

Press Clippings - 5/23/2023

– Chicago Tribune –

Suzanne Johnson, longtime U-46 administrator and EHS grad, to be the district's new superintendent

May 23, 2023

By Mike Danahey - The Courier-News



Suzanne Johnson, left, newly appointed superintendent of School District U-46, is seen here May 1 with School Board President Sue Kerr, center, and outgoing board member Eva Porter. (School District U-46)

Suzanne Johnson, a 25-year educator with School District U-46, will be its next superintendent.

The School Board announced Tuesday that Johnson, deputy superintendent of instruction and interim superintendent since February, would fill the job effective July 1 pending completion of contract negotiations and the board's final approval in June.

"The board is delighted to welcome Dr. Johnson as our new superintendent," board President Sue Kerr said in a prepared statement. "We look forward to working with her and are excited about the future of U-46."

Johnson's salary and benefits will be part of the contract that's to be negotiated.

When Tony Sanders left the job as head of the state's second largest school district to become Illinois state superintendent of schools, his base salary was \$269,243. He had been employed by U-46 for 16 years, including nearly six as CEO and superintendent.

Johnson began her career in education at U-46 nearly 26 years ago. She's served in her deputy superintendent role for the last five years.

In February, Kerr said the board thought Johnson was a good choice for interim superintendent because of her knowledge of the district, her personality and her deep dedication to U-46.

Johnson, 47, lives with her family in Streamwood and is a graduate of Elgin High School, according to district information.

After teaching language arts at Canton Middle School in Streamwood at the start of her career, her tenure also has included stints as associate principal and principal at Bartlett High School and assistant superintendent of teaching and learning.

Johnson has a bachelor's degree from the University of Iowa, a master's degree in curriculum and instruction from DePaul University, and a doctorate in curriculum and instruction from the University of Illinois-Chicago.

According to her LinkedIn profile, she was named Kane County Administrator of the Year in 2017 and was a 2019 Elgin Family Services Association Friend of the Families honoree. She described the district as an institution that "models values including: dreaming big, being bold and daring, driving potential, being tenacious and building connections."

The board hired consultants from Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates to help with the search for Sanders' replacement, opting to keep the pool of candidates internal so ongoing projects — including a major capital improvement plan and the transition to a career-path high school system — would not be disrupted.

Last week, the board held in-person interviews with the job finalists and Monday night met to vote on their selection for the job.

Mike Danahey is a freelance reporter for The Courier-News.

– Daily Herald –

U-46 makes new superintendent official

May 24, 2023

By Alicia Fabbre



Suzanne Johnson



Suzanne Johnson, the new superintendent for Elgin Area School District U-46, attended a February reception for former Superintendent Tony Sanders at South Elgin High School. (John Starks/jstarks@dailyherald.com)

The title of superintendent is new, but Suzanne Johnson is no stranger to Elgin Area School District U-46.

Officials Tuesday announced the Elgin High School alum will be the district's new superintendent. Johnson has been serving as the interim superintendent since late

February, when her predecessor, Tony Sanders, was named [the state superintendent of education](#).

Johnson has spent her 26-year career in the district, starting as a **language arts teacher at Canton Middle School** in Streamwood. Before joining the district's administrative team in 2013, **Johnson** served as **principal at Bartlett High School**. She served as **deputy superintendent of instruction** for five years before being named **interim superintendent** in February.

"The board is delighted to welcome **Dr. Johnson** as our new superintendent," said **Susan Kerr, U-46 school board president**. "We look forward to working with her and are excited about the future of **U-46**."

Johnson was not available for comment Tuesday.

Board members are expected to approve **Johnson's** contract in June. She will assume her duties as superintendent on July 1.

Johnson was selected after an internal [search that](#) included community input.

"Within **U-46**, **Dr. Johnson** is known for her deep understanding of instructional practices and a commitment to fostering academic excellence," according to a news release from **U-46**.

Johnson has an undergraduate degree from the University of Iowa and a master's degree in curriculum and instruction from DePaul University. She completed a doctorate in curriculum and instruction at the University of Illinois-Chicago.

Johnson and her husband, Ben, live in Streamwood with their two children, Will and Evan.

– NIU Today –

NIU PLEDGE, Elgin Community College add 18 elementary teachers to pipeline

May 23, 2023

The numbers tell an amazing story.

