

YOUR SCHOOLS

THORNTON TOWNSHIP
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 205

SUMMER 2018



THORNTON TOWNSHIP
DISTRICT
205
HIGH SCHOOLS



Thornridge



Thornton



Thornwood

State of District 205



*District 205 Superintendent
Dr. Leotis D. Swopes*

I have dutifully served Thornton Township High School District 205 for last three years as Superintendent or Interim with a mission to make education meaningful for the students that entered its doors. I attempted to make sure that every student, every day, had a teacher in his/her classroom that cared about

his/her education every day! Therefore, I defined my role as a higher level of service to give students skill of mind, hand and heart, so they in turn would help others.

I was selected as superintendent in May 2015

following a school board election whose winning candidates desired to be more progressive and build a foundation to set the school district's course in a more positive direction. I was the seventh superintendent in as many years! As this trek began with the new board and superintendent, it was paramount that communication was going to be the call of the day. It was important to build a cohesive team, internally. Also, we had to reach out to our constituencies to foster collaborative efforts and instill transparency in our operations. The fidelity of our purpose needed to reflect the urgency of making meaningful changes from the input of a cross-section of stakeholders. More importantly, we had to address instructional and cultural relevant paradigms more comprehensively to

counter the effects of poor pupil performances in all our schools, while celebrating the things that had been done well, thus far.

Following are the accomplishments made from May 2015 to June 30, 2018. No one person could have done this by him or herself. The many results were the advent of collaboration, communication and cohesive teamwork.

A Strategic Planning Process (2015) - produced Five District/Board Goals; Vision and Mission Statements; along with five Core Values. The five goals will be used to categorize the accomplishments that were made over the past three years.

Goal I. Ensure continuous learning development, growth and achievement for all students.

Mastery Connect (9/2016) - technology to foster multi-tier support for struggling students;

Northwest Educational Assessment (NWEA- 2017) - Type I District Assessment tool to monitor annual student progress at strategic times of the year;

Curriculum Audit (2017) - centered on the main business of schools, teaching, curriculum and learning;

Collaborated with Illinois Center School Improvement (ICSI) and Illinois State Board of Education as priority and focused schools to establish goals (Mathematics, English and Culture & Climate) to design school improvement;

Outlook Academy (2016) – provided students pathways to complete high school graduation requirements in a different setting and additional supports;

The advent of Division Leaders – these are instructional focused administrators trained in their specific content areas who work to improve the teaching and learning process;

Adopted SAT Suite of Assessments (2016) – designed to provide greater “readiness” for students in unprecedented ways in their schools/district;

Atlas Rubicon (2018) – an online warehouse to build the district's curriculum in collaborative ways and for continuous improvement.

Goal II. Ensure a safe, supportive, challenging and culturally sensitive learning environment.

Peace Center (2016) – provided layers of interventions and programs to include staff mentors, peer leaders, group and individual counseling, Positive Behavior Intervention Systems;

Senate Bill 100 Tribunal – a cross section of experienced educators who review, advise and make determinations in the exercising of equity in the disciplining of student with serious infractions;

Governors State University Partnership – making teachers aware and better prepared to address students who have lived through Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES);

Collaborated with Illinois Center School Improvement (ICSI) and Illinois State Board of Education as priority and focused schools to establish goals (Mathematics, English and Culture and Climate) to design school improvement;

Each school developed Safety Plans – ensuring safe passage, taking preventive operations and mutual input;

Atlas Rubicon (2018) – an online warehouse to build the district's curriculum in collaborative ways and for continuous improvement.

Goal III. Recruit, train and retain a high-quality staff that is committed to continuous improvement through teamwork, collaboration and shared leadership.

Frontline (2015) – online manager for attracting and hiring the best candidates;

Talent Ed (2016) – online resource to improve observation, supervision and evaluation process.

Goal IV. Engage parents, students, staff, clergy, business owners and community (stakeholders) in the District's continuous improvement effort.

Strategic Planning Process (10/15) - resulting in Vision and Mission Statements; Core Values to guide District work;

Grade level Parent Coordinators at each of the high schools;

Parent Summit (2018) – provided parents with strategies and skills to help their children and work with their schools;

Chicago State University Partnership (2016) – gave access to higher education and workforce development;

Governors State University Partnership (2017) – making teachers aware and better prepared to address students who have lived through Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES);

South Suburban College Partnership (2016) – increased the number of students earning dual credits significantly;

Southland Conference (2017) - our coaches/athletes desired to move from the Southwest Suburban Conference (SWSC) to increase our competitiveness. This will begin in the 2019-2020 school year.

