



Joliet Township High School

Empowering Students to Compete and Contribute



**Annual Report
School Year 2014-2015**

Introduction

This publication has been prepared for the purpose of assisting the community and parents in understanding District 204 programs and operations; challenges and growth; and finance. For more information about JTHS, visit www.jths.org.

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Dr. McCarthy Superintendent's Welcome

Dear Partner in Education,

It is with great pride that we present the Joliet Township High School 2014-2015 Annual Report. Each year JTHS highlights a variety of programs and educational successes to share with our parents and community. The Annual Report tells the story of our District as we strive to provide the best education for our students.

The 2014-2015 school year was filled with collaborative partnerships and planning. The first section of the Annual Report provides information regarding our Strategic Plan. Since 2002, the JTHS Strategic Plan has served as a road map for all District initiatives and improvements. Our planning efforts have resulted in financial stability and innovative programs such as our 1:1 technology initiative. A diverse group of stakeholders worked diligently to develop the recent Strategic Plan, and I am confident that this 5-year plan will allow us to continue our journey of success.





JTHS is dedicated to providing a rigorous and personalized education to each and every student. The Annual Report has been designed to provide an insight into the programs, services, and plans in place to achieve this goal. Within the pages of this report you will find stories of school pride, interdisciplinary partnerships, academy highlights, student achievements and more. Additional information can be found at www.jths.org.

Our success would not be possible without the support of our Board of Education, community partners, parents, and staff. Working in partnership with students and families has allowed JTHS to become the school of choice for our community. Thank you for supporting Joliet Township High School.

Sincerely,

Cheryl McCarthy, Ed.D.
Superintendent

JOLIET TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

District 204
Board of Education



Joliet Township High School Board of Education

Elected by residents within school district boundaries, Board of Education members serve four-year terms on a staggered basis. The Joliet Township High School Board of Education adopts policies and rules that govern the administration and operates in strict accordance with Illinois laws and Illinois State Board of Education regulations. Every day, our students and community benefit from the Board's dedication and commitment.

Board of Education Meeting Dates

Board of Education meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. in the Board Room of the JTHS Administrative Center, located at 300 Caterpillar Drive in Joliet. For a complete listing of Board of Education meeting dates, please visit www.jths.org.

Board of Education Duties & Responsibilities

- * Selection of superintendent
- * Adoption of the Strategic Plan
- * Establishment of general policies
- * Employment of school personnel upon superintendent recommendation
- * Adoption of annual budget and approval of expenditures
- * Exercising legislative power in administering school functions



The Joliet Township High School Board of Education received recognition at the Salute to Service Partnership Event for their commitment and dedication.

Joliet Township High School Board of Education Members

Jeff Pierson, President (Served since 2001); Tracy Spesia, Vice President (Served since 2011); Don Dickinson, Secretary (Served since 2011); Arlene Albert, Member (Served since 1981); R. Dale Evans, Member (Served since 2013); Tyler Marcum, Member (Served since 2013); David Skorupa, Member (Served since 2015)

The JTHS Strategic Plan

Charting the Future, Empowering Students

The Joliet Township High School Strategic Plan is a comprehensive document that identifies the District's mission, objectives, strategies, parameters, and beliefs. The plan charts the future of JTHS and is a working document that is used to improve our schools.

The Strategic Plan is a five-year blueprint; however, it is reviewed yearly and periodic updates and renewals are held to make revisions that are necessary due to changes in society, legislation or the circumstances of the District.



Strategic Plan Thorough Renewal

To continue the path of targeted goal setting and continued progress, JTHS held a Strategic Plan Thorough Renewal during the 2014-2015 school year. This was a Board-sanctioned opportunity to review and update the District's entire Strategic Plan and included an analysis of the mission, beliefs, objectives, strategies and parameters. A planning team of 34 members worked collaboratively to once again chart the future of JTHS, reviewing all aspects of the Strategic Plan.

As a result of the team's work, changes were made to the mission, objectives, parameters and strategies. Action Planning Teams were formed and met during January, February and March to develop Action Plans associated with the revised Strategic Plan. These Action Plans are the heart of the plan and will dictate the work of all JTHS staff for the next five years.



The Strategic Planning process allows the Board of Education and the District to involve key stakeholders throughout all stages of planning to positively impact the future of JTHS. The Strategic Planning team was comprised of 34 members from various stakeholder groups and included parents, students, community members, post-secondary education representatives, business representatives, teachers, support staff, administrators and Board of Education members.

Mission Statement

The mission of Joliet Township High School, a historically rich, unified and innovative learning community, is to empower every student to compete and contribute positively to our community and global society by providing a rigorous and personalized education through an academy environment.

Beliefs

We Believe:

- Every human being possesses inherent worth.
- Individuals are responsible for their own actions.
- Diversity strengthens and enriches society.
- Life-long learning is necessary to thrive in a continuously changing world.
- People learn at different rates, in different ways, and in a variety of settings.
- High expectations positively influence performance.
- Motivation, determination, hard work, and a positive attitude strengthen the ability of an individual to reach potential.
- The family environment has a strong influence on the development of each of its members.
- Education is a shared responsibility among students, family, staff, and the community.
- An educated public sustains our democracy.
- Honesty, integrity and respect are essential in building mutual trust.
- A safe environment is essential for every individual.
- High quality schools are essential to the quality of life for the whole community.
- All people can learn.

Objectives

Where We Are Headed:

Every student will meet or exceed annual growth targets as measured by classroom, District and standardized assessments.

The graduation rate will be 90 percent or higher.

By the year 2018, every student will develop and implement a challenging Individual Career Plan (ICP) to prepare for a successful transition to further education and a career endeavor of choice.

All students will consistently demonstrate the character attributes of Confidence, Compassion, Responsibility, Tolerance, Respect, Integrity and Perseverance.

Strategies

How We Will Get There:

1. We will use data to personalize instruction and support in order to motivate and engage students to achieve identified growth targets, complete their Individual Career Plan (ICP) and graduate.
2. We will ensure all JTHS personnel use effective internal and external communication to create a welcoming environment that develops positive relationships and engages all stakeholders in improving student achievement.
3. We will identify, model, reinforce, and measure the character attributes needed to compete and contribute as respectful, responsible and productive citizens.
4. We will ensure our curriculum and assessments strengthen the implementation of the academy structure so that all students are college and career ready.
5. We will secure and leverage our physical, technological and human resources to effectively support our students' education.

Joliet Township High School Strategic Plan 2015-2020 Empowering students to compete and contribute

Our Mission

The mission of Joliet Township High School, a historically rich, unified and innovative learning community, is to empower every student to compete and contribute positively to our community and global society by providing a rigorous and personalized education through an academy environment.

