



Clark Middle School

December 2025

Newsletter



Don't forget to check out all of the festivities and decor at Prairie West Park this month including Clark's National Junior Honor Society sponsored tree covered in custom ornaments made by our members! Swing Choir has a tree next to it, too!

Happy Holidays!





FROM PRINCIPAL GRABER...

Happy December! Wow, it's hard to believe that we are at the end of the first semester. The holidays are right around the corner. For those of you that will be celebrating the holidays, I hope that you are blessed with great memories with friends and family. If you are traveling, please be careful and remain safe.

As we finish first semester, a huge shout out to the students, staff, and parents for your hard work this semester. For some, the transition to middle school has been a bit rough, but for others, it has been smooth sailing. Whatever your experience has been, I hope that you know that the staff at CMS are here to support and help you through this journey. Please remember that free tutoring is offered on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8:00-8:30. Additionally, students can see a teacher if they have questions about an assignment on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday during advisory. As the saying goes, "it takes a village to raise a child," the same type of analogy works at CMS. It takes everyone to have a successful school. So, Thank You.

Entering the winter season can be a bit difficult for some students due to family issues, etc. If you find that your child is struggling academically, please reach out to the staff. Our goal is to see all students succeed. If your child is in need of a jacket, gloves or hat to keep warm, please email me. Additionally, I have backpacks and school supplies if you find that your child is running low or needs a new one. I have money from a local sorority to help students that have a need. In addition, our counseling staff is here to help your child with school related concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact them... Ms. Jacobs (A-Hara), Ms. Vail (Has-Pin) and Mr. Biscan (Pio-Z)

I trust that you will have a very happy holiday season. Looking forward to the time away from school, so remember... students do not return until Tuesday, January 6.

Happy Holidays!
Mr. Graber



Dates to Remember

December 19
End of 2nd grading period

December 22 - January 5
Winter Break



Nurses' Note

Parents please check your emails as we have started sending vaccine letters. Contact the nurses' office if you have any questions or concerns.

Students Leaving Early

Please send a note in with your child in the morning and we will issue them a pass to leave class early.



Glasses, purses, jewelry...
Check out our lost and found!





Counselors' Corner

Mr. Biscan

Miss Jacobs

Ms. Vail

CogAT Testing

On December 3rd, the CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) was administered to students currently not identified (or only identified in one area) for high ability. If a student qualifies with a high enough CogAT score, they will then take the IOWA test for final placement into advanced classes. Families will receive communication from Central Office when test results are obtained.

Coming Soon--Scheduling 8th Grade Students for High School Classes

The second semester of school is right around the corner. As we move into February and March, the counselors will be working with all 8th grade students to talk about high school. While specific dates have not yet been determined, the middle school counselors will touch on topics such as graduation requirements and earning credits, what a day at Lake Central High School might look like, and what classes should be taken freshman year.

In January, the middle school counselors will collaborate with the high school counselors to plan for the presentations. Stay tuned for additional information!!

The Role of the School Counselor

If you would like to better understand our role as counselors in the school, please check out this digital presentation: [Role of a School Counselor](#)





Checking in with Officer Stamate

It's hard to believe we are already approaching the end of the year this holiday season! It definitely has been a wintery season so far. With the cold and snow upon us, I wanted to send some safety reminders for all the car riders, bus riders, and walkers. Our drop off and pick up procedures have not changed and seem to be going rather well thus far. With the snowy weather and plows out, cones and signs have been removed. Please continue to use the same procedures when dropping off and picking up your kiddos. One important reminder for those that drop off in the parking lot, please park in a parking space so you do not impede traffic. Keep the same flow of traffic as you would anywhere else. Please do not pull over into oncoming traffic to drop off your child. This is a big safety concern and we want to ensure their safety and yours. Please drive SLOW, SLOW, SLOW into and exiting the parking lot. Remind your kiddos to refrain from scrolling on their phones (and ear buds) when walking to and from school and or from the buses. This is a huge distraction for students and is just as unsafe as texting and driving. We've had to remind some students of this in our parking lot for safety reasons from time to time.

With our middle school students and social media usage, it has been a much better year overall and have seen a decline in improper cell phone use. Our problem apps with student use still seems to be Tik Tok and Snapchat. With new apps always evolving and "AI" starting to gain popularity, please refer to smartsocial.com for information on the new trends and apps to be wary of. We continue to talk to our students on the proper usage of their devices and ways to stay safe. If you have any questions or concerns regarding social media or gaming please feel free to contact me anytime.

I want to thank all of you for a great first half of the year and are still accident free! I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and holiday season this year and truly appreciate the Clark Coyote Community for all the support! Thank you!

Officer Nick

Library News

By Tina Genovese



Give with Grace Food Drive

This year, Clark's Help Club and Library worked jointly on a Food Drive, which was hugely successful. Clark students and staff were up for the challenge of helping so many people in need this season. It was heartwarming to see everyone pull together and donate what they could for such a great cause.

We named this drive, **Give with Grace**, in memory of an LC graduate, Grace Bentkowski, who was killed in a tragic accident at age 22. Grace's family has made it their mission to keep her name alive by spreading kindness wherever they can. After making contact with the Bentkowski Family, we were able to increase their donations and replenish the St. John Township Food Pantry, who were more than grateful to accept all the donations and restock their shelves, which were depleted. Our donations helped families in need in our own community.

