

ABOVE ARTWORK BY JULIA HICKSON  
FAR RIGHT PHOTO BY HANNAH SPERLING  
RIGHT PHOTO BY VALENTINA VIANNA

**Above: Student Artwork on AI Use in Brainstorming. Right: Mother uses ChatGPT to generate a recipe idea. Far right: Seniors Kaiya Stewart, left, and Ava Lau, right, sign the Alpha STEM Program Honor Code, agreeing not to use “AI generated ideas and/or text” in the completion of assignments.**

**By VALENTINA VIANNA**  
In a classroom poll, 5 out of 10 students remembered their syllabi at the beginning of the year stating anything about using AI to brainstorm, but all 10 students remembered the prohibition of AI in general.

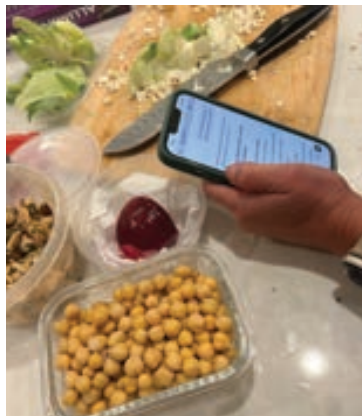
While expectations of AI use for writing assistance are pretty clear, when it comes to using AI to brainstorm for new ideas, there is less certainty from teachers.

190.6 million people ask ChatGPT a question every day.

But, how many people ask AI to brainstorm versus just to get something done?

Some teachers expressly forbid the use of AI to brainstorm or come up with ideas, and others don't even think of it as a possibility. Ms. Sears, a writing teacher to sophomores and seniors alike, recounted a panel on AI run by college professors right before the year started. The panel's takeaway was that the impact of AI on the educational process has been “catastrophic” — a word that stuck with

## Teachers on the Storm of AI



Ms. Sears.

Mr. Haiken, a creative writing teacher, went in depth on the difference in value between using AI to generate ideas on what to write and using AI to write for you. He said that he couldn't see a black or white response to using AI to brainstorm, but he doesn't want his students relying on AI to come up with ideas.

“I think something that is very much valuable is ideating, is brainstorming, is coming up with what your original take is going to be on

the thing you're being asked to do, the thing you're being asked to read or the topic you're being asked to talk about,” Haiken said.

For Haiken, the writing process needs to be seeded in a human formulated idea — which is often interfered with when students use AI to come up with ideas on what to write or research about. “The reason you read, the reason you write is to interface with other people, other humans, and to enter a discourse with them, enter a dialogue with other people,” Haiken said.

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## Staff Art Show Is Not Only For Art Teachers

By JULIA HICKSON

Beautifully crafted images of highly detailed foods, Pokémon and injured feet could only be found in one place: Gallery 147. A space commonly occupied by student work was taken over on Sept. 4 including art pieces from 10 teachers at Lane Tech's staff art show.

The gallery space is annually left in a lull between the beginning of the year and the end of first quarter as students work to create art pieces to display for the gallery opening. With this space being left unattended for nearly 2 months, the staff came together to make something special for the Lane community.

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**Artwork currently on display at the staff art show, created by Painting and Drawing Studio and AP Drawing teacher Elizabeth Chisholm.**

## What to Know About College Rep Visits

By JILLIAN HAYES

This fall, Lane Tech's College and Career Center has hosted college representative visits from over 125 colleges and universities all over the country. Visits began Aug. 28, and will continue throughout September and October. Visits are available to students before and after school, during all lunch periods, and also during advisory on Wednesdays.

So far, schools such as Yale University, University of Southern California, Illinois State University and many more have visited. Reps cover a variety of topics ranging from academic quality, tuition, and housing to extracurricular activities and Greek life.

Not only do college representatives want students to be knowledgeable of their schools in general, but they also want students to

know they are willing to answer any questions that will leave you better informed.

Marquette's college admissions counselor, Thomas Hermsen, said, “If you ever don't know what that next step is or if you're ever curious or not really sure about different programs that you're interested in, we're here as that resource for you so don't hesitate to reach out.”

College and Career Coach Erin Driesbach, encourages upperclassmen, particularly Juniors, to attend college rep visits as it can help begin your college search.

“Sometimes when you hear about a school, it might not be a school that you're interested in but you might hear something that interests you or you might realize it's not what you're looking for in a college and that can be particularly helpful in junior year,” said Driesbach.

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PHOTO BY JILLIAN HAYES

**Students view a presentation from Univeristy of Iowa rep.**

## Fashion in Lane Tech

By DASH ROREM

The weather in Chicago during the Fall tends to be inconsistent, ranging from cold and snow to temperatures in the 80s — inconsistencies fashion must adapt to.

This Fall, junior Ella Schlachter foresees a spike in stripes and slouchy sweaters. “I've seen [these sweaters] a lot and I feel like it's very nice, especially with the colder weather coming in,” said Schlachter.

Lane math teacher Lori McDonald predicts a continuation of the “rodeo-cowboy-cowgirl movement.”

Many people use social media for outfit inspiration. “I use pinterest as inspiration that I can then take to make my own,” said senior David Morowitz.

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The Champion  
2025-26

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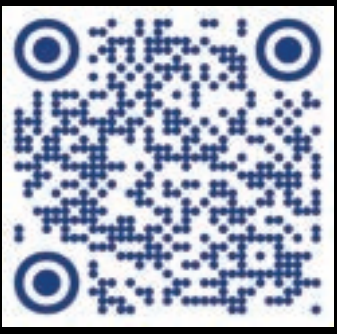
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# Teachers on the Storm of AI

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For Haiken, the writing process needs to be seeded in a human formulated idea — which is often interfered with when students use AI to come up with ideas on what to write or research about. “The reason you read, the reason you write is to interface with other people, other humans, and to enter a discourse with them, enter a dialogue with other people,” Haiken said.

“I don’t think you’re doing that if you’re using AI.”

Meanwhile, Ms. Wain, an art teacher, has previously suggested to students to use AI in specific circumstances. She recalls

giving one student the go ahead to generate a background for a piece using the AI feature in Adobe Express. The student could only use AI in the art process since they already had the idea.

“It’s helpful because it helps that student get the perspective probably more accurate than they would have if they would have freehanded it and get a bit more detail,” Wain said.

Most of the overlap in opinion between the teachers occurs in the humane aspect: the personal part of the writing process.

Mr. Gonzalez, an AP Seminar and Research teacher said, “I think that that’s where there’s a disconnect between what

a teacher’s goal for an assessment or for a project is, and what a student’s outcome is, where students may turn in something that’s good, but it’s not actually indicative of learning that has occurred.” Which shows the focus on what students gain from the process of writing itself.

Both Sears and Gonzalez were clear with their concern for brains faced with consistent AI use.

“I think generative AI takes away our ability to make ideas and start making ideas,” Sears said. “And so to just immediately say, ‘OK, I don’t know what to write for my This I Believe paper: What should I write about, AI?’ That takes away all of the potential you

have, and I think the more and more we rely on that, the less we’re gonna be able to do that skill on our own. So it’s making our brains weaker.”

On the teacher’s side, AI also produces a detriment.

“The final product is no longer the student’s,” Gonzalez said. “It is now, I am now grading a chat bot. And for me as an instructor, that really takes away a lot of my interest and my passion for teaching has now been reduced because now I’m not actually helping my students get better.”

