

## Press Clippings 3/9/2022

### Chicago Tribune/The Courier-News

#### U-46 to spend \$3.9M on summer programs for grade schoolers --- 3/8/2022

By Mike Danahey

The success of last year's free summer recreational programs has prompted School District U-46 to expand the activities offered this summer.

School Board members voted Monday to spend \$3.9 million to partner with 14 nonprofit organizations to cover the cost of first- through sixth-grade students enrolled in a U-46 school who participate in one of the June or July programs.

"Parents should be looking for lots of opportunities for students this summer to do experiential learning," U-46 Superintendent Tony Sanders said.

The district will pay for the programs with money provided through the federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund and American Recovery Act. Last year, U-46 used the same money to fund \$1.1 million in programs provided by eight organizations.

District officials said more than 2,000 students signed up for at least one of the activities offered last year.

The organizations that will receive funding are:

- New Jersey-based STEM class provider Black Rocket, \$372,960;
- Boys and Girls Club of Elgin, \$492,000;
- Chicago-based Chess Wizards, \$40,320;
- City of Elgin, \$367,080;
- Golden Corridor Family YMCA, \$561,000;
- Hanover Park Park District, \$282,000;
- California-based camp provider KidsToProz, \$315,000;
- Chicago-based Next Wave STEM, \$62,874;
- Evanston-based Right at School, \$205,800;

- St. Charles-based Three Fires Council Boy Scouts, \$792,000;
- The Learning Tree of East Elgin, \$95,700;
- Elgin's Side Street Studio Arts, \$67,420;
- Streamwood Park District, \$134,640,
- Village of South Elgin Parks and Recreation Department, \$116,600.

The programs will cover a variety of topics, including academic enrichment activities to help keep students engaged in learning over the summer; social issues relevant to students; physical activities; exploring cultural awareness; artistic expression; learning activities that promote health and nutrition; science and math learning opportunities; character building; study skills; personal skills development; community involvement; and asset building. All of the programs will be held at U-46 schools or at locations offered by the community partners.

More information on dates, times, places, registration and other details should be available later this month, officials said.

## **Chicago Tribune/The Courier-News**

### **Elgin News Digest: U-46 sets schedule for next two school years --- 3/8/2022**

**By Mike Danahey**

**District U-46** will start the 2022-23 school year on Tuesday, Aug. 16, according to school calendars proposed for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 academic years.

Other highlights of the upcoming school year include Thanksgiving recess scheduled for Nov. 23-25; winter break from Dec. 23-Jan. 8; spring break from March 27-31, 2023; high school graduations on May 27, 2023; and the last day of class on May 31, 2023.

For the 2023-24 school year, classes will begin Aug. 15, 2023; Thanksgiving recess will be Nov. 22-24, 2023; winter break from Dec. 22, 2023, to Jan. 8, 2024; spring break on March 25-29; high school graduations on May 25, 2024; and the last day of class on May 28, 2024.

# **The Examiner of Bartlett**

## **No masking this issue, U-46 parents speak out --- 3/9/2022**

**By Seth Hancock: Note – This story also ran in The Examiner of South Elgin and in The Examiner of Streamwood**

Parents are demanding accountability in **School District U-46** as the threat of forced masking remains dangling over the heads of students.

As previously reported, Superintendent Tony Sanders announced the district would go to mask optional, although calling it “a mask-recommended environment.” Sanders has also announced masks would be optional on buses.

However, Sanders still believes he has authority to force masks at any point. After many school districts went optional after the Feb. 4 temporary restraining order with some U-46 families included in the case, Sanders kept the mandate until a Feb. 17 appellate court upheld the restraining order.

Joey D'Alessio, a father, thanked the district for “making it optional,” but called it “long overdue” as one of several parents to address the Board of Education at its Monday, Feb. 28 meeting.

“But in the words though, that you put out Mr. Sanders, at the snap of your finger you can just make it all go away and it comes back,” D'Alessio said. “And I’m the guy that’s going to tell you it’s not going to happen.”

Rebecca Englese said her 6-year-old now has a suspension on his record for not properly wearing a mask, and the district refuses to remove that suspension despite the legal wins for parents. She said there needs to be accountability, and that starts with firing Sanders.

“We have a larger issue that needs to be addressed,” Englese said. “Tony Sanders is reckless in his decision making, disregards the law and is a liability for the district. He has violated every family’s rights by enacting illegal policies. Whether you are for or against masks, Mr. Sanders is a threat to us all thinking he is above the law.”

Another mother, Kerene Tilton, said her 5-year-old was suspended from kindergarten after the district denied a doctor’s recommendation that her child use a face shield instead of a mask. She did say that suspension has since been removed.

Other parents said staff this year have threatened to remove recess from students over masks and forced students into isolation.

Ultimately, some parents want the board to start doing its job and not allow the authoritarian approach to continue.

“You should be here to represent us, not govern us,” said Agnieszka Bajorek.

# **The Examiner of Bartlett**

## **Dist. U-46 Board recognizes district all-state musicians ---**

**3/9/2022**

**By Seth Hancock: Note – this story also ran in The Examiner of South Elgin and in The Examiner of Streamwood**

At its meeting Monday, Feb. 28, the **School District U-46 Board of Education** recognized 17 high school students that were selected all-state musicians.

The all-state selection is through the Illinois Music Education Association (ILMEA). They performed at a January state concert in Peoria.

“These students, guided by our music teachers, have persevered through two years of a pandemic, working hard to progress and challenge themselves,” Jaimie Giraldo, coordinator of fine arts, said in a district press release. “Their success is a testament to their dedication, drive, passion, and grit, as well as to their teachers’ commitment and support.”

South Elgin High School had six all-staters in chorus including seniors Mark Berg, Elijah Clarke and Jacob Pangilinan as well as juniors Alejandro Diaz and Nathan Shue and sophomore Kiera Moore.

Bartlett High School included five chorus selections including seniors Dinah Garner, Abby Juson, Nicole Kamarat and Philip Vu as well as junior Eric Fox.

Elgin and Larkin high schools each had three all-staters including seniors Jackson Baker (band, Larkin), Ariana Mattos Cruz (orchestra, Larkin), Nathan Lopez (chorus, Elgin) and Shaun Tupaz (chorus, Elgin) as well as juniors Madeline Conter (chorus, Elgin) and Katherine Wynn (composition, Larkin).

Bartlett’s Vu said there’s a series of auditions, which have been done virtually the last two years. He said over 20,000 students auditioned across the state and the top 3 percent are named all-state.

Additionally, sixth grader Saul Castaneda from Streamwood’s Sunnydale Elementary School was recognized for taking first in composition in his age division. The district had 31 students selected to the ILMEA District IX honors festival.