

At Clay Elementary, health is of the utmost importance. We are constantly looking at ways to teach students to be healthy. We understand the importance of an active lifestyle and teaching students how to create healthy habits. When mastered early in life, the benefits of healthy lifestyles can spill over to home and family which helps create a healthier community.

We currently have 24.8% minority enrollment, 27% economically disadvantaged students, 53% female and 47% male. In order to meet the needs of our suburban community, we identified our priorities based on the health triangle. We feel that Clay Elementary has done an amazing job supporting the physical side of the triangle, so our focus has shifted to the mental, nutritional, social & emotional sides. Lastly, we wanted to focus on our staff. We do a lot for our students, so we wanted to make sure our staff is also engaged in healthy activities.

Since applying for the Healthiest State Award last year, we have added to our focus. We have strengthened our connections with Kidstriders, First Tee, and NFL Play 60. We have also begun working with Hy-Vee Fit Kids, Make it OK, Going the Distance in May (live Healthy Iowa). These programs offer many opportunities for our students to work on physical and emotional health.

Through the Kidstriders program, we were the only school invited to participate in the Drake Relays. 50 of our students ran the blue oval. While there, they were challenged by Oypian Karissa Schweizer to beat her time.

We share our 5210 information on our Facebook page and the Sep Elementary PE page. We are a 5210 ambassador for the 2nd year in a row!

Through Hy-Vee Fit Kids we took top 3 in their squat challenge and had 6 classes in the top 25. Hy-Vee Fit Kids also came to Clay to promote their program and we did a cereal box tumble which then each student got to take home cereal.

In order to help focus on mental health, our staff purchased Make It Ok shirts to wear on Mental Health Awareness day thanks to our Make It Ok ambassador. This allowed us to engage in crucial conversations with our students.

Lastly, we took part in Go the Distance in May with Live Healthy Iowa. We got 100 water bottles to hand out to students who couldn't afford water bottles for our field day.

As you can see, health and well-being drive our work with students and staff at Clay elementary. We are passionate and driven to be as healthy as can be!

Key Action Items #1: 16. **Our School promotes the use of Physical Activity as a reward**

Provide rationale of why you chose to work on Key Action Item #1 and why it is important to your school specifically. (250- word limit) *

- We find it important to get staff and students up and moving throughout the day. Our students learn better when they are able to move their bodies many times in a school day.

Provide an overview of how you implemented the Key Action Item #1 (250-word limit)

We promote the use of physical activity as a reward through our PBIS rewards/incentives. Students can purchase P.E. Helper where they help lead class as well as the opportunity to play games in the gym. We also have Class rewards where students can pick to go outside, play games, and even come into the gym to play a P.E. game. Through PBIS we do Clay Clubs where students can pick different healthy activities to be a part of. The activities are chosen by our teachers and include fishing, basketball, community service, and etc.

We also bought stencils to put sensory pathways in our hallways. We have students that choose to do these as rewards for good behavior, finishing work and even if they need a break to help them refocus. We also were lucky enough to win a pathway from Hy-Vee Fit Kids since we won their Squat Challenge.

Describe the impact of implementing the Key Action Item #1. How are you measuring the outcome? (250-word limit) *

Students and teachers complete surveys to see how our incentives are being received. We noticed that students are picking these items as rewards over other choices like trinkets. Our clubs are fun ways for students to find a common interest with other students throughout the building. Our pathways are used as a way for students to get up and move. Students can be seen hopping, skipping and jumping on them every time they are in the hallway!

Describe the sustainability plans to ensure long-term adoption of the Key Action Item #1. For example: policy changes, environmental changes. (250-word limit) *

We bought stencils so we can put down pathways anywhere we would like. The Clay Clubs and PBIS rewards are free and something that is incredibly easy for us to keep as long as students and staff are wanting them. We do not see them going away for a long time.

