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To our Cougar family,

Dr. Bernhardt and I decided to write this Cougar Connection update together – we hope you’re enjoying the summer months as much as we have been. Summer for educators is always a mix of recuperating, relaxing, planning, and ramping up for the year ahead. To be honest, it’s hard to believe that we can technically start counting down to the beginning of the next academic year in weeks instead of months.

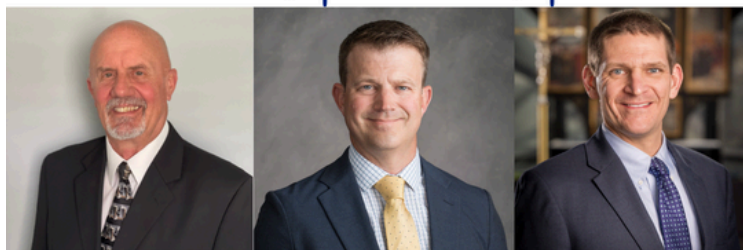
But, before we get too far ahead of ourselves, we wanted to use this edition of the Cougar Connection to bridge the space between 2024 and 2025.

As we put pen to paper, we were reminded of a session from ALSS (Association of Lutheran Secondary Schools) conference we attended in March about understanding the role of Lutheran Education to support our student’s holistic growth (spiritual, emotional, social, and physical) and development. What struck us about the presentation was the strong recommendation from Christian school leaders to talk more about our “eternal” or spiritual development than about the GPAs, ACTs, and scholarship dollars of the graduating class. And, while it seems unnatural, the prompt was a reminder to focus instead on the bigger ministry and mission of LHS, of which academic growth is a part.

If we only measure the success of LHS by things like GPA and ACT scores, we are limiting the richness of what God has called us to do for the young people in our care. To that end, we’re proud to offer a brief summary of blessings from 2024 and look ahead to what’s in store for LHS in 2025.

God’s grace and peace be with you,  
Dr. Kuhlmann and Dr. Bernhardt

## 2024 Hall of Honor



Jim Clark

Nate Droste

Nathan Haak

The Hall of Honor recognizes a select group of individuals who have significantly contributed to Lutheran High and/or their communities. In 2024 LHS was proud to recognize:

**Jim Clark**

**Nate Droste**

**Nathan Haak**

**Angie Steinbacher**

**Jan Tonjes**

**Brady Westphal**



Angie Steinbacher

Jan Tonjes

Brady Westphal

## Grow + Serve in Christ

The Lutheran High mission calls us to GROW

Personally:

- In April, LHS welcomed 1,500 elementary students, in addition to three nights of our spring musical with over 500 more guests, *Beauty and the Beast*. This is the largest show we have had in the past 25 years! The performance has sparked renewed interest in our Fine Arts...very exciting!
- This class has been part of 17 - AAA Conference Team Championships and 24 - District Championships.
- In state athletics, members of this class have also celebrated team championships in Boys' Soccer, Girls' Basketball, Football, Girl's Track, Girls Cross Country and our Sapphire Dance Team. They also recorded four runner-up finishes in Girls' Basketball, Cheer, Girls' Soccer, and the Sapphires. Finally, another third-place finish for the Cheer Program, as well as the Baseball Team.
- 36 of our 98 students, or 35% of our graduates will be participating in collegiate sports and activities
- The Roboteers wrapped up their 12th year of competing in FIRST Robotics and once again made it onto the world stage! Between placing well in competitions in Tulsa, Oklahoma and Chaifetz Arena, the Roboteers again qualified for World Championships in Houston, Texas for the 3rd straight year.
- Our LHS and our Concert Choir and Orchestra were blessed this year to visit all of our St. Charles County association churches and provide music for worship and share in the ministry.

Academically:

The class of 2024,

- 88% graduated with a 3.0 or higher.
- Graduated 6 Bright Flight scholars, meaning they have ACT scores of 31 and above.
- 11 students have received the Seal of Bi-Literacy.
- Earned more than 1,089 college credit hours.

In Christ:

- This year, we added "Interpreting Scripture," the first offering for dual-enrollment for our students to enhance their theological understanding of Scripture while at LHS.
- We celebrated a baptism of a LHS current student...we are excited for future opportunities in our Cougar Family.
- Engaging students with daily Chapel, Morning Devotions, Small Group Ministry, in addition to integration of their faith in multiple disciplines, our students continue to develop their faith in all they do at LHS.

The mission of LHS also calls us to SERVE

- 13 students are Missouri A+ Scholars who have recorded over 50 hours of community service and have a 95% attendance rate.
- Our Seniors spent four years, taking the lead in our Day of Service, done in conjunction with the Missouri District of the LCMS and ministries across Missouri.
- In the summer of 2023, fires ripped through Lahaina. As a result, several Lutheran schools were unable to have classes and serve their community. Between several projects and a trivia night, our students raised several thousand dollars to support Emmanuel Lutheran School in Maui.
- In January, over 20 members of our Teens for Life group, along with several chaperones and teachers visited Washington DC to continue bringing awareness.

We want to again congratulate our Class of 2024 on these achievements and recognize that you have done them in a way that reflects Jesus to all who have seen you achieve and compete. Thank you for providing this example to our school to "Grow and Serve in Christ!"



## LHS operational and financial health



In '23-24 LHS administration put significant focus on streamlining and enhancing the operations of Lutheran High. Notable successes include,

- Creating an organizational structure with clearly defined roles and responsibilities supported by updated job descriptions that align expectations to the organizational structure.
- This past year and into next year, we have several new initiatives to increase our operational efficiency including enrollment and admissions, branding protocols, communications with churches and schools, and the talent management (evaluation) of faculty and staff members.
- We remain fiscally healthy, demonstrating strong stewardship of resources entrusted to us through tuition, donations, and the association congregation provision. We are pleased to report that we will finish the current fiscal year on a positive note, reflecting our prudent and careful financial management. We are confident the results of this coming fall's audit will also confirm our commitment maintaining a healthy budget. Additionally, our endowment continues to grow, providing a solid foundation for our future. We align with industry standards regarding our expense-to-income ratio, ensuring financial stability. Proper reserves are allocated to support our ministry, guaranteeing the sustainability of our programs and operations.
- Into next year, LHS continues to evolve our supervision of instruction with methods to fosters professional dialogue for improved instructional practice. This initiative underscores our commitment to academic excellence and the professional growth of our teaching staff.

By God's grace, Lutheran High has been blessed with financial health that allows us to bring our ministry to families in St. Charles and beyond.



### Long-term planning informed by LHS mission

The upcoming academic year marks the beginning of a series of future-focused activities that will shape the strategic direction of LHS. In partnership with our faculty, staff, and LHS community we will,

- Finish the vision work that has been underway since Spring 2024 with LCEF. We look forward to sharing the results of these surveys, meetings, and planning sessions with our stakeholders this fall.
- Conclude the current strategic plan and create a new strategic plan that will guide LHS through 2028.
- Initiate giving outreach in service of Lutheran High's vision, mission, and strategic plan



**Lutheran High School**  
*Grow + Serve in Christ*