Our Beliefs

Our mission was built on these beliefs:

- Every human being possesses inherent worth.
- Individuals are responsible for their own actions.
- Diversity strengthens and enriches society.
- Life-long learning is necessary to thrive in a continuously changing world.
- People learn at different rates, in different ways, and in a variety of settings.
- High expectations positively influence performance.
- Motivation, determination, hard work, and a positive attitude strengthen the ability of an individual to reach potential.
- The family environment has a strong influence on the development of each of its members.
- Education is a shared responsibility among students, family, staff, and the community.
- An educated public sustains our democracy.
- Honesty, integrity and respect are essential in building mutual trust.
- A safe environment is essential for every individual.
- High quality schools are essential to the quality of life for the whole community.
- All people can learn.



2014-2015 Strategic Planning Team



Objectives Where We Are Headed:

- Every student will meet or exceed annual growth targets as measured by classroom, district and standardized assessments.
- The graduation rate will be 90 percent or higher.
- By the year 2018, every student will develop and implement a challenging Individual Career Plan (ICP) to prepare for a successful transition to further education and a career endeavor of choice.
- All students will consistently demonstrate the character attributes of Confidence, Compassion, Responsibility, Tolerance, Respect, Integrity and Persistence.

Strategies How We Will Get There:

1. We will use data to personalize instruction and support in order to motivate and engage students to achieve identified growth targets, complete their Individual Career Plan (ICP) and graduate. (See Action Plans)
2. We will ensure all JTHS personnel use effective internal and external communication to create a welcoming environment that develops positive relationships and engages all stakeholders in improving student achievement. (See Action Plans)
3. We will identify, model, reinforce, and measure the character attributes needed to compete and contribute as respectful, responsible and productive citizens. (See Action Plans)
4. We will ensure our curriculum and assessments strengthen the implementation of the academy structure so that all students are college and career ready. (See Action Plans)
5. We will secure and leverage our physical, technological and human resources to effectively support our students' education. (See Action Plans)

Parameters The Ground Rules:

- We will capitalize on the benefits of our diversity to enrich and strengthen our educational programs.
- We will always maintain a safe and secure environment.
- We will not tolerate behavior which demeans the self-worth or dignity of any individual or group.
- No new program or service will be accepted unless it is consistent with the strategic plan, its benefits clearly justify the cost and provisions are made for staff development with sufficient time for effective implementation and program evaluation.
- No program will be retained unless the benefits continue to justify the costs, and the program makes an optimal contribution to the mission.
- We will always use data, effective instruction, and a continuum of academic support to improve student achievement.
- We will always work in collaboration with our senior school districts to provide a cohesive, rigorous educational program to ensure all students are college and career ready.
- School and District Improvement Plans must always be consistent with the strategic direction of the district.
- We will establish scheduling priorities that support student academic achievement within an academy environment.

Charting
the Future,
Empowering
Students

JTHS Career Academies

During the sophomore year, JTHS students enter one of five career-themed academies.

JTHS Career Academies increase student engagement by organizing students into small learning communities that offer a personalized learning environment within a large school setting.

In the JTHS Career Academies, students receive an individualized education relevant to their career interests. Teams of teachers work together to prepare learning opportunities that relate to each academy's theme. Students are provided with a rigorous and personalized curriculum that integrates course content and technology skills in alignment to the Common Core State Standards and College and Career Readiness Standards.



The Five JTHS Career Academies are: the Academy of Arts and Communication; the Academy of Business Management & Information Systems (BMIS); the Academy of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM); the Academy of Health & Medicine; and the Academy of Human Services.

Job Shadowing

Career & Academy Exploration



Bertino's Auto Services



Caterpillar Inc.

Career exploration is a key component to the JTHS Academy structure. During the sophomore year, all JTHS students participate in a Job Shadowing Experience that requires the completion of a four hour on-site employee observation. Job Shadowing provides students with a personalized opportunity to experience career interests through hands-on interaction with professional employees.

Students have the option to participate in Job Shadowing throughout the school year at locations within the Joliet community or through the annual Job Shadowing days where transportation is provided.

During the 2014-2015 school year, over 1,000 students successfully completed Job Shadowing. Students reflect on their experience through multimedia presentations that are delivered in the English 2 classes. JTHS student Zach Shrarer completed his Job Shadowing experience with the Troy Fire Department and observed firemen in action at a small house fire in Channahon.

"Job Shadowing is very powerful," said Shrarer. "I am so thankful for this experience because it showed me the teamwork that goes into fighting a fire. I had a first-hand opportunity to observe the career I really want to pursue in life."

Programs of Study

Project Lead the Way & the STEM Academy

Each JTHS Career Academy has unique and individualized Programs of Study, which are sequences of recommended courses that a student should take based on his or her career goal.

To secure comprehensive Programs of Study for the STEM pathway of engineering, JTHS adopted the Project Lead The Way (PLTW) program for implementation during the 2015-2016 school year.

Project Lead The Way is the nation's leading provider of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programs. Through a world-class curriculum, high-quality teacher professional development, and outstanding partnerships, PLTW helps students develop the skills needed to succeed in the global economy.

At JTHS, the Programs of Study are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure relevancy and alignment to post-secondary and industry standards. "We previously offered a rigorous pre-engineering Program of Study; however, Project Lead The Way allows us to refine this program by adding the benefit of accreditation recognized nationally by post-secondary institutions," said Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services Karla Guseman.

JTHS was fortunate to receive a grant during the 2014-2015 school year that will support the implementation of the PLTW Program.

