

## **Press Clippings 11/02/2018**

**---The Courier-News---11/02/2018**

### **Area schools do well on new report card**

Most get rating of 'commendable' or 'exemplary'

**By Rafael Guerrero**

Most public schools in the Elgin area were ranked as "commendable" or better under Illinois' new school rating system.

The Illinois State Board of Education Tuesday released the 2018 Illinois Report Card, which now relies more on how student performances on standardized tests improve from year to year than on if students meet or fail to meet a designated benchmark.

Under the new system, schools fall into one of four categories: exemplary, commendable, underperforming and lowest performing.

The change is seen as a way to give low-performing schools credit if they can show their students are improving, even if their scores remain below average. As such, student growth resulted in 80 percent of schools being rated either commendable or exemplary. In addition to test performance results, designations also factored in such things as graduation rates and chronic absenteeism.

Only the schools in the top 10 percent statewide receive the designation of exemplary, which mean no student subgroups, including racial and ethnic groups, students from low-income families and those with special needs, are found to be low performing.

About 70 percent of schools in Illinois fell into commendable category, 15 percent were underperforming and 5 percent were deemed lowest-performing group.

In School District U46, 45 of 53 schools were designated commendable.

A handful were found to be underperforming, including Elgin High School, Abbott and Larsen middle schools in Elgin, Tefft and Canton middle schools in Streamwood, Ronald O'Neal Elementary School in Elgin, and Laurel Hill and Parkwood elementary schools in Hanover Park.

None fell into the lowest-performing group.

Laura Hill, U46's assessment and accountability director, told the school board Monday that all under-performing schools will be required to complete a self-assessment on their respective governance and management, curriculum and instruction, and school culture. They may be able to collaborate with each other on a common plan for improvement and will have access to additional federal funding, she said.

School District 300 had seven of its elementary schools designated exemplary:

Algonquin Lakes, Eastview, Lake in the Hills, Sleepy Hollow, Neubert, Wright and Gilberts. The remaining 18 schools were commendable.

In Central School District 301, the schools deemed exemplary were Burlington Central High School and Prairie Knolls Middle School in Elgin. Three other schools were cited as commendable.

The eight St. Charles District 303 schools making the exemplary list were St. Charles North High School; Thompson and Wredling middle schools; and Lincoln, Wild Rose, Bell-Graham, Norton Creek and the now-closed Fox Ridge elementary schools. Its other eight schools were listed as commendable. Naperville Sun reporter Suzanne Baker contributed.

## **Classes resume after ‘suspicious odor’ at Huff**

**By Rafael Guerrero**



- Huff Elementary School in Elgin was evacuated Thursday due to a “suspicious odor” in the basement, the source of which could not be found. Classes resumed in the late morning. (Rafael Guerrero/Courier-News )

Huff Elementary School in Elgin was evacuated Thursday morning after a “suspicious odor” was detected, but emergency personnel were unable to determine the source. Students and staff, who had been moved to school buses as a precaution shortly after 9 a.m., were given the all-clear at about 11 a.m. to return to the 801 Hasting St. building, School District U46 spokeswoman Mary Fergus said.

Elgin fire and hazmat teams called in to investigate were unable to determine the source of the odor, which was isolated to the basement and deemed not to pose a threat to those in the school, Fergus said.

Families at Huff were notified about the situation at the time of the evacuation and later when students returned to class, Fergus said.

Elgin Fire Department officials could not be reached for comment.

## SPORTS SECTION

---The Courier-News---11/02/2018

### Despite end, Streamwood gains

With supersectional berth, Sabres show continued progress

By Paul Johnson



- Streamwood goalkeeper Hector Alfaro clears the ball against Lake Park during Tuesday's Class 3A Conant Supersectional. (H. Rick Bamman/Courier-News )

Streamwood graduated 13 players off last season's star-studded team that reached a sectional final.

Expectations outside of the program may have been low, but internally, the Sabres expected to make another run this season, according to senior forward Alex Chavez.

"It motivated me more," he said. "A small town like Streamwood, being on a big stage, only a few teams left in the state, it's amazing. It made me want to be better every single day."

The Sabres went even further than last year's team, winning the program's second sectional title. The season ended in Tuesday's Class 3A Conant Supersectional with a 1-0 loss to Lake Park.

"I know no one probably expected this team to do what they did, but I always have high expectations for these guys," Streamwood coach Matt Polovin said. "It's always tough when guys know this is their last game in high school.

"I wish it could have been their last game this weekend (at the state finals)."

After sitting through a 55-minute weather delay, Streamwood (18-5-3) started to put pressure on late in the first half. Jesus Limon had the first shot on goal for either team with 10:30 left, but it was stopped.

The Sabres knocked on the door a couple of other times as well before Josh Taboada received a soft red card with 3:32 left in the half, leaving Streamwood a player down the rest of the game.

“When we lose a man, it automatically kills our vibe,” Chavez said. “Things start going through our heads. We start thinking about the worst things possible, and I guess that’s what happened.”

Lake Park (23-3-3) came out aggressive offensively in the second half.

That paid off with the game’s only goal with 23:13 left. Matteo Costa put in a rebound of a shot initially saved by Streamwood goalkeeper Hector Alfaro.

“Hector played phenomenal,” Polovin said. “Last year, he played maybe one game because he had Daniel Dominguez, one of the top goalies in the state, in front of him. (Alfaro) had a heck of a season.”

Chavez got the Sabres’ offense going again, but his free kick was stopped with 12:20 left. He had another shot later in the half.

Streamwood had two corner kicks in the final three minutes, but couldn’t come up with the equalizer.

“The last 10 minutes, we started really looking at the time, so why not give it all we’ve got?” Chavez said. “That’s what I told my boys.”

The Sabres finished over .500 for the 16th straight season, but have kicked it into a higher gear in recent years.

Since 2012, Streamwood has won four regional titles, two sectional titles and finished fourth in the state in 2014.

“It started from getting guys to know the system and keep working, keep doing stuff in the offseason, coming in and playing at the level you see us do,” Polovin said. “We’ll lose some good players, but next year I’m sure we’ll gain some and hopefully the (returning) guys will come back stronger.”