Goal V. Demonstrate and communicate effective and efficient school district operations to ensure excellent stewardship of public resources.

Updated all school district policies (2017);

Hired a full-time Chief School Business Official (2016) – the individual monitors all school business operations for greater efficiency;

Bond Issues of \$60 million (2016) – improve infrastructure in all three district high schools, stadiums and fieldhouses;

Bond Issues of \$2 million (2016) – improve technology throughout the district;

Bond Issues (2016) were structured to reduce property tax over a longer period of time;

Technology Audit (2018) – designed to assess infrastructure, personnel and needs to run a highly proactive system;

Financial Recognition from ISBE (2018) - two years of having met its financial requirements and received a high score of 3.70/4.00 scale.

Interview with Dr. Nathaniel Cunningham, Jr. Superintendent, School District 205



Dr. and Mrs. Cunningham with District 205 Board Members
Pictured L-R Albert Butler, Dr. Nathaniel Cunningham, Carla Cunningham, Nina Graham, Almetta Vasser-Moody, Bernadette Lawrence

Congratulations to Dr. Nathaniel Cunningham, Jr. as the new incoming Superintendent for School District 205. As a professional educator with many years of service in the field of education, Dr. Cunningham shares his expertise, thoughts, and hopes for the school district as he takes on his role as superintendent.

Please share with our readers various positions held in the field of education.

I went to college at the United States Air Force Academy and finished my bachelor degree at the University of the State of New York. I received my first master's degree at Chapman University in Orange, California in Curriculum and Instruction. I then received a second master's degree in Educational Administration from Eastern Illinois University where I got my EDS, (Educational Specialist). I have a doctorate from Illinois State University and K-12 Educational Administration with a focus on Leadership. My dissertation was on "Professional Learning Communities."

I did ten years in the United States Air Force and decided to return home to teach and coach with my father in Danville, Illinois. There, I was an Eighth Grade Science Teacher and High School Football Coach. I was recruited by a neighboring district in Rantoul Township High School to serve as Assistant Principal. I served three years there and left as an Associate Principal before I became Principal at Chatham Glenwood High School, which is a suburb of Springfield. I was there for seven years. I went from Principal at Chatham-Glenwood High School to the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources at Unit 5 in Normal. McClean County Unit 5 is actually the destination new school. I did five years at McClean Unit 5 and from there, I went to Crete. I served as Superintendent for Crete and beginning July 1, I will become Superintendent for District 205.

What are some of the educational challenges in District 205 you see that can be improved upon as well as programs you hope to enhance?

If you take a look at the programs that are available in our school district, we have a wide variety of programs to meet a wide variety of students. Whether you start with our basic AVID program, all the way up to our International Baccalaureate programs, we have many, many programs for our students. Our focus is to become a better team, as administrators, and teachers, so that we team with our parents to ensure our students' success.

The challenge that we have is getting and speaking a common language. What we have a lot of trouble with right now is a lot of times, we speak as a district speak. We talk about our MTSS program and no one knows what MTSS is. Now, what's important for us to do is be on a common level, when our parents understand when we talk about Multi-Tier Systems of Success (MTSS). The MTSS program is designed to meet our students where they are and ensure they have the skills necessary to be successful in our schools.

Discuss some of the accomplishment that District 205 has already achieved?

They've brought in a successful program with AVID and they do a great job with AVID. The program is really designed to bring our students who are struggling a bit over to the side of success. They are doing that very well. The district also has successful Advance Prep and

IB programs. So, if you take a look at the numbers of students in our schools that are going out to top-tier universities, they are doing that very well. Our challenge is to find our way to ensure the success of each student, not just the top-tier students.

As former Assistant Principal at Thornridge, what type of programs you help to implement?

My position as Assistant Principal served as an opportunity for me to listen to staff and work with them to create programs that help them become more successful. My role primarily started out in discipline. What we tried to do is create holistic systems for the students to motivate them to do the right thing and help both the student and the teacher know where we are going.

Is there a need to foster better communication between teachers and parents?

I plan to ensure that we are communicators and that it becomes more than just a one-sided communication. We are going to work to make sure that we are taking input from our parents, whether it's in finding out what their needs are or the needs of the students or finding out the teachers' needs for their students. There's going to be a two-way communication so we can understand that together teachers, administrators, and parents all play an important role in students' success.

Can you further explain the importance of these three components working together to ensure each student success?

As the educational experts, we know how to educate children, but the parents know their children and together that gives us enough knowledge to ensure the success of each student.

What are some of the hopes that you have for the District 205?

I hope that together, we become a place where people want to come to learn, not just for our students, but for our teachers and administrators. This district has a history of excellence and doing great things, not only for students but for teachers. This requires work, but we can do it.

