Claymont CONNECTION

A publication of the Claymont City School District

WINTER 2027

PROVIDING EACH STUDENT AN OPPORTUNITY FOR A LIFETIME OF SUCCESS



SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Claymont Families and Community Members,

As we reflect on the first semester of the school year, I am pleased to share this edition of our district newsletter with you. Our newsletter is one of the many ways we work to keep our families and community informed about the great things happening throughout our schools.

This edition highlights many of the activities, accomplishments, programs and opportunities that have taken place during the first semester. Each day, our students and staff are working hard in the classroom, participating in extracurricular activities, serving our community and representing our district with pride. We hope these pages provide a glimpse into the many positive experiences taking place across our district.

The success of our schools would not be possible without the continued support of our families and community. Whether you attend school events, support our students and staff, volunteer your time, partner with our schools or simply encourage a student, your involvement makes a difference. Strong schools are built through strong partnerships, and we are grateful for the commitment our community continues to show our students.

As we look ahead to the remainder of the school year, we remain focused on providing our students with meaningful educational experiences and opportunities for success. Thank you for your continued trust, encouragement and support of our schools.

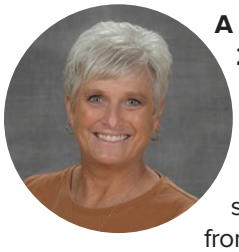
On behalf of our Board of Education, administration, faculty, staff and students, thank you for being an important part of our school community. We are proud of what we have accomplished together and look forward to all that the remainder of the school year will bring.

Sincerely,

Brian Rentsch
Superintendent, Claymont City Schools

OHIO SCHOOL FUNDING AND CLAYMONT CITY SCHOOLS

Kim Beckley, Treasurer



A Community Update on Fiscal Years 2022-2027

Claymont City Schools is receiving a smaller state share under Ohio's school funding formula. Across the six fiscal years shown here, the district's state share fell from 71.34% to 56.02%. State guarantees and supplements have cushioned the effect, keeping total foundation aid nearly unchanged while Claymont becomes more dependent on those protections.

Ohio public schools receive money from state, local and federal sources. The Fair School Funding Plan, introduced in FY 2022, calculates a base cost of educating students and estimates each district's ability to contribute locally using property values, resident incomes and enrollment. The state helps cover the remaining base cost and provides additional aid for needs such as special education and transportation.

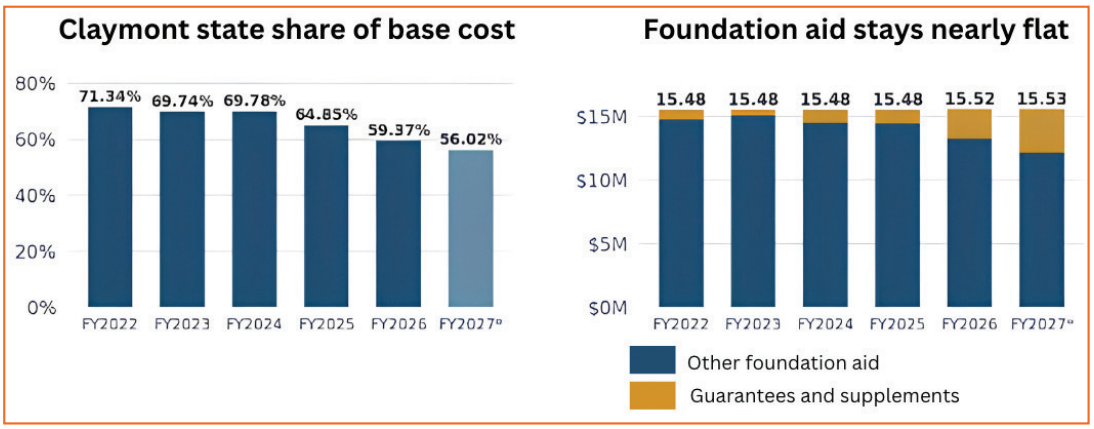
The "state share" is the state's calculated portion of that base cost, not its share of Claymont's entire budget. A lower percentage means the formula assigns more responsibility to local funding capacity.

