

Press Clippings for 9/21/2022

---The Daily Herald---

Sep. 21, 2022

Panel of education, legal experts recommends against police ticketing of students at school

By: Eric Peterson



Elgin Unit District U-46 Superintendent Tony Sanders Brian Hill | Staff Photographer, 2019

A panel of education and legal experts spoke Tuesday on how and why Illinois school districts should amend practices of referring minor cases of student discipline to their local police departments for tickets and potential fines.

The webinar was hosted by reporters of ProPublica and the Chicago Tribune, focusing on the findings of their recent collaboration on a series of articles called "Ticketed at School."

Elgin Area **School District U-46 Superintendent Tony Sanders** said it was through that series' research that he learned last April that some of his own district's schools had been doing this, and that he had been unknowingly misinforming his board that school resource officers were used purely for support rather than discipline.

"It was a shock to me as the superintendent of the state's second-largest school district," he said. "It was a shock to me that we tried to address."

Sanders explained that U-46 lies in several municipalities and that not every police department was handling the situation the same way.

The Elgin Police Department never really used such ticketing whereas others did. In that regard, U-46 is a microcosm of Illinois, Sanders said.

One of the ways his district immediately set about changing things was to define what violations of the student code of conduct required police involvement, such as the presence of weapons, and which, like truancy, vaping and alcohol use, would not be.

He said the difference in approach to being caught vaping at school instead of at the mall is that at school a student is meant to be surrounded by people there to mentor and redirect them.

Jeff Aranowski, executive director for Safe and Healthy Climate at the State Board of Education, pointed out that the school code specifically bars districts from charging fines for disciplinary offenses and from referring students to the police for truancy.

Jackie Ross of the Loyola University Chicago School of Law suggested that the quickest legislative fix to the disconnect between the school code and the municipal code would be to expand the definition of disciplinary issues for which schools couldn't refer students to the police.

In the wake of the first "Ticketed at School" article, State Superintendent Carmen Ayala called on Illinois school districts to cease abdicating their disciplinary responsibilities to local law enforcement.

David Eterno, an administrative law judge and hearing officer, said municipalities themselves could also be limiting the ability of someone like himself to tailor an appropriate response for a ticketed student by setting a flat fine as high as \$400 for disorderly conduct.

Compared to the teachable moment that could have been delivered at school, a \$400 fine to a student from a low-income family doesn't provide much effective learning, Eterno said.

"It doesn't do justice to the respondent." he added.

---Kane County Connects---

Sep. 20, 2022

Three U-46 Academies Receive Magnet Status



Three of **School District U-46**'s specialized academies — at **Streamwood, Larkin, and Bartlett high schools** — have been recognized as nationally certified magnet schools for providing high-quality, innovative educational options to families and students that promote choice, diversity and academic excellence.

Of the two remaining academies in **U-46**, **South Elgin High School's Beacon Academy of Media & Digital Arts** earned magnet status in 2021, and **Elgin High School's Gifted and Talented Academy** is preparing for International Baccalaureate accreditation.

The certifications come as **U-46** continues to strengthen its high school programming to ensure every student is prepared to succeed in college and careers. The District is investing in facility upgrades, enhancing its "Educational Pathways," and offering an increasing number of work-based learning opportunities.

"We've always been proud of our high school academies, and the certification through the Magnet Schools of America demonstrates to our families that they provide outstanding

learning opportunities for our students, with a rigorous and relevant curriculum,” said School District U-46 Superintendent Dr. Tony Sanders. “I wanted to thank all the administrators and teachers who worked on the applications, evaluations, and extensive process that led to this accomplishment.”

U-46 launched academies, a themed-based school within a school, at each of its five comprehensive high schools more than 20 years ago. In recent years it has redesigned programming at the academies to ensure they remain unique and focused.

