

Press Clippings - 12/19/2024

- Daily Herald -

‘Long overdue’: Plans revealed for Larkin High School’s new \$11.8 million stadium

By: Rick West

Date: December 19, 2024



This week, Elgin Area School District U-46 administrators presented a plan to build a new \$11.8 million sports stadium at Larkin High School in Elgin.

Larkin High School may finally be able to host Friday night lights action on its own Elgin campus.

Elgin Area School District U-46 school board members on Monday reviewed the plan to build a new \$11.8 million sports stadium that would be ready to host games in 2026.

“After 62 years, Larkin High School will soon have its own dedicated athletic complex, a long overdue transformation that underscores the district’s commitment to equity and excellence,” Deputy Superintendent of Operations Ann Williams said.

Larkin High School was built in 1962 on the former farm of Cyrus H. Larkin, after whom the school is named. For decades they’ve used Elgin High School’s Memorial Field, located about four miles away, as its home stadium.



Elgin Area School District U-46 officials expect a new stadium at Larkin High School host sporting events in the

2026-27 school year.

The new complex will feature a modern stadium with a turf field for football, soccer and other sports in addition to a high-performance track, updated locker rooms, lighting, a press box, concessions and enhanced spectator amenities.

The proposed schedule for the \$11,865,700.00 project calls for design work to start in January 2025 with a groundbreaking in November 2025. The schedule allows time for the project to move through Elgin's zoning and approval process.

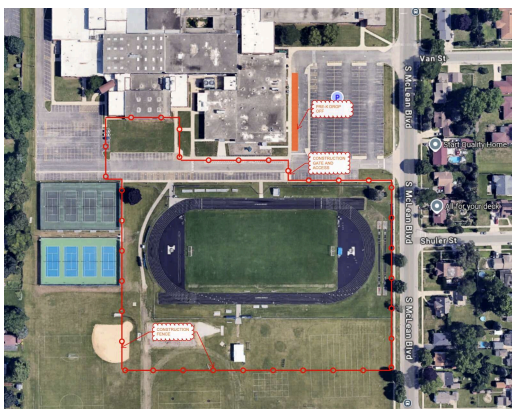
The athletic complex is expected to be substantially completed for the 2026-27 athletic season.

Board Vice President Kate Thommes said she wanted to put on her "parent hat" talk about how important the project will be for Larkin students while praising Elgin High School for sharing the stadium on their campus.

"It's gonna be huge for these kids to be able to walk into their own stadium," she said. "Elgin's been fantastic. Elgin shared with us, even when we win the jug game and they lose. They've been fantastic."

Larkin Principal Krystal Bush said the stadium will help ensure equity for all athletic programs across the district.

"Having a dedicated stadium will not only enhance the athletic experience for our students but also foster a sense of pride and community for Larkin High School," she said.



For decades, Larkin High School has played its home football and soccer games four miles away at Memorial Stadium at Elgin High School. A new on-campus stadium at Larkin could be ready for the 2026-27 school year.

The district consulted with civil engineers about concerns voiced on social media regarding the proposed east-west orientation of the field.

"I think it's important to note that there are very successful programs that also have east-west orientations," Williams said, citing Glenbard West, Mount Carmel and Providence Catholic

high schools as examples.

The athletic complex was part of a package of capital projects presented to the board Monday, including \$9.5 million in renovations to Bartlett High School to modernize and enhance the school's Educational Pathways. Pathways are part of the district's initiative to provide high school students with a focused, career-aligned educational experience that prepares them for postsecondary success.

Other projects scheduled throughout the district include installing new heat pumps, generators, fire suppression systems, roofing, domestic water lines, and paving. Pool renovations also are planned for South Elgin High School. All projects are anticipated to begin in the summer of 2025.

U-46 serves families in 11 communities, including Bartlett, Elgin, Hanover Park, South Elgin, Streamwood and Wayne, as well as portions of Carol Stream, Hoffman Estates, St. Charles, Schaumburg and West Chicago.

- The Examiner -

Expense items receive nod from U-46 board

By: Seth Hancock

Date: December 18, 2024

The Board of Education in School District U-46 unanimously approved, with 7-0 votes, of two expenditure items totaling \$122,434, both operations and maintenance fund items, that were presented and approved that evening on Monday, Nov. 18.

