



Believe in Your Greatness

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

CLAY NATION NEWS

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Clay Nation,

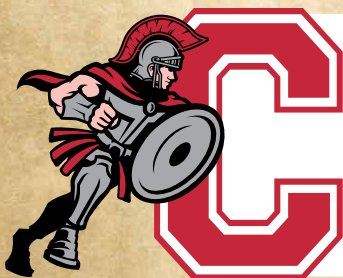
As we are quickly approach the end of the first quarter and Fall Break, I feel we have gotten off to a great start. **Create Greatness – Make a mark and see where it takes you** is our theme for this school year. In these first few weeks of school, our students, staff, and parent volunteers have been working very hard to ensure that Clay's greatness is fostered and created each and every day. Their efforts have been truly remarkable, and we have witnessed greatness both inside and outside of the classroom. Setting goals for the 2024-25 school year began with a vision of where we want to go. As we look to be the best middle school not only in Indiana but across the country, it is through reflection that we continue to get better and grow together. Our staff members have been collaborating on ways to differentiate lessons to challenge all of our students at the highest level and they are seeking out support from their colleagues and our school administration.

Since returning to school in August, I am so happy to see so many of our students helping each other and living out the **Clay Way**. Clay students are showing leadership and

seeking out opportunities for growth and enrichment, and most of all, based on this example, they appear to be taking an even more active role at Clay Middle School to "Create Greatness". The Clay Way, which includes **"Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Ready to Learn, Be Full of Pride,"** are the four pillars leading to a positive culture at Clay Middle School. Clay Middle School has a proven reputation of being an outstanding school with a constant commitment to exemplary education. We must give our students the best experience they can have in middle school. I was recently interviewed by one of our student editors, and they asked me what I felt was one of the most essential things any school needs. I immediately responded, "An identity, a solid school culture with a focus on PEOPLE."

As the principal of Clay, I believe we all share a responsibility to nurture young leaders and challenge them to reach their full potential. When your son or daughter shares their greatness with others, we all grow. I always emphasize that HOW we do our jobs is just as important as WHAT we do daily to make a difference in the lives of our students, staff, and the greater Carmel community.

...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...***CLAY HIGHLIGHTS****Sports Updates**

As our Fall sports season starts to wrap up, we would once again like to thank the athletes and coaches who are helping to mold and shape our young people into leaders. Your time and efforts are very much appreciated. Congratulations to our tennis, football, volleyball, cross country, and cheerleading squads as they are concluding or have concluded their Fall sports seasons. Thank you for always representing Clay Middle School with great sportsmanship. **THE CLAY WAY!!**

Onward to Victory Clay!!

Clay PTO

Thank you to anyone who donated to our 2024-25 Champions of Clay fundraiser. Every donation and contribution counts, and we appreciate all of your support. Thank you to our Clay PTO for all you do for the Clay Nation, from the volunteers who help in our lunch room to the treats provided on Tuesday Treats and the help provided when we have field trips and events at school. We can all agree we are fortunate at Clay to have such a supportive PTO. You all are truly remarkable! **We have successfully reached our goal!**

Clay MLL Family Night

On Tuesday, September 10th, from 6-8 p.m., Clay hosted a night for our multilingual families to come together for an evening of information, fun, and community. Pizza and fun for everyone! Thank you to all the staff who helped organize this event, our community partnerships and resource providers, and our parents and families who attended.

Clay Parent Book Club

On Wednesday, September 11th, Clay hosted "The Anxious Generation" Book Club / Discussion. We want to thank any parent who attended that evening to discuss youth mental health in the era of smartphones and social media (Reading the book is optional and not required for participation). Don't hesitate to get in touch with Mrs. Erin Naas (Clay Guidance Counselor) or Mrs. Catherine Gahl (Clay Assistant Principal) if you have any questions about future meeting dates and times.

Clay Celebrates Red Ribbon Week

During the month of October, Clay Middle School will celebrate Red Ribbon Week. Thank you also to our Clay Student Services Department, which helps to organize this fun and meaningful week for our students.

Clay Performing Arts Concerts

Throughout the upcoming months of October and November, we will experience some incredible concerts by our 6th, 7th, and 8th-grade bands, choirs, and orchestras. I would like to recognize all the time and dedication that our students put into their performances under the leadership of Mr. Frizzi, Mrs. Pote, Mr. Grifa, Mrs. Susie, and Mrs. Loren. (We appreciate all of you do!) Through the month of October, we will have our 8th Grade Orchestra Festival at the Palladium, and our students get to play together on stage with other students from both Creekside and Carmel Middle Schools in front of a packed house.

