

Press Clippings - 12/21/2023

- WBBM Newsradio - School District U-46 considers closing six schools amid declining enrollment

By: WBBM Newsradio
December 20, 2023



To listen to the broadcast report, please click [here](#).

ELGIN, Ill. (WBBM NEWSRADIO) -- The state's second largest school district is looking at closing six schools amid declining enrollment.

Three elementary schools on the potential closure list are well over a century old: **McKinley**, **Washington** and **Lowrie**. All three are located in Elgin. **Century Oaks** in Elgin and **Glenbrook** and **Hanover Countryside** elementary schools in Streamwood are also on the list for potential closures.

U-46 district leaders presented recommendations to the school board earlier this week that McKinley, Washington, and Lowrie close in June of 2027. They also suggested some schools would be rebuilt while Century Oaks, Glenbrook, and Hanover Countryside close sometime later.

- Daily Herald -

York, Pontiac among must-see tourneys next week

By: Craig Brueske

December 20, 2023



Batavia's Jacob Aseltine shoots a 3-pointer during the Bulldogs' win at Geneva last Friday. Batavia is part of a deep 32-team field at York next week while Geneva heads to DeKalb to defend its 2022 tournament title.

'Tis the season to be jolly for high school basketball fans.

From Pontiac to Pekin, Algonquin to Elmhurst, Marengo to Plano, Bloomington to DeKalb, **Elgin** to Hinsdale – there are plenty of holiday tournaments to choose from later this month for prep basketball aficionados.

Nine years ago, the **Elgin** Holiday Basketball Tournament ended its 39-year run as one of the state's premier events.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the tournament flourished, thanks to players like **Elgin's** Sean Harrington, Marcus Smallwood, and Marcus Howard, and Chicago King's Marcus Liberty and Jamie Brandon.

Two years ago, **Elgin** brought back its holiday tournament, and Shepard captured last year's tourney title, edging the host Maroons, 45-41.

Next week, the Astros will look to defend its tourney championship at the 16-team event in **Elgin**, which tips off at 9 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 27, with Harvest Christian facing West Chicago.

Other first-round matchups include Woodstock vs. Kennedy (10:30 a.m.), Waukegan vs. Elgin Academy (noon), Richards vs. Walther Christian (1:45 p.m.), Lake View vs. St. Edward (3:15 p.m.), Elmwood Park vs. Plainfield Central (4:45 p.m.), **Elgin** vs IMSA (6:30 p.m.), and Aurora Central Catholic vs. Shepard (8 p.m.).

The tournament semifinals and championship are Friday and Saturday, Dec., 29 and 30.

Coached by Brett Johnson, the host Maroons are led by senior guard Maddox Hollian, who scored 33 points during their 62-56 victory over Streamwood on Dec. 8.

Benet Academy (10-0), West Aurora (9-2), and St. Charles North (5-5) head to the 92nd annual Pontiac Holiday Tournament Dec. 28-30.



Benet's Colin Stack is fouled by Marist's Marquis Vance during the Redwings' win last Friday. Benet is undefeated this season but just the No. 3 seed at the talent-filled Pontiac Tournament.

How deep is the 16-team field? The unbeaten Redwings drew the No. 3 seed behind Curie and Bloom.

"It's the best," North Stars coach Tom Poulin said of the Pontiac tourney. "Other than the state tournament, this is what all the alumni talk about when they come back – Pontiac.

"We are treated like an NBA team down there. They take care of your meals, your hotel, they launder your uniforms after games – they take care of everything. When you walk into a restaurant, you have little kids asking for your autograph. People don't realize how special it is to be there. "If you love basketball, you should go to Pontiac at some point. It's heaven to a basketball junkie."

North Stars senior forward Jake Furtney is looking forward to returning to Pontiac.

"We play Oak Park River Forest in the opening round, and I've already started watching some film on

that,” said Furtney.

Batavia, Downers Grove North, Downers Grove South, Glenbard East, Glenbard North, Glenbard West, Hinsdale South, Naperville North, St. Francis, Wheaton North, and host York are among the 32 teams participating in the 49th annual Jack Tosh Holiday Classic Dec. 26-30.