Included was \$79,779 with Apex Landscaping and Mark 1 Landscape for snow removal services. This is on top of \$128,926 with TNT Landscaping Construction and Winter Services already approved for snow removal services.

The board previously was expected to vote on a snow removal contract in October with TNT, Winter Services and KCG Management totaling \$141,064, but KCG was later removed from consideration. The total with TNT, Winter Services, Apex and Mark 1 is \$208,706.

“KCG Management, Inc. was one of three contractors providing snow removal services in four of the ten district regions from 2019 through September 2024,” the proposal stated. “Recently, KCG Management was purchased in its entirety by another corporation. Additionally, service levels resulted in KCG Management being eliminated as an approved vendor for the district. The other providers, TNT Landscaping Construction Inc. and Winters Services LLC were recommended for contract extensions during the November 4, 2024, meeting of the Board of Education.”

The proposal added: “As required by law, the services previously provided by KCG

Management Inc were publicly bid on November 6, 2024. Bids submissions ranged from \$36,100.00 to \$85,008.45. Apex Landscaping, Inc. and Mark 1 Landscape were identified as the lowest responsible bidders.”

Apex and Mark 1 will each cover two regions previously serviced by KCG. The costs are estimates based on assumptions of five snowfalls of five or less inches, three of five to nine inches and one of more than nine inches.

Also approved was a \$42,655 proposal with Weaver Consultants Group for an emergency abatement and domestic pipe repair at Ellis Middle School.

“Plant Operations recently discovered a leak in the domestic water line located in the boiler room at Ellis Middle School,” the proposal stated. “Upon further investigation, it was found that the plumbing lines beneath the leak are insulated with asbestoscontaining material.”

The district worked with Weaver, an environmental consultant, to “establish a comprehensive plan to address the issue” which includes “the abatement of approximately 200 linear feet of asbestos insulation; next, the repair of the domestic water line by the District’s maintenance staff; and finally, the re-insulation of all affected plumbing lines once the leak has been fixed.”

- The Examiner -

Incumbents uncontested for three U-46 board posts

By: Seth Hancock
Date: December 18, 2024

Three open seats on the School District U-46 Board of Education will go uncontested with the incumbents the only ones to file by the deadline on Monday, Nov. 18.

Dawn Martin, Veronica Noland and Melissa Owens all filed for reelection for the three seats on the seven-member board in the April 1, 2025 consolidated election.

Noland is seeking her fourth term on the board, first being elected in 2013. Owens, the current board president, was elected in 2017 and is seeking her third term, and Martin is seeking her second term after first being elected in 2021.

“The Board of Education is responsible for determining the policies which guide the operation of School District U-46,” the U-46 website states. “State law holds school boards responsible for policies in these areas: approval of courses of study and textbooks, adoption of an annual budget, construction, furnishing and maintenance of facilities, employment and evaluation of the superintendent.”

The website added: “Elected members serve four-year terms and are not paid for their services. To be eligible to serve, a school board member must meet the following requirements on the

date of election: a citizen of the United States, at least 18 years old, a registered voter, a resident of the State of Illinois, and a resident of School District U-46 for at least one year immediately preceding the election. All U-46 Board members have completed the Open Meetings Act Training as required under the Illinois School Code, (5 ILS 120/1.06) and the Professional Development Leadership Training.”

- The Examiner -

Expense and bill items approved by U-46 board

By: Seth Hancock

Date: December 18, 2024

The Board of Education in School District U-46 unanimously approved, 6-0 vote, of \$1.7 million in expenditure proposals under its consent agenda at its Monday, Nov. 18 meeting.

The largest item was \$638,627, paid through the education fund, with ProvenIT for a five-year lease of copiers.

“The district must replace its copiers with energy-efficient models,” the proposal stated. “To facilitate the secure transmission of confidential medical information, every nurse’s office in the district requires an energyefficient multifunction desktop printer to replace the outdated models currently in use.... The district will lease 110 black-and-white copiers, 40 color copiers, 199 Paper Cut licenses for secure printing, 6 card readers, and 57 multifunctional desktop printers.”

Costing \$382,082 (operations and maintenance fund) with Filter King, the board approved a three-year agreement for annual HVAC filter replacement. The district uses more than 14,000 filters a year, according to the proposal.