Haiken stated added concern due to the environmental impact, as many fail to consider the average of 550,000 gallons of water used by Google data

centers alone in the past year, an amount noted by many water consumption researchers.

Though the teachers had their own thoughts on the difference of using AI to complete a task and for brainstorming each one could agree on being unsure of where AI was going to progress in the future. As far as the future of students’ use of AI, just as much is known, and users should be cognizant of its effects.

“Using AI, sometimes is a short term gain, like interrupts long term outcomes. So students need to just be aware of what is the goal of being here in school,” Gonzalez said.



PHOTO BY DASH ROREM

**Ella Schlachter poses in her outfit.**

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However, Morowitz does have concerns with Pinterest: “I think that it can lead to a little bit of unhealthy comparison being bombarded with images of people that are cool — really cool

and matching a style so effortlessly. It makes you feel like you have to have more money sometimes, or at least it makes me feel like I need to have more money and more freedom to buy more clothes and more accessories to fit a very certain, niche style

## Fall Fashion at Lane

when that isn’t the case.”

Though Schlachter too uses Pinterest for inspiration, she tries to be “realistic” and said she only pins clothes that she already has something similar to.

McDonald, on the other hand, draws inspiration for her outfits based on what calls to her. “I love color, I love patterns and really nice, soft, luxurious feeling materials,” she says.

Often, the forecasted weather isn’t always what people base their outfits off of. “I usually like to dress for it being a little warmer than it is because I feel like in the Lane Tech building, I often get very warm and I don’t want to wear a sweater, even if the weather calls for it,” Morowitz said.

Both Morowitz and Schlachter said that their entire outfit was thrifted. “I like that [thrifting is] so unique and you can find a lot of cool things that just represent you more

than something that’s non-thriftstore... It adds a unique element to your outfit and like no one else really has that,” Schlachter said.

Schlachter was wearing a tighter-fitting blue-and-white striped half-button-up, or a henley, with black bootcut jeans, Converse, and gold jewelry, an outfit very reminiscent of her predictions for fashions trends coming up this fall and chilly temperatures. “With this top — I altered it so it fit tighter,” Schlachter said.

Morowitz was wearing a white graphic T-shirt, a grey sweater, jeans, and cowboy boots. “My friend who believes himself to be a cowboy boot expert says that these are made out of ostrich,” Morowitz said.

McDonald was wearing a black and green floral turtlenecked dress with black lace leggings. “[The dress] was either Anthropologie or Free People,” she said.

In a time where microtrends are so rampant and common, McDonald has a refreshing take on the trend cycle. “When I was a teenager, I was very much into trends. I find that as I get older, or as I got older, it was more about what just makes me feel good in what I have on and sometimes trends don’t necessarily fit my look, or my personality, or even body type,” she said. Alternatively, she believes trends can be very positive for younger generations: “I love to see you guys with your personalities and your twists on trends so I think it’s really good for your generation to follow trends,” she said.

Schlachter agreed that people should wear what they want to wear. “Don’t care what other people think, just wear what you want,” said Schlachter. “It’s like who cares in the real thing? You know? Just wear what you want.”

## Time, Sacrifice, and Support: The Balance of Lane

By SAMIRA SOORYA

At the peak of her season with multiple events ahead, Lya Brenner — a junior on the dance team — says, “Dance is a year round sport, but it gets especially crazy during homecoming season when we’re getting ready for pep rally, and during competition season. So it definitely becomes hard to give a lot of my time to homework after school.”

Lane Tech’s large athletic department of 37 sports consists of countless student-athletes who constantly work to manage their time and responsibilities. The life of a Lane ath-

lete is a busy one, between the workload of a selective enrollment school and the expectations of being a high performing athlete. The average schedule of these athletes consists of an early morning, full day of school, then following with 2-3 hours of practice.

“I have a little time when I go home,” said Tucker Atwood, a junior on the Lane Tech Boys Basketball Team. “I have to have dinner, have time with my family, and I have to mix in schoolwork, which is a struggle most times.”

Despite the long and hard schedule, these athletes have to find a balance between school, their social

lives, and sometimes work, with support from their sports community, and the Lane Tech staff. For Brenner, school takes priority, and dance comes second.

“Coaches are really understanding that school sometimes has to take priority, and I think my teachers understand that if I have a lot of practices, maybe I’ll turn in an assignment late,” Brenner said.

Ethan Data, a junior on the Boys Baseball Team said, “I do genuinely feel really supported, especially by my coaches, but a lot of my teachers also accommodate for what my day entails and like what works that I actually do.”

Even with the support of the Lane Tech community, there are notable sacrifices these athletes have to make in order to succeed.

“It’s also really important to note that you have sacrifices you have to make, with your parents and socially as well, it comes with a big responsibility,” Data said. “So I would say I have to make a lot of sacrifices day in and day out.”

With the balance of sports and school being so time consuming, Atwood explains “I’ve sacrificed time, time with family, friends, sometimes grades.”

To avoid becoming overwhelmed by the demands of

school and athletics, Data explains he tries to stay focused on his personal path.

“For me personally, I know that there’s one path that fits me the best, so I try to remember that I have to stick on that path,” Data said. “Anything that comes in my way is either a distraction or will push me further to what I want to do.”

These athletes’ words reflect the commitment it takes to succeed in such a competitive environment. As Atwood says, high school sports are a “great opportunity for growth.”

## Lane Tech's Staff Art Show Is Not Only For Art Teachers

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Despite the staff work being displayed instead of the students', they were not absent in the process of creation for Printmaking teacher, Liana Faletto. "I did a series of prints that were inspired by things I would overhear my students saying out of context," Faletto said. One piece, "He Doesn't Need a Hat," consists of a blue figure with red and yellow hair atop drawings of different styles of hats. Faletto said these funny snippets of conversations from students would aid her creative process. "Out of context, it sounded so funny to me, and I would come up with these weird drawings from what I thought maybe you were talking about," Faletto said.

Another piece featured in the gallery, titled "Lasagna Care Package" by art teacher Sarah Wain, was created amidst the pandemic.

"It's something that I grew

up with, going to church, people would give people care packages when they were sick or something, and now I am doing that with my church," Wain said. "I take care packages to families and new babies, people who are sick, so that's kind of what I was thinking of. But, I also wanted to challenge myself to paint foil, which was a new challenge."

This painting is just one of many pieces in Wain's food-inspired series that she began 16 years ago. While several of these food paintings are displayed in the gallery, they can also be found in local coffee shops around Chicago, such as the Backlot Coffee locations on Irving Park and Montrose.

Not only do the students inspire the staff, but these teachers' works serve as an inspiration to the next generation of artists in the school. Senior Lark Beck said that they "love all of [the work in the gallery] so much", although they were particularly inspired by

the creations of Metalsmithing teacher Kelly Novak, and the work that she completed while in Vietnam, such as a lantern that was "super cool to see."

Despite this being the first staff art show, Lane Tech teachers do not intend for it to be the last. "[The] goal is more work from teachers that aren't art teachers" said Faletto, "Everybody knows we make art. That's our job. But like, there's a lot of other teachers that do too."

The range of artists in this showcase includes 8 art teachers and 2 non art teachers, including pieces from math teacher Rebecca Atwood, and school clerk Lori Carroll.

