

Superintendent's Weekly Newsletter



March 20, 2025

Dear Colleagues,

In February, we honored a very special group of individuals who have dedicated years to U-46, our schools, and most importantly, our students. This year, we have approximately 130 employees marking 25, 30, 35, or 40 years of service. You can view photos from our February Years of Service celebration [here](#).

They served as bus drivers, secretaries, administrative assistants, paraprofessionals, and home-school liaisons. They worked as administrators and classroom teachers, some in Specialized Student Services or Dual Language, or as art, music, or PE teachers. They filled key roles in Plant Operations, Transportation, Payroll, Information Services and Food and Nutrition Services.

Thank you for everything these team members have done during their U-46 career. Their knowledge and commitment have helped shape our schools and the lives of children throughout the District.

Thank you to the spouses, partners, family members, and friends. Your support contributed to our success in U-46.

Thank you to our team members for your dedication to improving our schools and our District. Your level of commitment to our students is amazing!

Thank you for making it a great day to learn in U-46 for the past 25, 30, 35 or 40 years!

Dr. Suzanne Johnson

Kudos

Note: We enjoy seeing the recognition and respect among our U-46 Team through the [Kudos submitted](#) in each issue of the Superintendent's Weekly. In an effort to further recognize our team members, we will be sharing select Kudos on social media each week under the hashtag #U46StaffKudos. When entering Kudos in Let's Talk, please note if you would prefer to not have your kudos shared on social media. We look forward to continuing to receive your kudos and celebrating them in this new way.

Remember, only Kudos with the sender's name will appear in the Weekly; no anonymous messages. Kudos are due by **5 p.m. each Tuesday**.

Kudos to Detective Beth Sterricker, at Elgin High School, from Richard Bosh and the District Safety Department

We would like to send out a big congratulations to School Resource Officer Beth Sterricker at Elgin High for being selected as the City of Elgin's Police Officer of the Year for 2024. Detective Sterricker started her School Resource Officer assignment in 2019 and has shown her commitment to school safety and the ability to forge great relationships with the students and staff at Elgin High. The District is grateful to have Detective Sterricker at Elgin High and appreciate all the work she does!

Kudos to Pablo Alonso in the Warehouse, from Cyntia Marrero, in the Literacy Department

Thank you, Pablo, for going above and beyond to find a piece of mail. This allowed the Literacy Specialists to attend the IRC Conference in Springfield.

Kudos to Samantha Geijer, at Heritage Elementary School, from Cynthia Marrero, in the Literacy Department

Thank you to Samantha for her part in getting the Literacy Specialists to be able to attend the IRC Conference in Springfield.

Kudos to the Streamwood Police Department, from Janelle Raine, Sarah Hansen, and Kelly Roback, the Administrative Team at Ridge Circle Elementary School, and the Entire Ridge Circle Staff

The staff at Ridge Circle would like to recognize the dedication of the Streamwood Police Department in helping to keep our students, staff, and families safe. Their consistent presence at Ridge Circle is particularly noticeable and appreciated during our busy arrival and dismissal times. They help us to create a safe and welcoming environment at Ridge Circle, and we value their community partnership. We are deeply grateful for their support and dedication especially when it comes to the well-being of our children.

Kudos to Jamie Youngerman, from Molly Porters, both at Abbott Middle School

Jamie is our ESL Language Resource Teacher at Abbott. She is always going above and beyond for our students and teachers and their families. She not only rotates into all academic classes to assist our ESL students and more specifically our newcomers, she is also meeting with teachers and instructional coaches to make sure the students are getting the best education possible. She has even started an after school club that allows all the ESL students to work on their English proficiency. She has made these students feel comfortable and you can tell Mrs. Youngerman is a person they trust and enjoy seeing every day at Abbott. You can spot her anywhere with her rolling

cart of goodies as she goes from classroom to classroom helping everyone along the way. Thank you, Jamie, for all you do for Abbott and our students, teachers, and families!

Kudos to Shannen Sutherland, at Kimball Middle School, from Tiffany Mikkahil-Wright, in Equity and Inclusion

Shannen is a school counselor at Kimball, and she is simply the best! She consistently goes above and beyond to support both our students and staff. I have personally sought her guidance on several occasions when navigating challenging situations, and her insight has been invaluable.

Students have also shared how comfortable and supported they feel with Shannen. Recently, she attended the Students' Voices Matter professional development session, and her presence meant a great deal to our students. It demonstrated that their voices truly matter—both inside and outside of school. Thank you, Shannen, for your unwavering dedication and the positive impact you make every day!