A contract with SkillsUSA, costing \$200,423 (education fund), was approved to provide workforce preparedness.

“By partnering with SkillsUSA, School District U-46 students will have greater access to essential resources and hands-on experiences that build critical workforce skills and enhance employability,” the proposal states. “This collaboration strengthens U-46’s leadership in career and technical education while attracting support from state representatives and other key stakeholders.”

Costing \$150,000 (education fund), a contract renewal with 5Star Interpreting was approved to outsource sign language interpretation services.

An approved contract renewal with TNT Landscape Construction, Inc. and Winter Services LLC costs \$128,926 (operations and maintenance fund) for snow removal.

“Each contractor is responsible for managing snow removal, including plowing parking lots, asphalt playgrounds, large sidewalks, building entrances, and loading dock areas,” the proposal stated. “The District’s Grounds Department oversees snow and ice management for the remaining district properties.”

The board approved of \$126,225 (school safety funds) to purchase 450 replacement two-way radios from Alpha Prime Communications, a contract renewal with EdPuzzle costing \$77,571 (education fund) for its “webbased interactive video and formative assessment tool,” the proposal stated, and an \$8,750 (education fund) contract renewal with Universal Music Production which provides “a resource of music and sound effects to the Beacon Academy students, ensuring they remain copyright compliant,” the proposal stated.

Also approved by a 6-0 vote was \$34.8 million in itemized bills.

- Chicago Tribune -

Taking over as South Elgin’s point guard, Quentin Albert keeps dialogue going with his coach. ‘It’s everything.’

By: Paul Johnson

Date: December 18, 2024



South Elgin’s Quentin Albert (1) controls a steal from Elgin’s Coreyon Johnson (5) in the second quarter of an Upstate Eight Conference game in South Elgin on Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2024.

Senior point guard Quentin Albert is one of several South Elgin players getting his first chance this season at serious varsity minutes.

Albert has a bigger workload than many of his teammates, however. As the navigator of the offense for new coach Ryan Storm, he’s involved in far more than the average starter.

“It’s everything,” Storm said of developing communication with Albert. “He and I have probably had more dialogue than maybe one other player over the past four or five months.

“That position, for what we’re trying to do from an offensive perspective, is very, very

important.”

Albert set the tone early Tuesday night for the host Storm in a 61-15 Upstate Eight Conference win over Elgin. He had a steal and a pair of layups in a game-opening 10-0 run that got things going.

Albert finished with a game-high 12 points on 6-for-6 shooting with five steals for South Elgin (3-7, 2-1). Drew Harms added 10 points, while Aman Chiluka and Massimo Nalbono each scored nine.

Jeremiah Seward paced Elgin (1-10, 0-3) with seven points.

Albert knows he’s filling a big role in his first season as a regular, but he’s ready for it.



South Elgin’s Quentin Albert (1) and Elgin’s TJ Singson (0) battle for a rebound in the third quarter of an Upstate Eight Conference game in South Elgin on Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2024.

“I have a great relationship with my team, so I feel like the chemistry is there,” he said. “I’m taking on a new role this year. It’s been challenging, especially at the beginning of the season, trying to figure out where my role is and where my teammates’ roles are, where their strengths are.

“It’s very important. I have to slow the game down and kind of get my guys going. I think (Tuesday) we did a very good job of that and you saw the end result.”

Albert has some familiarity with Storm, who was his sophomore coach.

That gives Storm the confidence to trust Albert with helping install the offensive philosophy he wants to implement, which involves a lot of reversals and getting the ball moving side to side.

“It’s so much more of getting us organized and getting us into our actions,” Storm said. “He is the catalyst of doing that.”



South Elgin's Drew Harms (5) drives past Elgin's Nic Avina (23) for a basket in the first quarter of an Upstate Eight Conference game in South Elgin on Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2024.

Albert is thankful to already have a previous relationship with Storm heading into such a pivotal season.

"It's really nice to have a coach that I'm comfortable with," Albert said. "Our team was pretty deep last year, so I was just going hard in practice every day.

"Now, I kind of finally get my shot, and it's really nice to get out there and play with my guys."

All of Albert's baskets were layups Tuesday, including two off of his own steals. That helped set the tone and take Elgin out of the game early.

