

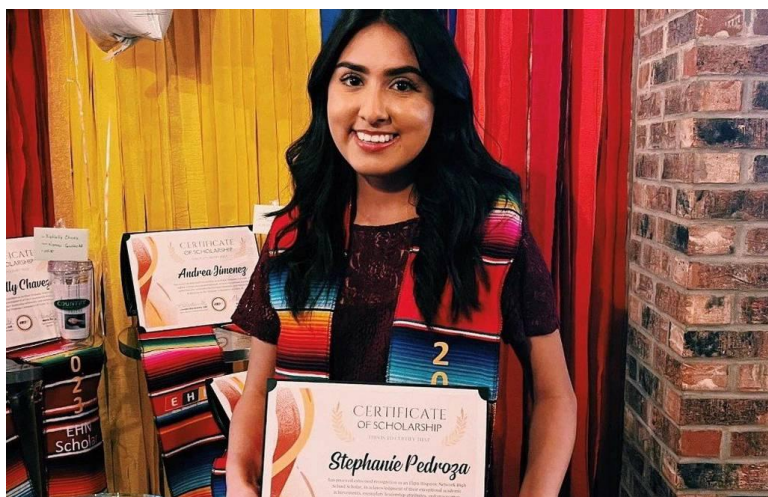
# Press Clippings - 6/7/2023

## – Chicago Tribune –

### Bill that would have allowed South Elgin student to wear Hispanic graduation garb awaiting gov's approval

June 6, 2023

By Gloria Casas - Elgin Courier-News



***Stephanie Pedroza was not allowed to wear a stole representing her Elgin Hispanic Network scholarship at South Elgin High School's May 27 graduation ceremony. (Stephanie Pedroza/HANDOUT)***

Legislation awaiting the governor's signature could prevent situations like the one in which a **South Elgin High School student** was told to remove a Hispanic academic scholarship stole the day of her commencement ceremony.

State Sen. Cristina Castro, D-Elgin, is the chief co-sponsor of a bill introduced in February that addresses the issue and ensures students have a right to wear stoles, sashes or cords related to their "cultural, ethnic or religious" identities.

The legislation was written and sponsored by Sen. Suzy Glowiak Hilton, D-Oakbrook Terrace, in response to an incident last year in which an Evanston Township High School senior was told he could not wear his Native American regalia at graduation.

If approved, school district dress code policies “shall not prohibit the right of a student to wear or accessorize the student’s graduation attire with items associated with the student’s cultural, ethnic or religious identity or any other protected characteristic or category identified in the Illinois Human Rights Act.”

Items deemed obscene or derogatory toward others are prohibited, according to the bill.

Castro said the bill is meant to guide school districts to avoid these types of situations in the future.

Because Gov. J.B. Pritzker has not yet signed it, the legislation could not have helped **South Elgin High School graduate Stephanie Pedroza**, who was told to take off the stole she received from the Elgin Hispanic Network in honor of a scholarship she won and her Mexican heritage.

A high school dean told Pedroza she had to remove the accessory if she wanted to participate in the May 27 graduation ceremony at the NOW Arena in Hoffman Estates.

She was told **School District U-46** had a strict policy against wearing such attire but district officials later said the decision was up to individual high schools. **South Elgin** allows students to wear stoles not provided by the school if a student asks permission beforehand, something Pedroza was not told, she said.

“Intentionally or unintentionally, it impacts someone’s day in their life that they only get one time,” Castro said.

Castro is a former Elgin Hispanic Network official who has been involved with the organization’s scholarship committee. This was the first year the network gave stoles to scholarship recipients, she said. “It identifies with the Latino culture,” she said.

School districts have students from many different cultures who want to honor their heritage at graduation, Castro said. It’s especially important for first generation students like Pedroza to honor their family, who often make many sacrifices to help them achieve academic milestones, she said.

“As long as it’s not offensive, why would we tell a student not to show their appreciation?” Castro said.

**U-46 Superintendent Suzanne Johnson** read a statement at Monday’s School Board meeting in which she apologized to Pedroza on the district’s behalf.

“The feedback and attention from the community has been heard,” **Johnson** said. “We appreciate everyone’s engagement and advocacy on this matter. I would like to express on behalf of **School District U-46** our sincere apologies for the distress caused to

Stephanie.”

