

Press Clippings - 3/3/2023

– **Illinois.gov** –

Gov. Pritzker Highlights New Teacher Pipeline Initiative to Address Shortages

Press Release - Friday, March 03, 2023

SPRINGFIELD — Today Governor JB Pritzker visited **Streamwood High School** in Elgin to highlight a new teacher pipeline initiative aimed at addressing chronic shortages in the state's most understaffed districts. The proposed Teacher Pipeline Grant Program will direct \$70 million per year over the next three years to the 170 school districts with the greatest need to fill teaching positions.

"When it comes to our kids, we can always do more. And when that comes to our schools, that means not just more funding, but more resources — and most crucially, more educators," said Governor JB Pritzker. "All across the nation, school districts are fighting the impact of teacher shortages — as education professionals struggle to weigh their passion for their classrooms with their own mental, financial, and personal wellbeing. So as part of my education investment plan, I'm proposing an additional \$70 million annually specifically targeted at addressing teacher shortages."

Governor Pritzker was joined by Dr. Tony Sanders, who began his tenure as state superintendent on Feb. 23. He previously served as the **superintendent of School District U-46**, which is based in Elgin and is the second largest school district in Illinois, for nearly a decade.

Under the leadership of Dr. Sanders, U-46 launched its Horizons4U program last spring, allowing employees who already work for the district to pursue a career in teaching and several other professions. Horizons4U is a collaborative effort between neighboring universities and colleges in which U-46 covers the tuition cost, and participants pledge to

continue working at U-46 for at least five years under their new credentials. U-46 offers similar tuition benefits to current U-46 teachers who earn their Bilingual/English as a Second Language endorsement through a special cohort with Northern Illinois University.

"From the cradle to college, we put children first in Illinois," said Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton. "That is why our state is investing in plans that will address the teacher shortage by supporting our most strained and understaffed districts, so our children and their teachers can thrive together in the classroom. We recognize how valuable educators are to the future of our state, and this initiative uplifts their needs to do the critical work of raising up the next generation."

"The best investment we can make in our schools is in our teachers," said State Superintendent of Education Dr. Tony Sanders. "The experience of teaching is incredible. It's not teaching itself that's causing a teacher shortage; it is the systemic inequities present in our most under-resourced districts. The Teacher Pipeline Grant Program provides these districts with the resources they need to solve local challenges to recruitment and retention and remove barriers preventing aspiring educators from pursuing the calling to teach."

"It is important for students to see themselves reflected in their teachers by their race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or by other relevant identifiers. As a former social worker, I know firsthand that students come to school with a wide array of different struggles, and having teachers who can relate through lived experiences can improve our children's education experience," said State Senator Karina Villa (D- West Chicago). "I believe this teacher pipeline is a great first step to ensuring every child is represented and supported by the staff who teaches and uplifts them."

"As a former teacher and a parent of school-aged children, I know that an investment in the teacher pipeline is an investment in the academic success and wellbeing of students across the state," said State Rep. Maura Hirschauer (D-Batavia). "This funding will put

Illinois on the right path to rebuild its teacher workforce and therefore provide our children with the high quality education they deserve."

"Giving school districts with high teacher vacancy rates the ability to develop innovative programs that attract and retain high quality educators is one important way to address our state's teacher shortage," said State Rep. Anna Moeller (D-Elgin). "This program and our upcoming budget negotiations are part of our broader efforts to ensure that we are providing every student with a great education."

"This topic is very important, not only to our members who see the effects of the education employee shortage every day, but to the students they work with and the parents they partner with. We have helped institute the EdRising program in Illinois, which helps middle and high schools students with an interest in teaching pursue those dreams, and helped start a virtual coaching and mentoring program that pairs new teachers with veterans in hopes of keeping them in our classrooms," said Kathi Griffin, president of the Illinois Education Association. "But nothing makes working in schools more attractive than respect. As our State of Education in Illinois poll results released yesterday indicate, Illinoisans said teachers are "underpaid, dedicated, good and hardworking" when asked to give a one-word description. It is this kind of respect we hope doesn't get drowned out by a vocal few. Illinoisans overwhelmingly believe in our teachers and respect them, much like every other country in the world, who know that teachers help shape our future."