"When you give the other team confidence, it just snowballs," Elgin coach Kurt Kerrigan said. "It's the same thing we preach to our guys. We're a young group, so maybe the sense of urgency just isn't there. We have to find it.



South Elgin's Quentin Albert (1) looks to pass as Elgin's Ryan Varghese (2) defends in the first quarter of an Upstate Eight Conference game in South Elgin on Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2024.

"It's a long road for us, but I never quit. That's how I was raised, so we're going to keep fighting every day and whoever is on the court will earn it. I have to shake things up a little bit."

South Elgin is still without returning starters Ishmael George and Caden Scholl due to injury,

although Storm expects them back soon.

In the meantime, a runaway win like Tuesday's effort after a rough start to the season may just be what the team needed to get things together.

"It's really a confidence booster," Albert said. "Coming into a big game Friday against Bartlett, they're our rivals. That game is very important to us, and this kind of boosts our confidence."

- Chicago Tribune - Basketball and local scores for the Southland, Aurora, Elgin, Naperville and Lake County

By: Josh Krockey

Date: December 19, 2024



Stagg's Abbey Hobart, center, goes for a rebound against Oak Lawn's Lamia Quinones, left, and Danielle Dempsey during a nonconference game in Palos Hills on Monday, Dec. 18, 2023.

High school and local college results and highlights from the Southland, Aurora, Elgin, Naperville and Lake County coverage areas.

TUESDAY'S RESULTS

HIGH SCHOOLS

BOYS BASKETBALL

Ag. Science 57, Farragut 54 (OT)

Ag. Science (7-3, 4-0 Public Red Star): Chris Cole 16 points. Isaiah Hall 12 points. Bryce Tillis 12 points.

Addison Trail 79, Evergreen Park 72

Evergreen (4-4): Keshawn Vaval 33 points. Lenear Bolden 19 points. Arshawn Powell 12 points.

Bartlett 72, East Aurora 54

Bloom 74, Thornwood 42

Bloom (7-1, 1-0 Southland): Payton Edwards 20 points, 5 rebounds, 5 assists. Elijah Lovemore 18 points, 10 rebounds, 8 assists, 6 steals. Adam Page 11 points, 10 rebounds.

Bradley-Bourbonnais 58, Stagg 34

Stagg: Noah Rhodes 9 points.

Chesterton Academy 62, Aurora Central Catholic 58

ACC: Nick Czerak career-high 36 points.
 Crete-Monee 63, Richards 49
 Dwight 68, Newark 62
 Newark (6-4): Dylan Long 24 points, 8 rebounds, 5 assists. Cody Kulbartz 15 points, 11 rebounds. Payton Willis 9 points, 5 rebounds, 5 steals.
 Fenwick 71, Mount Carmel 58
 Mount Carmel (7-1, 1-1 CCL Blue): Cameron Thomas 24 points. Noah Mister 21 points.
 Hinckley-Big Rock 56, Rochelle Zell 32
 Hinckley-Big Rock (6-1): Martin Ledbetter 21 points, 19 rebounds, 4 assists. Maz Hintzsche 16 points, 6 assists.
 Leyden 67, Reavis 52
 Lincoln-Way Central 44, Lincoln-Way East 42
 Lincoln-Way Central (6-3, 3-2 SWSC): Lucas Andresen 15 points. Korey Cagnolatti 12 points; GW basket as time expired.
 Marian Catholic 52, Leo 42
 Marian (8-2): Zack Sharkey 21 points. Delan Davis 11 points.
 Plano 59, Ottawa 56
 Plano (4-4): Gabe Steele 23 points. Taron McGown 14 points.
 St. Laurence 64, Hinsdale South 30
 St. Laurence (8-2): Zerrick Johnson 18 points. Caleb Lindsey 10 points. Jacob Rice 10 points.
 Sandwich 59, Serena 47
 Sandwich (2-7): Simeion Harris 19 points, 8 rebounds, 4 steals. Dom Rome 13 points, 9 rebounds. Griffin Somlock 11 points, 3 steals.
 Somonauk 60, Putnam County 24
 Somonauk (5-4): Brock Sexton 16 points. Weston Hannibal 12 points. Silas Johnson 10 points.
 Stevenson 70, Lockport 63
 Stevenson (6-3): Liam Curtin 19 points, 6 rebounds. Aidan Bardic 12 points, 6 assists. Atticus Richmond 11 points, 8 rebounds, 3 steals. Donny Williams 11 points, 7 rebounds.
 Lockport (6-4): Nojus Venckus 24 points. Collin Miller 12 points, 7 rebounds. Trace Schaaf 10 points.
 Tinley Park 62, Morton 46
 Tinley (5-3): Nolan Maciejewski 24 points. Brayden Kennedy 15 points. Kendall Webb 11 points.
 Waukegan 86, North Chicago 39
 Waukegan (6-2): Xavi Granville 19 points. D.J. Cole 18 points. Carter Newsome 18 points. Rico Love 16 points.
 West Aurora 80, Streamwood 40
 West Aurora (3-6, 3-1 Upstate Eight West): Gabe Gonzales 23 points. Kael Adkins 15 points.
 West Chicago 43, Larkin 35
 Westlake Christian 47, Harvest Christian 38
 Wilmot Union (Wisconsin) 45, Grayslake North 38
 Yorkville Christian 79, Ottawa Marquette 54
 Yorkville Christian (7-3): Jayden Riley 34 points; reached 1,000 career points.

