



Why Wait to be Great?

For the parents, students, staff, and community of Clay Middle School

CLAY NATION NEWS

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Clay Nation,

It is hard to believe that Thanksgiving is quickly approaching and we are well underway in 2nd quarter. As we reflect over the first four months of school, we really have had a wonderful start to this school year.

As I walk the hallways and talk with students and staff, I do not have to look very far to see so many of our students and staff doing amazing things for each other. I truly see the Clay Way being lived out.

Be Respectful

Be Responsible

Be Ready to Learn

Be Full of Pride

Clay GREATNESS

Carmel Veterans Day Essay Contest Winners

For example, I would like to take moment to recognize all of our veterans and the sacrifices they made to our country. This month we take time to recognize our veterans at our annual Carmel Veterans Day Program.

On Thursday November 10th, 2022 at Noon at the Tarkington Theater located in Three Center Green in Carmel, Indiana two of our own Clay Trojans have been selected from all middle schools and Carmel High School students across the entire school district to read their essays. **Awesome job to Clay 7th grader, Reid McKay and 8th grader Ash Jachnik on being selected as grand prize winners for the Carmel Veterans Day Essay Contest.** We are looking forward to honoring our veterans and their families on November 10th. **We are so proud of you both!**

Clay PTO is amazing!

As an entire Clay Nation, we are so fortunate to have great parental involvement and support and for that reason, Clay Middle School was able to meet its fundraising goals for the 2022-2023 school year. As principal of Clay Middle School, I speak on behalf of our entire administrative team and teaching staff when I say thank you. Please know we cannot begin to thank you enough for your time, effort,

...continued on the next page

ADMINISTRATION

Todd Crosby, Principal

Catherine Gahl, Assistant Principal

Mark Smith, Assistant Principal

John Corcoran, Athletic/Activities Director



PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

continues...

volunteerism and contributions to Clay Middle School. We are looking forward to all the ways these generous PTO contributions help to offer and support new opportunities to our students and staff with various classroom activities and lessons.

Clay Performing Arts Concerts

Throughout the months of October and November, we have experienced some incredible concerts by our 6th, 7th and 8th grade bands, choirs and orchestras. The time and dedication that our students put into their performances under the leadership of Mr. Frizzi, Mrs. Pote, Mr. Grifa and Mrs. Susie does not go unnoticed or unrecognized. (We appreciate all of you for the work you do!)

2022 Ghosts and Goblins Spirit Award

Congratulations to Clay Middle School on winning the 2021 Ghosts and Goblins 5K/2K run and walk participation award for an unprecedented 11th straight year. Clay Middle receives this award by having the highest number of participants among all three of our middle schools. This is an unprecedented run by Clay that we have been able to achieve only because of our awesome families, students and staff that make up the Clay Nation. Thank you to Carmel Education Foundation for hosting this incredible community wide event. **Clay Nation Domination!**

Clay Athletics

A huge thank you goes out to our Fall athletic coaches - football, cross country, volleyball, cheerleading and tennis. The Clay Way was always on display when our student athletes competed and I could not be prouder of our athletes and coaches for representing Clay at the highest level. Best of luck to all of our winter sports that are now underway. If you have not had an opportunity to come out and see our Clay Trojan athletic teams in action, I encourage you to attend any of our winter sports events. **ONWARD TO VICTORY CLAY!**

2022 Fall Musical (Seussical)

Clay Middle School will be putting on Seussical as our fall musical for our community. As we typically do, we will have a Thursday night understudy show and finishing with our final shows on Friday and Saturday nights. The amount of support from our Clay families for this musical has



been unbelievable and we want to thank you for all your help and assistance to pull this musical off for our Clay community.

Clay Spell Bowl Team

Congratulations to our Clay Spell Bowl Team on receiving a 3rd place finish in the 2022 Hamilton County competition to advance to the state level competition at Purdue University this coming weekend November 12th, 2022. Great job to our Clay team and a special thanks goes out to Mrs. Smiley and Ryan Snyder for all of their leadership. **GOOD LUCK AT STATE!**

Clay Book Fair

Clay's 2022 Book Fair started Monday November 7 and will extend through November 11th. A great deal of time and effort goes into this event and a special thank you goes out to Mrs. Swartzendruber, our Clay media center specialist and Mrs. Carole FitzGerald for all their organization. A big thank you also goes to any of our parent volunteers that helped to make this year's book fair a big success and to any student / family that purchased items at the book fair and continue to promote the love for reading.

