

Press Clippings 03-03-21

---The Courier-News--- 03/03/2021

U-46 eyes post-pandemic pathways plan

District bringing in help to review school equity issues

By Karie Luc Angell

School District U-46 will use consultants and focus groups to examine the last school year and what lessons were learned from the pandemic as officials move forward on implementing the pathways plan and resolving equity issues, Superintendent Tony Sanders said Monday.

“If there are some blessings to come out of COVID, one of them could be us really rethinking what public education looks like in School District U-46,” Sanders told the school board. “If schools look the same on the heels of COVID, then we’ve done something wrong.”

Part of that will be reviewing what can be applied as the district makes the transition to an education pathways system in which high school students choose an academy — fine arts, human services, liberal arts, business and STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) — that best matches their career goals.

“I really want to take this to heart as we think about the new organizational structure for next year, the way we intend to support schools for next school year and beyond, as well as how do we close the gaps for students as they return to us to a more in-person format,” Sanders said.

A presentation made to the board also reviewed the more comprehensive, coordinated services needed to provide early intervention for struggling students and ways to address the negative state designation given to the district in 2018 because of its student equity problems.

“When we don’t have good quality core instruction for all students across all of U-46, then sometimes we have some disproportionate data,” Sanders told the board.

“And one of the areas that we’ve been identified by the state for being disproportionate is in our overidentification of African American male students as being emotionally disabled,” he said.

Kelly Gilbert, the district’s coordinator of early intervention services, said disproportionality is deeply rooted and widespread across the education system in the United States.

Racial inequities come into play.

“African-American students in School District U-46 were found to be greater than six times as likely as non-African-American students to be found eligible for special education services under the disability category of emotional disability across four consecutive years,” Gilbert said. “School District U-46 falls into significant disproportionately and is now mandated to address this issue.

“It starts in the classroom,” she said, “and cumulatively leads to visibly disproportionate patterns in schools, districts, states and the nation as a whole.”

District U-46 is not the only one to be cited yearly for this situation, Gilbert said.

“Black and brown students, the children who are most often perceived as different culturally and linguistically, are at risk in our schools,” she said. “There are no easy answers. ... Addressing and eventually remediating disproportionately will require attention and commitment of personal and fiscal resources.”

Once students with disabilities are identified as eligible for special needs, they generally remain in special education classes for the duration of their schooling, she said.

Gilbert said professional development, equity training, new hires and surveys help to address the situation.

“We’ve had to go slow to go fast,” she said of identifying root causes. “There are many moving pieces. ... (But) this will stop here in our district and we will remediate this designation we’ve received.”

---Albuquerque Journal--- 03/03/2021

APS superintendent finalist addresses community, board questions

BY: SHELBY PEREA / JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Ignacio Ruiz, assistant superintendent for the Clark County School District in Nevada, said he grew up in a community similar to Albuquerque and that’s part of the reason he wants to become the next Albuquerque Public Schools superintendent.

“I was an English learner going into school,” he said.

He playfully cited the state’s famous chile as another big draw to make the move.

Ruiz is now one of three finalists for the job after **Ushma Shah**, assistant superintendent of elementary schools, instruction and equity for **School District U-46** in Illinois, withdrew her application.

“While I was excited to potentially make the move to New Mexico, recent personal matters have underscored the importance of remaining local at this time,” Shah wrote in a letter to the APS Board of Education dated Feb. 28.

Ruiz spent Monday night answering community questions and being publicly interviewed by board members.



Ignacio Ruiz, assistant superintendent for the Clark County School District in Nevada, spoke to the Albuquerque Public Schools community virtually on Monday night after being named an APS superintendent finalist.

The bilingual administrator, who calls himself a lifelong educator and a collaborative leader, emphasized his experience in other large, urban districts.

Ruiz said the district he is at now has 310,000 students and over 300 schools. Part of his job is overseeing an English language learner division.

“I really feel like I’d be of service to the APS community,” he said.

When asked about boosting academics, Ruiz said he wants to raise student expectations.

“Grade-level standards are the floor, not the ceiling,” he said. “Too many times, we see the grade-level standards and that’s where we stop.”

