

Press Clippings 2/16/2022

The Examiner of Bartlett

Area school districts vary in reacting to court ruling ---

2/16/2022

By Seth Hancock; Note – this story also ran in The Examiner of Streamwood

While many school districts across the state have made face masks and COVID-19 shots optional following a Feb. 4 judicial circuit court ruling, it's been a mixed bag for area schools.

Judge Raylene DeWitte Grischow in Sangamon County issued a temporary restraining order (TRO) on school districts forcing students to wear masks, quarantine and other measures implemented through executive fiat. The case included families from over 140 districts across the state.

In her ruling, Grischow called the “unilateral unchecked exercise” of power by Gov. JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Public Health and other bureaucracies a “type of evil” that is “exactly what the law was intended to constrain.”

Although the TRO applies to the families involved in the case, Grischow wrote that students have “individual due process rights” which all students have. The state is appealing the decision.

The lawsuit did include families from **School District U-46**, but days after the TRO was issued Superintendent Tony Sanders wrote in a message that the mandates were still on. He wrote that U-46 “reached out to those students who are included in the lawsuit,” but “all other students” will have to submit to district dictates.

Superintendent David Hill in School District 93, which did not have any families in the lawsuit, released a similar statement that the mandates were still in effect after the TRO, but a Board of Education discussion at its Thursday, Feb. 10 meeting led to a change.

This week, D93 students will have an option of wearing a mask, Hill wrote. He stated masks are still required on the bus because of federal dictates.

Contact tracing will continue and quarantine recommended, but not required. Noting the division of opinions on the matter, Hill asked people to respect the choices of others and wrote: “We will not tolerate disrespectful behavior of any kind.”

At the board meeting, there was a packed audience and 18 public comments were made including parents, students and teachers.

All were against forced masking except one father who said he has an immunocompromised child and said “you have to consider that one child.” Another said he understood where he was coming from as a father of a child with cancer but said you can’t remove all risk for your children as he supported ending the mandates.

In contrast, the U-46 board did not discuss the mandates despite a packed audience at its Monday, Feb. 7 meeting. There were nine comments made opposing the mandates.

Kim Kowall, a teacher at Illinois Park Early Learning Center in Elgin, said the district has ignored the religious objections to masks the jabs of her and other staff, and “the terrible discrimination that I, and many other staff members, have felt throughout this process is very real and completely unnecessary. We need to be recognized and not villainized.”

A parent noted a video on social media showing a middle school student in the district being physically locked in a room by a U-46 staff member for not wearing a mask. On Friday, Feb. 11, a large group of students walked out and gathered for a protest at Bartlett’s Eastview Middle School. Similar walkouts have occurred at Glenbard North High School in District 87.

The Examiner of Bartlett

U-46 approves expenses, debt refinancing plan --- 2/16/2022

By Seth Hancock; Note – this story also ran in The Examiner of South Elgin and in The Examiner of Streamwood

The Board of Education in **School District U-46** approved of a debt refinancing plan as well as \$3.5 million in expenditure items at its Jan. 24 meeting.

The votes were 6-0, board member Eva Porter was absent.

The refinancing included two resolutions issuing general obligation (GO) bonds in not-to-exceed amounts of \$96 million and \$44.8 million with the proceeds going to two 2015 GO bonds. Robert Lewis, with PMA Securities, said the move will save the district \$23.6 million, slightly lower than earlier estimates from December 2021 of \$25.8 million.

Presented and approved that evening was \$212,875, to be paid by the nation’s taxpayers through grant funds, with Virtuoso Education Consulting (VEC) for a disproportionality consultant.

“The district needs ongoing assistance from an expert in disproportionality,” the proposal stated. “The continued goal is for staff to understand and address academic and behavioral challenges prior to consideration for special education services. As a result of the root cause analysis completed during the 2020-2021 school year, select schools will strategically implement processes around multi-tiered systems of support practices and proactive social-emotional behavior, the two primary focus areas. VEC will provide professional development,

onsite coaching, consultation, and integrate concepts in Canvas, our district’s professional learning platform.”

Education fund items approved included \$1.5 million for network switches from Sentinel Technologies, \$209,808 to the Crisis Prevention Institute for training and materials and \$72,500 for community engagement, surveys and communications with Creative Entourage, LLC.