“It’s great competition,” said Glenbard North coach Kevin Tonn, whose Panthers are off to an 8-1 start. “They do such a nice job with everything organization-wise. They’ve got two gyms going.

“I love that tournament. If I wasn’t coaching basketball, I’d be there anyway watching.”

At DeKalb, Dundee-Crown, Geneva, Huntley, Naperville Central, and Wheaton Academy will participate in the 96th Chuck Dayton Classic Dec. 27-30.

Huntley (8-3) is seeded fourth, while defending champion Geneva (4-5) is the sixth seed.

“It’s nice to see teams we don’t usually see throughout the regular season,” said Vikings coach Scott Hennig. “Also, it’s nice to play different styles. Four games in four days can be physically and mentally challenging.”

Unbeaten Waubonsie Valley (9-0) drew the top seed in the Hinkle Holiday Classic at Jacobs, joined by No. 3 seed Crystal Lake South (11- 1), **South Elgin**, Cary-Grove, **Bartlett**, **Larkin**, and the host Golden Eagles.

“The Hinkle is a nice mix of teams with various styles,” said Waubonsie coach Andrew Schweitzer. “Lake Zurich, Barrington, and Crystal Lake South will be in contention. Overall, I enjoy the bracket-style because playing for something – an end goal – is always nice.

“They do a great job organizationally, and especially enjoy the student crew they use for media. From a scheduling standpoint, it’s fantastic to have freshmen, sophomores, and varsity all at the same place for their holiday tournaments.”

Top-seeded Aurora Christian (9-1) travels to Bloomington for the State Farm Holiday Classic Dec. 27-30 – small school division, while Addison Trail, Metea Valley, and Wheaton Warrenville South compete in the large school class.

“The State Farm Classic brings so much value to our team every year,” said Eagles coach Dan Beebe. “First and foremost, it provides great competition. In 2017, when we won the tournament for the first time, we beat three teams that received state trophies at the end of the season. We also enjoy the built-in chemistry builders that the tournament provides.

“Staying in a hotel for three nights and eating meals together gives us a wonderful opportunity to spend time with each other as a team without any involvement in basketball practices or games.”

Kaneland and defending champion Burlington Central drew the top two seeds, joined by Lisle and Marmion, in the 60th annual Plano Christmas Classic Dec. 27-30.

“We like the tournament because it is very well run, and it is a great atmosphere for a high school tournament,” said Knights coach Ernie Colombe. “Jim Schmidt and now Steve Lucas do a great job. In our mind, Burlington is the defending champion until somebody knocks them off.”

“The atmosphere at Plano is second to none,” said Rockets coach Brett Porto. “If you’re fortunate enough to play in the final four and tournament championship, the players play in front of a packed house.

“We have a ton of youth, so every practice, film session, and game is very important to our development.”

St. Charles East and Hinsdale Central participate in the Hinsdale Central Holiday Classic Dec. 27-30.

“There are 16 teams from 15 different conferences, so you’re going to see some different teams with different styles,” said Saints coach Rob Klemm.

Hampshire, Neuqua Valley, and **Streamwood** head to the Hardwood Classic Dec. 27-30 in Wheeling, while Lake Park (9-1) competes in the 58th annual Pekin Insurance Tournament Dec. 27-29.

IC Catholic Prep, Glenbard South, Montini, Westmont, and Willowbrook play in the ICCP/Westmont Christmas Classic Dec. 27-30, while Fenton (10-1) heads to the E.C. Nichols Tournament Dec. 23, 27-29, in Marengo.

Timothy Christian travels to Florida for the Jim Clark Classic Dec. 27-29 in Orlando.

- Daily Herald -

Scouting DuPage, Fox girls basketball holiday tournaments

By: Mike Miaza

December 20, 2023

The Bill Neibch Holiday Classic hosted by Wheaton North is annually regarded as one of the top girls basketball tournaments around.

The 2023 version is no exception. The 16-team tournament is in its 39th iteration with schools from mainly around the western and northwest suburbs entered. Hinsdale Central and Glenbrook South are tied for the most Neibch tournament wins with seven each. Glenbrook South has won it the last two years and three times since 2018.

