

Superintendent's Weekly Newsletter



April 11, 2024

Dear Colleagues,

It is exciting to see our facility's work continue to take shape to support our focus on standards-based learning and assessment, rigorous student tasks and assessments, and academic teaming.

On Monday, April 8, the Board of Education reviewed proposals for the sale and purchase of real estate. Specifically, the Board of Education is being asked to consider the sale of the former Woodland Heights Elementary School and the purchase of property located at 850 North Grove Ave. in Elgin. This effort is directly connected to our goal that "U-46 will establish and operate equity-focused, inclusive, efficient, and safe learning environments." As part of our work to update facilities, we are also responsible for finding new owners or second life opportunities for sites we will no longer utilize or "retire," as well as purchasing property to host new schools.

As a reminder, we have been doing the following to prepare for these recommendations:

- Reviewing and analyzing new data and information.
- Establishing priorities and standards for building updates.
- Determining how many elementary and middle schools our community needs.
- Evaluating criteria to determine new attendance boundaries.

Additionally, we have provided regular overviews of the changing factors as we attempt to refine our plan, such as enrollment, construction costs and inflation, land availability, and ongoing development of the middle school instruction model.

To learn more about this work, please consider attending the next Unite U-46 event at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, May 8, at Eastview Middle School. To learn how your voice can help shape our work going forward, please visit the [Unite U-46 site](#) regularly.

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 Dr. Leatrice Satterwhite, Director of Specialized Student Services, Amanda Leatherby, Assistant Director of Specialized Student Services - Compliance, and Alicia Fabianczyk, Assistant Director of Specialized Student Services - Curriculum; from Melanie Patterson, Special Education Secretary

I want to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude for your unwavering commitment to ensuring that our students receive the support they need through Specialized Student Services.

Your dedication to this crucial aspect of education is truly commendable and does not go unnoticed. You work tirelessly to ensure that every student, regardless of their individual needs, receives the resources and assistance necessary to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.



Your passion for making a difference in the lives of our students is evident in everything you do. From advocating for inclusive education practices to providing personalized support to each student, your efforts are invaluable and deeply appreciated by our entire community.

Thank you for your compassion, your expertise, and your unwavering advocacy on behalf of our students. Your contributions to Specialized Student Services are making a profound and lasting impact on the lives of countless individuals, and we are incredibly fortunate to have you leading this important work.

Kudos to all of the Paraprofessionals at Wayne Elementary School from Heather Heatley, Assistant Principal

Here at Wayne, we have more paraprofessionals than we do classroom teachers. We are so incredibly lucky and thankful for the work our paras do each and every day. They come in ready to support and care for our students. Each of our paras make a huge impact in our classrooms and school every day, and we are so proud and thankful to have you as part of our Wayne team. Happy Paraprofessional Day!

Kudos to Teagan Pompa, Web & Social Media Specialist, School & Community Relations, from Melanie Patterson, Special Education Secretary and U-46 Parent

Teagan thank you for coming to speak to the Girl Power Group at Heritage Elementary school. We truly appreciate you coming and speaking about your career as well as encouraging the girls on how to work hard for their future. We appreciate all you do in School District U-46.

Kudos to our Paraprofessionals at Otter Creek Elementary School from Jami Windau, 1st Grade Teacher, and the Otter Creek Teaching Staff

We'd like to recognize our paraprofessionals in honor of National Paraprofessionals Day (April 3). Special thank you to Karin Runzel, Ana Reich, Tammy Datisman, Nina Sandner, Rosa Gonzalez, and Veronica Aguilar. Your support to us as teachers and to all our students is "TURTLE-Y AWESOME!"



Kudos to Erika Washington, Assistant Attorney, and Trisha Olson, Chief Legal Officer; from Jason Gold, Principal, Fox Meadow Elementary School

I just wanted to send a thank you to Erika and Trisha. They are always available whenever you have questions and need support. I appreciate working with them.

