

Superintendent's Weekly Newsletter



May 9, 2024

Dear Colleagues,

As we approach the conclusion of the school year, the recognitions and celebrations continue!

On Monday, in recognition of National Teacher Appreciation Week, the U-46 Board of Education presented a Proclamation of Appreciation on behalf of all U-46 teachers for delivering inspiration, knowledge and motivation in an effort to create exemplary citizens. The role of a teacher is to provide knowledge, to build a welcoming environment, to mentor students, and to be a role model while continuing to grow in their individual knowledge. Our educators demonstrate a commitment to education and a love for teaching and learning! Thank you!

Additionally, to celebrate National Nurses Week, the U-46 Board of Education presented a Proclamation of Appreciation on behalf of all U-46 nurses in recognition of National School Nurse Day on May 8, 2024. Our nurses are dedicated and devoted to providing our students with health care and essential resources to support their health. Thank you!

Students were also recognized this week, as the Board of Education applauded a group of students from Bartlett High School for winning the "Critics Choice Award," the top honor in the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) Musical Theatre Revue category of the IHSA Drama State Series, held on March 22-23, 2024, at Sterling High School. Bartlett High School competed with the musical "Six", a modern retelling of the lives of the six wives of Henry VIII. The cast included Bartlett High School students Clara Dean, Jenna Fox, Ava Grace, Mia Lannon, Jamielyn Opilla, Emma Robin, Mariella Santoro, Victoria Smutek, and Cosette Winter.

Also on Monday, Fox Meadow Elementary School Kindergarten Teacher, Aimee Legatzke, received the [Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Teaching](#). Aimee is the first U-46 teacher to receive this

prestigious award. In February, Aimee was announced as a finalist. Watch [this video](#) to see the special surprise visit. Congratulations to Aimee!

Finally, U-46 Planetarium Director Peggy Hernandez won the Kane County Elementary Educator award on Friday, May 3. After a teaching career in U-46, including the past fifteen years at the Planetarium, Peggy has taken our science instruction to new heights! Congratulations Peggy, on this well-deserved honor!

In addition to the recognitions and celebrations, I wanted to take a moment to thank the more than 2000 staff members who recently completed the brief Gallup Pulse survey. We were encouraged to see that over 60% of you indicated that you received feedback on your team's engagement survey results from last Fall. However, only 25% of you indicated that your team or department had held effective conversations about how to use the results to move forward. So we still have some work to do and will continue our partnership with Gallup next year to make U-46 an even better place to work.

Thank you all for making it a great day to learn in U-46!

Dr. Suzanne Johnson

Kudos

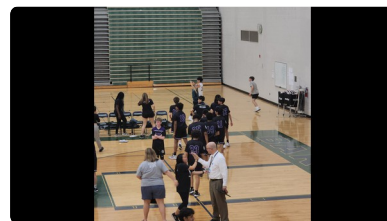
Send Kudos directly by clicking [HERE](#) or using Let's Talk. Remember, only Kudos with the sender's name will appear in the Weekly; no anonymous messages. Kudos are due by **5 p.m. each Tuesday**.

Kudos to Anthony Lewis, Bus Driver, Transportation Department, from the Streamwood Varsity Softball Team

Thank you for getting the Streamwood softball team to and from our games safely! We also appreciate you coming and cheering the girls on at every away game that you've brought us to. The girls always look forward to having you as a bus driver. Streamwood softball appreciates you!

Kudos to Dr. Richard Lebrón, Principal, Tefft Middle School, from Erin Bryant, U-46 Parent

Dr. Lebrón has made such a positive change at Tefft this year. He's visible throughout the school and at numerous events such as the boys' basketball and volleyball championship games. He truly cares for all his students and it shows. Thank you, Dr. Lebrón!



Kudos to Stephanie Hopkins, Bartlett Network Early Learners Coach, from Jackie Jones, Assistant Principal, and Lisa Cardenas, Principal, at Sycamore Trails Elementary School

Stephanie is always available to help align the work our school is doing for our early learners. Thank you Stephanie for always being available to help make sure all of our learners are getting what they need

Kudos to Pat Waldau, Director, Ashlee McHaney, Assistant Director, and Karl Alagna, Supervisor/Maintenance, all at Plant Operations, from Charlotte Coleman, Principal, Kimball Middle School

I would like to publicly thank Ms. Pat Waldau, Ms. Ashlee McHaney, and Mr. Karl Alagna for the support given to Kimball students, staff and admin! All three were on site due to a building concern and were willing to remain there to support next steps!

