

# Superintendent's Weekly Newsletter

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**February 8, 2024**

Dear Colleagues,

We are currently in our *It Starts With U!* employee giving campaign, and as an alumnus, employee, and parent in U-46, I would like to share with you some of the benefits of supporting the [U-46 Educational Foundation](#). I understand the impact this giving has on our district.

It's important to acknowledge that our budget cannot meet every need and that in our school district, we are fortunate to have innovative teachers and staff whose ideas for improving the learning environment are truly inspirational. Many of them apply for the annual teacher and staff grants available through the Foundation. This year, there were more than 100 applicants vying for \$25,000 in grants. When the Foundation is able to raise more funds, it is also able to allocate more money for important projects and programs that have the potential to make a real difference in U-46.

In our district, you will also find high school seniors who dream of continuing their education in order to make a difference in their community and world. They write essays every year about overwhelming obstacles they've faced in their lives, or their struggle to excel in school while also helping support their families. The Superintendent's Scholarship is awarded each year to high school seniors who would be the first in their family to attend college, fulfilling the dream of being a college graduate. It's a proud achievement for them, and through the employee giving campaign, you can feel proud that you've contributed to these students' dreams.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the U-46 Educational Foundation. If you haven't already done so, please consider joining me in making a one-time or recurring donation to the Foundation. [Click here](#).

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

## 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 Christopher Lee, Tech Support Supervisor, Information Services, from Skyler Chiavario, Technology Specialist, Information Services**

I am a new hire in the School District U-46, and I wanted to show my appreciation for Christopher, my IS supervisor. He has been extremely helpful and on the ball during my training. It's probably the best week of training I've ever experienced in my work history. Thank you.

### **Kudos to Human Resources from Michele Chapman, Director of Post-Secondary Success, and Beth McKinney, Post-Secondary Success Coordinator**

A big thank you to Human Resources for their amazing work in posting all jobs for Summer School! We appreciate you, Kimberly Noonan, Francisco Ponce, and Mireya Perez. You were so knowledgeable and helpful with this process.

### **Kudos to Phillip Cuccinello, Wayne's Food Delivery Driver, Route 6, from Nicole Karabetsos, Food Service Lead at Wayne Elementary School**

Phil goes above and beyond to ask the right questions to always ensure that the order of the meals is in the correct order. This saves me so much time and labor, and for that, I am grateful. We are all in this together and Phil is a perfect example of this.

### **Kudos to Josh Beu, Coordinator of Maintenance at Plant Operations, from Sebastiano Abbitanti, Food & Nutrition Coordinator**

I cannot Praise Josh and his team enough for the professionalism and teamwork that they have on a daily basis. Over the course of the past few months, Food Service has had many projects going on that could not be executed or completed without the help of Josh and his team. Truly wonderful people!

### **Kudos to Julie Fowler, Parent Educator, Early Learners, from Ana Alanis, U-46 Parent**

Thank you to Julie, our parent educator, for the incredible service that she provided our family during her time as our parent educator. My son, Angel, loved every session that he had with her. Angel recently turned 3 and aged out of the parents as teachers program. We are incredibly thankful for all the resources the program provided and for the monthly group connections that brought the children together. Thanks, Julie, for everything you did for us!



**Kudos to Margaret Peskuski, Certified School Nurse at Willard Elementary School, Jessica Alek, Health Services Secretary, Patty Kenyon, Health Services Supervisor, and Jeffrey Judge, Health Services Supervisor, from Laurie Kawa, Registered Nurse at Bartlett Elementary School**

Thank you all very much for helping me to get a new otoscope. It really made my day. It has allowed me to further assess the needs of the students here.

**Kudos to Jessica Ventrella, Sean Hardiman, and Eve Perdikaris, School Counselors at Kenyon Woods Middle School, from Lisa Olsem, Principal of Kenyon Woods Middle School**

I want to thank all of our incredible school counselors at Kenyon Woods Middle School. They serve as advocates, mentors, coaches, cheerleaders, and teachers, and they are truly the glue that holds so many aspects of our schools together. As we recognize their hard work and dedication this week, I want to personally express my appreciation and gratitude to each of our amazing counselors. We are so lucky at Kenyon Woods to be surrounded with such a talented, student focused and creative group of dedicated counselors. Thank you for everything you do each and everyday!

