

---Crain's Chicago Business---09/16/2021

Lightfoot names San Antonio schools chief as new CPS CEO

By A.D. Quig

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New Chicago Public Schools CEO Pedro Martinez

Pedro Martinez is Mayor Lori Lightfoot's choice to lead Chicago's school system, the mayor announced this morning in a news conference with CPS leadership at Benito Juárez Community Academy—Martinez's alma mater—in Pilsen. The mayor welcomed Martinez, "a son of Chicago, back home." Martinez—an immigrant from Mexico who grew up in Pilsen and is the eldest of 12 children—was his family's first college graduate and is the first Latino to be named as permanent CEO of CPS.

Martinez, who has been the superintendent of the San Antonio Independent School District since 2015, previously worked at CPS as its chief financial officer under former CEO Arne Duncan.

At the news conference, Lightfoot said Martinez was selected not only for his experience overseeing a large, urban, diverse public school system, but for the personal experience he shares with "our students and their families."

"It's that kind of authentic leadership that has made CPS so successful in driving student excellence over the years," Lightfoot said. "It helps ensure the student's unique needs are met, but showcases to them . . . that they, too, can get into leadership positions and thrive. It says quite clearly that you can be what you see."

Martinez's name was [first floated as a CEO finalist last month](#), according to [Chalkbeat Chicago](#). As San Antonio superintendent, Martinez opposed Texas Gov. Greg Abbott's executive order that barred mask or vaccination mandates by making both mandatory districtwide, Chalkbeat reported. The state's attorney general, Ken Paxton, is now fighting the mandate in court.

Pre-COVID, Martinez's "radical" push to [better integrate the economically divided district](#) gained national attention. The district is 91% Latino and just over 6% Black, but largely segregated by income. He moved to open new "schools of choice," including Montessori and dual language, with designated spots for neighboring prosperous school districts, according to the 74, an education nonprofit.

Lightfoot credited Martinez with increasing the San Antonio school district's "grade from an F to a B, an achievement that earned the district statewide recognition from the governor and the state board of education" where it became the fastest-improving large district in Texas in 2018, and had the highest achievement gains of any district in the state in 2019. He also helped improve the number of students who graduated high school and attended college. Those accomplishments have "rightly made him a national leader in education," the mayor said, and she pledged her "full support" to Martinez ahead of formal Chicago Board of Education approval.

He is scheduled to start the job Sept. 29. Lightfoot said his contract is not yet finalized.

Martinez fills the spot left vacant when [Janice Jackson resigned](#). She announced in May she'd leave her post leading the nation's third-largest school district after four years.

In June, Lightfoot installed [Jose Torres as interim CEO](#). He had been a regional superintendent for CPS before going on to head [Elgin School District U-46](#), the second-largest district in the state after Chicago.

Martinez, a father of two, first came to the city as an immigrant when he was 5 years old, "because Chicago embraced us as immigrants."

"I will make a commitment that I will be making sure that I listen to my teachers, that I listen to our parents," Martinez said, "with a priority on safety and stability" for the district as the COVID pandemic continues. "I know what's possible for our children. I know that our children can reach their full potential. All of us united, we can achieve that."

He said he has a "strong track record" of achievement for providing access to Black and Latino children, including helping expand programs for English language learners in San Antonio. The dual-language programs expanded from two out of 100 schools to more than 61.

While acknowledging he and the teachers union in San Antonio disagreed over school openings—the union there wanted to continue remote instruction, while Martinez worked to gradually open schools in person—Martinez pledged to be a uniter. He said he considers the head of the San Antonio union a “critical friend” whom he respects, and he said he hopes to find ways to collaborate with the Chicago Teachers Union.

Martinez also pointed out he’s worked his entire time in San Antonio under an elected school board. The first elected members of Chicago’s school board will be seated in 2025.

Ald. Gilbert Villegas, 36th, chair of the City Council's Latino Caucus, said choosing Martinez, who was born in Mexico, to lead an increasingly Latino district is a "step in the right direction, but a lot of work needs to be done to achieve parity, what we're trying to accomplish." For several months the caucus has been pressing the Lightfoot administration on a dearth of Latino leadership in top posts across the city.