He also stressed targeting resources at students who are struggling.

Ruiz was also asked about reopening schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We need to get our kiddos back in school,” he said. “We need to be able to see them and be able to support them – not only with the instructional piece but also ... that social, emotional piece.”

The superintendent finalist said partnerships with local health agencies and detailed protocols are key. He also stressed community communication is a crucial aspect of successfully reopening schools.

According to an updated schedule, APS Interim Superintendent Scott Elder will go through the same process on Tuesday and Bolgen Vargas, a self-employed consultant and former superintendent of Rochester City School District in New York, will be under the spotlight on Thursday.

Community forums are 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. and interviews are 7:15 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., all of which are livestreamed. The link is at [APS.edu](https://www.aps.edu).

The board has been looking for a permanent leader to succeed Raquel Reedy and has already conducted initial interviews with six semifinalists. The aim is to announce the superintendent selection as early as Friday.

---The T74 Million--- 03/02/2021

Parents Expected to Opt Children Out of Spring Testing in Large Numbers, Especially in Places Where Schools Haven’t Reopened



Therren Miller, 10, is a student in the Pflugerville Independent School District in Texas. His mother Yolanda Miller is opposed to standardized testing this year. (Yolanda Miller)

The U.S. Department of Education might expect standardized assessments this year, but state and district leaders are predicting a lot of empty seats. While parents generally want more data on their children’s performance, many say they’re unwilling to send them back to school during the pandemic just to take a test.

In Florida, more than 7,000 parents have signed petitions asking for state assessments to be cancelled. Others in Florida’s Duval County want an option to take the test virtually. And in the

District of Columbia, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education will “seek to suspend” an annual assessment following requests from parents.

Many education groups last week commended the department for not canceling assessments outright and instead offering broad flexibility for when and how they can be given. They argue that comparable data across districts and by students’ race and poverty level is needed to measure the impact of the pandemic on children’s learning. Even with that leeway, however, some state and district leaders continue to speak out against the department’s decision, saying that it disregards the ongoing upheaval caused by school closures

On Thursday, New York City schools Chancellor Richard Carranza, who later announced he is stepping down, sent shock waves by suggesting parents in the nation’s largest school district exercise their right to opt out of assessments if they’re opposed to their children taking them.

Outgoing New York City schools Chancellor Richard Carranza discusses assessments for this year:

In addition, lawmakers in Texas have asked Gov. Greg Abbott to create a formal process for parents to opt out.

“We still do not feel comfortable, as Black and brown parents, to send our children to an in-school environment,” said Meenal McNary, who has three children in the Round Rock Independent School District, north of Austin, Texas. “Assessing students during this time only adds the trauma that they may be experiencing.”

Federal law requires states to annually test “not less than 95 percent of all students” in reading and math, as well as 95 percent of low-income students, English learners, students with disabilities and those in major racial and ethnic groups. Testing almost all students provides more accurate results, but the department last week noted that states could request a waiver from that requirement.

The law requires districts with a policy in place to let parents know they can opt their children out of annual assessments, if they ask. In a normal year, if more than 5 percent of students opt out, those additional students would be considered not proficient in overall results, which can lower a school’s rating on state report cards.

Whether or not parents officially opt out, some district leaders expect little or no participation.



School District U-46 Superintendent Tony Sanders wrote a letter asking the U.S. Department of Education to cancel assessments this year and got almost 700 superintendents to sign it. (School District U-46)

“I do not know how I could possibly compel 13,700 students who are learning from home to come into a school building for a test when I cannot get them to come in to learn,” said **Tony Sanders, superintendent of School District U-46**, near Chicago.

Prior to last week’s federal testing announcement, he wrote a letter to the department, joined by almost 700 other Illinois superintendents, asking that assessments be waived this year.

And in Georgia, where state Superintendent Richard Woods came out early last fall requesting a waiver from testing for a second year, state education department spokeswoman Meghan Frick said, “We certainly expect that some parents who have opted for virtual learning, specifically if they’ve done so because their child or a member of the household is high-risk, will choose not to have their student enter a school building to take the test.”

