



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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U-46 Student Musicians to be Honored

Board's 'Accent on Achievement' program to recognize students and staff member

ELGIN - Twelve U-46 high school students will be recognized by the Board of Education Monday with an "Accent on Achievement" for their outstanding achievements as musicians.

Ten of the students participated in the Illinois Music Education Association (ILMEA) competitive audition process to be named All-State Musicians, the highest musical achievement for high schoolers in Illinois. Selected students performed at the ILMEA's annual music education conference in Peoria in late January.

Two of the students were selected to play in the pit orchestra of the All-State Production of "Shrek the Musical" on the campus of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in early January. The students submitted audition recordings to the Illinois High School Theatre Festival and were selected from hundreds of submissions from around the state.

"We are proud of the strength of our U-46 music programs and the dedication of our music teachers to help our students be the best they can be," said Jaimie Giraldo, U-46 Coordinator of Fine Arts. "These accomplishments by our exceptional student musicians speak volumes of their commitment to excellence and pride in their musical growth."

In addition, Larsen Middle School math teacher Hector J. Hernandez Jr. will be honored with an Accent for being selected to head the crew of the All-State Production. Hernandez co-leads the Larsen drama club and is the executive director for the 2024 Illinois High School Theatre Festival.



The Board of Education will recognize the following students with “Accent on Achievement” certificates at 7 p.m. Monday, March 6, in room 140 at the Educational Services Center. The U-46 Board of Education meeting will also be streamed live on the District’s [YouTube channel](#)

All State Musicians - Bartlett High School

Eric Fox, Senior, Honors Chorus, Tenor I
Ethan Wankel, Junior, All-State Chorus, Bass I
Zoey Helle-Kuczynski, Junior, Future Music Educators Symposium

All State Musicians - Elgin High School

Madeline Conter, Senior, Honors Chorus, Alto I
Stephanie Skrabacz, Senior, All-State Band, Bb Clarinet
Diego Gomez, Junior, Future Music Educators Symposium

All State Musicians - Larkin High School

Madelyn Dobbeck, Senior, Honors Band, Trumpet

All State Musicians - South Elgin High School

Alejandro Diaz, Senior, Honors Chorus, Tenor I
Haley Leuze, Senior, All-State Chorus, Tenor I
Taylor Picha, Senior, Honors Band, Flute

All-State Production - Bartlett High School

Sarah Walser, Junior, Pit Orchestra, Bass

All-State Production - Streamwood High School

Sarah Ballenger, Sophomore, Pit Orchestra, Violin

The Board will also recognize the vital role social workers play in schools as part of National School Social Work Week, March 5-11, 2023. Mary Abbott, lead school social worker in U-46, will accept the “Accent on Achievement” certificate on behalf of the District’s social workers.

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Dr. Suzanne Johnson, Interim Superintendent

School District U-46

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School District U-46 serves families in 11 communities: Bartlett, Elgin, Hanover Park, South Elgin, Streamwood and Wayne, as well as portions of Carol Stream, Hoffman Estates, St. Charles, Schaumburg, and West Chicago. In total, the District encompasses 90 square miles within the Fox River Valley, approximately 45 minutes west of downtown Chicago, and includes communities within Cook, DuPage and Kane counties. More than 35,000 preschoolers through 12th graders attend the 57 District schools and programs. To learn more, visit the U-46 [website](#), or like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#).