Although the main turnouts from the event were art teachers and art students, other members of the Lane Tech staff were in attendance to show their support. "I know what the kids can produce, ... but I wanted to see what the teachers can produce," said Assistant Principal Sarah Hanly. "And



PHOTO BY JULIA HICKSON

**Teachers viewing artwork at the staff art show opening. The range of artists in this showcase includes eight art teachers and two non art teachers.**

I'm amazed, very amazed."

The art teachers at Lane worked after school to create a truly one of a kind art show to display the works they make in and outside of the classroom. This

exhibit will be open to Lane staff and students until Oct. 16 when they will begin setting up for the first student art show of the year.

## Politics at your Fingertips: The Political Engagement of 'Gen Z'

NEWS ANALYSIS  
By NIANI DARDEN

"Okay Boomer, Time's Up!", reads the sign of a young protester in Kathmandu, Nepal, according to The Atlantic. On Sept. 8, thousands of young people from ages 13 to 28 surrounded the streets of Nepal, with one goal in mind: to gain justice.

Booming streets that once were filled with citizens looking for a new life were left with thick smoke covering the air and fear lingering among the people.

Children of rich Nepali heirs were being put into high places of politics and higher education outside of the country. In social media posts these heirs flaunted their belongings overseas as Nepali residents lived in poverty and economic disparity.

In response to these complaints on Sept. 3, a few days prior to the protests, Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli issued a state ban on social media platforms. This included major communication and news platforms such as Instagram, X, Youtube, Facebook, and WhatsApp.

According to BBC, the government ban on these social media platforms prompted discussions among the youth of Nepal on the corruption of their government. Despite seemingly proper living conditions, the unemployment and emigration rates of Nepal citizens has risen due to a lack of industrialization.

As young Nepali residents used non-digital methods to promote their movement, a peaceful protest shortly followed the ban in Kathmandu, Nepal, near Parliament's building. In response, the government implemented a curfew on the protestors. Protestors who refused to comply with military enforcement were met with rubber bullets and tear gas.

These violent military interactions turned a peaceful protest into a social rebellion, as Gen Z Nepali citizens fought fire with

fire. With this came the arson of Singha Durbar, a significant government complex building in Nepal.

More than 1,000 people were hospitalized, and at least 70 people were killed in the riots, according to the BBC.

Ultimately, the Prime Minister of Nepal stepped down from his position due to the current stressors within the government. The lawmakers are currently attempting to come to a peaceful agreement with Gen Z organizations, as they look for a temporary government to rely on.

Around 8,000 miles away in the U.S., citizens look at headlines on the reported protests in Nepal with nuanced opinions. Under one Tiktok post by @bugssbunnnnyyy, users have commented that these protests highlight the voice of Gen Z shaping the future, while others refer to the protests as an "anarchist" movement, often compared to novel Lord of the Flies. One of the main topics of discussion being political engagement within the younger generation-- specifically Gen Z.

A generation born with technology by their side, Gen Z has used their political voice through social media platforms, as information consumed rapidly by the average person. As of recently, Chicago residents have used social media to promote anti-deportation protests as ICE raids increase in Latino neighborhoods, according to NPR.

"If you look at the events in Nepal in the last week, and their engagement, I think you can see that as Gen Z comes into their young adulthood we're seeing [social media] have a role in activism more so than before," said social studies teacher Timothy Hopps, "That's starting to come to fruition. Does it amplify their voice? Well, social media has probably been one of the most important factors of socialization."

Millions of videos and pictures are posted online by social media users each second, and within these posts, humans voice their opinions to find communities or algorithms that align with their values. With this, comes evergrowing political discussions and influencers prompting said discussions. Influencers such as Hasan Piker, Charlie Kirk, Dean Withers, and Joe Rogan have racked up millions of views by supporting or refuting popular movements such as the Black Lives Matter Movement, and Free Palestine/Pro-Israel movement in recent years.

Despite the amount of political opinion pieces posted by the younger generation through the growing usage of social media, voting rates in America have dropped in younger voters by 3% since the 2020 election. Additionally, there has been a huge gap in the demographics of Gen Z within the two parties. According to Circle Tufts.

As voting rates drop, it raises the question: How politically engaged is the younger generation?

According to the Illinois Report Card, at Lane Tech, there are currently 4,525 students enrolled. Half of them are enrolled as male, while the other half is enrolled as female. Within this population, 36.4% are White, 34.9% is Hispanic/Latino, 10.3% is Asian, and 6.7% is Black/African-American.

Due to its diverse population, many polarizing ideas float through the Lane Tech hallways and naturally make their way into History and English classes. In an urban area such as Roscoe Village, though, many ideas blur together to create a fairly progressive environment. Although, this isn't the case for all schools in Chicago.

"I would say, being in two different schools, the demographics of this school and the one I started my career at were a bit different," said Hopps. "Have I seen a rise of conservatism among

my students? Yes, and among the predictable demographics. Simple. Why? I mean, take what you know about political socialization and you can apply it, and take trends in American politics and apply it. Social media plays a role in that... Certainly the patterns that are taking place in broader society, like are reflected in the student population as well."

As our two party system begins to become more divided on social issues due to political figures using their platforms to vilify opposing groups, Americans build an intolerance to one another, according to CNN. Donald Trump uses terms such as "Psycho Joe" on X to refer to his previous presidential candidate, Joe Biden, along with former U.S. representative Gerry Connolly claiming Trump's statements to be "pure disinformation."

The he-said-she-said way of politics has wedged parties further away from each other. This has made it harder to find common ground, causing younger people to stray away from conflict, and eventually politics as a whole.

In a recent study done by The United Way of the National Capital Area in 2024, political analysts examined the responses of 1,000 people within Gen Z to find that 32% of Gen Zers are politically engaged in activism.

After winning the presidential election and taking office in January 2025, President Donald Trump has distributed over 150 executive orders combating many controversial ideas. One of these was the invocation of the Alien Enemies Act of 1789, granting him the ability to remove people from the U.S. without due process, according to Whitehouse.gov. These controversial executive orders have been broadcasted on a larger scale, causing outrage in liberals within the U.S., referring to his policies as "tyrannist" and "unconstitutional," according to CAP and Our Public Service.

"I think trust in institutions has been deteriorating, and quite frankly, rightfully so, because we have had some institutions really fail to deliver on what they should do for the American people, providing Americans with safe, affordable communities to live in," said social studies teacher

Steven Parsons when referring to public reactions to current events. "And I think, once again, it's generational, because I think older generations can remember a time when it seemed like the government was more responsive and more relaxed."

Despite surface level apathy and a distrust in institutions due to current events, the younger generation holds hope for the future as they make their way into a new democracy.

### What to Know About College Rep Visits

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Evie Chamlin, a 10th grader at Lane, said she grew interested in a school she had not thought about prior to attending a college rep visit.

"It was really informative. I never really knew much about that college when I went. When I went to it I kinda just went for kicks, but I learned a lot about it and now I'm genuinely considering it," Chamlin said after attending a visit from University of Chicago.

The CCC is expecting future visits from University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Brown University, and more. Driesbach encourages students with any questions or concerns regarding college to attend these visits, information can be found through email or SchoolLinks.

