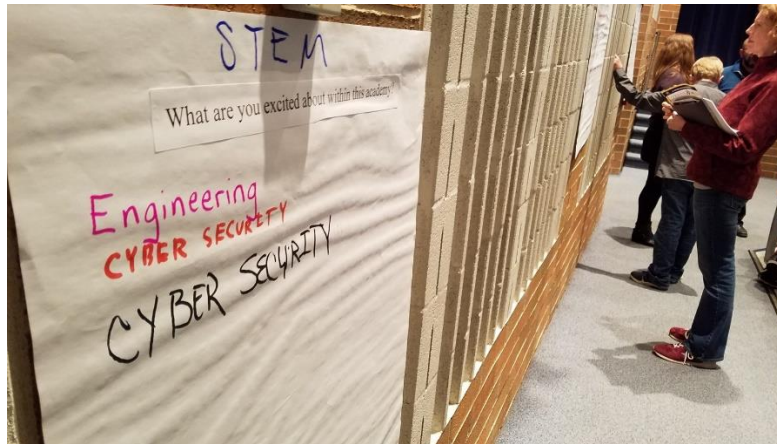


## Press Clippings 11/05/2018

---The Courier-News---11/04/2018

### U46 seeking input, questions from parents on career academy

By Rafael Guerrero



- Parents and students provide feedback on U46's career academies and pathways proposal Tuesday at a town hall meeting at Larkin High School in Elgin. Attendees were asked to cite what excited them about the proposed changes and what additional information they needed.

School District U46's decision to push the launch of its proposed career academies and educational pathways school system to the 2021-22 school year is a move welcomed by parent Thelma Smith.

The Bartlett woman said there are still too many unknowns about the change, which would essentially abandon the traditional high school setup for a program in which students would be grouped by the career paths they want to follow.

"I think they were jumping into something they didn't have all the answers to," Smith said.

The district is using the extra time to gather more public opinion and provide more information on how the new system would work. The first of seven town halls was held Tuesday at Larkin High School in Elgin.

U46's plan is to establish career academies for business, liberal arts, humanities, STEM and fine arts in each of the district's five high schools. Within each academy would be

educational pathways for such subjects as education, accounting, engineering and digital art.

The liberal arts academy would offer a plan similar to the current traditional high school curriculum.

Academies that already exist in the district would undergo revisions to become “magnet” academies.

Smith, one of about a dozen people to attend the Tuesday meeting, was accompanied by her daughter, Isabelle, a sixth-grade student at Horizon Elementary in Hanover Park. In general, she said, she liked the proposed educational pathways, particularly the addition of cybersecurity as a STEM educational pathway. Smith and her daughter said they both liked the idea that students might be able to graduate with both a high school diploma and an associate’s degree.

At the forum, administrators asked attendees to write their responses to three career academy questions posted on the wall: Are there any pathways that should be adopted/revised? What does U46 still need to address? What were they most excited about?

Kevin and Michelle Sweeney and their daughter, Caitlin, a sixth-grader at Lowrie Elementary School in Elgin, wrote they were excited that an accounting pathway was being discussed as a part of a business academy. They also wrote that the pathways should demonstrate employment opportunities for students.

“It’s interesting to see the different spins on all these (career academies and pathways),” Michelle Sweeney said.

Lela Majstorovic, U46’s assistant superintendent for secondary schools’ instruction and equity, said no final decisions have been made on how the academies will be structured. The district’s timeline calls for administrators to update the school board on progress and curriculum planning in February and present curriculum measures sometime between spring and summer 2021, Majstorovic said. The first ninth-grade class would go through a full implementation of the plan in fall 2021.

“This process will help us determine where we go,” Majstorovic said of the town halls. Future town hall meetings will be held at 7 p.m. at the following locations:

Streamwood High School, Nov. 6

Kimball Middle School, Nov. 14

Ellis Middle School, Nov. 15

Elgin High School, Nov. 28

Bartlett High School, Nov. 29

A Spanish-only session, Dec. 26 at the U46 central offices auditorium.

