

## Press Clippings 3/26/2018

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### **U-46 may expand dual-credit options with ECC**

BY MADHU KRISHNAMURTHY

More **Elgin Area School District U-46** students might have the chance to earn college credit at Elgin Community College in the future.

U-46 officials last week provided an update on dual-credit courses offered for the first time this school year to seniors through ECC's Accelerate College program. Forty-five students were accepted into the program. Of those, 42 made it to second semester. About two-thirds of the students are female, 38 percent qualify for the federal free and reduced lunch program, and 62 percent paid full fees. Participants' demographic makeup is 38 percent Hispanic, 38 percent white, 19 percent Asian and 5 percent black, said Chris Boden, U-46 lead counselor.

Boden said students performed well in the first semester, earning 633 credits with a 3.42 cumulative grade-point average score, saving \$79,000 in college tuition.

Classes are held at ECC's Elgin campus. Students are taking 12 to 16 credit hours per semester at \$125 per credit hour, which increases to \$129 next school year. They attend classes between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and meet with Boden on Fridays for guidance.

To qualify, a student must be a high school junior, have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0, meet college readiness requirements -- based on ECC placement tests or scores on the ACT or SAT in reading, writing and mathematics -- and have a good attendance record in high school. Students complete high school graduation requirements embedded into ECC's program, taking English, math, science, social science, behavioral science, fine arts and humanities courses during senior year of high school. All students also must take a College 101 class.

They can work toward an associate degree or certificate in arts or science, earning between 30 and 32 credits for the year. Students pay for books and U-46's instructional fees, while the district covers ECC's tuition and course fees through general state aid.

"We have 45 spaces available for students for the fall," said Terri Lozier, U-46 assistant superintendent of secondary schools and equity. "We are also allowed to have 45 additional spaces (for students entering junior year). Before we suggest or move forward with the junior-senior program at ECC, we want to make sure that we have the senior program pretty well under control."

Among the challenges with identifying eligible students for this fall is getting them to take ECC's placement exam.

"It would be much easier if we could do it during the school day at our own facilities, but there is a question of how secure the test is and are they all being given within the same parameters," Lozier said.

Another concern is seniors attending ECC are ineligible to compete in Illinois High School Association-sanctioned sports and college athletics.

"We are continuing to explore other dual-credit options so that students can remain at our home high schools," Lozier said. "We are working with ECC to align our programs so that a student will take their senior year and college credits right in our own buildings, go to ECC for one year and then move on to either Northern Illinois University or Illinois State University for the remaining two years."

Officials also are exploring dual-credit options with Harper College in Palatine and other community colleges.

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## **U-46 board honors its teachers with National Board Certification**

SUBMITTED BY ELGIN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT U-46

On Feb. 26, the Elgin Area School District U-46 board recognized eight teachers who have recently earned the highest credential in the teaching profession as well as another three teachers who have maintained and recently renewed this credential.

National Board Certification requires teachers pass a rigorous performance-based assessment that only 33 percent of candidates pass on the first attempt.

"I'm very proud of these teachers who have taken on this rigorous certification process to hone their practice and demonstrate their advanced knowledge and skills," said CEO Tony Sanders. "Their students and schools will benefit from having these outstanding professionals in the classroom."

The latest group of U-46 teachers join more than 100 of their peers in the district who have earned the credential. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards oversees the process for National Board Certification, which can take a teacher one to three years to complete. It is a self-reflective form of professional development that aims to hone each candidate's teaching skills.

Candidates must demonstrate their understanding of content knowledge in their chosen certificate area; design and implement instruction to advance student learning and achievement; describe, analyze and reflect on their teaching and interactions with students; and highlight their abilities as an effective and reflective practitioner in developing and applying their knowledge of their students.

The following teachers in U-46 earned National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification in 2017:

- Meagen Balzer: Streamwood High School, English Language Arts/Adolescence and Young Adulthood;
- Christine Bowen: South Elgin High School, Mathematics/Adolescence and Young Adulthood;

- Sandra Citron: Early Learners Initiatives/Kindergarten Early Learners Initiatives/Kindergarten and Literacy: Reading-Language Arts/Early and Middle Childhood;
- Nicole Fernstrom: Streamwood High School, Arts/Adolescence and Young Adulthood;
- Eric Hill: Larkin High School, English Language Arts/Adolescence and Young Adulthood;
- Brooke McGrath: Clinton Elementary School, Exceptional Needs Specialist/Early Childhood Through Young Adulthood;
- Amanda Patano: South Elgin High School, English Language Arts/Adolescence and Young Adulthood;
- Karen Witt: Horizon Elementary, School Literacy: Reading-Language Arts/Early and Middle Childhood.

The following individuals in School District U-46 renewed their National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification:

- Maryellyn Friel: Heritage Elementary School, Exceptional Needs Specialist/Early Childhood Through Young Adulthood;
- Nicholas Vassolo: Streamwood High School, Social Studies History/Young Adolescence and Young Adulthood;
- Naushina Rahman: Elgin High School -- Social Studies History/Young Adolescence and Young Adulthood.

The board-certified teachers will receive an Accent on Achievement certificate at the board meeting.

The U-46 board of education Meetings are always open to the public and they stream live on YouTube.