Property values help explain this shift. Claymont's report shows property values rising, with growth since 2022 slower than the statewide average. Higher values can increase calculated local capacity and lower the state share. But rising valuations do not automatically bring matching tax revenue: Ohio's House Bill 920 generally reduces effective rates on existing voted fixed-rate levies as existing property values rise, subject to exceptions such as the 20-mill floor.

For Claymont, the state share declined 15.32 percentage points. The report's state share of base cost funding fell from $7.42 million in FY 2022 to $5.62 million in FY 2027, a decrease of approximately $1.80 million, or 24.3%. Ohio's FY 2026 and FY 2027 base cost calculations also continue to use FY 2022 statewide salary and spending inputs, limiting their reflection of more recent costs.

The effect on total aid is different. Guarantees and supplements rose from approximately $791,000 in FY 2022 to $3.4 million in FY 2027. These payments help maintain funding when the regular formula produces less. Total foundation aid increased only $51,141, from $15.48 million to $15.53 million, or about 0.3% across the period.

Nearly 22% of Claymont's FY 2027 foundation aid comes from guarantees and supplements. Those protections support budget stability, but nearly flat funding leaves little room to absorb rising costs. Future state budget decisions will remain important to Claymont's ability to plan for students.



SUPPORTING EVERY LEARNER, EVERY STEP OF THE WAY

Claymont City Schools believes every child deserves opportunities to learn, grow and succeed. From preschool through senior year, teachers, specialists and families work together to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities. Through individualized instruction, supportive learning environments and transition planning, the district helps students build independence and prepare for further education, employment and life beyond graduation.

Support can begin before a child enters school. Parents of children ages 1 to 3 who are concerned about developmental milestones, such as talking, walking, learning or interacting with others, can contact Help Me Grow or Claymont City Schools. The district can help connect families with appropriate services. Help Me Grow Early Intervention serves eligible children under age 3, and the district can help families explore preschool supports as children approach their third birthday.

Talking and reading with a child every day builds a strong foundation for learning. Sharing a book and having rich, back-and-forth conversations supports brain development, strengthens communication skills and builds oral language, an important first step toward reading. Parents can talk about the pictures, ask questions and give children time to respond. Children learn to communicate by participating in conversations and having their ideas heard and valued.

The Claymont Public Library is a wonderful resource for encouraging an interest in reading and learning from an early age. Choosing books together can spark curiosity and make reading an enjoyable family routine. Together, the district and families can help every child feel supported, discover their strengths and develop a lifelong love of learning.

TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT FOCUSES ON RELIABILITY, SECURITY AND RESPONSIBLE PLANNING

The district's Technology Department has focused on maintaining reliable, secure technology for students and staff while making responsible use of district resources during the first semester of the 2026-27 school year. Summer preparations included readying devices, accounts and classrooms for the new school year and completing technology work associated with the closure of the Intermediate School. Since August, the department has resolved several hundred support requests from students, staff and families while maintaining an average response time of approximately 30 minutes.

Improving Technology Infrastructure

Several infrastructure improvements were completed over the summer, including the installation of new battery backup systems at all district network closet locations. Funded through the federal E-Rate program, these systems help protect equipment from power outages and support reliable network access.

The department also successfully relocated the district's main network hub from the Intermediate School to the Central Office without significant service interruptions. Planning is underway to secure additional E-Rate funding to replace aging network switches that support computers, Wi-Fi, cameras and other essential building systems. Federal E-Rate discounts help reduce the district's cost for these improvements.

Strengthening Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity remains a priority as the district works with the OME-RESA cybersecurity consortium to meet new requirements established through Ohio House Bill 96. The department also implemented a new patch-management system that allows staff to identify and install important security updates on Windows computers throughout the district, helping reduce vulnerabilities and protect district information.



Planning for Future Technology Needs

The department is evaluating options for the next replacement cycle of student and staff Chromebooks. With technology costs rising, staff members are comparing devices, vendors and purchasing options to balance reliability with affordability. During the second semester, the Technology Department will continue prioritizing cybersecurity, network improvements, Chromebook replacements and daily technology support. These efforts reflect the district's commitment to providing dependable technology while making responsible use of community resources.