"I was proud to stand with Governor Pritzker today and help promote his proposed Teacher Pipeline Grant Program. Once again, the governor is demonstrating his commitment to Illinois' students and educators," said Illinois Federation of Teachers President Dan Montgomery. "The teacher and school staff shortage is dramatically impacting our school communities, and we applaud the governor for addressing the issue. We look forward to working with him to help pass and implement this program to help districts with the most severe shortages attract and retain teachers, and working collaboratively on additional long-term solutions like improving teacher retirement

benefits and providing support for educators of color."

The Teacher Pipeline Grant Program will allow districts maximum flexibility to use the funds in innovative, creative, and evidenced-based ways, such as offering signing bonuses, housing stipends, down-payment assistance, or loan repayments; paying tuition and fees or providing residencies or apprenticeships; and sustaining current teachers by providing materials, supplies, coaching, and school culture supports.

ISBE will also utilize \$6 million in federal funds to procure a multimedia advertising and marketing firm to develop and implement a statewide teacher recruitment campaign.

The teacher pipeline initiative builds on Illinois' nation-leading efforts over the past four years to strengthen educator recruitment and retention. Illinois' teacher pipeline programs have helped Illinois buck national teacher shortage trends - adding more teachers to the profession, increasing teacher retention, and increasing enrollment in educator preparation programs steadily over the past four years.

However, teacher shortage data recently released by ISBE show that Illinois schools reported 3,558 unfilled teaching positions as of October 2022; these unfilled teaching positions are concentrated in high-need subjects and in under-resourced schools. The vacancies in the 170 districts targeted for the Teacher Pipeline Grant Program account for 80 percent of all unfilled teaching positions and affect 870,000 students.

– Chicago Tribune – Elgin News Digest: Rose Day fundraiser orders being taken by Elgin Lions Club ...

March 3, 2023

By Mike Danahey - The Courier-News

Elgin Lions Club taking orders for Rose Day fundraiser

Orders are being accepted for the Elgin Lions Club's 39th annual Rose Day fundraiser –

the long-stemmed roses are \$15 a dozen and will be delivered April 5-7.

Roses can be ordered by calling 847-289-4206 and leaving a message, with a club member returning the call to complete the process, officials said.

They can also be ordered by going to elginlions.org/roses.

Money raised through the event will help fund vision care for Elgin residents and **School District U-46 students** and to fund scholarships to **Elgin and Larkin high schools**.

For more information, email elginillinoislions1@gmail.com.

U-46 interim superintendent posts YouTube video



Suzanne Johnson, deputy superintendent of instruction, is School District U-46's interim superintendent. (School District U- / HANDOUT)

Suzanne Johnson, interim superintendent for School District, has posted a video on YouTube in which she introduces herself and talks about replacing Superintendent Tony Sanders while a search for his successor is conducted.

Johnson notes she is a second generation graduate of **Elgin High School**, a second generation **U-46 educator** and a lifelong **U-46 resident** and parent who has spent her whole career working in **U-46 schools**.

The district's priorities will not change, and officials remain focused on passing a \$180 million zero-tax-rate-change bond referendum during the April 4 election and are committed to improving core instruction, she said. In the coming weeks, she will be visiting schools, attending community events and talking to residents across the district, she said.

Sanders resigned his post in February to become state superintendent of schools.

The video can be viewed at www.youtube.com/watch?v=2aoxOdnXTnQ.

To read full article, [click here](#).

– Daily Herald –

Learn about Elgin High's Biodiversity Teach-in with Izaak Walton League March 7

March 3, 2023

Submitted By Thomas Stewart

On Tuesday, March 7, the Elgin chapter of the Izaak Walton League will host a free program on environmental issues.

Elgin High School science teachers Bridgid Trimble and Brittney Mallen, along with Deb McMullen, Elgin Area School District U-46 Coordinator for K-12 Science & Planetarium, will discuss Elgin High School's annual student-led National Biodiversity Teach-In that was held on Fridays in February.

The program will begin at 7 p.m. at the Hanover Township Izaak Walton Center, 899 Jay St. in Elgin.

