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*Thanks UKANDU! -Sports camp at
St. Paul Lutheran School-Dorchester*

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

The beginning of a new school year always reminds me of the old song, "school days, school days, dear old Golden Rule days." written in 1907 by Gus Edwards and Will D. Cobb. For the 21 Lutheran schools in the greater Chicagoland area, these are exciting times for our students and their families.

Here are some of those exciting things. We're entering our third year of the Pathways to Excellence program that seeks to expand communication among all parties, enhance reading and writing and overall literacy, provide ongoing professional development for our teachers, implement methods of high-quality instruction and distinguish CLEF schools as centers of innovative literacy and faith-based learning and practices.

Our Pathways to Excellence program was created to help fulfill the goals outlined in CLEF's strategic plan.

As we look to secure the future of Lutheran education, we are planning for the launch of our Medallion initiative. Our continued focus on strategic improvement, academic excellence, effective board governance and ongoing recruitment and retention will help schools achieve their academic and enrollment goals.

We're thrilled to announce the launch of our brand-new CLEF website at www.clefchicago.org that is not only user friendly but has 21 landing pages, one for each of our unique schools. This not only helps raise awareness of the benefits of a Lutheran education, but provides our potential families with much needed information on scholarships, academics and the nurturing and safe learning environment at our schools.

None of this would have been possible without the leadership and support of CLEF's Board of Directors,

as well as several faithful donors. The parents, students, principals, teachers and myself wish to give special thanks to the Christopher and Schawk families and their foundations, and to Dean and Rosemarie Buntrock for their continuous and overwhelming generosity to our schools.

While the Golden Rule always has been a part of our school days, the Good News of the gospel of Jesus Christ makes each school day special. Each new school year brings its own blend of New Starts, New Believers, as well as new opportunities for the application of the Golden Rule through the forgiveness, mercy and grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

And that's really something to get excited about!

In service and thankfulness,

Janet Klotz
Executive Director

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Chicagoland Lutheran Educational Foundation is to empower Lutheran Schools to deliver innovative, quality education in a Christian environment.

OUR VISION

Our vision is that children in Chicagoland have the opportunity to experience Christ's love and grace through a high-quality, Christian values-based education, in order to reach their potential and fulfill their vocation.



NEW WEBSITE IS ONLINE!

Check out the newly launched CLEF website at www.clefchicago.org! The bright, user-friendly interface offers many enhancements from its predecessor. The site is extremely mobile friendly, enabling users to check-in with CLEF on the go. A new events calendar with navigational search features makes it easier to connect with upcoming goings-on in the CLEF network. Supporters can get an in-depth look at the programming CLEF funds for Lutheran students and educators in Chicago under an expanded 'Our Programs' section. There are now plenty of ways to donate under 'Take Action,' and a 'Donate' button in the navigational toolbar.

However, the biggest update in the new site is: Each CLEF school now has its own landing page! These pages feature descriptive information about individual schools and their special programs, offering parents of potential students the opportunity to search the school that is the best fit for their child. Check out all the schools in the CLEF network in the 'Our Schools' section of the site.



Cheryl Collins
Holy Family School CEO

“The coaching has allowed me to see the possibilities for growth for my school and myself.”

THANK YOU TO OUR PATHWAYS PARTNERS

The Pathways to Excellence program is made possible through the very generous support of Dean and Rosemarie Buntrock. This leadership training program for CLEF principals and teachers is designed to build the school management, classroom management and leadership skills to foster and maintain sustainable, high-quality Lutheran education environments. Special thanks to our Community Partners Concordia University and Davidoff Strategy for their ongoing help with this initiative. We congratulate and thank you for making a difference in the lives of many Lutheran school educators and students!

EDUCATORS DISCOVER PATH TO EXCELLENCE

As a school leader, Cheryl Collins is often bombarded with programs and opportunities for professional development for her Holy Family School staff. When CLEF announced the Pathways to Excellence program for principals, Cheryl was skeptical and thought, “One more session, one more thing to do!” However, after attending the Pathways coaching and training sessions, Cheryl, who was recently named Holy Family’s CEO, willingly admits, “I was wrong.”