BEHIND THE SCENES: CARING FOR CLAYMONT'S SCHOOLS AND FACILITIES

The Claymont Buildings and Grounds Department works year-round to provide safe, clean and welcoming facilities for students, staff, families and community members. From maintaining classrooms and building systems to caring for athletic facilities and outdoor spaces, the district's custodial, maintenance and grounds teams play an important role in keeping Claymont schools running smoothly.

Much of the department's work happens behind the scenes, but the results are visible every day. Whether preparing buildings for the school day, completing repairs or maintaining grounds for school and community events, these dedicated employees take pride in creating an environment that supports learning and school activities.

Safety remains a top priority. The addition of new safety equipment strengthens the district's ongoing efforts to maintain secure facilities and improve emergency preparedness. The department continues to work closely with district staff to ensure equipment is properly maintained and used effectively.

Another exciting improvement was the installation of a new playground at Claymont Middle School in October. The playground provides students with additional opportunities for physical activity, outdoor recreation and social interaction.

Caring for district facilities is also a community effort. Visitors can help by using designated trash containers, respecting school property, following posted directions and reporting maintenance concerns or unsafe conditions to school staff. During school events, keeping walkways clear and leaving facilities clean helps ensure everyone can enjoy these shared spaces.

Claymont City Schools appreciates the hard work and dedication of its buildings and grounds staff, as well as the continued cooperation of students, families and community members.

Working together helps keep Claymont's schools safe, welcoming and ready for learning throughout the year.

CLAYMONT PRIMARY SCHOOL AND PRESCHOOL CELEBRATES A FALL FILLED WITH FUN, LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT

With winter in full swing, Claymont Primary School and Preschool is reflecting on a fall filled with excitement, learning and wonderful achievements. Claymont appreciates the families and community members for their continued support and for being such an important part of the school community. Here are some highlights from the first half of the school year.









The school's Title team participated in the East Central Ohio Educational Service Center's Annual Family Reading Festival in November. At the event, the team was honored with the 2026-27 Literacy Engagement Award. Beyond participating in fun activities with students at the Reading Festival, the Title team supports Claymont classrooms every day, helping students build the skills and confidence to become strong readers. Claymont is proud of the team and grateful for the team's dedication.

The Halloween celebrations brought plenty of smiles, laughter and spooky excitement. Students enjoyed showing off their creative costumes, participating in fun Halloween activities and sharing in the festive spirit with their classmates. Staff and families helped turn the day into a "spooktacular" success.

Staff connected with families during fall parent-teacher conferences. These meetings provided an opportunity to celebrate student successes, discuss academic and social development and work together to set goals for continued growth. Claymont City Schools values parent-teacher conferences as a key way to support each child's learning journey.

With colder weather keeping many families indoors, Claymont Primary encourages literacy at home as well as in the classroom. Simple ways to support reading include:

- Read together for 15 to 20 minutes each day.
- Visit your local library and explore new books.
- Encourage your child to talk about the stories they read.
- Let your child see you enjoying a good book!

Claymont looks forward to more learning, growth and celebrations in the second half of the school year.

AUTUMN ADVENTURES AT THE ELEMENTARY

This fall, students enjoyed many activities that brought learning to life. A Buster the Bus assembly taught important bus safety habits, while Right to Read Week and a reading parade celebrated the joy of reading and books. Students learned about their community and showed their pride on 922 Day. Firefighters taught students how to stay safe, and students toured a fire truck. The PTO Pumpkin Patch and Costume Parade sparked creativity and brought the entire school together for seasonal fun. The Kent State Tuscarawas Campus Performing Arts Center offered students a concert by Simply 3, which mesmerized them. Finally, the school honored those who served through the second-grade Veterans concert, connecting music and history with gratitude and respect.

Another fall celebration is the success of our district Title team. The team not only participated in the East Central Ohio Educational Service Center's annual Family Reading Festival but also received the 2026-27 Literacy Engagement Award. Winning the award is especially meaningful because it recognizes the district's own dedicated literacy experts. The team works together, helping students grow into capable, confident readers.