Any final words you would like to share with our readers?

I can't tell you how excited I am to be in this community and to have the opportunity to work here. I look forward to the success of our schools and our community and I look forward to getting any and all input that I can from our community.

VISION STATEMENT

Thornton Township High School District 205 is a high-quality district that produces major gains in student achievement and prepares all students for success in college, careers and service in our community and global society.

MISSION STATEMENT

Thornton Township High School District 205 puts students first and will provide a challenging and engaging curriculum, use evidence-based teaching practices, connect learning to life experiences and maintain a safe, nurturing, technology-rich environment that addresses social justice and partners with family and community members.

CORE VALUES

Pride • Integrity • Responsiveness • High Expectations with High Support • Commitment to Excellence

Board President Message



Board President
Nina Graham

Dear District 205 Community,

It has been a rigorous and successful year in District 205. Our 3 schools are comprised of Thornridge, Thornton and Thornwood High Schools, as well as Outlook Academy and Peace Center.

Together with dedicated staff and faculty we are committed to a high level of educational values, and intentionally declare that we put students first. Our goal is to provide opportunities for students to become lifelong learners, while connecting with family and the school community. Our core values are powerful declarations: Pride, Integrity, Responsiveness, High Expectations with Support and Commitment to Excellence. Our vision is to prepare all students for college and career success, entering society as prepared, productive, global citizens. Ensuring that all students have access to a quality education is our promise.

As we focus on preparing students for successful careers, our goal is to increase student achievement in STEM categories. Research shows that many current and future job opportunities will require advanced technical expertise. We understand the importance of ensuring students can touch technology daily, and diligently working to equip schools with updated digital tools and access. Developing capacity in problem solving, data analysis and technology are critical to student success. The subjects we teach today will ensure our students are prepared for tomorrow's opportunities.

I am happy to report that our district is financially stable, with a balanced budget. We have recently been highlighted in the Daily Southtown newspaper for achieving financial recognition - and showing the biggest improvement in the South Suburbs. Through capital improvement funds, we are continuously refining our facilities to provide a safe environment conducive for high quality teaching and learning.

We have also recently announced the hiring of a new Superintendent to lead District 205 into a bright future. Please take time to read the article introducing Dr. Cunningham.

As a board of education, our goals are to see every student graduate, increased parental involvement, build stronger relationships, and continue to be the bridge that connects schools and communities.

Please enjoy your summer and know that we are busy preparing for another successful year in District 205.

Warm regards,

Nina Graham
Nina Graham, District 205 Board President



District 205 Board of Education and Student Board

DISTRICT 205 STUDENT BOARD MISSION STATEMENT

To use our leadership positions to represent District 205 students, improve our schools, and give back to the community. We will do this by providing quality programs and acting as a sounding board to the superintendent and Board of Education.

VISION

With humility, humbleness, and hard work, the Student Board of Education will represent and serve our peers, schools, and community. By using our leadership skills, we will work to ensure that all students receive a high quality, well-rounded high school experience.

Outlook Academy

Outlook Academy continues to be a growing success for District 205! Since its opening in August 2016, just over 300 students have graduated from the program and are well on their way to completing their post-secondary education plans. Some of these students aspire to be teachers, lawyers, electricians, and entrepreneurs, while others are still undecided.

Outlook Academy (OA) is just one of District 205's many initiatives to create opportunities for all students and residents of our community to succeed. The program gives those who are between the ages of 17 and 21 and second chance to obtain a high school diploma. Through a partnership with Chicago State University, Outlook Academy provides students with a pathway to complete the requirements for a high school diploma in a different setting with additional program assistance. At Outlook Academy, all teachers are taught by District 20 teachers. Along with receiving the tools and tutoring it takes to complete their classes get their diploma, students have access to many others tools. Some of these include Academic and Career Counseling Support and an opportunity to join CSU's Job Readiness Program.

Patricia Fortier, Coordinator for Outlook Academy, highlighted that OA exposes students to more than just education. She said, "Outlook Academy, through the assistance of a dedicated veteran staff, makes education a priority for our students via individual learning pathways, academic direction and creation of 'true' college and career skills."

The program also gives students the chance to take various dual-credit classes such as Art & Ceramics, Manufacturing, Game Design, Karate, Dance & Aerobics, and Diversity and International Studies. Along with academics, OA also included athletics. This February, Keenan Alexander, a student of OA was named the IHSA Regional Champion in Wrestling. Another student, Jerald Simmons was named All Conference for Basketball in March! This program gives students the opportunity to be well-rounded by giving a variety of educational and recreational class options. Simmons was also recruited by the University of Georgia basketball team!

