



# *Paving Our Path To Greatness*

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

# CLAY NATION NEWS

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Clay Nation,

Since returning from spring break the months of April and May has been very busy. We started and completed ILEARN testing in April and May. I would like to commend all of our students on doing their very best and giving a solid effort on these state standardized tests and thank you goes out to our teaching staff as well. Thank you to Mrs. Cole as Clay's building testing coordinator and Mrs. Holly Baker Banninga as our Clay Student Services Administrative Assistant for all of their organization on coordinating dates and test sessions. As we transition out of testing the emphasis has been on finishing this last month of school strong.

As I reflect back on this entire school year, I am amazed at how much we accomplished and how it took **TEAMWORK** by all of us (students, teachers, administrators, parents and our entire school community) to overcome the many challenges COVID continued to present as we moved through the school year. This was a year where even though we learned to adapt and remain flexible, we did not allow Covid to define our experience. We made

the most of the situation and we did what we had to do to stay together in person. In many cases we had to relearn and reteach what may have been altered due to the pandemic. I am so proud of our students and staff on their display of perseverance, dedication and willingness to take care of each other. I have witnessed our people helping each other (both adults and children) and the pandemic just reinforced to me that the "human element" is so critical to every person's true development. We need each other and we need that human interaction to grow and mature and learn things that we did not know.

In my tenure as principal at Clay, **GREATNESS** has been the expectation. This is what we have all strived for and longed to achieve. But perhaps how we get there is the most important. It is a great thing to be a Clay Trojan where the focus remains on being respectful, being responsible, being ready to learn from one another and taking pride in being a Clay Trojan. These are the four cornerstones of the Clay Way and they embody Clay Middle School. These

*...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...*

cornerstones are what we believe in and what we build our school culture around. I understand that these things do not just happen by just showing up each day, but they happen because we are intentional and purposeful with how we promote and instill these core principles with both our students and the adults that work at Clay. Truthfully, we are very fortunate to have such a supportive community that holds education at a high level.

As we close out another school amazing school year, it gives me great pleasure as principal of Clay to take time each month to reflect as I write my principals message on what I am grateful for. We do not ever have to look very far to see **GREATNESS** on display. Education and learning never stop and the moments where our students and staff are achieving excellence, I feel should always be highlighted and recognized to remind us that anything worth having is worth working for and also anything worth working for is worth having.

## CLAY HIGHLIGHTS

### STAFF AWARDS

#### Clay's 2002 Teachers of the Year and Semifinalists for Carmel Clay Schools Teacher of the Year:

*This award is voted on by students, parents, families and colleagues.*

- Mrs. Susie Fulp – 8th grade Science teacher and Science Department Chair
- Mrs. Gretta Pote – Clay Band Director

#### Clay's Support Staff Person of the Year

Congratulations to Mrs. Jennifer Pletcher (Clay School Treasurer and Administrative Assistant) on being named Clay Middle School Support Staff Person of the Year.

#### Carmel Clay Schools Food Service Person of the Year

Congratulations to Mrs. Amy Glover (Clay Middle School Cafeteria Manager) on being named Carmel Clay Schools Food Service Person of the Year.

#### Clay's Spring 5th Grade Open House

This was a huge success and we had a large turnout. The night was filled with exciting activities for students and their families, student tours organized to take our incoming 5th graders from Cherry Tree, Mohawk Trails, Prairie Trace and Woodbrook on an interactive experience at the middle school level. Our Clay Student Services Department (Mrs. Naas, Mrs. Coats, Mrs. Potter and Mrs. Janson) do a phenomenal job of organizing this evening with delicious food trucks available for our families as they arrive for the evening. Clay is very excited to welcome all of our new incoming 6th graders in August. **Gear up for GREATNESS!!** A special thanks goes out to several of our Clay student leadership

groups that helped that evening such as SRA, AVID, and NJHS in addition to all of our teachers that helped to participate in this event. Clay wishes all of our current 5th graders a great summer break.

#### 5th to 6th Grade Transition - Elementary Visits

During the month of May, Mr. Crosby, Mrs. Naas and Mrs. Coats made organized visits to each of our elementary schools (Cherry Tree, Mohawk Trails, Prairie Trace and Woodbrook) to do a Q and A session with our 5th graders that were getting ready to come to middle school. What is great about these visits is that on each visit we take 4 to 5 sixth grade students back to their respected elementary schools to speak with students about their first year in middle school. This is really a true student-centered experience where students lead the discussion. We are so proud of our Clay leaders – Super job everyone!

#### Congratulations to Clay 6th grader Brooks Kline

Brooks is one of three grand prize winners of the 2022 Sertoma Essay Contest receiving a third-place plaque. Thank you goes out to Mr. Anderson and Mrs. Giles for all of their support with this essay contest that Clay has been a part of for the past several years. Brooks was recognized at a Sertoma luncheon in May where in the presence of his family, teacher, social studies department chair he was able to read his award-winning essay to a large crowd of people. Awesome Job Brooks - great essay!!