**Johnson** also reached out to the Elgin Hispanic Network, she said.

“We value their partnership. We will work together to address concerns and better support our students,” she said. “We remain committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment that honors the diversity of our students and ensures that all graduation ceremonies are joyous and respectful occasions.”

Pedroza, who will attend the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in the fall, has been an advocate for underrepresented students and was a member of the **school’s Racial Inclusion, Support and Equity Committee**.

She is also doing an internship with Castro’s office, having been selected prior to the stole situation occurring, the senator said. **Pedroza’s** first day was Monday.

“I’m very proud of her for speaking up for others,” Castro said. “We need more young people to be involved.”

*Gloria Casas is a freelance reporter for The Courier-News.*

## – Examiner of Bartlett –

### **U-46 approves expenses led by curriculum items**

**(This article also appeared in the Examiner of South Elgin/Examiner of Streamwood)**

**June 7, 2023**

**By Seth Hancock**

The Board of Education in **School District U-46** unanimously approved, via a 7-0 vote, of \$4.1 million in expenditure proposals at its meeting on Monday, May 15.

The largest item was a three-year contract renewal with Istation costing \$1.2 million (education fund) for its literacy intervention resource.

The proposal called it “a necessary literacy intervention in English and Spanish for all elementary students K6.

It was among seven total curriculum and instruction contract renewals paid for through the education fund including with Houghton Mifflin Harcourt for fifth and sixth grade science resources (\$421,990), two with Savvas for K-12 science and planetarium resources (\$240,199) and social studies resources (\$143,075), two with National Geographic for K-12 science and planetarium resources (\$84,000) and for NatGeo

social studies resources (\$56,250) and one with TurnItIn, LLC for its text matching tool (\$58,991).

Additional education fund contracts approved were with Follett School Solutions for its library management system (\$174,938), one with EBSCO for advanced research databases (\$115,300) and one with Journal Storage for databases (\$9,885).

A bid from Pala Supply Company will cost \$1.2 million, from federal funds, for elementary supply kits.

“We plan to order 21,449 supply kits for all of our U-46 students Kindergarten–6th grade,” the proposal states. “Kit supplies were determined by teachers across U-46.”

With Celtic Environmental, the district will spend \$283,200 (operations and maintenance fund) for asbestos abatement at the Dream Academy and Central Schools Program where renovations are taking place. The proposal states that “in order to facilitate the work, the asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) need to be removed by a licensed environmental contractor.”

The district will spend \$68,492 (federal funds) for the literacy program LitCamp from Scholastic, Inc. and \$37,590 (operations and maintenance fund) with Armstrong Relocation to move furniture from classrooms and offices at Streamwood’s Tefft Middle School during fire alarm replacement and ceiling/lighting/insulation projects.

Also approved by a 7-0 vote was \$12.3 million in itemized bills.

## – Examiner of Bartlett –

### **Bryl, music teachers recognized for awards**

**(This article also appeared in the Examiner of South Elgin/Examiner of Streamwood)**

**June 7, 2023**

**By Seth Hancock**

Adam Bryl, head custodian at South Elgin High School, was named the Education Service Personnel of the Year by the Kane County Regional Office of Education (KCROE).

Bryl was one of four nominated in the educational service personnel category, according to the KCROE website. The website describes the category: “These team members are critical to the operation of their schools. This category includes secretaries, bus drivers, aides, custodians and others that work in the district school system.”

Bryl has been the lead custodian at South Elgin for 11 years, according to a School District U-46 press release. He was recognized by the Board of Education at its meeting on Monday, May 15.

"I am invested in this building," Bryl said for the release. "This is, honestly, the best job I've ever had, even as a second career. ... When you take pride in your work and have a great crew, work is joy."

A nominating letter to the KCROE stated: "He is an adult in the building that students look up to and see as someone who cares about them collectively and as individuals."

The board also recognized music teachers in the district at the May 15 meeting after U-46 received the designation of Best Communities for Music Education by the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) foundation for the fifth straight year.

"To qualify for the Best Communities designation, the District answered detailed questions about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, and support for the music programs," the district press release stated.

"Being recognized for five straight years is a testament to the value that our school district and greater communities place in music education as part of a well-rounded education for all children," Jaimie Giraldo, fine arts coordinator, said. "We know that music gives our students an outlet for personal expression, and research shows it supports academic growth as well."

