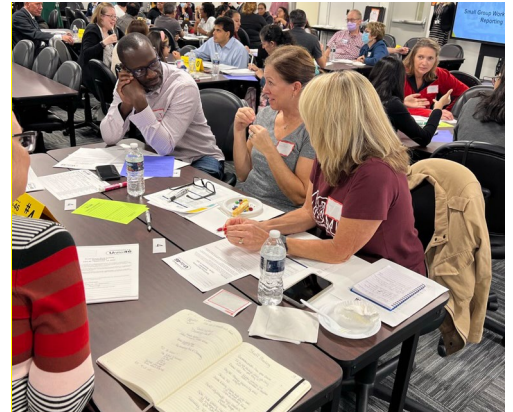
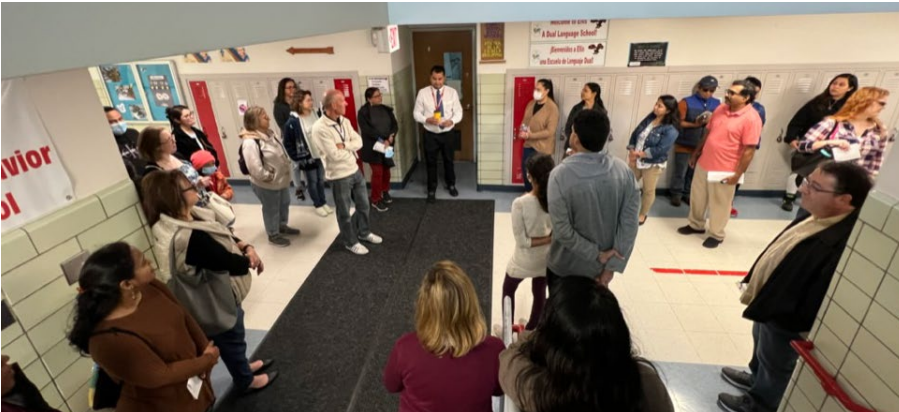


SCHOOL DISTRICT U-46

Unite46

Moving Forward Together

FINAL REPORT



► Introduction

With declining enrollment, aging buildings and rapidly changing needs of students, the U-46 Board of Education turned to the community for solutions. Throughout 2022, Unite U-46, a community-led public engagement process, brought together more than 650 community members to learn about the challenges and opportunities facing our schools and to develop solutions to move our schools forward.

► Overview

In February 2022, community members and School District U-46 staff embarked on the Unite U-46 planning process in response to a charge from the Board of Education.

This 10-month community engagement effort united those who live in the school district - community members, parents, staff members and students - to develop recommendations to improve and move U-46 schools forward.

At the beginning of the effort, participants decided to study these key topics during the process:

- How Our School Buildings Impact Student Success
- The Whys Behind PreK and Middle School
- How School Building Improvements Are Funded
- Options for Moving Forward

The community engagement process involved five two-hour Unite U-46 Community Engagement Sessions (CES) at the U-46 Welcome Center, a Saturday morning building tour of four schools, four Thursday evening Open Houses at buildings throughout the District and a community telephone and online survey. More than 650 individuals attended the community-wide engagement sessions. In addition, well over 100 participated in the building tour and open houses.

A community-led Facilitating Team served as leaders of the Unite U-46 program and met three times before the first community meeting and once between each community meeting. The information learned and documentation of the feedback gathered at each CES session is available online at UniteU46.org.

The community engagement process resulted in recommendations presented in response to the charge given to Unite U-46 participants by the Board of Education.

The following overview breaks the Unite U-46 program into four sections: purpose, participants, process and product.



Purpose

History

The process to move U-46 schools forward started in 2018 when the vision of the Board of Education recognized the need to address declining enrollment and aging buildings.

Designing Our Future

In 2020, the DLR Group was hired to develop an educational facility master plan. They spent more than a year conducting an in-depth review and analysis of every school building. This included student, staff and community input sessions and a professional building condition analysis. The process known as Designing Our Future was led by a 14-member steering committee that brought a variety of experiences, perspectives, and U-46 partner representation to the process.

There were six phases to the Designing Our Future process that was used to develop a deeper understanding of how the District's facilities are used, the quality of the learning environments in each building and current and future curriculum and program needs. The information learned and data gathered was used to inform the Educational Facilities Master Plan.

The Designing Our Future final report was presented to the Board in 2021. At that time, the Board knew it needed the community's input on this facility plan to improve U-46 schools, which is when Unite U-46 was brought to life. The Board presented the following charge to the community.

