

Press Clippings 08/13/21

---Elgin Courier-News---08/13/2021

Elgin District U-46 to provide free breakfasts and lunches to all students in 2021-22 school year

by Mike Danahey

District U-46 parents will have one less expense to worry about this coming school year — providing breakfast and lunch for their children on weekdays.

The district will be providing both free of charge to all U-46 students thanks to an extension of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Lunch Program and its Seamless Summer Option, district spokeswoman Mary Fergus said.

Both programs are typically available to students who qualify to receive free or reduced-cost meals under federal standards.

The free meals benefit is in addition to already-announced breaks parents will be receiving this year from federal relief money being provided because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Free school supplies will be provided for all pre-kindergarten to 6th-grade students and most school fees other than those for driver's education and sports will be waived.

Fergus said the district anticipates 65% to 75% of the district's 37,000-plus students will take advantage of the free meals when the new school year starts Aug. 16. U-46 is the state's second largest school district.

"About 50 percent of our students participated in in-person learning last spring, and we sent all of them home with bagged meals," Fergus said.

In a normal school year, about 60% of the district's enrollment qualifies for free or reduced-price meals, she said.

Even though breakfast and lunch will be free for all students this year, officials are encouraging parents to fill out the paperwork to apply for the meals because it might qualify the district for other programs, Fergus said.

"This information helps us determine other possible discounts or breaks," she said.

According to the district's website, meal application forms could help U-46 if the government decides to reissue Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer cards. During the pandemic, that food benefit program provided \$6.82 per each school day in which students were engaged in remote learning.

Federal guidelines will be followed for the free meals, meaning there will be no meal time flexibility and no combining meal periods in order to have the food to take home, Fergus said. Meals will no longer be handed out at curbside as they were when students were doing remote learning, she said.

"All meals must be consumed onsite," Fergus said. "At this time we are not selling anything."

Examples of the types of meals that could be served include Salisbury steak with mashed potatoes and beef gravy, garlic parmesan chicken over rotini, enchiladas, orange chicken and barbecue teriyaki chicken, **Superintendent Tony Sanders** said at Monday's school board meeting.

Sanders also lauded the staff members who prepare and serve the meals for everything they did during the pandemic.

"I can't say enough about our amazing food services team," Sanders said. "That's one group that never did stop working from March 2020 on, in braving the elements and doing curbside pickup throughout the school year. Very demanding jobs they had to step into, and they all did a phenomenal job."

---Daily Herald---08/13/2021

**U-46 welcomes new district and school leaders for the 2021-22 school year
Submitted by Elgin Area School District U-46**

Elgin Area School District U-46 is preparing for the 2021-22 school year with new leaders stepping into top administrator roles. Some of these professionals have recently joined the district, or have been promoted from within U-46 to serve a new role. A restructuring of district senior leaders puts more emphasis on supporting principals so they can be instructional leaders and better support classroom teaching and learning.

District and school administrators oversee schools, districtwide programs and services, collaborate with staff and teachers, and guide our families to help students achieve academic success.

"I'm grateful to see these intelligent, passionate, and energetic leaders take on new roles and responsibilities across our district to support students," said U-46 Superintendent Tony Sanders. "Our U-46 team is stronger and more responsive with them beside us."

The following educators have been named to new positions created by a restructuring of the district's organizational structure or to jobs made vacant due to retirements, resignations, or other opportunities within the district.

Cabinet Members

• Ericka Brown -- Internal Auditor

As U-46's new internal auditor, Brown brings with her 20 years of experience in internal auditing, finance, accounting, and internal controls in the private sector.

Most recently she has served as a senior accounting analyst for BP, a position she has held since 2011. In addition to leading compliance work toward internal controls and coordination of audits, Brown worked to improve the internal environment of the firm by volunteering for committees, including being a member of BP's Diversity and Inclusion team. She has also served in auditor roles for Redbox and Sears Holdings Corporation.

Brown holds her Bachelor of Science in business administration from Robert Morris University and her Masters of business administration from Roosevelt University.

• Brian Lindholm -- Chief of Staff

Entering his 10th year in the district, Lindholm most recently served as the Coordinator of Strategic Initiatives since 2017. Prior to joining U-46, Lindholm worked for nearly 20 years in the telecommunications industry with roles in engineering, product development, marketing,

and operations. Lindholm joined U-46 in 2012 through the Broad Residency in Urban Education program.

Lindholm earned a Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering from Iowa State University and an MBA from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.