## **– Daily Herald – Hanover Township Summer Concert Series kicks off June 15 in Elgin**

**June 6, 2023**

**Submitted by Hanover Township**

Hanover Township's free Summer Concert Series will kick off on Thursday, June 15 at the Izaak Walton Reserve outdoor amphitheater (899 Jay Street, Elgin) with a performance by Caliente at 7 p.m. Known for their soulful sound of old school with a Latin groove, Caliente has been bringing crowds to their feet all over the Chicago area.

"We are excited to welcome everyone to our inaugural concert series and join us as we celebrate the beginning of the summer season," said Brian P. McGuire, Hanover Township Supervisor. "Whether you're walking the trails or playing at the baggo courts,

these shows are truly for the entire family."

Attendees are encouraged to bring chairs and blankets to sit out and enjoy the concert. Drinks and snacks will be available for purchase with proceeds benefiting youth programming. The Ice Cream Overload truck will also be onsite offering everyone's favorite flavors and toppings.

Limited parking is available. Offsite parking is available at **Huff Elementary School** (801 Hastings Street, Elgin).

## **– Examiner of Bartlett – Baseball, softball teams at BHS, SEHS log solid years**

**(This article also appeared in the Examiner of South Elgin)**

**June 7, 2023**

**By Seth Hancock**

The 2023 season was a successful one for the baseball and softball programs at both **Bartlett and South Elgin high schools** that combined for 17 all-conference players. The **Storm's** softball program had the best season in terms of postseason runs. **South Elgin** was 24-6-1 overall and won the UEC title with a 17-1 mark.

In postseason, the No. 3 **Storm** beat No. 14 Rolling Meadows 11-1 and No. 5 St. Charles East 3-0 to win the **South Elgin Regional title**, the program's fourth overall and first in 10 years. The season ended with a 6-3 loss to No. 2 Lake Park in the St. Charles North Sectional semifinals on May 31.

"We had a great season," said **South Elgin coach Brad Reynard**. "This is a special group that truly loved each other."

**Senior pitcher CeCe Bell** was 12-0 with 88 innings pitched, a 1.43 ERA and 125 strikeouts to be named UEC Pitcher of the Year. **Senior Hannah Harms** (outfielder), juniors **Madison Hunt** (catcher/third baseman) and **Ava McDaniel** (infielder) and sophomore **Anna Kiel** (pitcher/first baseman) were all-conference.

**Bartlett softball** was second in the UEC finishing 21-8 overall, 13-3 in the UEC.

**Senior first baseman Addison Koth**, a Division II Maryville University recruit, had a monster year with a .587 batting average, a program-record 19 home runs and 82 RBI to earn the UEC Players of the Year title.

Also all-conference were juniors **Olivia Liguori** (catcher/infielder), **Lauren Liguori**

(infielder), **Julia Wilkens** (catcher) and sophomore **Christina Stankus** (pitcher/infielder).

On the baseball side, **South Elgin** was 17-8 overall and tied for first in the UEC, with **Streamwood**, with a 15-3 mark, and the **Storm** advanced to a regional final.

**Storm coach Jim Kating** got his 300th career win this year.

All-conference selections were seniors **Jordan Green** (outfielder; .352 batting average, 23 runs, 25 hits, 18 RBI, seven doubles, two triples, one home run), **Tyler Glowacki** (pitcher; 5-1, 1.79 ERA, 67 strikeouts), **Kyle Steinhofner** (outfielder; .411 batting average, 28 runs, 30 hits, 13 RBI, three doubles) and **Quinn Bradford** (catcher/outfielder; .271 batting average, six runs, 16 hits, 19 RBI, three doubles, one home run).

**Bartlett baseball** was 19-16 overall and finished third in the UEC with a 14-4 mark.

**Senior Daniel Krulak** (pitcher/first baseman; .327 average, 23 runs, 32 hits, 23 RBI, 12 doubles, one home run), **junior Brendan Campbell** (pitcher/shortstop; .360 average, 21 runs, 32 hits, 19 RBI, 12 doubles, one triple) and **freshman Josh Colaizzi** (pitcher/outfielder; .388 average, 22 runs, 38 hits, 20 RBI, five doubles, one triple) were all-conference.