

## **Press Clippings 08/07/2019**

**---The Daily Herald---08/07/2019**

### **Eight new principals take helm at U-46 schools**

**By: Madhu Krishnamurthy**



Jennifer Van Deusen, principal of Streamwood High School.



Charlotte Coleman



Cyndi Aleman



Joel Pollack, principal of Creekside Elementary School in Elgin.



Stephanie Sylvester



Noe Velazquez



Adam Zurko, principal of Wayne Elementary School in Wayne.

Eight new principals will take the helm at Elgin Area School District U-46 schools as classes begin Wednesday.

Among them are new hires who recently joined the district and existing employees promoted from within to positions left vacant due to retirements, resignations or employees pursuing other opportunities within the district. They are:

- Jennifer Van Deusen, Streamwood High School -- worked in U-46 for more than a decade. She was appointed in June as interim Streamwood High principal. She was associate principal at Bartlett High since 2014 and a dean of students. She joined U-46 in 2006 as an English teacher at Elgin and South Elgin high schools.
- Charlotte Coleman, Kimball Middle School in Elgin -- principal of Nature Ridge Elementary in Bartlett since 2013. She joined the district as a teacher in 2005, then became assistant principal at Nature Ridge. Coleman previously was a teacher and curriculum coordinator for the Hattiesburg (Mississippi) Public Schools.
- Cyndi Aleman, Nature Ridge Elementary School in Bartlett -- worked in U-46 for more than 20 years, serving the last three as assistant principal at Hillcrest Elementary in Elgin. For much of her U-46 career, Aleman taught at Liberty Elementary in Bartlett. She previously taught at St. Joseph School in Elgin, Bloomingdale District 13, Palatine District 15, and St. Raymond Catholic School in Mount Prospect.
- Joel Pollack, Creekside Elementary School in Elgin -- joined U-46 in the spring. He was an associate provost at the University of Chicago overseeing prekindergarten-12th grade education initiatives, the chief education officer for Acero Schools, deputy superintendent of instruction for North Chicago Unit District 187, and held leadership positions at the Academy for Urban School Leadership. Pollack also taught in traditional and nontraditional settings for 10 years.
- Tiffany Robinson, Lowrie Elementary School in Elgin -- more than 18 years experience as a teacher, teacher leader and administrator. She joined U-46 last school year as assistant principal at Hilltop Elementary in Elgin and was a member of the district's student conduct and dual language advisory committees. She is pursuing an ESL endorsement.
- Stephanie Sylvester, Liberty Elementary School in Bartlett -- assistant principal at Liberty for two years. She has worked in U-46 for 12 years as a peer consultant teacher, a special education resource teacher at Lowrie Elementary in Elgin, and teaching seventh- and eighth-graders with extraordinary needs at Canton Middle in Streamwood and seventh- and eighth-grade special education students at Kenyon Woods Middle in South Elgin.
- Noe Velazquez, Lords Park Elementary School in Elgin -- worked 14 years in U-46, most recently as assistant principal at Highland Elementary in Elgin. He was a science teacher at Ellis Middle in Elgin where he also served as a data coach, a PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) universal coach, and a cultural competency facilitator. He has facilitated the U-46 Parent Leadership Institutes since 2013. Previously, he taught at-risk students at Elgin High and was a bilingual paraprofessional in Community Unit District 300.
- Adam Zurko, Wayne Elementary School in Wayne -- served in administrative roles for 13 years as an elementary principal in Meridian District 223 and an elementary

principal and district administrator in Rochelle Elementary District 231. He previously taught elementary grades in Kaneland Unit District 302 and in Colorado.

## **Elgin's back-to-school BBQ bash looking for volunteers**

**By: Elena Ferrarin**



The second annual "Back to School BBQ Bash" takes place Aug. 17 at Wing Park in Elgin. The first one gave out 500 free backpacks filled with school supplies, shown here.



The second annual "Back to School BBQ Bash" takes place Aug. 17 at Wing Park in Elgin. One of the organizers is Elgin Councilman Corey Dixon, shown in this photo from last year in the second row, center, wearing a green shirt.



The second annual "Back to School BBQ Bash" takes place Aug. 17 at Wing Park in Elgin. The first one, shown here, was attended by more than 1,200, organizers said.