Outlook Academy is making a difference in the lives of many. A July 2017 graduate, Kevin Miller sent OA a message which said "Thank you to Outlook Academy and all the teachers. You for sure never gave up on me, even when I gave up on myself."

We owe the success of Outlook Academy largely to



Crystal Conner TT CSU Freshman Future Nurse

all of the staff who put their efforts into this program to help our students. District 205 would like to thank the Staff Members of the Month (from September through March respectively), Lawrence Goffer, Leo Conry, Josh Folsom, Jason Hill, OA Counselor Pam Martin, Linda Kingdon, and Paul Arrington.

The purpose of Outlook Academy is to empower those students who have struggled to achieve in a traditional educational setting the opportunity to excel in a non-traditional setting. Thus, making success, competence and confidence a reality.

Outlook Academy provides its students the opportunity and flexibility to learn in an environment more suited to their individual needs. Students are provided with adjustable start and end times, a block schedule and Saturday tutoring

options. Each student has an individual academic plan that begins on their first day at Outlook and continues well past their completion date. Outlook Academy, through the assistance of a dedicated veteran staff, makes education a priority for our students via individual learning pathways, academic direction and creation of 'true' college and career skills.

Outlook Academy is designed to not only service students in need of high school credits, but works on post high school plans with each individual student. All students take and/or retake the ACT test as part of their individual academic plan. All Outlook Academy students upon completion of their high school credits has an established post-Outlook plan in place that secures employment, training programs, military enlistment and/or college.



TV & Radio Production Class

Thornridge

H I G H S C H O O L



District 205 high school students attending Upward Bound academy.



Principal Ebonie Williams

Upward Bound and Talent Search Continue Legacy of Aiding Local Students

District 205 high school students attending Upward Bound academy.

For many high school students, preparing for college can be both exciting and daunting, oftentimes mired with questions of which college to choose, how to fill out college applications and how to qualify for Pell Grants. Through the years, the Family Centered Educational Agency (FCEA) has partnered with Thornton Township District 205 to offer Upward Bound and Educational Talent Search (ETS) Enrichment programs, which have answered many puzzling questions for students headed to college.

Under the auspices of the Trio Program, a federally funded initiative, Upward Bound and ETS were established in 1964 and 1965 through the U.S. Department of Education to help disadvantaged students apply for federal aid for college. Originally, the two programs fell under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 but later was housed under the Trio program in 1968. The FCEA TRIO projects have served the Township since 1998. Since that time, thousands of students in District 205

have benefited from both programs. According to Matthew Dright, Program Coordinator of FCEA's Educational Talent Search program (ETS), in past years, students who participated in the Upward Bound and Educational Talent Search programs have successfully enrolled in many Illinois universities and colleges across the country. These colleges and universities include the University of Illinois at Urbana, University of Illinois at Chicago, Illinois State University of Iowa, Eastern Illinois University, Florida A&M, Moorehouse College, Fisk University, Tennessee State, to name a few of the many colleges students attend.

"I'm a graduate of the Educational Talent Search program and I know that without the assistance of that program, I would not have received my four-year college degree. It's beneficial from my standpoint," Dright said.

Both Upward Bound and ETS programs provide robust academic assistance to help student transition from high school to college. The FCEA website (www.familycentered.org) states that the program offers one-on-one academic and personal counseling, assistance with completing financial aid forms and college/scholarship applications for post-secondary education, academic skills assessment, Personal and professional development programs, tutoring and test prep (ACT/SAT, PSAT, PLAN, EXPLORE), among other assistance.

"Through the years, the Upward Bound program has been a tremendous benefit to all students in District 205,

particularly students who face socio-economic concerns. We look forward to working and partnering with the Upward Bound program for many years to come," said John Arrington, Director of College and Careers for District 205.

According to Dright, participating students in both Upward Bound and the Educational Talent Search program have pursued degrees in fashion design, medicine, law, multimedia services, animal sciences, and marketing. He also added that the Upward Bound program has an alumni ceremony where college graduates are acknowledged.

To learn more about Upward Bound and Educational Talent Search programs, as well as other college prep initiatives, please call (708) 210-1771.

Historically Black Colleges

Thornridge and District 205 Students Visit Historically Black Colleges and Civil Rights Sites While the majority of the student body enjoyed time off from their rigorous class schedules over Spring Break, more than 57 students traveled to several Historically Black Colleges (HBCU) in the Deep South from March 26-29, making several stops at African-American institutions and other notable sites along the route.