Waubonsie Valley is the No. 2 seed and brought a 12-1 overall mark into this week thanks to a 7-game winning streak. The Warriors, who have two Falcon Classic titles to their credit (1998 and 2011), face Willowbrook in their Dec. 26 opener. The Warriors beat Willowbrook 66-36 in early December.

Waubonsie sophomore Danyella Mporokoso, all-tournament at Wheaton North a year ago, averages 20.8 points, 6.7 rebounds and 3.2 steals, while Ariana Garcia averages 4.5 assists and Hannah Laub is at 1.2 blocks per game.

Schaumburg is the No. 1 seed, followed by Waubonise (2), Downers Grove North (3), Wheaton North (4), Glenbrook South (5), Palatine (6), De La Salle (7) and Glenbard South (8) to round out the top eight seeds. "The Falcon Classic is a competitive tournament," said Waubonsie coach Brett Love. "We are looking to compete for the championship this year. Our team can be really good. We still have a long way to go, but we make progress every day in practice and games. At this point, we are looking to be challenged, although we have played some competitive teams and the results have led to blowouts. It would be nice to play a top 10 state team to see where we stand."

Willowbrook is coming off a 65-63 double-overtime win over Downers Grove South where Division I Wright State signee Elle Bruschuk had 27 points and 19 rebounds. She also notched a double-double in a recent win over Glenbard East.

Elgin coach Nick Bumbales calls the Falcon Classic an overlooked area tournament. "The top teams generally play well in the state tournament," he said. "It's a good balance of teams with different styles of play. Schaumburg is the top team and is big and athletic and led by Symone Harrell. Waubonsie is the No. 2 seed and is crazy athletic. We're hoping to get a couple wins to continue our strong start." The Maroons, who won the tournament in 1995, were 6-5 overall at week's start and have the most wins at this point of the season for any **Elgin** team in the last 20 years, Bumbales noted. **Elgin**, which plays No. 1-seed Schaumburg on Dec. 26, is led by junior Izzie Castro (14.1 points), senior Jocelyn Bardesi (8.4 points, 5.4 assists) and junior Mahitha Ratakonda (5.5 points, 9.2 rebounds).

Upstate Eight Conference leader Glenbard South (7-4 overall), the No. 8 seed, faces Glenbard North at Wheaton North. South won an earlier meeting 50-20. Balanced scoring from junior Brooklyn Moore (9 points, 7 rebounds) sophomore Rheayanna Ferguson (7 points), senior Allie Mizwicki (7 points), senior Sofia Alcala (6 points, 5 rebounds), sophomore Jamie Mizwicki (6 points) and sophomore Callie Hardtke (5 points) has fueled the Raiders. "Every year, Wheaton North is a tough tournament," South coach Erica Daca said. "We are one of two 3A schools going against 4A schools, but it gives us a great test as we near the halfway point of the season. To date, we've been struggling with some injuries and we've struggled with our shooting, but we have a relatively young, talented group that as we continue to have everyone on the floor and healthy, we will begin to hit our stride."

Glenbard North (1-11) continues to see improvement as its season progresses. "Just like any other game this season, we are using this tournament as an opportunity to get better," Glenbard North coach Pam Decheva-Mashmi said. "We have an awesome group of girls that is working hard each game and that's all we can ask for as coaches. We have been focusing on playing hard defense, which we have done a good job of. Now, we have to focus on scoring the basketball."

Other local entrants include Jacobs, West Aurora, Hinsdale Central and **Bartlett.**

At Montini

The Montini Catholic Christmas Tournament has 12 teams this season. St. Charles East, St. Francis, Benet and Montini received first-round byes, but East and St. Francis, and Benet and Montini will play shootout format contests on Dec. 26.

St. Francis (8-2 and 3-0 in Girls Catholic Athletic Conference White play to start the week) is the No. 4 seed, awaiting the winner of Plainfield Central and York.

Junior guard-forward Riley Austin averages 16 points and is shooting 43 percent from 3 and 83 percent from the free-throw line. "Riley is off to a fantastic start in her junior season," Spartans coach Jeff Gerdeman said.

Junior guard Tea Rubino is at 10 points per game. St. Francis also receives help from senior forward Natalie Doyle (5 rebounds, 5 deflections/steals per game) and senior point guard Dolly Smith (3 assists, 4 rebounds).