The California Department of Education has asked for the maximum flexibility from the department, including a waiver from any penalties if less than 95 percent of students participate in assessments. New Mexico has also requested a waiver from that requirement and will instead test a sample of students.

Parents split on testing

Polls show that parents are split on the issue of assessments. New results from the National PTA and Learning Heroes, a nonprofit that advocates for parents’ access to data, shows that 52 percent support testing this spring. The rate climbed to 60 percent when parents were told that the stakes would likely be lower. For example, the results will not be used to rate schools or determine students’ promotion to the next grade.

In addition, new data released Monday from the National Parents Union, a network of parent advocacy groups, shows about “half of parents consistently support assessments as a means to determining what kids need and where there might be challenges,” said Keri Rodrigues, president of the organization.

Some parents say they have gleaned some of that insight from observing their children’s remote learning and don’t feel assessments would tell them anything they don’t already know. Yolanda Miller, another Texas parent, brought her 10-year-old son Therren into her home office so she could observe him in remote classes and help if needed. She noticed that he gets confused about the teacher’s expectations. Her 13-year-old daughter Madison, however, is doing well in distance learning.

“I feel that students are not receiving quality lessons during these times and teachers are trying to stay afloat the best they can,” said Miller, whose children are in the Pflugerville Independent School District, also in the Austin area. “This is not the time to assess students’ growth and learning via the [state test]. It’s only going to reflect what parents and teachers already know. Everyone is struggling — students and teachers. Look at the grade book.”

Some parents are seeking expertise on how to excuse their children from assessments. Bob Schaeffer, the interim executive director of FairTest: National Center for Fair & Open Testing, said website traffic to the organization’s opt-out guide is more than seven times higher than it was at this point last year. He said the Biden administration “severely underestimated” reactions by parents and educators to the announcement that assessments would go forward.

‘We need to know how to do this’

Parental views on the matter tend to hinge a lot on the extent to which students have already returned to the classroom. Scott Marion, executive director of the New Hampshire-based

Center for Assessment, said he expects opt-outs to be “huge in states that are engaged in largely remote learning if they ask kids to come into buildings to test.”



Scott Marion

According to one tracker, almost 28 percent of students are still attending virtual-only schools, with the western states and Maryland least likely to have students back in school.

But Paige Kowalski, executive vice president of the Data Quality Campaign, said if parents do opt out, it will be difficult to draw assumptions about why. “There is a critical difference between a parent who wants to make a statement about policy and a parent with three small children at home sharing one device on weak broadband,” she said.

Concerns remain that allowing virtual assessments would taint the results because of the possibility of cheating. But Kowalski said it’s time to solve that dilemma.

“We can’t just say remote assessments don’t work for everybody in this country,” she said. “I don’t think this is our last time to do school at home. We need to know how to do this.”

Other experts see current movements to opt out as part of a larger trend.



Morgan Polikoff, a professor at the University of Southern California, said parents’ opposition to testing this year is part of a “backlash” that’s been building for years. (University of Southern California)

“There’s a broader anti-test backlash that’s been brewing for many years and that has accelerated under the pandemic and in response to recent racial reckonings,” said Morgan Polikoff, an educator professor at the University of Southern California. “I don’t see that slowing down just because schools are opening up.”

The Examiner of STREAMWOOD

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"IF I WERE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN A GOVERNMENT WITHOUT A NEWSPAPER OR A NEWSPAPER WITHOUT A GOVERNMENT, I WOULD NOT HESITATE TO CHOOSE THE LATTER." THOMAS JEFFERSON

50 cents
March 3, 2021

SHS girls hoops
win two of three
See Page 3

Cheap Seats:
Law and orders
See Page 8

Tax abatement, fee waiver passed by District U-46

By Seth Hancock

The Board of Education in School District U-46 unanimously approved of a tax abatement and a waiver of most school fees in 2021-2022 at its meeting on Monday, Feb. 22.

The abatement amount is \$9.6 million on a portion of the 2020 debt service levy totaling \$66 million.

The district annually raises its property tax levy by the maximum amount under the law, even as enrollment continues to drop. The stated purpose for the abatement is to provide some relief for taxpayers, but administrators have admitted in the past the

measure effectively kicks the can down the road preserving the tax increases for taxpayers to pay in the future.