Kudos to Allison Hale, Angela Williams, Carolyn Flores-Rodriguez, and Jessica Harrison, all in Special Education, from Tiffany Mikkahil-Wright, in Equity and Inclusion

Happy World BCBA Appreciation Day to our amazing BCBAs. These ladies are the ultimate rockstar crew! When they walk into your school, you know you're about to receive the best support. Their positive energy is contagious, and they approach both students and adults as whole individuals — not by the labels they've been given.

They are always there for our students and staff, offering guidance and compassion — even when we're working through big emotions. While World BCBA Appreciation Day may only be on March 20th, their dedication deserves to be celebrated every day. Thank you, ladies, for all that you do, we appreciate you!



Kudos to Kathy Priest, at Elgin High School, from David Dybalski, Psychologist at Elgin High School

Mrs. Priest is the librarian at EHS, and I just want to share about how much she has meant to Elgin High School over the 10 or so years she has been there. She's easy to approach and will help you out if needed. The library environment is positive and students seem to desire to go there. You can feel it when you walk in. It's not the old time library manner of the past. So it's about time I sent this Kudos to Mrs. Priest after all these years. She has a good heart! Adam Moliwell is also a librarian there, and I don't forget about his contribution to this positive environment.

Kudos to Saju Kizhakkail, in Information Services, from Trinette Gardner and the Financial Services Department

Thank you, Saju, for consistently going above and beyond to assist Financial Services at a moment's notice! We greatly appreciate your expertise and your unwavering willingness to address any IS-related challenges with professionalism and efficiency.

Kudos to Leslie Duckett and Marcella Sheler, from Samantha Scimeca, all at Huff Elementary School

I just wanted to give a kudos to our IAR Test Coordinators, Leslie Duckett and our principal Marcella Sheler, for all their efforts organizing the IAR testing materials. They spent many long hours preparing student and teacher tickets, packing healthy snacks for students, and making sure teachers had all the information needed in our bins. I also wanted to give an extra kudos to Leslie for keeping up with additional testing info and making sure we had updated information. Both Ms.

Sheler and Mrs. Duckett have been on call for teachers that needed extra help, and it's really appreciated. So thank you for all you have done!

Kudos to the ELL Speech Language Pathologists Yanitza Vazquez, Lorena Orizaba, Cheryl Hoika, Alexandra Cordoba-Lee, Josefina Leautau, and Heidi Valerio, from Anabela Largo, ELL SLP Lead

Thank you for your openness in taking SL graduate students and Clinical Fellowship Year SLPs under your supervision. Your passion and dedication in guiding them through the challenges and successes of our profession are truly appreciated. The hard work that each one of you puts into supporting future and newly graduated SLPs is invaluable, and it plays a crucial role in raising awareness about the significance of our work. Thank you!

Kudo to Christopher Lee, in Information Services, from Emily Sanchez, in the Multilingual & Multicultural Education Department

I wanted to take a moment to recognize Christopher for his professionalism, prompt responses, and willingness to help. His support and clarity in addressing any doubts have been truly appreciated. His dedication makes a difference, and I wanted to make sure it doesn't go unnoticed.

Kudos to Ashley Talip and Lisa Toppel, from Charity Di Liberti, all at Century Oaks Elementary School

I want to recognize Ashley and Lisa for their quick thinking and "let's do it" attitude. When the students in the mobiles had to work in the building due to high winds, Ashley and Lisa immediately jumped into action and rearranged work space inside the building so the students would have a place to work for the day. Their efforts and fast action made for a smooth transition indoors.

Kudos to Erin Holden, from Charity Di Liberti, both at Century Oaks Elementary School

Erin is the band teacher and gave up her practice room on a day when students from the mobiles had to move inside the building. Erin was moved to the conference room that day for band lessons. She was understanding about the sudden move and was flexible with her lesson times. Thanks, Erin.

Kudos to Lisa Jacskon, Jessica Harrison, and Allison Hale from Kelli Walsh, South Elgin Network SERT

I would like to extend my thanks to Lisa, Jessica, and Allison for joining the South Elgin Network CoP and presenting. I appreciate all the time you spent with our Network and sharing your expertise.

Kudos to the Assessment and Information Services Departments from Jim Medcalf, in Special Education

It's "Assessment Season," and as we are in the midst of testing, we always have some cleaning up to do of accommodations for our students with IEP's and 504's. Due to some (late) changes at the state and in our IEP system, we've been doing a little more clean-up than usual. A huge thanks to the members of the Assessment and Information Services departments who have helped to input and facilitate all of the changes: Danielle Pepa, David Bell, David A. Williams, Aurora Lozano, David Steuer, Jennifer Simon, Matt Raimondi ... and anyone else I missed - it's been a wild week!) Also, thanks to all of the case managers keeping track of their students' needs, reporting inconsistencies and amending IEP's/504's (in addition to administering the tests themselves).



School District U-46