Organizers of the second annual "[Back to School BBQ Bash](#)" in Elgin are looking for volunteers to help with the festivities, including giving out hundreds of backpacks.

The event takes place 12 to 4 p.m. Aug. 17 at Wing Park with free food, entertainment, games, face-painting, free hair cuts and styling, and backpacks filled with school supplies. Last year's bash was attended by more than 1,200 people and distributed 500 backpacks, said Elgin Councilman Corey Dixon, one of the organizers. So far, 900 backpacks have been collected with the goal of collecting 1,500, he said.

"We want to celebrate the kids as they go back to school (to say) that the community is behind you, and that you can do it," Dixon said.

Volunteer coordinator Teresa Mascote of Together We Are Elgin said students can earn community service hours by volunteering. Aug. 14 is the first day of school for Elgin Area School District U-46.

"It's a great way to network among your community -- helping others, meeting other people that you wouldn't have otherwise have met, and that can turn into great long-term relationships," she said. "Plus you get to see the whole event take place from a different place, which I think is a great thing."

The event is a combination of the annual free barbecue held in August by Together We Are Elgin -- a group that organizes free community dinners started by Elgin restaurateur Jeff Turner -- and a back-to-school initiative spearheaded by The Alanza James Foundation For Youth, a group founded by Dixon and his brother Jeremy Hawkins of Schaumburg.

The menu will include fried fish, roasted pig, pulled pork and egg rolls, donated by Delicia Tropical Cafe in Elgin and Food for Friends, Dixon said. Entertainment will include Funk Brotherz, Accidentally on Purpose, Ballet Folklorico Huehuecoyotl, the choir of Second Baptist Church of Elgin and more.

Backpacks and school supplies are being donated by community members, businesses like Blush by Tiffany in Elgin, and organizations such as Delta Sigma Theta and Lambda Theta Alpha, organizers said.

The bash also celebrates Elgin's diversity, Dixon said. "It allows for the diversity of the city to really shine -- and that's really important to me," he said.

Anyone who wants to volunteer can sign up at [signupgenius.com/go/8050F45AAAF22A4FA7-2ndannual](https://signupgenius.com/go/8050F45AAAF22A4FA7-2ndannual). There are shifts for set up, registration booth, greeting and mingling, clean up and more. Bilingual volunteers also are needed.



# U-46 primed to vote on multiple pact renewals

**By Seth Hancock**

The Board of Education in School District U-46 is set to vote on 15 contract renewals totaling \$4.5 million at its upcoming meeting on Monday, Aug. 12.

The items were presented on July 15 and were among 25 expenditure items totaling \$5.3 million.

The largest renewal is \$2.1 million going to 18 different entities or individuals for speech language therapist services which will be paid for by the nation's taxpayers through federal grant funds if approved. The price is an increase from \$1.9 million last year while Community Therapy (\$570,860) represents the largest contract and both Ana Grzybek (\$97,125) and Maria Rodriguez (\$96,037) are the highest paid individuals.

"There is a nationwide, as well as statewide, shortage of therapists," the proposal states.

Sue Kerr, the board's president, asked how the therapists are chosen to which Leatrice Satterwhite, director of specialized student services, said most have been used in U-46 "for several years" and "we try to keep that consistency... as much as possible."

"We treat them as if they're district employees when it comes to professional development and other supports provided to them," Satterwhite said. "The only difference is how they're compensated."

Board member Melissa Owens asked if all therapists were paid the same rate and Satterwhite said: "No, they're different. It is a little more costly than if they are district employees."

The district is asking for \$543,058, also through federal grant funds, for occupational therapy services through Top Echelon (\$252,331), Community Therapy (\$200,078) and EBS Healthcare (\$90,650). The cost is up from \$533,968 last year.

Board member Kate Thommes asked why the district isn't hiring in-house to which Satterwhite said "our first preference is to hire in-house," but there's a national shortage of occupational therapists.

With Istation, the district is asking for \$419,780 (education fund) to renew a contract of a "digital learning resource" that "follows a systematic linear path of structured lessons personalized to meet the literacy needs of each student," according to the proposal. The cost is an increase from \$305,460 last year.

The board will vote on a contract renewal with One Hope United costing \$357,500, to be paid for by Illinois taxpayers through a Preschool For All grant, to pay for preschool services rendered in the 2018-2019 school year.

