

Alton's Special Olympics Basketball Team Recognized as State Champs

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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ALTON - The Alton Community Unit School District #11 Board of Education recognized the Special Olympics State Basketball Division Champions during their regular meeting on April 16, 2024.

“Not only did they go to state, but they won state,” explained Coach Tammy Talbert. “I’m going to brag and I’m going to use the word ‘dominating.’ They actually dominated against their opponents.”

Talbert is a teacher at Mark Twain School. She explained that there are two Special Olympics basketball teams in the Alton School District. The Board recognized Taydem Harrington, Charles Harris III, Ryan Spangler and Tyree West as the four state champions who attend Alton High School.

Talbert noted that the students did a great job playing in “a variety of tournaments throughout the year,” but they especially succeeded at a shoot-out hosted by Alton. They then went on to win at a regional game, which qualified them to compete at the state level at Illinois Wesleyan.

“And guess what? The domination occurred again, so they dominated up at state,” Talbert said.

She said that the Special Olympics competitions are “a great environment and everybody has a great time.” She recognized each student for their dedication, the time they put into practice, and their teamwork.

“It was an honor and it’s a privilege,” Talbert added. “I’m the lucky one that gets to be around to get to coach these guys because it’s amazing. It really is. It’s a fun job and I appreciate it.”