#### Clay Middle School - Spring 2022 Concerts

As we continue to look for **GREATNESS** around Clay, I would like to thank our performing arts staff (Mr. Frizzi, Mrs. Pote, Mrs. Susie and Mr. Grifa) for putting on such incredible concerts in band, orchestra and choir. *Astounding!*

#### Clay ELL Family Night

In May Clay Middle School hosted our ELL Family Night where we welcomed all of our students and their families in our ELL program. This evening was filled with activities, community resources, arts and crafts and even pizza. We had a great turn out for this event from our children and parents. A special thanks goes out to all of our community partners that came in set up information booths for our families to gain exposure to more resources throughout the greater Carmel community. A huge thank you goes out to Mrs. Brooke Cole and Mr. Josh Lowe for all of their hard work planning this event. We would also like to thank all of our Clay staff members that came that

evening to help as well. This night was truly a memorable and rewarding experience for all who attended and we can not thank our families enough.

### Clay Dance Marathon for Riley children's Hospital

On Friday, May 13th Clay held its annual Clay Dance Marathon for the first time since Covid. Clay was chasing their own national and state record for a middle school. Our previous record was \$9,580.00. After a few weeks of promoting I am glad to report that Clay Middle School did not only break its record of \$9,580.00, but it crushed its past record by raising \$14,412. 24. This is truly remarkable. On behalf of our entire staff, we cannot thank you enough for your generous



donation to Riley Children's Hospital and the 2022 Clay Dance Marathon. Thank you to our wonderful student body and teaching staff for turning out for this awesome event – please know it is greatly appreciated. **THANK YOU, CLAY NATION,**

**FOR HELPING US SET YET ANOTHER RECORD.**

### Thank you Teachers!

During the month of May we celebrated Teacher Appreciation Week (May 9-13). As we reflect on the job of all educators across the country during this ongoing pandemic, we stop for a moment to say thank you for all you do to educate, model, empower and guide our youth towards success. Please know how much you are valued and appreciated.

### Thank you Officer Dewald!

During the month of May, we also celebrated National Police Week (May 16-20). As we reflect on the job of all educators across the country during this ongoing pandemic, we stop for a moment to say thank you for all you do to always put safety first and to help guide our youth towards success. Please know how much you are valued and appreciated.

### Thank you to our awesome Clay Community.

Since this is the last newsletter for the school year, I would be remised if I did not take time to thank you as parents for all you have given to Clay. Please know that we value our partnership with our school community and we realize that Clay is a GREAT school because your son / daughter comes to school ready to learn and live out THE CLAY WAY. Thank you again and I hope you have a restful and relaxing summer break.

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 take Clay Middle School in the direction of continuous success and excellence.

**"Continuing to Pave Our Path to GREATNESS"**

Todd A. Crosby, Principal

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## GUIDANCE

### Course Selection and Scheduling 2022-2023

It's hard to believe that we are entering the final weeks of the school year. We are proud of all of our students for their resilience and perseverance through yet another unique school year. We hope that all of our families enjoy summer break and begin to look forward to next school year.

We have completed our staffing and will continue to work to finalize 2022-2023 schedules throughout the summer. Requests for changes to course requests were due March 1, 2022. At this time, we have met the maximum number of requests for the majority of our 9-week elective offerings. Questions may be emailed to the appropriate counselor as noted below.

Regarding team placements, we want to remind students and parents that we do not take requests. Students will receive final schedules in early August. Although our student services staff does not work full time during the summer, we will be checking email messages periodically. We wish each of you a safe, joyful, and relaxing summer.

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### Erin Naas

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### Michelle Janson

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## SOCIAL STUDIES

In January, we recognize Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr on the third Monday for his life and dream that impacted our nation. In February, the Indiana Association of School Principals offered all students, in the state of Indiana, an opportunity to reflect on Dr. King, Jr's life and legacy. Out of fifteen Clay Middle School entries, five students' essays represented the Clay Nation in the IASP essay writing contest: Rebecca L (Team Poseidon/Snyder); Annabel P and Barrie T (Team Atlas/Stewart); Abigail M (Apollo/Patane); and Mathias A (Visionaries).

Clay Middle School would like to congratulate from Team Atlas, Barrie T, for earning second place in the Junior Division of the IASP writing contest. Barrie will be awarded a monetary scholarship of \$300 from the IASP for her work. Way to 'Pave your way to Greatness', Barrie!



## SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

Thank you to Carmel Clay Parks and Recreation for inviting Clay Middle School's 8th grade, science students to participate in focus groups designing the new nature park coming to Carmel. This was an amazing opportunity for our students to provide valuable input into the planning and developing of the Thomas Marcuccilli Nature Park!

## FROM THE CAFETERIA

**Some reminders as we close out the 2021-22 school year...**

- » \*SNACK ITEMS WILL RUN OUT BEFORE THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR IN ORDER TO REDUCE/ELIMINATE INVENTORY! If you feel it necessary, you may want to provide your student with snack items to bring to school.
- » \*Any funds left in your student's lunch account will roll over to the following year.
- » \*Please use EZSchoolPay.com to add money to your student's lunch account whenever possible.
- » \*Stay tuned to find out if the Free Meal Waiver will extend through the 2022-23 school year. We'll have more information at Back-to-School Registration in August.
- » \*If you're interested in employment with CCS Food Services, please fill out an application found on the CCS website. The hours are great, especially if you have school-age children!