According to the proposal, 101 U-46 students were given "preschool services within a facility that offers extended day childcare to families. U-46 does not offer extended day childcare within the district's preschool programs.... The subcontract paid for the salary and benefits of three teachers, three teacher assistants, facility expenses and materials."

The district is asking for a contract renewal costing \$208,081 (federal grant funds), up from \$103,500, with both Career Staff (\$103,600) and Soliant (\$104,481) for school psychology services.

With Geneva Hearing Services, the district is asking to renew a contract costing \$197,000 (federal grant funds) "for audiology and equipment relating to providing the program for the hearing impaired students," the proposal states. The cost is up from \$195,000 last year.

The district is asking for \$131,768 (education fund) for a contract renewal

with Mind Research Institute for ST Math software, a math intervention. The cost is down from \$149,643.

Another math intervention resource contract renewal is with Houghton Mifflin Harcourt costing \$75,000 (education fund) for FASTT Math software.

The district claimed both math interventions showed data supports both after being piloted in the district, and Owens asked if the board could see the data.

U-46 CEO Tony Sanders said that the data is "setup within the assessment office to evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions that we're putting in place," and Trisha Shrode, director of curriculum and instruction, said: "We could get that from the assessment department. We kind of separate ourselves so that we're not the ones pulling that data."

"I'm confident that it did show the results that we were looking for," Sanders said. "I just didn't incorporate it into the report."

The district is asking for \$128,937 (federal grant funds) for a contract renewal with Renaissance Services for STAR 360 for secondary literacy and libraries, an increase from \$104,830.

"Renaissance STAR 360 is used to support all identified students in U46 as a progress monitoring tool," the proposal states.

With Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, the district is asking for a contract renewal costing \$105,979 (federal grant funds) for Read 180/Systems44 resources. The cost is up from \$86,249 in the 2018-2019 school year.

Additionally, the district is asking for a \$98,560 (federal grant funds) contract renewal with Houghton Mifflin Harcourt for professional development on the same resources. That cost is down from \$119,638.

A contract renewal with News-2-You costs \$73,389 (federal grant funds) which the proposal states is a program that "serves students from kindergarten through high school (ages 5 to 22) that have mild to severe cognitive disabilities with IQs below 70 and include students who are English Language Learners." The cost is up from \$61,075.

With Encyclopedia Britannica Online, the district is asking for a three-year contract renewal costing \$72,735 (education fund) for the online research tool. The district spent \$26,985 for the resource in the 2018-2019 school year.

The district is asking for \$40,850 (education fund), up from \$39,100, for a contract renewal with Turnitin, LLC for the literacy resource.

"Turnitin provides teachers and students an electronic submission platform where students can receive immediate feedback from a combination of methods, including a peer review system, teacher feedback system, automated grammar feedback, and its signature originality checker and feedback system," the proposal states.

A contract renewal with SchoolPace: American Reading Company costing \$25,000 (education fund) if approved. The proposal states: "SchoolPace is a platform for reading teachers to collect student reading data on a daily basis."

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# Police Reports

roads for a report of a hit and run in progress.

- ★ At 8:56 a.m., police responded to the 0 block of Lexington for a fraud complaint.
- ★ At 9:28 a.m., police responded to the 0 block of Quarry for a report of a domestic.
- ★ At 11:32 a.m., police responded to the vicinity of Seabrook and Crane for a request to assist fire department personnel.
- ★ At 1:29 p.m., police responded to the 400 block of Crystal for a report of theft.
- ★ At 2:32 p.m., police responded to the 600 block of North LaFox for a report of criminal damage to property.
- ★ At 3:11 p.m., police responded to the vicinity of Bowes and North LaFox for a report of a malfunctioning sign or signal.
- ★ At 3:52 p.m., police responded to the 0 block of Lone for a report of an abandoned vehicle.
- ★ At 4:15 p.m., police responded to the 1100 block of West Kane for a report of a hit and run.
- ★ At 4:44 p.m., police responded to the 0 block of Ridge for a fraud complaint.
- ★ At 4:53 p.m., police responded to the Thornwood Sports Core, 850 E. Thornwood Drive, for a fireworks complaint.
- ★ At 5:02 p.m., police responded to McDonalds, 100 N. McLean Blvd., for a report of theft.
- ★ At 6:03 p.m., police responded to the 700 block of Fairview for a keep the peace request.
- ★ At 6:18 p.m., police responded to CVS Pharmacy, 255 N. McLean Blvd., for a shoplifting complaint.
- ★ At 8:59 p.m., police responded to

the 100 block of Beck for a fireworks complaint.