Kudos to Michelle Lortie, Teacher-Gifted Specialist, from Maria Hull, 2nd Grade Teacher at Oakhill Elementary School

I would like to express our sincere appreciation for the incredible work Ms. Lortie has done with our 2nd grade class through the AIM program this school year. Every week, your dedication and enthusiasm bring such joy and excitement to our classroom. The AIM sessions have not only enriched our students' learning experiences but have also sparked their curiosity and nurtured their critical thinking skills in ways that extend far beyond the classroom walls.

Your ability to engage and inspire our young learners is truly remarkable. Through AIM class, our students are not only gaining valuable knowledge but also developing important skills such as problem-solving, collaboration, and creative thinking that will serve them well throughout their academic journey and beyond.

We are grateful for the passion and commitment you bring to each session weekly, and we cannot thank you enough for the positive impact you have on our students' lives. Your dedication to fostering a love for learning is truly commendable, and we feel fortunate to have you as part of our educational community. Thank you once again for all that you do, Ms. Lortie!

Kudos to Dr. Annette Acevedo, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Teresa Winters, Executive Director of Elementary Schools, and Erika Washington, Assistant Attorney; from Melanie Patterson, Special Education Secretary and U-46 Parent

On behalf of everyone at Heritage Elementary, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you for taking the time to speak to our LEAD students during Women's History Month. Your career journey and insights into your experiences at U-46 were incredibly inspiring and valuable for the girls.



Your dedication to your profession and your willingness to share your experiences with the next generation of leaders is truly commendable. By providing such a positive and empowering example, you are helping to shape the aspirations and futures of our students.

Your presence during Women's History Month served as a reminder of the importance of representation and empowerment. Your words will resonate with our students for years to come, encouraging them to pursue their dreams and break down barriers.

Once again, thank you for your time, wisdom, and dedication to supporting our students. We are immensely grateful for your contribution to our community.

Kudos to Mrs. Young, Mrs. Rottman, and Mrs. Roy-Chowdhury at Hanover Countryside Elementary School; Ms. Elwing, Mrs. Yera, Mrs. Zarmakoupis, Ms. Saini, Ms. Adams, Mrs. Regul, Ms. Jaramillo Brena, Ms. Hernandez Colon, Mr. Proctor, Mrs. Rysavy, Mrs. Weithofer, Mrs. Albright, Mrs. Brenner, Ms. Farmer, Ms. Wallace, Mrs. Mucha, Ms. Hopkins, Ms. John Jeffrey, Mrs. Pizzuto, Ms. Martinez, Kowaczek, Ms. Ohja, Mrs. Lujan, Ms. Craig Mrs. Byer, Ms. Ferreri, Ms. Saletta, and Mrs. Bucio, at Tefft Middle School; and Ms. Makishima, Coordinator ELL Initiatives, Multilingual & Multicultural Education Department; from the Students of the Leader Club at Tefft Middle School

We would like to extend our sincerest thanks for your incredibly generous donation to our club shoe fund project. Your support will make it possible for us to provide essential resources to both current Leader Club students and future student leader candidates. Your kindness is truly invaluable, and we are grateful for individuals like you who make a positive impact in the world.

Kudos to Lisa Bezella, Digital Literacy Coach, at Oakhill Elementary School, from the 2nd Grade Students and Teachers at Oakhill Elementary School

We wanted to extend a huge thank you to Lisa for her incredible support and guidance. Your expertise has been instrumental in helping our students design and produce logos for their student-created stores as part of our Social Studies Unit 5 on economics and financial literacy.

In addition, your efforts in teaching them how to use Flip videos so they can write and record their own student-created commercials as a team for their businesses have opened up new avenues for their learning and expression. By providing them with the tools and skills to effectively market their products, you have empowered them to engage with real-world applications of their knowledge and creativity. Thank you, Ms. Bezella!

