

Press Clippings - 7/17/2024

- Chicago Tribune/ Courier News - U-46 high school students to have one shortened day a month to give teachers extra planning time

By: Mike Danahey

Date: July 16, 2024



Starting this school year, students attending **District U-46's** five high schools will be released almost an hour earlier than normal on the second Wednesday of the month to give teachers additional time to do other job-related work.

Students who take the bus and take part in after school-activities will have to remain on campus until the normal release time, U-46 spokeswoman Tara Burghart said.

“These early release dates will provide high school teachers with additional time for planning, data review and collaboration,” she said.

Collaborative teams will consist of teachers who teach the same course and can use the time to review the new curriculum, design lessons, evaluate students' work and assess where students need more support, Burghart said.

On early release Wednesdays, students at Bartlett, Elgin, Larkin, South Elgin and Streamwood high schools will be dismissed from class at 1:59 p.m. However, students who rely on bus transportation or participate in after-school activities will be expected to remain at school until the regular dismissal time of 2:55 p.m.

Students who remain on campus will be supervised by staff.

“They can attend a study hall, an open gym or take advantage of other opportunities,” Burghart said. “Potential activities that schools may offer, depending on the site, include ACT prep, peer tutoring and opportunities through partnerships with organizations such as Upward Bound, Boys and Girls Club, Hanover Township and Elgin Community College.”

The early release dates were part of the contract the Elgin Teachers Association negotiated with the school district earlier this year.

U-46 recently posted on social media that the new initiative will enhance the educational environment for high schoolers.

“Research shows that collaboration among teachers is tied to improved student learning outcomes through strengthening of curriculum, instruction and assessment,” Burghart said. “Collaboration also provides opportunities for feedback and growth as teachers learn from each other, and the support among colleagues can improve teacher retention and teacher satisfaction.”

During the 2024-25 school year, students will be off on five teacher institute days and for Labor Day, Columbus Day/Indigenous People’s Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day and President Day. Schools and offices will also be closed on Friday, April 18, for a spring holiday weekend.

For the Thanksgiving holiday, schools will be closed starting Wednesday, Nov. 27, classes resuming Monday, Dec. 2.

Winter break will start Monday, Dec. 23, with classes resuming Monday, Jan. 6. Spring break will start Monday, March 31, with classes resuming Monday, April 7.

If no snow days are used, the last day of classes for all U-46 schools will be Friday, May 23. High school graduations will be Saturday, May 24.

- Daily Herald -
**ECC Project Backpack returns in-person to
provide supplies to local students**
By: Elgin Community College
Date: July 16, 2024



Community members check out donations during the 2019 Project Backpack event, the last time the event was in-person.

Elgin Community College and its partners are preparing for Project Backpack, a community-based initiative that collects and distributes school supplies to students in need in the area.

The school supply giveaway event is back in person this year and will take place on Saturday, Aug. 3, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Building J Spartan Events Center, 1700 Spartan Drive, Elgin. It will also take place outside of Building C in the Green Space.

Project Backpack is celebrating its 15th year; approximately 22,000 students have benefited from the program. During the event, backpacks pre-filled with school supplies are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis, with a limit of one backpack per student.

“Each year, the Project Backpack Committee comes together to help our community youth,” said Amybeth Maurer, assistant dean of student experience and engagement. “We are grateful for the opportunity to partner with local school districts to distribute supplies directly to families so they are prepared and confident when the school year begins.”

Individuals interested in volunteering for a shift during the backpack packing days on Tuesday, July 30 through Thursday, Aug. 1, or during the event on Saturday, Aug. 3, can register online at project-backpack.org.

Students who provide proof of residence for fall 2024 enrollment in Elgin Area School **District U-46**, Algonquin-based Community Unit District 300, Central Unit District 301, St. Charles Unit District 303, or Keeneyville Elementary District 20, or at ECC are eligible to receive free backpacks.

A range of community agencies, interactive activities, and services will also be available at the event to share information and help residents. Attendees can get their faces painted, visit the mobile library, tour a firetruck, and more.

Project Backpack partners are Elgin Community College, Elgin Community College Faculty Association, Elgin Community College Pension Plan Participants, Kane County Regional Office of Education, Kane County Teachers Credit Union, and Elgin Area School District U-46.