**Thursday, July 25**

- ★ At 9:27 a.m., police responded to the 700 block of Fairview for a keep the peace request.
- ★ At 1:53 p.m., police responded to the Thornwood Sports Core, 850 E. Thornwood Drive, for a trespassing complaint.
- ★ At 5:34 p.m., police responded to the 1100 block of Oxford for a report of harassment by telephone.
- ★ At 6:44 p.m., police responded to Caputos, 622 Randall Road, for a report of a hit and run.
- ★ At 6:52 p.m., police responded to Rhyso and Bowes, LLC, 705 Bowes Road, for a report of an intoxicated subject.
- ★ At 8:40 p.m., police responded to the vicinity of South Collins and Chesterfield for a report of an intoxicated subject.

**Friday, July 26**

- ★ At 12:58 a.m., police responded to the 800 block of West Spring for a report of an overdose or poisoning.
- ★ At 3:38 a.m., police responded to AT&T, 312 Randall Road, for a report of an open door or window.
- ★ At 10:07 a.m., police responded to Riverside Pizza and Pub, 456 Redington Drive, for a report of an activated alarm.
- ★ At 11:07 a.m., police responded to Jim Hansen Park, 280 Concord Ave., for a report of criminal damage to property.
- ★ At 12:20 p.m., police responded to the 100 block of Lone for a fraud complaint.
- ★ At 12:55 p.m., police responded to the 1900 block of Sagebrook for a report of a suspicious person.
- ★ At 2:52 p.m., police responded to Kolikos Gaming Cafe, 1185 W. Spring, for a report of an intoxicated subject.
- ★ At 3:02 p.m., police responded to the 600 block of Kenilworth for a request to remove an unwanted subject.
- ★ At 3:27 p.m., police responded to the Towerhill Care Center, 259 W. Kane, for a 911 investigation.
- ★ At 6:04 p.m., police responded to the 600 block of Chasewood for a report of a suspicious noise.
- ★ At 6:37 p.m., police responded to the 600 block of East Thornwood for a

report of an activated vehicle alarm.

- ★ At 9:38 p.m., police responded to White Oaks at Heritage Woods, 703 N. McLean Blvd., for a request to assist fire department personnel.
- ★ At 10:20 p.m., police responded to the 1200 block of Angeline for a report of a fight.
- ★ At 10:22 p.m., police responded to the Premise Alert Record, 625 Jenna Drive, for a child custody dispute.
- ★ At 11:13 p.m., police responded to the 400 block of Concord for a fireworks complaint.
- ★ At 11:54 p.m., police responded to the 300 block of West Middle for a report of a hit and run in progress.

**Saturday, July 27**

- ★ At 12:01 a.m., police responded to the 300 block of West Middle for a report of a domestic in progress.
- ★ At 12:43 a.m., police responded to Cool Operator, 310 N. LaFox, for a report of an activated alarm.
- ★ At 9:46 a.m., police responded to the 700 block of Michigan for a report of a domestic in progress.
- ★ At 5:01 p.m., police responded to Leslies Poolmart, Inc., 502 Randall Road, for a request to remove an unwanted subject.
- ★ At 5:49 p.m., police responded to the 100 block of Sweetbriar for a fraud complaint.

- ★ At 6:12 p.m., police responded to the 200 block of Paine for a report of a hit and run.
- ★ At 7:27 p.m., police responded to the 0 block of Marcia for a report of an open door or window.
- ★ At 8:16 p.m., police responded to the 1300 block of Jenna for a 911 investigation.
- ★ At 8:29 p.m., police responded to the 500 block of Jenna for a fireworks complaint.
- ★ At 9:18 p.m., police responded to the 700 block of Lakeridge for a fireworks complaint.
- ★ At 9:20 p.m., police responded to the 300 block of Woodridge for a fireworks complaint.
- ★ At 11:05 p.m., police responded to Mi Vallarta, 1101 N. LaFox, for a report of a disturbance.