“These sessions have brought skills of visioning and clarity of purpose to my school,” Cheryl says. “The coaching has allowed me to see the possibilities for growth for my school and myself. As a result, Holy Family is moving in positive ways as we increase our enrollment, improve our pedagogy, and enlarge our vision of what our programs can become.”

This is exactly what the Pathways to Excellence is designed to do as a three-year leadership and skill-building program. During the first year, principals participated in a 10-month curriculum with content geared toward teaching practical skills necessary to generate actionable plans for their schools.

The Pathways to Excellence program isn’t limited to principal leadership development. Years two and three include intensive mentoring and coaching by a team of education experts who are assisting teachers and leaders in implementing their plans. Working with Concordia University, the program began with leadership training for principals, and expanded into a teacher program in the fall of 2017.

Teachers already are reaping the benefits of these coaching and trainings sessions and in turn, most importantly, so are Lutheran School students.

St. John Lutheran School teachers shared the following on why they are so thankful and blessed to participate in the Pathways to Excellence program:

“Thanks for the many professional development opportunities CLEF has made available. Both the Thursday night ITI (Innovative Teacher Institute) meeting and my participating in the CAPS (Collaboratively Articulated Plan of Study) writing projects have been beneficial to improve my instruction. Blessings on your continued ministry as you support Lutheran education in Chicago.”

—Bonnie Mayrens, Third grade teacher

“Thank you for all the classes, conferences and additional resources you provide for teachers and our schools. What a blessing you are to help better and strengthen Lutheran schools.”

—Christina Yerkes, Preschool/Pre-Kindergarten teacher

“I want to say a big thank you for all the work you put into our Pathways program this year. The writing training will be helpful in my classroom and I am excited to implement new strategies.”

—Rachael Franklin, 6th grade teacher

CLEF PARTNERS SUPPORT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Community partners assist CLEF in carrying out its mission. Sponsorship of a cause, such as CLEF, allies a company with its customers, employees and the communities in which it does business. The spirit of the Community Partners Program is to build mutually beneficial and rewarding relationships.

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS!

Here's how you can partner with us:

HOW TO GIVE

CLEF's Community Partner program offers Chicagoland businesses and organizations the opportunity to contribute their skills and resources through:

- ❖ **Financial Donation:** Community Partners commit funds in the form of a restricted or unrestricted gift.
- ❖ **In-kind Donation:** Community Partners provide product, materials, services or labor, these gifts-in-kind have monetary value and fill a need.

LIAISONS

Commitment to provide introductions to potential partners, vendors and colleagues who may become additional sponsors and/or supporters.

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OF GREATER CHICAGO



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We are grateful to Thrivent Financial and its Thrivent Choice program, which helps supplement our student scholarship fund. Eligible Thrivent Financial members can direct their Thrivent Choice dollars to CLEF to bring quality Lutheran education to even more students!

Eligible Thrivent Financial members: Show your appreciation for CLEF by directing Choice Dollars. The individual recommendations you make through Choice Dollars directions can make a profound impact.

To learn more about Thrivent Choice, visit Thrivent.com/thriventchoice. Or call Thrivent at 800-847-4836, and say "Thrivent Choice" when prompted.



CONGRATS TO PILGRIM PRINCIPAL ON NATIONAL AWARD!

*Chris Comella
Pilgrim Lutheran School principal*

Principal Chris Comella of Pilgrim Lutheran School received the 2018 National Distinguished Principal Award from the National Association of Elementary School Principals.

"Principal Comella, your persistence, professionalism, and ministry have been acknowledged and affirmed throughout the nomination and selection process by your school, congregation, peers and national education leaders."

-Gayle Denny, Executive Director of the Evangelical Lutheran Education Association (ELEA)

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) recognizes and celebrates elementary and middle-level principals who set high standards for instruction, student achievement, character, and climate for the students, families, and staff in their learning communities. The distinguished principal honor goes to one public school principal in each state, a representative of LCMS and ELEA, Department of Defense and Catholic school systems each year.

In October, NAESP will honor Principal Comella at a ceremony hosted by the U.S. State Department. ELEA will recognize Chris at the Ignite ELEA Professional Educators Conference in Texas in January.

