

## Press Clippings 10-23-20

---The Courier-News--- 10/23/2020

### COVID-19 cases in U-46 transportation facility delay Elgin district's back-to-school plan

By: Courier-News Staff Report

A COVID-19 "outbreak" at one of School District U-46's transportation facilities has resulted in 11 employees being quarantined and plans to bring preschool through second-grade students back to school put on hold indefinitely, district Superintendent Tony Sanders has announced.

Two staff members were confirmed to be positive for coronavirus Thursday, prompting the Kane County Health Department to declare a virus outbreak at the district's Shales Parkway facility, Sanders said in a note posted on the district's website.

That has resulted in nine other employees being quarantined for 14 days, he said.

"We cannot serve 5,000 students in pre-K to 2nd grade without a functioning transportation department," he wrote. "At this time, we do not have dispatchers available to guide drivers, respond to parent calls and ensure students can be safely transported."

This district had planned to have its youngest students start in-person classes on a part-time basis Monday under a hybrid schedule that will also continue remote learning. They would be followed by third- to sixth-graders in late November.

The [plan was confirmed at Monday night's school board meeting](#), but Sanders stressed at the time that it would be dependent upon COVID-19 positivity numbers.

[Kane County is currently under restrictions](#) because of a surge in cases, resulting in all indoor restaurant and bar seating and dining being prohibited until the positivity numbers drop to 6.5% or less for three consecutive days.

Sanders said he did not know when the district will be able to return to its back-to-school plan. Because transportation for the district's self-contained special education classes and transition programming is handled by employees who work out of the transportation facility on Chicago Street, the situation will have no effect on those in-person classes, he said.

"I am so sorry that the virus is once again affecting you," Sanders wrote. "We all were looking forward to seeing the smiling eyes of our youngest learners as they returned for their second 'first day' of school. I know that day will come. It just is not yet."

**---Daily Herald--- 10/23/2020**

## **U-46 won't bring youngest students back next week**

**By: Mary Chappell**



Tony Sanders

"The best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry."

Elgin Area School District U-46 Superintendent Tony Sanders used that quote from Scottish poet Robert Burns to lead off his weekly newsletter and announce Thursday that the state's second-largest school district is delaying its plan to bring pre-K through second-grade students back to school.

Students were scheduled to return to in-person instruction Tuesday under a hybrid format, but two staff members in the district's transportation facility on Shales Parkway tested positive for COVID-19 within a 28-hour period, and the department sent home nine additional staff members to quarantine for 14 days.

"We cannot serve 5,000 students in pre-K to second grade without a functioning transportation department," Sanders wrote. "At this time, we do not have dispatchers available to guide drivers, respond to parent calls and ensure students can be safely transported."

U-46 hasn't set a new date to bring those students back.

"We all were looking forward to seeing the smiling eyes of our youngest learners as they returned for their second 'first day' of school," Sanders wrote. "I know that day will come. It just is not yet."

The district will continue to offer in-person instruction for students with special needs. Buses for those students will operate out of the district's Chicago Street facility in Elgin.