The webinars first began at Elgin High School in 2013 to raise awareness about biodiversity. Over the years, there have been 110,000 participants in 27 countries. Topics of the webinars in February included studying dolphins, marine mammals, amphibians and global change, and more. Watch previous seminars at youtube.com/@nationalbiodiversityteachin or facebook.com/natbioteachin.

The Elgin Chapter of the Izaak Walton League has provided funding to the Elgin High School E-CLUB over the years and just recently donated \$6,000 to help with purchasing equipment to monitor Poplar Creek's water quality and restore the oak hickory woods on campus.

For information on the Izaak Walton League, visit www.iwla.org/elgin or facebook.com/izaakwaltonleagueelginchapter/.

The Elgin Chapter of the Izaak Walton League, known as the "Elgin Ikes," was established in 1931. Chapter members volunteer time to introduce youth and families to conservation, outdoor recreation, and land ethics by building nature trails, restoring stream banks, monitoring and "cleaning" creeks, planting trees, and eliminating invasive species.

The chapter sponsors both a Cub Pack, Boy Scout Troop, and a Venturing Crew. The lodge is located at the confluence of Willow and Poplar creeks. Meetings and programs are held at the Hanover Township Izaak Walton Center.

– Chicago Tribune – Police are still ticketing students in Illinois schools. A new bill would make that illegal.

March 3, 2023

By Jodi S. Cohen and Jennifer Smith Richards - ProPublica

A new bill in the Illinois House aims to stop schools from working with police to issue students tickets for minor misbehavior, a harmful and sometimes costly practice that many districts have continued despite pleas to stop from the state's top education officials.

An investigation by ProPublica and the Chicago Tribune revealed last year that school-based ticketing was rampant across Illinois, with police writing citations that can result in a fine of up to \$750 for conduct once handled by the principal's office.

A 2015 Illinois law prohibits schools from fining students as a form of discipline; school officials instead have been referring students to police, who then ticket the students for fighting, littering, theft, possessing vaping devices and other violations of local

ordinances.

The new legislation, introduced last month, would amend the state's school code to make it illegal for school personnel to involve police to issue students citations for incidents that can be addressed through a school's disciplinary process.

"We have to close that loophole and end school-based ticketing," said Rep. La Shawn Ford, a Democrat from Chicago who is sponsoring the legislation. "There is no place for this type of system to be in our schools."

Ford's legislation deals only with school tickets, which are issued for civil violations of local laws and often are adjudicated in administrative hearings. The bill is not intended to stop police from arresting students for crimes. It would also not prevent schools from seeking restitution from students for lost, stolen or damaged property.

After the Tribune and ProPublica began publishing the investigative series "The Price Kids Pay" in April 2022, then-state education Superintendent Carmen Ayala urged schools to stop working with police to ticket students and "consider both the cost and the consequences of these fines."

The investigation documented about 12,000 tickets written to students over three school years and also found that, in places where information was available on the race of ticketed students, Black students were twice as likely to be ticketed as their white peers.

Some school districts heeded Ayala's plea or scaled back on ticketing, but new reporting shows that many others have continued the practice into this school year.

Over the last seven weeks, ProPublica and the Tribune sought new ticketing records for roughly 60 Illinois schools in districts that had some of the highest numbers of citations in previous years. Reporters have been able to obtain ticket records in 37 of those schools so far and found that students in 26 — or 70% — of them have been ticketed this school year, though some districts have scaled back the practice.

Ticketing has continued even in **District U-46**, the state's second-largest district, where

then-Superintendent Tony Sanders had been shocked to learn of the practice and told his administrators and police working in district schools to stop ticketing students. At the same time, he tweaked the student code of conduct to limit when schools should involve police in student incidents.

Sanders, who took over last week as the new state superintendent, said Wednesday he was “appalled and saddened” to learn that students are still being cited by school-based police, known as resource officers, in some of the district’s schools.

At **South Elgin High School in U-46**, students have not received any tickets this year, compared with 83 last school year. But police have ticketed students at the district’s **Bartlett High School**, most often for fighting and possession of cannabis, with fines between \$50 and \$250. At the two **U-46 high schools** in the city of Elgin, students have been ticketed, but city officials initially assigned them to counseling or another community program instead of a fine.