Operations and maintenance fund items included \$1.2 million for lintel and window replacement at Elgin’s Ellis Middle School with Northwest Contractors, Inc., and a three-year agreement with Cintas, Inc. for annual fire alarm inspections and testing costing \$67,988.

Through grant funds, \$144,750 will be spent for a consultant through Gorbold Behavioral Consulting, a supplement to an \$85,000 contract approved last August.

Also approved was \$10.8 million in itemized bills.

Chicago Tribune/The Courier-News South Elgin’s Ella Winterhalder hasn’t shot well in Larkin’s gym. Her solution? ‘I put on different socks – something to get myself going.’ --- 2/15/2022 By Paul Johnson for the Aurora Beacon-News



South Elgin's Ella Winterhalder (10) tries to slap the ball away from Elgin's Izabella Vidallo (00) during a Class 4A Larkin Regional semifinal game in Elgin on Tuesday, Feb. 15, 2022. (H. Rick Bamman / The Beacon-News)

For some reason, **South Elgin’s** Ella Winterhalder does not like shooting in Larkin’s gym.

The Royals' rims have been nothing but trouble for Winterhalder, who is the Storm's all-time leader in 3-pointers made, regardless of gender,

"I have no idea why," she said. "I've struggled the last four years I've played here.

"I changed up my ritual. I put on different socks — something to try to get myself going."

The 5-foot-5 senior guard just may have exorcised that demon Tuesday night.



South Elgin's Ella Winterhalder (10) releases a 3-point shot against Elgin during a Class 4A Larkin Regional semifinal game in Elgin on Tuesday, Feb. 15, 2022. (H. Rick Bamman / The Beacon-News)

Winterhalder hit three 3-pointers in the first quarter to spark South Elgin to a 59-17 victory over Elgin in a Class 4A Larkin Regional semifinal.

South Elgin (25-5) will face Jacobs at 7 p.m. Thursday for the regional title. Jacobs defeated Larkin 42-35 in the other semifinal.

"Defense turns into offense, and I think that really helped," Winterhalder said. "Our press, my team getting me the ball in the open court, it just kind of helped me get my shooting going."

Winterhalder got going indeed, scoring a game-high 23 points for the Storm.

"She just shoots with such confidence," South Elgin coach Dan Mandernack said of Winterhalder. "If she misses, that just means the next one is going in."

A big key, as Winterhalder referenced, was turning defense into offense.

The stifling defense of Caroline Croft and Caitlyn Tolentino at the top of the press helped the Storm to a 24-2 lead, and the game was effectively over for Elgin (4-27).

"We generate a lot of points off our press and our pressure, half-court defense," Mandernack said. "Caroline and Caitlyn lead our press. We call them hyenas."

“They just never get tired. They’re so fast. They’re in the passing lanes. They set up everything.”

Even with the lopsided final score, Winterhalder was still pleased with how the Storm went about building that lead.

“I feel like we always come out with the first punch,” Winterhalder said. “We always have high intensity. It’s a game of runs, but I feel like our strength is coming out strong, and that’s what we did.”



South Elgin's Ariana Lopez (13) drives against Elgin's Izabella Vidallo (00) during a Class 4A Larkin Regional semifinal game in Elgin on Tuesday, Feb. 15, 2022. (H. Rick Bamman / The Beacon-News)

Croft added 11 points for South Elgin and Raina Yang had 10.

While Croft recently committed to NCAA Division III Dallas to continue her career, Winterhalder will not play in college, instead deciding to focus on majoring in forensic science.

Both Croft and Winterhalder are in their fourth varsity seasons. And that gives these games even more meaning for Winterhalder.

“I don’t think it’s quite hit yet, but I think it will start getting emotional the last couple games,” she said. “I’m just playing every game like it’s my last. Hopefully, we have another game and we’ll see how far we can go.”

South Elgin beat Jacobs 54-34 in the season opener, but Mandernack is making sure his team doesn’t get too far ahead of things.

“It will be a war on Thursday,” Mandernack said. “The environment will be different. It’s going to be more people, more intensity.”



Elgin's Madison King (41) passes against South Elgin's Caitlyn Tolentino (1) during a Class 4A Larkin Regional semifinal game in Elgin on Tuesday, Feb. 15, 2022. (H. Rick Bamman / The Beacon-News)

Winterhalder remembered winning a regional title as a freshman with a double-overtime victory over Barrington at Elgin.