**Sunday, July 28**

- ★ At 7:12 a.m., police responded to TJ Maxx, 352 Randall Road, for a report of an activated alarm.
- ★ At 9:15 a.m., police responded to the 600 block of East State for a report of a suspicious person.
- ★ At 10:32 p.m., police responded to the 0 block of Ridge for a report of a domestic in progress.
- ★ At 11:13 a.m., police responded to Jewel, 375 Randall Road, for a report of a hit and run.

## Multiple U-46 proposals slated for meeting vote

**By Seth Hancock**

The Board of Education in School District U-46 is set to vote on 10 proposals and contracts totaling \$712,008 at its upcoming meeting on Monday, Aug. 12.

The items were presented on July 15 and were among 25 total expenditure items totaling \$5.3 million.

Included is a \$253,560 proposal with Stabilizer Solutions to be paid by the operations and maintenance fund if approved. The expenditure is for Hill-topper Infield Mix to be used on four high school softball fields (Bartlett, Elgin, Larkin, Streamwood).

The mix is already in use at South Elgin High School with good results according to the proposal.

“The results led to the District asking for funding for the other four varsity softball fields, which was approved, and Bartlett High School was completed,” the proposal states. “Due to work constraints the other three fields were not completed within the fiscal year and approval is required again for the last three fields.”

Sue Kerr, the board’s president, asked if there was unused mix if it could be saved for future use to which Sheila Downs, director of plant operations, said it is applied once and “our intention is to use all of it and to do all four fields at each of the high schools.”

A proposal with Elgin Community College (ECC) will cost \$100,000, a not to exceed amount, which will be paid for by the nation’s taxpayers through grant funds if approved. The cost is for the use of ECC’s facilities for professional development.

Kerr asked if ECC was necessary based on a “large group” of teachers and Trisha Shrode, director of curriculum and instruction, confirmed saying 2,500 teachers will be trained.

A contract with Central Unit School District 301 in Burlington has a price tag of \$94,500 (education fund) for 63 U-46 students to take veterinary science courses in that school district. The cost is \$1,500 per student for 27 sophomores to take Introduction to

Agriculture and 36 juniors to take Veterinary Science.

Kerr asked if the courses are open to sophomores through seniors to which Kinasha Brown, director of educational pathways, said they were.

With Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH), the district is proposing a \$52,952 (education fund) expenditure for System 44 literacy resources at the secondary level.

“Through use of HMH coaching support and data analysis in collaboration with high schools, it has been determined that there is a strong need for System 44 at the high school level to service students who are not able to enter the Read 180 intervention (cognitively) due to multiple deficit areas in reading,” the proposal states. “System 44 would help scaffold the missing phonics deficits present for many high school students.”

A contract with Great Minds costs \$49,002 to be paid by the nation’s taxpayers through grant funding. It will go for professional development on Eureka Math for kindergarten through eighth grade.

For reading mastery and corrective reading resources, the district is proposing to spend \$42,694 (federal grant funds) with McGraw Hill.

A contract with Instructional Coaching Group costs \$37,590 (federal grant funds) for professional development of instructional coaches.


A proposal with Cengage Learning will cost \$30,412 (federal grant funds) for Canciones y Cuentos literacy resources.

Costing \$26,288 (federal grant funds), U-46 is proposing to continue using Imagine Learning and Imagine Español online literacy resources from Imagine Learning, Inc.

With Mackin Maker Professional Development, the district is proposing to spend \$25,000 (federal grant funds) for professional development of secondary librarians and library paraprofessionals. Kerr asked how many high schools will receive the professional development and Shrode responded all would.

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# Timeline established for new Dist. U-46 budget

By Seth Hancock

The Fiscal Year 2020 budget in School District U-46 is expected to be presented to the Board of Education at its upcoming meeting on Monday, Aug. 12.

The board approved of a resolution for displaying the budget as well as setting the public hearing date at its July 15 meeting. The vote was 4-0 with board members John Devereux, Veronica Noland and Donna Smith absent.

The budget will go on public display on Aug. 13, a public hearing is scheduled for Sept. 9 and a final vote by the board is planned for Sept. 23.

