



## *Superintendent's Weekly Newsletter*

**October 22, 2020**

*"The best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry"*- Robert Burns

I am writing today to tell you that our plans to re-open for grades Pre-K to 2nd for the in-person hybrid model must be delayed. Today, two staff members in our Transportation Department were confirmed to be positive with COVID-19 within a 28 hour time period. As such, the Kane County Health Department declared an outbreak at our Shales Parkway facility and has sent home nine additional staff members to quarantine for a minimum of 14 days.

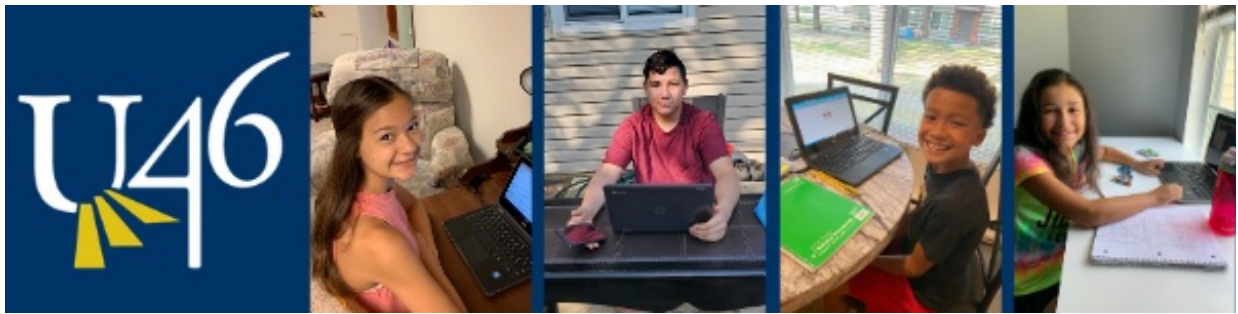
We cannot serve 5,000 students in pre-k to 2nd grade without a functioning Transportation Department. At this time, we do not have dispatchers available to guide drivers, respond to parent calls, and ensure students can be safely transported.

Because of this delay, students in pre-k to 2nd grade will remain with their current teacher. We will not proceed with shifting those schedules until such time as we begin the hybrid model. At this time, I cannot commit to a date that will occur.

We will continue to serve our self-contained special education classes and transition programming (Center House, SEHS, and SWEP), Exceptional Needs (EN), Individual Learning Programs (ILP), Modified Learning Program (MLP), and Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH). Transportation services for these programs all operate out of our second transportation facility located on Chicago Street in Elgin.

I am so sorry that the virus is once again affecting you. We all were looking forward to seeing the smiling eyes of our youngest learners as they returned for their second “first day” of school. I know that day will come. It just is not yet.

Tony



## Human Resources

### Benefits Enrollment

Enrollment for your 2021 employee benefits gets underway on Friday, Oct. 23 and is open through Tuesday, Nov. 10. New this year, the 2021 Benefits Enrollment Guide has gone green! Printed copies will not be distributed; instead you can access the electronic version on the District's **Benefits Intranet page** or as an attachment to the all-staff email that was sent the morning of Oct 21.

Please note that even if you want to keep the exact same plan you had in 2020, you must still participate in Open Enrollment. Same for those who do not want to enroll in medical coverage — you must log into Munis Self-Service by Nov. 10 to waive coverage for 2021 or elect a health plan.

For those with questions, the **virtual benefits counselor Alex** is available 24/7 from any computer or mobile device.

There are also three Open Enrollment Meetings being held via Zoom on the following dates and times: Monday, Oct. 26 from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. (**join**

[here](#)), Thursday, Oct. 29 from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. ([join here](#)) and Tuesday, Nov. 3 from noon to 1 p.m. ([join here](#)). A recorded version of these meetings will also be posted on the [Benefits home page](#) if you cannot attend a live meeting.

## K-12 Social Studies

### Call to Committee

School District U-46 is seeking district certified and licensed staff members affiliated with AP US History and AP Psychology to form a committee that will review and recommend curricular resources to support the already BEE-approved curricula, College Board's CED, and course audit requirements for both courses. The purpose of this committee will be to review the text and online needs of each class' curriculum, identify potential materials, and evaluate them in order to select resources that will meet those needs. This will be a three-month process, and the committee will be meeting virtually after school hours four times, for which participants will receive hourly pay. The first committee meeting date will be Nov. 10 from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Applications may be made electronically by completing the following [AP US History and AP Psych adoption committee interest form](#). Please complete the form by Oct. 30, 2020. Candidates will be notified of their acceptance by November 2, 2020.

Read the complete [Call to Committee here](#). If applicants have further questions, they may contact Jacob VandeMoortel at [jacobvandemoortel@u-46.org](mailto:jacobvandemoortel@u-46.org).

