

## Press Clippings 12/29/2021

### **The Examiner of Bartlett**

### **Parents speak out against U-46's lottery system ---**

**12/29/2021**

**By Seth Hancock; Note- this story also ran in The Examiner of South Elgin**

Is a lottery system to gain entrance into a gifted magnet academy really fair?

**School District U-46** announced last year that it would be using a lottery system as part of its entrance into gifted high school magnet academies.

In September 2020, Superintendent Tony Sanders wrote in a message, which noted plans for the lottery system, that “equity and access” were at the forefront of what the district was doing.

Equity and access,” Sanders wrote. “Are they just buzzwords, or will we really take the steps necessary to address the inequities that persist across our district, our state, and our nation? I ask that in all seriousness.”

Sanders added: “In order to truly address inequities, we must first acknowledge that we have built systems, and perpetuate systems, that marginalize some groups of students.”

Included in the selection process is removal of “several barriers that have historically been in place, including testing and auditions for some programs,” Sanders wrote.

However, two parents addressed the Board of Education this November asking for a logical explanation for this.

Murugesh Patel said his son “has done all his work, hard work. Academically, he’s motivated, and he has maintained his grades. He knows he’s good in school and he’s working hard.”

“How do you convince that kid all that doesn’t matter, your name did not get up in the lottery, you’re not lucky?” Patel asked.

Adwitiya Balyan echoed those sentiments.

“Lottery system means, to be honest, is either you’re doing random placement testing, or plain and simple laziness,” Balyan said. “What is going on? And that’s a very, very big problem for me.”

Balyan said when children enter school, they should be pushed hard and they're "trying to push themselves beyond what they are expected to do." Now his son is asking why he worked hard at all if he's not going to be rewarded.

When attending open houses last year, Balyan said the common buzzwords were "equity and diversity."

"I want the board to really understand, equity and diversity has got no place in meritocracy," Balyan said adding this does not prepare students for the real world.

Balyan said "equity and diversity" should mean that at the "starting line" they have the same opportunities, but meritocracy then kicks in.

## **The Examiner of Bartlett**

### **U-46 Board approves various proposals, bills --- 12/29/2021**

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

The Board of Education in **School District U-46** unanimously approved, via a 7-0 vote, for iPad replacements.

The approval, at a November board meeting, was for \$258,020 with Apple, Inc. and will be paid by the nation's taxpayers through the Elementary School Emergency Relief Grant funds as well as the Emergency Connectivity Fund.

"The new 380 iPads (used for staff, Pre-K, and Kindergarten), 200 iPad Minis (used for Specialized Student Services, Physical Education, and some staff), and 10 iPad Pros (used for visually impaired students) will replace five and seven-year-old devices that have met their life expectancy for updates to their operating systems for security purposes," the proposal states.

The proposal added: "The iPads are moved from school to home on a daily basis for PreK and Kindergarten students which takes a toll on the devices. Not only will the new iPads receive security updates, but will also have updated operating systems and have a life span of five years.... With the purchase of the new iPads, the students will experience updated equipment and the district will ensure that the devices will receive updates and have a secure operating system."

Also approved unanimously was a change order with Abbey Paving Company, Inc. which added \$34,561 (operations and maintenance fund) to a South Elgin High School tennis reconstruction project that was previously approved.

The original contract cost was \$685,015 which increased to \$719,576 with the change order.

“Additional work was needed on site that was not in the original contract due to unsuitable soil conditions,” the proposal stated. “Undercuts on the asphalt were also needed to stabilize the surface surrounding the tennis courts.”

The board also unanimously voted on \$10.2 million in itemized bills.

## **Elgin Courier-News**

### **Elgin man shot by Buffalo Grove police remembered as ‘rock’ and someone always there for people, protective of family. Officers remain on administrative leave ---**

**12/29/2021**

**By James T. Norman for Pioneer Press**

An investigation continues into the Buffalo Grove police shooting of an Elgin man near the Buffalo Ridge Apartments. (Pioneer Press file)

Friends and family are remembering Brian Howard, the Elgin man who was shot by Buffalo Grove police earlier this month, as someone who always tried to uplift people and put those around him at ease.