# School Year Kicks off with First LSC Meeting

By JONAS GRAY

Student concerns around bathroom materials and about security being strict at football games were raised at the first Local School Council meeting of the year, held on Sept. 11.

This meeting also commemorated the welcome of two new student representatives to the council, Maeve Krikorian, a senior and member of Omega, and Valeria Hernandez, a junior, who were met with warm welcomes from the rest of the council.

One issue brought up by the student representatives was the lack of paper towels and soap in bathrooms. "People don't want to get sick, and I don't want to get into the details but no soap in the bathrooms is a big problem," said student representative Roman Brice, a senior.

In response, Assistant Principal Dr. Hanly said that she had gone around all the bathrooms that day and personally checked that soap was in all of the bathrooms.

Hanly went on to say that the custodians in charge of refilling bathroom supplies are employed by the district and four of them are on sick leave, leaving the school short staffed, which could lead to the material shortages.

Hanly also addressed the new policy where paper towels will not be supplied in bathrooms that already have electric hand dryers. If the hand dryers are not working that problem should be reported to administration to be fixed.

According to WBEZ, earlier this year CPS cut 500 custodian positions to save money. These shortages and cuts are emblematic of the greater budget deficit in CPS.

The other major student concern brought up by the student representatives was the issue of being told to sit at the recent football game.

Many students have complained to the student representatives about how they want to stand and show support for Lane, but the security had told them they needed to stay seated.

Dr. Hanly explained that Lane Stadium and the security guards in red coats are under the jurisdiction of the district, and not Lane, and that it is a matter of safety. "We have rivalries, but we have major safety concerns. We have two football games going on [referring to the Friday night lights games happening Sept 12]. We do not need a massive teenage brawl going on in the neighborhood because if that happens we can't do football games like that anymore and we want you guys to have that great experience."

Student representative Maeve Krikorian expressed concerns about this in an interview conducted after the meeting.

"I mean, people are going to be pissed no matter what," Krikorian said. "And I understand where Dr. Hanly's coming from. I know it's about safety, but when people hear that, people are going to be like, well, f--- that. You know what I mean?"



PHOTO BY JONAS GRAY

**Michelle Weiner, the executive director of the Lane Tech Alumni Association, addresses the council with updates regarding the association.**

In response, during the same post-LSC meeting interview, Brice added that letting the students stand up will make them happier. "If students are happier at a football game, they're less likely to want to get into a fight afterwards," Brice said.

Other topics discussed during the meeting included the following:

Dr. Hanly discussed sending out communication to inform parents of safety protocols and to provide resources from the district to prepare for federal agents in Chicago, and reiterated that the staff and admin have been trained to protect

the students and the school is not allowed to let federal agents into the building nor release student documents.

Celebrating Lane Tech's #3 status in Illinois by U.S. News & World Report, Dr. Hanly said, "We will continue to do what we need to do to get #1."

The LSC approved a new life-guarding position, with a paid spot open for students.

All 22 fundraisers from clubs and teams that were asked for were approved.

Former Assistant Principal Damir Ara was commended for his service to the school and the com-

munity.

Michelle Weiner, executive director of the LT Alumni Association, went over updates regarding the association including adding emergency clothing kits to the food bank, and announcing that a permanent football game in honor of 1912 alum, and the first ever professional black football coach Fritz Pollard is in the making. Weiner also said that the association's 40th anniversary was in may and they had awarded 40 scholarships last year.

The next LSC meeting will be held on Oct. 9; students and the public are invited to join as always.

# Increasing Phone Pouch Usage in Classrooms

By SOPHIE WU

As the school year kicks off at Lane Tech, the administration has purchased phone pouches for 150 teachers who requested them through a survey that was conducted last year.

Assistant Principal Dr. Hanly estimated that around 75% of staff had indicated in the survey they wanted more support from administration regarding the cell phone policy.

"I think it wasn't so much us [administration] changing that as it was teachers getting frustrated with kids and seeing the success of them [phone pouches] from other teachers," Hanly said. "They would then want to use it for themselves. So we haven't done anything differently other than just helping reinforce what the teachers are asking us to tell the kids, which is: whatever the rule is that your teacher has in their classroom, that's the rule you follow."

However, there were also teachers who didn't initially choose to use the pouches, but who eventually found phone pouches to be useful in the classroom. Social Studies teacher Irving Zamudio said, "Initially, I wasn't [on board with using pouches] because I like the idea of treating my older students like adults, but I think it's helped."

While he didn't use the pouches in previous years, he said he finds that it has boosted overall productivity and student engagement throughout the classroom. "See-

ing how it has helped students to concentrate on their work and not their phone, it has helped," Zamudio said. "Even if I didn't have that big of a problem before, it does. It has helped those 2-3 students who had an issue with that before."

Hanly also explained that the phone pouches are not required given how each teacher has their own way of conducting their classrooms.

"I know that in some of the art classes, they allow students to listen to music while they create their art. So, that's why I can't sit there and say, 'Well, I'm sorry the blind statement is no,' which is what some schools do," Hanly said. "We kind of try to balance this with a little bit of grace to the kids, but understanding that sometimes there's no place for it in the classroom and you have to respect the teacher's rules."

Junior Vivvian Lopez-Mercado has even noticed that every one of her classes, except one, has started to use phone pouches regularly. She also says that she uses her phone to listen to music while she works. While Lopez-Mercado acknowledges the potential benefits of students using phone pouches, she also feels that most students still complete their assignments regardless of using the pouches or not.

"There's definitely a benefit to not having your phone academically, but socially, I feel like it's a big disadvantage," Lopez-Mercado



**Students grabbing their phones from the phone pouch after class is over.**

PHOTO BY SOPHIE WU

said. "Just having your phone on you gives you a peace of mind to know if something happens, you can respond to it, but not having it takes away the urge of feeling like you need to use it during the chance you get."

Both Hanly and Social Studies teacher Melissa Smith have also expressed concern for students' overall in-person peer connection. They have observed that while students don't have their phones, they tend to engage more with their peers, fostering more meaningful conversations.

"I have seen again with the observations that when the phones aren't there, the conversation between kids is much more in tune to one another because they're not distracted or they're not looking at their phone while the other three [students] are talking," Hanly said.

Smith also commented on this while reminiscing on how her previous classes had been incredibly different to the current digital generation.

"I've noticed there is a huge disconnect between when I first started here in 2001. We used to have

a million kids come after school, hanging out in classrooms, playing games, card games, and board games, or they would just come in and chat," she said. "Nowadays, students in general lack the ability to talk to adults, and I worry about that."

While she doesn't use the phone pouches herself, Smith still expresses her gratitude for the administration's support. "I do appreciate that they're acknowledging that cell phones are an issue, and are trying to help us. I'm very appreciative," Smith said.

# Lane Tech Revives Letterman Club

By IRELAND COSTELLO

The life of a varsity athlete in high school is very demanding. Athletes struggle to weave other commitments around sports schedules, which can be difficult to balance with other responsibilities. But this school year Lane Tech has brought back an old club that might be the key to helping athletes get involved.

Lane Tech has just revived the historic Letterman Club, to help bring varsity athletes back together as leaders. Mr. Bradish and Coach Wallace launched the club this fall and it's already gaining momentum. It currently has around 55 members and is only open to varsity athletes.