"We started out in Tennessee and visited HBCUs, including Tennessee State and Fisk University," said



Veronica Mosley-Raggs, AVID and Career Portfolio Coordinator.

Historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) are institutions of higher education in the United States that were established before the Civil Rights Act of 1964 with the intention of primarily serving the African-American community. Included are Florida A&M, North Carolina A&T, Howard University, Winston-Salem State University, Jackson State, and many more.

"It is extremely important for African-American students to know about HBCUs because of the family atmosphere and the nurturing environment offered there," Raggs said. "I am a fan of HBCU's because I went to Clark and Spelman; so, with that being said, I felt it was so important for the students to see a different perspective. These institutions have made a lot of our leaders who they are today."

Traveling with the group were John Arrington, Director of College and Career Development for District 205, and Dr. Jerry Doss, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Community Relations for District 205. Arrington said, "During the tour, 10 students were offered onsite acceptance! One student was offered a full ride scholarship to Jackson State University, and nine other students were accepted at Rust College."

"I had never visited an HBCU before and, overall, the trip was good," said Michael Ogletree, who is a senior. "I like the colleges and the communities we visited. I plan to go to South Suburban for two years and from there I plan to go to a four-year institution to major in Radiology."

Aubriana Johnson, a junior said, "I loved the trip. Personally, I didn't think I would like it, because I wanted to attend a culinary school, but now I think I might be attending one (an HBCU)—I want to go to Tennessee State."

Arrington agreed. "Historical Black Colleges and Universities were, and still are, the foundation that has educated millions of African-American students. These are the universities that took African-Americans under their wings when it was illegal for any other schools to accept Blacks. These institutions are tried and true, and offer a solid education to African-American students."

As part of the tour, students also went to Memphis and visited Beale Street, as well as the Lorraine Motel, where Dr. Martin Luther King was shot. The tour continued on into Mississippi, where students visited Jackson State, Hinds Community College, and Rust College. The tour included the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum, which, according to Mosley-Raggs, was phenomenal experience for them.

Student Notables

Thornridge is proud to announce that we have four 2018 Illinois State Scholars. Markeese Bell, Sumaiyah Dairo, Cyann Knox, and Sophia Russell performed in the top one-half of the Thornridge graduating class of 2018 at the end of the third semester prior to graduation and/or scored at or above the 95th percentile on the SAT. We are proud of their accomplishments! Congratulations to Drael Dugar for making the Southwest Suburban All Conference Wrestling Team (Red Division). Drael's record for the year was 30 wins and 4 losses, and he placed 5th at the IHSA state meet. In addition, Drael was voted by the conference coaches as the Southwest Suburban Conference Wrestler of The Year (Red Division). This makes the first Thornridge athlete to Become Athlete of the Year in the SWSC in any sport. A HUGE congratulation to TR Band students. Band students participated in IHSA STATE Solo and Ensemble Contest at Hillcrest High School in March. With 24 entries of Solo and Ensembles, all 24 received Division I SUPERIOR RATINGS With 6 BEST OF THE DAY PERFORMANCES from Brianna Boyd – Trumpet, Destin Miller- Alto Sax, Miyah Norwood – Trumpet, Eddie Collins – Trumpet, Brianna Boyd - Trumpet, and Sonja Bradley – Trumpet.

Earth Day at Thornridge High School

The Thornridge High School community will host an Earth Day Expo during the school day on April 19, 2018. Our high school students will be demonstrating many

of the labs that they perform throughout the year with a focus on being earth friendly. Thornridge will have approximately 100 high school students set up in the school gym at stations of biology, chemistry, physics, earth science, forensics, and many more. The students will see demonstrations including "Greenhouse Effect", "Wind Turbine", "Soapy Shipwreck", and "Acid Attack". There will be over twenty Earth Expo Activities being performed.

The purpose of the event is to demonstrate to the middle school students and staff some of the labs and activities that are performed at the high school level, while celebrating Earth Day. The attending middle school students will be able to interact with the high school students and science teachers throughout the expo, where they will learn about science as well as the general school atmosphere of Thornridge High School.

The student helpers and teachers at Thornridge have been working very hard to put this together. Earth Day Expo 2018 promises to be a fun-filled day of learning!

Falcon Family Fun Night

The Thornridge community celebrated a Family Fun Night on April 19, 2018. Showcased were many of the excellent programs and student accomplishments from Thornridge High School. The night began with a free dinner, then attendees participated in different sections of interest including: STEM, AVID, Culinary, Poetry, and other extracurricular activities!

The purpose of the event was to continue to build the connections between the high school and the rest of the community.