WINTER WONDER AND MUSTANG COMMUNITY PRIDE

During the holiday season, both staff and students model the district's CARE Promise to the community. Each year, the district runs a hygiene drive to offer items to families in need. Students and staff bring food donations to support the Christmas Food Drive for families in the community.



December brought all kinds of holiday festivities. Students and staff dressed for and celebrated a theme almost every day in December, including the North Pole, the Grinch, candy canes and more. This year, first-grade students performed their Christmas concert at Claymont High School in the auditeria. The school also sends students off for holiday break with a building-wide-sing-a-long.

Winter weather brings cold-weather events and activities. Claymont Elementary annually presents at least one evening full of math fun, and this year's Family Game Night will be held in February. Teachers plan this original family engagement night. This year, they are planning three life-size games, each to be played in a different classroom: Trouble, Monopoly and Chutes and Ladders. Families will then enjoy hot cocoa, cookies and coloring activities together. The school will raffle a family game basket for each grade level.

CMS STUDENTS ENJOY NEW PLAYGROUND

Completed in October, the new playground at Claymont Middle School (CMS) provides students with more opportunities to play, stay active and enjoy time with their classmates during recess. The school is excited to offer this space and looks forward to seeing students enjoy it for years to come.







MUSTANG MANIA BRINGS FAMILIES TOGETHER AT CLAYMONT MIDDLE SCHOOL

Claymont Middle School (CMS) welcomed students and families in October for Mustang Mania, a family engagement night filled with food, fun and community spirit. Families enjoyed games, local food, academic activities, balloon twisting and community tables, all while getting a closer look at what the school has to offer.

Families representing 200 students attended, reflecting the strong connection between the school and the community. The evening gave students and their families a chance to connect with teachers, staff and neighbors in a relaxed, welcoming setting.

CMS thanks the local businesses that donated food and supplies and the organizations that connected families with available resources. Their generosity and participation helped make this event a success.





MUSTANGS HELPING HANDS GIVE BACK

On Oct. 30, about 35 Claymont High School (CHS) students from the Mustangs Helping Hands group spent the morning raking leaves for neighbors around the stadium. Working together, students helped with fall cleanup while putting the group's commitment to community service into action.

The morning provided an opportunity for students to step outside the classroom, lend a helping hand and make a positive difference close to home. Their efforts serve as a reminder that even simple acts of service can have a meaningful impact on others.

CHS is proud of these students for giving their time and energy to support their neighbors and for representing the school with kindness, teamwork and Mustang pride!







THREE MUSTANGS EARN A PLACE IN MACY'S THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE

Congratulations to Liberty Link, Emery Calderon and Chloe Dean on being selected to march with the Macy's Great American Marching Band in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City.

The Tuscarawas County Board of Commissioners sent a congratulatory message recognizing this exciting achievement and the years of dedication behind it. The students' selection reflects countless early mornings, late nights and demanding practice schedules, along with a commitment to keeping up with their schoolwork.

Claymont is proud of these talented students and enjoyed seeing them represent Claymont on a national stage. This opportunity would not have been possible without band director April Linard, whose dedication and hard work made it a reality for students.

FALL SEASON ATHLETIC AWARDS

Claymont congratulates the following students on earning Inter-Valley Conference honors this past fall.

BOYS GOLF:
Owen Lindsey - 1st Team IVC
Jayce Miles - Honorable Mention IVC

GIRLS GOLF:
McKenna Rausch - 2nd Team IVC
Emilee Ellwood - Honorable Mention IVC

BOYS CROSS COUNTRY:
Karson Bazzoli - 1st Team IVC
Braxton Myers - Honorable Mention IVC

GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY:
Kali Wallace - 1st Team IVC, IVC Runner of the Year
Corabell Morris - 1st Team IVC
Emma McPherson - 2nd Team IVC
Riley Roach - 2nd Team IVC
Heidi Johnson - Honorable Mention IVC