The Bentkowski Family was grateful to the caring and giving students of Clark for helping their cause...it has warmed their hearts in so many ways. We showed Clark truly Cares!

Scholastic Book Fair at Clark

The annual Book Fair took place the first week in December. It was a smashing success, selling over \$12,000 in Scholastic books and merchandise. The Clark Library will receive a percentage of the sales to purchase new titles for the Library, which will be on our shelves for years to come.

A huge **thank you** to the volunteer parents who donated time out of their busy schedules to work at the Fair. It could not have been a success without the help of these dedicated parents. Thank you also to our new PTO team, who helped find many of the volunteers. If you didn't have an opportunity to shop or use the funds in your eWallet, there is still time to shop on-line. Clark will get credit for any purchases through December 14.

Also, if you have a remaining balance in your *eWallet* account, Scholastic will send monthly email reminders to whoever created the *eWallet*, letting you know your current Scholastic eGift Card balance, ensuring it is not forgotten. Funds can be used to fund a new eWallet (for next year's Book Fair), shop online with Scholastic, or contribute to Share the Fair.

Cozy up with a Good Book

Aspecialthanks to Jordan Genovese, husband of Clark Librarian Tina Genovese, who created anew fireplace in the Library for students to cozy up to. Jordan spent countless hours making this realistic fireplace that makes its appearance December thru February in the Clark Library for awarm and cozy atmosphere.



Thanks to all for a great Book Fair!



MAKE TIME STAND STILL



ORDER A YEARBOOK



HAL E CLARK MIDDLE SCHOOL
USE OUR ORDER NUMBER WHEN YOU LOG ON:

12888



YEARBOOKORDERCENTER.COM



QUESTIONS? CONTACT: KAREN SULEK • KSULEK@LCSCMAIL.COM •



**7TH AND 8TH GRADE
VOLLEYBALL RECAP!**



7th Grade Team

- 1 Summer Hayes
- 3 Londyn Jackson
- 4 Mia Pervan
- 10 Ava Brann
- 11 Natalia Cordova
- 14 Audri Villegas
- 15 Elina Ranich
- 16 Paige Oszust
- 18 Emilee Habas
- 19 Isla Sullivan
- 23 Hanna Lane
- 27 Brooklyn Chmielewski

8th Grade Team

- 2 Bella Bluett
- 6 Ellie Colburn
- 7 Reagan Cox
- 9 Aleah Gineris
- 12 Maci Goeringer
- 8 Ava Hulverson
- 22 Avery Konicki
- 20 Lia Kostopoulos
- 17 Sofia Pritchard
- 21 Alaina Schmidt
- 13 Brittany Usher
- 5 Maeve Vartabedian

The volleyball season was a fantastic journey filled with growth, teamwork, and plenty of fun! Throughout the season, players learned key volleyball skills and improved their overall volleyball IQ. They practiced hard at every game and drill, showing great dedication and improving with each match. Beyond the skills, the team developed strong bonds, supporting each other on and off the court. Most importantly, they embraced the spirit of the game, enjoying every moment, and celebrating their progress together. It was truly a season of learning, hard work, and great memories!





**7TH AND 8TH GRADE
VOLLEYBALL RECAP!**



Understanding Absences

Exempt vs. Excused vs. Unexcused

State of Indiana Attendance Expectation: **94% (10 or fewer days missed per year)**

Exempt	Excused	Unexcused
<p>Pre-Arranged Exempt Absences per Indiana Code:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page for General Assembly • Election Day Worker • Court Witness • IN National Guard Active Duty • Civil Air Patrol • Educationally related non-classroom activity as defined in IC 20-33-2-17.5 • Exhibiting/participating in state fair 	<p>An excused absence occurs when a parent or guardian chooses to keep their student home in the student's best interest.</p> <p>Acceptable reasons include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illness (parent verified) • Verified medical visit (note must be returned within 1 week or absence will be unexcused) • School sends the student home sick • Professional appointments (medical, dental, legal) • Death in the family • Religious holiday • Military connected families' absences related to deployment <p>A parent/guardian must notify the school <u>on the day of the absence.</u></p>	<p>Students should have ZERO unexcused absences</p> <p>An unexcused absence is any absence that is not classified as exempt, excused, or is not verified within 24 hours of an absence (i.e.the school was not notified in time).</p> <p>If a student accumulates 5 unexcused absences within a 9 week grading period, an attendance meeting will be held, as required by law.</p> <p>A student who accumulates 10 or more unexcused absences is considered <u>habitually truant</u> and will be referred to juvenile services in accordance with Indiana Code 20-33-2-25.</p>
<p>A student who misses 10% or more of the school year for any reason (18 days) is considered <u>chronically absent</u> by the state of Indiana. After 18 total absences, all absences beyond that will be marked as unexcused.</p>		



**MISS A DAY,
MISS A LOT.**

Attendance Matters

Help Us!

free educational equipment and supplies.



**You can help our school earn FREE
classroom equipment and supplies!**

Courtesy Of



- Shop at **Strack & Van Til Food Market** and save receipts
- Receipts must be dated between **September 1, 2025 - March 31, 2026**
- Please drop off your receipts in our collection box at school by **April 8, 2026**.