

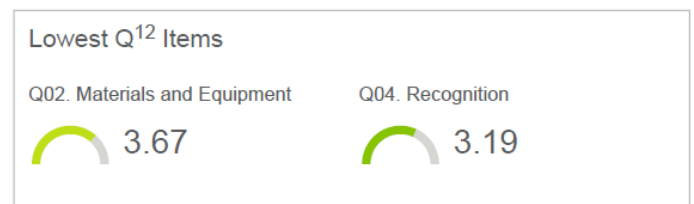
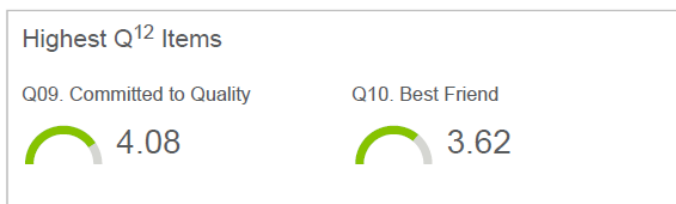
Superintendent's Weekly Newsletter



Dec. 19, 2024

Dear Colleagues,

As we prepare to conclude first semester, I want to thank our nearly 3,000 employees who completed the fall 2024 #U46Voice Employee Engagement Survey. Below is a quick snapshot of our progress as a school district.



Our engagement increased again this year on all 12 of the questions in the survey. As a result, we have improved our rank in comparison to school districts across the nation. Items rated the highest include a commitment to quality and identifying a best friend at work. Areas of growth include having the materials and equipment needed for our roles and recognition.

To address the concern about not having the necessary materials and equipment, we are working to improve our logistics across the school district. This includes hiring additional warehouse positions, shifting schedules and revising practices. Our goal is to make sure we are able to get materials and resources to sites within a week, and we are currently averaging over two weeks of

time. And to enhance our recognition efforts, we look forward to celebrating and recognizing our colleagues in additional formats.

All administrators have received the survey results specific to their team. Administrators should have completed Gallup coaching sessions and shared their team specific data. If schedules did not permit data to be shared prior to break, the meeting should be scheduled as soon as reasonable in January.

Looking to the new year, please accept my appreciation for your wonderful work. The pace of the first semester is exhausting and exhilarating all at the same time. Your commitment to our students, your colleagues, and our communities is recognized. Thank you!

I wish you, your families and loved ones peace, health and happiness during this holiday season and throughout the new year.

It's a great day to prepare for Winter Recess in U-46!

Dr. Suzanne Johnson

This will be the final Superintendent's Weekly Newsletter before the winter recess. The next newsletter will be published on Thursday, Jan. 9.

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 Catherine Fletcher and Angel Brooks, at Heritage Elementary School, from Melanie Patterson, U-46 Parent

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Mrs. Fletcher and Dr. Brooks for the incredible work you do for the students at Heritage. Your dedication and genuine care for their well-being is truly evident in everything you do. It is clear that you both prioritize the needs of the children, and that commitment makes all the difference. The impact you have on their lives is immeasurable, and I am so grateful for your efforts. Thank you for making students the top priority and for perfecting that every day.

Kudos to Molly Porter and Sittie Jackson, at Abbott Middle School, from Joan Riedel, at Larkin High School

Larkin High School counselors completed their Middle School Registration on Dec. 10 at Abbott Middle School. The day was the smoothest registration that I have experienced in the past 10 years. Thank you to AMS counselors Molly and Sittie; they had met with every student prior to the high school counselors and helped them select their future PE classes and their electives. They collected all the registration sheets to ensure all the materials were ready to go the day we met

with the students. Molly and Sittie - thank you for your organization and dedication to making sure your students were well prepared and engaged in their transition to Larkin High School!

