

Superintendent's Weekly Newsletter



Oct. 31, 2024

Dear Colleagues,

Happy Fall Season! As we enjoy October's vibrant colors and cooler weather, we also wish a Happy Halloween to those who celebrate. Depending on your preference, and likely experiences in an elementary, middle or high school building, today is either a favorite day or least favorite day of the school year. As a former high school principal, it was not a favorite day. The year the BHS Club Hockey team wore their complete hockey uniforms (pads and all) "stunk." As a parent, I have learned to see the joy of Halloween from the eyes of my children.

Nonetheless, today also marks the date by which Illinois school districts receive their school report cards based in part on assessments completed during the 2023-2024 year. The school report cards strive to provide a balanced accountability system for student growth and proficiency, student attendance, and many other measures outlined by the Illinois State Board of Education.

As report cards are released, I want to provide you with several reminders:

- Individual student test scores are attributed to their home school (the neighborhood school where the student would attend, not the actual school they attend).
- Schools receive one of five designations: exemplary, commendable, targeted, comprehensive and intensive. The targeted, comprehensive and intensive designations require specific resources and support for schools along with increased accountability metrics and expectations.
- Sites will also receive specific support from ESC teams including: data reviews and guidance, communication assistance, meeting and check-in structures, and support for refining essential school systems.

While school designations may change year after year, schools in a targeted or comprehensive improvement status remain on a 4-year cycle in order to receive multiple years of support that will

lead to sustained improvement efforts. Additionally, each individual student's score can be compared to last year's results, and the District can compare its results over time.

These individual growth metrics, school-based growth metrics and District growth metrics will be reviewed to determine our next steps to enhance student growth as highlighted in **District Goal 1**: School District U-46 will maximize resources available to accelerate student growth in alignment with the U-46 instructional clarity framework and our efforts to make sure students are growing. Overall, we saw significant growth this year and we will continue to work until all schools have a commendable rating or higher on a consistent basis.

Student assessment data provides a point we use to monitor academic performance. In addition to this data, we track attendance, conditions data, grades and graduation rates. Every U-46 team member is vital to supporting student growth. As we continue to focus on accelerating growth, your commitment to our collective work will ensure we have a positive impact.

It's a great day to learn in U-46!

Dr. Suzanne Johnson

Kudos

Send Kudos directly by clicking [HERE](#) or using Let's Talk. 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 all of our Kindergarten Teachers, from Kathleen Cox at Early Learner Initiatives

Thank you to all of our kindergarten teachers for entering their KIDS ratings into KIDS tech. This year was the smoothest it has been in four years, and we are grateful for your diligence and expertise!

Kudos to Parents As Teachers, from Kathleen Cox at Early Learner Initiatives

We would like to celebrate the effort of our Birth to 3 home visiting programs for being awarded Blue Ribbon Status with the National Parents as Teachers organization. For more than 25 years, U-46 has provided home visits to the families of our youngest citizens (prenatal through 3 years old). This high-quality program supports parents as their child's first teacher.

We are so proud of our team and the exceptional work they do in our community: Lynn Reuter, Chris Tornabene, Lucia Abreu, Felicia Ellis, Julie Fowler, Maria Gil, Francesca Hantgos, Andrea Johnson, Jeanine Manser, and Mireya Rodriguez.

Kudos to Kristine Kovari and Cathy Bryar, both at Huff Elementary School, from Elizabeth Oloughlin at Eastview Middle School and a U-46 Parent

Kudos for your work with our young learners. I would like to say thank you for all you ladies do. Not only as a parent but now as a staff member, I understand what you do day to day. The connections and impacts you have on these children's lives matter and you matter! Thank you for your time and efforts to make every child feel comfortable, safe, and welcome in your classroom.

Kudos to Katherine Lauesen, from Steven Tracy, both at Larkin High School

Thank you for thoughtfully organizing, creating, and distributing Maroon ribbons to all U-46 football programs on Friday, October 25, demonstrating our support for Elgin High School. This meaningful gesture shows how we, as a united U-46 community, come together to uplift and stand in solidarity with one another. Thank you for fostering a spirit of unity and pride that extends across all our schools.

Kudos to Carmine Fry, from David Dybalski, both at Elgin High School

Carmine, a paraeducator, has been serving the special education students at Elgin High School for 20 years. In all those years I have known her to be very supportive of the students, sensitive and understanding of their life's situation and needs. Thanks for all those years of helping kids, Carmine.

Kudos to Cheryl Frederickson and the Staff at Century Oaks Elementary School, from Rich Bosh in District Safety

I recently had the opportunity to walk the building with Principal Fredrickson, discussing safety procedures for our students, staff and visitors. Thank you to the teachers for allowing me to observe and engage with students in the morning circles and to share information about my role in school safety. Children can't learn if they don't feel safe, and the students at Century Oaks all had smiles and shared that they feel safe.

**School District U-46**