The Letterman Club is devoted to becoming a powerful platform for varsity athletes to connect with each other, promote their athletic achievements, and encourage involvement at Lane, according to the club's mission statement. Three club members communicated that the members have already started stepping up and volunteering at school events.

Senior Riley Coomer, Letter-

man Club member and an athlete who participates in cross country, track, cheerleading, and basketball, said that the club helps to offer a new way for athletes to connect across sports. She said that through the stress of her senior year these connections have been very beneficial.

"Balancing multiple varsity sports on top of academics and college applications is not easy, but the club has provided extra support and a sense of connection," Coomer said. "It's helped me meet other varsity athletes in a way that I wouldn't have otherwise."

Currently the Letterman Club meets every other week during advisory. This is known as the sports advisory, and on top of working around athletes schedules, this new sports advisory allows all of the members on the club to get to know one another, according to Coomer.

Promoting leadership is one of Letterman Club's key goals, Coomer said.

"The Letterman Club is all about uniting Lane's varsity student athletes as leaders who promote school spirit, support Lane's

athletic programs, and give back to the community through service and volunteering as well as strength and connections between athletes, Lane and our surrounding community," Coomer said.

One of the main ways the club has started showing up at school events is by working security at the football games.

Junior Ainsley Carter volunteered at the Lane Tech vs. Lincoln Park football game, and said she believes that these volunteering opportunities will help her to make connections with the community and other students. Before volunteering at the game she said "I'm excited to get to know the people from the other sports and it'll also be nice to serve the community in this way, do outreach,"

"One of the recent opportunities we had was to volunteer at football games," said Colette Heneghan, a junior varsity volleyball player. "Football games give back a lot of money to the school, so the help of student athletes makes it easier for the game to go on smoothly and for everyone to have a good time."

Carter also said she feels encouragement from the club in defining



PHOTO COURTESY OF EMIKA CRAMPTON

**Mr. Bradish leads a discussion with athletes during Letterman Club sports advisory on Sept. 17.**

leadership roles in sports.

"We've already been talking about what it means to be part of the Letterman Club and how we can support our school and the surrounding community and become better leaders in our sports," Carter said.

Although the club started in 1938, what is old is new again. Connections, community, and

support are just as important to students now, as they were 87 years ago when the club was founded.

"Being a varsity athlete on this club helps to ensure that you're a student athlete who excels both in school and on the field," Coomer said.

*Ireland Costello is a member of Letterman Club.*

# Teachers 'stand in solidarity' with CPS students

By SOPHIE WU

As Chicago braces for President Trump's action to send ICE—and possibly the National Guard—to Chicago, many are concerned about the precedent this might set. In response to this incoming threat, the teachers of Lane Tech helped organize and participate in a schoolwide walk-in that took place on Sept. 5.

"We're sending the message that we stand in solidarity and in support of all of our CPS students and staff members because a lot of them are very, very afraid of these threats," said music teacher Javier Payano. "It's really to send a message to our students and our parents that we're here to serve them, to protect them, and to keep them safe as much as we possibly can. It's to raise awareness of what's happening, and also to have a plan in place."

Payano said that CPS and the Union have a plan of action if agents were to approach a CPS school. "The first thing is that there is no release of any child or anything like that. We're not to release any students to the custody of any kind of agent. We're to immediately call the main office and we're immediately to call administration, so the administration can come down and support whatever the situation is."

Ensuring the safety of students and staff is also incredibly important as it contributes to their overall mental well-being and productivity in school. "Because of students feeling safe, they feel, number one, that they belong, and number two, that they can actually learn something," Payano said.

Senior Nevaeh Salazar also commented on the current CPS policy

for students' protection. "I hate that uncertainty [of not knowing what happens after the school administration arrives to deal with the situation], I don't like that at all. I think 'hate' is a really strong word, but I think for the situation, that's so appropriate. They shouldn't even be allowed in school in the first place and now that they are, it's so obscure," Salazar said. "School and education should be a thing that every student has the opportunity for and it's the fact that students are having to worry about that."

Although she said she feels that the walk-in was an overall good thing, Salazar still believes that more could be done such as further educating classes about the situation.

While some students may be upset about the potential changes that are finding their way into Chicago, Senior Andrew Kusar approves of the possibility of the National Guard and ICE coming to the city. "I would like it to happen here, I think that at the city and state level, we are very poorly run and we don't know what's good for us and someone has to step in and enforce the laws that exist."

Kusar also expressed how he felt that CPS and the Union's policy of not cooperating with ICE is not helpful. "I think, for their own sake and for the sake of everyone involved, that they should [cooperate with ICE]."

Science teacher Cameron Blome, who participated in the 6:45 a.m. walk-in that day (there was a second walk-in at 7:45 a.m.), shared his thoughts on the threat of the National Guard coming to Chicago and the walk-in's significance.

"This directly impacts us and

the people that we are with and the people that we teach. Teaching is not just a job, it's a human endeavor; our students are humans and we care about them. This type of thing is causing lots of disruptions at the very least. A lot of people are scared, and even that causes disruptions, and it negatively impacts your life," Blome said. "At the worst, people are getting deported or are getting arrested, and these types of things could break up families and that's very traumatic which is just terrible for the kids and it's terrible for learning."

Along with the plan CPS and the Union have to ensure staff and students' safety, Payano and World Language teacher Celeste Ramovic have shared some additional helpful resources.

"There's something called the Family Support Hotline and it's from ICIRR which is the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights," Ramovic said. "There's a lot of different member organizations, but they're the hub of immigrant rights organizing in the city and they have a hotline where people can verify that they saw ICE, if they saw someone get apprehended, or if there's a concern they can call the hotline."

Ramovic also said, "ICIRR has some really good know your rights resources that they keep updated regularly so that's one of the best resources. The other one is the First Defense Legal Aid which is less immigration focused, but has attorneys on call for people and it's a legal aid hotline and that number is 1-800-LAWREP4. Those are two resources that are really important for people that come into contact with whatever iteration of federal officials and police they experience."



PHOTO COURTESY OF MR. BLOME

**Lane Tech teachers outside of the building with their signs for the walk-in.**

Payano mentioned that the CTU is another great resource for those in need of assistance, especially since they are connected to other helpful organizations.

Another strong resource, according to Salazar, is the Lane Tech Latin Student Association (LASA) Club Instagram page. "I think that's a really good resource and I think the best we can do as a community, outside of teachers, is to continue posting resources on our personal pages, but in terms of teachers and their actions, I feel like it's not that relevant."

While it is unclear whether President Trump is still considering sending in the National Guard to Chicago, according to CNN, the city still braces for any upcoming changes that might arise.

Payano commented on how the walk-in was also a way for CPS and the Union to show that they are not afraid. "We're going to do everything that we can to protect our students. Chicago is a resilient city—we've been through a lot as a city, in the history of the city, and we'll get through this too."

Resources Mentioned:

ICIRR Family Support Network (FSN):  
(855) 435-7693

First Defense Legal Aid:  
1-800-529-7374 or 1-800-LAW-REP4

Lane Tech LASA Club Instagram:  
lt\_lasa

# Countering the 'Hellhole' Narrative: Chicago by the People

As sunny blue skies melt into the purple of twilight, brake lights illuminate Lake Shore Drive. Rush hour is never all that enjoyable, but the view never fails. Lake Michigan and Navy Pier lie to the East; the Chicago River and Aqua Tower at the West. This is the Chicago that many have grown up with, and grown to love.

