



*Building a Legacy of Greatness!*

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

# CLAY NATION NEWS

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

*"In diversity there is beauty and there is strength."*  
– Maya Angelou

Dear Clay Nation,

Welcome back from spring break everyone. I hope that each of you had an opportunity to rest and relax with your children and families. What a great honor it was for the city of Indianapolis to host the entire 2021 NCAA March Madness Basketball Tournament. Thank you for a great tournament!

We are excited as we enter April and May with the same motto as the Indianapolis 500 drivers for the greatest spectacle in racing...  
**TO FINISH STRONG!**

With approximately six weeks left to go and a lot still left to complete, we will continue to encourage our students to give their very best, have pride in who they are and their abilities so they can live out the CLAY WAY.

### CLAY HIGHLIGHTS

#### Spring Sports are Underway

Our spring sports for softball, baseball and track and field are now well underway. Our student athletes are working hard to prepare for their competitions and representing Clay Middle School with great sportsmanship. I would like to take a moment to thank all of our coaches and our athletic director, John Corcoran for all of their support in modeling a winning attitude for our student athletes. I would also like to thank you as parents for all of your support and pride for Clay Middle School. For more information, please feel free to contact our Clay Activities / Athletic Director, Mr. John Corcoran at [jcorcoran@ccs.k12.in.us](mailto:jcorcoran@ccs.k12.in.us) OR visit our school website at [www.ccs.k12.in.us/clm/athleticcs/](http://www.ccs.k12.in.us/clm/athleticcs/).

#### School Musical

This coming weekend we will be performing our spring musical, *The Lion King Jr.*

*...continued on the next page*

### ADMINISTRATION

Todd Crosby, Principal  
Brooke Cole, Assistant Principal  
Mark Smith, Assistant Principal  
John Corcoran, Athletic/Activities Director

BUILDING A LEGACY OF GREATNESS  
FINDING THE POWER OF OUR...  
OUR STUDENTS  
OUR STAFF  
OUR COMMUNITY



WE WANT TO BE THE BEST  
AT GETTING BETTER

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE *continues...*

Throughout these last two months, our students have done an amazing job preparing for this musical. This would not be possible without the guidance of Mrs. Miranda Susie and Mr. Patrick Anderson. They have been there for countless hours to support our student cast members and all of stage crew members, and for that we want to say a big THANK YOU! I would also be remised if I did not thank you as parents for all of your support and help with making this happen in a very challenging school year with Covid. We also would like to recognize the efforts of Mr. Jeff Frizzi, Mrs. Gretta Pote and Mr. Chris Grifa as they are starting to conduct instrument try ons for all of our incoming 5th grade students and our new redistricted students to Clay Middle School. These teachers and directors give an enormous amount of time to their students at Clay Middle School so that our school can compete at the highest level and in order for our students to have a wonderful performing arts experience in middle school. We are very fortunate to have an amazing performing arts department.

*We thank them for all they do!*

### **Education is a People Business – Together We Are Better!**

Over the last few months, we have celebrated and recognized the following people for their service.

- **School Safety Week-** Thank you to our school resource officer Greg Dewald
- **National School Counseling Week-** Thank you to our Clay Student Services Department
- **Food Service Appreciation Week-** Thank you to Amy Glover and our Food Services Department.
- **National Library Week-** Thank you to Stephanie Swartzendruber and Carole Fitzgerald for all they do in our Clay Media Center for all students and staff to promote the love of reading and writing.

At Clay, we believe that by showing appreciation to others, it allows us to better understand that it truly takes all of us working together to achieve success. There are a lot of people to thank on a daily basis for all the work they do here at Clay to make sure Clay remains a great school and these are just a few of them.

### **March – Disabilities Awareness Week**

During the month of March, we took time to recognize National Disabilities Awareness Week.

### **Successful Transitions**

As we look to transition our incoming fifth-graders to middle school life and we continue to prepare and transition our eighth graders to Carmel High School during this very “not typical” year with Covid, we must make the most of each day so that this eighth grade class looks back on their middle school experience with special memories of Clay.

For example, on May 12th we will be hosting our annual 5th Grade Open House (due to Covid – we will be asking families to sign up for time slots). Also, on May 13th, we will be having our open house for all of our new redistricted students to Clay Middle School.

I challenge all Clay Trojans to continue to help us **Build a Legacy of Greatness** together and we will take Clay Middle School to even greater heights. 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.