The three academies that recently received Magnet status are:

- **Streamwood High School’s LEAD Academy, with LEAD standing for Leadership Entrepreneurship Action and Design.** The academy students learn to be problem solvers and innovators in a collaborative environment. The program is designed for students interested in rigorous academic learning coupled with real-world experiential learning. Through several courses, students develop a business from conception to market, culminating in a “pitch night” to seek funding for each business.
- **Larkin High School’s Visual and Performing Arts Academy.** This academy features a four-year performance-based program in the focus areas of dance, drama, visual arts, and vocal and instrumental music. It uses multiple approaches to learning that address problem-solving skills, the creative process, and imagination through a focus on the fine arts.
- **Bartlett High School’s Science, Engineering, and High Technology Academy.** At this academy, students are immersed in the principles of engineering and design. Concepts from science and math are applied to solving real-world problems with technology.

The academies received the certification following a yearlong process. Academy staff and high school leadership provided evidence that demonstrated the schools met or exceeded criteria developed by Magnet Schools of America — criteria that fall under the pillars of diversity, innovative curriculum and professional development, academic excellence, leadership, and family and community partnerships. The efforts were led by Tracy Stewart, the Assistant Principal of Innovation at **Streamwood High**; Todd Duty, then the Assistant Principal of Innovation at **Larkin High**; and Milena Nedeljkovic, the Assistant Principal of STEM at **Bartlett High**. The certifications are valid through 2026.

Students in **U-46** apply to attend one of the five high school academies in the fall of their 8th grade year.

To help students decide on whether and where to apply, the five academies will offer open houses throughout October. Families and 8th grade students should visit www.u-46.org/magnetacademies for updated information on these opportunities. Email and text reminders will also be sent this fall to all families with 8th grade students.

Meanwhile, the District is also strengthening the “Educational Pathways” for students not part of an academy. Educational Pathways are a strategically planned sequence of career oriented

courses paired with required general education courses that lead directly to a post-secondary plan. For instance, a student in the Health Sciences pathway would take their core classes, as well as courses in the pathway. They could graduate high school as a certified nursing assistant, earning college credit through the Dual Credit program, and then be well prepared to pursue a variety of postsecondary options in the health professions or medical field.

Over the summer of 2022, improvements were made to the facilities at **Streamwood High School** for programs that include early childhood education, healthcare science, and law. The LEAD Academy was also fully renovated to include spaces that foster creating thinking and teaming; a board room; a student-run school store; and a digital fabrication laboratory. In the summer of 2023, the precision manufacturing, engineering, hospitality and automotive technologies programs at **Streamwood High School** are planned to be upgraded. **Larkin** and **South Elgin high schools** underwent similar improvements in the summer of 2021, and the remaining high schools are scheduled for updates in the coming years.

In addition, School District U-46, in partnership with the Alignment Collaborative for Education, placed 52 students in summer internships around the U-46 community. These internships offered the high school students hands-on opportunities with companies across many industry clusters working directly with professionals in engineering, manufacturing, real estate, finance, marketing, community relations, and youth services careers.

“I appreciated having real workforce opportunities that opened my mind to see how things we learn in school apply in real life,” said Kush Patel, a senior at Bartlett High School’s STEM Academy who completed an internship with Elgin Sweeper.

The Alignment Collaborative for Education is a non-profit organization of business and community leaders committed to partnering with schools, families, and the community to prepare students for future success as they progress through high school, ready to transition to post-secondary education and work experiences.

Alignment will also support U-46 by planning Explore, the District’s annual expo designed to expose 8th graders to various careers and demonstrate the connection between academic curriculum and future careers. Students will attend during the school day on Wednesday, Oct. 6, at the NOW Arena in Hoffman Estates.

---The Examiner---

Sep. 21, 2022

U-46 budget attracts negative public comments

By: Seth Hancock

The Board of Education in **School District U-46** is set to vote on the Fiscal Year 2023 budget, which is \$5.9 million in deficit, at its upcoming meeting on Monday, Sept. 26.

The budget shows total spending hikes of \$35.6 million, or 5.4 percent, from \$660.8 million to \$696.4 million, and revenue increases of \$28.2 million, or 4.3 percent, from \$662.3 million to \$690.5 million. The budget also shows a projected enrollment decline, from 36,049 to 35,202 (2.3 percent), with enrollment reductions projected to reach 33,676 by 2024-2025.