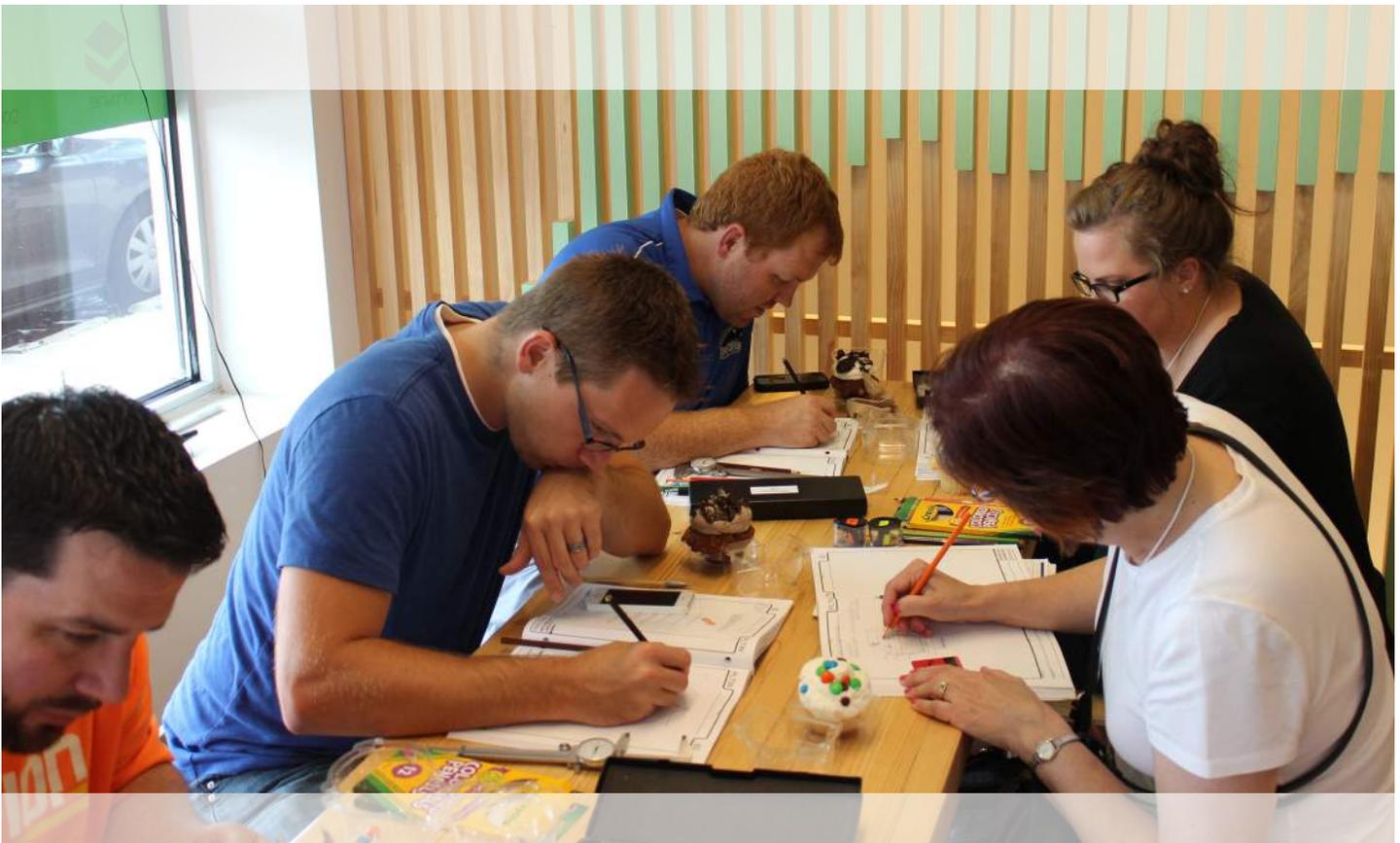


JTHS Teachers: Tim Gonzales, Dale West, Erin Wagner and Chris McGuffey

High-Quality Professional Development

To prepare for the implementation of Project Lead The Way, JTHS teachers Dale West, Chris McGuffey, Erin Wagner and Tim Gonzales attended the two-week PLTW training held over the summer at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

PLTW's three-phase professional development model focuses on preparing teachers with the professional skills necessary to engage students in learning the pre-engineering STEM disciplines, content and applications, design principles and problem solving. Training is conducted in partnership with more than 50 colleges, universities and other institutions.



Wild Bill! In-School Program

Real-world Experience in the Academy of Arts & Communication

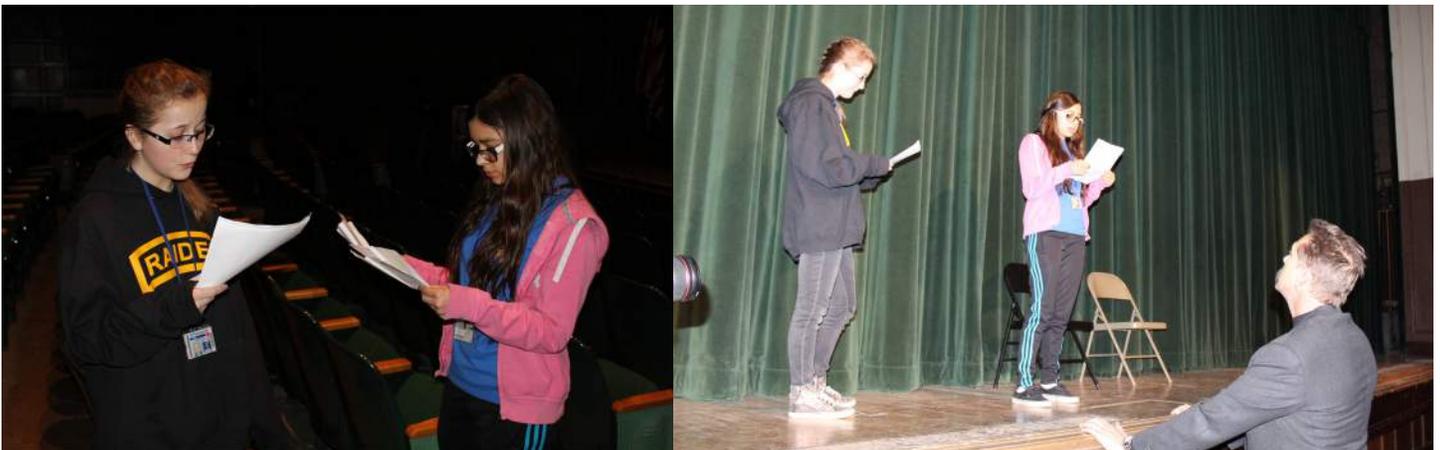
During the second semester of the 2014-2015 school year, students in the Academy of Arts and Communication were mentored by professional actor Walt Willey through their participation in the Wild Bill! In-school Program.

Willey, who played Jackson Montgomery on the daytime drama *All My Children*, worked directly with the Central and West drama students, providing one-on-one classroom instruction.

"We were extremely grateful for the opportunity to work with Walt on this project," said JTHS Director of Alumni Relations Lynne Lichtenauer. "The mentoring program fit perfectly within our Academy of Arts and Communication and provided real-world theatre experience from a seasoned industry professional."

The Alumni Relations Office partnered with Willey to coordinate the two public performances of his one-man show, "Wild Bill! An Evening with James Butler Hickok," held on February 28 and March 1 at Joliet West High School. Students from both campuses assisted with the productions, providing technical support and serving as ushers. In addition, 20 percent of net ticket sales were donated to each campus' drama departments.

