

Press Clippings 08/20/21

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Cleaning, tracing triggered after Larkin officials learn COVID-infected person was inside high school

by Mike Danahey; Note: This story also ran on chicagotribune.com.

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Larkin High School in Elgin had to implement precautions and do contact tracing after learning someone inside the building Monday had COVID-19, the school's principal said. (u-46.com)

Larkin High School in Elgin is taking extra precautions this week after learning someone inside the building Monday tested positive for COVID-19.

“The local (Kane) county health department and a U-46 health services staff member will implement the contact tracing process and directly communicate with any individual who was believed to be in close contact with said individual member who tested positive,” **Larkin Principal Krystal Bush** said in message sent to staff and families.

Bush did not specify if the person was a student, staff member or visitor or if they required hospitalization. Monday was the first day of school.

School District U-46 spokeswoman **Mary Fergus** said the high school was prepared for such an event.

“For the past year we have been alerting our school communities whenever this is a COVID case at a school. This is not a new practice,” she said.

Since the fall semester started Monday, U-46 has had two staff members and four students test positive at its schools or facilities, Fergus said. Another 31 tested positive prior to the first day of classes.

The names of the other buildings where COVID-19 cases have been found were not released.

In her message, Bush said the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines close contact as being within six feet of someone confirmed to have coronavirus for 15 minutes or longer.

“If you were not contacted, you were not found to be in close contact,” Bush said in her letter. “Close contacts will also receive a separate notification from the local health department or U-46 staff.”

Anyone found to have been exposed to the virus will need to quarantine for up to 14 days.

All District U-46 schools have COVID-related protocols in place, including mandatory face mask usage inside schools and buses and social distancing.

Larkin has taken additional measures to prevent the virus’ spread. Rooms and areas where possible exposure occurred were closed for deep cleaning and disinfection, the district said.

The high school will continue to monitor students and staff for signs and symptoms of illness and evaluate illness reports to promptly identify possible COVID outbreaks, Bush said in her note. Staff is continuously sanitizing high-touch surfaces, she said, and students are being reminded to frequently wash their hands, not share personal items like water bottles, and avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth.

Anyone found to have COVID symptoms will be “promptly placed in a separate supervised area away from others until they can be sent home,” she said.

Information on the district’s voluntary COVID-19 testing policy and other virus-related topics can be found online at www.u-46.org/Page/18406.

“Masking, physical distancing, vaccinations, voluntary testing of the unvaccinated and frequent hand washing are the best-known ways to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic,” Fergus said. “And those are the measures that our team has supported and communicated to our families.”

---Daily Herald--08/20/2021

Prep football: 2021 Fall Preview: Scouting the Upstate Eight Conference

by Craig Brueske

Updated 8/19/2021 8:35 PM

Bartlett 2021 spring record: 4-0 overall, 4-0 in Upstate Eight.

Coach: Matthew Erlenbaugh.

Worth noting: The Hawks enter the 2021 season with heavy hearts after junior offensive lineman Alex Czerwik was killed in an automobile accident earlier this month. "He was a great young man and will dearly be missed in our program, school, and community," said Bartlett coach Matt Erlenbaugh. The Hawks also graduated 2-time all-state TE/DL-LB Alec Palella (Central Michigan) and will have a lot of first-year starters this season. "Although there are only three returning starters, this group did get a lot of varsity playing time last season," said Erlenbaugh. The returnees include seniors Thomas Hubbard (6-4, 220 OL/DL), James Knight (5-10, 180, WR/CB), Jacob Searce (6-2, 205, QB), Gabe Bemont (5-11, 180, WR/LB), and Anthony Verges (5-10, 170, RB/FS). The list of newcomers is headed by Blake McCluskey (5-9, 185, OL/LB), Santino Stagen (6-2, 190, OL/LB), and freshman Sam Mancilla (6-0, 240, OL/DL). Bartlett, which has compiled a 19-5 record in Erlenbaugh's 3 years at the helm, opens its season at Glenbard South on Aug. 27. The Hawks host South Elgin on Oct. 15.

Elgin 2021 spring record: 4-2 overall, 4-2 in Upstate Eight.

Coach: Anthony Mason.

Worth noting: Hoping to continue their momentum from last spring's winning campaign -- the team's first since 2010, the Maroons figure to be led by their experienced offensive line that includes seniors Tony Rios (6-0, 260), Will Zamecnik (6-2, 245), Kenny Davis (5-11, 245), and junior Adam Lambaz (5-10, 235). Other notable returnees are senior RB/LB Tayvion Mitchell (5-10, 200), DB Adyn Avina (5-7, 150), and junior long snapper Nick West (6-1, 150). Junior James Syrek (6-1, 165) looks to take over for graduated All-Area QB Jeff Lomax, while senior Clem McCullough (5-10, 175 athlete), junior Kristian Davis (6-1, 170 DE) and sophomore Matt Lawson (5-10, 180 athlete) lead the list of newcomers. "This team has bonded together very well during the offseason," said Maroons coach Anthony Mason. "All of our games being conference games means a lot to us and we want to compete in every game, giving us the opportunity to be successful. We are truly grateful to play a full season and have a shot at the IHSA state series." Elgin opens its season against East Aurora on Aug. 27.