Kudos to Alex Blint, at Lowrie Elementary School, from Amy Whelan, Itinerant Teacher of Deaf and Hard of Hearing

My student has a rechargeable battery case for her hearing aids. She lost the charging cord. Alex, who is the Technology Specialist at Lowrie, searched and found the right cord for her. Not only was that kind, but I found out later from the secretary that he gave me his personal charging cord. That shows his dedication to the students of Lowrie. Thank you, Alex!

Kudos to Dr. Ann Williams, Deputy Superintendent of Operations, from Melanie Patterson, U-46 Parent

I would like to sincerely thank Dr. Ann Williams for taking the time to speak to the LEAD 5th and 6th grade girls. Your insights into your career and the valuable information you shared about your job were truly appreciated. Your words have inspired and empowered these young minds, and we are grateful for the knowledge you imparted. Thank you for making such a positive impact!

Kudos to Aurora Lozano and the Assessment Department, from Navi Gonzalez, at Creekside Elementary School

During the i-Ready exam, Aurora supported us a lot by answering questions and resolving issues on the platform. Every time I contacted her, she responded immediately. Thank you to her and everyone in the assessment Department for their support.

Kudos to Annie Gangloff and Donna Burritt, from Nicole Bryan, all at Centennial Elementary School

We want to send a shoutout to Annie and Donna, our incredible "Chaos Coordinators" at Centennial. Thank you for keeping our school running smoothly amidst the daily whirlwind. From juggling schedules to answering endless questions (with a smile!) and handling the unexpected with grace, you both are the glue that holds us all together. We are so grateful for your hard work, patience, and ability to turn chaos into calm. You make a world of difference every single day, and we appreciate you more than words can say!

Kudos to Scott Stewart, Sally Lennon, Katie Sternal, Geoffrey Guiney, Celine Kapolnek, Victor Camarena, and Adam Molliwell, from Britney Mallen, all at Elgin High School

Thank you for all your help this year on our Brush Pile field trip for the EHS environmental science classes and for being just as excited as I am to host this day! Stew, Lennon, Sternal, Guiney, Kapolnek, Camarena, and Molliwell - I appreciate each of you so much and I can't wait until next year!

Kudos to Nick Corn, Luis Lopez, Bill Colantonio, Jkolbi Grant, and Tyler Cox, all in Plant Operations, from Brittney Mallen, at Elgin High School

Thank you so much for your hard work at our EHS Brush Pile Day last Friday! The environmental science students loved having all of you with us and seeing you in action! We really appreciate your help taking care of the woods at EHS and the partnership we have with all of you.



Kudos to our Transportation Retirees, from Sharon Jackson, in Transportation

We want to take a moment to recognize and celebrate the incredible retired call-in drivers who are still helping us out! They step up every day to ensure our routes are covered and our operations run as smoothly as possible. Your willingness to jump in at a moment's notice and your dedication to keeping us rolling does not go unnoticed.

Your hard work, reliability, and positive attitude make a world of difference to our team and the communities we serve. You are truly an asset, demonstrating teamwork and commitment time and again. Thank you for your flexibility and for your help to keep our daily routes running. All the AM and PM managers appreciate each and every one of you! Thank you for all your help!

Kudos to Juan Fernandez, from Wendy Witt, both at Elgin High School

Juan's compassion for others was evident as he led the effort to organize several student groups in collecting, sorting, and distributing more than 3,000 items in support of those who were affected by the Elgin 'Tent City' fires. He is a model of humanitarianism and service to the community, and we at Elgin High are grateful for his contributions.

Kudos to Jose Rodriguez Lopez, from Miriam Vazquez and Naomi Chavez, all at Ellis Middle School

We want to send a heartfelt thank you to Jose, who helped the both of us make so many decorations and displays (and with very short notice) for our annual Winterfest meant to bring the Ellis community together. The gym was truly transformed into a winter wonderland due to his

creativity and ability to bring an incredible vision to life. Staff, students, and families all came together and enjoyed the food, games, and fun! This event wouldn't have been possible without Jose and the rest of the Ellis family! #TeamEllis



School District U-46