U-46 Educational Facility Master Plan Charge from the Board of Education

The U-46 Board of Education recognizes that student achievement and academic success requires the development of a comprehensive educational facility master plan that includes an evaluation of enrollment trends, facility usage, facility needs, and the alignment of facilities with instructional goals and practices. The Board further recognizes that an essential component in fulfillment of this mission is community collaboration and involvement in the development and implementation of this educational facility master plan.

The purpose of this community collaboration effort is to:

- ▶ Allow the community to work with the U-46 administrative team to examine the educational adequacy (today) and educational readiness (in the future) of our schools to meet our vision and ensure lasting value to the community, teachers, and students.
- ▶ Allow the Board of Education to hear and understand the community's educational beliefs, perceptions, and desires.
- ▶ Design a process that strengthens communication and collaboration with the community.
- ▶ Involve the community in planning for the future of the U-46 schools.

Charge From Board of Education

The U-46 Board of Education hereby authorizes the formation of a broad-based committee of community members and staff. The charge to this committee is to:

Learn About, Review and Understand:

- ▶ The vision of the Board of Education to close, rebuild, repurpose or remodel our oldest elementary school buildings, move to a true middle school model with grades 6-8, and expand PreK programming in our district;
- ▶ The long-term challenges the school district faces regarding facility maintenance and repair including providing cost-effective and functional spaces to accommodate the district's strategies for curriculum and instruction;
- ▶ The manner in which district facilities relate to the delivery of curriculum and instruction and student success;
- ▶ Current enrollment projections and how they impact long-range facility planning; and
- ▶ The Educational Facility Master Plan recommendations and timeline presented to the Board of Education on January 24, 2022.

Develop Recommendations To Include:

- ▶ Branding or a name for the committee's work.
- ▶ Input from a broad base of the community that includes:
 - How best to address long-term facility and enrollment challenges;
 - Current and accurate perceptions and priorities regarding the Educational Facility Master Plan; and
- ▶ Steps to be taken to implement the Educational Facility Master Plan.
- ▶ An ongoing model for school district/community collaboration and communication.

These recommendations should be formally presented to the Board of Education by December 15, 2022.

► Participants



Participation in the Unite U-46 process occurred in a variety of areas:

- **Facilitating Team (FT)**
- **Unite U-46 Community Engagement Sessions (CES)**
- **Unite U-46 Building Tours and Open Houses**
- **Online and community telephone survey.**

Facilitating Team (FT)

As its name suggests, this team was responsible for facilitating the Unite U-46 process. The 16-person team met nine times, three times before the first Unite U-46 community engagement session and once between each additional session.

As is so important in engagement programs, community members provided the leadership for the FT and the entire Unite U-46 process.

District administration, staff members and special advisors were also members of the FT and served as resources for the Community Chairs.

The primary role of the FT was to provide leadership and coordination for the entire process. The group helped with decisions regarding process strategy and communications.

UNITE U-46 Community Engagement Sessions (CES)

Since the Unite U-46 Community Engagement Sessions were the central component of the Unite U-46 process, there was a tremendous effort before the first meeting to communicate the importance of the process to the entire community. Throughout the process, the goal was to use every means possible to reach out and invite all District stakeholders to participate in the process.

Participants could attend the sessions in person at the U-46 Welcome Center or via an online virtual session. Spanish translation was available at every in-person and virtual session. More people participated in the virtual sessions than in person.

Attendance at the Unite U-46 meetings varied, with the top attendance being nearly 300 and the average attendance being around 144 participants. More than 650 individuals attended and participated in at least one Unite U-46 Community Engagement Session, with 145 attending multiple sessions. Of those individuals attending, 80 were parents, 24 were staff members. Overall, the average in-person attendance was 34 attendees and the average virtual attendance was 139.

UNITE U-46 Building Tour & Open Houses

To provide further outreach and gather more feedback, a Saturday Building Tour of four school buildings and a set of Thursday evening Open Houses at four schools were held in September. More than 100 people attended these activities. For more details about these activities, see the process section of this document.

UNITE U-46 Online and Telephone Survey

More than 2,000 people participated in an online and/or telephone survey about the community's thoughts and perceptions about the District, Unite U-46, and potential plans for the future of our school buildings.