Principal Ebonie Williams said, "We would like the community to be able to see what is currently being accomplished at our school. Many Thornridge administrators, teachers, and coaches attended this event, and it was a great opportunity to connect with the community!"

Thornton

H I G H S C H O O L



Drama Club



Principal Tony Ratliff

Greetings District 205 Community,

During my 8-year tenure as principal and even prior, you've been hearing about Wildcat Pride. The foundation of our success functions from what I have deemed as "One Team, One Mission," which has evolved into

a strong and collaborative effort between our board of education, central office, parents and guardians, staff, and yes, Student Level Leadership! Our board of education understands the pulse of the community and continues to provide the best educational opportunities for our students, while our parents and community leadership work with us to ensure optimal support for our school. Amongst our Wildcat Staff are visionaries who work tirelessly to keep Thornton students well prepared to meet and exceed the challenges of our global society.

Throughout our nation, this school year has been plagued by several crises and Thornton was no exception. However, Wildcat Pride was displayed through our show of courage and determination to make All Wildcat Students College & Career Ready. The support of our entire Wildcat Community and bonding of our Wildcat Staff and Administration under the banner of One Team, One Mission, makes us an extraordinary institution

because we continued our intense efforts toward yet another year of success in the face of such challenges. Thornton Township High School is a significantly healthy and successful school community, as measured by our school culture, schoolwide data, and team efforts! My undying gratitude goes to our board of education, parents/guardians and community leaders, administration, administrative assistants, staff, and especially our Wildcat Students!

One Team, One Mission,
Tony L. Ratliff Sr.

SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to Mr. Robert Powell, as he was the recipient of the Illinois Education Association (IEA) Education Support Professional of the Year for Illinois Award. Mr. Powell was selected out of 49 other nominees. He represented Thornton High School District 205 and the State of Illinois well and we are proud of Mr. Powell and his accomplishments. More importantly, we thank him for his dedication to our students.

Thornton IB Program Update

The International Baccalaureate Program (IB) is a high school program that is a highly respected college prep curriculum.

This past May our first group of graduating IB students took IB exams for college credit with tremendous success! 8 students received the prestigious IB Diploma awarded to students for outstanding academic achievement across the program. In addition, 19 students earned college credit for their scores on the IB exams. Students received college credit on 68 total exams, totaling over 200 college credit hours for these students. These students also earned millions of dollars in scholarship money. In addition to the rigorous academic program, students are required to write an intensive 4000 word research essay and complete hours in Creativity, Activity, and Community Service. This works to mold the students into well-rounded individuals. For more information about the International Baccalaureate Program, contact IB Coordinator Brad Ablin at 708-225-4025 or email at ablin.bradley@district205.net.



Two Young Ladies You Need to Know...

Illinois State Scholars Frances Walker and Motunrola Adebogun are two of Thornton's outstanding seniors.

Frances is **Valedictorian** of Thornton's 2018 graduating class, with a 5.3 G.P.A. She has been accepted to Princeton University with a full ride scholarship. Frances plans on majoring in Chemical and Biological Engineering. She hopes to become a psychiatrist working for the armed forces.

Motunrola is **Salutatorian** of Thornton's 2018 graduating class, with a 5.2826 G.P.A. She has been accepted to Princeton University and The University of Chicago (UIC) with a full ride scholarship offer from both schools. UIC offered additional funds to cover her entire medical academic career. Motunrola's aspirations are to become an obstetrician.

**CONGRATULATIONS
WILDCATS!**



Frances Walker



Motunrola Adebogun

(NTFE) Network For Teaching Entrepreneurship



Thornton Township's Principles of Entrepreneurship class is doing BIG things! Mrs. Parker hosted the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) Fast Pitch competition. Eight NFTE students presented a 60-second pitch about their business plan to the school community audience. The music was great, the energy

was live, and the crowd was lit. The Fast Pitch Challenge was an opportunity for students, school communities, and NFTE partners to engage with the curriculum and kick-off competition season. Pitches were evaluated by a panel of judges and peers. The winner of the People's Choice award, selected by the student judges, was



Wondell Anderson for his Futuristic Cuts business plan. The winner of the Judge's Choice award, selected by the faculty judges, was Anaya Gonzales for her Fast Pitch about ABC Tables. Congratulations to the winners.

NAVISTAR

Designed so students can transition directly into entry-level positions as technicians with area businesses, or enter higher education already armed with a wealth of knowledge and hands-on experience in the latest world-of-work methods

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Thornwood

H I G H S C H O O L



The Thornwood High School Band has had many notable achievements throughout the 2017-18 school year, including being grand champions in the Rich Central High School Battle of the Bands. The band also received recognition for participating in Northwestern University's Band Day, held last September.