His funeral was held Dec. 18 in Bartlett, and the family had established a GoFundMe crowd-sourcing fundraising effort to help raise money to pay for the services.

Nicole “Nikki” Howard, who identified herself as Brian Howard’s sister in a phone interview with Pioneer Press, said while she was the older sibling by a couple years, Howard was always protective of her and their other sister, Howard’s twin, Danielle. Nikki Howard said her brother was the kind of person who would try and include everyone and make sure nobody was feeling left out.

“Brian was everything and more,” she said. “He was my rock, he was my world, he was my protector, he was my best friend.”

Just after midnight Dec. 2, Buffalo Grove police officials said a caller they identified as Brian Howard, 25, phoned 911 and said there was a man near Boxwood Lane and Radcliffe Road, in the village, with a pair of guns. After inquiring further, Howard told dispatch that the man was him, officials said.

Two police officers then responded to the incident, and after officers reportedly told Howard to put his weapons down, he began to get closer to the officers while shooting more, the police chief said at a news conference in the hours following the incident. Authorities said it was unclear if Howard was shooting at the officers or into the air. The two police officers at the scene then opened fire on Howard, who died shortly after.

Following the shooting, police Chief Steven Casstevens said this was the first officer-involved shooting in Buffalo Grove. He also said there is a police squad car dashcam recording of the shooting. The video has not yet been publicly released.

Some in Howard's family have taken a stance against the police's fatal actions that night. Nikki Howard said that her brother called 911 seeking help. She also thinks the police should have called someone who knew her brother, or officers should have tried to further de-escalate the situation.

"Basically, he needed help," she said.

Nikki Howard told Pioneer Press that her brother had personally dealt with mental health issues. It initially began as anxiety, but over time grew into depression, she said.

Though things were moving in the right direction for a time, Nikki said. But, she said, Brian Howard was seemingly getting back to himself. He had graduated with honors from community college and was on his way to a four-year university. But the death of a close friend, as well as several other factors, began affecting him, causing him more issues.

Still, Nikki Howard said she never expected something like the fatal shooting to happen.

"He wouldn't hurt a fly," Nikki said. "There's no way that he would ever, ever, ever, ever murder, hurt, or anything."

Following the shooting, Casstevens in a news conference defended the officers' actions. The two officers involved were placed on administrative leave, per department policy, the chief explained.

A day after Brian Howard's funeral, police officials confirmed that the officers are still on leave while the case is investigated by the Lake County Major Crime Task Force.

"No officer ever wants to take the life of another person," the chief said at the Dec. 2 news conference. "All our officers are trained in de-escalation and critical incident response and

mental health first aid. That being said, officers are often placed in split-second decisions where they are forced to take action that unfortunately results in deadly force.”

An obituary for Brian Howard says he played football at Buffalo Grove and **South Elgin** high schools, and enjoyed hanging out with his friends. He was also an IndyCar Series fan and liked playing video games and watching the Chicago Bears.

Howard is survived by his parents, Kenneth Howard and Kristine Howard, step-mother Patricia; sisters, Nikki and Danielle; and his step-siblings Amanda Tarver, Amber Ghegan and Austin VerVynck, according to the obituary.

## Daily Herald

### Boys' Basketball: Larkin edges Barrington for Hinkle title --- 12/29/2021

By Jared Birchfield, Daily Herald Correspondent



Barrington's Daniel Hong and **Larkin's Jamarion Stubbs** dive for a loose ball in the championship game of the Hinkle Holiday Classic boys' basketball tournament in Algonquin on Tuesday. The Royals won 56-51. *John Starks | Staff Photographer*

When two high caliber teams face each other, it is often the small details that end up making the difference.

Such was the case Tuesday night when Barrington and **Larkin** squared off in Hinkle Holiday Classic championship game at Jacobs. Going into the title game, both teams had only lost once this season. The Royals capitalized on their free-throw shooting to win the first-place trophy, 56-51.

Larkin last won the Hinkle Classic in 2014.

Although the Broncos sank more baskets than Larkin, 21-17, the Royals went to the line 25 times and connected on 19. Barrington was perfect from the charity strip but only had three opportunities.

"In a game like this one, the differences are so small, it's one play here, one play there," said Larkin coach Deryn Carter. "They are a great team. We did just enough."