LAKES MLK TOURNAMENT

Fremd 61, Lakes 35

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Bloom 53, Evergreen Park 45

Glenbrook North 43, Mundelein 37

Mundelein (7-5): Casey Vyverman 18 points.

Grayslake Central 60, Antioch 22

Manteno 48, Beecher 21

Montini 59, Mother McAuley 42

Plano 56, Woodstock 42

Plano (10-3, 4-1 Kishwaukee River): Josie Larson 18 points. Nylah Matthews 13 points. Sanai Young 13 points.

South Elgin 71, Elgin 38

Stevenson 41, Carmel 31

Stillman Valley 50, Kaneland 25

T.F. North 54, King 32

T.F. North (8-3): Gabrielle McClain 11 points, 7 rebounds. Precious Agwu 11 points, 4 rebounds. Samiyah King 10 rebounds.

MCHENRY NORTHERN ILLINOIS HOLIDAY CLASSIC

Wauconda 51, Larkin 38

Wauconda (9-1): Grace Parker 17 points, 9 rebounds. Avery Geoghan 14 points, 5 rebounds, 3 steals.

Marengo 55, Deerfield 35

To read the full article, please click [here](#).

- Daily Herald -

Scouting DuPage County and Fox Valley holiday hoops: Some new faces in different places

By: Craig Brueske

Date: December 17, 2024



Geneva's Hudson Kirby, right, collides with Wheaton Warrenville South's Hank Burlage during a DuKane Conference game last week. The Vikings are among the area teams headed to different holiday tournament this season when they tip off at the Jacobs Hinkle Holiday Classic.

Tis the season to be jolly — especially for high school basketball fans.

High school basketball holiday tournaments are a tradition of sorts across the area, considering the oldest event — DeKalb's Chuck Dayton Holiday Classic — enters its 97th year.

Here's a look at some of the top holiday tournaments to watch for teams in the Daily Herald's DuPage County and Fox Valley areas:

Boys

St. Charles East, Hinsdale Central and first-time participants Burlington Central and Wheaton Academy will play in the Hinsdale Central Holiday Classic Dec. 26-28, 30.

"It was real tough leaving Plano," said Rockets coach Brett Porto, whose team was a long-time fixture at the Plano Christmas Classic, winning the tourney title recently in 2021 and 2022. "Great fans, great administration — a great environment. It felt like a second home for our program.

"It just felt like it was time for us to try something different. Hinsdale Central is a top-tier tournament. We'll see a lot of tough teams and a lot of different playing styles."

The Rockets open against Marian Catholic at 3:45 p.m. on Dec. 26.

"You learn a lot about yourself in a short amount of time," said Porto.

Earlier in the day, St. Charles East faces Brother Rice (11 a.m.), while Wheaton Academy takes on Rockford Auburn (2 p.m.).

"Hinsdale is a great tournament," said Saints coach Rob Klemm. "I love the fact that there are 16 teams from 15 different conferences, so we see opponents that we won't see at other points during the regular season.

“We drew a tough first-round matchup in Brother Rice, which set the tournament record for most points scored last year.”