Key Action Item #2: 18: Our School incorporates social and emotional in pe and physical Activity

Provide rationale of why you chose to work on Key Action Item #2 and why it is important to your school specifically. (250- word limit) *

We decided this year we wanted to look at all sides of the health triangle and how we can help students with social and emotional issues in the gym. Our P.E. finds social and emotional health just as important as physical health. As a school that incorporates the Zones of Regulation, we know students can not learn unless they are in the Green zone. So we focus on social and emotional skills in the gym which will allow kids to learn, be happier, and see movement as a positive experience.

Provide an overview of how you implemented the Key Action Item #2 (250-word limit)

Our P.E. teacher is a Make It OK Ambassador. He found it important to make sure that he was making his gym a social and emotional safe place. Clay Elementary believes in the importance of him being a Make It OK ambassador. His rules in the gym are linked to standard 3:I act fairly and respectfully when I play. Our class uses Zones of Regulation as well as Sanford Harmony materials to help educate all students about mental health.

Describe the impact of implementing the Key Action Item #2. How are you measuring the outcome? (250-word limit) *

We are looking at student data using our RAMS WAY expectations. Those are our behavior grade standards reported out on report cards. We also are using the Zones of Regulation and Sandford Harmony language and strategies throughout the school. This helps students find ways to cope and use their words with other students.

Describe the sustainability plans to ensure long-term adoption of Key Action Item #2. For example: policy changes, environmental changes. (250-word limit) *

We will keep these programs strong by teaching them K-5, so all students know the strategies from the beginning of their elementary career and on. Our P.E. teacher is committed to being a "Make IT OK" ambassador and doing what we need to be a part of the program. We understand that problems arise and that we will find ways to help students get back to the "green zone." It is so important it is to have students moving, learning, and growing.

Key Action Item #3: 1) Our school has implemented a healthy Celebration policy for students and families

Provide rationale of why you chose to work on Key Action Item #3 and why it is important to your school specifically. (250- word limit) *

We believe it is crucial that we make healthy choices and are role models for our students. This is why we decided to work on having healthy celebrations.

Provide an overview of how you implemented the action item #3 (250-word limit.) *

We have made it so our students have health choices during different kinds of celebrations. We have classes decorating pumpkins, playing different games, using the gym, doing school-wide sing-alongs, etc. Even for birthday celebrations, students get the opinion of healthy choices. For example, they can come to the gym to play a game, have extra recess, be line leader, etc.

Describe the impact from implementing the action item #3. How are you measuring the outcome? (250-word limit.)

It was a tough change at first, but kids are loving the fact they get to choose a healthy activity to do for their birthday. Our fall and spring parties have become more interactive. Students spend time playing rather than sitting and eating.

Describe the sustainability plans to ensure long-term adoption of Key Action Item #3. For example: policy changes, environmental changes. (250-word limit.) *

The birthday celebration is a list of free activities students can choose from. Our PTA and families are supportive and have found ways to support our classrooms and what they are wanting to do. We also have our sing-alongs that are free and students have a blast coming together to sing with each other.

Key Action Item #4: 13) Our school provides an opportunity for students to be physically active every day!

Provide rationale of why you chose to work on this action item #4 and why it is important to your school specifically. (250- word limit) *

We needed to find ways to support teachers and ways to give students active breaks and rewards. We wanted to figure out ways to give students a chance to move during indoor recess. We know many studies have been done about how exercise can “wake up the brain” and help students to focus. This is why we picked to do this action step.

Provide an overview of how you implemented the Key Action Item #1 (250-word limit

Throughout Clay Elementary, we have sensory pathways. We found that students and teachers are using them for many reasons. They are using them as an activity break, indoor recess, or as a reward for getting their work done. Students are taught the rules of the pathways, so they know when they are allowed to use them and how to do the different patterns. We also won one from Hy-Vee Fit Kids, so that one has allowed students to practice their letter and letter sounds.

