

# Superintendent's Weekly Newsletter

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**March 27, 2025**

Dear Colleagues,

Have a great Spring Recess! Please take this time to rest and recharge to return for the final quarter of the year.

I wanted to take this opportunity to let you know that on the first morning after recess, Monday, April 7, you will receive an email asking you to take our **#U46Voice** Pulse Survey administered by Gallup. These spring Pulse Surveys, and the Employee Engagement Survey we offer in the fall, are part of our ongoing commitment to fostering a positive and productive work environment.

This survey will provide further insight into our workplace environment and employee satisfaction. The questions asked will specifically focus on actions taken since last fall's survey.

Here are some of the reasons why we're conducting this Pulse Survey - and why it's so important for you to make your voice heard:

- **To Measure Accountability:** We want to understand how well we hold ourselves and each other accountable for results.
- **To Track Progress:** We want to ensure continuous improvements and address emerging issues promptly.
- **To Enhance Responsibility:** We want to increase engagement and commitment through accountability.

It's important to know that your responses will be kept **completely anonymous and confidential**. Gallup is a third party and handles all survey responses and data collection. Individual responses

will not be shared with anyone at U-46, including managers and leadership. Feedback will be combined with that of other employees to ensure privacy.

We encourage all employees to participate and share their honest feedback to help us in creating a work environment where everyone feels heard and respected.

Thank you for your continued dedication and support in making every day a great day to learn in U-46!

Dr. Suzanne Johnson

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## 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 Bus Driver Antonio Hernandez-Colin, in Transportation, from Ana Alanis, Sarah Ruff, and Kelly Ford, all at Independence Center for Early Learning**

We wanted to give a shout out to Antonio, a bus driver who picks up at Independence, for being so great with our students! Antonio is kind, timely, and takes the time to get to know our students. Great job, Antonio!

**Kudos to Mary Lee, in Health Services, from Jessica Hayes, in Special Education**

Thank you so much to Mary, for the 3D printing Braille Crayon labels. These 3D printed labels make it so our students can find the color they want independently. Thank you so much!

**Kudos to Warehouse, Maintenance, Grounds, and Custodial Employees, from Tim Sheahan, in Plant Operations**

To all the members of the Education Support Service Organization (ESSO): I am extremely proud to be associated with such hardworking and dedicated people. Without the services you provide, the special requests you fulfill, and the emergencies you tackle, U-46 could not function. I'm sure I'm not alone when I say thank you for everything you do for us.

**Kudos to Lisa Jackson, in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, from Marisa Herrell, Elisabeth Ferrill, Kelli Walsh, and Zehra Schwarze, all in the Culture and Climate Department**

A big thank you for taking the time to meet with assistant principals from various networks to discuss how we can foster a sense of belonging in our schools. Your insightful conversations encouraged us to take a deeper look at the core values we hold as educators, and your reminder to lead with those values is truly impactful. We appreciate your dedication to this important work!

**Kudos to Maribel Turcan, from Sean Gimpert, both at Bartlett High School**

I recently nominated Maribel Turcan, a school nurse at BHS, at our monthly "Distinguished Staff" lunch. You can often see her sprinting down the hallway with her first aid backpack during a student emergency. I was unable to formally recognize her during our lunch because she had to respond to another medical emergency during our recognition lunch. The next day, I called for a nurse due to a medical emergency, and I could not believe how fast Maribel made it to the scene. I was in awe and inspired not only by her medical attention, but her compassion, ability to console, and calm the student who was in a panic. We are lucky to have Maribel at Bartlett!

**Kudos to Debbie McMullen, Christina Rodriguez, and Vince Fosco, in the Science Department, from Maria E. Hull, at Oakhill Elementary School**

A huge thank you to Debbie, Christina, and Vince, for an incredible day at our school district's 2025 STEM Expo on March 22 at Eastview Middle School! The expo was buzzing with the energy of 200 curious minds exploring science, technology, engineering, and math. From mind-blowing experiments to hands-on discoveries, it was a thrill to see future scientists and inventors light up with excitement. Thank you for all you do to spark curiosity and help our budding scientists reach for the stars!