► Participants

Facilitating Team

Community Chairs

Veronica Medrano, U-46 Bilingual Parent Advisory Council and U-46 Parent

Amber Peters, Elgin Partnership for Early Learning

Chanda Schwartz, Community Advisory Council and U-46 Parent

Dana Wojnarowski, U-46 Parent

Community Representatives

Ryan Dickinson, Hanover Township

Tina Houdek, Hanover Township Youth and Family Services

Sharmin Shahjahan, U-46 Parent

Patricia Williams, Designing Our Future Steering Committee and U-46 Parent

District Representatives

Dale Burnidge, Director of Financial Operations

John Devereux, U-46 Board of Education

Karla Jimenez, Director of School & Community Relations

Brian Lindholm, Chief of Staff

Melissa Owens, U-46 Board of Education

Dr. Tony Sanders, Superintendent

Pat Waldau, Director of Plant Operations

Dr. Ann Williams, Deputy Superintendent of Operations

CES Participants

The following individuals signed in at an in-person or virtual community engagement session.

Mary Abbott	Benjamin Bernal	Victor Chacón	Valerie Deatherage	Mirela Florea	Michelle Gonzalez
Annette Acevedo	Veronica Betz	Pat Chamberlain	Klinger	Maria Flores	Romy Gonzalez
Molly Ackerman	Daniella Beu	Benjamin Chambers	Rebecca	Karen Foster	Trenie Gorak
Nicole Adams	Evelyn Bevins	Edith Chamorro	Defrancesco	Keegen (Kym)	Carly Gorich
Elvy Aguilar	Steve Bob	Michele Chapman	Cynthia Delcid	Fowler	Theo Gorich
Jorgen Akesson	Sue Bob	Neema Chaudhari	Gonzalez	Laura Fowler	Penny Gralewski
Sonia Albarran	Jamie Boccuzzi	Yomal Chauhan	Ivonne Delgado	Andrea Fox	Cindy Gray
Pam Alexander	Bernard Bolanowski	Maria Chavez	Efrain Deluna	Lisa Fraber	Shawna Green
Melissa Alfaro	Jeremy Bower	Zarna Chiluka	Lisa Demilio	Susan Freund	Amanda Gross
Maiza Alias	Felisa Brach	Eng Chong Lim	Ivette Desantiago	Byron Furdge	Tuong Gross
Christina Altamirano	Mitchell	Bill Chow	Igor Diachenko	Andrea Gaitan	Crystal Gruszka
Katherine Alvarez	Briesemeister	Olga Chudzik	Erika Diaz	Bustos	Susan Grygier
Lorena Alvarez	Kyle Brill	Kathy Chwee	Shawn Dicus	Angela Gallegos	Larissa Guiao
Victor Amaro	Michelle Brill	Sandy Citron	Jennifer Dienelt	Meghan Galvan	Jackie Gustafsson
Rafael Argueta	Domeni Brito	Veronica Clay	Meghan Dillenbeck	Carmen Galván	Adriana Gutierrez
Luisa Arias	Cheryl Brumbaugh-	Elvee Clemons	Natalee Dismuke	Gezie Galván	Janiese Gutierrez
Marie Arteaga	Cayford	Trinette Co	Nicole Doeseckle	Alejandra Ganddini	Marybeth Hanson
Jocelyn Ashford-	Melissa Buckardt	Gail Cohen	Carrie Douglas	Meghavi Gandhi	Erin Hart
Yarbrough	Jennifer Bueche	Nancy Coleman	Jaime Dovichi	Armando Garcia	Melissa Hartley
Hira Asim	Maria Buendía	Laura Collins	Chelsey Drake	Bertha Garcia	Melissa Hartley
Briana Augustine	Suzanne Bukantis	Margarita Colorado	Dan Dresbach	Maritza Garcia	Laura Haske
Benjamin Aurich	Lauren Bullaro	Laura Connery	Olya Drozd	Ida Garcia	Sherry Hausermann
Ever Avila	Trisha Burchill	Joann Contreras-	Deborah Drummond	Marcela Garcia	Stacy Hayes
Michelle Avila	Andrea Burns	Belman	Mica Dugas	Rick Gard	Jeremy Hayes
Shelby Avina	Karla Burzynski	Rosalia Cornejo	Karen Durkin	Julie Gard	Deborah Heiser
Vivienne M. Bailey	Alvaro Buso	Doumarys Correa	Tom Durkin	Sandy Gaussein	Amy Hendrix
Lindsey	Yanixa Buzo	Mirian Cortez	Ebony Dyson	Jo-Anne Gentallan	Sheila Henry
Ballschmiede	Megan Bykoff	Jeanette Cortez	Natalie Edwards	Anna Ghioth	Abbie Hernandez
Yasmeen Bankole	Nicole Byrne	Dustin Covarrubias	Felicia Ellis	Vittoria Giangrasso	Angelica Hernandez
Celia Banks	E. C. Wilson	Elizabeth Covington	Ana Escalona	Marilena Giczkowski	Laura Hernandez
John Banks	Mayra Caiceros	Kim Crawshaw	Brenda Escobedo	Ziomara Gil	Laura Hernandez
Penny Barefield	Monica Calderon	Crystal Cristescu	Brian Fagan	Kelly Gilbert	Lirio Hernandez
Samantha Battaglia	Karia Campbell-	Nayelli Cruz	Heather Fagan	Jaimie Giraldo	Martha Hernandez
Michaëlle Bauer	Kimbrough	Kevin Curtis	Sara Fajardo	Shannon Gloude	Julian Hernandez
Ben Bauman	Brandy Carbery	Gustavo Dalal	Jeffrey Falk	Antonio Gomez	Josey Herrera
Kelly Baumann	Ana Careaga	Mehzbeen Dar	Ortiz Family	Monica Gomez	Kristina Herrick
Alan Bautista	Kristen Carney	Marlene Daubert	Joy Farmer	Veronica Gomez	Tonya Hinshalwood
Stephanie Belk	Adriana Carpio De	Demarco Davidson	Elizabeth Ferenciak	Artemisa Gonzalez	Jessica Hopkins
Michelle Benages	Palma	Michelle Dawson	Carrie Fernandez	Isela Gonzalez	Ian Horn
Maria Benitez	Amanda Casay	Kristal Day	Luz Figueroa	Lydia Gonzalez	Rabya Hyder
Ken Benson	Justyna Castillo	Dennis Day	Gary Figurski	Art Gonzalez	Ramotu Ibrahim
Tatiana Bermudez	Andrea Chacón	Miriam De La Cruz	Anne Flathau	Isela Gonzalez	Denisse Ignacio