“I tried to do it by saying, ‘Effective immediately, we’re not doing it any longer.’ That clearly didn’t work,” Sanders said in an interview. “I think legislation is needed. I think professional development for staff in schools and school resource officers is needed. You can’t just say, ‘No more ticketing,’ and have that be effective.”

The Illinois State Board of Education supports Ford’s legislation, Sanders said, and is helping shape the language of the final bill.

U-46 district spokesperson Tara Burghart said administrators have been told they cannot sign tickets as complainants. She said the schools don’t decide whether to ticket and fine students; the police and municipalities do.

Ticketing students is also still routine at McHenry Community High School in McHenry, Stagg High School in Palos Hills and Plainfield South High School on the border of Plainfield and Joliet, for example. At Stagg, police have written students more tickets so far this school year than they did in all of the 2021-22 school year. Most of the tickets

were for tobacco vaping devices or for cannabis, records show.

A spokesperson for Consolidated High School District 230, which includes Stagg, said the district believes that school officials “are obligated to inform local police” when a city ordinance is violated.

“If a student is smoking or vaping while at school, they are still breaking the law and there are consequences to those actions. Smoking at school does not preclude police from enforcing the law,” spokesperson Jennifer Waterman wrote in an email. “We take all offenses seriously. We want our halls to be clean, safe and secure.”

In East Peoria Community High School District 309, where students this year have continued to get tickets for theft, for fighting and for possession of cannabis and vape materials, Superintendent Marjorie Greuter said the school still refers students to police for tickets so the school doesn’t become a place where young people can break the law without consequences.

“This would, in effect, make the school a ‘safe’ zone for breaking an ordinance,” she said.

East Peoria police records show that officers ticket young people at the high school more than anywhere else in the city.

– Chicago Tribune – Elgin News Digest: U-46 School Board candidate forum being held March 9; South Elgin HS alum nominated for college TV award

March 2, 2023

By Mike Danahey - The Courier-News

U-46 School Board candidate forum being held March 9

A forum for candidates running in the April 4 election for **District U-46 School Board** will be held Thursday, March 9, by the **District U-46 Community Advisory Council**.

The public event is scheduled for 7 p.m. at the **U-46 Welcome Center**, 1019 E. Chicago St., Elgin, and will be streamed live on the district's YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/user/SchoolDistrictU46. A Spanish translation will be available.

The candidates running for four, 4-year terms are incumbents **Kate Thommes and Sue Kerr** and challengers Chanda Schwartz, Samreen Khan, Maureen Morris and Heather LH Manzella.

Township, credit union hosting financial wellness seminar

A free, public program on "How to Build a Better Budget" will be held Thursday, March 9, by Elgin Township and the KCT Credit Union.

The financial wellness seminar, set for 6 to 7 p.m. at the township office, 729 S. McLean Blvd., Elgin, will focus on identifying spending leaks, tracking spending to help save money and a five-point spending plan, a news release said.

To register to attend, call 847-741-2045.

South Elgin HS alum nominated for college TV award



South Elgin High School graduate Derryl Barnes has been nominated for an award by the Television Academy Foundation. (University of Miami / HANDOUT)

Derryl Barnes, a 2020 graduate of South Elgin High School, has been nominated for the Television Academy Foundation's 42nd College Television Awards.

Barnes is one of eight University of Miami students nominated in the news category for their April 7, 2022, edition of UMTV's NewsVision, a half-hour, live newscast, a news release said. Barnes was a writer on the program, which was selected from more than 132

college and university submissions.

Winners in the competition will be announced at an awards ceremony Saturday, April 1, in North Hollywood, California, according to the release. For more information, go to www.emmys.com/foundation.

Fire union selling buttons to benefit local food pantries
Carpentersville Professional Fire Fighters IAFF Local 479 has partnered with the McNamee Family Foundation to raise money for local food pantries by selling specially designed green buttons during St. Patrick's Day season.

The skull-and-leprechaun adorned buttons can be purchased for \$5 each, cash only, at Fire Station 91, 213 Spring St., through March 18.

For more information, go to www.facebook.com/iafflocal4790 or email Mattjackson@iafflocal4790.org.

To read full article, [click here](#).