This will be the eighth straight year of spending increases and enrollment declines. Additionally, the district again plans to hike the property tax levy by the largest amount allowed under the law.

The board held a public hearing at its Sept. 12 meeting, and three comments were made blasting the district for this ongoing trend as well as the lack of results.

Rick Newton asked questions about accountability metrics. He noted that proficiency numbers in the state report card are abysmal, yet there seems to be no accountability for the board and staff, specifically **Superintendent Tony Sanders** who was just given a recent contract extension.

The most up to date numbers are largely from 2019 as COVID has been used by the state as a reason why proficiency scores have not been updated. “When you look at those numbers, they are nothing to go out and brag about,” Newton said. “They are very low right now. There’s some ups and downs, but the highest ones are not all that great.”

Newton added: “I would hope that we could get some response as to what is being done. I’m not talking about the strategic plan. I’m talking about actual improvements, and what is the scorecard. What does it look like?”

Crystal Cristescu listed items in the budget she did not approve of using taxpayer dollars on while the district has discontinued a reading program, Reading Strategies, that she said has been effective.

Corina Gomez, reading a statement on behalf of someone unable to make the meeting, said Sanders and the board are responsible for “dumbing down the children,” and “the audacity to continue to hike spending within a school system that has yearly declining enrollment and third world proficiency scores” should result in Sanders losing his job and the board members losing their seats.

The board offered no discussion or asked any questions on the budget after the public comments.

Under this budget, spending will have increased 62 percent and enrollment will have declined 13.5 percent since 2012 when expenditures were at \$430 million and enrollment at 40,687.

---The Examiner---

Sep. 21, 2022

Developer payout to U-46 approved by village board

By: Seth Hancock

The Village Board of Trustees approved of a payout of developer donations to **School District U-46** at its meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 6.

The vote was 5-0 with one abstention. The item was under the consent agenda which Trustee Mike Kolodziej abstained.

Megan Golden, director of administrative services, wrote in a memo that the village has \$309,464 in developer cash contributions previously collected. **U46** is requesting those funds and provided indemnity to the village for projects that occurred at **South Elgin High School** as well as **Willard** and **Clinton elementary schools**.

“Please accept this letter as a formal request for distribution of the developer fees currently collected on behalf of **School District U-46** and on deposit with the Village of South Elgin,” wrote **Ann Williams, U46’s deputy superintendent of operations**, in a letter. “With the replacement of the **South Elgin High School** tennis courts, underdrains and new fencing completed in August 2021 at a cost of \$853,770.00, the **Willard Elementary School** HVAC replacement completed in July 2021 at a cost of \$185,800.00, and the playground replacement at **Clinton Elementary** and **Willard Elementary** completed in the fall of 2021 at a total cost of \$114,265.06, I believe our expenditures meet the requirements of the ordinance.”

The Village Code of Ordinances includes an ordinance requiring developer cash contributions on any new residential subdivision, new residential planned development and any annexation of land.

The purpose of this Section is to provide for the immediate and future needs of residents for facilities and services that include, among others, the public school system, parks and recreation, police, street maintenance, and fire protection,” the ordinance states.

The ordinance adds: “The developer is required to dedicate land or to make a cash contribution in lieu of actual land and remit any fees as established in this Section.... The donation of land to meet requirements is preferred, and cash contributions in lieu of actual land should only be accepted when unique inability to provide suitable land is demonstrated.”

---The Examiner---

Sep. 21, 2022

Village approves pact with U-46 through 2027

By: Seth Hancock

The Village Board of Trustees unanimously approved, via a 6-0 vote, of an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with **School District U-46** at its meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 6.

The IGA allows the village use of **Fox Meadow Elementary School** for recreational programs, according to Kim Wascher, director of parks and recreation. The IGA runs from this Sept. 1 to Sept. 1, 2027.