"Walt was eager to work with our students and teachers and had an approachable nature that made this program a success," said Lichtenauer. "To have an actor of Walt's caliber directly working with our students and teachers provided valuable learning experiences, while raising funds for the drama program."





The Wild Bill! In-school Program caught the attention of CBS2 reporter Vince Gerasole who filmed his live morning broadcast at Joliet West High School on February 18, 2015. The program featured live performances from band, choir and drama students.



Actor Walt Willey coaches West Campus drama students.

Reap What You Sow

STEM Academy in Action



Students in the STEM Academy have the opportunity to learn hands-on cultivation and gardening skills through Reap What You Sow. Thanks to a partnership with ExxonMobil, University of Illinois Extension, Joliet Junior College, University of St. Francis and the Joliet Park District, students at Joliet Central and Joliet West plant and harvest greens in newly constructed raised garden beds at each campus.

Reap What You Sow participants are mentored by master gardeners from the University of Illinois Extension who teach the theories of horticulture and environmental science. "The master gardeners have a true passion for nature and everything green," said JTHS Project Director Carol Collins. "Their enthusiasm is contagious and inspires students to actively participate in all aspects of the program."

The Reap What You Sow gardening initiative has also been integrated into the Instructional Biology and Culinary Arts curriculum. Students and garden club sponsors work with foods instructors to identify the produce and herbs to grow for use in their classes. Produce is also donated to local food pantries, which teaches students the value of giving back to the community.



1:1 Technology

JTHS Receives 2015 Districts of Distinction Award

Joliet Township High School received the Districts of Distinction Award in March of 2015 for its innovative 1:1 technology initiative. Districts of Distinction is a national recognition program created by District Administration magazine to honor school districts that are leading the way with innovative programs.

At JTHS, the 1:1 technology initiative provides every student with a netbook computer that allows 24/7 access to education anytime, anywhere. The technology has provided teachers with the tools to expand their instruction beyond the walls of the classroom through innovative lessons that provide authentic audiences.

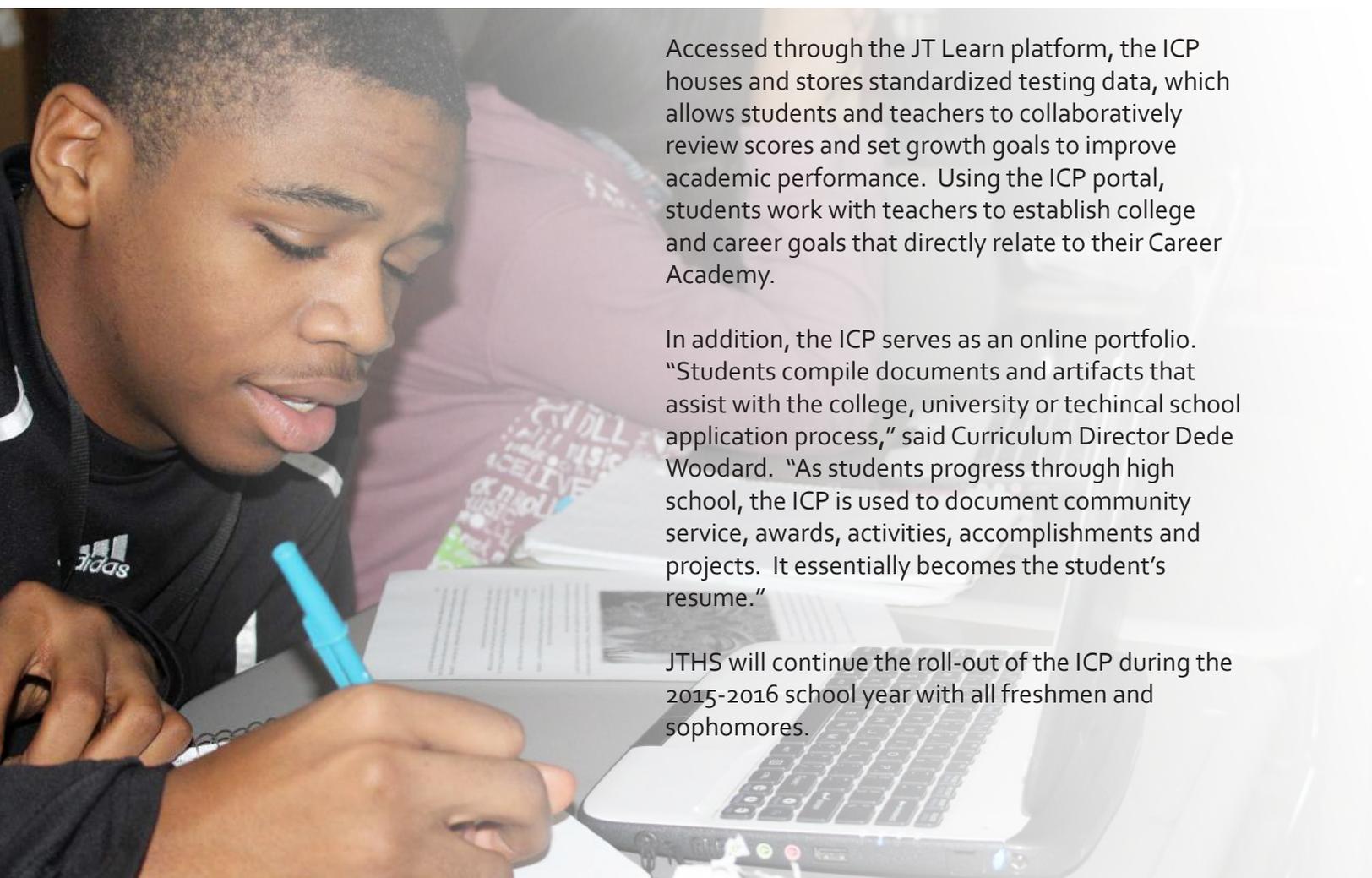
In addition, 1:1 technology allows JTHS to offer blended learning classes. "Blended learning challenges and empowers students to become active learners through a combination of face-to-face and online instruction that can be accessed off campus," said Curriculum Director Dianne McDonald. "During blended learning courses, students experience a reduction in the amount of time spent on-site in the classroom, while continuing to learn through active, independent learning facilitated by the teacher."



1:1 Technology

The Individualized Career Plan (ICP) & Personalized Instruction with a Purpose

The 2014-2015 school year marked the launch of the Individualized Career Plan (ICP) for all freshman students. The ICP is an online portal that is personalized and tailored to each individual student's goals, academy and college/career interests.



Accessed through the JT Learn platform, the ICP houses and stores standardized testing data, which allows students and teachers to collaboratively review scores and set growth goals to improve academic performance. Using the ICP portal, students work with teachers to establish college and career goals that directly relate to their Career Academy.