We are grateful to Chris for his dedication to Lutheran education and celebrate this much-deserved recognition!

BRENDA G. SWARTZ PAVILION

The Annex at Concordia Place is now known as the Brenda G. Swartz Pavilion. This name change honors Brenda, who currently serves as Concordia Place's president and CEO.

More than 70 friends, colleagues, staff, board members and elected officials attended a reception held in Brenda's honor on June 21. At this ceremony Brenda was recognized for her 15 years of dedication and leadership to Concordia Place and presented with a plaque that will be permanently displayed at the pavilion and in part reads:

In recognition of her vision and leadership in growing the mission of Concordia from a church and child care center with a single location in North Center to the multiple sites of Concordia Place, Concordia Day and Concordia Church. We are blessed to have her leadership in all of Concordia's ministries, and grateful for the growth we have experienced in our missions to Love God and Love our Neighbor through our many ways of service in our community.

We echo these blessings and thank Brenda for her extraordinary dedication to Concordia Place!



Brenda Swartz is congratulated by Rev. Nicholas Zook, Concordia Place's Founder and Board Chair.



Nurse Pat is pictured third from the right in the third row, to her left is Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle.

Nurse Pat is always willing to share her health and wellness expertise.



NURSE PAT HONORED BY COOK COUNTY BOARD

CLEF School Nurse Dr. Patricia Braun received recognition at a recent Cook County Board of Supervisors meeting, including a special proclamation honoring women in ministry. Board President Toni Preckwinkle bestowed recognition on a group of women making a difference in faith communities throughout Chicago. Nurse Pat is incredibly deserving of this honor, due in large part to the amazing work she does in our schools, as well as outreach to other Lutheran groups.

This outreach was evident in the NID Parish Nurse Conference, "The Gift of Wellness," hosted by CLEF on March 3. Organized by Nurse Pat, the event focused on wellness in relation to mental health and a nurse's role of serving the whole person. Presenters at the conference were Nurse Pat herself, Gloria Dei Principal Ginny Terrell and keynote speaker Dr. Edgar Ramos, Assistant Professor of Human Services at Concordia University.

Nurse Pat is the Chair of the School-Based Health Services Special Interest Group of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners. At their annual conference in March, she presented to the group on "School Nursing in Private School Settings." Pat also was an exhibitor at the 26th Annual Concordia Conference for Parish Nursing and Congregational Health in May.

Nurse Pat...we're so proud of you! Thank you for your outreach to the Lutheran church community as well as your outstanding commitment to helping keep our Lutheran School students healthy and well!



LESLEE JOHNSON NAMED 2018 LEA DISTINGUISHED LUTHERAN EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER

Leslee Johnson received the Lutheran Education Association's 2018 Distinguished Lutheran Early Childhood Teacher award. Johnson is a full-time kindergarten teacher at St. John Lutheran School in Chicago. She was selected by LEA's Early Childhood Network leadership team.

In support of Leslee's nomination, one parent said, "I, myself, had Mrs. Johnson as a teacher for kindergarten. More recently, two of my children have had her as a teacher and my other two will be in her class in the near future.... I can tell you firsthand how AMAZING Mrs. Johnson is as a teacher and person. She is a teacher who is not only great at what she does, but you can tell she truly loves what she does.... Not only does she give our children the best education possible, she also teaches them what it means to be a Christian...."

Leslee's principal also commented, "Leslee Johnson has completed 40 years of innovative teaching at St. John's Lutheran School.... She is a very creative teacher who adapts her lessons to the current class of students."

We are so blessed to have a dedicated educator like Leslee teaching our children the GOOD NEWS

CLEF CELEBRATES 25 YEARS!



CLEF
Scholarship Gala
25
25 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

On April 14, the annual CLEF Scholarship Gala celebrated a milestone 25 years of teaming up with Chicago's Lutheran schools. Our generous supporters enjoyed festivities featuring dinner, dancing and both a silent and live auction at the Chicago Sports Museum. There was even a special guest appearance by a "Harry Carey" impersonator. Attendees included CLEF board members, donors, community partners and educators. The organization recognized board members past and present, with a special presentation of awards honoring Jay Christopher, Clarence Schawk and Bill Mattes. The event raised over \$100,000 for student scholarships!