2024 Ghosts and Goblins 5K / 2K Run and Walk

Mark your calendars at Carmel High School for October 26th at 9 a.m.! Clay Middle School has always had a strong tradition of supporting this great community event by having the highest participation award among our middle schools. This year will be no exception, Clay Nation – We look forward to a great turnout from all of our awesome families, students, and staff!

Clay Book Fair

The Clay Book Fair will be right around the corner the first week of November. A great deal of time and effort always goes into this event, and a special thank you goes out to Mrs. Stephanie Swartzendruber. Thank you in advance to all of our parent volunteers who will help make this year's book fair a big success and also to any student or family that purchases items that continue to promote the love for reading.

Thank you to our School Custodians

During the week of September 30-October 4th we will celebrate our excellent custodians for School Custodian Staff Week.

Thank you to our School Bus Drivers

During the week of October 21-25 2024, we will celebrate our fantastic bus drivers for National School Bus Safety Week.

Thank you to all parents/guardians of Clay students. You are an essential part of our success as a school, and we would like to recognize all your hard work and effort in prioritizing your child's education.

I am happy to announce that the **Clay Nation** is alive and well.

I would like to challenge all Clay Trojans to continue to help us "**Create Greatness.**" Together, we will take the Clay Nation to even greater heights. Your continued support is appreciated and recognized.

Reminder to follow us on Twitter @ClayTrojans #ClayGreatness

GO TROJANS!

Sincerely,

Todd A. Crosby
Principal



UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES

OCTOBER		
Sept 30-Oct 4	School Custodian & Maintenance Staff Week	
October 1, 2024	7th Grade Fall Choir Concert	6:00-7:00 PM
October 1, 2024	6th Grade Fall Choir Concert	6:45-7:45 PM
October 1, 2024	8th Grade Fall Choir Concert	7:30-8:30 PM
October 2, 2024	Late Start	
October 4, 2024	1st Quarter Ends	
October 7-11 2024	Fall Break	
October 16, 2024	Late Start	
October 18, 2024	PTO Meeting	
October 21-25, 2024	National School Bus Safety Week	
10/22/2024	8th Grade Orchestra Festival at the Palladium	1:00-2:00 PM
October 23-27	Red Ribbon Week	
October 24, 2024	7th/8th Grade Band Concert	6-7 PM
October 24, 2024	7th Orchestra Concert	6-7 PM
October 26, 2024	Ghost & Goblins 5k/2k Run/Walk (CHS)	9AM-12PM
October 30, 2024	Late Start	
NOVEMBER		
November 1-8, 2024	Book Fair Week	
November 13, 2024	Late Start	
November 14-16, 2024	Musical Performance	6:00 PM
November 15, 2024	PTO Meeting	
November 20	Education Support Professionals Day	
November 27-29, 2024	Thanksgiving Break	

SUPPORT A GREAT EVENT, CLAY NATION!

Clay has a long-standing tradition of incredible participation in this event.

Thirteen years in a row!

**CARMEL EDUCATION
FOUNDATION**
NEWS & UPDATES



16TH ANNUAL



GHOSTS & GOBLINS
5K/2K RUN/WALK • 2024

16th Annual Ghosts & Goblins 5k/2k

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Carmel

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STUDENT SERVICES

Clay Middle School Student Services Department promotes the academic, social, emotional, and career development of all students. The counseling program is preventive, proactive, and reactive. Our counselors serve as advocates for the students while collaborating with parents, staff, and the community to assist students in reaching their full potential. Each student has a counselor and student services coordinator/school social worker assigned to them.



2024-2025 Student Services Staff

Holly Baker Banninga
Administrative Assistant

Kym Roberts
School Psychologist

Michelle Janson
Counselor
All 7th Grade
6th Grade Teams 6-2 & 6-3

Erin Naas
Counselor
All 8th Grade
6th Grade Team 6-1

Gina Potter, MSW
Student Services
Coordinator
All 7th Grade
6th Grade Teams 6-2 & 6-3

Britney Coats, MSW
Student Services
Coordinator
All 8th Grade
6th Grade Team 6-1



WELCOME TO

SCHOOL YEAR



2024 / 2025

NEW FAMILIES

For all new enrollees to Clay Middle School, if you haven't provided two proofs of residency, please email those to our registrar, Mrs. Holly Baker Banninga, at hbakerba@ccs.k12.in.us.

Proof of Residency

(These must be in the parent's name):

- Purchase agreement, closing documents, deed, lease, mortgage document, or property tax statement

AND

- Gas or electric utility bill (ie: IPL, Vectren or Duke - *other utilities not accepted*) If you have not received your first utility bill, please provide within 30 days.