“We’re very excited that **U-46** is reopening facilities for us to have programming again in the next year and to get this agreement extended that we’ve had with **Fox Meadow Elementary School** since it’s been open,” Wascher said.

Wascher added: “We hold youth basketball practices there, a lot of our tot and youth programs and other youth sports practices. We utilize the fields outside, and we assist with the scheduling with the fields that are **U46**’s and ours. So, there’s really just some basic language that was cleaned up and some start and end times added for Sundays. And then the use of electronic notice which we always just used snail mail with each other. Now, we’re just going to use electronic for notice of if we’re going to cancel something or if we have to amend the agreement in some fashion.”

The village has had access to **Fox Meadow**’s facilities since its opening in 1996, but access was limited over the last two years.

“Over the past two years the use has been limited due to COVID,” Wascher wrote in a memo. “After speaking with District Officials, we will be allowed to use the facility to the fullest extent with the agreement.”

Wascher described the changes to the agreement as “very minimal” including room number specification and legal language changes. The weekend times added to the IGA are 6:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Saturday and 12 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Sunday.

---The Examiner---

Sep. 21, 2022

Several U-46 expenditures set for Sept. 26 board vote

By: Seth Hancock

The Board of Education in **School District U-46** is set to vote on \$750,755 in expenditure items and a series of resolutions at its upcoming meeting on Monday, Sept. 26. The items were presented on Sept. 12.

Included is a resolution supporting the Teacher Retirement System's (TRS) supplemental savings plan.

Dale Burnidge, director of financial operations, said it's a 457 retirement plan similar to a 401K. He said the district already offers a 457 plan, but TRS requires districts to also offer this plan.

The board will vote on a mutual use agreement with Judson University allowing the college's football team, whose stadium is under renovations, to use **Streamwood High School's** Millennium Field for home games. In return, **Streamwood's** baseball team will be able to schedule some home games at Judson's turf field.

An intergovernmental agreement with the Village of South Elgin will also be voted on allowing the village's parks & recreation department to use **U-46** facilities and vice versa.

A purchase of playsets from Game Time for six elementary schools is the largest expenditure item at \$359,569, from the operations and maintenance fund if approved. The proposal states the current sets "are in extremely poor condition due to age and require replacement to mitigate safety issues."

A two-year contract costing \$168,000 (education fund) with NOW Arena will allow the district to continue to use the Hoffman Estates site for high school graduation.

The district is asking for \$78,264 (operations and maintenance fund) to replace snow removal equipment at three high schools through AHW LCC.

Costing \$50,788 (education fund), the district is seeking a contract for nine resident administrators in a Northern Illinois University principal preparation program. For 15 residential administrators, the district is seeking a \$49,216 contract (education fund) for the Illinois Principals Association's coaching and mentoring program.

The district is also seeking \$44,920 (operations and maintenance fund) for a second floor painting project at Streamwood's Tefft Middle School through Warehouse Direct.

---The Examiner---

Sep. 21, 2022

BHS homecoming items receive village support

By: Seth Hancock

The Village Board of Trustees unanimously approved, at its meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 6, of a pair of items for **Bartlett High School**'s homecoming.

Bartlett's homecoming football game will be Friday, Oct. 7 against **Larkin** with homecoming week starting with a planned parade on Sunday, Oct. 2 and a fireworks display on Monday, Oct. 3, for which the board approved permit requests.

"On behalf of the **Bartlett High School** Student Council, I am requesting approval for the **Bartlett High School** Homecoming parade and amplifier permit for the Hawkfest Carnival," wrote Kristen Gac, social studies teacher and student council supervisor, in a letter. "The parade is scheduled for [Sunday, Oct. 2 at 1 p.m. The carnival will be Monday, Oct. 3 from 5 to 8 p.m.] We are requesting an amplification permit for DJ music that will be played during the Hawk Fest."

Gac added: "In addition to permission for the parade, we are requesting barricades and police officers to assist with traffic control. The parade will follow an abbreviated version of the traditional Fourth of July parade route; beginning at Oak Glenn Lane, traveling south on South Bartlett Road, and ending at South Bartlett [and Steams roads]. We expect the parade will last less than one hour."