▶ Participants

Sinaya Ivy	May Loo	Jodie Morell	Jen Pray	Sadia Sattar	Rodney Thomas
Sonia Ivy	Denesis Lopez	Sandra Moya	Geoffrey Pretkelis	Leatrice Satterwhite	Carina Thomas
Tracey Jakaitis	Guadalupe López	Mike And Angela	Renata Prieto	Aurora Scarpaci	Zalia Toledo
Kristen Jakubowski	Gisela M. Lopez-	Mroz	Courtney Przybylski	Dawn Schar	Kelly Treadwell
Guadalupe Jaramillo	Lauderdale	Rumin Mucias	Mary Pulido	Tanya Schield	Dawn Trevino
Jaimi Jayswal	Esteban Loredó	Jazmin Munoz	Eliza Punnoose	Meghan Schleicher	Tiffany Trewartha
Tiffany Jensen	Aurora Lozano	Pam Murdoch	Shinu Punnoose	Paul Schmidt	Avery Trickey
Arti Jha	Aurora Lozano	Marcy Murphy	Sophia Punnoose	Jennifer Schneider	Jola Tricroce
Manish Jha	Melissa Lucas	Adriana Mzyk	Terega Punnoose	Kathy Schulenberg	Charles Trong
Julie Jindra	Nicole Lucas	Katherine Najera	Matthew Punnoose	Chanda Schwartz	Colleen
Meredith Johnson	Jaci Luif	Katrina Neal	Stacey Purdy	Mary Scianna	Trongnetpanya
Dj Jordan	Inga Lungu	Fred Neitzke	Leidy Quintero	Mike Scianna	Veronica Ulreich
Tiffany Jourdan	Elizabeth M Hultman	Leiani Neitzke	Teresa Rackley	T Scriggs	Kristen Uryasz
Nithin K	Sarah Madson	Meghan Nelson	Jatin Radadiya	Elena Serban	Shayna Valdes
Penny K	Him Mallipeddi	Laura Newbrander	Anjali Rami	Jenni Servin	Abigail Valdez
Dan Kaatz	Yolanda Managan	Tanya Newton	Antonio Ramirez	Dhaval Shah	Heidi Valerio
Ravneet Kalia	Veronica Mancera	Eric Niccum	Ivette Ramos	Ketul Shah	Diana Van Hauter
Asra Kamal	Manpreet Mangat	Kendall Niccum	Abelisario Rangel	Komal Shah	Jerry Vanhauter
Melissa Kaplan	Dianna Manjarrez	Kelly Nicks	Thiramone	Stacey Shah	Sheryl Vanlaningham
Justin Kastory	Manuel Manrriquez	Katisha Nielsen	Ratsavongxay	Sharmin Shahjahan	Mary Vanslyck
Manohar Katakam	Christine Maonaco	Mario Noble	Becky Rauen	Cassie Shelley	Oscar Vasquez
Cissy Kazibwe	Tracy Marando	Jennifer Noble	Par Reehal-Khan	Harold Shepherd	Brigitte Vazquez
Lisa Keiler	Karina Marcano	Michael Noland	Heather Reinheimer	Sarah Sherwin	Estela Vazquez
Ryan Keiler	Betty Martinez	Linda Nordtvedt	Kristine Reniva	Mary Shesgreen	Miriam Vazquez
Tracy Kelly	Kristina Martinez	Jennifer Nowakowski	Adriana Reyna	Bhumika Sheth	Nancy Vega
Katheryne Kettle	Maria Martinez	Michelle Nugent	Loredana Rickard	Kathy Shields	Dolores Vidales
Asma Khan	Lisa Masella	Ladonna Oates	Alma Rios	Sarah Siddiqui	Alejandra Villagomez
Rana Khan	Ana Maske	Ana Ocampo	Cristina Rivas	Anahi Silva	Elizabeth Villalobos
Terri Kinsella	Donna Mastrangelo	Avita Odoom	Erika Rivera	Dawn Simon	Mikayla Vincent
Justin Klein	Nick Matarages	Gaby Olague	Alamzaib Rizvi	Danielle Siwicki	Aaron Vollrath
Julianna Kloeppel	David Mathews	Laura Ontiveros	Daniel Roberts	Jennifer Slaten	Marta Vollrath
Magdalena Kobeszko	Deni Mathews	Deanna Ortscheid	Doreen Roberts	Laura Smail	Kyle Vonschnase
Maggie Koch	Heather Mathews	Veronica Osuna	Esther Robledo	Bob Smith	Debra Vruble