Martinez takes over a district with about 340,000 students. The San Antonio school district—one of 17 school districts within the city's limits—has [about 48,000](#).

Martinez is a University of Illinois Chicago graduate who went on to receive an accounting degree from the U of I at Urbana-Champaign and an MBA from DePaul, according to his LinkedIn profile. He does not have teaching experience, a contrast to Jackson, who rose up in the ranks within CPS as an instructor and principal.

He joins a Chicago system that just [reopened last month for fully in-person education](#) for the first time more than 500 days and where the Chicago Teachers Union is still agitating for stronger COVID interventions. Chicago parents, educators and leaders have been intensely focused on the pressing task of safely reopening schools for mandatory, full-time in-person learning, as district and teachers union officials remain caught up in yet another round of contentious school reopening negotiations. As of Sept. 9, just over 3,000 CPS students and staff have been identified as a close contact of someone with COVID at school.

[Chalkbeat](#), a nonprofit news site covering educational change in public schools, contributed to this report.

The age at which Martinez immigrated to America has been corrected in this updated story.

---Daily Herald---09/16/2021

Boys soccer: South Elgin finds plenty to celebrate in win over Glenbard South

By Chris Walker, Daily Herald Correspondent



South Elgin's Nick Warwik heads the ball against Glenbard South in a boys soccer game in South Elgin on Wednesday, September 15, 2021. *John Starks | Staff Photographer*

Ethan Scholl told his mom that he was going to score a goal for her birthday on Wednesday night.

The **South Elgin** junior apparently isn't all talk no action as he scored his first high school varsity goal, creating an unforgettable memory for mom and son alike as the Storm jumped on visiting Glenbard South early and never let up in a 5-1 Upstate Eight win.

"It was my mom's birthday today so I told her I'm going to get her a goal," he said. "It feels great. It felt nice to be able to get the first one just two minutes in."

Scholl received the ball near the penalty area and just turned and shot it far post. It not only gave the Storm an early advantage but it seemed to really fire up his teammates and a nice crowd on Teacher Appreciation Night.

Before Glenbard South (6-4-1, 1-2-0) had time to try to recover from Scholl's score, Kendall Andrewin buried a shot to give the Storm a 2-0 lead.

"We are hit or miss," Raiders coach Adam Szyszko said. "We either come out and play well or we come out and make one, two, three mistakes and get jumped on. It's feast or famine."

South Elgin (2-5-3, 1-2-0) hasn't had much success in the win column this fall, but the Storm are rebuilding a bit and are continuing to make strides and have shown the ability to jump on teams from the get-go.

"We've been forced to throw a lot of new stuff at a young and inexperienced group," Storm coach Jerzy Skowron said. "We have nine seniors this year and maybe five of them actually played varsity last year."

Jumping on a team early and being able to increase that lead had the Storm looking like a team that's far better than their record would indicate.

"The kind of way we're sitting and organizing is proving to be very difficult for other teams to sit back and take," Skowron said. "And by the time they realize that the last few times we've been up. I think everything is starting to click for these guys."

Kyle Woertendyke's goal with a little more than five minutes left before halftime extended the Storm's lead to 3-0.

The Raiders cut into that lead with a goal from Hector Gonzalez with 18:57 remaining in the game, but about two minutes later Ryan Nguyen dribbled deep into the box and fired in the Storm's fourth goal of the night.

"It was an amazing start and when Ethan (Scholl) scored everyone was hyped and wanted to keep pushing and pushing," Nguyen said. "We couldn't get too comfortable. We didn't want to lose the lead. It was a great. The stands were packed. It was a fun night."

Ryan Doherty completed the scoring with 3:41 left as five different Storm players found the back of the net.

"This gives us a lot of confidence moving forward," Nguyen said. "I feel like we can take on any team right now. We played great."