Kudos to Calvin Chao, Music Teacher, Liberty Elementary School, from Stephanie Sylvester, Principal, Liberty Elementary School

Thank you Calvin for organizing an amazing performance for our 1st-4th graders! This was our first Spring Sing since 2019, and it was unique and engaging! The students did more than just sing, they played instruments, and danced. Wow! Thank you for all your hard work, Calvin. We cannot wait to see what next year will bring!



Kudos to all Teachers and Staff at Liberty Elementary School from Stephanie Sylvester, Principal, Liberty Elementary School

Happy Teacher's Appreciation Week! Thank you for all that you do for our Liberty Students, we are so lucky to have all of you! We hope this week you feel appreciated as you all deserve for going over and beyond the work day for our students. Thank you for everything that you do!

Kudos to Amy Hager, Secretary, Plant Operations, and Josiah Alloway, Logistics Coordinator, Business Services, from Katie Stan, Assistant Principal, and David Aleman, Principal, Otter Creek Elementary School

Amy went above and beyond to support Otter Creek when we forgot to order tables for a big event we had. She worked with Josiah to have the tables delivered in plenty of time for the event. Thank you so much!

Kudos to Salma Shethwala, Paraeducator, Sunnydale Elementary School, from Penny Pierce, Kindergarten Teacher, Sunnydale Elementary School

Mrs. Shethwala goes above and beyond her paraprofessional assignments on a regular basis. My students and I greatly appreciate how eager she is to provide assistance to anyone in need. She is proactive, intuitive, and flexible. She brings a smile to the face of students and staff alike.

Kudos to Miguel Medel, Manager, Food Service, Food & Nutrition Services, and the Kimball Food Service Team, from Charlotte Coleman, Principal, Kimball Middle School

We would like to let everyone know that the Kimball Food Service Team under the direction of Mr. Miguel Medel ROCKS! We had a concern in the building that caused Food Service to pivot and prepare a meal that was different from what they originally intended to serve students. We reached out and received great support from Mr. Aaron Nowak, Director of Food & Nutrition Services. The Kimball Food Service Team was a well oiled machine as they cranked out the next steps in order to ensure that our Kimball students were fed! Thank you!

Kudos to Crystal Solov, Sherry Pedersen, Kristi Giannotti, Melisa Creighton, and Karen Smith - Teacher Mentor Specialists with the Teacher Mentor Program, from Gloria Helin and Veronica Kernler, Teacher Leaders for the Teacher Mentor Program.

Thank you to this group of amazing educators who have created wonderful spaces for mentees to feel appreciated and welcomed as they begin their journey in U-46. We are grateful for all you have done to support the TMP! We know you will continue to do amazing things.



Kudos to Linda Taylor, Administrative Assistant for Teacher Effectiveness Initiatives, from Gloria Helin and Veronica Kernler, Teacher Leaders for the Teacher Mentor Program.

Thank you, Linda, for all you do to support the Teacher Mentor Program! We appreciate it!

Kudos to the School Improvement Leadership Team at Kimball Middle School from Charlotte Coleman, Principal, Kimball Middle School

The Kimball SILT members have been selected as the #1 School Improvement Leadership Team in the U by me. :) Thank you KMS SILT members for giving much more than the required time in order to set Kimball students and staff up for success!

Kudos to the Art Department and Art Students at Elgin High School from the Library Staff at Elgin High School

Your art show this year was a wonderful showcase of our students' hard work and talent. We know that you and your students put so much time and effort into the show, and we appreciate you sharing your talent with us. Can't wait for next year's show!

Kudos to Grounds Coordinator Nick Corn and his Team from Jason Gold, Principal, Fox Meadow Elementary School

Thank you for installing our new playground! You did an amazing job. Our Fox Meadow students are loving it!



Kudos to the Larkin High School Dean Team from Jeffrey Kerber, Dean's Assistant at Larkin High School

I would like to celebrate this group for the teamwork they have demonstrated this year. In particular, thanks to Ryan Echols, Dean's Assistant. Besides handling calls in his own sector, he is instrumental in gathering students assigned to ISI throughout the day. Ryan is ALWAYS quick to respond, support, back up, and assist any of us in any sector of the school, especially on days when we are short staffed. He is usually the first to pick up a call outside of his area, and I have never heard him complain. He is a valuable core team member, and an asset to our school. Thank you, Ryan!!