• **Lela Majstorovic -- Assistant Superintendent of Schools**

Majstorovic most recently served as the Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Schools, Instruction and Equity, a role she held since June 2018. In that role, she demonstrated her visionary and problem-solving skills to bring a cohesive, student-centered leadership approach to the oversight of eight middle schools, five comprehensive high schools, and two alternative programs. Majstorovic has developed new procedures and policies to ensure implementation of Standards Based Learning and Assessments and increased college and career preparation opportunities through the revision of middle school electives, expansion of a Dual Enrollment program with Elgin Community College, increased Advanced Placement courses and tests, the State's Seal of Biliteracy certification, and expanded Career and Technical Education courses. As part of this comprehensive improvement work, Majstorovic has developed and led Freshman Success teams at each high school, supporting an increase in the percentage of freshmen who are on-track to graduate from 81 percent in 2018 to 87 percent in 2019-20.

Prior to joining U-46, Majstorovic held leadership positions within Chicago Public Schools for a decade, last serving as a Network Chief of Schools for CPS. She began her career in CPS as a high school English teacher.

Majstorovic holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English, a Bachelor of Science degree in secondary education, and a Master of Education degree in educational leadership. She earned her superintendent endorsement in August 2020.

• **Trisha A. Olson -- Chief Legal Officer**

Before becoming U-46's Chief Legal Officer, Olson served as the General Counsel for the Illinois State Board of Education since 2019.

Olson is a former student at Eastview Elementary, when it was an elementary school, not a middle school. While a high school English teacher, Olson became involved in a special education due process hearing and that engagement with special education law ultimately led her to law school. Upon obtaining her Juris Doctorate, she entered private practice at the firm of Scariano, Himes and Petrarch as an associate attorney in 2008. In 2012, she was appointed as Assistant General Counsel for the Illinois State Board of Education. During a change in state leadership, Olson returned to private practice, working predominantly for the firm of Hauser, Izzo, Petrarca, Gleason, and Stillman through 2019.

Olson holds her Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and her Juris Doctor from New York Law School.

Executive Directors

• **Brian Tennison -- Executive Director of High Schools**

Tennison joins U-46 after serving the students in Chicago Public Schools since 1994, most recently as the Principal of Lane Tech College Prep High School, a position he has held since 2016. Prior to his principalship, Tennison served as an Assistant Principal at William Howard Taft World International Baccalaureate High School. He has also served as an Instructional Support Leader for a network of Chicago schools, in addition to 19 years as a classroom teacher and dean of students at Whitney Young Magnet High School.

Tennison holds his Bachelor of Arts in history from the University of Washington, his Masters of education from Loyola University, and a Masters in educational administration from Dominican University.

• **Dr. Annette Acevedo -- Executive Director of Middle Schools**

Acevedo is a dedicated, lifelong U-46er most recently known nationally as our Director of English Language Learners, a position she has held since 2015. Acevedo previously served as a Coordinator of ELL Initiatives and also the Family Welcome Center Coordinator before being named director. Earlier in her career, Acevedo was a school social worker at several schools across the district from 1995 to 2011, including Elgin High School, Central School Programs, and Ellis Middle School.

Acevedo holds her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Purdue University, her Masters of Arts in clinical social work from the University of Chicago, and her Doctorate in education leadership and organizational change from Roosevelt University.

• **Dr. Kyle Bunker -- Executive Director of Elementary Schools**

Before being named an Executive Director of Elementary Schools, Bunker had served as the Principal of Garfield Elementary since 2017. Prior to joining U-46, Bunker served as the Anderson Elementary principal for Arlington Independent School District in Arlington, Texas since 2006. Bunker started his career as an elementary classroom teacher before moving into leadership roles in California and Texas.

Bunker earned his bachelor's in elementary education with a minor in art from Northwest Nazarene University in Idaho, a master's in educational leadership and administration from Azusa Pacific University and doctorate in organizational leadership and management from University of La Verne, both in California.

• **Yvette Gonzalez-Collins -- Executive Director of Elementary Schools**

Gonzalez-Collins, now an Executive Directory of Elementary Schools, has a long history of leadership in U-46, most recently serving as the Principal of Ellis Middle School in Elgin for the last four years.

Prior to that role, she served as the Assistant Principal at Coleman Elementary School, a Dean of Students at Streamwood High School, and ELL Special Education Administrator in the Specialized Students Services department.

Gonzalez-Collins earned her Bachelor of Science degree in merchandising from the University of North Texas and a Master of Science degree in multi-categorical special education and in educational administration from Governors State University.

• **Sarah N. Rabe -- Executive Director of Elementary Schools**

Rabe, now an Executive Director of Elementary Schools, had joined U-46 in 2017 as the Principal of Centennial Elementary School in Bartlett.

She had previously been the assistant principal for five years at West Ridge Elementary School in Chicago Public Schools, as well as a classroom teacher and literacy coach at Rogers Elementary School, also in Chicago Public Schools.