In addition, the ICP serves as an online portfolio. "Students compile documents and artifacts that assist with the college, university or technical school application process," said Curriculum Director Dede Woodard. "As students progress through high school, the ICP is used to document community service, awards, activities, accomplishments and projects. It essentially becomes the student's resume."

JTHS will continue the roll-out of the ICP during the 2015-2016 school year with all freshmen and sophomores.

The EPAS Assessment

A System for Measuring Student Growth

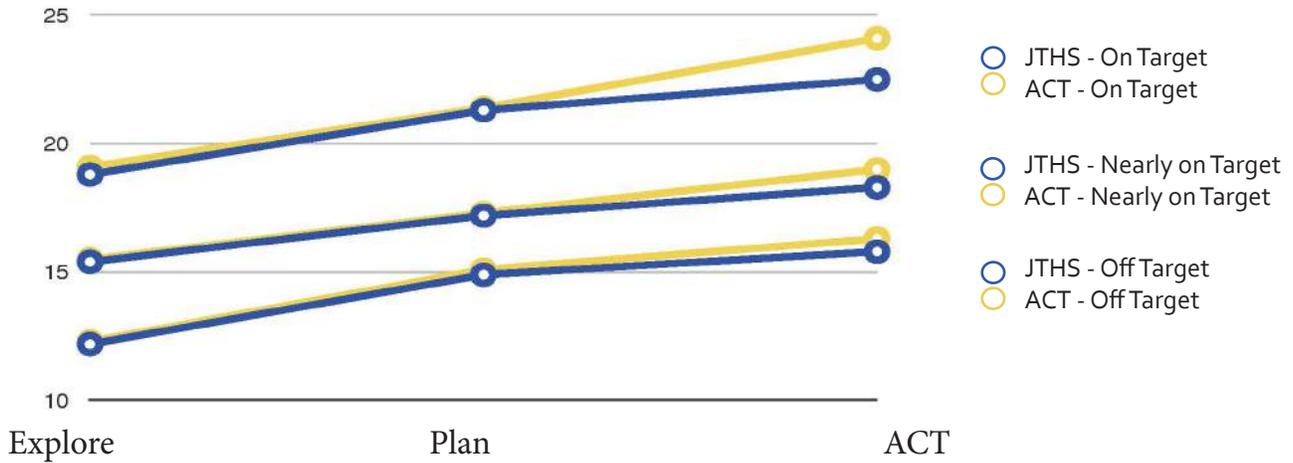
JTHS believes that students learn at different rates. Therefore, we realize that all students do not begin their high school education at the same academic level. To chart student growth, JTHS has grouped students into three categories based on their standardized test scores. Using the categories of "On Target," "Nearly On Target," and "Off Target," student growth is tracked from year to year using the EPAS assessment system.

The EPAS system contains three assessments: EXPLORE, which is taken in the 8th and 9th grade; PLAN, which is taken during the 10th grade; and ACT, which is taken during the 11th and/or 12th grade.

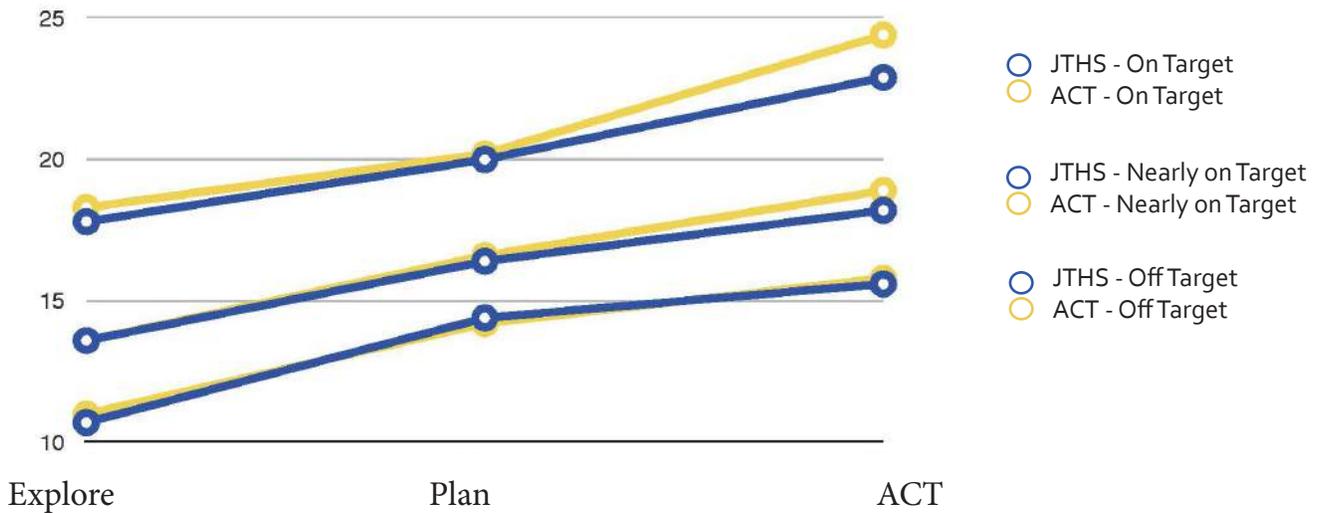
The graphs on the next page illustrate District assessment growth for the Class of 2015 as compared to the ACT study, "How Much Growth Toward College Readiness is Reasonable to Expect in High School?" For more information on EPAS, visit www.jths.org.



Math Expected EPAS Growth



Reading Expected EPAS Growth



Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College & Careers (PARCC)

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is a consortium of states working together to develop a set of assessments that measure whether students are on track to be successful in college and their careers. These computer-based K–12 assessments in mathematics and English language arts/literacy give teachers, schools, students and parents better information about whether students are on track in their learning and for success after high school.

Illinois is one of several states that administered the PARCC assessment. At Joliet Township High School, students who were enrolled in English 1 and Algebra 1 took the PARCC during the 2014-2015 school year. The PARCC test consists of two components—the Performance Based Assessment (PBA) and the End of Year Assessment (EOY).

For more information about PARCC, visit <http://www.parcconline.org>.



Advanced Placement & Dual Credit

Earning College Credit in High School

Advanced Placement Boot Camp

To prepare students for the rigors of Advanced Placement (AP) and honors-level coursework, Joliet Township High School offered a two-week AP Summer Boot Camp in 2015. The grant-funded opportunity was provided to incoming freshmen, sophomores and juniors in the subject areas of English, social science and mathematics.