### **IMPORTANT APRIL & MAY DATES**

April 1-11, 2021	Spring Break
April 23, 2021	PTO Meeting
April -12-16, 2021	National Library Week
April 21, 2021	Administrative Professionals Day
May 10-14, 2021	Teacher Appreciation Week
May 20, 2021	8th Grade Celebration – Clay Middle School
May 26, 2021	Last Day of School for Students
May 27, 2021	Teacher Work Day
May 6-10, 2019	Teacher Appreciation Week
May 17-21, 2019	National Police Week
May 27, 2019	Grades Due

## Attendance

Please remember to call the school's Main Office (317-844-7251) or our Attendance Line (317-571-4450) for **ALL** attendance issues before 8:30am on the day of the occurrence:

### Full Day Absences

### Late Arrivals

If you are picking up your child early, please call the Main Office (317-844-7251) when you are on your way and we will call for your child to meet you in the office for you to sign out.



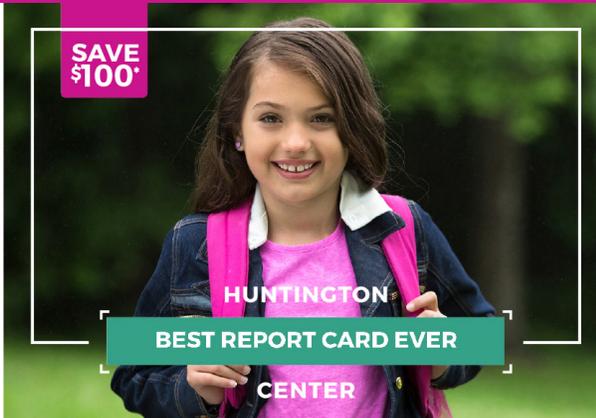
## AVID SPOTLIGHT

7th grade AVID students are finishing up a college research project and will present their college pennants after spring break. Other AVID 7 students have begun their career projects and are comparing the career they researched with that of another student. Recently, students earned a team-building game day! They worked collaboratively in small groups playing different games and had some well-deserved fun!

8th grade AVID students are currently in their descriptive writing unit. They're practicing showing vs telling and creatively crafting their papers to be a letter to a friend, or travel article, about their favorite places in the world. Next, we'll be preparing for their transition to high school and wishing them well on their journey to the next level!



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- Mary J.



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## TROJAN TECHS ROBOTIC TEAM

Down in the STEM lab, students set up orange, purple, and blue elements across their robotics playing field. Rotating and moving between these towers was "Alpha", a robot made entirely of Vex Robotics parts built by the Trojan Techs Robotics team.

For the first time in Trojan history, this year, Clay Middle School formed a robotics team.

Headed by Mr. Derek Dial, STEM and Robotics teacher at Clay, the team consisted of 8 students including Oliver B., Will B., Chhavi C., Anuva G., Thomas G., Fatima I., Julian R., and Rajeev S.

All of the team members are grateful and honored to have been able to be a part of such an interactive and amazing project.

"Robotics became my favorite part of school and I found interests in things that I never thought I would," said Anuva G., when asked about her experience in the team.

In less than about 2 months, the team was able to build a robot to compete in one of the last robotics competitions before the end of the season. Designing, building, and learning how to drive the robot proved to be a challenge but the team overcame these obstacles with their energized collaboration and hopeful outlook.

The competition, VEX Rise Above, was hosted by Cold Spring School in Indianapolis and took place virtually between February 17th and February 20th.

The objective was to gain points by stacking rows of the colored elements into towers and lining them all up into goals on the playing field with the robot. Two drivers, Anuva G. and Will B., were selected by the team to steer and control the robot for the competition, trying to accumulate the greatest number of points possible in 60 seconds. The Trojan Techs were able to score a total of 39 points with "Alpha" in the VEX Rise Above competition.



Although they were not able to make it to the Indiana VEX Robotics State Championship, they placed 14th in their competition out of 27 teams and finished in the top half in the state as 85th out of 176 teams.

The team views this as a significant accomplishment with the consideration of the pressed timeframe they were given to build and learn to drive their robot. They are proud of their work this year and hope for the best in the future for the Trojan Techs. The team would like to extend gratitude towards our Clay PTO and Admin for all of their support and allowing this to happen.



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## THE GREEN SCENE

### Green Team students recently participated in the Earth Hour Art Contest

Our top 20 entries were then submitted and can be found on display at the following locations around Carmel:

- Monon Center
- Muldoon's in the Carmel Arts & Design Center
- Carmel United Methodist Church
- Big Screen on the Green

[www.carmelartscouncil.org](http://www.carmelartscouncil.org)

Please stop by one of these locations and enjoy our students' artwork promoting energy conservation.



## 8TH GRADE WASHINGTON D.C. TRIP

Registration for the Washington D.C. trip is now open for current 7th graders to attend during their 8th grade year. Call 1-800-900-1776 and use the travel ID number of: **35462103**.

