

## Press Clippings 12-03-20

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### No in-person classes till January, School District U-46 superintendent says

By: Gloria Casas

School District U46 students will continue remote learning until January, U46 CEO Tony Sanders said.

Plans to resume bringing students back to school this month under a hybrid schedule were scrapped after state and local health departments advised the Elgin-based district that a new surge in COVID-19 cases could be expected following the Thanksgiving holiday, Sanders said in a letter posted on the district's website and social media pages.

"I prefer to err on the cautious side for the safety and well-being of our families and staff, while considering that families need time to plan this change," he said. "The last thing I want to happen is to inform you the night before the first day of the in-person instruction that has been delayed again."



Tony Sanders (Posted by Pat Szpekowski, APR, Community Contributor)

The new timeline for in-person instruction to begin on a part-time basis is Jan. 11 for preschool to sixth-grade students, Sanders said. Specialized Student Services also will return beginning that day, he said.

Middle and high school students will return beginning Jan. 19, Sanders said.

"We are also finalizing plans to provide some level of support for struggling students before the first semester ends, with targeted opportunities for small group in-person instruction from Jan. 4 through 15," he said.

"I appreciate your continued patience and understanding," Sanders said.

The announcement was made Tuesday night, the same day the Illinois Department of Public Health announced another 12,542 new coronavirus cases had been confirmed and no plans were on the horizon to roll back the state's Tier 3 restrictions.

U-46's failure to implement back-to-school plans has infuriated a segment of district parents, who took to social media yet again to voice their anger. Others, however, supported the decision

and said they sympathized with Sanders' situation amid criticism and demands that he resign or be fired.

One parent wrote in a post that they could not understand why private schools and other area school districts had resumed in-person instruction while U46 had not. Another said parents — not the district — be allowed to decide if and when their children return to school.

“Give those of us that want in-school learning a choice,” the parent wrote. “Other districts within our state and area have accomplished this. With our vast resources, we can too.”

But others came to the defense of Sanders and the district.

“People, can we just remember that we are a district of 40k+ students and all of these students and families are in the same situation, except a good portion of us do take this pandemic much more seriously than others apparently,” one parent wrote.

“We need to roll with it, the kids will manage just fine, and we will all get past this eventually.”