A tentative budget was presented in June which showed that the district

plans to continue hiking taxes and spending despite continued enrollment declines and continued poor academic results according to the annual report card by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

The tentative budget showed expenditures at \$579.7 million, up 3.9 percent or \$21.6 million from \$558.1 million, and revenue at \$581 million, up 3.6 percent or \$19.9 million from \$561.1 million. It's larger than the \$559.1 million in expenditures and \$564.3 million in revenue that was projected for FY2020 in the district's FY2019 budget.

U-46 is planning to again increase the property tax levy by the maximum

amount allowed under law, which is 1.9 percent. Property tax revenue has increased from \$302.5 million in 2013 to \$312.7 million in 2018 according to the district's property tax extension history.

Year over year, the district is expecting an additional \$5 million from the state under the "evidence-based" funding formula which U-46 claims is a conservative estimate.

"We kind of kept our expectations for increases from the state kind of low," claimed Dale Burnidge, director of financial operations. "We were only using about \$5 million a year from the evidence-based funding going forward."

To help pay for the "evidence-based" funding formula, that state hiked personal income tax rates by 32 percent and the corporate tax rate by 33.3 percent, increases lobbied for by U-46 and CEO Tony Sanders.

Illinois is currently \$160.7 billion in debt according to usdebtclock.org, it is ranked the worst in the nation for financial health according to George Mason University's Mercatus Center's annual ranking, the population has continued to decline and Gov. J.B. Pritzker recently signed 21 new tax and fee hikes with more being pro-

posed.

On the enrollment side, U-46 saw its fourth straight year of declines in 2018-2019 as it lost 633 students from the previous year to fall to 38,572 total. U-46 has lost 1,915 total students since 2014's enrollment of 40,487 but spending has increased nearly \$100 million during that time which is over \$70 million faster than the rate of inflation according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics inflation calculator.

Using the FY2019 budget projections and ISBE numbers, if the district's forecasts are realized there will have been a 13.1 percent drop in enrollment from 2012 to the 2021-22 school year while costs are expected to rise by 36.3 percent over the same period.

Despite the population loss, U-46 is planning to hire 54 new positions this upcoming school year under the tentative budget.

Also to occur at the Aug. 12 meeting is a vote on the FY2020 Northern Kane County Regional Vocational System budget, a joint-budget between four school districts. The budget shows revenues and expenditures both at \$1.8 million with a beginning and ending fund balance of \$628,842.

The budget is funded through Illinois and federal government grants.

## Firefighter to carve out thank you to district

By Frank Muisenga Jr.

A veteran firefighter decided he would make kitchen tables for three fire station locations in the village.

Capt. Bill Eckles, a South Elgin and Countryside Fire Protection District firefighter of more than 18 years said he had planned to make three tables, one each for the two new stations scheduled for construction and Station 22 located at 2055 McDonald Road.

Eckles said the kitchen table is a central spot in the fire station environment.

"These kitchen tables, we spend a lot of time around them; whether it's training, it's eating, socializing," said Eckles. "It's a big aspect of our time here, and we're here 24 hours a day, many days a week, and we spend a lot of time from breakfast to lunch to dinner, and other time sitting around these tables."

Eckles said he went to the site where new Station 21 is to be built with permission from the district and building contractor. He determined which trees, he suspected, could be used to make the tables. The contractor left the logs of the trees that Eckles had marked for him at the site and Eckles brought them back to his workshop at his home in Earlville.

Eckles added that there is about a two-month process before the wood can be used to make furniture.

"So, right now, I've just milled the logs, so we're cutting the logs, and then they need to be dried, so they're useable," Eckles said. "It'll probably be October before I actually start making tables out of them."

According to Eckles, his brother and brother-in-law assisted him with some of the process, but he estimates he does 80 percent of the work. Milling is

the process of making the wood flat, smooth and square or rectangular, and then furniture can be made from the wood. Eckles said most of the trees removed from the site for Station 21 were shredded into mulch, and the district tried to use the most environmentally friendly practices as possible.

"I'm excited that Capt. Eckles is able to use some of the trees we took down on the property and put them in all three stations," said Fire Chief Steve Wascher. "That'll be a nice memento to what used to be there, and we can all reminisce."

Eckles indicated he plans to use an epoxy resin filler along the center of the table with each station's unique emblem in the middle and he hopes each station's table will be a different color such as red or blue with a steel base.

