



St. Louis-area schools among districts sued by Missouri attorney general over mask rules

Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt on Friday began filing dozens of lawsuits against school systems across Missouri over their pandemic masking rules.

The suits, filed against St. Louis-area districts including Affton, Brentwood, Clayton, Fort Zumwalt, Fox, Francis Howell, Hazelwood, Ladue, Parkway, Pattonville, Maplewood Richmond Heights, St. Charles, St. Louis Public Schools, and Webster Groves, come as the state is battling a wave of coronavirus infections, straining health systems.

The lawsuits, copies of which were tweeted out by Schmitt's office throughout the day Friday, were filed in the name of parents in most cases, ranging from one named parent in several districts to 20 in the Rockwood School District.

In lawsuits against several districts, no parents were listed.

School systems have **reported waves of absences** among students, teachers and other staff in recent weeks, forcing administrators to scramble to fill vacancies and some individual schools to go back to virtual schooling.



Alton's Boys Basketball Squad Continues Improvement, Trounces SIUE Charter 69-17

ALTON 69, SIUE CHARTER 17: In the consolation semifinals of the Chick-Fil-A Belleville East Classic, Alton bounced back to defeat SIUE Charter 69-17 to advance to the consolation final.

Jeremiah Van Zandt led the Redbirds with 14 points and four rebounds, Byron Stampley added 11 points, Alex Macias had nine points and five assists, Blake Hall had eight points and eight rebounds, Hassan Elliott also had eight points to go along with eight steals, Adrian Elliott scored seven points, Roger Elliott scored six points, Noah Hardin came up with four points, four assists and four rebounds and Ihzel Brown scored two points.

Alton head boys coach Eric McCrary was excited to see his squad come out and play top-notch basketball against SIUE Charter. Coach McCrary definitely sees improvement in his boys each week, who are constantly working to strengthen their game.

"The kids came out ready to play and our defensive effort was excellent," he said. "We get to keep working to get better each day and make a strong push down the final stretch of the regular season."

Alton is now 4-15 for the season. The Redbirds play Hazelwood Central High School at 1:30 p.m. Saturday in the Chick-Fil-A Tourney at Belleville East then host East St. Louis Senior on Friday, Jan. 28, and travel to **Hazelwood West High School** on Tuesday, Feb. 1.