Eighteen B.S.Ed. in Elementary Education majors started the third cohort of the College of Education's PLEDGE (Partnering to Lead and Empower District-Grown Educators) program with Elgin Community College in the fall semester of 2021.

All 18 finished, gathering May 4 to celebrate their accomplishments after two years of being NIU Huskies without ever needing to travel to DeKalb while the coursework came to them and clinical experiences and student teaching were completed in the Elgin area.

Graduating Saturday, May 13, are Arminda Alvarez, Melissa Conley, Maria Gomez, Erica Kick, Natalie Koczwara, Sara Lepek, Cristal Lugo, Lauren Masciopinto, Colleen Morales, Lauren Nacht, Jazmin Navarro, Hilda Pimentel, Madeline Puchek, Rebeca Solis, Cassidy Szymanski, Sheila Vasquez, Priscila Velazquez and Alondra Vivanco.

Such success is becoming a trend; the same 100% completion rate was achieved by the 15 students in the first cohort and the 20 students who followed a year later.

Nearly 90% of those 35 graduates are currently teaching in Illinois schools, and nearly 70% of them are in their hometown classrooms of **School District U-46** and District 300.

Five members of the Class of 2023 already have secured jobs for the fall, and a dozen others are actively interviewing with nearby school districts. Some were quick to meet and greet **Suzanne Johnson, the interim superintendent of U-46**, who not only attended the reception on the ECC campus but also assured the students that she had taken notes.

Ongoing is Cohort Four, which began last summer and is producing another 14 future teachers; 25 more are expected to begin their two-year journey this fall. Seventeen students in the first cohort of Early Childhood Education majors started last summer, and 10 more are anticipated to follow suit this summer.

But it's the students themselves who tell the most amazing stories.

Cristal Lugo, already hired as a dual-language, second-grade teacher in District 300 for the fall, grew up in Carpentersville.

“I came from the lower socioeconomic perspective, so now I feel like I want to impact Latino communities like those teachers who impacted me,” says Lugo, who now lives in Crystal Lake. “The teachers I had in the past inspired me to be one of them.”

Lugo married and started a family before joining the ECC-NIU cohort; PLEDGE’s Elgin-only delivery of classes, along with the help of her “loving and supportive husband,” put her bachelor’s degree within reach.

She appreciates her coursework in classroom management, and already has applied some of the curriculum from her literature classes in her student-teaching placement.

With her career in education soon to begin, she hopes that sharing the Latino heritage of her future students will similarly empower them to dream big as she has.

“I’m most looking forward to making an impact on these children’s lives. Obviously, I’m looking forward to teaching them and guiding them to the right path, but I definitely want to make sure I can let them know that anything’s possible if they want it,” Lugo says.

“I’m a teacher speaking their own language and able to communicate with them in both languages,” she adds, “and when they know that, if I came from a community like that, and when they see the possibilities that they have, they know they can also become whatever they want.”

Jazmin Navarro, a graduate of **Elgin Larkin High School**, remembers looking up to her teachers in **U-46** as they filled her with knowledge and skills to succeed.

Becoming a teacher herself makes sense.

“I’m looking forward to all of it,” says Navarro, who is joining the faculty of District 300’s Golfview Elementary School this fall, “the lesson-planning, being with the other teachers and, most of all, being with the students.”

Taking the PLEDGE route provided “amazing teachers” while allowing her to save money and stay close to her family, who she says are “very proud and very happy. I can’t even explain. There’s just no words for it now.”





Priscila Velazquez also draws influence from her teachers in U-46.

Following her transition out of the bilingual program, however, her Hispanic teachers were few – and in that she found a calling.

“Being Hispanic, and learning about the dual-language program being offered in schools now, I thought that this was an amazing opportunity for me to be able to connect with students and to be able to teach in Spanish and English at the same time,” Velazquez says. “It’s wonderful.”

She believes it’s important to provide Hispanic children with a teacher who looks like them, and is excited to start doing so this fall at Lakewood Elementary School in Carpentersville.

“They can feel that connection,” she says, “and when they see someone as a role model, it’s like, ‘I can make it. I can go to the university. I can do whatever I want.’ ”

Alondra Vivanco shares that mission.

“I really want to give back to the community and just show some students of mine who are Hispanic – from a different culture – that they can make it,” says Vivanco, who is from Carpentersville. “I just want to inspire them to be the best versions of themselves.”

Doing so is paying it forward as she remains grateful for her own fourth-grade teacher from a dozen years ago.