Gosia Kochanski	Eunice Matos	John P	Rosas	Demitrius Smith	Jelena Vulovic
Natalie Koessl	Kimberley Mcalpine	Desiree Palasz	Elmer Rodolfo	Karen Smith	Herman W
Tim Kolb	Megan Mcbrearty	Melina Pantoja	Ramos Lopez	Karen Smith	Elizabeth Wahl
Weronika Koniecko	Colleen Mccarthy	Amit Patel	Estela Rodriguez	Kyle Smith	Teresa Wang
Ankita Kotadia	Kelli Mcelroy	B Patel	Iliana Rodriguez	Sarah Smith	Danalea Warrick
Kimberly Kowall	Sarah Mcmillan	Hemeeta Patel	Martha Rodriguez	Tamara Sobczak	Sue Webb
Patricia Kraft	Ana Medina	Priyanka Patel	Carmen Rodriguez	Edith Solomon	Heather Weiss
Jowita Krason	Bea Medina	Ronak Patel	Angela Rojas	Erin Sorellino	April Wells
Bozena Kupinski	Olivia Medina	Rupal Patel	Paulina Rolon	Cassandra Sparks	Roberta Werneske
Tina Labarbera	Sue Meek	Sanket Patel	Francine Romero	Kristen Speciale	Cory Wilcox
Shannon Lafauce5	David Mehl	Vimal Patel	Minerva Romero	Kris Stalzer	Cory Wilcox
Kim Lagioia	Lourdes Mejía	Poonam Patel	Minerva Romero	Mark Stanley	Ramana Wilkerson
Michelle Laiche	Laura Mellinger	V. Patfield	Jardeed Roy-	Elizabeth Stearns	Cambria Williams
Kelly Lake	Claudia Mendoza	María Patino Perez	Chowdhury	Laura Stewart	Vanessa Williams
Mellissa Lamorte	Erik Meredith	David Paton	Julie Roy-Chowdhury	Sandy Stoltz	Patricia Williams
Teresa Lance	Kristin Meredith	Melanie Patterson	Ronald Rudniski	Jenny Strappelli	Kimberly Wintz
Danielle Lane	Chrystian Merlo	Daysi Perez	Lisette Rueda	Carolina Suarez	Jim Wojnarowski
Elisa Lara	Carrie Merritt	Liz Perez	Antonia Ruiz	Jennifer Svec	Mark Wojnarowski
Elizabeth Larue	Lisa Mertinat	Manuela Perez	Lynda Rudio	Jennifer Svec	Bill Wright
Gilbert Latorre	Joanne Meyer	Maribel Perez	Amber Russell	Michelle Sweeney	Nicoletta Wright
Cassandra (Casey)	Alison Mezera	Pedro Pérez Llorente	Amber Russell	Noor Syed	Maysia Xiong
Lauinger	Deborah Miller	Mary Perkins	Beth Rychtanek	Delicia T	Bruce Yi
Danielle Lauritzen	Angelique (Angie)	Marro Pestane	Brenda Saiz	Ma Taide Pitones	Linda Yi
Olapeju Lawal	Miller	Jaime Petras	Heidy Salazar	Ashley Talip	Mary Young
Karen Lee	Chaitali Modi	Carolina Pham	Malitzina Salazar	Priti Tank	Tangela Young
Stephanie Lemaire	Liz Moeller	Emily	Ericka Salgado	Erin Tapins	Mehzbeen Younus
Marissa Lettieri	Marty Molina	Phamornsuwana	Yolanda Salgado	Kim Tazbier	Ismael Zacarias
Jolene Linneman	Maranda Molose	Eriberto Pili	Carolina Sanchez	Nancy Teesdale	Habiba Zahid
Jason Lipavsky	Teresa Monjaras	Francesca Pisani	Christian Sanchez	Darlynn Terry	Terrie Zamecnik
Sara Lippold	Keriann Moore	Janet Pishotta	Ana Sánchez	Nayan Thakkar	Dominique Zewde
Donna Little	Megan Moore	Rich Plonski	Mymy Sanders	Udon Thao	Dee Zillmer
Priti Lobo	Cindy Morales	Mike Pollacchi	Eduardo Sandoval	Mary	
Karen Lombardo	Rosa Morales	Herb Porter	Marc Santoro	Theodosopoulos	
Lance Long	Susana Morales	Traci Powell	Oscar Saravia	Kelley Thomas	