Over 200 students were selected to participate in the camp based on their math, reading or English test scores. "As we look to increase the amount of students enrolled in honors or AP level classes, our focus has landed on the students whose scores are just slightly below the eligibility mark," said Joliet West Principal Dr. Teresa Gibson. "These students greatly benefit from the extra support and exposure to the honors or AP curriculum, and we have seen significant increases in participation due to this additional support."

The AP Boot Camp curriculum integrates the College Board's AP SpringBoard instructional program which includes research-based strategies and practices that have been proven to prepare students for Advanced Placement courses.

"We are extremely fortunate to be able to provide this opportunity to our students," said Gibson. "The boot camp gives students hands-on learning opportunities that develop the critical skills necessary for success in these rigorous courses."

Advanced Placement Gains 2010-2015

Over the past six years, JTHS has increased the number of students taking AP courses and exams by over 200 percent, while increasing the amount of students scoring 3 or higher on the AP exam.

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total AP Students	196	202	238	355	693	884
Number of Exams	297	299	402	632	1096	1318
Students with scores 3+	103	112	138	154	252	343

College Board Advanced Placement Scholars

During the 2014-2015 school year, 45 students were named Advanced Placement Scholars by the College Board in recognition of their exceptional achievement on the college-level Advanced Placement Exams.

One of these students received the National Advanced Placement Scholar Award for earning an average score of at least 4 on all Advanced Placement Exams taken, and scores of 4 or higher on eight or more of these exams.

Six of these students received the Advanced Placement Scholar with Honor Award for earning an average of at least 3.25 on all Advanced Placement Exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams.

Eight of these students received the Advanced Placement Scholar with Distinction Award for earning an average of 3.5 on all Advanced Placement Exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams.

Student Achievement

ACT Scores for the Class of 2015

The average ACT score for the top 10 percent of students who were tested in the class of 2015 was 27.8. The top 20 percent of students who were tested in the class of 2015 had an average ACT score of 25.8. JTHS has approximately 1,000 students who take the ACT test each year.





Illinois State Scholars

Eighty-three JTHS students from the graduating class of 2015 earned the distinction of Illinois State Scholar. The prestigious award is given annually by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC). Illinois State Scholar winners rank in the top 10 percent of the state's graduating seniors from high schools across the state. Selection is based on SAT, ACT or Prairie State Achievement Exam scores, and/or class rank at the end of the junior year.

Student Scholarships

JTHS guidance counselors and staff work diligently with students to secure grants and scholarships for post-secondary and college/university study. During the 2014-2015 school year, over ten million dollars in grant and scholarship funding was awarded to JTHS students.

National Merit Scholarship Program Commended Students

JTHS students Sean Chapman, Margaret Spesia and Youjia Wang were named Commended Students in the 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program. Commended Students placed among the top five percent of more than 1.5 million students who entered the 2015 competition by taking the 2013 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT).



Community Outreach

JTHS Partners Honored at Salute to Service Event

Over 200 Joliet Township High School partners and volunteers were recognized at the Salute to Service Partnership Event on May 5, 2015. The annual event is held to thank JTHS partners who generously volunteer their service and time to benefit the students and high school.

At the event, JTHS Superintendent Dr. Cheryl McCarthy presented the prestigious Superintendent's Medallion to Board of Education President Jeff Pierson; Former Board of Education Member and JJC Partner Paige Vanderhyden; Presence St. Joseph Medical Center Partner Shannon Morgan-Jermal; and University of Illinois-Extension Partner Nancy Kuhajda. In addition, Area Operations Manager Bob Tota accepted the Superintendent's Medallion on behalf of Vulcan Materials and President Mark Turk accepted the award for the JTHS Foundation. JTHS Class of 1958 Alumnus Gary Lichtenwalter was named Distinguished Alumnus.

Over 500 invitations were sent to JTHS partners. "It is truly humbling to know that we have so many dedicated and supportive community members and volunteers that believe in giving back to our students and schools," said JTHS Superintendent Dr. Cheryl McCarthy. "I am so grateful for their support."

JTHS students contributed to the night's success. JWHS Culinary Arts students provided an array of pastries, JROTC students posted colors, and classical music was performed by the JTHS Orchestra.





History Comes to Life for Students at District-Wide History Fair

In May of 2015, Joliet Township High School held its first District-wide History Fair for students in World Affairs and US History classes. Over a four-day period, more than 2,000 students presented their projects to over 200 community judges.

To prepare for the event, students researched a contemporary world issue or US History event and developed a presentation and persuasive argument that was delivered to the volunteer judges.

"The idea for the fair was developed using aspects from the Northern Illinois University History Fair that is held each year," said JTHS Curriculum Director Alberto Filipponi. "We piloted our own version of the fair for the past couple years, and after seeing the amount of thought and work the students and piloting teachers put into it, we felt it should become a District-wide event."

The History Fair provided students with an authentic and practical application of the skills and content that are taught in class. Filipponi credits the community for providing this opportunity to the students. "I am so proud of the support we received from our school staff and the community. The teachers and the students have worked so hard on these projects, and the community really came through for them."



Honoring our Veterans

Joliet West Students Present WWII Veteran with High School Diploma

When students from the Academies of Health & Medicine and Human Services learned that World War II Veteran Donald Woodard never received a high school diploma, they knew they had to do something about it.

The 93-year-old veteran completed nearly all four years at Joliet Township High School and left his classroom in May of 1939 shortly before graduation to serve in the U.S. Navy. With the help of Academy Coordinator Dan Markun and Mr. Woodard's daughter, Administrative Assistant Sally Pagnusat, the students planned a Veteran's Day Ceremony at Lakewood Falls Nursing Home.

During the ceremony, the students honored 10 veterans and surprised Mr. Woodard with his high school diploma and replacement medals that were obtained through the assistance of the school's JROTC program. Mr. Woodard donated his service medals to the IBEW Local 176 Union Hall where they are on display, so the replacement medals were particularly special to him.

The diploma presentation was made possible through the "Operation Recognition" program, which authorizes schools to award diplomas to honorably discharged veterans who left school to serve in the military.

"This event epitomizes what the academy structure is all about," said Markun. "Our students seized an opportunity to honor our veterans, serve our community, and promote our school. They made this a very special day for our District, the residents of Lakewood and especially Mr. Woodard and his family."

Honoring our Veterans

Joliet Central Veteran's Ceremony

Since 2011, over 100 veterans have been honored at the Joliet Central High School Veteran's Ceremony and reception.

The ceremony is an emotional tribute that is open to the public and includes full participation from the school's JROTC students and staff. The event includes a heart-felt reading of veterans' service biographies, a student-produced video tribute, and musical renditions of "Taps" and "Duty Honor Country."

"This is an opportunity to pay our respects to the veterans of all wars and conflicts as well as honor all servicemen and women presently serving," said Social Science Instructor Terry Piazza. "Our veterans are heroes among us and their stories need to be heard."

Joliet Central High School has taken the ceremony one step further each year and now hosts a reception that takes place after the program where a panel discussion is held between the students and veterans. The reception includes refreshments provided by Culinary Arts classes, and student journalists conduct one-on-one interviews with each veteran.

Each year the Joliet Central Auditorium is filled to capacity with students, veterans and community members. "We take great pride in the response that the program has received from veterans, their families, our elected officials, students and faculty members," said Piazza. "The event allows us to ensure that the sacrifices of the courageous men and women of our military, and the sacrifices made by our veterans, do not go unnoticed."



Forever a Steelmen

JCHS Principal John Randich



The end of the 2014-2015 school year marked the retirement of JCHS Principal John Randich.

Principal Randich dedicated 34 years of service to JTHS as a teacher, coach, department chair, assistant principal and principal. A true Steelmen, he is a 1972 graduate of Joliet Central High School and the first Central alumnus to become principal of the Central Campus.

Over the years, Principal Randich has greatly contributed to JTHS and the Central Campus. He played an instrumental role in the numerous facility improvements, including the field house addition, JT Stadium, science labs, Indoor Air Quality Project, and the Student Center addition. He led an innovative educational reform that resulted in JTHS becoming the first public school district in Illinois to add community service as a graduation requirement. In 2015, Principal Randich received the Superintendent's Medallion and Awards of Excellence from the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois National School Public Relations Association.

"Principal Randich is an educational leader who always put students first," said JTHS Superintendent Dr. Cheryl McCarthy.

"He is, and will always be, a top notch administrator, teacher and coach."

JTHS thanks Principal Randich for his service to Joliet Township High School.

The Steelmen Tradition Continues

JCHS Principal Shad Hallihan

On February 24, 2015, the JTHS Board of Education approved the appointment of Mr. Shad Hallihan as the next principal of Joliet Central High School.

Mr. Hallihan brings a wealth of knowledge to the principal position and has 19 years of experience at Joliet Township High School as an English teacher, assistant athletic director, division chairperson, academy coordinator and assistant principal.

Mr. Hallihan's leadership at Joliet Township High School was instrumental in the implementation and planning of the District's 1:1 computing initiative, academy structure and the New Teacher Orientation Program. He has worked with staff, deans, and security professionals to foster a positive school climate and safe learning environment.

Joliet Central High School is a special place with a strong history of excellence," said Joliet Township High School Superintendent Dr. Cheryl McCarthy. "Mr. Hallihan has extensive leadership experience and a great understanding of our parents, students and community. I have no doubt that he will continue the quality leadership that Principal Randich has demonstrated over the years."



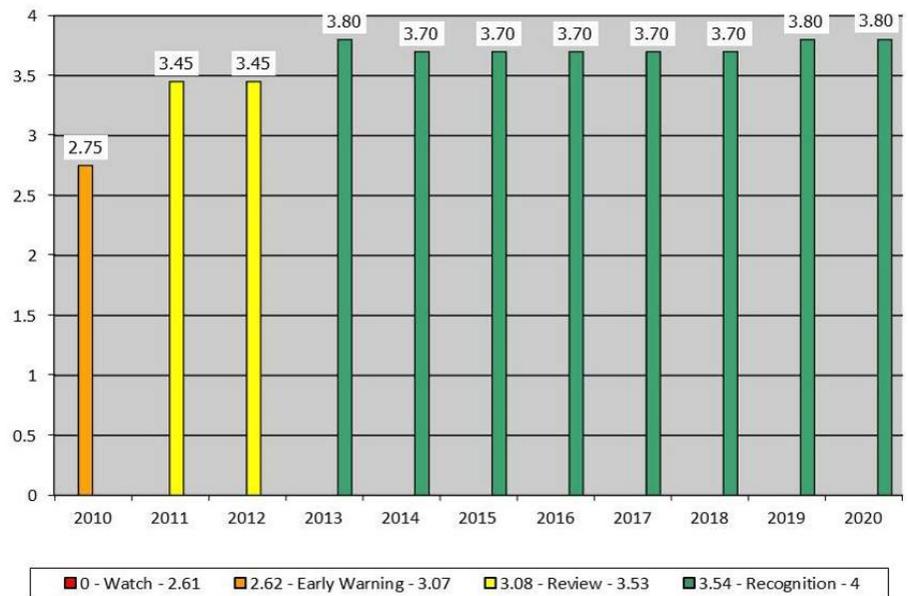
JTHS Fiscal Responsibility

Continued Financial Recognition Since 2013

On an annual basis, the state of Illinois requires school districts to participate in an independent audit conducted by an outside agency. The audit includes a thorough analysis of the District's fund balance to revenue ratio, expenditures to revenue ratio, days cash on hand, and other factors.

Since 2013, JTHS has received financial recognition, which is the highest rating a school district can receive based on audit results. Using PMA's

financial projection model, JTHS is on track to maintain recognition status for the next five years.



Proactive Planning in a Time of Uncertainty

Fiscal Year-end Fund Balance

Financial management is not an easy task during a time of fiscal instability at the state level. School districts across Illinois have received reductions in General State Aid and categorical funds. In addition, external factors such as pension funding and potential tax freezes also have the possibility of impacting our financial health.

To decrease the reliance on state funding and to proactively protect finances, JTHS actively maintains a healthy fund balance that exceeds the state recommended minimum. "This provides peace of mind for the District," said JTHS Assistant Superintendent for Business Services Ilandus Hampton. "We carefully monitor all aspects that can have a negative influence on our financial condition, and if we need to, make adjustments. The fund balance allows us to continue our operations without impacting the classroom or the quality of education that we provide."



Business Office Staff: Kristina Slawinski, Debbie Shelby, Amy Gomez, Ilandus Hampton, Kathy Hurley, Suzi Guerrero, Nancy Tutko-Mangun and Jen Kozlowski

JTHS Receives ASBO Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting for 28th Consecutive Year

For the 28th consecutive year, the Association of School Business Officials (ASBO) International awarded Joliet Township High School a Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting award for having met or exceeded the program's high standards for financial reporting and accountability.

The Certificate of Excellence (COE) award confirms the school business office's commitment to financial accountability and transparency. As the only award program specifically designed for school district financial reporting, it represents a significant achievement and reflects a high level of commitment to fiscal integrity. To receive the award, school districts must satisfy specific guidelines for effective, high-quality financial reporting recognized by school business officials.

"This award signifies the District's commitment to sound financial management and planning," said JTHS Assistant Superintendent of Business Services Ilandus Hampton. "Our entire business office staff has worked diligently to achieve this honor, and I thank them for their hard work and dedication."

Activities & Athletics

JTHS Joins Southwest Prairie Conference

In December of 2014, Joliet Township High School was accepted into the Southwest Prairie Conference. Both Joliet Central High School and Joliet West High School will enter the conference at the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year.

The Southwest Prairie Conference (SPC) is an organization of eight high schools in Southwestern Suburban Illinois, representing five communities in that part of the state. High schools in the Southwest Prairie Conference include: Minooka High School, Oswego East High School, Oswego High School, Plainfield Central High School, Plainfield East High School, Plainfield North High School, Plainfield South High School, and Romeoville High School.

JTHS will remain a member of the Southwest Suburban Conference (SWSC) until the 2016-2017 school year begins. "We thank all of the SWSC schools for our membership and it has always provided positive experiences for our students, coaches and administration," said JTHS Athletic Director Chris Olson. "We greatly appreciate the opportunity to have been a part of this conference, and we will continue our great relationship with all SWSC schools."

Olson notes many advantages that students will benefit from as a result of the change, including the close proximity to neighboring schools, familiarity with the schools and easier travel.

"We are excited for our students, community and coaches," said Olson. "The Southwest Prairie Conference will provide a variety of opportunities and further develop relationships among our neighboring schools."





School Spirit & Pride

JTHS Wins ABC7 Flyover Two Years in a Row

For two consecutive years, Joliet Township High School has earned the title of ABC7 Friday Flyover champion. In 2013 the award was presented live, on-air to Joliet West High School and in 2014 Joliet Central High School received the award.

Only 10 Chicago-area high schools are selected to participate in the flyover each year. During the Central and West Flyover, over 1,000 students gathered on the football field at 5:30 a.m. to display three formations that were broadcast live through an aerial view from the ABC7 chopper.

To determine the best flyover, ABC7 launched an online poll where votes were submitted from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. "Joliet Central and West were named Flyover Champions based on the overwhelming amount of online votes that were cast, which is a testament to the pride our students and staff have in our schools," said JTHS Athletic Director Chris Olson. "The flyover allowed our students to show their school spirit to the entire Chicagoland TV viewing area. The Steelmen and Tiger Nations came out in numbers to support our schools."



Joliet Township High School Orchestra Celebrates 110 Years of Musical Excellence

The 2014-2015 school year marked the JTHS Orchestra's 110th year of musical excellence. Established in 1905, the JTHS Orchestra has provided generations of students with the opportunity to participate in an award-winning string program.

"Joliet Township High School has three distinct orchestras: the JTHS Strings, the Philharmonia (an advanced string ensemble), and the Symphony Orchestra (an incorporation of woodwinds, brass and percussion)," said JTHS Orchestra Director Peter Lipari. "Each orchestra performs at various times and locations throughout the year. The one common thread connecting our three orchestra groups is our musicians, their excellent performances, and their dedication."

The 2014-2015 school year brought much success for the orchestra. Students traveled to St. Louis, Memphis and Nashville for performances and participated in a clinic at Vanderbilt University. A total of \$3,000 in grant funding was awarded to the orchestra from the JTHS Foundation, Ecolab and Meemic Insurance. A portion of the grant funding was used to commission two award-winning composers to write pieces that will be performed by the String Orchestra and Philharmonia in celebration of the 110th anniversary.

"For generations, the JTHS Orchestra has maintained a strong tradition of music-making. We are honored to be an integral part of a well-rounded curriculum," said Lipari.



IHSA Academic Achievement Awards

Nineteen athletic teams were awarded the IHSA Team Academic Achievement Award for the 2014-2015 season. The award recognizes teams that maintain a grade point average of 3.0 or higher throughout their respective season. The program is designed to reward teamwork, not only in competition, but in the classroom as well.

IHSA Team Academic Achievement Awards

JCHS Girls Cross Country	JCHS Badminton	JWHS Girls Cross Country	JWHS Softball
JCHS Boys Cross Country	JCHS Girls Track	JWHS Girls Volleyball	JTHS Girls Golf
JCHS Girls Volleyball	JCHS Softball	JWHS Girls Bowling	JTHS Boys Golf
JCHS Competitive Dance	JWHS Boys Cross Country	JWHS Cheerleading	JTHS Girls Swimming
	JWHS Boys Volleyball	JWHS Competitive Dance	JTHS Girls Tennis

IHSA All-State Academic Team

Milena Singletary

2014-2015 State Qualifiers & Team Achievements

JCHS Boys Cross Country: Team
JTHS Boys Golf: Trent Wallace
JCHS Boys Track: Raul Rosendo & Jesse Bradey
JCHS Boys Wrestling: Tyler Lawson
JCHS Bass Fishing: Team
JCHS Chess: Team
JCHS Solo and Ensemble: Team
JCHS Music Organization: Team
JCHS Journalism: Krynn Paluga
JTHS Boys Tennis: Tom Carney & Morgan Red
JTHS Girls Tennis: Eileen Carney
JWHS Boys Cross Country: Dan Treasure
JWHS Girls Bowling: Team
JWHS Cheerleading: Team
JWHS Girls Cross Country: Team
JWHS Football: Team
JWHS Wrestling: Darvell Flagg
JWHS Girls Track: Jessica Orr, Kristine Bourg, Brandy Teague & Melzina Johnson
JWHS Group Interpretation: Team
JWHS Group Interpretation: Grace Meagher, Madison Schlegel & Katie Robertson
JWHS Chess: Team
JWHS Math: Clayton Pelzer & Dora Richardson
JWHS Journalism: Sydney Czyzon, Abasi Kelley & Mike Maticka
JWHS Speech: Abasi Kelley, Morgan Lee & Emma Sheikh

2014-2015 Regional Champions

JWHS Girls Cross Country
JWHS Girls Bowling
JWHS Boys Volleyball
SWSC Blue Division Team Champions
JWHS Girls Bowling

Individual All-State Teams

JCHS Girls Soccer: Kathia Arredondo
JWHS Wrestling: Darvell Flagg
JWHS Baseball: Cody Grosse
JWHS Softball: Jen Ames & Alysia Rodriguez
JWHS Girls Volleyball: Elexis Coleman
JTHS Boys Tennis: Tom Carney & Morgan Red

State Division Winner

JCHS Mixed Chorus: IHSA First Division

Athletic Signings

Thirty-five Joliet Township High School students from the Class of 2015 signed letters of intent to continue their athletic careers at the college or university level.