**Kudos to Superintendent Dr. Suzanne Johnson from Alvin Gutierrez, 1st Grade Teacher, Sycamore Trails Elementary School**

One of my most favorite sections to read in the weekly newsletter is the kudos! I genuinely feel that I owe Dr. Johnson a huge thank you simply for her wonderful persona, charisma, and genuine heart to serve the common good! She has been so inspirational and encouraging to not only myself, but also to countless students without a doubt. Thank YOU for being you.

**Kudos to the Custodians at Elgin High School from David Dybalski, Psychologist, Elgin High School**

This kudos goes out to Rob Schweig, Joel Rojas, Pedro Gonzalez and all other custodians at Elgin High School for their hard work clearing the snow and ice on sidewalks around the school on the difficult January days so we would not slip. Your work is appreciated along with all the other jobs you do maintaining our wonderful Elgin HS. Thank you

**Kudos to Carrie Farmer, ENII Teacher, and Francesca DiMaggio, Assistant Principal, Student Services, both at Larkin High School from Olimpia Ayala, U-46 Parent**

I have a child in Ms. Farmer's class who has daily seizures. I was able to meet with the staff prior to the beginning of this school year to ease my concerns. Assistant Principal DiMaggio was very helpful in coordinating this meeting and answering any concerns of mine. As a parent of a child with health challenges I am very grateful for the support that I've received from Francesca, Carrie, and the paraeducators in the classroom. My son has been the happiest this year with their love and care. Francesca and Carrie have gone above and beyond to relieve some of the stress that can build-up on me as his caregiver. Thank you for pouring out your heart and compassion in your fields. We are beyond blessed to have you in our lives.

**Kudos to the Members of Club de Lideres, at Tefft Middle School, and The Hispanic Leadership Club, at Streamwood High School, from Aydee E. Castaneda, Dual Language Teacher and Leader of the Hispanic Leadership Team at Streamwood High School**

I wanted to send a kudos to the students in these organizations for their remarkable meeting with Senator Cristina Castro. This dynamic encounter exemplifies the power of youth engagement and its positive impact on communities.

Special kudos go out to my co-leaders in this effort, Ms. Leticia Yera and Ms. Olga Bucio from Tefft Middle School, for their help in organizing such an influential meeting, showcasing their dedication to amplifying Hispanic youth voices and addressing the needs of their community. By connecting with a prominent leader like Senator Castro, these talented students demonstrated their commitment to civic participation and advocacy. Additionally, these students have gained invaluable insights into the legislative process, policy-making, and the importance of commitment to civic participation and advocacy.

**Kudos to Nelda Newman, Bilingual Special Education Teacher, Lords Park Elementary School, from Angel Brooks, Assistant Principal at Heritage Elementary School**

Thank you, Mrs. Newman, for all that you do for Heritage. We appreciate you helping our service team by completing paperwork and working with our students offering compensatory minutes. Together we make a huge difference!

**Kudos to our Literacy Night Team at Heritage Elementary School from Catherine Fletcher, Principal, Heritage Elementary School**

I want to send a huge thank you to our Literacy Night Team at Heritage!! This event was just so creative and genuinely fun for our families! Thank you team for your planning and support of our Heritage students and community! Thank you Kathleen Speck, Iliana Gonzalez, Dan Hoffman, Caroline Hix, Pau Blanco, Elia Sanchez, Monica Estrada, Kimberly Kim, Corina Morales and the best art teacher ever, Mandy Byrne!