"Our team is off to a good start against a tough schedule," Gerdeman said. "We have quality wins over the likes of St. Ignatius, Sandburg, Aurora Central Catholic, St. Laurence, Hinsdale South, IC Catholic Prep and Kaneland. We are looking to take the next step against quality opponents at Montini."

Also at Montini, Neuqua Valley has won 5 of its last 6 and had an 8-5 overall record to start the week. The Wildcats face Morgan Park on Dec. 26, and the winner gets Benet in the second round. Kylee Norkus (8 rebounds) and Caitlin Washington each average 14 points per game, while Zoe Navarro

averages 3 assists. “It’s a very competitive tournament and our team is scrappy and starting to mesh,” Neuqua coach Mike Williams said.

Naperville North (4-6), which won the West Aurora Thanksgiving tournament, takes on Thornton at Montini on Dec. 26 (winner faces host Montini in the second round). Aly Miller’s squad features sophomore point guard Natalie Frempong (10.5 points), freshman Ava Podkasik (6 rebounds, 3.7 steals) and senior Sydni Flink (4.8 deflections, 3 assists). “We have had a tough stretch of competition the past couple weeks and are looking forward to seeing how resilient we can be as a team playing four straight games,” Miller said.

York, 8-3 and off to a hot start in the West Suburban Conference Silver Division, plays Plainfield Central with the winner getting St. Francis. Anna Filosa and Hannah Meyers are York’s two leading scorers.

Burlington Central faces Assumption out of Kentucky with the winner getting St. Charles East.

At Lisle

Lisle hosts its annual Lisle Cage Classic starting Dec. 26, an event considered one of the best small-/mid-sized school tournaments in the Chicagoland/northern Illinois region — consisting mainly of Class 2A/3A teams with a pair of Class 1A and three Class 4A schools also part of the field.

Wheaton Academy, Coal City, IC Catholic Prep and West Chicago are the top four seeds in that order.

IC Catholic Prep is in the midst of the Grant Holiday Tournament in Fox Lake this week ahead of its Lisle residency. The Knights were 9-3 through their first 12, led by a host of contributors, including Allie Geiger, Kelsey McDonough, Analisa Raffaelli, Mary Kate Hilgart and Graziella Narcisi.

“We’re playing good, team basketball,” ICCP coach Todd Fisher said. “We do not rely on one kid to do all the scoring. It seems when we have our best offensive nights it is when we have multiple kids close to double-digit points.”

Senior Cailry Salerno leads 4-6 Addison Trail in scoring at 12 points per game, while Emma Caniglia is second in scoring and leads the team in assists. Kathlyn Ford, who has been out since the first game of the season, is now ready to play, Blazers coach Cory Little noted. “We have gotten a lot better and I think our team is slowly peaking at the right time. This tournament will be great for us to continue our development. We’re looking forward to it.”

West Chicago is new to the Lisle Holiday Cage Classic where it is the No. 4 seed in the 16-team field. The Wildcats were 10-3 to start the week and will open with St. Edward on Dec. 26.

Junior point guard Jasymn Trigueros, who already has broken the 1,000-career-point barrier, averages

18.5 points and 5 steals, while senior forward Ellie Wingstedt averages 6 rebounds. West Chicago is holding opponents to 21 percent less points than it did last year.

“We’re very excited how well we are playing defense this year,” Wildcats coach Mark Fitzgerald said. “We are hoping to be competitive at Lisle. While there are several excellent teams in the tournament, we feel we can compete with them.”

St. Edward (5-7) is led in scoring by freshman Savannah Lynch at 19.1 points per game. The Green Wave has been without junior leading rebounder Maggie Jarzemsky (8 rebounds per game) for the past two weeks and coach Michelle Dawson hopes to have her back and playing at full strength at Lisle coming off an injury. Dawson also has been pleased with the play of sophomore Jordan Sauls, who averages 7.2 points. “Jordan is also playing strong,” Dawson noted.

The host Lions were 9-5 overall and riding a 3-game winning streak to start the week. Lisle, the No. 11 seed, opens play against No. 6 seed Seneca in the featured 8 p.m. game Dec. 26.

“It should be a very entertaining field,” Lisle coach Nick Balaban said.