Board member Melissa Owens called it a "fact" that U-46 has to "take benefit of the full levy every year" because of inflation. Illinois law does not require that school districts raise their property tax levy.

This is the sixth year an abatement has been done. U-46 has abated \$38.7 million during that time.

Regarding fees, all instructional fees will be waived for the coming school year, which the district said will cost between \$2.3 million and \$2.5 million. Optional fees, like athletics and driver's education, will be charged and will remain largely the same.

The only change in optional fees is for the high school lifeguard course fee, which will increase from \$34 to

\$45.75.

Additionally, nearly \$500,000 in expenditure proposals along with \$7.3 million in itemized bills were also unanimously approved.

Included was \$308,000 (operations and maintenance fund) to Oak Brook Mechanical Services, Inc. for an HVAC replacement project at the district's business services and grounds department building and a \$126,278 (education fund) contract renewal with Tyler Technologies for support and licensing for the district's human resource, finance and payroll software MUNIS.

A proposal costing \$37,415 (operations and maintenance fund) was presented and approved that evening for a fire alarm control panel replacement at Elgin's Ellis Middle School. The district has already purchased the equipment from Johnson Controls after the fire alarm system failed at Ellis, according to the proposal.

Building improvements approved via board vote

By Kristin Carreno

Trustees voted unanimously in favor of purchasing furniture and walls for the Public Works Building expansion and remodeling project at a cost of \$192,167 from Krueger International (KI), Green Bay, Wisconsin at the Village Board meeting on Thursday, Feb. 18.

"If you recall back in 2019 as part of the Village Hall remodeling project we also remodeled part of public works," said Public Works Director Matt Mann.

According to Mann, the public works lobby and reception area was remodeled and new furniture was added.

The Village Hall and public works department utilized the same furniture vendor with success on the previously mentioned project. Currently the rest of the Public Works Building including the IT department, engineering department, conference

room, administrative offices, lunchroom, departmental offices and training room are being remodeled or expanded to meet current and future needs.

"The remodeling plan includes furniture and some prefabricated walls and doors with glass windows," Mann said.

According to Mann, certain offices will have one prefabricated glass wall and door which will provide a buffer from high traffic and noisy areas while still allowing natural light to illuminate offices.

Mann said after evaluating the products and services available through the Sourcewell governmental purchasing cooperative and past performance KI was chosen as the most preferred and cost-effective vendor.

"The items have a 15-year warranty," Mann said.

Mann added the cost includes delivery and installation.

U-46 Equity audit among expense items set for vote

By Seth Hancock

School District U-46 is planning to spend \$163,250 as part of an equity audit.

The contract, with Curriculum Management Solution and paid through the education fund, if approved, was part of \$312,695 in expenditure proposals presented to the Board of education on Monday, March 1 with a vote planned for March 8.

U-46 openly opposes equality in favor of equity. It defines equality as "giving all students the same support" and equity as "supporting each student according to their need."

The proposal states the "goal of an equity audit is to identify institutional policies and practices that either advertently or inadvertently create discriminatory trends in data that negatively affect student outcomes. Our district will engage in an equity audit to identify inequities and discriminatory practices followed by re-aligning the work of the Equity Committee to ensure we have a robust equity plan based on the

equity audit findings."

The district is asking for \$65,000 (education fund) for a one-year contract with Ellen Kamps as a website consultant. The contract states she will work between 15 and 30 hours a week.

We are fortunate to be able to tap the expertise of a dedicated, highly skilled, and reliable consultant who can support our district and school websites, family engagement, and vital communication efforts for our staff of more than 5,000 full-time employees and families of our 37,000 students," the proposal states.

A contract with Workforce Software has a price tag of \$49,945 (education fund) for annual support and licensing updates.

For lead and asbestos abatement as well as demolition pertaining to a library relocation project at Elgin's Lowrie Elementary School, the district is asking for \$34,500 (operations and maintenance fund) with High Efficiency Professional Abatement, Inc.



Construction work ahead

Construction work is on the horizon in this area of the village. Pictured is Poplar Creek Court as seen from the intersection with Pine Street. Both roadways are slated to have water main work done as part of a village project. For more details, see the story on page 4.