Eckles added that the district agreed to pay for the supplies he might need, and he estimates each table will take roughly 25 hours to finish. He wants the three tables to be ready in February for all three stations.

Eckles said he started in the district in a voluntary position as a firefighter for seven years starting in 1993 and then he was hired by the South Elgin Fire District in 2000. The district has given him a career that has allowed him to reach professional goals and has helped him provide for his family. He decided to make the tables to thank the district for the support and experience it has given him.

Woodworking, according to Eckles, allows him to use his creativity and is an "expression."

"It's finding wood that has defects in it and so forth; that's unusual looking and seeing what you can make out of it," Eckles said.

## New law creates, extends select business tax credits

By Capitol News Illinois staff

Gov. J.B. Pritzker signed a bill Friday, Aug. 2 establishing a new tax credit for businesses that employ apprentices and extending for an additional five years another tax credit for investments in research and development.

The apprenticeship tax credit will cover up to \$3,500 of qualified educational expenses that employers incur on behalf of a qualifying apprentice, plus an additional \$1,500 if the company's principal place of business is in an "underserved area," which are geographic areas marked by either high poverty rates or high unemployment rates.

The research and development tax credit, which had been scheduled to sunset in 2021, provides a nonrefundable credit for 6.5 percent of qualifying expenditures for increasing research activities in Illinois. The new law extends that sunset through the end of 2026.

"An important part of my job is to transform our state into one of the most forward-thinking, economically prosperous, and innovative in the nation," Pritzker said in a statement.

The bill was strongly supported by the Illinois Manufacturers Association, which issued a statement Friday praising passage of the bill.

"Research and development is the lifeblood for innovative manufacturers and its passage sends a message to those companies to invest in our state," IMA President and CEO Mark Denzler said in a statement. "This legislation provides the needed certainty for companies to maximize their R&D dollars which correlate with good, high-paying jobs."

"In addition, manufacturers have spoken a lot about the need to close the skills gap and help resurrect those lost middle-class manufacturing jobs," Denzler continued. "The apprenticeship tax credit allows manufacturers to jumpstart the workforce and provide generational manufacturing jobs, which is the backbone of our state's economy."

Lead sponsors of the bill, Senate Bill 1591, were Sen. Ann Gillespie and Rep. Mark Walker, both Arlington Heights Democrats. The bill passed both chambers of the General Assembly by unanimous votes.

## Foundation scholarships awarded for 2019-20 school year

The Dennis Taylor Scholarship Foundation for the Performing Arts has announced the recipients of its scholarship awards for the 2019-20 school year.

According to the foundation, these scholarships benefit post-secondary students from the western suburbs of Chicago who have declared a major in the performing arts and demonstrated a passion for performance.

This year's winners include Andrew Hunter and Nathan Knautz of Batavia, Morgan Etnyre of Elgin, Yasmeen Abushawish and Samantha Resser of St. Charles, Greg Hoover of Sugar Grove, Grace Ryan of Bartlett, Katie Blakeley of Carol Stream, Laura Vesco of Hoffman Estates and Caitlin Preuss of Palatine.



Yasmeen Abushawish



Samantha Resser



Grace Ryan



Katie Blakeley

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# Pavilion picnic, pool party preface NNO

The Village of Bartlett, Bartlett Park District and Bartlett Fire Protection District hosted the National Night (NNO) "Picnic on the Park" on Friday, Aug. 2 at the Jim Jensen Pavilion. The event, in advance of NNO on Tuesday Aug, 6, included games, children's crafts, face-painting, balloon

sculpting, music by the **Bartlett High School** marching band, free food and giveaways, and miniature train and hot-air balloon. After the picnic, families headed over to the community center pool where police officers served free root beer floats and visited with guests.



Firefighter Jason Donat showed Irene Hussein how to put out a 'fire.'



Erin Teevans waved from the balloon while ascending into the air with Officer Kyle Rybowski and Glenn O'Connor..



Donna Popadicwz and Meghan Fitzpatrick came ashore after a ride down the lazy river.



Families and friends at the Jim Jensen Pavillion.



Teagan Block hammered in the last couple of nails of her model boat.  
(Examiner photos by Juli Schatz)