

# Press Clippings - August 8, 2023

## - Elgin Courier News

### District U-46 prepares to welcome about 36,000 students for upcoming school year

**By: Mike Danahey**  
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Elgin Area **School District U-46** administrative staff told the Board of Education at its Monday meeting that things are looking good for the start of the school year next Tuesday, Aug. 15.

“We are going to be ready, as we always are,” said **Mark Moore**, assistant superintendent for human resources.

Moore said it should come as no surprise to anybody that the district is not fully staffed.

“We haven’t been fully staffed for years, but we are getting pretty close,” Moore said.

According to Moore, the district is down just 12 bus drivers, whereas at the start of 2022-23 school year, **U-46** was down 35 positions from what would be considered fully staffed.

“They can cover internally with that, so it’s less challenging than last year,” Moore said.

Moore said **U-46** still has dozens of teaching positions to fill, but every school is making its own plans and will be ready for the first day.

A job fair the district held Saturday, Aug. 5, drew 170 people, and staff is working to hire those qualified for available jobs, Moore said. With unemployment still quite low, Moore said it will remain a challenge to fill all positions.

As for its facilities, **Deputy Superintendent for Operations Ann Williams** said buildings are ready to go. She will be inspecting sites later this week with the plant administration team.

Williams has also met with food and nutrition services staff Monday. They not only talked about providing nutritious meals, but also about taking notice of students they see who are

eating alone “to make sure we are reaching them as well,” Williams said.

**Deputy Superintendent of Instruction Lela Majstorovic** said the approach to the new school year is that every student, teacher and staff member deserves to have a great learning experience, not by chance but by design.

Toward that, the day after school let out in June, school improvement teams came together to work on their plans for 2023 - 2024, Majstorovic said.

Majstorovic said that throughout the summer, the district hired more than 30 administrators at all levels.

The district held a variety of professional learning opportunities this summer. There were also retreats and workshops for administrators.

Last week and this week there have been orientation sessions for more than 160 new teachers, Majstorovic said. The summer featured transition programming for students entering middle school and high school and a jump-start program for students preparing to attend college after they graduate.

And schools recently have been hosting back to school bashes, Majstorovic said.

**Superintendent Suzanne Johnson** thanked staff for their work as the district prepared to welcome almost 36,000 students next week.

“Our goal is to make each and every day a great day to learn,” Johnson said.