Thornwood High School Band Beats Drum of Notable Achievements

Band students at Thornwood High School have a lot of reasons to toot their own horn. The band, composed of 65 members, is an example that it isn't the number of people in the band that makes it great, it's the collective effort and A-1 performance that makes a great band.

The band is mixed with freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Band Director Dwayne Sanders is confident in his band, though he intends to push his students towards greater heights. "Recently, we had an opportunity to perform and compete in the Rich Central High School Battle of the Bands," he says. "We won first place as grand champions. Our status as grand champion was regardless of class, or whether it for show style or corp style. And we won a second time in a row. That was very good for us and our students enjoyed that."

The band's streak of achievements didn't stop there. The band won first in the Drumline category during the Rich Central High competition, and also received an award in the Best Winds competition. The band won first place for the Triple-A (AAA) category. Another noteworthy performance was its participation in a local parade. "We were privileged to perform in Band Day at Northwestern University in September 2017," said Sanders. "We also participated in the Bud Billiken Day

Parade in August 2017."

During the upcoming 2018-2019 school year, the band will perform in the well-known Chicago Thanksgiving Day Parade, an annual parade that attracts thousands of onlookers. "Once we get into the fall season of this year, we will start preparing for that as we move forward," Sanders said.

Locally, the band is called upon to perform in events across South Holland and the south suburbs. Sanders said, "We continue to perform in the surrounding areas and community as well. Over the Valentine's Day weekend, we just enjoyed a festival at Prairie State College along with performing at the South Holland Library for the Black History Celebration."

At the end of the school year, the band department will host its Band Achievement Award for graduating seniors. Along with musical scholarships, seniors having the highest GPA will be recognized.

A west side native of Chicago, Sanders received his Bachelor Degree in Music at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale and was awarded his Masters' Degree in Music Education at Vandercook College of Music.

Y.L.Douglas, Director of Bands at Thornridge High School, offered accolades to Sanders and the many achievements the band has received thus far. He offered a compliment to his friend and colleague: "Mr. Sanders is a true asset to Thornwood High School community

and District 205. He brings professionalism and a true passion for the development of his student. He has won in his short tenure (at Thornwood) several championship trophies and has given new experiences to the students he serves. I wish Mr. Sanders and the Thornwood High School Band all the best as he and the band continue to soar to higher heights," Douglas said.

Sander's wish is that all of his students will make a positive impact in the world. "I want all of my students to become good contributors to society by having studied music at Thornwood," he said.

Thornwood Teachers and Business Owners Give Back to the Community

Reaching out and helping others is not a difficult thing for Thornwood High School teachers like Della Mayes and Tracy Pate. Both are passionate about helping those in need. For them, it's a labor of love. "My father was a giving person and his legacy of giving was passed down to me and his giving to others made me feel that I needed to do the same. I like to give back to the school and the community," Mayes said.

Mayes launched a giving initiative over three years ago when she searched for business owners in the South Holland area willing to donate food items to Thornwood's disadvantaged students. Her efforts were amplified when Jewel Food Stores agreed to donate complete holiday



During the season of giving, Carmen Pate (third from left) and mother Tracy Pate (fifth from left), pose with participants at the Dec. 17 TuffLuv Toy Drive giveaway, held at the LuvStyle Beauty Lounge and Barber Blvd. in Markham's Canterbury Mall. Inset: Thornwood teacher Della Mayes (center) receives meals for students and their families from Jewel in South Holland. At left is Fred Jakob, Store Manager and at right is Kim Bedore, a Chef Kitchen Manager for the store.

meals to several Thornwood students and their families. "Jewel now calls us every year with dinners for the less fortunate, both at Christmas and Thanksgiving," she said. Tracy Pate teamed up with her daughter Carmen Pate and son James Cobbins to host a Christmas toy giveaway held at LuvStyle Beauty Lounge and Barber Blvd. at Markham's Canterbury Mall.

The beauty salon is owned by Carmen Pate. At the Dec. 17 event, toys were distributed at the salon to more than 100 girls, ages 2-13. The girls received Barbie dolls, girls' make-up, and a cool manicure. "My daughter has always been a giver and a doer," Tracy Pate confidently says of her daughter.

Mayes, who has taught at Thornwood for 9 years, also assists her students in finding employment opportunities. "I'm an advocate for our students," she says. With her connection to Jewel in South Holland, Mayes has helped more than 20 Thornwood students get jobs at the store. "Students patronize local businesses, and those businesses need to hire students." She stresses to the students: "Get your grades together and I can help you find work."