**Kudos to Josefina Federico, from Gisselle Moreira, both at Hillcrest Elementary School**

A huge thank you to Josefina, our amazing school nurse, for her professionalism, expertise, and quick response during an emergency. Your dedication to keeping our students safe and cared for does not go unnoticed. We are truly lucky to have you aboard, always ready and available when our students need you the most. Nurses are true heroes, and we appreciate everything you do each and every day!

**Kudos to Claire Ditchman, in Information Services, from Evelyn Bevins, at the Educational Services Center**

A big thank you to Claire, who is a support center agent in IS. Claire is always extremely helpful in trying to diagnose tech issues that arise. She handles the requests with such grace and professionalism. Thank you, Claire, for always being such a pleasure to work with!

**Kudos to Dawn Franzen, from Diane Rader, both in the Transportation Department**

I want everyone to know how much of an asset Dawn is to our department. Dawn was extremely helpful when I suddenly became sick driving a bus. She was able to stay until I was able to continue driving my route; and I am very grateful for that simple act of kindness. U-46 is extremely lucky to have such a special person like Dawn on their transportation team!

**Kudos to the U-46 Legal Department, from Steven Tracy and the High School and Middle School Athletic Directors**

We would like to thank the Legal Department. We asked them to review and assist in developing some documents related to our registration process. They were very willing to help and supported us tremendously.

**Kudos to Griffin Lober, at South Elgin High School, from Elisa Lieb-Bauman, at Kimball Middle School**

I want to send a kudos to Griffin for hosting the U-46 Middle School Band Festival last Saturday and for going above and beyond in helping my percussionists with an unusual setup for one of their

pieces. The extra effort helped make the performance a special one for my students, and I truly appreciate it!

**Kudos to Jessica Harrison and Allison Hale, in Specialized Student Services, from Elisabeth Ferrill, Kelli Walsh, Marisa Herrell, Zehra Schwarze, in Culture and Climate**

A heartfelt thank you for joining our CoPs and presenting on Tier 1 behavior interventions to the network assistant principals. Your knowledge and expertise were invaluable, and we truly appreciated your engaging presentation. Your enthusiasm and sense of humor made the session even more enjoyable. We feel incredibly fortunate to have the opportunity to collaborate with both of you!

**Kudos to Eastview and Kenyon Woods Middle Schools, from Aurora Lozano and the Assessment Team**

Though it's a bit late, the Assessment Team wants to celebrate our incredible teams at Eastview and Kenyon Woods for their outstanding start to the Illinois Assessment of Readiness window that opened on March 14! Achieving a 90% completion rate in both ELA and Math in the first week of testing is an impressive accomplishment!

Thank you to all the teachers, administrators, and students for your hard work and dedication. Your efforts truly make a difference! As we head into spring break, take this time to relax and recharge. You've earned it! Keep up the great work!

**Kudos to Jen Bury, Lisa McDonald, and Rajan Sharma, all at Glenbrook Elementary School, from Martha Reza, at Glenbrook Elementary**

Parents and staff would like to recognize Glenbrook's Blue and Yellow Battle of the Books teams, who both performed incredibly well in this season's battles! Both teams scored above 1,000 points, and the Glenbrook Yellow Team placed first among all U-46 teams! Thank you to librarian Lisa McDonald and 4th grade teacher Jen Bury for all of your support, hard work and most importantly, spreading a love of reading to our students! We would also like to thank Principal Rajan Sharma for always going above and beyond to support our kids and making it out to all school events. It was wonderful having him there to support our students; they are always excited to see him! Thank you Mr. Sharma, Mrs. Bury & Mrs. McDonald for your unwavering dedication and for the positive impact you make at Glenbrook every day, and for being those Hawks that rise above! CA-CAW!





**School District U-46**