Carmel High School Marching Band

Congratulations to two of our middle school students (**Aeden Kreke and Mason Gren**) for their ISSMA State Marching Band Championship performance on Saturday November 5th, 2022 with the Carmel Marching Greyhounds. Congratulations to both of these middle school students on being part of the 2022 Carmel Greyhound Marching Band National Championship run. On Saturday November 12th, the Greyhounds won the National Competition at Lucas Oil Stadium.

I challenge all Clay Trojans to not wait to be GREAT – seize opportunities as they present themselves and together, we will take Clay Middle School to even greater heights if we continue to work together. As principal, I believe it is my position to help provide vision, leadership, oversight, safety and the best instruction to every student that attends Clay Middle School. I truly realize that success cannot be accomplished without an active school community to continue to take Clay Middle School in the direction of continuous success and excellence. I am happy to announce that the Clay Nation is alive and well.

I hope everyone has a restful and relaxing upcoming Thanksgiving break.

Reminder to follow us on Twitter @ClayTrojans #ClayGreatness GO TROJANS!

Sincerely,

Todd A. Crosby, Principal





IMPORTANT DATES

NOVEMBER

November 16 Education Support Professionals Day
 November 16, 2022 Late Start
 November 17, 2022 Musical Performance 7:00 PM
 November 18, 2022 Musical Performance 7:00 PM
 November 18, 2022 PTO Meeting
 November 19, 2022 Musical Performance 2 PM & 7 PM
 November 23-25 Thanksgiving Break
 November 30, 2022 Late Start
 November 30, 2022 6th Grade Band Debut Concert 6:15 PM
 November 30, 2022 6th Grade Beginning Orchestra Debut Concert 7:30 PM

DECEMBER

December 9, 2022 PTO Meeting
 December 13, 2022 7th & 8th Grade Orchestra Winter Concert 7:00 PM
 December 15, 2022 7th Grade Choir Winter Concert 6:00 PM
 December 15, 2022 6th Grade Choir Winter Concert 6:30 PM
 December 15, 2022 8th Grade Choir Winter Concert 7:30 PM
 December 16, 2022 End of 2nd Quarter/End of Semester
 Dec. 19 to January 4, 2023 Winter Break

Have a great holiday break everyone!



CLAY SHOUT OUT!

Congratulations to Clay's Social Worker Mrs. Britney Coats on being named as Indiana's 2022 Social Worker Runner Up of the Year. We are so proud of you Britney and grateful for all you do for Clay.

Much of the hard work that is done in Student Service is done so behind the scene and can often go unnoticed. It is so great to see the work Britney does for our school and district, advocating and empowering our students and families, highlighted in this way. Way to go Britney!

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SEUSSICAL, JR!

Get your tickets for this year's school musical, *Seussical, Jr!* Tickets go on sale November 2!



We will have 4 performances.

Understudy Cast:

Thursday, Nov 17 at 7PM.

Purchase tickets [HERE](#)

Primary Cast:

Friday, Nov 18 at 7PM.

Purchase tickets [HERE](#)

Understudy Cast:

Saturday, Nov 19 at 2PM.

Purchase tickets [HERE](#)

Primary Cast:

Saturday, Nov 19 at 7PM.

Purchase tickets [HERE](#)

All Performances will be In-Person.

Tickets are \$5 each

Tickets can be purchased online or at the door. Students can also purchase tickets at lunch starting Nov 14.

We hope to see you and your family there!



THE GREEN SCENE

7th grade students have teamed with Rubicon to take part in their Trick-or-Trash Halloween Wrapper Recycling Campaign. Students are encouraged to place their used candy wrappers in the collection box rather than throw them away in the trash.

Once the box is full, it will be sent to Rubicon where they will process and recycle the wrappers.

Collection runs from October 24th through November 4th.

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STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Andrew Lee, is in 7th grade at Carmel Clay Middle School in Carmel, IN. He began his piano studies at 8 years old and studies under Dr. Robert Palmer. Andrew has participated in various recitals and has received numerous prizes in statewide, national and international competitions such as the Steinway Junior Piano Competition, International Grande Music Competition, Franz Liszt Center International Piano Competition, World Piano Teachers Association International Piano Competition, Carmel Klavier International Piano Competition and many more. Andrew has performed in venues including the Palladium, Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall in New York, Saal Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria and Kleine Zaal Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Netherlands. In addition to piano, Andrew plays the clarinet, enjoys creating mazes and loves playing with his dog Dobby.