Kudos to the Village of Bartlett, Bartlett Police Department, our Liberty PTO, 5th Grade Teachers, and 5th Grade Students; from Stephanie Sylvester, Principal at Liberty Elementary School

Thank you for your great work with the completion of the 10-week DARE Program. We appreciate the dedication to this program and the great message this program offers to our students!



Kudos to Ricardo Abundez, Head Custodian at Illinois Park Center for Early Learners; from Illinois Park Office Staff

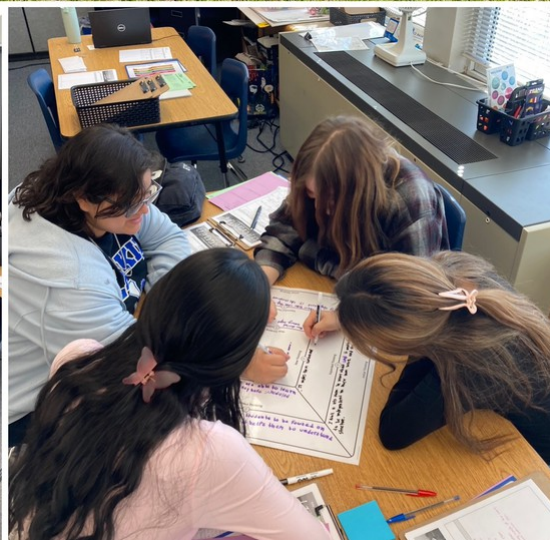
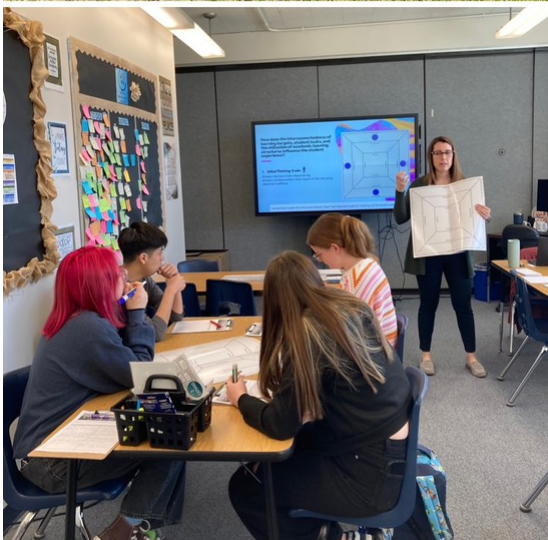
We want to thank Ricardo for not only taking care of our building, but also for taking care of students and staff. Ricardo is a huge part of Illinois Park, and we appreciate everything he does. Ricardo always goes above and beyond for us.

Kudos to Kimberly Hawley, Teacher, LEA Facilitator, at Larkin High School; from Sara Arnold, Secretary to the Assistant Principal at Larkin High School

A shout-out for being Larkin's LEA Rep and helping me so much this year. She is truly a lifesaver, and I couldn't be more grateful for her. She is always answering my questions, even when she isn't at Larkin. Her positive attitude and constant smile and willingness to help makes her so amazing to work with.

Kudos to Alisha Wildermuth, Teacher Leader, Teacher Effectiveness Initiative, Dustin Covarrubias, Willard Elementary Principal, Sean Crosby Resident Administrator at Willard, and the Willard Elementary School Team; from Aurora Scarpaci, Little Royal Preschool Director and Education Internship Coordinator at Larkin High School

Thank you for hosting Larkin Education Internship students in the Learning Lab on March 20. Our group of students was able to make meaningful connections while observing classrooms and debriefing their new learning of target task alignment and academic teaming. Some words they chose to describe their visit included: great, amazed, excited, hopeful, inspired and helpful. All students expressed their gratitude in being able to observe students' new skills collaborating and problem solving. Thank you for welcoming our future educators and providing them with inspiration and support on their journey.



School District U-46