Online Free and Reduced Meal Application



FAMILY SUPPORT

Dear Parents and Families,

We want to ensure all students have the necessary resources to inspire greatness. If your family is in need of assistance throughout the year please contact your child's assigned school social worker or complete our **Family Resource Assessment** <https://goo.gl/forms/QN5wQQCNI6iKxYa43>

[Free and Reduced Meal Application](#) is available Online.

Please remember this must be completed every year.

If there are any questions please contact our School Social Workers:

Gina Potter, LSW - gpotter@ccs.k12.in.us

Britney Coats, LCSW - bcoats@ccs.k12.in.us

THE GREEN SCENE

The Team Atlas Green Team is collecting gently used athletic shoes to donate to the MORE Foundation Group now through the end of August!

There are just 3 easy steps to follow!

Step 1 Donate your gently used athletic shoes by placing them in the collection boxes across from the main office.

Step 2 Once the boxes are full, they are shipped for free!

Step 3 Donating shoes keeps them out of landfills. The proceeds from the shoes help the MORE Foundation plant thousands of trees each year which offsets the carbon in the atmosphere and can help bring families out of poverty.

So please....

DONATE your athletic shoes today. All sizes are needed!

Visit morefoundationgroup.org for more information!

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- **Winter Session 2** runs from January to March

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PARENT BOOK CLUB

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION

- Gain a deeper understanding of the factors contributing to anxiety in teens.
- Discover practical strategies to support healthy phone habits in your family.
- Connect with other parents, educators, and community members who share your concerns.

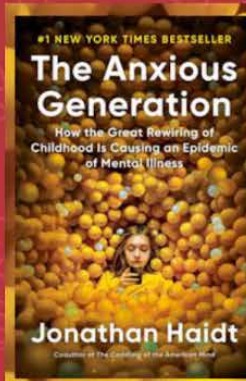
HOW TO JOIN!

- Complete this [google form](#) to rsvp your participation
- To purchase the book (hard copy, kindle, audio) visit this [LINK](#)
- You may attend sessions as you are able—we get that life happens, and want to hear your input even if you're not able to make it to every discussion.

Clay Middle School

PARENT BOOK CLUB

REGISTER NOW



Parents everywhere are trying to figure out how to maintain healthy technology habits for their kids, and it's not easy!

Join Erin Naas and Catherine Gahl, hosts of a Parent Book Club to discuss the book, "The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness," by Jonathan Haidt.

This book explores youth mental health in the era of smartphones and social media – and outlines a plan for a healthier, freer childhood.

**CLAY MIDDLE SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER
6:00 P.M.**

**11TH
SEPT**

**2ND
OCT**

**23RD
OCT**



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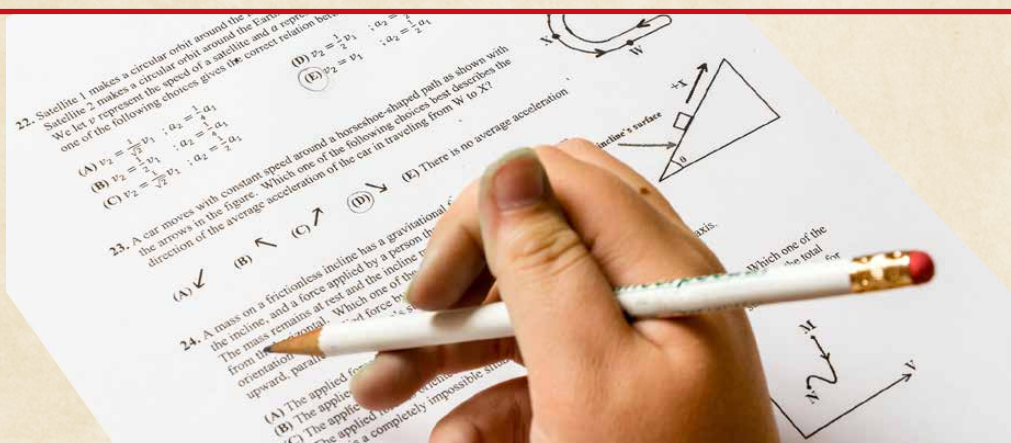
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HOMework: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

Parents can help children succeed with homework by providing clear messages about the importance of homework and specific support strategies. Expect children to complete homework and hand it in when it is due. Holding children accountable for homework builds responsibility and time management skills.

STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING HOMEWORK COMPLETION

- **Check in with your children every day.**
- **Establish clear homework routines.**
 - o Identify a location where homework will be done.
 - o Make sure children have all the materials needed to complete homework assignments (e.g., pencils, erasers, paper, dictionary, calculator).
 - o Decide on the best time to do homework (e.g., right after school, just before or after dinner).
- **Supervise but don't micromanage.**

Some children will need more help with homework than others, but a general rule of thumb is *provide the minimum help necessary for the child to be successful.*
- **Help children establish and maintain organizational systems.**
 - o Placing the homework in the appropriate folder or notebook and backpack.
 - o Cleaning off the desk or workspace so that the next homework session can begin in an orderly environment.

(Excerpts from article by Peg Dawson, EDD, NCSP - published by the National Association of School Psychologists)

https://www.nasponline.org/Documents/Resources and Publications/Handouts/Families and Educators/Homework_a_Guide_for_Parents.pdf

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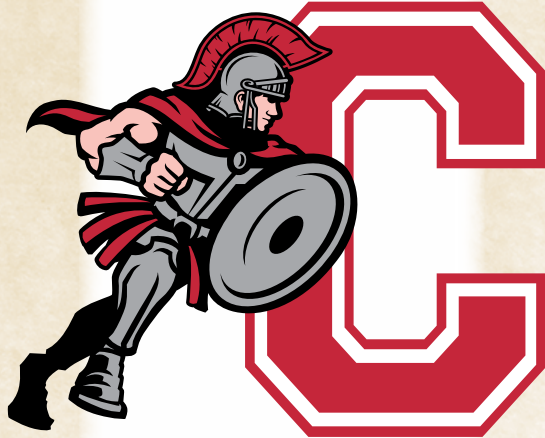
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THE CLAY WAY

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Be Responsible
Be Ready to Learn
Be Full of Pride



VETERANS ESSAY CONTEST

Looking to honor our nation's heroes? Looking to win some money? Check in with your Clay Social Studies teacher about how to do both!

Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth grade teachers are offering two essays for students and both focus on our nation's Veterans. The City of Carmel Veterans Essay Contest "A Legacy of Loyalty and Service" as well as the VFW "My Voice in America's Democracy" are available to all Clay students through Social Studies classes. All essays should be submitted to your child's Social Studies teacher by September 20, 2024 at 330 PM. Get writing!

This is where kids come to catch up and get ahead in math.



Is your child realizing their potential in math? Results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress show an alarming decline in math scores nationwide¹ – clear evidence of the toll the pandemic has taken on students. But there's plenty of time to turn things around with personalized math instruction at Mathnasium. A customized learning plan will focus on what your child needs to improve their math skills and build their confidence for the rest of the school year! ¹National Assessment of Educational Progress

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BECOME A PART OF THE CLAY NATION



Like many companies and organizations across the country, Carmel Clay Schools faces unique challenges due to labor shortages. We continue to remain well-staffed with teachers and full-time employees; however, we are in dire need of substitutes.

With more than 1,000 teachers throughout the district, absences due to personal or family illnesses, well-deserved personal days off, and professional development are expected. However, with fewer substitutes available, schools' resources are stretched thin.

If you have ever thought about joining the team at CCS, please consider the following:

- Substitutes can work part-time and select their availability. We are happy to try and accommodate your schedule for partial shifts if needed due to conflicts.
- While we hope substitutes are willing to work wherever needed, subbing is a great way to stay involved with your child's school.
- We offer training! If you are new to substituting or a little nervous to get started, don't worry! Every substitute and new staff member has required onboarding and training before heading into the classroom.
- Especially this year, it is so important to keep our students' learning environments consistent. Join our team and help us avoid any disruptions due to staffing shortages.

Please use Job #4105 (under substitutes) when applying. If you have any questions about becoming a substitute [please email Kelli Hackett](mailto:kelli.hackett@ccs.k12.in.us).



Carmel Clay Schools is also hiring Food Services, Edu-Care Staff and Bus Drivers. These part-time, flexible positions are also a great way to stay involved in our school system and serve the community. A variety of positions and locations are available.




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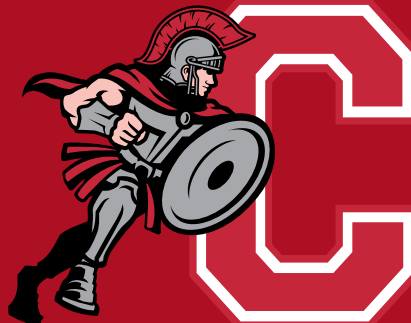
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CLAY
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HOME OF THE TROJANS

8th Grade Celebration
Tues, May 20th



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PTO Annual Fundraiser



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