▶ Participants

▶ Designing Our Future Steering Committee

The Designing Our Future Steering Committee worked hand in hand with the DLR Group to develop the Educational Facilities Master Plan that was studied by Unite U-46 participants.

Steering Committee Members

Cathy Russell, Chief Executive Officer, Boys & Girls Club

Juanita Crear-Price, Community Member, Educator and Psychologist, Substitute Teacher

Kim Wascher, Director of Parks and Recreation for City of South Elgin, Parent, PTO and CAC member

Nathan Gac, Fire Department Employee, CAC Committee, Bartlett High School Booster Club President, U-46 Parent

Trisha Morgan, Youth and Family Manager, Taylor Family YMCA, Parent of U-46 Students

Barb Bonner, Retired U-46 Administrator, Community Member, U-46 Advisory Committee

Jaime D. Garcia, Executive Director Centro de Informacion,

Former Principal at Sunnysdale Elementary School

Patricia Williams, Executive Director of The Literacy Connection, U-46 Parent and Alum

Joseph Russell, Executive at Taylor Family YMCA, Parent

Bill Wright, Streamwood Park Board, PTO at Hanover Countryside, Chair of Operating Board, Governing Board for U-46 Alignment

Jeffrey Janda, Executive Director, Streamwood Park District, Community Partner

Veronica Betz, Parent, Community Member, CAC Committee Member and Safety Subcommittee Member

Autumn McGowen, 2019 graduate of U-46, Current student at University of Illinois at Chicago

Andrew Greter, 2020 graduate of U-46, Current student at University of Illinois at Chicago

▶ Process

There were five Unite U-46 community engagement sessions from April to November 2022. The key study topics covered at each session were determined at the first session when participants went through an exercise to identify the top issues, topics and questions to be addressed during the Unite U-46 process.

Step 1: Board Charge

The process began when the Board decided to move forward with the planning initiative and adopted the charge. This set the direction and parameters for the planning effort.

Step 2: Building The Team

The next step was to build the Facilitating Team, which provided the leadership and guidance for the entire process. The first task in building this team was identifying and enlisting key community members to serve as chairpersons for the effort.

Step 3: Process Identity

The process was given an official name — Unite U-46: Moving Forward Together — and a project logo. This logo was used on all communication and meeting items.

Step 4: Informing The Community

The next step in getting the process underway was building participation in the community-wide Unite U-46 effort through an extensive communications program, which is detailed later in this report.

Step 5: The Schedule

After thoroughly inviting the public to participate, it was time to begin the actual planning effort. A schedule was developed to allow adequate time between sessions to prepare informational presentations. This time also allowed participants to process and digest the information and discussions.

► Community Engagement Sessions



The first Unite U-46 Community Engagement Session was held on April 27, 2022.