“I was going through a tough time, and she was very supportive. She was there for me,” Vivanco says. “The same empathy she showed me I want to give back to some of my students.”

NIU’s program in Elgin was “super-helpful, quick and easy” as well as convenient, she says.

“My life is here, and I am really family-oriented,” she says. “I loved all the teachers, and I feel so prepared for next year. I felt so supported, and I feel that the teachers were giving me so many strategies I can use in the future. I’m so excited to try all those strategies and all the new things I learned. I really am excited to try bridging, Total Physical Response and all those things. I can’t wait to continue. I just want to have my own class. I’m ready.”

LAURIE ELISH-PIPER, DEAN of the NIU College of Education, would agree.

ECC graduates who enroll in PLEDGE “are among the most well-prepared teacher-candidates that we get from any community college in the state of Illinois,” Elish-Piper told the audience at the May 4 reception. “They are motivated, smart, prepared, resilient, collaborative and truly remarkable.”

To read the full article, click [here](#).

– Daily Herald –

Memorial Day ceremonies, parades and festivals in the suburbs and beyond

May 24, 2023

By Susan Klovstad

Memorial Day is Monday, May 29. Events this week and over the weekend include parades and observances in honor of those who made the ultimate sacrifice, as well as festivals, concerts, shows and races.

Here’s a list to help you plan.

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Monday, May 29

Elgin Memorial Day services: Starting at 8:30 a.m. Monday, May 29, there will be various events throughout Elgin. Catholic Mass along with a combined color guard, rifle salute and the playing of taps at 8:30 a.m. at Mount Hope Cemetery, 1001 Villa St. Ceremony with a combined color guard, a rifle salute and the playing of taps at 9 a.m. at Lakewood Memorial Park, 30W730 Route 20. At 9:30 a.m., the Elgin Navy Club and the Elgin Marine Corps League program, designed to pay tribute to veterans interred at sea, with the Elgin Master Chorale, will spread flowers into the Fox River along with a rifle salute and the playing of taps at Elgin Veterans Memorial Park, 270 N. Grove Ave. At 11 a.m. at Bluff City Cemetery, 945 Bluff City Blvd., the ceremony will pay tribute to the 75th anniversary of the integration of U.S. Armed Forces. The keynote speaker will be Stanley “Curly” Thompson, Marine Corps veteran and Commander of Rockford American Legion Post 340. Features the Elgin Master Chorale, **Elgin High School Band**, and Elgin’s Poet Laureate Gareth Mann. A free shuttle bus will pick up riders at the main gate and east gate before and after. Free.elginmemorialday.org.

To read the full article, click [here](#).

– Examiner of Bartlett –

Resource proposal gains approval of U-46 board

(This article ran in the Examiner of South Elgin/Examiner of Streamwood)

May 24, 2023

By Seth Hancock

The Board of Education in School District U-46 unanimously approved, via a 7-0 vote, of a middle school math resource proposal at its meeting on Monday, May 1.

The approval is for McGraw Hill's Reveal Math resource to be used for sixth through eighth grade math. The cost is \$931,544, paid from the education fund, through 2029-2030.

“The resource selected by the curriculum team, Reveal Math, is a blended print and digital resource that includes a consumable student book along with digital, hands-on resources,” the proposal states. “This combination allows students to have a balanced and engaging learning experience in the mathematics classroom. This resource is also fully available in Spanish to support our Dual Language program.”

The resource will be implemented in 2023-2024 for seventh and eighth grade, and sixth grade will be added in 2025- 2026 when middle school is expanded to include sixth grade.

The resource will replace Eureka Math, which has been used since 2016. The proposal stated teachers had complaints about the resource “not providing enough materials or strategies to meet the needs and range of learners in their classrooms. As a result, teachers began using various resources found on the internet and they also developed their own worksheets in an attempt to best meet students’ needs.”

“To address the lack of materials to support a range of learners, the curriculum team selected a new resource, Reveal Math, that is aligned to standards and meets the usability expectations set forward by Edreports.org,” the proposal added. “Reveal Math provides the materials and strategies to scaffold lessons, support our population of English Language Learners, as well as advance learning for students. It also incorporates an online platform and interactive technology tools to capture student interest and engagement in the classroom.”

Also approved by a 7-0 vote was the final 2022-2023 school calendar showing the final day of school as Wednesday, May 31 with 176 student attendance days and 184 teacher

attendance days. The final calendar must be approved and submitted to the Kane County Regional Office of Education.