Mayes also encourages area business owners help underprivileged students at prom and graduation time. "For students who can't afford to get their nails done, or don't have the means to get a haircut for graduation, businesses kindly offer complimentary services." Mayes is grateful to businesses like Pro Shop Nails, J.R. Barbershop, and Charm Cleaners who offers to clean students' prom dresses for free.

SAT University Increases Students' Practice Scores

"When Sylvan Learning Center said, 'We have to salute Ms. Je'Len Evans because she received the perfect score on her practice exam,' we were like, 'oh my God,'" said SAT University staff member, Veronica Mosley-Raggs, AVID Coordinator for Thornwood High School. "Her SAT scores were very average in the beginning—but then, she increased her scores by 200 points from when we started the sessions in January up until now."

SAT staff members' first impression of Je'Len's practice scores were reflective of just her math exam, but after taking a closer look, test results showed that the 200-point increase was for all three subjects—math, English, and reading. Evans is currently a junior at Thornwood. "The phenomenal growth with her is because she comes to every single practice session and she comes on Saturday," said Mosley-Raggs.

Managed by a dedicated staff of teachers at



Je'Len Evans, a junior at Thornwood High School, increased her SAT practice scores by 200 points according to Veronica Mosley-Raggs, AVID Coordinator for Thornwood and staff member of SAT University. SAT University is a program that uses strategies designed to increase students' practice scores. The official SAT exam will be administered April 10.

Thornwood, SAT University has created proven strategies and test-taking methods to help students increase their scores. With the assistance of the Sylvan Learning Center, the combined team turns students' average SAT practice exam scores into significantly remarkable scores.

Thornwood HS's PSAT Program Serves as a Model for District

In conjunction with the Sylvan Learning Center, the SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test) staff at Thornwood High School have developed a cohort system designed specifically to help students obtain the highest possible scores on their SAT exams, according to Maria M. Brown, Division Leader for English, Reading, Speech, and Library at Thornwood.

Brown stated that she, along with Thornwood parents and community stakeholders, agree that the SAT program serves as a model for District 205. Listed are several SAT components put into place to make the program shine.

Thornwood has implemented SAT afterschool classes held Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 3:00 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. Brown explained that on Tuesdays, two math teachers are selected to go over Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT) prep lessons and on Thursdays, two English teachers are in the classroom to train the students on test-taking methods. To understand all aspect of the SAT exam, the sophomore and junior attendees rotate around Science, English, and Math classes.



Maria M. Brown, Division Leader for English, Reading, Speech, and Library at Thornwood High School, along with the school's SAT staff and Sylvan Learning Center have created an SAT model for Thornwood students to increase their exam scores.

"We've seen an uptick in the number of students who are showing up in the afterschool and Saturday PSAT program. I can say about 30 students participate in the program each day, which totals about 90 a week. About 52 students come every single Saturday for the PSAT program," Brown said.

Thornwood High School Drama Team Places in State Competition

Recently, the Thornwood High School Speech and Drama team won fourth place in the Performance in the Round category and fifth place in the Prose Reading category during the IHSA Speech Competition, held Feb. 16-18 in Peoria, Illinois. More than 200 schools participated in the competition. Pictured here are members of the Thornwood drama team who attended the Southwest Suburban Conference (SWSC) Speech competition at Homewood-Flossmoor High School, December 16, 2017. From left: Blake Jackson, Cidney Thicklin, Antwan "AJ" Potts, Jennifer Wilson, Jordan Restaino, Jada Johnson, Jaylin Williams, and Theresa Funes-Martinez.





DISTRICT 205 MISSION STATEMENT

"Preparing all District 205 Students to be Competitive Leaders in our Global Society"

District Administration

Nathaniel Cunningham,
Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Jerry B. Doss,
Assistant Superintendent

Mr. John Arrington,
Director of College & Careers

Mr. Brett Fickes,
Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Mr. Toriano Horton,
Director of Business Operations

Mr. Robert Penman,
Director of Research, Assessment & Quality Analysis

Mr. Thomas Porter,
Director of Pupil Personnel Services

School Administration

Thornridge High School

Mrs. Ebonie Williams, Principal

Mrs. Laquitha Snow, Principal

Mr. Derek Alexander, Asst. Principal

Thornton Township High School

Mr. Tony Ratliff, Principal

Ms. Jennifer Kuyper, Asst. Principal

Ms. Wanda Russell, Asst. Principal

Thornwood High School

Mr. Don Holmes, Principal

Mrs. Kelly Hock, Asst. Principal

Mr. Thomas Walsh, Asst. Principal

Outlook Academy

Patricia Fortier - Coordinator

Peace Center

Tyran Cox-Bey - Principal