“We weren’t really aware of how big that was,” Winterhalder said.

The following season, the Storm lost in the regional semifinals to Cary-Grove, while last season’s state series was canceled by the Illinois High School Association due to the pandemic.

Led by Winterhalder, the Storm are not taking lightly the opportunity to bring home some more hardware Thursday night.

“We’re all just eager to get that win and go out strong,” Winterhalder said.

The Examiner of Bartlett

Bartlett tops Sabres for first of three wins in week ---

2/16/2022

By Seth Hancock

The **Bartlett** girls’ basketball team ran away early and then held on for a 47-32 win over **Streamwood** in Upstate Eight Conference play on Monday, Feb. 7 at Streamwood’s “Rosner Arena.”

The Hawks defense stepped up to hold Streamwood to just three points in the first half, including a shutout in the second quarter. Bartlett led 22-3 at halftime.

Streamwood didn’t go away quietly opening the second half on a 12-5 run to pull to 27-15 midway through the third quarter. The hosts won the second half 29-25, but Bartlett was able to maintain a double-digit lead over the final two frames. “With a young team, that’s something you battle where you play three good quarters, one bad quarter,” said Bartlett coach Tanner Gardon. “We’re still trying to put four quarters together. It wasn’t our best basketball, but whenever you come out with a win you can’t be mad as a coach.”

Laney Stark and Amadea Montijo led the Hawks on the night with eight and seven points respectively in the first half to help build the commanding lead. Stark finished with 19 points and Montijo 15 as the pair hit some key baskets in the second half to stop Streamwood's momentum.

"They both do a really good job helping us break the press and stuff like that," Gardon said. "They're both sophomores, which is awesome. They're still learning the game, but the growth this year has been phenomenal and I'm proud of both of them."

Samantha Blanchard, a junior, scored five points.

Bartlett went on to end the regular season with a 38-31 UEC win over Glenbard South on Wednesday, Feb. 9 at Bartlett to finish 8-10 in the conference.

In the Hoffman Estates Regional quarterfinal, the No. 15 Hawks opened the postseason with a 36-26 win over No. 17 Hoffman Estates on Saturday, Feb. 12 at Bartlett. The Hawks, now 10-20 overall, advance to play No. 2 Wheaton North.

The Examiner of Streamwood

Battling Sabres done in by very 'cold' first half --- 2/16/2022

By Seth Hancock

The **Streamwood** girls' basketball team went down fighting on senior night and George Rosner's final home game in his over four decades varsity coaching career.

The Sabres were held to just three points in the first half, including being shutout in the second quarter, and faced a 19-point deficit against **Bartlett** in Upstate Eight Conference play. The host's, however, never stopped in rallying to as close as 10 points in the second half in an eventual 47-32 loss on Monday, Feb. 7 at "Rosner Arena."

Rosner sensed the team may come out cold after not having a good warm up, but he said he was proud of the way his team kept fighting.

"The shots just weren't falling, and it was just a bad half, one of the worst halves we've played all season," said Rosner. "To Bartlett's credit, they played great defense."

Rosner added: "I just saw it coming and I tried to do what I could. I was very happy with the way they came back and made it respectable. It's a senior night that they won't feel too bad about."

Trailing 22-3 at the break, the Sabres won the second half 29-25. Senior Nicole Barcenas scored all seven of her points in the second half and she, senior Sayuri Ishikawa (seven points) and freshman Angelina Sagadraca (five points) all hit big three-pointers. Senior

Sariah Dixon scored six points and sophomore Jamia Gatlin five. Streamwood has four seniors, including Sarah-Jo Noworyta.

It was a somewhat surreal game for Rosner as his final game coaching on that court, but he's had former players all the way back to his grade school coaching days, friends and family coming to games including the last one to support him.

"I have a lot of emotions going through me right now," Rosner said. "I realize I will never coach on this court again. It's kind of hard to truly accept it. I'm ok with it, and I'm handling it the best I can."

Streamwood, which finished the regular season 3-26 overall and 2-16 in the UEC, went on to drop a 39-36 conference game at Larkin on Wednesday, Feb. 9.

The Sabres, seeded seventh, open the postseason against top-seeded regional host Barrington.