CELEBRATING OUR TEACHERS!

dream a little dream

We celebrated the commitment of our educators at CLEF's annual Teacher Recognition Dinner on May 17. It was a time to say thank you to the dedicated teachers, principals and staff members at CLEF schools who work tirelessly to enrich the lives of our students. As part of the evening CLEF granted Dream Awards as selected by a Dream Awards committee.

Each Dream is something a teacher, principal or staff member has personally chosen to enhance the quality of education for their students. This year, funding was secured for a record 44 Teacher Dreams! Select educators also received Above-and-Beyond awards, honoring dedication that went the extra mile over the past year.

ABOVE-AND-BEYOND RECOGNITION

Nancy Bowman

St. Philip Lutheran School

Ashley Strong

St. Paul Lutheran School-Austin

Annamarie Kamman

Gloria Dei Lutheran School

**Michelle Runge, Jeremy Benedict,
Leslee Johnson, Rachael Franklin**

St. John's Lutheran School



"If you give a teacher new educational materials, she is going to want to paint her shelves. If she paints her shelves, she is going to want to paint the walls. If she paints the walls, she is going to want to put up new curtains. If she puts up new curtains, she is going to want to rearrange her furniture. If she rearranges her furniture, she is going to want to organize all her toys. If she organizes her toys to make more room, chances are she is going to ask for new materials. Thank you Chicagoland Lutheran Educational Foundation!"

—Bethesda International Academy teacher Judith Acosta

CONGRATS SCHOLARS!

High school students receiving CLEF scholarships attended our annual Scholarship Breakfast on May 24. Their parents, teachers and CLEF board members attended to honor these students for their outstanding accomplishments.



BEST OF LUCK GRADUATES!

We send our blessings and hope to our 2018 graduates and wish them much success as they follow the pathway to excellence!

PATHWAYS TO EXCELLENCE



SPREADING CHRIST THROUGHOUT THE CITY

ST. PHILIP LUTHERAN CELEBRATES 81ST YEAR!

Last year St. Philip Lutheran School celebrated 80 years of continuous Christian education! The celebration is ongoing as teachers and staff guide students in this long-lasting Christian tradition filled with worship, fellowship and service.

St. Philip Lutheran School provides an educational experience for children PreK-2 through 8th grade in a safe Christian environment. In addition to rigorous academics, the St. Philip curriculum emphasizes the development of strong spiritual and social lives as well. Staff strive to provide students with a foundation of Christian values, as well as service opportunities to share their talents and time with those around them. Here are just of the few projects that students were blessed to help serve the community with during the 2017-2018 school year: St. Jude's Children's Hospital, Ravenswood Food Pantry, Lutheran World Relief (helping hurricane victims), Epilepsy Foundation, Comfort Dogs, SAFE (Stuffed Animals for Emergencies) and Feed My Starving Children.

"Every first day of school is exciting, but this year's is particularly exciting," says Donna Tennis, St Philip's principal. "It feels like a family reunion because our preschool families will be learning in the same place as our elementary school children. We'll be united in one building."

Over the summer months, the school with the help of volunteers and teachers moved its early childhood center from another offsite building into its main school building.

The school encourages, supports, and guides students and their families in all aspects of their lives by providing an atmosphere of Christian love, where the Christian faith is both taught and modeled. Educators acknowledge the uniqueness of each child and respond to each according to their individual needs to develop their God-given talents and abilities.

"Our parents will meet with each other, help each other, and work together for the sake of our children bringing all members together for a common purpose: Growing, Serving, Sharing Christ," Donna says.

In addition, to a faith-based programs, the school features small, personalized education plans using differentiated learning in ALL levels, a full sports program, a music program and nationally recognized award-winning technology program using Robotics and iPads in the classroom. This curriculum offers students the opportunity to become critical thinkers, problem solvers and take creative approaches. At St. Philip, teachers believe that these opportunities prepare children academically, socially and spiritually for life in high school and beyond

The school reaches out to the community with its Vacation Bible School during the summer. This year's theme was "Splash Canyon" and included skits, songs and fun activities for school, church and neighborhood children. The help of UKANDU volunteer leaders made the Vacation Bible School and sports camp fun for all who attended. In addition, the school hosts events where the community can learn more about St. Philip and its many benefits throughout the year including: Community Fun Fair, Trunk and Treat, Thanksgiving Dinner for alumni and guests, Ornament decorating/Meet with Santa, a Winter Carnival and Easter Eggstravaganza.