Fenton 2021 spring record: 2-4 overall, 2-4 in Upstate Eight.

Coach: Matthew Lynch.

Worth noting: On the plus side, the Bison averaged 27 points per game this past spring, topping the 40-point mark on 2 occasions. However, Fenton's defense allowed nearly 33 points per contest and dropped their final 3 games to Glenbard South (42-15), Bartlett (48-18), and Streamwood (44-41). Fenton, which begins its season at South Elgin on Aug. 27, welcomes the return of senior 2-way players Richard Chavez (5-5, 160 WR/DB), Zane Benayad (5-10, 170 RB/LB), Tyshawn Brooks (5-8, 170 RB/LB), Andrew Flint (5-10, 180 OL/LB), and Gregory Mejias (6-2, 250 OL/DL). Newcomers expected to contribute include OL/DL Richard Swanek III (6-3, 195), OL/DL Jordan Wilson (6-4, 215), WR/DB Michael Warkentien (6-0, 175), and WR/DB Sebastian Paiz (5-11, 160). "We are looking to compete each and every game in the Upstate Eight Conference," said Bison coach Matthew Lynch.

Glenbard East 2021 spring record: 2-3 overall, 2-3 in Upstate Eight.

Coach: John Walters.

Worth noting: The Rams are trying to return to the state playoffs for the third consecutive full season, having qualified in 2018 and 2019. With 6 offensive and 5 defensive starters back, they will look for leadership from a group that includes seniors Marc Koumoundouos (6-3, 285, OT/DT), Connor Cerkas (5-10, 165 QB), Matt Schager (6-2, 200 LB), Tyrese Buffkin (6-3, 180 WR), Nathan Kelley (6-3, 280 C), Nick Kostov (5-9, 185 RB), Kyrie Jones (6-1, 165 S), Kyle Tyszkiewicz (6-1, 165 WR), Alonso Perkins (6-1, 165 DB), and juniors Raul Garcia (5-8, 160 CB) and Dimitri Hritz (5-10, 180 RB/S). Juniors Delmario Taylor (6-3, 205 DE), Demontay Mack (6-3, 265 DL), Troy Cooper (6-4, 210 DE) and sophomore Dailen Zollicoffer (5-9, 160 WR) headline the list of newcomers. "We will be very experienced in the offensive and defensive skill positions," said Rams 11th-year coach John Walters. "We are really excited about the talent of these players." The Rams host Larkin in their season opener on Aug. 27.

Glenbard South 2021 spring record: 1-2 overall, 1-2 in Upstate Eight.

Coach: Ryan Crissey.

Worth noting: After playing just 3 games last spring, the Raiders are looking for a fresh start this season. They should benefit from the return of several starters, headlined by senior 4-year varsity starter Trevor Burnett (593 yards rushing last spring), senior 3-year varsity starter LB/WR Dominic D'Ambra (29 tackles, 210 yards receiving), and senior 4-year varsity starter DL/OL Connor Murphy (24 tackles). Other veterans include Brandon Lim (5-11, 260, OL), Gavin Krisik (6-3, 235, OL), Kenyetta Barlow (6-2, 165, athlete), Sam Scullion (6-0, 195, athlete), Zach Blazek (5-9, 170, WR), and Cain Smith (5-10, 220, DL). The list of newcomers includes senior Nathan Plaso (5-10, 165, WR), juniors D'Manual Payton (5-8, 145, athlete), Owen Gibson (6-4, 210, LB/TE), Jack Donnelly (6-3, 190, LB), Owen DiFranco (6-4, 225, DE), Edwin Tchapda (6-1, 275, OL/DL), and sophomores Michael Champagne (5-9, 165, QB) and

Cam Williams (6-2, 180, WR). According to Raiders coach Ryan Crissey, Burnett has received 9 Division I scholarship offers, while Williams has already garnered 4. "We have several returning starters and a talented crop of juniors and sophomores that will be major contributors." Glenbard South hosts Bartlett on Aug. 27 in an early season battle between hopeful UEC title contenders. "We expect to battle with a few schools for a conference championship," added Crissey.

Larkin 2021 spring record: 0-4 overall, 0-4 in Upstate Eight.

Coach: Grant Dietz.