Joey Dienberg, management analyst, wrote in a memo that the village has received the proper certificate of insurance for the parade.

The fireworks display, planned as part of the Hawkfest Carnival, will have the "racks set up away from the northeast corner of the football field," according to Dienberg.

Dienberg stated the appropriate certificate of insurance, pyrotechnic operator's license and other federal permits have been submitted to the village, and the Bartlett Fire Protection District has also given permission.

Also approved that evening by a unanimous 5-0 vote was a bill list totaling \$2.9 million, the sewer fund (\$1.6 million) making up the largest portion.

---The Examiner---

Sep. 21, 2022

Streamwood finishes 2-2 at own tournament

By: Seth Hancock

The **Streamwood** soccer team went 2- 2 as it hosted the **Sabres** Fall Classic at Millennium Field.

The tournament was bookended by a pair of 2-1 losses for the **Sabres**, who are now 5-4-2 overall, against **Elgin** (7- 0-3) and St. Charles North (7-2-2).

Jairo Sanchez scored the **Sabres'** goal in the finale against **Elgin** on Saturday, Sept. 17. Hugo Marquez, assisted by Sanchez, scored the Sabres goal against St. Charles North on Saturday, Sept. 10.

The most exciting game of the tournament for **Streamwood** was a 2-1 victory over Loyola Academy on Thursday, Sept. 15.

Playing a man down due to a red card and locked in a 1-1 tie in the final two minutes of play, Ajdin Sabanovic blasted in the game winner off a Marcos Gutierrez feed. Gutierrez also had an assist on the game's first goal netted by Michael Garcia 14 minutes into the second half, but Loyola tied it up a little over 10 minutes later.

"I told my team afterward that this was the kind of game I wish I could have watched from the stands," said Streamwood coach Matt Polovin. "It was a good game, an exciting game. Loyola has big players, and it's a really good group, one of the program's best that I've seen in some time."

Sabres goalie Jason Ramirez made four saves in the effort.

Streamwood also defeated Crystal Lake Central in an 8-1 victory on Tuesday, Sept. 13.

Marquez had a dominant performance finding the back of the net four times while Garcia found it twice and added a pair of assists. Ricardo Aguilar and Bryan Huerta also tallied a goal in the win, and Ramirez made three saves in the effort

---The Examiner---

Sep. 21, 2022

Storm football in control in 47-12 romp over Larkin

By: Seth Hancock

The **South Elgin** football team was able to run away to a 47-12 Upstate Eight Conference win over **Larkin** on Friday, Sept. 16 at **South Elgin**.

Tied 6-6 late in the first quarter, junior Ari Kravis put the **Storm** ahead for good with a one-yard touchdown run. After a two-point conversion, it was 14-6 entering the second quarter.

With 365 rushing yards on the night, the **Storm** moved the ball mostly on the ground. However, junior quarterback Jake Sullivan (8-for-15, 122 yards) provided most of the scoring throwing four touchdown passes over the middle quarters.

“He’s not even come close to his ceiling,” **South Elgin** coach Dragan Teonic said of his junior quarterback. “That’s why we coach him so hard. He craves to be coached hard. He wants to be the best that he can be. Jake is so much better than he was as a sophomore, but he’s got a long way to go. That’s what I mean with his ceiling.”

Sullivan threw two touchdown passes of 14 and 40 yards to senior Kyle Steinhof in the second quarter as well as a 10-yard TD pass to senior Mason Montgomery as the Storm built a 34-12 halftime lead. Montgomery, who had 107 rushing yards, had the game’s first score with a 14- yard run in the first quarter.

In the third quarter, Sullivan threw a 19-yard touchdown pass to Montgomery, and Jordan Green ended the game’s scoring with a three-yard run.

Junior Lucas Noworol led the **Storm** with 123 rushing yards. **South Elgin** remains undefeated with the win improving to 4-0 overall and in the UEC.