Over this past weekend, Andrew participated in the MTNA (Music Teachers National Association) Performing Competition that was held at Ball State University, and became the state winner of the Junior Division (Piano). As a state winner he will be moving on to the Divisional round scheduled in December.



FROM THE CLINIC

On October 18th Clay Middle School conducted vision screenings for the 8th grade students with the help of the Zionsville Lions Club. If your student was absent that day, the nurse will screen them at a later time. Students who did not pass with 20/30 vision or better will receive a referral letter soon regarding vision testing. A special thanks to the following PTO members for their help:

Liz Moore

Jessica Chang

Becca Rae

Stacie Orahood

Stay healthy!

-Nurse Julie Dickson



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COSTUME CONTEST RESULTS

Ghosts and Goblins Run
1st Place Costume Contest Winner:
Nicholas Anderson



VETERAN'S DAY ESSAY CONTEST

Social Studies students had the opportunity to honor all Veterans in the annual City of Carmel Veteran's essay contest. Sixth through Eighth grade students submitted three-hundred-word essays on the theme "Saluting Heroes".

The essayists' work was judged by local veterans and a winner (at each grade level) will have the honor of reading their essay out loud to all in attendance at the City of Carmel Veteran's ceremony on Thursday, November 10th.

Classroom winners included the following:

Anderson (Justice) - Henry P, Aaron R, Piper B, Austin Y, and Jordyn O
McGuckin (Avengers) - Anna W, Lauren M, Lita P, Andy C, and Penny T
Myers (Titans) - Karis L, Alex B, Kinsley M, Lena A, and Mira S
Patane (Apollo) - Ashlyn M, Madison B, Aby S, Joel J, and Phillip S
R Snyder (Poseidon) - Story H, Camryn L, Colin P, Rodion Z, and Reid M
Stewart (Atlas) - Isabelle D, Anabelle D, Annabell G, Halina P, and Ella S
Carr (Revolutionaries) - Ellie P, Shreya K, Shambavi M, Sheldon S, Charlotte M, and Chhavi C
Gafkjen (Legends) - Charlotte H, Maaik M, Patrick VH, Reagan F, and Matthew G
Giles (Visionaries) - Ash J, Ella K, Vaishu P, and Malia L
Wasemann (Visionaries) - Emily O, Hailey O, Rebecca L, and Emma N

Congratulations to all students and **special congratulations** to seventh grader, Reid McKay (Team Poseidon) and eighth grader, Ash Jacknik (Team Visionaries) for being selected as this year's winning essayists! Both students will have the honor of reading their work to Veterans in attendance on November 10th at the Tarkington. Both Reid and Ash will be awarded certificates and \$100 for their accomplishments. Way to shine, Trojans!

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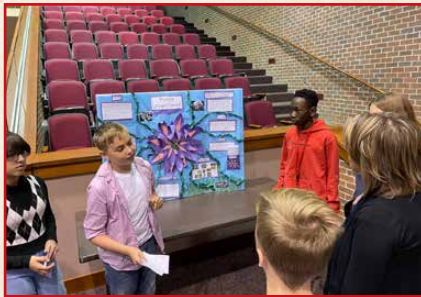
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6TH GRADE SCIENCE STUDENTS FIGHTING INVASIVE SPECIES OF INDIANA

"Everywhere we look, there are species damaging our natural ecosystems both now, and as we look into the future." 6th grade science students at Clay were tasked with coming up with creative solutions for solving these ecological problems. Students presented to members of the scientific community who are on the front lines of Indiana's invasive species problems. Members of this professional audience included scientists from the following institutions: Indiana DNR (Department of Natural Resources), Purdue University, Indiana-Illinois Sea Grant, Carmel Clay Parks and Recreation, INDOT (Indiana Department of Transportation), SICIM (Southern Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management), HIP (Hamilton Co. Invasives Partnership), Hamilton Soil and Water Conservation District, and NRCS / USDA (National Resources Conservation Service).



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please check
**Lost
&
Found**

LOST AND FOUND

Reminder to have your child please check lost and found outside the cafeteria area. We currently have a large amount of clothes, water bottles, and even library books that need to be claimed. The holiday seasons are coming up quickly and if we still have these items left when we leave for Thanksgiving Break at the end of November, they

will be donated to local charities as we have done in the past. There are so many wonderful community programs that help to support families who may be in need. **Any lost and found left at school on the last day leading up to Thanksgiving break will be donated.**

MATHCOUNTS

Attention all 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade Students!