Senior Crystal McHugh averages 20.1 points, 8.1 rebounds and 5.6 steals per game — all team highs. McKenna Kane, also a senior, averages 7.2 points and a team-best 4.1 assists. Senior Taniya Cates is at 7 rebounds per game. Kane shoots 22.2 percent from 3, while sophomore Aly Russell leads the team in free-throw shooting (.667).

“We are off to a promising start,” Balaban said. “Our student-athletes have collectively come together since the off-season and have been playing a very inspiring brand of basketball. As we approach the halfway point, we’re looking to achieve some of our goals by continuing to grow and develop as a whole as the season progresses.”

Rosary (3-8) faces Westmont at Lisle on Dec. 26. Karyna Brol, Maddie Stumm and Megan Molenhouse all average in the 10-point-per-game neighborhood. Key defensive contributors include senior Erin Murray and sophomore Peyton Saltijeral. “The team definitely is figuring things out on the fly,” Royals coach Ken Ubertino said. “We had very little varsity game experience with these players prior to the season, so we’re expecting them to be a handful by season’s end and the playoffs.”

Timothy Christian with leading scorer Sami Drye opens play at Lisle against Antioch. Fellow Chicagoland Christian Conference entrant and top-seeded Wheaton Academy plays Walther Christian in its opener.

At Dundee-Crown

Lake Park is part of the field at the 40th annual Komaromy Charger Classic at Dundee-Crown in Carpentersville, yet another tournament regarded as tops in the Chicagoland area. The 5-5 Lancers play

Hampshire on Dec. 26. Sophomore Allie Gogola leads the Lancers at 14.6 points, while sophomore Maggie Frank averages 9.6 points.

"We have played a difficult schedule and are looking to improve through the second half of the season," Lake Park coach Bobby Reibel said.

Also at D-C, **South Elgin** (2-11) opens Dec. 26 against Maine South. Lexi Lopez, a junior, leads the Storm in scoring at 9 points per game, while freshman Liv Miller averages 8 rebounds per contest. "This will be a tough tournament for our young team, but we are looking to prepare as best as possible and continue to learn and improve," **South Elgin** coach Emily xxDriessen said.

St. Charles North (10-1) has only lost to Batavia this year. The North Stars play host Dundee-Crown in their opener at 2:30 p.m., and if they win will face either New Trier or Lake Forest. Reagan Sipla reached the 1,000-point milestone for Mike Tomczak's squad.

St. Charles North's Reagan Sipla recently scored her 1,000th point. The North Stars have only lost once this year and are one of the favorites at the Dundee-Crown tournament. Sean King/for Shaw Local

At Dixon

Aurora Central Catholic (11-2) heads to Dixon where it opens with Rock Island Alleman on Dec. 27. Junior Riley Cwinski averages 18.7 points and shoots 59 percent from the floor for the Chargers, while Grace Grunloh is shooting 43 percent from 3 over the last 8 games.

"We enjoy coming to this tournament," ACC coach LeVada Smith said. "There is some good competition and, of course, we start off right away with Alleman. The season, so far for us, has been going in a positive direction. We have a really solid schedule. We have a mixture of six-plus 4A schools along with 3A and 2A schools that we compete against. So far, we have held our own and are trying to keep moving forward and get better each day."

At Morton College

Once again, the third annual Morton College tourney in Berwyn (Dec. 26-29) features some of the premier teams in the state, including Fremd (10-3) and Hersey (8-5) from the Mid-Suburban League, and Geneva (7-3) and Batavia (9-2) from the DuKane Conference.

"I think the Morton College tournament has quickly established itself as the top Christmas tournament in the area," said Fremd coach Dave Yates. "In many Christmas tournaments you might not get a tough game until the final four. At Morton, that could happen in game one and for sure by game two." Geneva will be in the final game of the day facing Hersey at 8:15 p.m.

Batavia opens play against Sycamore.

Geneva beat Fremd 50-42 in last year's championship game.

"Geneva is obviously a really, really good, seasoned team, good coach so it will be a challenge right off the bat," Hersey coach Courtney Ludois said.

"I think there are eight to nine teams who could all win the tournament," Yates said.