**---The Courier-News---11/04/2018**

## **Elgin fire officials: Refrigerant leak could be to blame for Huff School false alarm**

**By: Rafael Guerrero**



- Huff Elementary School in Elgin was evacuated Thursday after alarms were activated, possibly by a refrigerant leak, fire and school officials say.

A possible refrigerant leak set off alarms that led to an evacuation of Huff Elementary School in Elgin, fire officials said.

The Elgin Fire Department responded to a call about a possible hazardous material leak at the 801 Hastings St. building at 9:08 a.m.

Thursday, Battalion Chief Tim Michaels said in a news release. Alarms had activated in the school basement.

The school's engineering staff checked the area with monitors and confirmed an unusual odor and that alarms were functioning properly, the release said.

Hazmat technicians were dispatched from Elgin's and South Elgin's fire departments, the release said. Students and staff were moved to school buses as a precaution, and families were notified of the evacuation.

School staff said they believed a refrigerant leak may have triggered the alarm.

The area was thoroughly ventilated and the air quality monitored before the school was reopened, the release said.

The incident in question was isolated to the basement and never impacted classrooms or instructional space, the release said. No injuries were reported.

"(Elgin fire Chief) David Schmidt would like to thank the U46 faculty and staff for their professional response to this potentially serious condition," Michaels said in the release.

## SPORTS SECTION

---The Courier-News---11/04/2018

### NO REGRETS

## Playoff run ends, but St. Charles East savors moment

By: Paul Johnson



- St. Charles East's McKenna Slavik (8) and Kirsten Rogers block a kill attempt by Downers Grove North in the Class 4A Bartlett Supersectional on Friday. (H. Rick Bamman)

Coming off an AAU national title with Sports Performance last summer, senior McKenna Slavik relished leading untested St. Charles East this season. The Clemson-bound setter guided the Saints to Friday's Class 4A Bartlett Supersectional against Downers Grove North.

The Saints' unexpected run ended at the hands of the Trojans, 25-13, 25-17, but Slavik was proud of what the Saints accomplished.

"Honestly, I know no one thought we'd make it this far," Slavik said. "I didn't think we'd make it this far either. I had my doubts, too, but it was a really fun season. We did way better than last year, so we have something to be proud of."

East coach Jennie Kull marveled at the fact that Slavik was able to round up an unlikely cast and lead the Saints (25-15) to the program's first sectional title since 2011.

“She taught our kids so much,” Kull said. “I couldn’t be prouder of her. McKenna led them to where they are now. She’s just a great role model, and she’s going to do great things.”

Coming off a thrilling sectional run that featured three-game wins over Belvidere North and Huntley — each of whom entered the sectional with three losses — the Saints were unable to recapture the magic Friday.

The Saints beat Downers North twice in the last month, but the Trojans (29-11) were ready for everything the third time around.

“I always hate that third match,” Kull said. “It’s hard to beat a team three times, I keep saying it. I told them that this is a different team than we played the first two times, and they were. They had a real mindset to take care of business. They won when it mattered.”

East fell behind 12-3 in the first game and couldn’t recover. The second game started out better for the Saints, though they trailed the majority of the game. They cut the deficit to 16-13 on a kill by Slavik, but that was the closest they got.

“They were playing really good defense,” Slavik said. “They scouted us really well. They knew where we were going to hit it, and that is really hard to play against.”

The Saints had Slavik and middle hitter Kirsten Rogers back this season. Calli Gentry, who is naturally a setter, emerged as an undersized outside hitter along with Sam Urban. The rest of the team was largely untested at the varsity level.

Yet, they were a match away from reaching the state semifinals.

“I couldn’t be prouder of this group of kids,” Kull said. “I can tell you that I didn’t think we’d be here, after 14 losses (coming into the match). They went above and beyond what needed to happen to make it here.”