

Press Clippings 06/06/20 to 06/08/20

---Press Clippings---06/08/2020 There are no U-46 related news stories.

---The Courier-News---06/07/2020

Gov gives school districts the OK to reopen

Summer classes allowed with restrictions; U-46 sticks with remote plan

By: Hannah Leone



Gov. J.B. Pritzker, right, speaking here with community members Thursday in Chicago, is allowing in-person summer school classes.

Illinois schools, which have been shut down since March because of the coronavirus pandemic, will be allowed to hold in-person summer school, thanks to an executive order issued by Gov. J.B. Pritzker.

But many area school systems — including School District U-46 — have already announced that summer school will be held through remote learning, so it's not immediately clear if districts will change course.

The order states that all Illinois public and nonpublic elementary and high schools can open for “limited in-person educational purposes” once the regular school year ends. They can also continue providing food and other services, but must follow guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health as the state moves through the third phase of its reopening plan.

Any school that reopens must take safety measures that include anyone older than 2 years old wearing face masks and other appropriate personal protective equipment. Also, the number of people in a space will be limited to 10, maintaining a 6-foot distance between them. Physical contact and sharing of personal items is discouraged, and students and staff must adhere to regular hand-washing and other cleaning and hygiene practices.

Schools are required to provide masks for employees who are unable to ensure the 6-foot distance at all times, and should make an effort to provide students with disposable masks, according to the order.

Elgin-based U-46, the state's second-largest school district outside of Chicago, plans to start some summer programming Monday. Despite the governor's order, summer school will be

done through distance learning with no in-person instruction, spokeswoman Mary Fergus confirmed.

Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot said Friday that Chicago Public Schools “is evaluating” what to do with summer school.

“I don’t have an answer for you now, but we will adapt as we are able to,” she said.

Also on Thursday, the Illinois State Board of Education and Illinois Department of Public Health released further recommendations for the transition back to in-person instruction, with a focus on activities allowed in phase three of the “ Restore Illinois ” reopening plan, including summer school.

“While Phase 3 allows for the resumption of limited face-to-face instruction, schools cannot yet return to pre-pandemic operation,” states the guidance, which was developed by an advisory group of educators and others similar to the process for the state’s remote learning guidance.

It includes nearly 30 pages specific to various areas of the schools and activities such as physical education, driver’s education and music courses.

Schools should do symptom and temperature checks before someone enters the school, and anyone who shows signs of any illness should stay home. An area should be designated to quarantine anyone who starts experiencing COVID-19-like symptoms and may be waiting to be picked up or evaluated, but students are not supposed to be left alone.

Local school districts can still decide whether to facilitate the activities allowed in this phase, which include behind-the-wheel driver’s education, so long as cars are sanitized between each use and no more than two students and one instructor are inside at any time.

“We must continue to be diligent in following the required safety protocols to keep Illinois on the path to recovery,” said State Superintendent of Education Carmen Ayala in a news release.

ISBE has stated it will make recommendations in the coming weeks for the 2020-21 school year.

Schools may serve as student testing sites and can allow summer programs sponsored by third parties to use their buildings, but not playgrounds.

Districts also may “conduct activities pertaining to the legal requirement that schools find all children who have disabilities and who may be entitled to special education services” and offer extended school year services if required by a student’s special education plan.

Students with individualized education plans and students who got incomplete grades during remote learning are among those ISBE said should be prioritized for summer services.

---Daily Herald---06/07/2020

Elgin cop busts a move

His 'dance battle' delights protesters and fellow officers

By: Orrin Schwarz



AT DAILYHERALD.COM: Watch Elgin police officer Hector Gutierrez break dance at the Elgin In Solidarity With Black Lives Matter rally Friday night in front of Elgin City Hall.

Elgin police officer Hector Gutierrez was aching to dance at a protest rally Friday night.

Saturday he was just aching.

The 36-year-old Gutierrez was watching the protest on a Facebook Live video, heard the music playing and decided to join in. At least a few videos of Gutierrez engaging protesters in a dance-off are going viral.

“I have it in my blood, and I felt it, and I’m like, this is good, I love it,” Gutierrez said. “I was having a good time. I love the people, the environment. I was like, this is a time for me to see if I still got it.”

Gutierrez said he used to dance as a student at **Bartlett High School**.

“To be honest with you, I was more worried about not getting hurt,” Gutierrez said. “My knees were killing me, my back. But you know what? The adrenaline rush, I was feeling the vibe of the people, the community.”

“We were just all having fun and then that moment happened,” added protester Belinda Vega, who filmed one of the videos on her cellphone. “Everything was just so aligned. It wasn’t premeditated or anything along those lines.”

The videos show Gutierrez and Cmdr. Eric Echevarria in a circle with demonstrators watching a young man dance. The dancer walks up to the officers and mimics marking a line in front of them with his foot as if to dare them to cross it.

Gutierrez turns to Echevarria and hands him his equipment vest and holster, keeping his mask on as the crowd cheers. He holds up a finger and says, “One city,” then walks to the center of the circle and starts dancing.

Gutierrez said he expected to get a little razzing from his fellow officers. Instead he got praise and requests to teach them how to dance.

“They loved it. They said that it was a good job and perfect timing as well,” Gutierrez said.

Vega said the reaction to the videos has given her a good feeling as well.

“Someone even made a comment, which really touched me — I’m in tears right now. And that was so powerful because she expressed that she was in tears because she was seeing something positive,” Vega said.

Gutierrez has had similar feedback from relatives.

“I feel like I accomplished something,” Gutierrez said. “I feel like I’m involved with the community, and that’s where I want to be.”

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