– Examiner of Bartlett –

District U-46 approves various expense proposals

(This article ran in the Examiner of South Elgin/Examiner of Streamwood)

May 24, 2023

By Seth Hancock

The Board of Education in **School District U-46** unanimously approved \$362,050 in expenditure proposals at its meeting on Monday, May 1.

Included was \$227,050 with Warehouse Direct, to be paid for through operations and maintenance funds, for the purchase of feminine hygiene products and vending machines. The cost is for five years.

The proposal states that a 2017 state law, House Bill 3215, requires the products to be available “at no cost to students” in all government school bathrooms. It’s for all secondary schools.

“This contract will ensure **School District U-46’s** compliance with the law that went into effect in 2018 by providing feminine hygiene products at no cost to students in the bathrooms of school buildings,” the proposal states.

The proposal adds: “The bid consisted of the two different feminine hygiene consumable products and the vending machines that distribute them at no charge. The vending machines are a one-time purchase, with the exception of replacing broken or damaged machines on an as needed basis, but the feminine hygiene consumable products will be an annual expense moving forward.”

Office Depot did have the lowest bid, \$154,753, but its bid “was incomplete,” the proposal states. Warehouse Direct was the lowest of three remaining bids, \$252,300 being the highest.

Additionally, a \$135,000 proposal (operations and maintenance funds) with DLA Architects was approved for architectural services for planned capital improvements.

“**School District U-46** is seeking assistance in the conceptual capital improvement planning process for facilities designated through the facilities master plan,” the proposal states. “This would include work to address our oldest elementary schools,

support the migration of 6th grade into our middle schools, and identify sites to host additional Pre-K programming. The conceptual capital improvement plan will include program and site studies for each of the impacted schools, feasibility studies, impact analyses, conceptual designs, and tentative schedules for each identified project.”

Also approved was \$5.9 million in itemized bills.

– Examiner of Streamwood –

Sabres baseball captures share of conference title

May 24, 2023

By Seth Hancock

The **Streamwood** baseball team clinched a share of the Upstate Eight Conference title with an 11-1 win at Fenton coupled with **Bartlett** defeating **South Elgin** 7-4 the same day on Wednesday, May 17.

Both the **Sabres and South Elgin** finished 15-3 in the league, and the teams split their series the previous week.

Chris Lara (three RBI), Miguel Rodriguez (RBI) and Frank Sanchez (RBI) all had two hits in the Fenton win and Joshua Wilder (three RBI) tripled, and Joseph Matuszak allowed one run on six hits and a walk while striking out five in five innings of work for the win.

“I am so happy for our program and our guys,” said **Streamwood coach Dan Jennings** of the UEC title. “These seniors are my first full group (three years plus COVID canceled year) as a head coach, and this was always something that they believed they could attain. These guys have worked so hard to get here and that's why it is so special. They have earned everything.”

The **Sabres** swept Fenton with a 10-0 win at **Streamwood** on Monday, May 15. Austin Paskewic (3-for-3, two RBI), Nick Weaver (2-for-2, two RBI) and Isaiah Ortiz (2-for-3, RBI) led the offense, and Rodriguez tossed a four-hit shutout with eight strikeouts.

Streamwood went on to split a pair of non-conference games to end the week, an 8-3 loss to Huntley at **Streamwood** on Thursday, May 18 and an 11-10 win at Palatine on Saturday, May 20.

The **South Elgin** series saw the **Sabres** take Game 1 in an exciting comeback win, 6-5 on Tuesday, May 9 at **Streamwood**. Trailing 5-4, the **Sabres** loaded the bases in the bottom

of the seventh inning when a Sanchez RBI fielder's choice brought in the tying run with an errant throw allowing the winning run to cross.

South Elgin returned the favor in Game 2 using a five-run sixth inning to overcome a 7-4 deficit and take a 9- 7 win on Wednesday, May 10 at **South Elgin**.

The **Sabres** ended that week with a 6- 3 non conference loss against Schaumburg on Thursday, May 11 at Boomers Stadium in Schaumburg and a 7-5 non conference win on senior day against Elk Grove Village on Saturday, May 13 at **Streamwood**. Seniors Weaver (3-for-4, double), Joey Lunz (2-for-3, double, three RBI), Vinnie Lunz (2-for 2, two RBI) and Lara (2-for-3, RBI) led on senior day.

Streamwood, now 24-8-1 overall, is the top-seed in the **Larkin** Regional and opens with No. 8 **Elgin**.