## Elementary Literacy

### Read for the Record

The elementary literacy department is looking for U-46 staff who'd like to participate in this year's Read for the Record event on Thursday, Oct. 29. The book is "Evelyn Del Ray is Moving Away" by Meg Medina. **Volunteers can sign up to to be a guest reader here on this Google sheet.** (Yellow highlight indicates Dual Language classroom.) Make sure you include your email address. Copies of the book are located at ESC. Please email Nina Lopez at **ninalopez@u-46.org** to arrange to receive your copy, either via District mail, picking it up at ESC, or having it delivered to you inside ESC.

## School & Community Relations

### Social Media

We have nearly 20,000+ followers on our **School District U-46 Facebook Page**. Are you one of them? If not, please follow and like us. As you know, Facebook is an easy way to recognize and celebrate our schools. As you share your own posts and photos on social media, remember that we are all representatives of the District. Make sure any students whose faces are shown are OK with media, per the media release form completed as part of student registration.

During the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, also check that the people in your photos reflect social distancing guidelines, are at least 6 feet apart, and all properly wearing masks that cover their nose and mouths.

### School Building Directory

The 2020-21 School Building Directory is available for download on the Intranet **here** under School & Community Relations/Publications.

### U-46 Educational Foundation

Teachers - Mini-Grants for teachers through the U-46 Educational Foundation are available now! With a mini-grant, you don't have to do any fundraising, and you are not limited to particular vendors. Most importantly, donations are not

used to fund an outside business. Apply for a Mini-Grant TODAY! The deadline has been extended through to 10 a.m. Monday, Oct. 26. Find the application here on the Foundation page at [www.u-46.org/Page/6883](http://www.u-46.org/Page/6883)

## Community Resources

### MLK Food Drive

Organizers of the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Food Drive are making it easier for local residents to help others in these challenging times caused by COVID. Those donating items won't have direct contact with food drive organizers; they will simply drive up and pop their trunk and a volunteer will take the donations out of the trunk.

A drop-off event is next scheduled to take place on Saturday, Oct. 24 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Gail Borden Public Library's main branch, 270 N. Grove Ave., Elgin. Donations will be accepted at the northeast corner of the library parking lot near Ann Street. Directional signage will help drivers arrive and depart easily.

Suggested items to donate include peanut butter and jelly, canned tuna, macaroni and cheese, pasta, beans and rice, canned fruit, cereal, pancake mix and syrup, and canned vegetables. Cash donations will be helpful as well.

In its 10th year, the food drive is organized by the City of Elgin's Human Relations Commission. Donations from the food drive will help supply several area food pantries including Elgin Crisis Center, Food for Greater Elgin, All Peoples Interfaith Food Pantry, Westside Church of Christ, Centro de Información, the Salvation Army of Elgin, Bethesda Church and Hanover Township Food Pantry.

## In Memoriam



Denise Dunphy taught in U-46 for 30 years, the last 25 as an English Language Arts teacher at Eastview Middle Year, before she passed away on Oct. 9. She nurtured the reading and writing skills of thousands of students during her teaching career, and also positively influenced students as a boy's basketball coach at Eastview. Colleagues say she encouraged many students to succeed beyond what they thought possible for themselves. You can read more about Denise, and other U-46 employees we have lost during the last two school years, [here](#) on the Intranet under School & Community Relations.

## Photo of the Week



Bartlett High School students were back at the BHS pool this month for lifeguard certification with physical education teacher Jaron Baker.

## State News

The Oct. 20 Weekly Message from State Superintendent Carmen I. Ayala, Ph.D., is available online in Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) format [here](#). All COVID-related editions of the Weekly Message are archived on the Illinois State Board of Education's website [here](#).

## Kudos

*Send Kudos directly by clicking [HERE](#) or using Let's Talk. They are **due by 5 p.m. each Tuesday**.*

### **Kudos to the ELL SLPs from Anabela Largo, ELL SLP Lead**

Big kudos to all my ELL SLPs for embracing Distance Learning with professionalism and overcoming its obstacles with patience and flexibility. Each one of you have had to step out of your comfort zone, and you have succeeded! It is a great pleasure to work with such a wonderful group. I am proud of all and each one of you!

### **Kudos to Daniela Cristina Necs, Cross Cat Teacher at Streamwood High School, from Josi Gama, Parent at Streamwood High School**

I would like to express my gratitude to Mrs. Daniela Cristina Necs. Thank you for your vigilance and dedication to your students. My daughter is currently a freshman, and she was having a hard time with math, but with your flexibility, patience and guidance, she now understands and looks forward to math class. You have really made an impact on her. Thank you, for all that you do!

### **Kudos to Nicole Fernstrom, Teacher/Sponsor at Streamwood High School, from Jason Ziols, Athletic Director at Streamwood High School**

Thank you to Nicole for all of her hard work in setting up and providing virtual activities, games, and events for the students and staff of Streamwood High School to promote our Stay-at-Homecoming 2020 week. Her dedication to our

students, staff, and Streamwood High School community is unparalleled!