---Daily Herald ---09/16/2021

Marmion, Batavia, South Elgin among those off to fast starts

By Mike Miazga, Daily Herald Correspondent



Jordan Jones intercepts a pass last week against Glenbard South for South Elgin, who is off to a 3-0 start this season. *Mark Black / Shaw Media Illinois*

Marmion football coach Dan Thorpe mentioned recently his team's schedule going forward is no walk in the park.

Well, the opening part of that walk started off well for the Cadets, who were 27-10 winners over historically tough Montini in Week 3 in Lombard.

The win pushed Marmion to 3-0 with St. Ignatius headed to Aurora Friday for the Chicago Catholic League/East Suburban Catholic Conference White opener for both squads.

"We now enter the CCL and our schedule is brutal with Montini, St. Iggy, Marist and Fenwick," Thorpe explained. "We will find out who we are as a football team."

Marmion has a strong recent history of playing well out of the gates. The 2019 team started 4-0, while the 2017 team was 5-0 and the 2016 team began 4-0.

Central stickers:

Burlington Central coach Brian Melvin had a lot of good things to say about the play of Nate Majewski, Alfredo Ortiz and Johnny Lawson's defensive exploits to start the season. "Nate, Alfredo and Johnny are flying all over the field making tackles for us," he said.

DuKane hotseat:

Batavia coach Dennis Piron will put the quality of play in the DuKane Conference up against anybody.

"The DuKane looks very good, maybe as good as any league in Illinois right now top to bottom," he said. "There are no easy weeks."

Heading into Week 4, two DuKane teams remain undefeated in Batavia and Glenbard North, while four teams have 2-1 records (Geneva, St. Charles North Wheaton North and Wheaton Warrenville South).

Telling from the opening week of DuKane action, the average margin of victory in the four conference tussles was 6.5 points with three of the four games being decided by a 7 or less (2 by a field goal or less). The only game that skewed that number higher was Glenbard North's 21-7 win over Geneva -- still by no means a blowout.

Friday has Batavia at Lake Park, St. Charles East at Glenbard North, WW South at Geneva and St. Charles North at Wheaton North.

More Batavia:

Piron pointed out nose tackle Fikayo Afolarin and offensive line captain Spencer Prats are part of the Bulldogs' success sauce even though they might show up in the box score.

"Fikayo and Spencer both show up big on film and get it done in the trenches," Piron said.

Center of attention:

Geneva coach Boone Thorgesen loves what Vikings center Kyle Anderson brings to the table.

"Most valuable position on the field and he is one of our smartest players," he said. "Kyle gets our guys up front blocking the right man. He is as dependable as they come."

Never underestimate:

Joey Woltz is one guy Crystal Lake South coach Rob Fontana said might get overlooked on the field by opponents--to their extreme detriment.

"Joey does a nice job for us as a high motor guy," he said. "You look at his size and think, 'no problem.' Then you see him play and he becomes a handful for people."

Double duty McCluskey:

Bartlett sophomore Blake McCluskey has been a dual threat for the Hawks this season at center and then on defense from his linebacker position.

"Blake has done a great job at center for us from the first day we pulled him up to varsity," Hawks coach Matt Erlenbaugh said. "He is also the next man in at linebacker and adds quality depth. What really is a huge value to the program is he never leaves the field in practice. He never takes a break. If he is not on the starting unit, he jumps in on the scout team because he knows that will give us the best look."

Racking up the yardage:

Streamwood coach Keith McMaster was effusive in his praise of the team's offensive line that includes Jojo Chamopoulos, Eric Gomez, Richard Rodriguez, Chris Marquez and Jace Wolf. That unit helped Streamwood pile up 900-plus yards in two games to go with 12 points.

"The offensive line is never seen on the stat sheet, but those guys have propelled the ground game to a new level," he said. "It all starts in the trenches and I would be remiss to not mention them."

Air mail:

Kaneland quarterback Troyer Carlson is well on his way to putting up massive passing numbers this season. Through three games, Carlson was 61 of 90 for 847 yards and 8 touchdowns. He's averaging 282 passing yards per game.