**Kudos to the Dual Language Teachers at Streamwood High School from Lisa Baran Janco, Assistant Principal for Humanities at Streamwood High School**

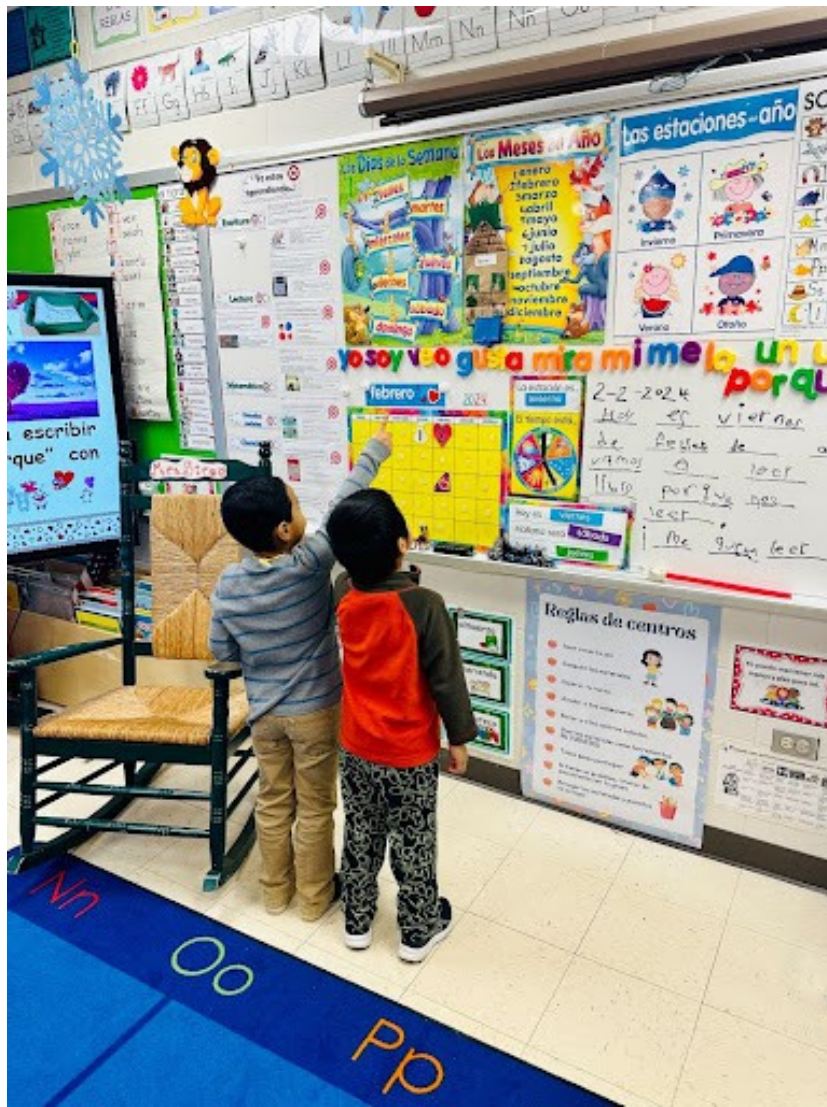
This kudos is for our fantastic group of DL teachers who are helping us to plan our Dia de Logros event. Thank you to Gerardo Barrio and Rosa Morales for your leadership. Thank you to Ana Cots, Aydee Castaneda, Maripaz Hernandez, Robin Gloss, Sandra Poulos, Sean Torres, Jorge Michel, Ana Pilar Sainz De Murieta Garcia De Eul, Guadalupe Villagran, Juan Jacobo, Maria Jose Barragan Ortiz, Shafik Nieves Zawahra for assisting with this event. We appreciate your ideas and can't wait for the event.

**Kudos to the South Elgin High School Athletic Director, Administration, and Support Staff from Renee Jimenez, U-46 Parent, and the SEHS Cheer Parents**

We cannot thank you enough for the send off breakfast and for the championship celebration on Saturday night after the big win! We are looking forward to all the celebration events to come. ROLL STORM!

**Kudos to the Team at Lords Park Elementary School from Noe Velazquez, Principal, Lords Park Elementary**

I'd like to share a big kudos to the Lords Park team of teachers, support staff, and families for the collective work to affirm and enhance a sense of belonging for our newcomers. The team has been collaborating with families to determine needs and how we can ensure they are set up for success. Our teachers quickly found various "buddies" to help our new students in the classroom and at lunch/recess. As a result, our school is learning more as students/families share their rich lived experiences and talents. It is a great day to be a Lords Park Lion!



School District U-46