Describe the impact of implementing the Key Action Item #1. How are you measuring the outcome? (250-word limit) *

We have seen students choose to do the pathways in the hallway over other free choice activities. We notice that students are wanting to complete their work to go do it, and that allows teachers to help students that are finishing up the assignment. We notice that it helps students get up and move.

Describe the sustainability plans to ensure long-term adoption of action item #4. For example: policy changes, environmental changes. (250-word limit.) *

Our school bought stencils. We have a lot of different ones, so it is really easy to change out for different patterns or different designs. We have title hallways, so we found a way to make it so they last, but if we need to take out a pattern or change the plan. We started off with a basic design and the plan is to add to the patterns students like. We also put these patterns down outside so students can do it during their recess or if it is just blacktop only.

Key Action Item #5: 25) Our school implemented healthy eating, active living, and social-emotional wellness

Provide rationale of why you chose to work on Key Action Item #1 and why it is important to your school specifically. (250- word limit) *

Our team believes that healthy eating, active living, and social-emotional wellness are key to creating a well-balanced school community. We know we could work hard to make our school more well-rounded. We not only looked at students but we looked at how we can improve this for all staff!

Provide an overview of how you implemented the Key Action Item #1 (250-word limit)

In order to encourage students to try new foods, we have "Try It Wednesday". Students try different fruits and vegetables every Wednesday. We also worked with local places like Planet Smoothie to have students try their smoothies and possibly try a new food item for them. We are a Registered Make It OK Workplace. We have a teacher that is an Ambassador of the program and has found ways to help students and staff. Our staff have the Make It OK t-shirts and we wear them throughout the year. We make a big deal about Mental Health Awareness Month. We also talked to our students about Mental health. We also give out positive certificates to students and staff to show how much we appreciate each other and the work they are doing. Also with our staff, we do team-building activities once a month in front of the school. We also have made a Clay Cup. This is where, once a month, staff come down to the gym to play a PE game or sport. We make sure that staff are moving and having fun with each other before school starts. All these are healthy ways our staff have come together to help each other and support each other as a team.

Describe the impact of implementing the Key Action Item #1. How are you measuring the outcome? (250-word limit) *

The impact we have seen is our staff coming closer together and really interacting with each other. We have seen teachers and students aware of Mental Health and we have seen as a staff that we are more supportive of each other. We have seen staff having fun playing games and coming together which has made us strong as a staff to ask for help and has made us aware of how we can help each other.

Describe the sustainability plans to ensure long-term adoption of action item #5. For example: policy changes, environmental changes. (250-word limit.) *

Our Lunch team has done an amazing job of putting together our “Try It” Wednesdays. The Staff part has been easy for us. Each grade level leads a team-building activity and the Clay Cup we have a trophy and the games are picked and all the dates are set. The Positive certificates are printed and are in the workroom for staff and students and after they are filled out they are presented to staff and students from our principal and then posted on our Facebook showing the positive things going on at Clay. A lot of our events are self-run and as a team we work hard to meet the needs of our whole school community. We look at Healthiest State Initiative as a way not only to benefit our students but our staff and the families of Clay.

- 3) Describe why you are proud of the work you are doing and why you should win the Healthiest State Initiative Award. (250 word limit)

- At Clay Elementary, health is of the utmost importance. We are constantly looking at ways to teach students to be healthy. We understand the importance of an active lifestyle and teaching students how to create healthy habits. When mastered early in life, the benefits of healthy lifestyles can spill over to home and family which helps create a healthier community.

We are so proud of our school because we do not just look at the academics and scores of each student, we look at our students as a whole. We ensure that our students are getting the best elementary education possible. We are creating opportunities that no other school is getting thanks to the dedication and hard work of our entire staff. We are looking for all opportunities to enrich their lives and take advantage of them. We rarely say no and we have an open door. We will keep getting better because we know the work isn't done. We believe and know we are the healthiest school in the state and we will strive to be the best in the nation. This award would allow our school to be recognized for this hard work and we will strive to be even better!