

## Press Clippings 1/6/2022

### **WBEZ Chicago: “Reset with Sasha-Ann Simons” CPS cancels classes after teachers’ union votes to shift to remote learning --- 1/5/2022**

By Daniel Tucker, Lynnea Domienik

(To hear interview with **Dr. Suzanne Johnson**, click on the link below)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wZVqY3mEy06BNBgirWmPwV3jJojzUUMC/view?usp=mail>

The Chicago Teachers Union [voted late Tuesday night](#) to shift to remote learning, saying schools are unsafe because of the city’s record-high COVID positivity rate. But the mayor and the city’s top doc continue to assert that schools are safe. *Reset* checks in with WBEZ education reporter Sarah Karp and CTU Vice President Stacy Davis Gates. We also check in with Suzanne Johnson, deputy superintendent of school district U-46 in Elgin about how their district is responding.

**GUESTS:** Sarah Karp, WBEZ education reporter

Stacy Davis Gates, CTU Vice President

**Suzanne Johnson, Deputy Superintendent of School District U-46**

### **Kane County Connects, Thursday, Jan. 6, 2022 edition School closing update” Three U-46 schools closed Jan. 5 due to staffing shortages, two reopened --- 1/6/2022**

Three **U-46** schools are closed today (Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2022) due to staffing shortages, but two that were closed Tuesday have been reopened.

According to a website update from **U-46 Superintendent Tony Sanders**, Highland Elementary, Huff Elementary and Parkwood Elementary are closed today.

Independence Center for Early Learning and Ridge Circle Elementary School have reopened, and all other U-46 schools are open on Wednesday, Jan. 5, as is the District’s central office and the Welcome Center.



*visit the [U-46 website](#) for details.*

- [U-46 Facebook Page](#)
- [U-46 Twitter Site](#)

Students resumed classes on Tuesday, Jan. 4, according to the [U-46 website](#).

## Website Statement from Superintendent Tony Sanders

Dear U-46 Staff and Families:

It was good to have most of our students back in classes. Unfortunately, due to staffing shortages, the following schools will be closed Wednesday (Jan. 5, 2022):

- Highland Elementary
- Huff Elementary
- Parkwood Elementary

No remote instruction will be provided at these schools.



***Tony Sanders***

I am glad to share that Independence Center for Early Learning and Ridge Circle Elementary School will be able to reopen Wednesday, Jan. 5. All other U-46 schools are open on Wednesday, Jan. 5, as is the district's central office and the Welcome Center.

In our collective effort to keep our staff and students safe and healthy, it is important that if your student has tested positive for COVID-19, or is suspected of having COVID-19, please notify your [principal](#) or [school nurse](#) and have your student remain at home until cleared to return to in-person learning.

Keep in mind that when calling your child in sick to school, for any reason, it is vital that parents/guardians specify the symptoms of the child's illness so that it can be followed up with properly.

As a reminder, masks must be worn in all U-46 facilities by students and staff. Social distancing is encouraged to the extent possible. We also will continue to discourage visitors at this time.

Thank you for your understanding and patience as we all work together to ensure the safety of all our students and staff. We will continue to monitor our data and keep our families informed regarding the status of classes.

Sincerely,

Tony Sanders, Superintendent School District U-46

**CBS Chicago (aired 1/5/2022)  
COVID-19 cases have led to substitute teacher shortages;  
Moves to remote learning in many suburban school districts  
By Steven Graves – Note: School District U-46 is briefly mentioned in  
this report**

<https://chicago.cbslocal.com/2022/01/05/covid-19-chicago-suburbs-school-problems/>

**CHICAGO (CBS)** — A substitute teacher shortage is creating a big problem in some suburbs.

As CBS 2's Steven Graves reported Wednesday, it was a truly all-hands-on-deck approach at Deerfield Public Schools District 109 in the north suburbs, which has about 2,600 students.

Leaders have asked qualified parents to apply as teachers online, and are tapping other staff members to step in.

"A librarian might be a first-grade teacher, or our music teacher might be in fourth grade," said Deerfield Schools Supt. Mike Simeck. Our goal from the beginning has been to get kids to school and keep them there, and the communication today was an all-call."

The all-call comes as Deerfield District 109 says since Monday, 66 staff and students tested positive for COVID-19, or reported positive cases. On Wednesday, the district did not have enough substitutes to fill 25 positions.

A similar situation was seen in District 47 in Crystal Lake. They have had 74 positive cases since Monday, and they were short 26 substitutes on Wednesday.

They were also short 16 bus drivers, which delayed routes Wednesday morning.

Staffing shortages have led to at least three school closures in **Elgin District U-46**.

In the southwest suburbs, Lincoln-Way Community High School District 210 has gone to remote learning next week for all schools. And in Niles District 219, students are doing virtual instruction for the next two weeks.

One small school district in McHenry County is on the verge of closing.

“If we have to go to a pause, we would do it for five school days and then reevaluate,” said Dr. John Bute, superintendent of Prairie Grove School District 46. “When we have staff that are asymptomatic – they don’t have a sore throat, fever, cough or other issues – but yet they’re excluded for up to 10 days, that’s a problem for us.”

Multiple school districts in McHenry County have issued a letter asking the state Department of Public Health and Board of Education for guidance on quarantine measures.

## **Times News Express**

### **Elgin District U-46 closes several schools due to COVID-related staffing issues --- 1/5/2022**



ELGIN, Ill. (WLS) — Five schools in **Elgin U-46 school district**, the second largest school district in the state, are closed Tuesday due to COVID-related staffing shortages.

Patty Galiotos was looking forward to seeing her classroom full of second graders again after holiday break. Instead she was surrounded by empty desks and had plenty of time for lesson planning.

“I look forward to it as much as the kids do, so I was disappointed,” she said.

Galiotos teaches at Highland Elementary School, one of the five schools closed for the day. With nearly 400 teachers out sick, mostly with COVID, the district was able to replace fewer than half of them with substitutes.

“Today was exceptionally difficult because of the number of absentees of staff,” said Tony Sanders, U-46 superintendent.

Fifty-two other schools in the district remained open Tuesday. Sanders said he intends to do everything possible to keep kids in the classroom and keep as many schools open as possible. He said last year’s experience with remote learning was a failure for most students and teachers, and the district does not intend to bring it back this year.

“When they’re here, they’re learning best. Especially our younger children,” said Highland Principal Steve Johnson.

District officials said they are taking it day by day and hoping to reopen schools as quickly as possible, even as soon as Wednesday. They said much of the increase in COVID cases is likely from holiday gatherings, and school may be among the safest places to be.

“School is the right place to be and the safest place to be for students and staff because it is the one place where we do follow the protocols,” Sanders said. “We wear masks, social distance to the best of our ability.”

That includes on school buses. Roughly two-thirds of District U-46 students take bus transportation to get to school. District officials said they’re learning it’s almost as difficult to replace bus drivers as it is teachers.

Plainfield District 202 Tuesday also warned parents to prepare for major bus delays because of COVID-related staffing issues.

Copyright © 2022 WLS-TV. All Rights Reserved.