– Courier-News –

Local Scoreboard

May 24, 2023

MONDAY'S RESULTS HIGH SCHOOLS

BOYS VOLLEYBALL REGIONAL QUARTERFINALS

FREMD

Geneva d. Hoffman Estates 25-22, 25-16

South Elgin d. Fenton 25-16, 25-20

Streamwood d. Rolling Meadows 25-20, 25-23

Fremd d. **Larkin** 25-7, 25-7

GLENBARD WEST

Bartlett d. Wheaton Academy 25-22, 19-25, 25-22

Prospect d. **Elgin** 25-12, 25-10

SATURDAY'S RESULTS

HIGH SCHOOLS

BASEBALL

Antioch 4, Huntley 3

Antioch: T.J. Schuyler 2 HRs.

Buffalo Grove 8, South Elgin 3

Burlington Central 10-3, Normal West 2-5

Cary-Grove 10, Lake Forest 1

Evanston 5, Stevenson 2

Glenbrook North 12, Libertyville 2 (5 innings)

Grayslake North 3, Wheeling 1

Grayslake North (15-16): Jacob Donohue 3-for-3, RBI.

Grant 6, Deerfield 3

Grant (13-16): Adrian Medina 2 RBIs. Caleb Royer 2 RBIs.

Highland Park 9, Evergreen Park 6

Highland Park (14-15): Nicholas Blumer 2 RBIs.

Lake Zurich 6, Grayslake Central 4

Lake Zurich (13-12): Jonathan Fleaka tiebreaking double in top 7th.

Marmion 6, Wheaton North 0

Mundelein 5, Prairie Ridge 2

Mundelein (20-9): Lucas Ganan 2-for-3, HR, 3 RBIs.

St. Charles East 2, Neuqua Valley 0

St. Charles East (25-4): Nick Miller RBI.

St. Charles North 4, Barrington 2

Waubonsie Valley 5, Romeoville 4

Wheaton Warrenville South 6, Metea Valley 2

GIRLS SOCCER

CLASS 3A REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

SOUTH ELGIN

Geneva 1, South Elgin 0

FRIDAY'S RESULTS

HIGH SCHOOLS

BASEBALL

Benet 6, Bolingbrook 2

Benet (16-12): Cole Rosenthal 3-for-4, 2 runs.

Carmel 7, Vernon Hills 4

Carmel (16-15-2): Adam Galdoni 3-for-3, HR, 4 RBIs.

Cary-Grove 6, Lake Zurich 5

Geneseo 16, Plano 2 (5 innings)

Grayslake North 6, Grayslake Central 1

Grayslake North (14-16): Chris Filas 2 RBIs.

Jacobs 9, Geneva 7

Jacobs (15-18): Owen Ziaja GW grand slam in bottom 7th.

Kaneland 11, St. Charles East 4

Kaneland (19-12): Patrick Collins 3-for-4, 2 RBIs.

Libertyville 9, Highland Park 2

Lincoln-Way East 8, Neuqua Valley 5

Mundelein 6, St. Viator 2

Mundelein (19-9): Justin Clapp 2-for-3, 2 RBIs.

Warren 7, Glenbrook South 3

West Chicago 8, Larkin 5

SOFTBALL

Barrington 14, Jacobs 12

Batavia 9, Crystal Lake South 8 (9 innings)

Batavia: Bella Zagotta 2-for-4, 2 RBIs.

Carmel 6, Loyola 2

Fremd 4, Grant 0

Glenbard South 1, Larkin 1

Libertyville 6, Cary-Grove 2

Libertyville (22-11): Adriana Callahan 2 runs.

Naperville North 4, Benet 3

Naperville North (20-7): Olivia Hebron 2 runs: scored GW run in top 7th.

Oswego 6, Bolingbrook 0

Oswego (23-11): Aubriella Garza 2-for-4, 2 RBIs.

St. Francis 3, Geneva 2

St. Charles North 6, South Elgin 3

St. Charles North (20-6): Sophia Olman 2 RBIs.

Vernon Hills 10, Lake Zurich 0 (5 innings)

Vernon Hills (14-20): Katie Cir 3 RBIs.

Warren 6, Taft 1

Wauconda 4, Glenbard North 2

Wauconda (24-9): Savannah Powers 2-for-3, 3 RBIs.

Compiled by Josh Krockey.

To read the full article, click [here](#).