**Kudos to Jaclyn Aylward, Teacher at Wayne Elementary School, from Dawn Auriene, Social Worker at Willard Elementary School**

I want to send Jaclyn a big thank you for being so flexible with so many schedule changes to our Erin's Law schedule. I truly appreciate your professionalism and kindness in working with all of our children.

**Kudos to Nancy Wulleumier, Secretary at District Records, from Anna Pasternak, Supervisor at District Records**

Thank you, Nancy! I appreciate all your hard work and dedication you put in each week when processing hundreds and hundreds of student records. You are doing a great job, and our department is so lucky to have you. Your efforts are recognized and greatly appreciated.

**Kudos to Salma Shethwala, our Fabulous ParaEducator at Ronald O'Neal Elementary School, from Ani Smith, Teacher at Ronald O'Neal Elementary School**

Salma joins my 4th grade class and is like my right and left arms during Distance Learning. On one particularly tough day, I was having a neighborhood WiFi issue. My audio was unintelligible. Mrs. S. picked up on my pantomiming as I was not able to speak to the students. She narrated exactly what I was doing as I worked from the document camera, projecting the lesson. I did not have to speak, she was my voice. The lesson was delivered and learning continued in spite of the technology thanks to her!

**Kudos to Keith Walker, Support Center Agent at Information Services, from Dr. Leatrice Satterwhite, Assistant Director at Special Education**

Keith has been phenomenal and extra patient with me and all of my tech issues. He came to my office three times in one day to fix my microphone that kept going out during my meetings. In one final attempt to correct the problem, he made an appointment around my hectic schedule to take my laptop to re-image it. My microphone is working now like I have a brand new computer. His assistance and level of professionalism is always appreciated. Thank you Keith.

**Kudos to Nicole Fernstrom, Student Council Sponsor and English**



**Teacher at Streamwood High School, from Marie McLaughlin, Teacher at Streamwood High School**

Nicole worked so hard to make Streamwood's #StayAtHomecoming2020 so special for our students! We had virtual events throughout the week, including trivia, chalk your walk, and a dance battle. To top it off, Friday Class Sponsors drove to students' homes if they were nominated to the court. It was amazing to honor the students! Way to go Nicole and class sponsors! Check out the amazing video here: [https://youtu.be/\\_61EW7PhTW8](https://youtu.be/_61EW7PhTW8)

**Kudos to Jana Hite and Linda Walter, SLPs and AAC Specialists, and Kelly DiFulvio, AAC Assistant, from Veronica Kernler, Teacher Mentor Specialist at Teacher Effectiveness Initiative**

Thank you to all of you for your willingness to collaborate and share your expertise regarding Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) tools and strategies with mentees. You have developed ways for SLPs to access many resources and adaptable tools for students. Thank you for ensuring all students have a voice! Kudos to Kelly O'Hara, Lead SLP, for being there to support mentors and mentees when needed! We appreciate your helpfulness and advocacy!

**Kudos to Hawk Hollow Elementary School, from the Hawk Hollow Elementary School's PBIS Team**

Several new tools have been provided to our teams, anxieties run high, professional development occurs daily, students require your time and energy AND with all this, the team at Hawk Hollow remains STRONG! You are our heroes! Thank you for all you do day in and day out for this community! You are impressive, and I am proud to stand beside you each and every day!

**Kudos to Chad Halper, Custodian at Sunnydale Elementary School, from Andrea Gaitan, Principal at Sunnydale Elementary School**

I wanted to thank Chad for being an amazing custodian. He has been very patient with all the requests and favors we have asked him to do during the last few weeks. He is always open and quick to help all staff members at Sunnydale. Thank you Chad!

**Kudos Andrea Paterala, Special Education Administrator at the Special Education Department, from Jennifer Bianchina, Special Education**

## **Teacher at Sycamore Trails Elementary School**

Many thanks to my special education administrator Andrea Paterala. Her guidance, teaching and support is so appreciated. She is a calm and loving leader in an uncertain time. I appreciate her ability to keep our team running smoothly and her strong hand always behind our back.

## **Kudos to Kris Walsh, Secretary; Jessica Paz, Secretary/Clerical; Karen Lombardo, Nurse; and Tom Mead, Custodian; at Hawk Hollow Elementary School, from Noelle Dupuis, Principal at Hawk Hollow Elementary School**

Thank you for all you do for our staff here at Hawk Hollow. Each of you consistently goes over and above daily to make sure this staff has everything they need to be successful. I truly appreciate you and your support!

## **Kudos to Maureen Parker, PLC Coach at Hawk Hollow Elementary School, from the 3rd Grade Team at Hawk Hollow Elementary School**

We would like to express our gratitude for Maureen. She is an invaluable asset to our school. She works incredibly hard to meet with students that are on intervention and takes the time to not only teach them the program but also works with them weekly to keep them on track. The students love working with her and look forward to their sessions. She is extremely flexible at our weekly meetings and tailors them to our needs. She reduces the stress level that is associated with Distance Learning while teaching us how to navigate through Canvas, Kami and additional programs. We are truly lucky to have her at Hawk Hollow.



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