

Superintendent's Weekly Newsletter



February 1, 2024

Dear Colleagues,

Last week's Board meeting included two important strategic plan updates and proposals to support teachers and schools. The first was an update on our Unite U-46 work as tied to ***District Goal 4: U-46 will establish and operate inclusive, efficient, safe and equitable learning environments.*** The update included a summary of the building proposals shared at the [December 18 Board of Education meeting](#), investment options for areas of the school district, financing information and a reminder of our [February 8th Unite U-46 Session](#). Thank you to Dr. Ann Williams and Brian Lindholm for their ongoing leadership in this work.

Our second update was on our Pathways work which is connected to ***District Goal 2: School District U-46 will update and enhance the wide range of college and Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways and magnet school programs.*** Thank you to Mitchell Briesemeister and Doreen Roberts for sharing the exciting future of Pathways in U-46 and the student data presented during this update.

I encourage you to watch the January 22 [Board of Education meeting](#) to learn more about the exciting future of our facilities and Pathways programming.

Additionally, Tracey Jakaitis, Celia Banks, Mary Juvingo and Carl Metzke presented the Aquatics curriculum proposal and an updated Middle School Physical Education curriculum proposal in support of ***District Goal 1: School District U-46 will maximize resources available to accelerate student growth in alignment with the U-46 instructional clarity framework.*** Thank you to the team for bringing forward these proposals to continue to support student health and wellness.

Finally, I want to congratulate Crystal Kempf, Ontarioville Elementary School Resident Administrator, on being named the Illinois Principals Association Kishwaukee's Division Aspiring

Leader of the Year Award!

It's a great day to learn in U-46!

Dr. Suzanne Johnson

Kudos

Send Kudos directly by clicking [HERE](#) or using Let's Talk. Remember, only Kudos with the sender's name will appear in the Weekly; no anonymous messages. Kudos are due by 5 p.m. each Tuesday.

Kudos to Summer Schmidt, Olivia Hollingsworth, Asma Vahora, MaryBeth Erickson, Cathy Schlueter, Christina Amenta, Katie Finnegan, Anita Costabile, and Jessica Hayes, Case Managers, Wayne Elementary School, from Heather Heatley, Assistant Principal, Wayne Elementary School

Thank you to you all. Not only do you all do a phenomenal job as case managers day-in and day-out, with the utmost attention to detail in IEPs, well-written goals, and professionalism during meetings, but with having two Tuesdays in a row called off due to weather, you have had to be extremely flexible with rescheduling meetings to stay in compliance. I am extremely grateful for all you do throughout the year, and especially grateful for your flexibility, understanding, and hard work to ensure our meetings were rescheduled in a timely manner. Thank you!

Kudos a Bebzaida Camacho, Personal de Recursos Humanos, departe de Diego Duarte, Miembro de la Comunidad

Quiero expresar mi agradecimiento y admiración por el gran trabajo y apoyo de su personal de Recursos Humanos, en especial a Vicky Camacho, pues su orientación, amabilidad y deseo de ayudar enmarcado por una sonrisa y calidad humana, nos colmó cada inquietud en el proceso de aplicación a la carrera que buscábamos en el Distrito U-46. Gracias y espero que su ejemplo y carisma siga brillando en cada espacio de la educación del universo.

Translation:

Kudos to Bebzaida Camacho, Generalist, Human Resources, from Diego Duarte, Community Member

I want to express my gratitude and admiration for the great work and support of your Human Resources staff, especially Vicky Camacho, because her guidance, kindness and desire to help framed by a smile and human quality, filled our every concern in the process of application to the career we were looking for in District U-46. Thank you, and I hope that your example and charisma continues to shine in every educational space in the universe.

Kudos to Cody Papp, Assistant Principal, Cristina Martinez, Principal's Secretary, and Adrianna Miranda, Home/School Liaison, all at Sunnydale Elementary School, from Laura Biggers, Certified School Nurse, Sunnydale Elementary School

These three ladies really helped me to obtain a parent interview for a parent who had proven to be very elusive. I couldn't have done it without them. Thank you!

Kudos to the Office of Climate and Culture and to Melanee Brandt, Dean of Students, Elgin High School, from Rada Basic, Assistant Principal, Student Services, Elgin High School

Thank you to the Office of Climate and Culture for always working with our special education students, going above and beyond to support and guide them. Special kudos to Dean Brandt for all of your support for our freshmen during their 1st semester of high school!

Kudos to the 6th Grade Teachers and Front Office Secretaries at Channing, Lords Park, Hilltop, Huff, Ronald D. O'Neal, and Lincoln Elementary Schools from Jose A. Alonzo, AVID Site Coordinator, Ellis Middle School

I wanted to acknowledge these groups for their help with work surrounding the recent interviews of 6th grade students applying for AVID at Ellis Middle School. The teachers were extremely welcoming and opened up their classrooms for elective presentations. The front office staff employees were helpful, too, and provided guidance around the buildings. Their assistance made the entire process easy.

Kudos to Human Resources, Michele Chapman, Director of Post-Secondary Success, and her team, from the Assistant Principals of Student Services - Francesca DiMaggio, at Larkin High School; Rada Basic at Elgin High School; Shama Josi, at Streamwood High School; Matthew Murphy, at Bartlett High School; Megan Xaverius, at Central School Programs; and Lauren Stewart, at South Elgin High School

This kudos is for all your work on Summer School 2024. Many thanks to you all for all the wonderful updates and needed changes in hiring for Summer Programs. ESY Assistant Principals of Student Services of each high school have been updating significant changes, and we wish to thank you for all your help and updates as well.

Kudos to Aaron Nowak, Director of Food & Nutrition Services, from Matthew Murphy, Assistant Principal, Student Services, Bartlett High School

Bartlett High School experienced a complete loss of power during our lunch periods on January 30th, and we were concerned that this would impact our ability to feed all of our 2,200 students. Within 20 minutes, Aaron was at BHS with all of the ready-to-eat food we needed to get through the day. We were incredibly impressed and appreciative of how quickly he was able to help and are grateful to work with him!

Kudos to Saju Kizhakkail and Mathue Wurtz, System Engineers, Information Services, from Aurora Lozano, Manager, Assessment & Accountability

They work tirelessly to help resolve our ACCESS testing issues. They ran several scripts to put the student devices into their appropriate schools in addition to upgrading and building several caching servers to distribute the processing load. Because of their efforts, Assessment went from Armageddon to Eden!

Kudos to Erin Jackle, Instructional Coach, Early Learners, from Sarah Rabe, Executive Director, Larkin Network

I want to thank Erin for the wonderful monthly kindergarten SEL professional learning, she continues to work on and facilitate with me to support our kindergarten teachers. I appreciate your partnership, your willingness to help, and the connection that these monthly learning sessions have to the Restorative Practice work we are doing as a Network.

Kudos to all School Counselors, from Michele Chapman, Director of Post Secondary Success, and Alexa Charsha, Lead Counselor

Counselors play an invaluable role in shaping the academic and personal development of students,

supporting students through challenges, providing guidance on academic and post secondary choices, and offering a compassionate ear during times of personal struggle make them invaluable to our schools. Their impact extends far beyond the walls of the counseling office, leaving an enduring mark on the lives they touch and the school community as a whole. Thank you for everything - February 5 - 9th is National School Counseling Week.



School District U-46

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