

Press Clippings 2/25/2022

Chicago Tribune/The Courier-News Elgin police review procedures after schools, parents question shooting response --- 2/24/2022

By Gloria Casas



Elgin police investigated a shooting in the 100 block of North Gifford Street Tuesday. (Gloria Casas / The Courier-News)

Laurissa Dziejdzic said her 13-year-old son got off the school bus Tuesday near North Gifford Street to a chaotic scene with dozens of police officers, a SWAT vehicle, and his route home cordoned off.

An officer stopped him as he approached the 100 block of North Gifford Street where Elgin Police were investigating a shooting that left an 18-year-old man injured. Dziejdzic's son was less than a block away from the home where shots rang out and could hear and see all the action hours after the initial call.

Dziejdzic's family moved from Chicago seven months ago. Gunfire reports aren't shocking to her, she said. But, her son, a Larsen Elementary School student, was alarmed when he got off the bus and started walking home. "He was pretty shocked because it's so quiet out here. He said, 'I walked right up on it,'" she said.

Their backyard faces the property where the shooting occurred, Dziedzic said. She heard sirens and an ambulance but thought there was an accident. If she'd been notified by the school or the police about the shooting, she would've picked her son up from the bus stop, she said.

The experience left Dziedzic questioning why police didn't set up a larger perimeter and how the department can have better communication between parents, schools, and EPD during emergency situations like the one Tuesday. "Hopefully, there's a positive change and outcome that comes from this," she said.

EPD has an active, open investigation into the shooting and didn't provide further details about the incident.

The 911 emergency call came in at 2:26 p.m. about shots fired. Patrol officers were immediately at the scene because officers were in the area since it was close to school dismissals, said Sgt. Heather Lencioni, the department's spokesperson.

Officers didn't have much information when they arrived at North Gifford Street and started searching the area, Lencioni said. "The perimeter was set up as early as possible with the limited information we had as the situation was unfolding," she said.

EPD contacted **School District U-46** and Elgin Academy, Lencioni said. Two Catholic schools, St. Edward Catholic Preparatory Academy, formerly St. Joseph School, is located about three blocks east of the shooting and St. Mary School, located three blocks south, weren't contacted about the incident, she said. Police reached out to administrators at both schools late Tuesday afternoon, she said.

"We have to make notification to the schools when there is an incident in the immediate area," she said. Schools make their own determination on what kind of lockdown they want, soft or hard, Lencioni said. Every school has its own protocols, the police department doesn't dictate those regulations, she said.

The Catholic schools weren't notified because both were located beyond the perimeter, Lencioni said. Additionally, the situation didn't involve a search for a suspect within that area, she said. Witnesses reported seeing subjects on foot heading north, toward the area where Elgin Academy is located, she said.

"We felt we had whatever we were looking for contained. We found that out pretty early, which is why we locked things down as quickly as we did," Lencioni said. Officers were on hand directing traffic, school children, and pedestrians away from North Gifford Street while detectives investigated the scene, Lencioni said.

EPD met with Catholic school officials Wednesday to discuss any concerns about how the situation was handled. The department also addressed concerns on social media posts.

"We are always open to having conversations with school administrators in order to make schools as safe as possible, but the decision to lock down a school (and the level of lockdown) ultimately will have to be made by the school itself barring any obvious scenarios, such as an active shooter," Lencioni said.

EPD wants parents and their children to feel safe, Lencioni said. The incident is a good opportunity to double-check procedures now rather than when something is happening in real-time, she said.

Daily Herald

U-46 TalentFest returns after pandemic hiatus --- 2/25/2022

By Rick West



Seniors Melanie Feliciano, left, and Katie Cordon sing "If I Ain't Got You" by Alicia Keys at the Streamwood High School Talent Fest Feb. 11. Feliciano and Cordon's performance was chosen as a finalist and will compete in the U-46 TalentFest at the Hemmens on March 8. *Courtesy of John Konstantaras*

After a year's hiatus due to the pandemic, **Elgin Area School District U-46** is bringing back TalentFest.



Senior Sarika Nalla performs an Indian dance to "Adivo Alladivo" by Annamayya Keerthana at the Streamwood High School Talent Fest Feb. 11. Nalla will compete in the U-46 TalentFest March 8. - Courtesy of John Konstantaras

The performing arts competition will take place at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 8, at the Hemmens Cultural Center, 45 Symphony Way, Elgin. Tickets are \$5 at the door or can be purchased at hemmens.org.