The purpose of this meeting was to:

- Provide a thorough orientation to the process and an introduction to Unite U-46
- Receive input and direction from participants regarding the significant issues that would be studied during the process

Feedback from participants at that meeting was tabulated and summarized. This provided the basis for developing topical presentations for the remaining portion of the planning effort.

Each CES followed a specific, timed agenda. The session began with a brief recap of the preceding meeting and a review of the materials in the agenda packet.

Following these explanations was an informational presentation on the designated topic for the evening. Professionals and experts in each topic area gave the presentations. Virtual session participants watched these presentations in real time via live stream. A copy of each presentation is provided on the Unite U-46 website. All presentations were rehearsed and critiqued by the Facilitating Team in advance. The Facilitating Team continuously evaluated the Unite U-46 process.

A specific work activity followed the formal presentation at each meeting. Participants worked in small groups (four to seven individuals per table or a virtual online breakout room) to complete the activity. Participants were randomly assigned to a small group as they arrived for the session or randomly assigned to a virtual breakout room after the presentation. The intent was to create an opportunity for participants to meet new people each time and hear different perspectives from a variety of individuals.

Each small group selected its own facilitator and spokesperson. The facilitator was instructed to complete the worksheet based on the consensus or general agreement of the group. Following the small group work, the spokesperson from each group was invited to share

the main ideas from the group with all the participants at the session. The worksheet was then collected from each table for documentation. Virtual participants shared their feedback with the other virtual participants and submitted their responses via a digital form. Each Unite U-46 session concluded with a preview of the topic for the next session.

Spanish translation was offered at all virtual and in-person sessions, and all meeting materials were available in English and Spanish.

All presentations and meeting documentation were available at the Community Engagement Sessions and online at UniteU46.org.

Documentation

Transparency and documentation are critical components of a successful community engagement effort. The Unite U-46 process and the feedback received throughout were thoroughly recorded with the following documents, which were made available to the public following each community engagement session.

- Verbatim responses: A document of responses transcribed directly from the worksheets turned in by each small group at the community engagement session.
- Executive summary: A summary of the verbatim responses.
- Consensus points: The points of general agreement of participants based on the executive summary.
- Sign-in sheets: Each participant was asked to sign in at their table at each engagement session or through an online sign-in form.

UNITE U-46 Building Tours

On Saturday, Sept. 24, from 9 a.m. until noon, members of the community boarded a U-46 school bus and took guided tours of one of the District's oldest schools, Garfield Elementary, one of the District's newest schools, Hilltop Elementary, and a typical U-46 middle school, Ellis Middle School. Building principals led the tours, and participants were encouraged to ask questions and learn more. At the end of the tours, participants were encouraged to provide feedback and complete an online survey.

UNITE U-46 Open Houses

On Thursday, Sept. 27, from 5 to 8 p.m., four U-46 schools were open for people to learn more about the Unite U-46 process and the challenges facing our school buildings and take a self-guided tour. Eastview Middle School and Glenbrook, Horizon and Willard elementary schools hosted the open houses. These locations were strategically chosen to provide easy access to an open house to everyone who lives within the District. At the open houses, participants had the opportunity to review a series of display boards

► Community Engagement Sessions

that described the process, key information learned about the District and details on how to take the electronic survey. In addition, Unite U-46, school and District representatives were available to answer questions and provide more information.

UNITE U-46 Online and Telephone Survey

An online survey to learn more about the community's thoughts and perceptions about the District, Unite U-46, and potential plans for the future of our school buildings was available from Sept. 24 through Oct. 21. In addition, a random telephone survey of 400 people who live in the District was also conducted. The surveys found that 35.5% of the community was aware of the Unite U-46 process by mid-October.

Unite U-46 Community Engagement Schedule

April 27: Welcome to Unite U-46 and Overview of U-46 and Our Buildings

May 11: How Our School Buildings Impact Student Success

May 25: The Whys Behind PreK and Middle School

September 14: How School Building Improvements Are Funded and Options for Moving Forward

September 24: Building Tour

September 27: Open Houses

November 9: Refine and Finalize Recommendations

► Communications Tools

Several strategic communications tools regarding Unite U-46 were developed and implemented to create awareness and encourage participation from key audiences, including parents, those who live in the District and community leaders. A strong recruitment effort by FT members, building principals and District leadership was also conducted.

Communications tools included:

Email and Text Messages

Emails and text messages were sent to parents, staff, and community members before each Community Engagement Session.

Website

A section of the District's website was developed to share information and documentation and gather RSVPs throughout the process.