CLEF PRESCHOOLS AND GRADE SCHOOLS

- 1 **Bethesda International Academy**, 6803 N. Campbell Ave., Chicago
- 2 **Christ the King Lutheran School**, 3701 S. Lake Park Ave., Chicago
- 3 **Concordia Place**, 3855 N. Seeley Ave., Chicago
- 4 **Concordia Place**, 3300 N. Whipple St., Chicago
- 5 **Edison Park Lutheran Preschool**, 6626 N. Oliphant Ave., Chicago
- 6 **Gloria Dei Lutheran School**, 5259 S. Major Ave., Chicago
- 7 **Good Shepherd Christian Academy**, 3740 W. Belden Ave., Chicago
- 8 **Grace Christian Academy**, 4106 W. 28th St., Chicago
- 9 **Grace English Lutheran School**, 2725 N. Laramie Ave., Chicago
- 10 **Holy Family School**, 3415 W. Arthington St., Chicago
- 11 **Little Learners Academy**, 3415 W. Arthington St., Chicago
- 12 **Lutheran Day Nursery**, 1802 N. Fairfield Ave., Chicago
- 13 **Our Saviour Lutheran School**, 7151 W. Cornelia Ave., Chicago
- 14 **Pilgrim Lutheran School**, 4300 N. Winchester Ave., Chicago
- 15 **Saint Luke Academy**, 1500 W. Belmont Ave., Chicago
- 16 **St. James Lutheran School**, 2101 N. Fremont St., Chicago
- 17 **St. John's Lutheran School**, 4939 W. Montrose Ave., Chicago
- 18 **St. Paul Early Childhood Center**, 5650 N. Canfield Ave., Chicago
- 19 **St. Paul Lutheran School**, 7621 S. Dorchester Ave., Chicago
- 20 **St. Paul Lutheran School**, 846 N. Menard Ave., Chicago
- 21 **St. Philip Lutheran School**, 2500 W. Bryn Mawr Ave., Chicago

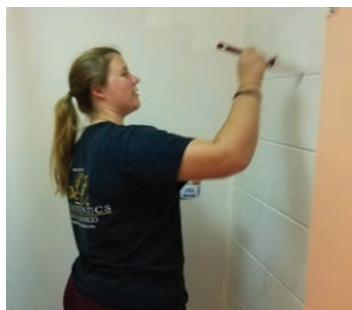
SERVING GRADES 6-12

- 22 **Walther Christian Academy**, 900 Chicago Ave., Melrose Park



THANKS UKANDU!

Thanks to all the UKANDU volunteers who rolled up their sleeves and pitched in with service to help many of our Lutheran schools this summer. There was no task too small or large for this mission-driven crew. From painting stairs, hallways, closets, and teacher's lounges to assembling new shelving, building benches or volunteering at summer camps, this dedicated group of volunteers helped make a difference for our schools.



WELCOME TERESA & RACHEL!

Teresa Clark recently joined the CLEF team as Marketing Coordinator. Teresa is a marketing/communications professional with extensive experience in public relations, writing, social media and project management. A Roosevelt University alumna, Teresa has written for daily/weekly newspapers and national business-to-business and consumer magazines. She also knows firsthand the value of a faith-based education as she was blessed to attend Christian grade and high schools. When not promoting CLEF schools, Teresa volunteers for the Ray Graham Association and the Chicago chapter of the National Reye's Syndrome Foundation.

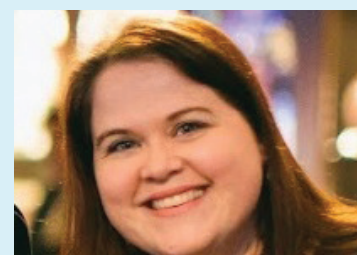
Teresa looks forward to helping raise the visibility of Lutheran schools and the foundation in the Chicagoland area. She will be working directly with our school principals and leaders to share the GOOD NEWS about our Lutheran Schools.

