

1. Clay 101 – The Basics



First things first

- Stop panicking. Clay is something the kids love and even the most inexperienced clay parent can help the class produce a room full of beautiful treasure.
- **Look at all the available information on the PTA website and print anything you need .**
- Talk to your teacher and find out when and what clay lesson(s) they would like.
- **There is a list of projects entitled “Grade Specific Projects”.**

This is important to avoid repetition as the kids move through the grades and are also fairly grade appropriate. The teachers have had a copy and should know what lessons are available for their grade. They almost all have a favorite. When you are comfortable with the clay program it is fine for you to create your own lessons. Do share these with the kiln operator so she can add them to the list!

- Schedule the lesson, even if it’s months away and put it on the clay room calendar.
- Clay lessons come in 2 parts – one lesson for making the basic project which then stays in the class and dries, the second lesson is for glazing. Clay takes at least 7-10 days to dry completely before it can be fired. Allow 3 weeks between your first clay lesson and your glaze lesson.
- Be mindful of the clay deadlines for holiday projects and mother’s day projects. They are posted in the clay room and the teachers all have a copy.
- Ask for help. You need to plan of at least 5 parents to help out in the early grades and 4 in the upper grades.

Where to find everything

- The clay and all the supplies are currently located in work room A, opposite the basket ball courts.



The clay calendar and the kiln sign up

Sign up on the clay calendar when you have decided when to do both your lessons. Not only does it help with ordering supplies, it helps to make sure 5 classes aren't doing a project at once.



Sign up on the kiln sign up sheet as soon as your lesson is complete. The first firing is a bisque fire, the second firing is a glaze fire. If you don't sign up your project will not be fired. The kiln operator is responsible for making sure your project is dry enough to be fired.



- Kiln sign up – If you have a child absent on the day your projects are made please write them up SEPARATELY so the kiln operator can judge when to dry them. Do not put them with the rest of the classes work.

Clay terms

- **Green ware** = unfired clay
- **Bisque firing** = first firing of green ware
- **Glaze firing** = second firing with glaze on
- **Slab** = a sheet of clay of and even thickness
- **Slip** = liquid clay, used for “gluing” separately formed clay parts
- **Score** = cross hatch or rough up surface of clay
- **Leather hard** = clay that is only partly dry; still damp enough to cut with a knife but will hold it’s shape