Recently, though, the city has gained a new title from none other than President Trump, who declared the city to be a "hellhole." This was just one of many negative comments toward Chicago that the president has made in the opening week of September; Trump also went as far as posting that "Chicago is about to find out why it's called the Department of WAR" on his Truth Social platform.

But even amidst the president's curated chaos, Chicagoans persist.

The diversity in Chicago has never been a secret, and may be one of Chicago's greatest strengths. It is because of this diversity that Chicago is able to foster so many unique communities, each one ready to embrace new members with open arms.

For junior Nick Bernstein, this type of community can be found in a Logan Square gym. Bernstein says that culture and community is "more important to me than what I do there to some degree. I go for a variety of reasons: because I enjoy it, it's good for my body, but I enjoy talking to people there. It's good to socialize outside of my school and my job."

And no one can forget the natural beauty of Chicago. With twenty-eight miles of lakefront, endless architectural gems, and countless public parks, the city offers everything a resident or visitor could need. Chicago's skyline is sure to leave viewers dazzled, but freshman Sophie Menard finds her place at the Ledge—a popular "concrete

beach" along the lakefront.

"I really like the Ledge and watching the sunsets," Menard said. Going to school in the Wrigleyville area, Menard would take trips to the Ledge and find "a bunch of places around the city that are some peaceful areas."

This type of calm can be difficult to find with all the movement and energy of a large city, yet somehow Chicago achieves this balance. Even though President Trump called the crime in the city "out of control," Chicagoans seem to disagree. Crime is focused in certain hotspots—and while the city should invest time and money into these areas to further lower the crime rates, overall crime and homicide rates are down 33% compared to this time last year, according to Block Club Chicago. Even though there are these changes, even though forward progress is being made, Chicago has still taken steps back.

"The CTA is a beautiful part of our city that I really enjoy. I think everyone would enjoy more consistency," said Bernstein. And while the CTA has recently promised its new "frequent network," the new schedules do not apply to all bus routes and train lines. Yes, faster schedules can be appreciated—but, really, that should be the bare minimum for the third-largest city in the United States.

Environmental science teacher Arthur Wawrzyczek said, "the original motto of Chicago was 'make no small plans.' And historically Chicago has done insane things: changing the direction of the River, lifting the entire city... I think we lost touch with [historically insane part] of our cultural history as a city."

Of course, it can be extremely difficult to rekindle an entire city's identity, but perhaps President Trump's comments can be the

spark for change in Chicago. "It's not just Chicago as a land, it's Chicago as a people," said Menard. It's the people—and all of their diverse backgrounds and lives—that make Chicago, Chicago. So it is our turn, as the people, to step up.

It may be impossible for the entire city to come to a single agreement given that we cannot seem to agree on a baseball team,

but work needs to be done in our city. A step towards a more unified Chicago could be the push to continue—and maybe reform—Chicago's identity. Chicago could be described as many things, and each Chicagoan is sure to have a different response. One thing is clear, though: Chicago is strong, resilient, and certainly not a "hellhole."

Opinion By Ellie Sanderson

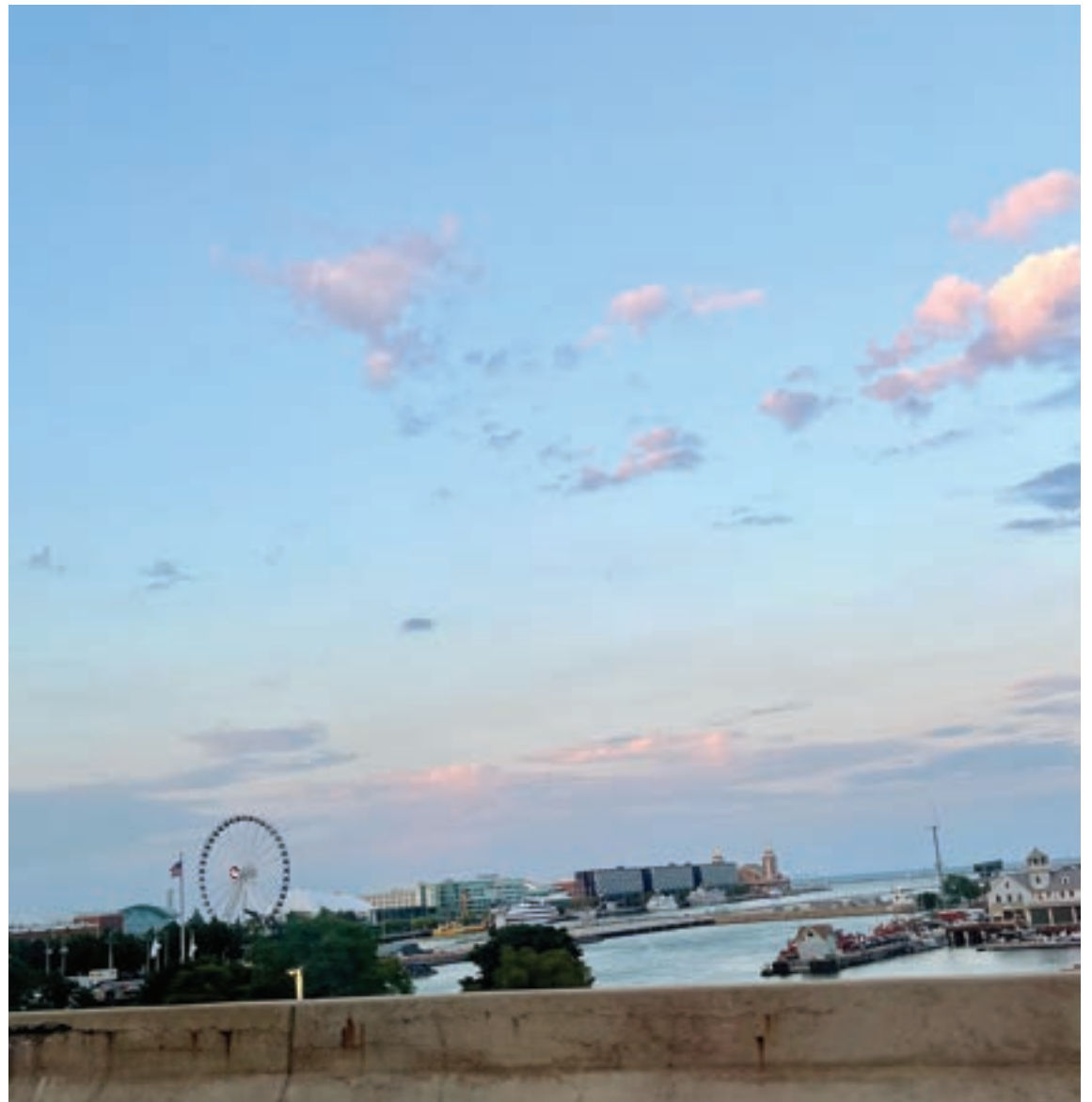


PHOTO BY ELLIE SANDERSON

Navy Pier and Lake Michigan seen from Lake Shore Drive, a contrast to President Trump's comments.

## Lane Tech's New Demerit Policy, Effects Regarding Public Transport

By NAIMA JOHN

It's a crisp and chilly fall morning as students rush to pile off city buses, scrambling to get into the school building with a sense of disjointed urgency due to their chronic tardiness.