Rabe earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in elementary education from Augustana College, a Master of Education degree in reading and literacy from Benedictine University, and a Master of Arts degree in school leadership from Concordia University.

• **Dr. Michelle K. Thompson -- Executive Director of Elementary Schools**

Before arriving in U-46 to become an Executive Director of Elementary Schools, Thompson served as the Director of Literacy in Elmhurst School District 205 and the principal of Emerson Elementary School in the same district.

From 2013-17, Thompson split her time as an assistant principal for both Enders-Salk Elementary School and MacArthur International Spanish Academy in Schaumburg Community School District 54. She also served in Schaumburg as a literacy instructional coach and as an elementary school teacher.

Thompson holds her bachelor's degree in elementary education from Illinois State University, her master's in literacy and language, and doctorate in reading and language, from National-Louis University.

• **Teresa Winters -- Executive Director of Elementary Schools**

Winters, now an Executive Director of Elementary Schools, has been in U-46 since 2014 when she was selected to be an administrative intern for Lords Park Elementary School. The next year, she became principal of Hillcrest Elementary School in Elgin.

Early in her career, Winters worked as an assistant principal in two buildings in Maywood and Melrose Park and taught early childhood courses at Trinity College and College of DuPage. Winters has also worked as a classroom teacher, a differentiated specialist, assistant principal, and summer school principal in Plainfield Community Consolidated School District 202, as well as a career counselor at Northern Illinois University.

Winters earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in early childhood at Kendall College in Chicago, and her master's degree in administration and supervision in elementary education at Loyola University of Chicago.

Districtwide Administrators

• **Richard Bosh -- Coordinator of School Safety**

Bosh, who began his law enforcement career with the Bartlett Police Department, is the new Coordinator of School Safety for U-46.

Bosh served as the School Resource Officer at Bartlett High School from 2005 to 2011 and from 2013 until taking his new role. He was nominated as Officer of the Year by the Kane County and Cook County Chief of Police and named the 2015 Officer of the Year at the Bartlett Police Department.

Bosh holds his Associate Degree in criminal justice from the College of DuPage and has trained as an Illinois Juvenile Officer and Illinois Gang Specialist, among a number of other professional development courses, including the Delinquency Control Institute at the University of Southern California.

• **Kathleen "Katie" A. Cox -- Director of Early Learner Initiatives**

Cox, the new Director of Early Learner Initiatives for U-46, had previously served since 2018 as the Director of Early Learning and Educational Grants for the East Aurora School District 131. She also was the principal of The Early Childhood Center and Child Service Center in the district.

Previously, she worked as a special education coordinator/case manager and held leadership positions, including as an assistant principal, in other Chicago-area districts. Cox was a 2019 Barbara Bowman Fellow at the Erickson Institute of Chicago and a member of the Illinois Early Childhood Multi-Tiered System of Support.

Cox earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in recreation and park administration from Illinois State University, a Master of Arts in Education, school counseling, from the University of Phoenix, Arizona, and a Certificate of Advanced Study from Lewis University.

• **Lisa Jackson -- Director of Equity and Inclusion**

Before being named the Director of Equity and Inclusion, Jackson had served for nine years as U-46's Coordinator of Assessments & Accountability.

In that role, she developed a districtwide school improvement process that was aligned to schools' visions and missions as well as being aligned to the District's strategic plan. Prior to her tenure at U-46 Jackson served in several positions for Chicago Public Schools.

Jackson holds a bachelor's degree in marketing from Michigan State University. She is currently enrolled at Northern Illinois University in the Masters of education program with an expected completion date of June 2022.

• **Griselda Pirtle -- Director of English Language Learners**

Before being named the Director of English Language Learners for U-46, Pirtle had served since 2014 as the Director of Multilingual Programs for the Community Consolidated School District (CCSD) 59 in Elk Grove Village. There she launched the very first nationally-recognized Polish Dual Language program in the nation.

Prior to her leadership role at CCSD 59, Pirtle served as a dual language teacher and has also served as an adjunct professor at Judson University.

Pirtle holds a Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education from Rockford College, a Master of Science in literacy education with a specialization in bilingual and multilingual education from Northern Illinois University, and a second Master of Science in educational leadership from Concordia University in Chicago.

High School Principals

• **Mary Mangione -- Principal of Dream Academy**

Mangione, the new Principal of Dream Academy, had served as the Assistant Principal of Student Services for the District's Central Schools Programs since 2019.

She brings more than a decade of teaching and educational leadership experience to her new role with deep knowledge and skills in the area of students with autism, emotional and behavior disorders. She has served in educational roles at sites including the Virtual Connections Academy in Palatine, the South Campus Therapeutic Day School, and as a special education teacher for students with high functioning autism at New Connections Academy. Mangione earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts with a concentration in visual

communication and painting/drawing from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, a Master's in special education and another in educational leadership from Northeastern Illinois University.