Registration will remain open until all available spots are filled. Contact Chad Carr at [ccarr1@ccs.k12.in.us](mailto:ccarr1@ccs.k12.in.us) if you have any questions/concerns.



## GRADES K-8 TAKE CHROMEBOOKS HOME FOR THE SUMMER



Students grades K-8 may use Chromebooks for educational review, if appropriate for your family.

\*Only those students not returning to CCS should return Chromebooks. All others, grades K-8, regardless of change in schools or grade levels within the district should keep your Chromebook.

Or unplug for the summer!

Choose a safe place to store device and charger and bring it back in August when we return to school.



Please have your child bring their school-issued device fully charged.



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- Winter Session 1 runs from November to January
- Winter Session 2 runs from January to March

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## WRITING CONTEST

Congrats to 7th Grader, Yerik C., who won Carmel Clay Schools' first Diversity, Equity and Inclusion writing contest: Black History Month Juneteenth Art and Poetry Contest. Over 160 middle school students entered the contest. Yerik's English classroom was awarded a Black History Prize Package. Yerik's poem can be seen below.

What is freedom?  
 What does it mean to be free?  
 Is it being able to vote?  
 Is it being your own person?  
 Why do some not have it?  
 Is it morally right to not?  
 Why do we as people go wrong?  
 We do right, then wrong over and over.  
 When do we learn to be better?  
 Is it after protest?  
 Is it after riots?  
 Time and time again, we as a whole have done wrong.  
 Slavery, World Wars, Terrorist acts.  
 It's not one person, one religion, one race.  
 We are not so different.  
 We all bleed the same.



If we are all the same species what need do we have to discriminate?  
 Juneteenth, a bittersweet day on our calendars is the perfect example.  
 A day where millions of people had the basic right of being free.

How wrong is that?  
 If we truly believe we are the best how could we choose to dehumanize our own people?  
 Juneteenth reminds us of what we must never do again.  
 I believe that we can thrive.  
 That we can learn how to love again.  
 That we can not only forgive ourselves but others.  
 Many examples throughout our history show that we can change.  
 Humanity's biggest strength is change.  
 As we look on the day of Juneteenth we as people appreciate others.  
 On Juneteenth we celebrate for our brothers and sisters.  
 On Juneteenth we march, we parade, we love.  
 We do this all to appreciate the day in which are people were freed.  
 In which humanity learned to love again.

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*Must possess the ability to read, write and speak effectively in the English Language*

### STAFF TESTIMONIALS

I love working in Food Services (12 years!) and will continue until I retire!  
-Susie

CCS has been the hidden gem in my life as a chef. I never knew there was more to Food Service than what I was exposed to as a culinarian until I came here. I felt the warmth and love in the room and instantly wanted to be a part of this team! We are a family instead of a group of colleagues. Thank You CCS Family!  
-Darnell

The hours are great and the pay is outstanding! I've made some good friends over the past 6 years working in Food Services - the atmosphere is amazing!  
-Mitzi

It is wonderful to have summers, winter break, and spring break off, same as the students! You don't take the job home with you at the end of the day - you are done! It's nice to be part of a district that cares about staff & students!  
-Beth

I started working at CCS about 10 years ago and I love it here! I love the team-work aspect of the job where we all work together to make something that students really enjoy. I also love seeing and interacting with the students each day and meeting new people. It is a rewarding job and I'm glad to be part of it!  
-Mervat

I am home around the same time as my children, enabling me to spend time with them after school. My greatest enjoyment is serving and being around kids, and specifically kids with special needs, putting a smile on their faces!  
-Lulu



## FREE WAYS TO BENEFIT CLAY



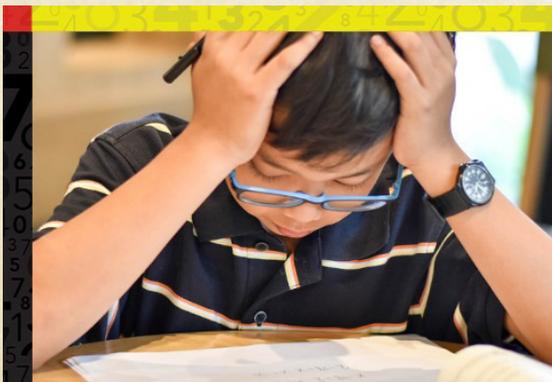
**FREE and EASY way to raise money for our school:** By signing up with the following link, Kroger will donate a portion of your shopping trips (when you use your Kroger Rewards card) directly to Clay Middle.

