CLARK-PLEASANT MIDDLE SCHOOL

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EXPLORING...EXCELLENCE ★ ★ ★ ★

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Dear Clark-Pleasant Parents/Guardians:

The eighth grade students will begin a new unit this semester covering the Little Rock Nine, the first African American students to racially integrate Little Rock High School during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. The memoir *Warriors Don’t Cry* by Melba Patillo Beals, in addition to supplemental material, will feature strong language as well as mature content around race and gender. Our goal is to challenge students to analyze difficult topics in a mature manner and expose them to literature and themes that they can directly relate to in order to gain a greater appreciation for reading. The following are further reasons why we chose this text:

* Some language shows the fierce struggle our characters had to overcome as well as the challenges of integration
* Reading about the reaction of the Little Rock Nine to strong language helps students understand the power of words and the importance of relating to people in respectful ways
* Many of the topics in the novel relate to issues in current news events
* *Warriors Don’t Cry* is a timely read with this month’s celebration of the Dr. King, Jr. holiday
* The story shows the importance of standing up for what is right and the value of perseverance in the face of difficult situations
* The argumentative devices students will find in the memoir will prepare them for the challenges of high school as well as the approaching ISTEP exam

If you feel the content in this unit is inappropriate for your child, or you feel that your child will not be able to handle the unit in a mature fashion, please do not hesitate to get in touch with your child’s English teacher to share questions or concerns or to request a copy of the memoir for further review.

Thank you,

8th Grade English Staff

Clark-Pleasant Middle School