Rachel Swanson joined the CLEF team in August 2017 as the Instructional Technology Coordinator. Her warm, friendly approach and passion for technology already have made a significant impact in our schools. Rachel provides high-quality instructional technology opportunities to raise student achievement and build innovative learning in our schools. She provides training, individualized coaching, consultations and ongoing support to our schools. A certified Google Educator Innovator and Trainer, Rachel previously taught and coached in the Chicago Public Schools and Elmwood Park school district. She holds a Master of Education, Curriculum and Instruction from National Louis University. Her undergraduate degree is in Sociology from Wheaton College.

When Rachel is not teaching Lutheran school students the latest in technology, she is a mentor for the Dynamic Learning Project, coaching technology coaches in urban schools districts. In her free time Rachel loves to read, write, sketchnote and spend time with her family.



Teresa Clark



Rachel Swanson

SPECIAL OLYMPICS AD PROMOTES LUTHERAN SCHOOLS

The Special Olympics spark ignited at the first 1968 International Summer Games in Chicago. Special Olympics founders returned to Chicago this summer to launch its year-long global 50th anniversary celebration of inclusion for all. We promoted our Lutheran schools in a program brochure ad available at all these anniversary events to show our support and raise the visibility of our schools.

GOLD SEAL OF TRANSPARENCY EARNER

CLEF earned a 2018 Gold Seal of Transparency on GuideStar USA! By adding information about our goals, strategies, capabilities, achievements, and progress indicators, we are highlighting the difference we help to make in the world. Check us out:

<http://bit.ly/CLEFGuideStar>

WELCOME EUNICE MATTES



Eunice Mattes is now carrying on the traditions and dreams of her late husband and CLEF founding Board Member William “Bill” Mattes. While Eunice is now officially on our Board of Directors she always has held the CLEF mission and vision close to her heart.

Eunice has been a proud CLEF supporter for many years and she will continue the Lutheran school blessings by building upon the wonderful legacy that her husband crafted with such grace and commitment.

What do you hope for Lutheran schools? My hope for the next generation is to hear about Jesus.

What do Lutheran schools need going forward? Lutheran schools need money and donations to continue to offer quality education.

What is best thing schools have now compared to when you were going to Lutheran schools? One of the best things schools have now are computers!

How can Lutheran schools help themselves for future sustainability? In the last two years, we have added so much to our Pathways to Excellence program and our marketing programs. Schools are on the right path so they can sustain themselves.

What do you like best about working with CLEF? I like working with CLEF because we are continuing the legacy that my husband Bill and Clarence Schawck started.

“Eunice has a remarkable knowledge and knows the history of the Lutheran schools and churches in Chicago,” says Janet Klotz, CLEF Executive Director. “Eunice always has been willing to lend a helping hand to CLEF!”

EMPOWER LUTHERAN SCHOOL STUDENTS BY INVESTING IN KIDS

As we start the new school year, we are especially grateful for a new opportunity to help support student scholarships. The recently created Invest in Kids Tax Credit Scholarship Program provides students with access to scholarships that can cover up to 100% of tuition and fees. Supporters donate through a Scholarship Granting Organization (SGO) and receive a state income tax credit equal to 75% of their donation.

Demand for scholarships has been strong, far outpacing available funds. Over 48,000 students state-wide applied for scholarships, but funding has been secured for only 4,135 of them. Please consider a gift to Empower Illinois, our partner SGO, designated for CLEF scholarships. A \$5,000 donation could fund a year of Lutheran education for a student from a low-income family at a net cost of \$1,250 to the donor. Gifts in any amount are welcome and will be combined with other gifts to bless a child with the life-changing gift of a Christ centered education.

This is an amazing opportunity to support Lutheran education and significantly reduce your state income tax bill at the same time. Given recent changes to federal tax law, an Illinois income tax credit may bring far more benefit than a federal charitable deduction.



FIND OUT MORE!

To learn more, please contact the CLEF office at (630) 595-9310, email clef@clefchicago.org or check out our special newsletter at www.bit.ly/CLEF-SGO.



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CONGRATULATIONS CLEF GRADUATES!

