



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

**Forest Whitaker**  
UNESCO Goodwill  
Ambassador

September 10, 2013

Dear Findley Parents:

Welcome to another school year! I am sure that you, too, are surprised at how quickly the last school year ended, and how quickly this new school year has begun. It seemed like just yesterday when I was at Findley Elementary School alongside you during the musical performances and meeting with your children. I had a terrific time last year during my visit, and I would like to express my thanks to you for making me feel so welcome.

As we start the new school year, I would like to take this time to reiterate the importance of arts integration in education. I know that Principal Owen and all of the committed educators at Findley are dedicated to the Turnaround Arts Initiative, and I hope that you will continue to support the arts at home too. I believe I've mentioned it before: the arts were so central to my personal growth and development, and I know that most studies demonstrate that drama, music, drawing and other forms of artistic expression are central to enhancing learning in all other academic subjects. I also know it helps to bring children together and learn things about each other and themselves that they wouldn't otherwise know!

I would like to close by saying that I am happy to make another visit to Findley Elementary School later this year. I know that many new developments and positive changes are planned for this year at Findley, and I look forward to seeing these improvements as well as seeing you and your kids once again!

Sincerely,

Forest Whitaker  
UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Peace and Reconciliation  
Member, President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities