

# LYONS TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

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TO: Lyons Township HS District #204 Board of Education  
Dr. Brian Waterman, Superintendent

FROM: Dr. Jen Tyrrell, Principal

DATE: June 12, 2024

RE: 2023-24 End of Year Summary

On Wednesday, May 29, 2024 Lyons Township High School hosted the Class of 2024 Commencement Ceremony, thus concluding a successful 2023-24 school year. The students of LTHS excelled in the classroom, within extra-curricular activities, and within interscholastic athletics throughout the school year. The following information provides various highlights and celebrations from the 2023-24 school year.

## Academics

Based on the scholarships and awards submitted to us by May 23rd, the class of 2024 reported that its students will utilize 16 million 682 thousand dollars toward its future education goals.

In addition, LTHS students were awarded the following:

- Thirty (30) National Merit Commended Students
- Nine (9) were named Semi-finalists and all nine (9) were named Finalists
- Nineteen (19) seniors were named National Hispanic Recognition Scholars.
- Six (6) seniors were named National African American Recognition Scholars.
- One Hundred Eleven (111) qualified as "High Honor Status"
- One Hundred Ninety Six (196) achieved the status of Illinois State Scholar
- 95% of the students in the Class of 2024 will continue post-high school education at two and four year colleges, technical schools, apprenticeships, or the military.

## Student Activities

This year's reporting finds that 81.7% of LT students participated in at least one extracurricular activity (sport, club, or intramural), with 61.4% participating in two or more. Also, 90.7% of students experienced at least one element of our co-curricular program (athletics, intramurals, clubs, or special events).

LT again hosted the Illinois Directors of Student Activities Student Leadership Conference on October 27, 2023, welcoming over 800 students and 100 sponsors from 48 schools to South Campus. The Conference will return to North Campus in 2024.

Several of our cultural clubs collaborated in April to host our first Multicultural Festival in the North Campus Cafeteria, with plans to expand the event next year.

Five sponsors were recognized at the 2024 IDSA State Convention for Student Activities: Joan Cushing (*Career Achievement Award* for Peer Leaders and Congressional Debate); Candace Jackson Fauth (*Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Award* for Black Student Union and GEMS); Maria Ricker (*Student Activity Advisor Award* for Congressional Debate, Model UN, Best Buddies, Scholastic Bowl, and Soccer); Tom Swiontek (*Student Activity Advisor Award* for Congressional Debate, Recycling Club, and Girls Tennis); and Jose Oleaga (*New Student Activity Advisor Award* for Spanish Club).

Snowball Sponsor Angie Patel was recognized as the 2023-24 Adult Excellence Award winner by Operation Snowball, Inc., the state-level organization.

**Battle of the Books:** Hosted its second annual competition, defeating Marist High School by a score of 60-28 on *National Read Across America Day*.

**Best Buddies:** Hosted numerous monthly events, including a Halloween Bash, Charlie Brown Friendsgiving, Holiday Party, Movie Night, Valentine's Day, an Easter Egg Hunt, and a collaboration with Yoga & Wellness Club. The club also marched in the Countryside St. Patrick's Day Parade.

**BPA:** Twenty-two students qualified for State in 30 events, with nine students in eleven events advancing to the National Conference in Chicago. Seven additional students in four events finished in the top ten, but did not qualify for Nationals. Two students finished in the top six nationally in their events.

**Chess Team:** The team ended its seventh year with a 7-12-1 record in the regular season. They finished 3rd at Sectionals, and tied for 66th at State (75th after tiebreakers). At the U.S. Chess Federation National High School Championships, the Under-1200 team finished 12th, the Unrated team finished 14th, the Blitz team finished 14th, and one of our Bughouse teams finished 13th. Individually, Francis Casiple won the Unrated section of the National Tournament, and Brandon Becerra finished 15th in the Unrated section of the National Tournament and 2nd in the Unrated Blitz Tournament.

**Congressional Debate:** The team had a historic season, earning five top-six finishes and 59 individual awards. The team finished 3rd at the ICDA State Finals, bringing home the Best Civil Policy Legislation Award and three All-State recognitions. At the 50th Annual Harvard College Tournament, LT won the Best Performing New School Sweepstakes Award. Finally, three students qualified for the National Tournament of Champions in Lexington, Kentucky (the first time in LT history), with one student advancing to the semifinal round.

**Cyber Defense Club:** The club fielded three CyberPatriot teams this year, two in the Platinum (top) Tier and one in Gold. The Platinum teams finished 4th and 6th in the State of Illinois, and the Gold Team placed 9th. The Club also competed in the College of DuPage's Cyber Fire Challenge, winning the competition despite being the only high school team competing. Their final competition came in the nationwide Cyber.org Cyber Cup Challenge, where LT's teams all finished in the top 20%. As part of the club's participation in the CyberStart America Competition, one of our students earned a \$3,000 scholarship applicable to participation in the Cyber Foundations Academy – a multi-week online program based on the nationally recognized SANS Foundations training course and certification.

**eSports:** The Mario Kart Team won their IHSA Sectional and finished 7th at the IHSA State Series.

**GEMS:** Welcomed dozens of participants to their annual Introduce a Girl to STEM Day on Saturday, February 24.

**Interact:** Dropped off handmade thank-you cards, sweets, and donuts at the La Grange Fire Department in December. Collected 400 books on behalf of Bernie's Book Drive.

**Latin Club:** Two teams earned six top three finishes at this year's Certamen competitions, and the Latin 2 team finished 4th at the State Certamen Competition. At the IJCL State Convention in February, the Latin 2 team earned a 4th place award, and the club as a whole won the Overall Convention Spirit Award (Small Schools). Students brought home 20 top-five finishes.

**Latinos Juntos:** Continued their partnership with the LT Care Space while also taking leadership roles in numerous special events, including Noche Navidena and the inaugural Multicultural Festival.

**The Lion Newspaper:** At the 2023 National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA) convention, five students were recognized for their work, including one Superior award, two Excellent awards, and two Honorable Mentions.

**Lions Den:** 3A/4A finalist in this year's IHSA Student Section Showdown.

**LTTV:** Ben ('23) Cunin Alvarado's commercial, "LEGO - The Purrfect House", won a Crystal Pillar from the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences Chicago/Midwest chapter and the student Emmy Award. At this year's MMEA Video Festival, students earned nine top-five awards.

**Math Team:** Had another strong year, finishing 3rd in the WSML Conference championship (two wins and 11 top-three finishes). At ICTM State, the team finished 15th, with top-ten finishes in three events.

**Menagerie:** The 2022-23 edition, *Once Upon a Time*, received the following awards during the 2023-24 school year:

- "First Place" - American Scholastic Press Association
- "Most Outstanding High School Literary-Art Magazine" - American Scholastic Press Association
- "Silver Crown" - Columbia Scholastic Press Association
- "Gold Medal" - Columbia Scholastic Press Association
- "Pacemaker" - National Scholastic Press Association
- "All-American with Five Marks of Distinction" - National Scholastic Press Association
- "Best in Show - 1st Place" - JEA/NSPA - Spring National HS Journalism Convention
- "Best in Show - 6th Place" - JEA/NSPA - Fall National HS Journalism Convention
- "First Class" - National Council of Teachers of English, REALM

**Model UN:** In seven conferences this year, LTMUN won two Best and one Outstanding Delegation awards. Students brought home 42 individual awards, including 16 Best Delegate, 15 Outstanding Delegate, and 11 Honorable Mentions. They also hosted the tenth annual LYMUN Conference, featuring opening video statements from António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General, and Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General.

#### **Music:**

- 50 students were selected for the ILMEA District Ensembles in band, orchestra, choir, jazz band, and jazz choir. Of those, 15 were named All-State musicians.
- The LT Jazz Ensemble, Jazz Lab Band, Jazz Band, and three Jazz Combos earned 28 individual Outstanding Soloist Awards at the Evanston Jazz Festival.
- The LT Jazz Ensemble performed in concert with guest artist, Derrick Gardner.
- The LT Wind Ensemble was selected from a national pool of candidates for a featured performance at the National Concert Band Festival at Butler University in Indianapolis.
- For the ninth time in the history of LT, the LT Wind Ensemble was selected as an Illinois Superstate Band Finalist (state finals for band in Illinois).
- Including marching band, concert bands, jazz bands, and pit orchestra students gave over 50 performances for school and community audiences this school year.

**NHS:** Spearheaded a holiday food drive that collected 1,342 items for area food pantries.

**Older Adult Connections:** Collaborated with Plymouth Place and Bethlehem Woods on six events throughout the school year, including game nights, a bean bag tournament, and holiday gatherings.

**Poms:** Varsity won the WSC Conference Championship, finished 2nd in their IHSA Sectional, and 6th at the IHSA State Series (the seventh straight year that they have qualified). At the IDTA State Competition, they brought home two championships: 3A High Point Award (the highest score across all competitions, for their Lyrical performance), State Champions in Lyrical/Contemporary, and State Champions in Open Pom. The JV team took 2nd place at the WSC Conference Championships and finished 8th in the JV Poms State Championship. At the IDTA State Competition, JV earned four awards: State Champions in Lyrical/Contemporary, JV Grand Champions (overall award), and 2nd Place in both Jazz and Open Pom. Their Lyrical performance also earned the highest JV score across all competitions.

**PSI:** Hosted approximately 1,500 students at their various events, including a “Meet & Eat” events with SAVE Promise Club, Student-Administrator Forums at each campus, Final Exam Study Breaks each semester, and their annual PEP (Peers Educating Peers) Fair at South Campus in the spring.

**Robotics Team:** Two teams qualified for the VEX State Competition, with one earning the Sportsmanship Award.

**Snowball:** Forty-three Staff & Theatre members welcomed 164 students to the three-day fall retreat in early November, with an additional 170 taking part in early March’s two-day retreat.

**Speech Team:** Six top-ten tournament finishes as a team this year, highlighted by a 4th-place finish at Regionals. The team earned 34 individual top-five awards during the season, including 12 at Regionals. Nine events advanced to Sectionals, including a first-time qualification by the Performance in the Round team (2nd at Regionals). Four individuals qualified for the Sectional finals. Three students chose to continue their season by participating in the National Speech and Debate District Qualifier (a first for LT), with all three finishing in the top half of their events. Finally, Speech and **Congressional Debate** accumulated enough points this year to be recognized as a chapter of the National Forensic League on February 15, 2024.

**Steppers:** The team was invited to perform at The CommUNITY Diversity Group of La Grange Area’s unveiling of their Mosaic Project on October 15, 2023. They were invited to perform at Brook Park Elementary School’s March spirit assembly for the second year.

**Student Council:** Planned the Homecoming Dance and the All-School Assembly. Also took part in a number of philanthropic endeavors, including:

- The 2024 Mr. LT Pageant raised \$8,985.93 for the Jack Kunkle Memorial Scholarship. (As a result, the Kunkles intend to increase the amount of future scholarships.)
- Hosted two community blood drives. Over 150 students, staff, and community members donated approximately 133 “blood products”, providing treatment for almost 400 patients. This is the LT community’s largest response since 2017.
- This year’s Secret Santa program supported 160 area families in collaboration with the La Grange Rotary Club.
- Donated \$1,000 worth of reversible LT sweatshirts to the LT Care Space.

- Partnered with **Older Adult Connections** to bring back Senior Citizens Prom, hosting dozens of area seniors for an afternoon of music, dancing, and light refreshments in the North Campus Cafeteria. This marked the first time that LT has hosted this event since 2019.

**Tabulae:** The 2022-23 edition of the yearbook, *In Essence*, received the following awards:

- "First Place" - American Scholastic Press Association
- "Gold Medal" - Columbia Scholastic Press Association
- "All-KEMPA" - Kettle Moraine Press Association
- "First Class with Three Marks of Distinction" - National Scholastic Press Association
- "Golden Eagle" - Northern Illinois Scholastic Press Association

**Theatre Board:** Produced another successful season of eight productions:

- *So (Blank) You'll (Blank) XV: A Tale of (Blank) (Blank)*
- *The House at Pooh Corner*
- *As You Like It: The Musical* (selected for performance at the Illinois High School Theatre Festival)
- *A Christmas Carol: The Radio Play*
- *Urinetown: The Musical*
- *The Donna Mavros Festival of One-Act Plays*
- *Tens by Teens*
- *The 24-Hour Plays*

**Winter Guard:** Brought home six 1st-place finishes at this year's competitions, but failed to qualify for the IDTA State Final.

**WLTL:** At the annual John Drury Radio Awards, WLTL won eight awards: Best Station Promotional Poster, Best Social Media Account, Best Celebrity or Artist/Band Interview, Best Community Volunteer Program/Personality, Best Sports Play-by-Play, Best Production Director, Best Social Media Director, and Best Programming Director. Rock-a-Thon raised over \$17,000 for WLTL and LTTV.

### Interscholastic Athletics

#### **Fall**

**Girls Swimming and Diving** – WSC Champions, IHSA Sectional Champions, IHSA State Finish 4<sup>th</sup> place at the State Meet

**Football** – Advanced to the second round of the playoffs and finished in the top 16 teams in 8A in state

**Boys Soccer** – IHSA Regional Champions, IHSA Sectional Champions, IHSA Super Sectional Champions, IHSA State 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Trophy

**Boys Cross Country** – IHSA State Finish 4<sup>th</sup> place at the State Meet

**Boys Golf** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place is WSC, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place IHSA Regional Finish

**Girls Golf** – IHSA State Finish 10<sup>th</sup> Place at the State Meet

**Girls Volleyball** – IHSA Regional Champions, Ranked 10<sup>th</sup> place in state

**Girls Cross Country** – IHSA State Finish 12<sup>th</sup> place at the State Meet

**Girls Basketball** – IHSA Regional Champions

**Bowling** – IHSA Regional Champions, Qualified for State as a Team, Finished in 18<sup>th</sup> Place in IHSA State

**Girls Gymnastics** – IHSA Regional Champions

**Boys Swimming** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place IHSA Sectional Finish, Finished in 27<sup>th</sup> Place as a Team at IHSA State

**Competitive Cheer** – WSC Champions, Qualified for State as a Team, Finished in 16<sup>th</sup> Place in IHSA State

**Pom Pon** – Qualified for State as a Team, Finished in 6<sup>th</sup> Place in IHSA State

**Special Olympics Basketball** – Blue Team Finished the Year in 4<sup>th</sup> Place in the State

### **Spring**

**Badminton** – IHSA 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Sectional Finish

**Boys Gymnastics** – West Suburban Conference Champions, Sectional Champions, 4<sup>th</sup> Place Finish in the State Tournament

**Boys Water Polo** – IHSA Sectional Champions, IHSA State Champions

**Girls Water Polo** – IHSA Sectional Champions, IHSA State 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Trophy

**Boys Track** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place finish in the IHSA Sectional

**Girls Track** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place finish in the IHSA Sectional

**Boys Tennis** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Finish in the IHSA Sectional, Finished in 5<sup>th</sup> place in the IHSA State Tournament

**Girls Soccer** – IHSA Regional Champions, IHSA Sectional Champions, Advanced to the Elite 8, Finished the Year Ranked 8<sup>th</sup> Place in the State

**Boys Volleyball** – IHSA Regional Champions, IHSA Sectional Champions, Elite 8 Finish, Finished the year ranked in 6<sup>th</sup> Place in State