Worth noting: "Our guys have put in a lot of hard work from the shortened COVID spring season into the summer program to now," said Royals coach Grant Dietz, who is Larkin's sixth head football coach in 3 years. "We are hopeful for the hard work to pay off for us this season." The Royals seek to improve upon last spring's 0-4 mark with the return of 3-year starting quarterback Dontrell Maxie (5-2, 215) and seniors Jamarion Stubbs (5-10, 150 WR/DB) and Michael Hibbler (5-11, 240 OL/DL). "Dontrell is a dynamic dual threat at quarterback," Dietz said of last year's all-UEC selection. "Jamarion is elusive with breakaway speed and provides experience on defense, while Michael was an all-UEC player last season." Additional veteran support figures to come from seniors Giovanni Lara (6-3, 265, OL/DL), Omarion Thomas (6-0, 250, DL/OL), and juniors Angle Gonzalez (6-0, 245, DL/OL) and Chevelle Clements (5-11, RB/LB). "Chevelle will be counted on as our utility man," said Dietz, whose squad visits Glenbard East in the Aug. 27 season opener. "Dealing with COVID and other situations have caused our numbers to drop but we will coach up the players we have and be ready to play hard," added Dietz.

South Elgin 2021 spring record: 5-0 overall, 5-0 in Upstate Eight.

Coach: Dragan Teonic.

Worth noting: Fresh from an unbeaten spring campaign, the Storm look to continue that momentum into the latter half of 2021. Outscoring its opponents by a staggering 44-11 average last spring, South Elgin figures to be a major force in the Upstate Eight Conference title chase once again. "Our goal is to be competitive in the Upstate Eight and continue our climb in Class 8A," said Storm coach Dragan Teonic, who has compiled a 21-6 mark in 3 seasons at the helm. Returning offensive starters are senior all-UEC selections Joey Viverito (6-1, 220, TE) and Jalen Jones (6-2, 180, WR), supported by seniors Dominic Cianciarulo (5-10, 235, OL), Spencer Menchaca (5-9, 170, WR), Kai Paz (5-11, 165, WR), and junior Nathan Dinse (6-2, 220, OL). Defensive returnees include all-state senior DB Jordan Jones (6-1, 180), Omari Larson (5-10, 200, DL), Salvi Macaluso (6-2, 210, LB), Alex Rios (6-1, 185, LB), Axel Bernal (5-11, 185, LB), Paz (DB) and Jalen Jones (DB). The list of newcomers includes seniors Gino Santini (6-1, 210, TE/DL), Cole Wilmot (6-0, 200, WR/DL), juniors Mason Montgomery (6-1, 180, WR/DB), Tyler Henson (6-5, 295, OL/DL), Kyle Steinhofer (6-0, 175, WR/DB), and sophomores Tommy Roath (5-10, 250, OL/DL), Jacob Sullivan (6-0, 185, QB), and Ari Kravis (5-10, 200, RB/LB).

Streamwood 2021 spring record: 5-1 overall, 5-1 in Upstate Eight.

Coach: Keith McMaster.

Worth noting: After experiencing back-to-back, 2-7 seasons in 2018 and 2019, Streamwood posted an impressive 5-1 mark during the shortened 2021 spring campaign. Now, the Sabres want more. "We're looking to build on the success of last season," said Sabres 2nd-year head coach Keith McMaster. "The goal is to make the playoffs for the first time in a decade (2011)." That confidence is boosted by the return of senior veteran starters Isaac Martinez (5-11, 185), who gained 799 yards rushing with a 7.13-yard average per carry and 12 touchdowns last

spring, Michael Estrada (5-11, 180, LB/RB), who collected 35 tackles -- 2nd on the team, and Justin Sharks (6-1, 185, SS), who had 24 tackles, including 5 for loss with a pair of interceptions. Senior offensive linemen Jojo Chamopoulos (5-10, 220), Eric Gomez (6-1, 250), and Richard Rodriguez (6-2, 265) also return to bolster the interior for the Sabres. Streamwood also expects a lift from sophomore newcomer Taro Ishikawa (5-9, 175, RB), who averaged 4.58 yards per carry last spring. Streamwood opens its season at West Chicago on Aug. 27.

West Chicago 2021 spring record: 0-2 overall, 0-2 in Upstate Eight.

Coach: Tyler Belding.

Worth noting: The Wildcats' shortened spring season was more abbreviated than expected, with the team playing just two games -- losing 46-8 to Streamwood on March 19 and dropping a 21-20 decision to Elgin on April 16. "After graduating a talented senior class, we are looking to reload with a balanced mix of juniors and seniors, along with 12 returning players who have varsity experience," said Wildcats coach Tyler Belding, whose team hosts Streamwood in its season opener on Aug. 27. Heading the list of returning veterans are Pedro Vazquez (6-0, 215, DL), who recorded a team-high 7 tackles for loss last spring, Mason Wright (6-1, 190, WR), who had 14 catches for 285 yards with 3 TDs), Ethan Ross (5-7, 170, RB/LB), and Dejon Davis (5-9, 210, OL). The list of newcomers includes Joey Ferruzza (5-9, 180, LB/RB), Adrian Munoz (5-9, 170, QB/LB), Jaden Bates (5-10, 160, DB), and Aidan Murrin (6-1, 170, WR).