The TalentFest is a talent competition featuring two acts from each of the five District U-46 high schools. The two acts are chosen by judges or audience votes from the high schools' talent shows.

"We are especially excited to feature Tony Sanders, superintendent of District U-46, as our emcee this year," said Jeff Grosser, coordinator of TalentFest.



Junior Angel Salas places first during the Bartlett High School Talent Show with his vocal and acoustic rendition of "Adelante" by Payarillo on Feb. 16. Salas will go on to compete at TalentFest on March 8. - Courtesy of Mark Black

At TalentFest, all 10 acts perform in the first part. At intermission, each member of the audience votes for their favorite act. The five acts receiving the most audience votes perform again, this time also evaluated by five preselected judges. Those judges choose the first, second and third place winners. The winners receive a cash prize and a plaque. The school that has the most audience votes combined between its two acts receives the traveling TalentFest Trophy.



Senior Sophie Leo places second in the Bartlett High School Talent Show with a performance of her original song "Opacity" on Feb. 16. She will compete at TalentFest on March 8. - Courtesy of Mark Black

"The TalentFest began in 2010 during a brainstorming session at a Hemmens Advisory Board meeting," Grosser said. "We missed last year because of COVID, so this year is our 11th program."

See more on Facebook at [U-46 TalentFest](#).

Daily Herald

Girls' Basketball: Barrington holds off South Elgin for sectional crown --- 2/24/2022

By Dick Quagliano



Barrington's Molly O'Riordan, left, and Sophie Swanson hug as they celebrate their Class 4A DeKalb sectional championship after defeating South Elgin Thursday. *Paul Valade | Staff Photographer*

Barrington's slice of the pie was bigger than **South Elgin's** Thursday in the Class 4A girls' basketball sectional final at DeKalb.

South Elgin had a nice size piece in the first half. But it was Barrington that came away with all the cream as the Fillies survived with a 58-51 win.

"I am super proud of the girls," Barrington coach Babbi Barreiro said. "We were so tight to start the first quarter. We were a little out of rhythm. But we were able to battle back. This has been a goal of this team since the start of the season."

Barrington (28-5) will meet St. Charles East in Monday's supersectional at South Elgin at 7 p.m.

South Elgin (27-6), which lost to Barrington at Christmas, got off to a quick start as the Storm fired out to a 7-0 lead. South Elgin was able to keep Barrington at bay defensively as well, as the Fillies opened the game missing their first 9 shots and turning the ball over twice.

Barrington finally found its mark and the Fillies closed to 12-9 on a rebound basket by Sophie Swanson at the first quarter buzzer.

Led by Ella Winterhalder, the Storm went on a 7-2 run to open the second quarter as South Elgin built a 19-11 advantage.

Barrington's Molly O'Riordan started going outside for the Fillies. The 6-foot-2 sophomore, drilled a 3-pointer. She then used her height advantage under the basket for a sweet reverse layup that tied the game at 21-21.

Winterhalder's 3-pointer kept the Storm ahead and enabled them to take a 24-23 lead at the half.

It was Barrington's turn to get off to a strong start to a half. The Fillies scored 12 unanswered points to start the second half.

They also held South Elgin without a basket until as the Storm missed their first 11 shots and turned the ball over three times.

South Elgin, couldn't quite match the Fillies' first-half comeback as the Storm scored with just 30 seconds left in the quarter on a 3-pointer by Zoie Lewis. O'Riordan scored just before the buzzer as the Fillies led 37-27.

Swanson then put the game away with a pair of 3-pointers to spark an 8-3 run to open the final quarter and give Barrington a 45-30 lead with 5:44 to play.

It was South Elgin's turn at a comeback. The Storm battled back to close to 47-45 with 1:46 left. But a layup and 8 free throws by Swanson along with a free throw by Allison Funk were enough as Barrington hung on for the win.

"We really came together as a team," said Swanson, who had 15 of her 18 points in the fourth quarter. "We knew coming into the second half we had to play our game."

O'Riordan had 16 points for Barrington while Funk had 13 points. South Elgin was led by Raina Yang, who had 14 points. Lewis had 10 points while Winterhalder and Caroline Croft each had 8 points.

"Our girls absolutely battled their hearts out," South Elgin coach Dan Mandernack said. "They will remember for the rest of the lives of how hard they fought."