(Examiner photo by Bruce Leighty)

Compare and find out what works best for you

So, I wanted to prove to myself as someone who's been in the cosmetic industry for years that price doesn't always mean better. In other words, price does not always mean better when using cosmetics but it is a matter of finding what you like and can afford. I have always been cautious with money and try to save where I can. I buy things not because they are cheaper but because they are products that give me quality at a reasonable price. I usually buy my cosmetics at places like Walgreens or any discount store because I learned early on that just because something is expensive it doesn't mean better quality than buying for less.

I bought a facial cream that's used before applying my foundation. I would buy brands that were popular but reasonably priced. You probably know the brand names I'm referring to because they are on the shelves at common retailers and may sell for less than \$10. People told me that my skin looked good and asked what I use on my face. I told them that I spend less on my cosmetic products than a bagel and an extra-large coffee with cream and sugar at Dunkin Donuts. Who'd believe that? As unbelievable as it might seem, it's true and it also lasted a lot longer than my coffee and bagel.


Several years ago I went to a party where the hostess demonstrated and sold her brand name cosmetic products that were beautifully packaged and presented. She even chose several women on which to apply her fancy cosmetics. It all looked beautiful and the girls modeling the products looked absolutely gorgeous when she finished applying the stuff. It took her almost a half hour to apply facial cream, foundation, eye shadow and mascara. She also explained why there had to be a finishing touch so that the make-up applied to the model would stay fresh all day. Tell that to a gal that has a job cooking behind a hot stove all day while sweating bullets. She wouldn't be able to keep her face looking fresh all day no matter what was applied.

After about three hours at the party seeing and hearing about a ton of cosmetics the model was done and looked gorgeous. Clearly the products looked nice but who would have that much time to apply all of the things this lady recommended. Of course I'm a sucker for something new and I ended up spending enough money on make-up products to use on the rest of the women who attend-

ed for quite a while. I wasn't the only one spending a fortune that evening. I was glad to get out of there and prayed I'd get my money's worth on the stuff I bought. I knew better but hey, a friend had invited me and I didn't want to look like a "cheapo." For the next couple of weeks I took the time to use the products I spent al-

Tidbits...

By Rachel



tidbits@examinerpublications.com

most a month's worth of groceries on and hoped I would see how much better they were. It was wishful thinking.

First, problems appeared when I woke up a few days following my purchase and I realized I looked no different when using this stuff than I did with my products bought at Walgreens. Second, I noticed my face started breaking out in places I couldn't cover up, such as my cheeks and around the nose area. My forehead didn't look too bad because I covered it up with bangs. After seven days I decided to toss all of the products that were so highly recommended and looked so beautiful on someone else. I knew I wasted a lot of money on a product that I was allergic to and was too expensive so I decided to stick to the less expensive products that worked best on my face. Higher prices do not always mean better quality and what works for one person may not work for another.

Due to the ongoing response to the coronavirus pandemic, The Examiner strongly recommends that readers verify the status of any pending events.

Congratulations to Millicent Joan Reyes and Aaron Siewert of Streamwood who were named to the dean's list for the 2020 fall semester at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Congratulations to Kenzie Maybrun of Streamwood who was named to the dean's list for the 2020 fall semester at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities.

Sabres girls basketball win pair, beaten by Storm

By Seth Hancock

The Streamwood girls basketball team couldn't overcome its turnovers as the Sabres fell 57-32 in Upstate Eight Conference play to South Elgin on Friday, Feb. 26 at South Elgin.

The Sabres never led but hung tight in the first quarter trailing just 18-11 at the end of the period. That seven-point deficit grew to 33-12 after South Elgin opened the second on a 15-1 run, and Streamwood was unable to claw back from there.

"They didn't do anything different, but we didn't do anything different," Streamwood coach George Rosner said of the second quarter. "You can't dribble into trouble and you can't pass the first thing you see."

From there, the Sabres pulled no closer than 19 the rest of the game while South Elgin's lead grew as large as 30.