MATHCOUNTS Meeting Dates

First Semester Schedule

Tuesday, November 8 – 7:30am in LGI

Tuesday, November 15 – 7:30am in LGI

***No meeting November 22 due to Thanksgiving!

Tuesday, November 29 – 7:30am in LGI

Tuesday, December 6 – 7:30am in Media Center

Tuesday, December 13 – **3:30-5:00pm School Competition** in Media Center

There is not a strict attendance policy first semester and all are welcome. Starting Tuesday, NOVEMBER 1, enter the building through **DOOR 1 only** (main entrance) no earlier than 7:30am but no later than 7:40am and Mrs. Arnold or Mrs. Grace will let students into the building. After 7:40am, students take the chance of not being let into the building until regularly scheduled entry. If a student misses a meeting and would like the practice sheets, they may see Mrs. Grace in room 622. Bring a pencil and calculator to meetings. See Mrs. Grace (room 622) or Mrs. Arnold (room 721) for the materials if you cannot attend a meeting.

We will have the **school competition on Tuesday, December 13 after school from 3:30-5:00** and that will be mandatory. The top 12 competitors will continue on with MathCounts practice and competitions during semester 2.



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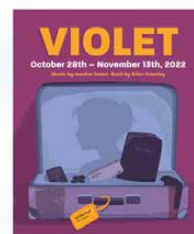
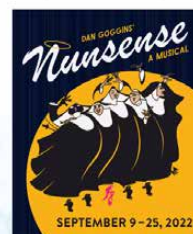
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FROM THE PTO

Order your holiday gifts at the **Clay Middle School Winter 2022 Store**, open online now until November 23rd! We also have CHS Greyhound gear for your rising freshman. We will be sending all orders home via backpack mail before winter break: <https://claywinter22.itemorder.com/shop/home/>.

We could use some additional food donations for our **Tuesday Treats** (monthly teacher appreciation)! Sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508084eaba92fa4fc1-clay1>

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Supporting Your Middle Grader

The middle school years can be exciting, as your child moves toward adulthood and enjoys new experiences. But they can also bring challenges, like finding ways to keep connected with your tween and helping him handle peer pressure. Here's how to support your child and help him thrive.

Stay in the loop

As your tween becomes more independent, he may not want to spend as much time at home or with you. These ideas can keep the lines of communication open and let him know you care.

● **Reach out.** Ask specific questions, like what he's learning in history class or who won last night's football game. You could also send texts or leave supportive notes for him. ("Good luck on your presentation. I can't wait to hear how it goes!")



● **Use car time.** Many parents find the car to be a great place for conversations with their kids. When you drive your middle schooler to piano practice or to get a haircut, make the most of it. If he's quiet, try talking about your day or sharing family news to get the conversation started.

● **Make friends welcome.** Social circles are important at this age. By encouraging your child to invite friends home or on family outings, you'll show that what matters to him matters to you. You may also get to spend more time together.



Build self-esteem

Middle graders can feel unsure of themselves from time to time. Help your tween develop a good self-image with strategies like these:

● **Encourage confidence-boosting hobbies.** Noncompetitive activities provide a safe way for your child to try new things and to believe in her abilities. She might work on the school poetry journal or join the environmental club, for instance. Or suggest physical activities such as yoga or rock climbing, which can make her feel good about her body without pressure to compete.



● **Be there.** Make your middle grader feel valued by attending events she cares about. For example, if she's on the sound crew for the school play, go to opening night. If she loves horses, take her to a horse show.

● **Celebrate strengths.** Everyone is better at some things than others. If your youngster puts herself down, challenge her to list at least five of her strong points. Examples: "I'm a good babysitter." "I have a great memory." When she wants to improve at something (say, skateboarding), suggest that she set a goal and make a plan for achieving it, such as practicing 30 minutes three times a week.

Middle Years

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continued

Supporting Your Middle Grader

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Be proactive about peer pressure

Tweens care a lot about what their friends think, and this is the age when they're most likely to be introduced to alcohol, cigarettes, vaping, and other drugs. But research shows they're also influenced by their parents' opinions. Help your child manage peer pressure and avoid dangerous behaviors with these tips:

● **Practice specific responses.** It's hard for tweens to think clearly when they're on the spot. Planning ahead can help your child make good choices. Role-play what she could do if friends asked her to drink beer, for instance. She might say, "No, that sounds dangerous." Or she could come up with an alternative. ("Let's go to the park instead.")