VOLLEYBALL:
Elah Davis - 1st Team IVC
Brinly McMorrow - Honorable Mention IVC

FOOTBALL:
Heston Cranmer - 1st Team IVC
Calvin Edwards - 1st Team IVC
Jackson Jinks - 1st Team IVC
Camden McCall - 1st Team IVC
Kam Stout - 1st Team IVC
Zach Edgar - 2nd Team IVC
Parker Haney - 2nd Team IVC









CHS HONORS VETERANS WITH CEREMONY, LUNCH AND FLAGS

Claymont High School extends a heartfelt thank you to veterans everywhere for their service, sacrifice and dedication to our nation. We were honored to welcome local veterans for a special ceremony and lunch in recognition of their courage and commitment.

This gathering gave students and staff an opportunity to express their appreciation and recognize the contributions of those who have served. Sharing time with local veterans helps students understand the importance of service and the sacrifices made by military members and their families.

Claymont also extends a special thank you to the National Veterans Memorial and Museum for donating more than 400 flags that were placed at Claymont High School for Veterans Day. The flags served as a visible reminder of the community's gratitude and the meaning behind the day.

Students and staff thanked the veterans who attended and all who have served the country, expressing gratitude for their courage, dedication and service to others.







MYSTERY AND COMEDY TAKE THE STAGE AT CLAYMONT HIGH SCHOOL



Claymont High School (CHS) Drama Club presented "The Sound of Murder" on Nov. 12, 14 and 15. Directed by Lora Cotton, the comedy combined a murder mystery with familiar Broadway characters, unexpected twists and plenty of laughs.

The story follows two eccentric detectives investigating a director's murder, with suspects ranging from Maria and Alexander Hamilton to little Annie and a suspicious barber. Packed with musical theater references and outrageous situations, the production gave CHS drama students an opportunity to showcase their acting skills and creativity.




Congratulations to all the talented students for their hard work and dedication in bringing this entertaining production to the stage. The Spring Musical is scheduled for March 18, 19 and 20. Students and staff are eagerly anticipating the production.

MUSTANG SPIRIT FILLS THE HALLS

The Mustangs' historic football season brought plenty of excitement and school pride to Claymont High School! From High Five Fridays filled with music to spirited dress-up days, students and staff found ways to celebrate and show their support. The winners of the Mustang All Out spirit contest helped keep the enthusiasm going by showing off their school spirit.





The excitement reached far beyond the football field, bringing the school and community together as everyone cheered on the team. Congratulations to the players, coaches, cheerleaders and marching band for making this a season to remember, and thank you to everyone who helped fill Claymont's halls and stands with Mustang pride.

CLAYMONT
CITY SCHOOLS

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, January 4
Classes Resume After Winter Break

Monday, January 18
Martin Luther King Jr. Day - No School

Tuesday, January 19
Staff PD/Work Day - No School

Thursday, January 21
Preschool Parent Night

Monday, February 15
Presidents Day - No School

Thursday, February 18
Parent-Teacher Conferences

Friday, February 19
PS-5 Conferences - No School

CLAYMONT TRANSPORTATION: **BEHIND THE WHEEL**

Our Claymont Transportation Team works hard every day to ensure our students travel safely to and from school. Their dedication, teamwork and care make a difference in the lives of Claymont students and families. We appreciate all they do!

Join the Mustang Family!
The district is always looking for dedicated individuals to join the Transportation Team! Help students get to school safely.

Drive with Purpose. Make a Difference. Join the Mustang Family. Visit claymontschools.org to learn more.

Winter Bus Safety Reminders
During the winter months, please remember these important bus safety tips. Thanks to everyone who helps keep Claymont students safe!

- Arrive at your bus stop five minutes early.
- Wear bright clothing and stand safely back from the road. In the dark, use a cellphone light to help drivers see you.
- Watch for school closing announcements.
- Remain seated, keep aisles clear and avoid eating on the bus.



Meet Our Transportation Team:

Top row, from left: James Katicich, Mike Slorgie, Juanita Parker, Jim Parker, Shelly Donohoe
Bottom row, from left: Tammy Butler, Stef Armstrong, Dan Kinsey, Terry Wright, Brandi LeGlise, Steph Lendon