Kudos to Timothy Adam, Bus Driver, Transportation, from Amanda Huggins, Social Worker, Bartlett High School

Tim drove a shuttle bus for the Kane County ROE 2024 Educator of the Year recognition event last Friday at the Q Center. I was decorating a table for the event and had to navigate while carrying balloons and flowers among other things. To say my hands were full is an understatement. I had never been to the Q center and for those of you who have not, it is a huge venue with multiple parking lots. My colleague had arrived before me and let Tim know I'd be arriving shortly with balloons. The ROE estimated 700 cars to be there. I had barely opened my car door and got the balloons out when I heard Tim ask if I was the other BHS social worker in need of a ride to the building. I kid you not when I say I had not even shut my door and he had his bus behind my car waiting. I had door-to-door service. And because of Tim, no balloons were lost! Not only was his timing and service impeccable, but he also was beyond kind and engaged me in a fun, positive conversation. Tim's kindness and service made both me and my colleague's night. He shared that he regularly drives events for our BHS students, and I am so glad they are given an opportunity for a positive interaction with him. Thank you, Tim!

Kudo to Melisa Creighton, Teacher Mentor Specialist, from Crystal Solov, Sherry Pedersen, Gloria Helin, Karen Smith, Kristi Giannotti, and Veronica Kernler, all Teacher Leaders for the Teacher Mentor Program.

Congratulations Melisa, on your nomination for Kane County Educator of the Year in the Student Support Personnel Category! We are so proud of you!



Kudos to Mary Juvingo, Student Wellness Teacher Leader, and Tracey Jakaitis, PE and Student Wellness Coordinator, from Emily Rosales, Elementary MTSS Lead, and the Health Teacher Team at Harriet Gifford Elementary School

Thank you for a terrific Elementary Health Teacher Collaboration Day! We appreciate your leadership and taking care of us during Teacher Appreciation Week, too! It was so nice to come together and look at our curriculum as a team. I look forward to all the healthy things next year will bring!

Kudos to Mark Johnson, Social Worker, Bartlett High School, from Alison Andrews and Amanda Huggins, Social Workers, Bartlett High School

Mark was nominated for Educator of the Year in the Kane County Regional Office of Education program. He has gone above and beyond for his students and school community for close to 40 years in our District - and he is not stopping anytime soon! Mark is always there to address teacher concerns, communicate with parents, advocate, and consult with us. He knows and helps so many people within our District. This past Friday evening we were able to celebrate his nomination at the Q Center. Congratulations Mark we are so very proud of you and all your accomplishments!



Kudos to Dr. Richard Lebron, Principal, Tefft Middle School, Karla Jiménez, Director, School & Community Relations, Leaders' Club Leads Ms. Leticia Yera, 7th Grade Dual Language Social Science Teacher, and Olga Bucio, 8th Grade Dual Language History Teacher, and U-46 Parent Mrs. Reyes, from Melody Ramirez, 8th Grade Dual Language student and Leaders' Club President, and Leaders' Club Members Ana Franco, Abigail Montiel Velazquez, Gabriela Ponta, Gabriela Duque Clavijo, Jocelyn Ortega Angulo, Jose Luis Reyes, Kristopher Herrera, Michael Garcia, Nataly Cardenas, Elvin Villanueva, Vanessa Gonzalez, Melissa Salas, Melanie Nava, Amal Naim, Sandra Martinez, and Gabriela Vasquez

As members of the Leader Club, we had the privilege of embarking on a field trip to Springfield. This excursion provided us with a unique opportunity to establish new connections and apply the historical knowledge we acquired in class to real-life experiences. We witnessed the "Capitolio" in action and observed efforts to create a more inclusive educational system that accurately represents underrepresented ethnic groups.

Furthermore, we visited Abraham Lincoln's Salem settlement, where he arrived at 21 years old, explored his first home after getting married, and learned more about his life at the Lincoln Memorial Tomb following his passing. This was an incredibly enriching educational experience, and we are immensely grateful.

We owe this fantastic team a tremendous debt of gratitude, as well as the rest of the Tefft Middle School staff and our supportive parents. Without it, we would not have been able to embark on such an incredible field trip.



School District U-46

