

Press Clippings 3/3/2022

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U-46 nixes rules requiring students must wear masks on buses, athletic vans and driver's ed cars --- 3/2/2022

By Mike Danahey



Students will no longer be required to wear face masks on U-46 school buses under new rules announced by the district this week. (Melissa Jenco / Chicago Tribune)

School District U-46 students will no longer need to wear face masks while riding school buses, athletic vans or driver education vehicles.

Superintendent Tony Sanders made the announcement this week in an update emailed to families.

“U-46 will continue to follow several mitigation measures on our transportation services, such as thoroughly cleaning and disinfecting the school buses daily, having face masks available (upon request), increased ventilation (weather permitting), promoting frequent hand washing/sanitizing, social distancing to the extent possible and voluntary weekly SHIELD testing for staff and students,” Sanders’s announcement said.

Last week, the district eliminated the need for face masks in school as long as as COVID-19 cases continue to decline.

At Monday night’s school board meeting, U-46 Chief of Staff Brian Lindholm said the district has not had “any significant issues following our shift to making masks strongly recommended (on Feb. 23). The metrics continue to trend favorably.”

The changes also come in the wake of court rulings, including one from the Illinois Supreme Court, that challenged mask mandates put in place by Gov. J.B. Pritzker, who announced last week that he was lifting rules that required mask usage in indoor locations and schools.

The coincided with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that did not need to be worn in schools where the risk for spreading COVID-19 was at a medium or low level as determined by the number of local cases and hospitalizations.

U-46 communities in Kane, Cook and DuPage counties are all at the low risk level, according to Lindholm.

The district's website has updated its page for COVID-19 information to include the newest information. It can be found at www.u-46.org/Page/18979.

That said, the district continues to push for students to be vaccinated and will be holding a vaccine clinic from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, March 4, at 955 E. Chicago St., Elgin. To register, go to events.juvare.com/IL-IDPH/a5163a2e-b5a8-4c4b-a306-1a2100b04aff/.

American Kahani

Indian American Megha Bhattacharya joins White House as press assistant--- 3/2/2022

- She most recently worked as a communications assistant for Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff.



Megha Bhattacharya, most recently communications assistant for Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff, has joined the White House as a press assistant. Bhattacharya announced her departure from the Second Gentleman's staff in a tweet on March 1.

In a reply, Press Secretary Jen Psaki wrote: "Thank you @SecondGentleman for letting us steal the fabulous @mbhattacharya46 for team press."

Illinois native Bhattacharya graduated from the University of Chicago with an honors degree in Political Science. She then moved to Boston, Massachusetts, to work for Sen. Elizabeth Warren's presidential campaign. Afterward, she worked for the Democratic National Convention, helping run the first-ever completely digital Democratic Convention. She also worked on the Biden-Harris presidential campaign.

During her time at UChicago, Bhattacharya interned twice at the university's Institute of Politics, run by former President Barack Obama's Senior Advisor David Axelrod, according to her profile on the [Elgin Area School District U46](#) website. She also interned for JB Pritzker's Gubernatorial campaign and worked abroad in Vienna, Austria for the State Department's U.S. Mission to International Organizations, serving the United Nations and International Atomic Energy Agency.

The Indian American told U-46 that she "credits" her 2014-15 role as the Board of Education's Student Advisor for inspiring much of her college work. "I was very lucky to meet such a large cross-sample of the District and create lasting relationships with them," Megha said. "I received an insider view of the workings of a large conglomerate and it was such a fascinating and educational experience."