As always, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns!

Have a great summer!

Amy Glover, *Café Manager*  
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aglover@ccs.k12.in.us



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## WELLNESS

On May 4th and 5th, the wellness department and the 8th grade SRA (student government) paired up to organize a fun run in honor of Caitlin Engel Kochheiser, a beloved Clay wellness teacher, coach, and avid runner who sadly passed away from cancer this last winter. All Clay students participated in the "Caitlin's Course" fun run during their wellness block. The outdoor course included five activity stations based on Caitlin's legacy and interests. Caitlin's Course was also a fundraiser for the Caitlin Engel scholarship fund and honorary wellness award plaque. As a thank you for donations, students received a race bandana, a silicone wristband, and a large Kona Ice treat at the end of the race. Due to the popularity of the event, the SRA was able to sell out of the prize packs and raise \$3,500. Thanks to all who participated and donated. It was a very meaningful event for the Clay Nation.



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## CRUSHING RECORDS!

Congratulations Clay Middle School for setting a state and national record for a middle school. As a school we fundraised \$14,412.24 for Riley Children's Hospital, crushing our previous record of \$9,580.50.

Thank you, Clay Nation, for your contributions and continued support promoting this event with your children. We are happy to be giving back to help children in need.



**CLAY GREATNESS AT ITS BEST!!!**



## 21ST CENTURY SCHOLARS

**Deadline for all 8th grade students is June 30th!**

21st Century Scholars is a scholarship which provides eligible students up to four years of undergraduate tuition at any participating public college or university in Indiana. To learn more or enroll visit <http://scholars.in.gov/parents/enroll/>. For questions, please contact Gina Potter at [gpotter@ccs.k12.in.us](mailto:gpotter@ccs.k12.in.us).



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**MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH**

**MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH**

May is Mental Health Awareness Month! Mental health is essential to everyone's overall health and well-being, and mental illnesses are common and treatable. So much of what we do physically impacts us mentally – it's important to pay

attention to both your physical health and your mental health, which can help you achieve overall wellness and set you on a path to recovery.

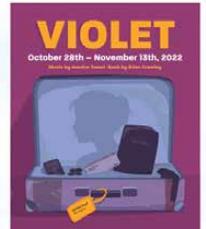
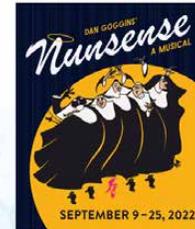
A healthy lifestyle can help to prevent the onset or worsening of mental health conditions, as well as chronic conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and obesity. It can also help people recover from these conditions. For those dealing with a chronic health condition and the people who care for them, it can be especially important to focus on mental health. When dealing with dueling diagnoses, focusing on both physical and mental health concerns can be daunting – but critically important in achieving overall wellness.

There are things you can do that may help. Finding a reason to laugh, going for a walk with a friend, meditating, playing with a pet, or working from home once a week can go a long way in making you both physically and mentally healthy. The company of animals – whether as pets or service animals— can have a profound impact on a person's quality of life and ability to recover from illnesses. A pet can be a source of comfort and can help us to live mentally healthier lives. And whether you go to church, meditate daily, or simply find time to enjoy that cup of tea each morning while checking in with yourself – it can be important to connect with your spiritual side in order to find that mind-body connection.

Living a healthy lifestyle may not always be easy, but it can be achieved by gradually making small changes and building on those successes. Finding the balance between work and play, the ups and downs of life, physical health and mental health, can help you on the path towards attaining and maintaining mental wellness.

For more information, visit [www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may).

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# 10 Paving Our Path To Greatness

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Spirit wear store is open and includes Clay and Carmel gear. Orders will come in and be sent home with your student in May.

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### Save the Date for the 8th Grade Celebration

**Tuesday, May 24th from 6 - 8:30 PM at Clay**

This evening event (just for 8th grade students) will be a great way for current 8th graders to say "see ya later!" to Clay and will feature games, dancing, snacks, and a whole lot of fun! Registration will be available mid-April.

### Committee Chairs

We need committee chairs for the PTO. Please reach out to [claypto.16@gmail.com](mailto:claypto.16@gmail.com) if you are interested in helping!

### Game Shack

We still need volunteers for the Game Shack during lunch. Please consider volunteering!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508084eaba92fa4fc1-makers1>

## INFORMATION ABOUT ATTENDANCE!

**ALL** attendance issues can be called into the Clay MS attendance line 317-844-7251 (full-day absences and late arrivals).

Please remember to call **ALL** of these in before 8:30am on the day of the absence.

FYI, you may call in absences at any time...even weeks before. We can input that information at any time and can record multiple-day absences in one phone call.

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FINDING THE POWER OF OUR...

OUR STUDENTS

OUR STAFF

OUR COMMUNITY



WE WANT TO BE THE BEST  
AT GETTING BETTER

# 12 Paving Our Path To Greatness

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



**CLAY NATION**  
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