[www.kroger.com/account/enroll-CommunityRewardsNow](http://www.kroger.com/account/enroll-CommunityRewardsNow)

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



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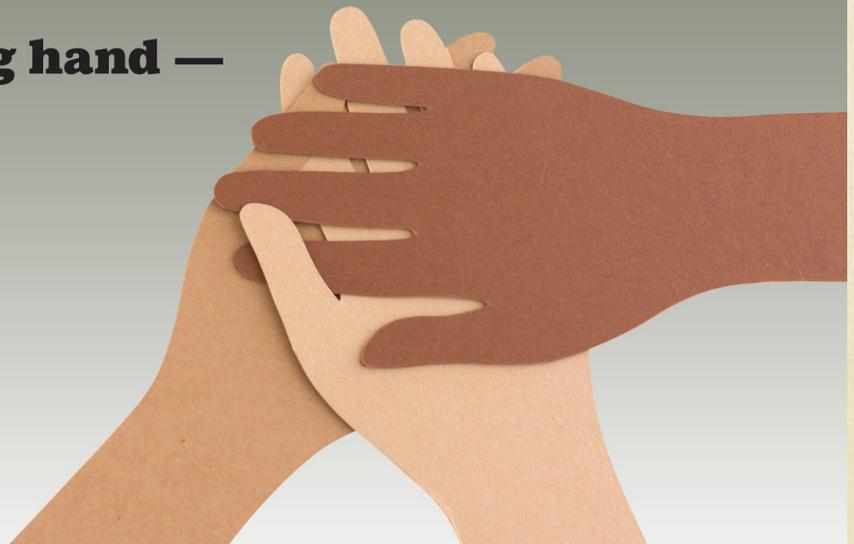
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## MATHCOUNTS

### MathCounts Chapter Invitational

Congratulations to Michael Q., William Z., Alex S. and Jennifer H. who competed in the Central Indiana Chapter Mathcounts Invitational on February 25th.

*These students did an outstanding job representing Clay!*

Michael Q. placed 2nd, Jennifer H. placed 6th, and Alex S. placed 11th.



### MathCounts STATE Competition

Michael, Alex, and Jennifer moved on and competed in the State Competition on March 25th. To get to this point this year has been very difficult and quite impressive. We are so proud of them for their dedication and hard work!

The results are to be posted on April 2 and then on to the NATIONAL competition for those that qualify.

### BREAKING NEWS!

Over Spring Break, the results of the 2021 MathCounts State Competition came in!

We had 3 Clay students competing in the state competition and we are proud of all three students for making it to state!! This was quite an accomplishment this year as less students were allowed to move on to state, only 51 of the top mathletes in all of Indiana were able to compete at this level.

Alex S. ranked 24 out of the 51 state competitors.

Jennifer H. ranked **THIRD** in the state as a seventh grader.

And Michael Q. ranked number 1 in the state!! This is an amazing accomplishment! He is our **first ever student to win the state competition!**

**Jennifer and Michael will be 2 of only 4** students that will continue to compete and represent the state of Indiana at the National Competition May 8-10. Clay has NEVER had 2 students competing at the Nationals the same year! AMAZING work! Please congratulate them and wish them luck if you see them.



## RECLAIM YOUR SMILE & CONFIDENCE



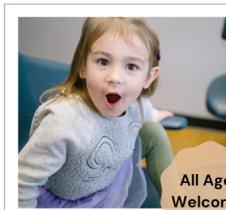
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The 21st Century Scholars Program provides income-eligible students the opportunity to earn a scholarship that covers up to four years of tuition and regularly assessed fees. 21st Century Scholars support eligible students and parents with the tools they need to prepare for college, graduate on time and begin a successful career.

Indiana's 7th and 8th grade students can apply for the 21st Century Scholars Program if their families meet the eligibility guidelines. All students must apply by June 30 of their 8th grade year. Please visit <http://scholars.in.gov/> to learn more and apply!

**If you have any questions please contact Gina Potter, LCSW at [gpotter@ccs.k12.in.us](mailto:gpotter@ccs.k12.in.us).**

## HIGH SCHOOL

If your 8th grade student is planning to attend a school other than Carmel High School for their 2021-2022 freshman school year, you must complete our [withdrawal form](#).

This form can also be found on Clay Middle School's home webpage. Follow the link at the bottom of the page to 'Student Services' and then select 'Current Students' to fill out the [withdrawal form](#) and return to our office.