With 24 seconds left to play and leading by only 3, Larkin's Jamarion Stubbs sank the most critical free throws, converting both ends of a 1-and-1 that sealed the victory.

"Those were huge," Carter said.

"It was two teams that played really hard, and they made some plays at the right times and we couldn't recover," said Barrington coach Bryan Tucker.

Larkin (14-1) jumped out to a 14-9 lead after the first eight minutes.

Barrington (11-2) outscored Larkin 20-16 in the second quarter and pulled within one point just before the half 30-29 on a Daniel Hong 3-pointer just before the buzzer. The senior guard finished the night with 10 points.

The Broncos took a 32-30 lead after a minute of play in the third quarter. Will Grudzinski opened the period's scoring with a three-point play. He converted a steal into a layup and then made the ensuing free throw. Grudzinski scored a team-high 19 points.

Barrington pulled out to a 37-33 lead halfway through the period. Larkin rallied and retook the lead 40-37 on a Jacob Blakely trey. The Broncos tied it again at 40-all on an Evan Baptiste bucket.

Damari Wheeler-Thomas scored three of his game-high 25 points to close out the quarter giving Larkin a 43-40 advantage to start the fourth quarter.

Wheeler-Thomas, a North Dakota State commit, continued his one-man run in the fourth quarter, scoring Larkin's first three points of the frame on free throws awarded when he was fouled attempting a 3-point shot and widened Larkin's lead to 46-40.

Wheeler-Thomas and teammate Fernando Perez (11 points) were named to the all-tournament team. Hong and Grudzinski were also honored. Grudzinski was a unanimous choice.

## **Daily Herald**

### **Boys' Basketball: Luczynski's 32 leads Bartlett to 3<sup>rd</sup> at Hinkle tourney --- 12/29/2021**

**By Dave Hess, Daily Herald Correspondent**



**Bartlett's Conrad Luczynski** shoots over Loyola defenders in the 3rd place game in the Hinkle Holiday Classic boys basketball tournament in Algonquin on Tuesday, December 28, 2021. *John Starks | Staff Photographer*

Loyola Academy seemed to devise every imaginable defensive scheme to stop **Bartlett's** 7-foot-3 senior center Conrad Luczynski.

Nothing they attempted worked.

The Hawks' dominant senior center filled up the stat sheet with 32 points, 14 rebounds, 7 assists and 3 blocked shots to propel Bartlett past Loyola Academy 61-40 in the third-place game of the Hinkle Holiday Classic hosted by Jacobs Tuesday night.

"It was his best game by far," said Bartlett coach Jim Wolfsmith. "He affected the game with his left and right hand. He is a great passer. He had a great game against a very good Loyola team. He played to his full potential."

Luczynski was 14-of-17 from the floor including his first 3-pointer of the season.

"Teams are double- and triple-teaming me every game," Luczynski said. "I can pass to the open man knowing we have very good shooters. It was a good bounce-back win for us."

Sophomore Kelton McEwen added 12 points for the Hawks (11-4).

Holding a tenuous 27-24 lead at halftime, Bartlett took control of the game to start the third quarter.

With Luczynski scoring 6 points on inside power moves along with a long 3-pointer from Ian Smith, Bartlett tallied the first 9 points of the second half. The 9-0 run gave Bartlett a 36-24 advantage with 4:47 left in the third quarter.

Loyola, which made seven 3-pointers in the game, scored its first points of the half on a 3 by Luke Kurtzwell with 3 minutes left to make the score 36-27.

Bartlett, which led 43-30 after three quarters, put the game out of reach by scoring the first 6 points of the fourth all by Luczynski and led 49-30 with 5:50 left in the game.

Holding Loyola to 40 points, 16 in the second half, Wolfsmith was happy with his team's defensive effort.



"Loyola is a quality team and we made them take tough shots," said Wolfsmith. "We didn't give them many easy shots or layups. We did a good job of contesting their back cuts.

"The wheels fell off in the second half against Barrington last night but I like the way we bounced back tonight."

Miles Boland, with a 3-for-4 effort from beyond the arc, led the Ramblers with 13 points while Alex Engro scored 12.