staff and students are poised for success. Outside of work, Dr. Barker is a devoted horse trainer and competes at shows throughout the country. No doubt the patience she has for students translates to her great care for her horses.



FELICITY PARTNERS

We are pleased to share **some** of our District partners over the past few years. Thank you for trusting your students with us!

Chicago Public Schools
District 128- Libertyville/Vernon Hills
Grayslake High School District 127
Zion District 126
Niles Township District 219
Barrington District 220
North Shore School District 112
Glenbrook School District 225
Waukegan District 60
Woodland District 50
Township High School District 113



Park Ridge 64
Lake Villa
Grant High School
New Trier High School District 203
Evanston/Skokie District 65
Hinsdale High School District 86
Riverside Brookfield High School
Township High School District 211
Oak Park River Forest High School
McHenry Community High School
Lake Forest High School
Zion School District 6
Stevenson High School District 125
District 300
District 96

Felicity School

550 Lake Cook Road
Deerfield, IL. 60015

www.felicityschool.com