## ILEARN

### ILEARN Testing Begins the Week of April 19, 2021

April 19/20	Math Computer Adaptive Test and Performance Task
April 23/26	ELA Computer Adaptive Test
April 29/30	ELA Performance Task 1 & 2
May 6/11	Science Computer Adaptive Test & Performance Task

#### Before the test...

- Get a good night's sleep the night before the test.
  - This means at least 8 hours of sleep!
- Eat a good breakfast before the test.
- Be on time!
- Take a deep breath...try to relax and do your best.



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**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in our Community**

**April 15, 2021  
4 PM via Zoom**

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**<https://forms.gle/Xbh59cvnBHhVPrVL9>**

Join CCS's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer, Terri L. Roberts-Leonard, for the next Courageous Conversations Series event! You can register for this zoom event by completing this Google form - <https://forms.gle/h6fd5xQzrv6YduB87>.



*Tickets are now available to watch the streamed performance of this year's school musical, Disney's The Lion King JR!*

**Streamed Performances Dates:**

- Saturday, April 24 at 7:00PM (Primary Cast)
- Sunday, April 24 at 2:00PM (Understudy Cast)

[Get your Tickets HERE](#)

The 60-minute musical, designed for middle-school aged performers, is based on the Broadway production directed by Julie Taymor and the 1994 Disney film. The 6th-8th grade cast and crew contains approximately 50 students led by Mrs. Miranda Susie and Mr. Patrick Anderson.

*The Lion King JR.* tells the story of the epic adventures of a curious cub named Simba as he struggles to accept the responsibilities of adulthood and his destiny as king. Along the way, the young lion encounters a colorful cast of characters including spunky lioness Nala, charismatic meerkat Timon, and loveable warthog Pumbaa. To claim his rightful place on the throne and save his beloved Pridelands, Simba must find his inner strength and confront his wicked Uncle Scar. The Lion King JR. features classic songs from the 1994 film such as "Hakuna Matata" and the Academy Award®-winning "Can You Feel the Love Tonight" as well as additional songs penned for the Broadway production.

## CLAY SPEECH & DEBATE WRAPS UP UNIQUE SEASON

The 2020-21 school year has been a challenging one for all, especially when it comes to extracurriculars, and the Speech & Debate club was no different. Over 40 students participated from October through February, devoting a lot of time outside of school hours to preparing for competitions that were not even scheduled yet or were tentatively scheduled and could be canceled at any moment. Needless to say, it was a different experience for these kids.

However, their hard work and dedication to refining their talents was rewarded as Clay was able to participate in multiple events, including one in Kentucky. The other aspect that made this experience different was that all competitions were virtual, as students participated in synchronous (live) events like Impromptu, or asynchronous (pre-recorded entries uploaded to YouTube) events such as Poetry. In the two Indiana events that Clay participated in they finished 3rd out of eleven teams in the Canterbury Invitational and concluded the season with a 2nd place finish out of eleven teams at the Bloomington BIG Ideas Tournament in February.

Having A-K and L-Z students practice on separate days was challenging, and not getting to compete in live, in-person events was frustrating, but these kids certainly made the best of it. Special thanks go to the leadership exhibited by the following eight grade students: Eesha S., Megan A., Nava G., Fatima I., Akshay P., George D., Aleeza P., Margaret H., and William Z.. Many thanks also go out to all of the parents that supported everything we did this season behind-the-scenes to help their students participate.

Over the last two seasons the Clay Speech & Debate program has re-established itself as one of the top three middle school programs in the state, and we look forward to seeing these kids continue to excel in the 2021-22 season!

# 12 Building a Legacy of Greatness!

FINDING THE POWER OF **OUR** OUR STUDENTS... OUR PARENTS... AND OUR COMMUNITY

**BIKE TO SCHOOL DAY**  
**MAY 5, 2021**

Take your time!  
 It's a late start day!

Please follow all safety guidelines provided by your school.

**CARMEL CLAY SCHOOLS**  
 TOGETHER WE ACHIEVE



VISION STATEMENT  
 CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT  
 WHERE EVERYONE  
 ACHIEVES  
 SUCCESS  
 TOGETHER  
 #greatness



**Clay Coffee Cart**

Erin Mayer  
 Clay Middle

Steffy McCourt  
 Clay Middle

Mindful in the Middle:  
 A Book Club

**Great Idea!**



**CLAY NATION**  
 BUILDING A LEGACY OF GREATNESS  
 FINDING THE POWER OF OUR...  
 OUR STUDENTS  
 OUR STAFF  
 OUR COMMUNITY

**TROJANS**

WE WANT TO BE THE BEST  
 AT GETTING BETTER

**To Answer Your Question Podcast**

Ryan Snyder  
 Clay Middle

Gina Potter  
 Clay Middle

Clay Calm Corner

**Great Idea!**

