



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 18, 2021

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U-46 Designates March 23 as 'Survey Day' *Date designed to encourage participation in 5Essentials and Equity and Inclusion surveys*

ELGIN - School District U-46 is offering two ways for students to make their voices heard this month. To emphasize the point, the District is designating Tuesday, March 23 as "U-46 Survey Day" to ensure everyone has the space and information available to provide their feedback on two important surveys: the [Illinois 5Essentials](#) and the [Equity and Inclusion Student Survey](#).

In addition to students, the 5Essentials Survey invites parents and teachers to share their opinions, and while many already have, the March 23 Survey Day also aims to increase participation rates among both teachers and parents.

The 5Essentials Survey, administered in U-46 since 2013, provides a comprehensive picture of a school's organizational culture in an individualized report measuring five "essentials" critical for school success: Effective Leaders, Collaborative Teachers, Involved Families, Supportive Environment, and Ambitious Instruction. School Improvement Planning teams across the District use the survey results to better identify a school's strengths and areas that can be improved.

All teachers and students in 6th through 12th grades can take the survey at any time and will be encouraged to complete the survey during the school day on the 23rd if they have not yet done so.



The version open to parents takes about 15 minutes to complete, is available at <http://bit.ly/5EssentialsU46> in Spanish and English, and can be accessed via a desktop, laptop, tablet, or mobile phone. The responses of parents or guardians remain anonymous.

A 20 percent parent participation rate is required to generate a parental supplemental report, but U-46 is aiming for at least a 35 percent participation rate by school this year for a more reliable and meaningful sample of our parents' feedback. So far in 2021, 22 of the District's 57 schools have met or exceeded the District's 35 percent threshold goal.

The parent report provides important, actionable data for schools. For instance, the winter 2019 "Sidewalk Heroes" campaign with the City of Elgin was inspired by a desire to improve the "supportive environment" at Washington Elementary School by making it safer for students who walk to school during winter weather. Sidewalk Heroes encourages those who are able to keep sidewalks clear of ice and snow in their neighborhoods.

At Ridge Circle Elementary School in Streamwood, 72 percent of parents have already filled out the 2021 5Essentials Survey. Principal Janelle Raine credits a new approach for her high rate of success this year. One school day, her teachers gave their students no homework, and instead the students were told to have their parents look in Canvas, the District's online learning management system, for their own assignment, which was completing the 5Essentials Survey.

"It turns out kids love to give their parents homework!" Raine said. "I appreciate that parents are taking the time to communicate their thoughts on these important topics. We're proud of our building, but we want to continue to get better. We use the data from 5Essentials, including the parents' feedback, to determine what areas we need to continue to grow in."



U-46's Survey Day will also focus on the Student Equity and Inclusion Survey, designed to measure how well students feel included and represented in the District's schools. It is open to students in 4th through 12th grades, and some teachers are asking students to take the survey as part of class time. During Survey Day, teachers will be encouraged to make time for their students to complete the survey. Alternatively, students can also take it on their own time by following a link emailed to their student account.

The Equity and Inclusion Survey was first administered in U-46 last May, and the District is again partnering with Panorama Education, a leading K-12 research company, to manage the survey process to ensure data privacy and security.

So far, nearly 30 percent of 4th through 12th graders have completed the survey with questions such as how well people at their school understand them as a person; how common it is at their school for students to have close friends from different racial, ethnic or cultural backgrounds; and how often they are encouraged to think more deeply about race-related topics.

At Harriet Gifford Elementary School, more than 90 percent of students in 4th, 5th, and 6th grade have taken the Equity and Inclusion Survey. The school created a schedule for teachers to indicate which day of the week their students could take the survey in class, and a few weeks ahead of time, Principal Joe Corcoran and Assistant Principal Geynell Lawrence-Tabb delivered a presentation to students to review last year's survey so that the young people could better understand the questions being asked of them. Another member of the team provided support as needed to classroom teachers.

"Our school really values student voice, and we know that the higher the percentage of responses, the more valid the data is for interpreting," Corcoran said. "This presentation was well received, it set the tone for the



upcoming survey, and we know that we will have some solid data to look at for our School Improvement Plan.”

Corcoran credited Washington Elementary Principal Lori Brandes with his school’s approach and the neighboring school in Elgin, at 77 percent, is also proving that it’s a winning strategy. Across the District in Bartlett, Eastview Middle School Principal Donald J. Donner also explained the survey’s importance to both students and teachers and worked with his English department which administered the survey during classes with 77 percent of students completing the survey. Meanwhile, physical education teachers at Eastview administered the 5Essentials and the school aims to have 100 percent student participation by spring break.

“This is their opportunity to share what's working or not working, how they feel and what they need,” Donner said. “If students know why they are doing a survey, and feel there is value and their voice will get heard, they are all in.”

The Equity survey will close at 11:59 p.m. on Friday, March 26. More information about it, including a preview of this year’s sample questions and the results for the 2020 survey, can be found on the District’s website [here](#).

The 5Essentials portal will close for this school year at the end of the day April 2. While the dates are in flux because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the results of the 5Essentials surveys are always shared with principals and superintendents, as well as on the 5Essentials reporting site and will be part of the [State School Report Card website](#) in Fall 2021.

More information on the 5Essentials Survey, including tutorial videos for parents in both English and Spanish, can be found [here](#).

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School District U-46 serves families in 11 communities: Bartlett, Elgin, Hanover Park, South Elgin, Streamwood and Wayne, as well as portions of Carol Stream, Hoffman Estates, St. Charles, Schaumburg, and West Chicago. In total, the District encompasses 90 square miles within the Fox River Valley, approximately 45 minutes west of downtown Chicago, and includes communities within Cook, DuPage and Kane counties. More than 37,000 pre-K through 12th graders attend the 57 District schools and programs. To learn more, Visit the U-46 [website](#), or like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#).