This scene is very common for students who take public transportation to school. According to the CTA performance dashboard, in the month of August 2025, buses garnered eight extra minutes of waiting time on average. That amount of time can be crucial for students rushing to get to class, and even more so with Lane Tech high school's new demerit policy.

The policy, just introduced this school year by the attendance office, registers a tardy as one demerit rather than half a demerit like in previous years.

The change seemed to have stirred negative responses, with sophomore Audrey Terry express-

ing that she is "not a fan" of the new policy. "It doesn't make sense that skipping is the same punishment as just being late, a minute late or 30 seconds late," She said.

Terry takes the CTA to school most days. "Sometimes there can be problems with it, like if a bus is late, or a train is messed up," said Terry, who described getting tardies when these events occur.

When asked about the efficiency of public transport getting her to school on time, she said that CTA tends to be a bit erratic.

"There have been times where my train didn't show up, or my bus didn't show up for an extra 30 minutes, and I got to school at like, 8:28, 8:30," Terry said. These factors might not make it the smoothest ride to school.

However, ease seemed to be a consideration taken when the policy was changed. "This is really the easiest way for students to keep track of demerit count," said Gaby Escobar, the director of

culture and climate at Lane Tech, referring to the policy.

Escobar described how in previous years, the policy of obtaining a half demerit caused a lot of confusion. "Students had a difficult time tracking their demerits, and it was a lot of work for the attendance office to go out and calculate." Even with student backlash Escobar says, "You know, we really try to be fair, and this was really the easiest way for students and parents to keep track of demerit count."

Though, one teacher has taken a sympathetic view on different conditions that might make a student late. "It's just being understanding in what the situation is," said Soshana Levy, a first period trigonometry teacher at Lane Tech.

She expressed her opinions on tardiness to her class due to the CTA. "Chicago public transportation is always unreliable," Levy said. "But I always talk to the

students and want to get their opinion and thoughts on what's happening and why that's happening."

However, a student who is chronically tardy might miss out on important aspects of their class, Levy said.

"I feel like they're always maybe a few steps behind," She said. "And so that definitely hurts — they don't know when the next quiz is or what's going on."

Students also have the ability to set "goal weeks," where they can erase their demerits if they are on time for an entire school week. "I think it's pretty easy to set a goal week," Terry said. "You know, they send it out in a student newsletter every day."

Goal weeks to Levy seem to be a solution to the disruption of the policy, and whether or not the policy will be positive. "Now, I think in the scheme of things, it won't really matter," she said, referring to the new policy. "Especially if

students have already filled out that form to get rid of their demerits. She continues. "If they're comfortable filling out that form, if they know how to fill out that form, then I don't think changing it from a half point to a point is going to change anything."

Even so, the policy seems to be a positive motivating factor for students. "I feel like this year, these students were more willing to participate in setting goal weeks, or were more motivated to be on top of their attendance," Escobar said.

There has yet to be any physical change in tardiness data as of now; however Escobar says she is hopeful. "It's just motivating students to really track their attendance and to make sure that they're catching being marked absent."

# The Mind and Body: Athletic Injuries on Mental Health



PHOTO BY LILY ROYER

**Lane Cross Country girls running an injury prevention easy run.**

**By LILY ROYER**

Athletes put their all into their sports but it comes with the risk of damaging their own bodies. The pressure of sports with the added pressure of school can cause stress and affect mental health, and when injured, students' mental health can be easily overlooked.

Balancing school and sports can be challenging, but when athletes are sidelined due

to injury, it can be even more challenging.

According to the National Library of Medicine, "Athletic injury negatively impacts the mental health of athletes. Likewise, mental health can and does influence athletic performance and is also intimately tied to the risk of athletic injury, thus creating a complex cycle with inability to separate physical and mental health."

Recovering from an injury is mentally challenging; it puts a direct mental strain on athletes. Brent Bradish, the athletic director at Lane, said that an injury can introduce questions such as, "Am I good enough? Am I strong enough? Can I really, you know, twist and turn my body this way? Am I really at 100% or do I need to back off a little bit?... You're afraid to push it to the limit," Bradish said.

Athletes can see a direct impact to their mental health when recovering or trying to push back at an injury. One athlete, Autumn Wolfman, a cross country runner, explains how she feels while in recovery from an injury saying, "I feel like because I am not pushing through that pain in my hip, I am not as dedicated to running as my teammates are."

Injured student athletes struggle with the question of whether or not they should just play through their pain. The NCAA estimated fewer than 6% of athletes go on to participate in intercollegiate sports after high school. High school athletes with injuries are getting sidelined at the very end of their sport career and due to this, athletes are presented with a challenge wondering if they can just push through an injury.

"In high school, you're kind of right there at the peak of your competitive career," Bradish said. "You've been playing this sport your whole life.... And so then when you do get injured, it becomes a real blow to being able to compete at that level. How long am I going to be able to compete? Is this injury going to keep me from being able to compete again?"

Marcus Malou, the athletic trainer at Lane, said that everyone is different when recovering — some want to seek recovery and are OK sitting out, although some athletes rely on their sport more and push themselves past a point of recovery just to play one more game.

"I've had athletes not mention injuries, and it ends up taking them longer just because they purposely avoid me or just avoid being seen by a physician or a physical therapist, just to kind of play through an injury, just because they do not want to miss game time," Malou said.

Bradish said sports injuries can hold you back from homework or other priorities as they can take over your thinking which can make it a challenge to keep your recovery out of the rest of our life.

"That is hard to balance, right? I think it's tempting to just kind of give up and mentally shut down, when, in reality, things in your athletic life might shut down for a while, while you recover, but you can't let that also translate into your school, because that's your job," Bradish said.

## Lane Tech boys soccer defeats Libertyville 2-1

**By FAITH GALIK**

Lane played in an intense and physical game, against an impressive competitor on Tuesday, Sept. 9. The game began with the first point 9 minutes in with a goal by Adrian Szkolnik, giving Lane the advantage. Following that, also in the first half, senior captain Sebastian Wimmer scored, increasing Lane's lead before halftime.

There were other goal opportunities that Libertyville's defense deflected, keeping Lane to a 2 goal advantage.

During halftime, Lane Tech Dance Team performed an upbeat hip-hop routine for fans before the game continued.

Into the second half, Lane was still up 2-0 against Libertyville, who was fighting diligently for a turn around. In the last 4 minutes of the game, Libertyville scored a goal from a redirected sideline throw-in. This created some moments of tension as Lane now only held a single goal lead.

Lane took an approach of tightening up and focusing on their defense in order to stay ahead. "We really held on still to clear out balls, had guys back to defend, to see out the game, even though it wasn't pretty," said Head Coach Andrew Ricks. "And that's what you have to do, because the other team is desperate. They're throwing everything at you to try and tie. And you have to suffer a little bit and hold, and we did, fortunately."

The defensive attention made a big impact on their game, and was a large part of their strategy in that second half. "It was two zero, and they were sending wingers down the sideline, and I just had to hold the line," said senior Maks Schechinger. "We were kinda parking the bus, but then we were relying on counterattacks to keep us in the game."