Seniors Leah Palmer and Brooke Carlson lead the Vikings and Bulldogs, respectively, both off to big starts statistically. Palmer just had 30 points and 11 rebounds in Geneva's win over Batavia last week to give the Vikings the early lead in the DuKane Conference race.

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- Chicago Tribune -
Basketball and local scores for the Southland, Aurora, Elgin, Naperville and Lake County
By: From Staff Reports
December 20, 2023



Sandburg's Paulius Mizeras (14) and Oak Lawn's Henry Martinez (32) try to grab a rebound during a nonconference game in Oak Lawn on Tuesday, Dec. 19, 2023.

Results and highlights of high schools and local colleges from the Southland and Aurora, Elgin, Naperville and Lake County coverage areas.

TUESDAY'S RESULTS

HIGH SCHOOLS

BOYS BASKETBALL

Andrew 71, Lemont 57

Beecher 72, Coal City 39

Beecher (11-0): Adyn McGinley 16 points, 9 assists, 3 steals. Orlin Nesbitt 11 points, 7 rebounds.

Elgin Academy 54, Indian Creek 39

Evergreen Park 59, Hinsdale South 50

Evergreen (8-2): Lonnie Mosley 30 points. Tre Dowdell 11 points.

Fenton 46, **South Elgin** 40

Glenbard East 80, East Aurora 67

Glenbard South 63, **Bartlett** 48

Lincoln-Way East 60, Crete-Monee 45

Lincoln-Way East (6-4): B.J. Powell 17 points, 4 steals. Karson Thomas 15 points, 9 rebounds.

Manteno 55, Shepard 33

Morris 72, Kaneland 64 (OT)

Kaneland (9-2, 3-1 Interstate Eight): Troyer Carlson 33 points. Freddy Hassan 13 points.

Oak Forest 51, St. Rita 42

Reavis 78, Woodlawn 73 (2 OT)

Reavis (7-4): Yigit Akgunlu 27 points.

Riverside-Brookfield 69, Bremen 34

Rockford Auburn 90, Yorkville Christian 66

Yorkville Christian (5-8): Zach Marini 20 points.

Sandburg 92, Oak Lawn 82
Somonauk 48, Reed-Custer 46
Somonauk (7-4): Carson Bahrey 19 points, 4 steals.
Southland Prep 59, Chicago Military 16
Stevenson 54, Lockport 49
Stevenson (5-4): Aidan Bardic 17 points. Atticus Richmond 14 points, 13 rebounds. Jack Dabbs 12 points.
Lockport (4-7): Bryce Turner 16 points, 4 assists. Logan Cooper 16 points. Anthony Kosi 11 points, 6 rebounds.
Thornwood 67, Carver 33
Thornwood (4-5): Arden Eaves 25 points. Kavon Ammons 13 points.
Warren 90, Marian Central Catholic 36
Warren (11-1): Jaxson Davis 20 points. Immanuel Brown 16 points. Javerion Banks 12 points.
Waukegan 78, Zion-Benton 54
Waukegan (6-4, 2-2 North Suburban): Nehemiah Dunn 23 points. Simereon Carter 22 points.
West Chicago 68, **Elgin** 52
Yorkville 63, Plano 38

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Bishop McNamara 39, Crete-Monee 26
Bolingbrook 52, Lincoln-Way East 39
Lincoln-Way East (11-3, 1-2 SWSC Blue): Makayla Kelly 11 points.
Evergreen Park 51, Elmwood Park 39
Evergreen: Trinity Jones 15 points.
Glenbard East 49, East Aurora 18
Hampshire 64, Jacobs 34
Kaneland 42, Burlington Central 32
Kaneland (9-4): Berlyn Ruh 9 points. Kendra Brown 9 points.
Lake Zurich 27, Cary-Grove 26
Larkin 56, **Streamwood** 34
Minooka 46, West Aurora 40
Plano 53, Earlville 18
Plano (8-8): Josie Larson 19 points, 5 rebounds, 5 assists. Chloe Rowe 10 points, 6 rebounds.
West Chicago 41, **Elgin** 32
Willows 66, Thornridge 29
Yorkville 56, Metea Valley 41
Yorkville (10-3): Brooke Spychalski 19 points. Lainey Gussman 10 points.