● **Encourage safe activities.** Help your child find groups centered around drug-free forms of fun. You might encourage her to sign up for a youth program at a community center, join a bowling league, or attend middle-school events at places of worship. Also, encourage her to think of safe ways to occupy time with friends (experimenting with hairstyles, playing Ping-Pong).

● **Keep talking.** Hearing the same message on different occasions will let it sink in and give your middle schooler plenty of chances to share concerns. You might bring up drugs by mentioning a news report you heard. Or ask what she learned about alcohol in health class. Be clear about where you stand and why, and discuss what could happen if she drinks, smokes, vapes, or does drugs. For example, she could become addicted, get grounded, or even be arrested.

Discuss bullying

Bullying tends to peak in middle school. Consider this advice to help your tween avoid being bullied—or avoid bullying others.

● **Set a standard.** Explain that if he isn't sure whether a comment or an action would hurt someone, he shouldn't say or do it. Suggest that he ask himself, "Would I act like this if my

grandparents or the principal were watching?"

● **Prevent cyberbullying.** Does your child text or post online? Remind him to type kind messages and to communicate only with others who do, too. Explain that if someone sends a hurtful or nasty message, he shouldn't respond, since that can escalate the problem. Instead, he should block the sender and tell you.

● **Take action.** Your middle grader can help stop bullying by speaking up. Let him know it's important that he tell a teacher or another adult if he is bullied or if he witnesses bullying. Also, talk about how he can respond to bullying. For example, he should stay calm, walk away, and get help.

Manage stress

More responsibilities at home and at school can cause your child to feel stressed sometimes. Try these suggestions for supporting her.

● **Stick to routines.** Knowing what to expect can make your youngster's life more predictable and less stressful. Help her set up routines that work for both of you, such as having her do homework right after school or packing her lunch at night. She might need to create new routines as her schedule changes. When swimming season starts, for example, she may have to do homework after dinner.

● **Pay attention to sources of anxiety.** Does your tween have a tendency to put off big projects and then stress about them at the last minute? Remind her of this, and brainstorm ways to prevent it from happening again. For example, she should start work sooner and perhaps buddy up with a classmate to stay on track. Or if she's irritable because she isn't getting enough sleep, set an earlier bedtime.



● **Watch for bigger issues.** Some stress is normal for middle graders. But symptoms that last more than two weeks may indicate a problem. If your child isolates herself from friends and activities, complains of headaches or stomachaches, or is often tired or sad, have her see her doctor. A professional can rule out physical causes and suggest ways to help if she has anxiety or depression.

Middle Years

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WAYS TO BENEFIT CLAY

FREE and EASY way to raise money for our school: By signing up with the following link, Kroger will donate a portion of your shopping trips (when you use your Kroger Rewards card) directly to Clay Middle.

<https://www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow>

School code is #RK877 for 'Clay Middle School'. Sign up now!

Clay Middle participates in AmazonSmile donation program! A portion of your purchases will be directly donated back to Clay Middle at no cost to you. Please click on the unique link below to be taken to smile.amazon.com where you will be automatically asked to support "Clay Middle School PTO". Our unique charity link is: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-7374823/>.



MLL FAMILY NIGHT

Clay hosted a special evening for the families of our multi-language learners on November 8th. The evening began with dinner in our cafeteria and opening remarks offered in both English and Spanish by Mrs. Gahl, assistant principal.

During the event, families were provided a translator and had opportunities to learn about community resources available to them. Clay staff also led workshops on our educational platforms- Canvas and PowerSchool. Members of our MLL team of support at Clay, along with district coordinator Mrs. Betsy Howard, also facilitated a session for parents to explain the WIDA ACCESS test and scoring—a test that is used to rate an MLL's English proficiency.

While parents and guardians were attending informational sessions, MLL students and siblings enjoyed a photo booth, decorated frames for their pictures, played games with peers, and visited stations showcasing the variety of elective classes available to them at Clay Middle School.

At the close of the evening, families returned to the cafeteria for a raffle, sponsored by the Clay PTO. Raffle giveaways included experiences at Birdie's Miniature Golf, Pinheads Bowling, Carmel Ice Stadium, FLIX movie theater, and Urban Air Trampoline Park. The PTO also raffled off six baskets with all a family would need to have a fun game night together!

Clay Middle School recognizes the importance of connecting with our MLL families and are grateful for all of the support from our community as we continue to foster relationships.



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