Turnovers killed the Sabres as South Elgin took advantage of the mistakes. "You can't win a game committing 25

or more turnovers," Rosner said. "There's nobody you can beat, and you can't win any games that way. In the case of this game, I would say at least half of those turnovers resulted in a direct basket for them. There's no way to overcome that."

Sayuri Ishikawa had 11 points, Vivian Sumoski 10 and Sariah Dixon five to lead the Sabres.

The Sabres were coming off a pair of conference wins including a 64-29 victory over Elgin on Tuesday, Feb. 23 at Streamwood and a 35-26 win over East Aurora on Thursday, Feb. 25 in Aurora.

Streamwood, now 3-4 overall and 3-3 in the UEC, is starting to get its full team back after some missing some early contests.

"For the first time next week, we'll have everybody playing who should be playing," Rosner said. "It's been one game, the first game, that we've had everybody playing."

Al-Anon Family Groups, Al-Anon and Alateen, give us the assurance that no situation is too difficult and no unhappiness too great to be lessened. With the understanding that alcoholism is a disease, and with the realization that we are powerless over it, as well as over other people, we are ready to do something useful and constructive with our own lives. Only then can we be of help to others. While most of us know that alcoholism is a disease, too few recognize it as a "family disease," which may emotionally, spiritually, and often physically affect three or four people in addition to the alcoholic. Come to an in-person meeting on Tuesday evenings at 6900 Barrington Road, Hanover Park, in the Christ Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall downstairs. The meeting begins at 7:15 p.m. Face masks and social distancing required. Confidentiality and anonymity is practiced. For information on other meetings, visit niafg.org.

The Illinois Sheriffs' Association announces that it will be awarding over \$58,000 in college scholarships throughout the State of Illinois to students wishing to pursue higher education during the 2021-22 academic year. The scholarships are to be applied to tuition, books and fees only. The student must be enrolled full-time at a certified institution of higher learning within the State of Illinois, full-time online learning is acceptable. There will be no restriction on any applicant by reason of race, age, creed, color, sex or national origin. The only limitations are as follows:

- Applicants must be permanent Illinois residents;


- Scholarships must be utilized at institutions of higher learning within the State of Illinois; and

- Students must be enrolled as a full-time student during the 2021-22 school year (excluding summer session).

Applications are now available on the ISA Website <https://www.ilsheriff.org/youth-2/>. Students must complete the application; answer the essay question and return all documentation to the Sheriff's office in their permanent county of residence by March 15 (must be postmarked by this date). For more information, please contact your local Sheriff's office, Illinois Sheriffs' Association, high school advising center or college financial aid office.

Want to help your fellow neighbors in need? The Food Pantry at Lutheran Church of the Master, 580 Kuhn Road, Carol Stream is still accepting unexpired food and paper supply donations. They are most in need of: white and brown rice, pasta, pasta sauce, canned tomato products, bottled juice, flour, sugar, vegetable oil, peanut butter, grape jelly, canned fruit, tuna/ chicken/salmon, salad dressing, condiments, pancake mix, oatmeal, syrup, paper towels, toilet paper and dish soap.


Food donations can be dropped off with a pantry worker during pantry hours Monday, 12:30 to 3 p.m., Tuesday to Thursday, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Please do NOT leave donations at the door. Monetary donations may be dropped off/mailed to the church, payable to: Neighborhood Food Pantries. Questions? Contact 665-5188. For safety concerns, all donations will be held for 24 hours before dispersing.



COVID-19 RAPID TESTING AVAILABLE

Suburban Orthopaedics is now offering all of the COVID-19 tests at our Bartlett location at 1110 W. Schick Road.

- Rapid Antigen Test
- RT-PCR Test
- Antibody Test
- Results typically within 15 minutes



Our drive thru allows you to remain safely in your vehicle and receive quick, same day testing, accurate results within 15 minutes.

Testing hours:
Drive thru or in-office. Monday - Friday, 7:00 AM - 5:30 PM
No appointment needed.

Need proof of a negative Covid-19 test before traveling?
We provide official documents stating your test results.

For more details please go to:
www.suburbanortho.com/our-services/covid-19-rapid-testing/

For further questions about our COVID-19 rapid antigen testing, please call 630-233-7929.

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