The term "parking the bus" as used by this Lane player, means positioning many players

deep in their own half of the field in order to reinforce holes in the defense and create less scoring opportunities for opponents. Schechinger also uses the term "wingers," which are wide attacking players whose purpose is to create scoring chances for the team. Lane used these wingers along with a tight defense in order to combat a possible Libertyville comeback. This strategy proved to be successful for the Lane boys as they ended the game 2-1.

Along with defensive strategies, other factors were said to have significantly contributed to the victory. "I think we came out with energy, we came out with happiness, we came out with things that you need to win a game and I think we produced those and that's why we won today's game," said Wimmer.

This game made it the second win in a row for the Lane boys soccer as they beat Juarez on Sept. 8, just the day before. "I don't like to schedule many back-to-back games, but yesterday was a league game, which was scheduled for us, and today was the opportunity to have a suburban team come to us, Libertyville, which is not common," Ricks said.

Libertyville has an impressive history as they won the state championship in the 2015-2016 season. "We were expecting them always to be really good, really tight," Wimmer said. "We played them last year — we tied them 1-1, and they were a really good team, and much respect to them."

Both Schechinger and Wimmer described contentment with the win and the improvement from the tie last year against Libertyville.

Looking forward, Wimmer wants the team to work on accentuating enthusiasm in games. "We went in, our last games have been a little bit less energetic," said Wimmer.



PHOTO BY FAITH GALIK

**The sun sets in the stadium as Lane boys soccer sets up to begin the game against Libertyville.**

"Everyone just said we got second in the state last year, we're gonna do it again this year, but it's not the same. We have to show it and we have to produce it by the amount of energy we got. Everyone has to be has to fire up one another."

This is only the beginning of the season for Lane boys soccer. "We have a very bright future," Wimmer said. "And there's still a lot more to work on. And we're just going to keep building on every single game."

## Varsity Volleyball Defeats Ag Science 2-0 In Non-Conference Match On Teacher Appreciation Night

By SARAH ROJAS

Lane dominated both sets against Ag Science on Sept. 9, winning 25-9 and 25-13 with strong serving and defense setting the tone early. The sense of school spirit was clear as families and teachers cheered loudly from the bleachers, setting the stage for a lively matchup. "We were very energetic and proud to be Lane," sophomore Sophia Mendez said.

This win was particularly important for Lane as they bounced back from a 3-7 record so far this season after struggling with roster challenges. Injuries and illnesses have limited the team's full roster and left the team without consistency in the recent weeks. Head Coach Kwong said that the team is focused on bringing back its chemistry.

"We've had a lot of illnesses, injuries, and just different reasons why our team missed this tournament and previous tournaments," Coach Kwong said. "So we just wanted to make sure we were building that cohesiveness once again, because once we do that, I know we're going to fire on all cylinders and do really well."

Kwong highlighted the team's defense and hitter-setter relationships as they showed to be the biggest strengths of the night. "We pass pretty well, and I really like the way that we were picking up balls on defense, and we're slowly starting to build the hitter-setter

connections," Kwong said. "So we still have more work to do, but I thought I looked a little better today."

Libero Lena Palus stood out with a strong performance, delivering 7 aces and 9 digs. An ace is a serve that lands directly on the opponent's court without a return or being touched, while digs are defensive plays where players can prevent the ball from touching the court after an opponent's attack, usually spikes or fast ball hits. For her, the biggest challenge was maintaining the team's competitiveness and eliminating mistakes.

"It's all about mentality against teams like this," Palus said.

Palus also credited communication and keeping a positive energy as keys to her role. "As a libero, I think it's really important to be really vocal, so I think I'm doing a great job at that," she said. "I think I did well at cheering on my team and then keeping up the positive energy against the other team."

Fans noticed the team's enthusiasm as well and cheered after nearly every point. Lane Tech's bench joined in too, creating a positive and encouraging atmosphere that matched Palus's.

Looking forward, the team is motivated by what lies on the road ahead. "We've just got to continue to minimize mistakes and just continue to build on every win and get ready for state and city playoffs," Kwong said.



PHOTO BY SARAH ROJAS

**Lane Champions come together to celebrate a win against Agricultural Science Cyclones. Lane as they bounced back from a 3-7 record so far this season after struggling with roster challenges.**

Palus echoed this optimism, saying she wants to carry on the team's positive attitude and mindset to their next performances. "And I think just every game, we just get

better, so I just want to keep going at that," she said.

Lane will hold their next game against the Amundsen Vikings on Sept. 25.

## Friday Night Lights is Back for the 2025 Season: Game Finishes 35-0

By CHARLOTTE KNEER

The sun sets over Lane Stadium the Friday night of Sept. 5 as the Lane Tech football team runs onto the field of their first home game. The crowd is dressed in bright, Hawaiian-themed colors, and people squeeze together to fit on the crowded bleachers. Football season is back, and the student section is ready.

"I think my favorite part about being at football games is just the energy the crowd gives," sophomore student Sofia Repta said. "Like, I feel like our school is really, really, really good with the team spirit and just, like, everybody being so hyped up and watching our team play."

The Lane Tech Champions beat Thornton Fractional South in the home opener Friday night to continue their strong start to the season. The team won 35-0 in their second game and second blowout.

On their opening possession, Lane's junior player Samuel Bodeau scored a running touchdown for a rare result on a first drive. Later in the first quarter, junior quarterback Robert Suteu completed a pass to Taylor Clay, also a junior, to make the score 14-0.

In the second quarter, senior Vernon Cole added another rushing touchdown. Cole scored four touchdowns in the team's first game of the season against Shepard, according to MaxPreps.

In the third quarter, defensive player Paiden Buckner took advantage of a mistake and intercepted a pass from TF South. Buckner ran the ball 61 yards to score a touchdown. Buckner said making big plays like this feels great. "It just shows that all the work I put in over the summer paid off," Buckner said.

Lane finished off the third quarter with a third running touchdown, scored by junior Ethan Pena, to make the score 35-0. No points were scored in the fourth quarter. Due to the massive point deficit, the referees



PHOTO BY CHARLOTTE KNEER

**Lane faces off against TF South at the line of scrimmage.**

decided to speed up the clock and bring on the end of the game quicker.

TF South, located in the suburb of Lansing, Illinois, won their first game of the season according to MaxPreps, but failed to create scoring opportunities or stop the Lane offense.

Lane also won their first game, against non-conference team Shepard, by a score of 37-19. With the strong start to the season, the team's coaches and players are looking forward.

"Coming into the season, we wanted to qualify for state playoffs again, which is still

very much possible and still one of my biggest hopes," Coach Conley said. "Hopefully, we can win a game and advance in the state playoffs, because there's been a long time since we did that." The last time Lane won a state playoff game was during the 2004-2005 season, where they beat Elmhurst in the first round, according to the IHSA.

Buckner also claimed high hopes for the season, saying his goals are to "Go undefeated, win city, and make a run in the state playoffs."

Conley said he sees some improvements in the team's ability to work together. "I feel

like it's still some work to do, but we're definitely off to a better start than we have been in the past," Conley said. "I think the kids, they're buying into the play for each other aspects, so it's feeling more like a family than just individuals playing football."

Lane Tech continued their season Friday the 12th with a highly anticipated conference game against the Lincoln Park Lions. They beat Lincoln Park 30-0 to remain undefeated. Lane's next away game is at Johnson, Sept. 20. The next home game is homecoming, against Bulls College Prep, Oct. 3.