

Power of the Pen by Karissa Williams-Kuzmikas- published on January 10, 2019

The Power of the Pen competition season started off with a bang! The first competition for the St. Charles Borromeo team was on December 8, 2018 from 8am-3pm at Heights Middle School, in University Heights, Ohio. Twenty schools competed, with 100 students at each grade level. Seventh grader Karissa Kuzmickas placed fourth overall with her writing, and eighth grader Darcy Burke placed eleventh. The eighth grade team got the second place team award, and the seventh grade team placed fifth!

Power of the Pen is a writing team for any seventh and eighth graders, and competes against schools across our state. Every Monday after school until 3:30 we practice to improve our writing, and we meet in groups once a week during lunch and recess to share our stories in Mrs. Seguin's room, or the library. It's a great opportunity to express creativity, show a love of writing, and have excitement from competitions.

Anyone who wants to compete has to try out for the team by writing a story during practice. This year's Saint Charles Borromeo competition team is made up of eighth graders Emily Humbel, Callie Naso, Darcy Burke, Isabella Munoz, Meghan Gaughan, and Kathleen Grundel. The seventh grade team members are Karissa Kuzmickas, Kaiden Bruno, Kendall Ziegler, Jazlyn Stanton, Sydney Boots, and Cecilia Suszko.

At each Power of the Pen competition, writers arrive at the school between 8 and 8:15 in the morning. We eat donuts and chill until around 9:30. Then it's on to the auditorium where everything is explained and we get our schedules and folders. Then it is time to find our first room for writing round 1. In each round, students get a prompt with forty minutes to write. Then this process is repeated for rounds 2 and 3. This is followed by a lunch break, and a talent show. At 2:30, the awards are finally ready to be announced, and we find out how we did!

Seventh grade team member Jazlyn Stanton states, "I am nervous and excited for the upcoming competition. Last time was fun, and now I have another chance to place and improve my writing." She'll be one of many Saint Charles Borromeo students headed to the regional competition. Qualifiers include eighth graders Callie Naso, Darcy Burke, Meghan Gaughan, Isabella Munoz and Kathleen Grundel and seventh graders Karissa Kuzmickas, Jazlyn Stanton, Sydney Boots and Cecilia Suszko. Congratulations, writers!

If any kids have thought about joining, do it! You may be nervous about writing on the spot or having a time limit, but Mrs. Seguin is there to help us improve. "The fact that Power of the Pen challenges your writing to be greater is probably what I like so much about it," says Kaiden Bruno, seventh grade team member. Power of the Pen is a fun way to practice writing and storytelling, and has been a wonderful experience for me so far this year. Thank you Mrs. Seguin for this great opportunity!