Favorite targets for Carlson thus far include Sam Gagne with 21 catches for 365 yards and 2 scores and Aric Johnson, who has 16 catches for 260 yards and 4 touchdowns.

Digging deeper:

South Elgin is 3-0 on the season (48-7 over St. Viator, 58-0 over East Aurora and 35-7 over Glenbard South) for several reasons.

The obvious is the Storm is averaging 7.1 rushing yards per carry on offense. The not so obvious stuff on the stat sheet? How about a massive plus-10 turnovers advantage (12-2), a defense that has 10 quarterback sacks (Omari Larson leads the way with 3.5) and is allowing 18.3 rushing yards per game.

The result is South Elgin and Glenbard East are the lone 3-0 teams remaining in the Upstate Eight Conference. South Elgin squares off against **Larkin** Friday.

---Aurora Beacon-News ---09/16/2021

‘This is not a secret’: Mason Montgomery enjoys breakout season as junior running back for unbeaten South Elgin. Like father, like son.

By Paul Johnson; Note: This story also ran at chicagotribune.com



South Elgin's Mason Montgomery (8) gets dragged down by Bartlett's Max Nordlund (37) during the fourth quarter of a game on Friday, April 23, 2021. (Brian O'Mahoney / The Beacon-News)

Junior running back Mason Montgomery didn't have much of a choice when it came down to his current position on the football field for **South Elgin.**

It's in his DNA.

Montgomery's father, Broc, was a running back at Eastern Illinois. And he instilled that passion quickly into Mason.

"All of my childhood I played running back because of my dad," Mason said. "I jumped straight into it. I've loved it ever since I was a little kid."

South Elgin (3-0, 2-0) is glad he did.

The Storm remained undefeated with a 35-7 win Friday night over Glenbard South, which hadn't allowed a point in its first two games. Montgomery ran for 195 yards and two touchdowns on only 11 carries.

In three games this season, Montgomery has run for 370 yards and five TDs on a mere 27 carries.

“He’s been explosive as a running back,” South Elgin coach Dragan Teonic said. “His biggest games came against our best opponents.”

Montgomery didn’t get a lot of chances to play in the spring as Teonic worked seniors like Davion Cherwin and Alex Noworol into the mix for their final high school games.

Montgomery played a big role in the Upstate Eight Conference clincher against Bartlett, however, which was a preview of things to come this fall.

“He really didn’t get the opportunity to show what he can do but we knew what he could do,” Teonic said. “This is not a secret. The thing that separates him from other athletes is not only is he gifted but he’s a hard worker and he’s extremely bright.

“He understands concepts and plays. You don’t have to tell him twice. He’s so coachable. He doesn’t have an attitude. He’s just a pleasure to have.”

Montgomery has teamed up this season with sophomore quarterback Jacob Sullivan, with two-year starter Ben Karpowicz deciding to focus on baseball for his senior year.

That thrust Sullivan into the spotlight. He has thrown for 265 yards and six TDs with no interceptions, running for 213 yards and four more TDs.

“I’ve never seen a sophomore quarterback do what he’s doing,” Montgomery said. “He takes hits like no one I’ve seen. He’s surpassed expectations.”

South Elgin had to adjust its schedule in Week 1 when Fenton bowed out due to COVID-19 protocols.

The Storm, who added St. Viator that week and impressed with a 48-7 win, followed that up with a 58-0 win over East Aurora before beating Glenbard South. They travel Friday to Memorial Field to face Larkin.

“We’ve played a harder schedule this year than usual,” Teonic said. “Glenbard South is really talented. That was the game of the year so far in our conference. That was a really good team and we played well against them.”

The beefed-up schedule has the Storm aiming high.

“I like testing ourselves,” Montgomery said. “I think we’ve learned we’re better than we think we are. Now, we think we can compete with all the Class 8A schools and we have a shot at a state title this year.”

Like his older brother Drake, a former standout basketball player for South Elgin, Montgomery also plays basketball. He knows which sport, however, is his calling.

He hopes to play college football someday — just like his father did.

“Football is my main sport,” Montgomery said. “My goal is to get the best offer I can.”