

## Press Clippings 08/26/2019

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There are no U-46 related news stories.

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### ---The Courier-News---08/25/2019

### Volunteers grow food for U46 schools

By: Rafael Guerrero



Amelia Rothstein picks up cucumbers that have grown at a vegetable garden just outside School District U46's food services facility.



The vegetable garden is on a small plot just outside U46's food services commissary on Bowes Road.

Just west of School District U46's food commissary on Bowes Road is a small garden bearing fruit — or in this case, vegetables — in the form of cucumbers, peppers, tomatoes, basil, and more.

Food services employees and volunteers planted approximately 200 plants this summer in a 60-by-60-foot plot. Four elementary schools and two high schools have already

received some of the harvested vegetables in the first days of the school year, and the goal is to supply more locally-grown produce to school cafeterias as the year wears on.

“I do think what we feed these kids impacts their overall health, their overall diets,” said Amelia Rothstein, special programs coordinator for the district’s food and nutrition services department.

A produce garden was among the “wish list” items Food and Nutrition Services Director Elena Hildreth had when she took over last year. Her arrival also coincided with the department moving to a new facility on Bowes Road, where she said there is more room to try new initiatives.

Hildreth said she and others saw the potential for a vegetable garden in the plot of land just outside the commissary, which is part of the U46 property. The department sought grant assistance on the project but it proved unsuccessful, she said.

Regardless of grant money, the department moved forward on the garden in late June, Hildreth said. South Elgin farmer Mike Kenyon volunteered to plow the terrain U46 would use to garden and donated straw. Heinz, meanwhile, donated seeds for them to grow tomatoes. Staff purchased seeds, hoses and signs and also brought their own tools. Hildreth estimated it cost no more than “a couple hundred dollars” for the garden to come to fruition.

“It was really wet, we couldn’t plant earlier,” Rothstein said of soil conditions earlier in the summer. “With the wet season, a lot of people were abandoning their gardening plans. But we persisted through and made it work.”

Both staff and volunteers help harvest the produce grown at the garden. Volunteers from the Association for Individual Development across the street come once a week to harvest and weed.

Eggplants, zucchini, carrots, basil, tomatoes and cucumbers have already gone out to four elementary schools and two high schools. Both Hildreth and Rothstein said the goal is for the locally-grown vegetables to become staples of the elementary school “garden bars,” fruit/salad bars that feature fresh fruit and vegetables for students to pick from during lunch. Five schools already have them in place, with the goal for the food stations to be set up in 10 schools this fall. Another 10 salad bars will be installed by the end of the year.

“We want to expose them to new fruits, new vegetables, getting them excited about eating fresh and healthy,” Rothstein said.

Besides harvesting, the goal for the department is to grow the garden even more. Hildreth said they plan to expand the garden next year so they can grow more crops. They would like to grow blueberries, apples and other fruits as well; the only fruit grown at the site currently is cantaloupe and tomatoes.

“If we get some grant money, we will plant fruit trees,” said Rothstein.

Staff also see the potential for the garden to be an educational tool. Hildreth said she could envision classes taking field trips to the site. Schools may also follow suit and attempt to grow their own gardens at their campuses, she added.

“We’re here year round. It has the attention,” Hildreth said. “Some of the schools do have their own gardens, but after hours or on extended breaks during the summer there’s nobody there to tend to it. But we have people interested (in helping any school-specific garden projects).”

**---Daily Herald---08/24/2019**

## **Former U-46 board member Ward seeks Oberweis' Senate seat**

**By: Madhu Krishnamurthy**



Jeannette Ward

Former Elgin Area School District U-46 school board member Jeanette Ward has announced her bid for a state Senate run in the 25th District represented by dairy magnate and Republican Jim Oberweis.

Oberweis is not seeking re-election to the seat he's held since January 2013. Instead, he is pursuing the 14th Congressional District seat held by Naperville Democrat Lauren Underwood.

Ward, 46, a West Chicago Republican, said she is running "to protect life, liberty, sound fiscal policy and parental freedom."

She expects "Democrats will spend millions" in the race.

"I have only just begun fundraising," Ward said. She said how much she spends will depend on how much she can raise.

She doesn't have formal endorsements yet.

An unabashed supporter of President Donald Trump, Ward was ousted from the U-46 school board in April after serving one term.

Ward advocated for lowering taxes and cutting spending. She consistently voted against increased spending for more staffing and new programs, such as full-day kindergarten and expansion of the dual language curriculum.

As a Christian conservative voice on the school board, Ward fought the adoption of high school social studies textbooks that she believed promoted politically left-leaning biases, communist ideology, "global warming pseudoscience" and "anti-American bias." She also criticized the district administration's decision to allow a transgender middle school student access to the locker room and restroom corresponding with the student's gender identity.

"I exposed bias and radical indoctrination in student textbooks, now required by Illinois' new LGBT history law, with no opt out," Ward wrote in a Facebook post. "I want leaders who will protect our kindergartners, not cave in to political correctness."

She touted her support of increased school choice helping Elgin get its first charter school.

Ward said Illinois has the most radical abortion law in America, the highest overall tax burden, and a recently doubled gas tax sponsored by Democrats and complicit Republicans.

"We are notorious for corrupt politics," she wrote. "It's crippling us and causing people to leave our state. It doesn't have to be that way. It's important for leaders to stand on principles and also be flexible enough to work toward common goals."

Ward said she is using social media, email, events and radio to get her message to constituents.

The 25th District encompasses all or parts of Aurora, Bartlett, Batavia, Campton Hills, Elburn, Geneva, Montgomery, Naperville, North Aurora, Oswego, Plano, South Elgin, St. Charles, Sugar Grove, Warrenville, Wayne, West Chicago and Yorkville.