For more information, visit project-backpack.org or contact the ECC Student Life Office at (847) 214-7370. For more information in Spanish, call (847) 888-5000, ext. 5039 (Para información en Español, llame (847) 888-5000, extensión 5039.)

- The Examiner -

Dist. U-46 expenses, bills given unanimous board support

By: Seth Hancock

Date: July 17, 2024

The Board of Education in **School District U-46** unanimously approved, via a 7-0 vote, of \$3.2 million in expenditure proposals at its meeting on Monday, June 24.

Included was one item that was presented and approved the same evening, a two-year lease of a modular unit (mobile classroom) to be used at Clinton Elementary School from Willscot costing \$142,938 to be paid for through operations and maintenance funds.

The proposal states that there will be additional staff at Clinton because it has been designated as a School for Rigor which requires more space.

“To address this need, the administration proposes a two-year lease for a modular unit comprising two classrooms, to be installed on the blacktop directly north of the building,” the proposal stated. “This solution is anticipated to bridge the gap until the planned middle school transition in the 2026-2027 school year.”

The remaining items were all presented on June 10, the costliest two being operations and maintenance fund items including a \$1.4 million proposal with MG Mechanical Contracting for mechanical upgrades at the South Elgin High School pool and a \$585,435 bid from Ascend Electric for overhead electrical service replacement at Elgin High School.

Two items will be paid through national grant funds. They include \$471,686 to Apple Inc. for 475 iPads to “support our district's transition to a fully digital educational

environment,” the proposal states, and \$140,431 for a contract renewal with Houghton Mifflin Harcourt for its Read 180 reading intervention.

Education fund items include a \$188,208 contract renewal with Brecht’s Database Solutions for its IEP and 504 plan data management system and a \$158,400 contract renewal with Notable, Inc. for Kami, which allows “students and teachers to markup text without the need to print, scan, etc.,” the proposal states, as well as a \$34,980 proposal from Metronet for internet access at Kenyon Woods Middle School.

Costing \$63,113 (school safety fund), the board approved of the replacement of 225 two-way radios from Alpha Prime Communications.

Another contract renewal with Brecht’s was approved for its Medicaid database system. Specifics on costs were not presented with Brecht’s receiving 5 percent of Healthcare and Family Services reimbursements.

Also approved by a 7-0 vote was \$36 million in itemized bills.

- The Examiner - Proposals await action of U-46 board of education

By: Seth Hancock

Date: July 17, 2024

The Board of Education in **School District U-46** is set to vote on \$598,645 in expenditure proposals at its upcoming meeting on Monday, July 22. The items were presented on June 24.

The largest expense is a \$200,797 contract renewal, to be paid for by the nation’s taxpayers through grant funds if approved, with n2y, LLC for the News2You resource. The resource has been used by the district since the 2009- 2010 school year, the proposal states.

“Specialized Student Services has utilized n2y curricular resources for K-12 students identified with mild to severe cognitive disabilities, including monolingual and English Learners students,” the proposal states.

“The resource supports life skills literacy, math, social studies, and science instruction modified for students with intellectual impairments.”

A \$138,800 (education fund) contract renewal with National Geographic Cengage was presented for licenses for the World Cultures and Geography resource which “is the

primary textual resource for our existing 7th Grade Social Studies class for both General Education students and for students in the Dual Language Humanities block,” the proposal stated.

A contract renewal with McGraw-Hill costing \$57,504 (education fund) was presented for the Discovering Our Past–US History, Early Years resource which “is the primary textual resource for our existing 8th Grade U.S. History Class,” the proposal states.

Other education fund proposals include a \$63,400 contract renewal with CDW for the use of Zoom and a \$30,000 proposal from Creative Entourage to provide community engagement and communications services related to the ongoing facilities updates.

Operations and maintenance fund proposals include a \$68,300 bid from Everlast Blacktop for a parking lot resurfacing project at Ellis Middle School and a \$39,844 proposal from Premistar HVAC, Plumbing and Building Controls for a smoke hatch replacement at Bartlett High School’s auditorium