Social Media

Information about the process and Community Engagement Sessions was shared through Facebook posts and events, LinkedIn posts, and Twitter posts.

Flyers and Handouts

Flyers were developed throughout the process and distributed to the schools and community. Bookmarks with process information were also distributed to local libraries and throughout the community. Multiple postcards were sent via postal mail to all households in all U-46 communities.

Videos

Videos were used to share about the process and encourage participation. These were included in email and text messages, website, and social media posts.

Media Outreach

News releases were sent to local media outlets throughout the process.

School Marquees

Information about the different Unite U-46 activities was displayed on school marquees.



► Unite U-46 Recommendations

Introduction

Following a nine-month course of discovery and conversation to gather input from a broad base of community members about:

- How best to address long-term facility and enrollment challenges;
 - Current and accurate perceptions and priorities regarding the Educational Facility Master Plan; and
 - Steps to be taken to implement the Educational Facility Master Plan
- Unite U-46 presents the following recommendations to the School District U-46 Board of Education.

AS U-46 SCHOOLS MOVE FORWARD

ALL U-46 STUDENTS SHOULD

- Have equitable access to programs and opportunities at school buildings districtwide.
- Attend schools with similar class sizes, which can be achieved by balancing enrollment districtwide.
- Be well-supported by high-quality teachers and staff who are well-trained and certified in their areas of expertise.
- Have their educational, social and emotional needs addressed as they transition to preschool, elementary, middle and high school levels and to new schools.
- Have the opportunity to learn in schools that are:
 - Safe and secure.
 - Accessible to all.
 - Proactively maintained and updated as needed.
 - Adaptable to changing technology.
 - Integrated with the outdoors and nature.
 - Updated to include collaborative, flexible spaces that encourage group and self-learning.
 - Replaced when they have reached a point where they are more expensive to repair or renovate than replace.

THE U-46 COMMUNITY SHOULD

- Continue to have the opportunity to learn and provide feedback about the future of U-46 schools through Unite U-46.
- Continue to be well-informed about District operations, facilities and finances.
- Be well-informed and actively involved in supporting students as these recommendations are implemented and schools are retired, renovated and rebuilt.

► Goals To Accomplish Recommendations

To make these recommendations a reality and address the needs discovered in the educational facilities master plan, Unite U-46 recommends the Board of Education utilize available reserve funds and place a \$180 million zero-tax-rate-change bond proposal on the April 2023 ballot to address these goals:

- Increase the annual budget for maintenance and repairs by \$10 million per year as recommended by architectural firm DLR Group in the facilities master plan. This includes:
 - Protecting the \$1.5 billion investment our community has made in our school buildings by proactively maintaining and updating building infrastructure items like roofs, windows, electrical systems, plumbing and HVAC systems.
 - Ensuring all U-46 schools have up-to-date safety and security features, including secure entryways, lockable doors in every classroom and are ADA accessible,
 - Maintaining and adding more outdoor learning spaces and environments and updating playgrounds and greenspaces.
- Balance enrollment at schools throughout the District.
- Improve equitable access to programs at more schools districtwide.
- Update elementary school buildings to support expanded preschool opportunities for more students districtwide.
- Implement a true 6th through 8th grade middle school model districtwide.
- Develop an initial timeline for the implementation of the Unite U-46 recommendations and thoroughly communicate this timeline with the community.
- Make necessary updates to existing middle schools to implement 6th-8th grade model.
- Selectively add preschool classrooms to elementary schools based on up-to-date enrollment data, available space and grant funding opportunities.
- Rebuild Lowrie, McKinley, Glenbrook, Century Oaks, and Parkwood elementary schools.
- Renovate or add on to Washington Elementary School.
- Retire Hanover Countryside Elementary.
 - The school cannot be retired until Glenbrook is update
 - Transition students to Glenbrook and/or Oakhill elementary schools when those schools have capacity to receive students.
- Retire More At 4 Early Childhood Center.
 - This leased space will no longer be needed with expanded preschool offerings throughout the District.
- Retire Illinois Park Early Childhood Center.
 - The center cannot be retired until space is available in the elementary schools, but will eventually not be needed because of expanded preschool offerings throughout the district.

To work toward accomplishing these goals, the District should:

- Retire Garfield Elementary.
 - Transition students to Channing and Huff elementary schools, which have room for more students.
- Complete transition of Hawk Hollow from an elementary to middle school.
 - Provides a middle school in the southeast portion of the District and increase capacity to allow all 6th grade students districtwide to attend middle school in the fall of 2024.
 - Funding is already approved from the District's reserve funds.