

## Press Clippings 08/15/2019

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### 38,000 students begin classes in U-46

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Iyahna Craig wears a unicorn crown on her first day in second grade Wednesday at Washington Elementary School in Elgin.

More than 38,000 students in kindergarten through 12th grade returned to Elgin Area School District U-46 schools Wednesday for the first day of classes.

Preschool students will have their first day of school on Wednesday, Aug. 21.

This school year, the district is rolling out Chromebooks for all students in fifth through eighth grades. High schoolers and some middle school students enrolled in specific math classes already have them.

It's also expanding the dual language program into 10th grade at its five high schools with the goal of adding a grade in each of the following years. More than 11,000 U-46 students are enrolled in one of the largest dual language programs in the country.

Major construction projects completed ahead of the start of school include library renovations at Bartlett, Larkin and South Elgin high schools; a new track at South Elgin High School; and playground replacements at Coleman and Hillcrest elementary schools, both in Elgin, and Sycamore Trails Elementary in Bartlett.

High school libraries have been reconfigured to include more collaborative spaces and to incorporate technology, such as media boards, small touch screens for catalog systems, Chromebook charging stations, 3-D printers, interactive monitors for small and large groups, and speaker systems.

Also, South Elgin High now has a permanent stadium press box, LED lights around the perimeter of the football field and a renovated track. The running track at Larkin High in Elgin also has been renovated.

U-46's partnership with Elgin Community College will allow high school seniors to enroll in a full-time dual-credit program after meeting college readiness benchmarks for acceptance. Students enrolled in the program will take all of their courses at ECC and earn both high school and college credit for each class.

This fall, U-46 will conduct a free career expo for all district eighth-graders in partnership with the Alignment Collaborative for Education. "Explore 2019" is scheduled for Sept. 11 at the Sears Centre Arena in Hoffman Estates.

The district plans to roll out new educational pathways for incoming freshmen in the 2021-22 school year. Information about specific pathways to be offered at the high schools will be presented to the school board this fall.