“We’re thrilled to join the field at Hinsdale Central to have the chance to play against some of the best basketball programs in the Chicagoland area,” said Warriors coach Daniel Smith, whose team is off to an 8-0 start. “I want our guys to test their resolve and play against a variety of styles and matchups to launch us into the second half of the season.”

Geneva (8-0) and Naperville North join the 16-team field along with Bartlett, Cary-Grove, Crystal Lake South, Jacobs, Larkin, South Elgin, and Waubonsie Valley at Jacobs’ Hinkle Holiday Classic Dec. 21, 23, 26-27.

“Jacobs was able to accommodate all levels,” Vikings coach Scott Hennig said of his team’s move from DeKalb. “We have had a lot of success at DeKalb and are grateful for their hard work in running a fantastic tournament.

“I think the Jacobs tournament will prepare us for the second half of the season. We’re looking forward to a great week of basketball.”

Waubonsie Valley (8-0) looks to defend its Hinkle tourney title.

“We want to keep working toward our full potential,” said Warriors coach Andrew Schweitzer. “This year’s motto is, ‘No Limits,’ meaning there are no limits to what we can accomplish as a team.

“Any chance you get to play for a championship helps prepare you. Tournaments yield higher stakes with short prep times.”

The 50th annual Jack Tosh Holiday Classic at York is a 5-day, 32-team extravaganza (Dec. 26-28, 30-31) that includes Batavia, Glenbard East, Glenbard North, Glenbard West, Hinsdale South, St. Francis, Wheaton North, Timothy Christian, and the host Dukes.

Dundee-Crown, Huntley, Naperville Central, and Neuqua Valley compete at DeKalb (Dec. 26-28).

“It has been a great tournament for almost 100 years,” said Wildcats coach Todd Sutton. “It’s closer for us than Wheeling, and it is also a chance for our younger players to improve.”

Other holiday tournaments will be held at East Aurora, Elgin, and Pontiac.

Girls

Defending champion Waubonsie Valley, Bartlett, Downers Grove North, Elgin, Hinsdale Central, Jacobs, Glenbard North, Glenbard South, West Aurora, Willowbrook, and host Wheaton North are among the 16 teams participating at the 40th annual Bill Neibch Holiday

Classic (Dec. 23-26-28).

“The Falcon Classic is one of the best tournaments in the state because of how it is run, from the seeding meeting to the hospitality — it’s top tier,” said Warriors coach Brett Love.

“Winning is of course always the goal, but we treat this tournament like a mini-postseason situation. Our game day preparation and mindset must be win or go home.

“Plus, we also get an opportunity to honor our AD, Chris Neibch, and his dad, with the tournament named after (former Falcons AD and tourney founder) Bill Neibch, which is important to us.”

At Dundee-Crown, the 41st Komaromy Classic includes Hampshire, Huntley, Lake Park, Naperville Central, South Elgin, St. Charles North, and the host Chargers (Dec. 26-28, 30).

“The four back-to-back games is definitely a grind, but you learn a lot about yourselves as a team through times like that,” said North Stars coach Mike Tomczak, whose team entered the week with an 11-0 mark. “We are just trying to grow a little bit every game. Being so young, all these experiences are happening to most of our kids for the first time — and they’re invaluable.

“Dundee-Crown is such a great atmosphere. We love the tradition that comes with the tournament. They also have a phenomenal hospitality room — best in the state.”

At Montini, the tourney field includes Benet Academy, Burlington Central, Geneva, Hinsdale South, Naperville North, Neuqua Valley, St. Charles East, St. Francis, York, and the defending champion/host Broncos (Dec. 23, 26-28).

“We hope to make a name for ourselves at the tournament that includes some highly ranked teams in the state,” said Saints coach Katie Claussner. “Outside of winning, our team hopes to continue to strengthen our tenacious defense, transition offense, and mental toughness on the floor.”

Geneva placed third in the 4A state tournament two years ago.

“We want to learn and grow with every game we play,” said Vikings coach Sarah Meadows, who guided the program to back-to-back 4A state titles in 2017 and 2018.

“It is a great atmosphere at Montini for our girls, and great competition. We want to play the best.”

Batavia's girls, who just handed St. Charles North its first loss on Monday, are participating in the Loyola Academy Christmas Classic Dec. 23, and Dec. 26-28.