Middle School Principals

• Dr. Art Fessler -- Interim Principal of Eastview Middle School

Fessler, who will serve as the Interim Principal of Eastview Middle School in Bartlett for the 2021-22 school year, most recently served for eight years as Superintendent of Elk Grove Township School District 59.

Prior to that, he served as Superintendent of Oak Lawn -- Hometown District 123 from 2010 to 2013. Before becoming a superintendent, he worked for Barrington Public Schools as a middle school principal and assistant superintendent over middle and high schools. Going all the way back to his student teaching, he started in U-46 as a teacher at Elgin's Grant Elementary School, now closed.

Fessler holds his Bachelor of Science in elementary education from Judson University, his Master's in curriculum and instruction from Concordia University, and his doctorate from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

• Jaime Cadengo -- Ellis Middle School Principal

After having served as the Assistant Principal of Kimball Middle School in Elgin since 2013, Cadengo has been selected as the new Principal at Ellis Middle School.

Prior to joining U-46, Cadengo served as an assistant principal at Jacobs High School in Community Unit District 300 and at Auburn High School in Rockford School District 205. From 2001 to 2003, Cadengo served as the bilingual director of Community Unit School District 100. Cadengo earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Northern Illinois University,

and attended National-Louis University in Evanston for his Masters of Arts in curriculum and instruction.

• **Marc Spacone -- Principal at Larsen Middle School**

Spacone, the new Principal of Larsen Middle School in Elgin, had served as the school's Assistant Principal since 2016.

Before arriving at U-46, Spacone served as the Director of Student Activities and Dean of Students at East Aurora School District 131. He started his administrative career as a Dean of Students of Warren Township High School in Gurnee and has taught in school districts including Chicago Public Schools, Thornton Fractional School District 215, and Libertyville High School. Since 2013, he has been an adjunct faculty member in the Curriculum and Instruction program at Concordia University.

Spacone holds his Bachelor of Arts from Northern Illinois University, his Masters in Education from DePaul University, a Masters of Arts in Educational Leadership from Northeastern Illinois University, and obtained additional credit hours in educational leadership from Concordia University.

Elementary School Principals

• **Dr. Barbi K. Chisholm -- Garfield Elementary Principal**

Chisholm, the new Principal of Garfield Elementary School in Elgin, has served as the assistant principal at Hubert H. Humphrey Middle School in Valley View School District 365U since 2016.

Previously, Chisholm served as a student support coordinator in Riverside District 96 and spent nine years there as a social studies and English Language Arts teacher.

Chisholm earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Knox College, her Masters of Arts in teaching and learning from DePaul University, her Masters and doctorate in

Educational Organization and Leadership from the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign.

• **Rebecca Lunak -- Channing Memorial Elementary School Principal**

Lunak, the new Principal of Channing Memorial Elementary School in Elgin, had served as the school's Assistant Principal for the previous two years and been an educator in U-46 for 23. She was a teacher at Liberty Elementary School in Bartlett and Laurel Hill Elementary in Hanover Park prior to joining the Channing team, bringing with her an expertise in English language instruction and leadership skills.

Lunak earned her Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education from Illinois State University, a Master of Arts degree in linguistics from Northeastern Illinois University, and another Master of Arts degree in educational leadership from Roosevelt University.

• **Matthew Palcer -- Centennial Elementary School Principal**

Palcer brings more than a decade of leadership experience to his new role as the Principal of Centennial Elementary School in Bartlett.

Starting in 2012, Palcer served as the principal of Marie Murphy Middle School in Wilmette. He previously served as principal at Pleasant Hill Elementary School in Palatine and as the assistant principal at Jane Addams Elementary School in Palatine. Palcer has also worked as a middle school student adviser and teacher.

Palcer earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in secondary social studies education from University of Illinois, a Master's degree in education administration from National Louis University and is currently working on obtaining his Doctorate from Concordia University.

• **Dr. Glenda Rosado -- Hillcrest Elementary School Principal**

Rosado, the new Principal of Hillcrest Elementary School in Elgin, arrived in U-46 with more than a decade of leadership experience in East Aurora School District 131. There she served as the Interim Excel Academy administrator, assistant principal, principal, assistant director of the bilingual department and executive director of elementary teaching and learning.

Rosado has also served as a bilingual education teacher in Plainfield Community Consolidated School District 202 and Chicago Public Schools, as well as an adjunct professor at Aurora University and University of St. Francis.

Rosado earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish from Roosevelt University, and attended University of St. Francis for her Master of Arts degree in elementary education, a second Master of Science degree in educational leadership and a Doctorate in educational leadership.