

# Superintendent's Weekly Newsletter

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Feb. 20, 2025

Dear Colleagues,

In 2021, we launched a drastically updated organization chart to better support our instructional focus. The Executive Director positions were created to make sure that the central office was organized to support principals as the instructional and operational leaders of their schools.

This new structure has been successful in supporting the following primary goals:

**Goal 1:** School District U-46 will maximize resources available to accelerate student growth in alignment with the U-46 instructional clarity framework.

**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.

**Goal 3:** U-46 will increase access to and enrollment in high quality early childhood programs.

I share this as background for the new Assistant Superintendent of Operations position that we will have in place beginning July 1, 2025. This role will support our Operations Teams including: Facilities, Food Services, Instructional Technology and Transportation. The addition of this position will provide much needed support for the Operations Team as the facilities plan continues to move forward and we strive to meet **Goal 4:** U-46 will establish and operate inclusive, efficient, safe and equitable learning environments.

I am highlighting this change at the cabinet level as it will support this goal specifically and our extensive facilities plan. Just as we had to take a close look at our instructional structure in 2021, it was time to look at how we can better support our Operations Team in a complex and fast-moving environment. The passage of our bond proposal in April 2023 has resulted in a tremendous amount of exciting work aimed at moving our schools forward. This Assistant Superintendent of Operations position will support all of our Operations Teams as we strive to enhance our responsiveness to issues and allow for greater collaboration across departments.

I believe this structure, coupled with better support for our school leaders and teachers, will lead us to an operational and facilities plan with schools that are welcoming and safe for all students each and every day.

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

Dr. Suzanne Johnson

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## Kudos

**Note:** We enjoy seeing the recognition and respect among our U-46 Team through the [Kudos submitted](#) in each issue of the Superintendent's Weekly. In an effort to further recognize our team members, we will be sharing select Kudos on social media each week under the hashtag #U46StaffKudos. When entering Kudos in Let's Talk, please note if you would prefer to not have your kudos shared on social media. We look forward to continuing to receive your kudos and celebrating them in this new way.

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 Adam Moliwell and Kathryn Priest, from Avelira Rodriguez, all at Elgin High School**

Adam organized and led the Book Dating Event, and Kathryn supported and helped lead. Students got the opportunity to "speed date" different books and record their first impressions. They checked out the cover, read the summary, and even sampled the first few pages. Then, they rated how interested they were in reading the full book and hopefully found their perfect "match". This is a fantastic opportunity for students to: Explore different genres and authors, broaden their reading horizons, get excited about reading and add new titles to their "to-read" list.



**Kudos to Sarah Koltonuk and Joe Wilfinger, from Mandy Hanson, all at Central School Programs**

Thank you to my English colleagues, Sarah and Joe. It has been an incredibly challenging year. I can't tell you how much I appreciate having you both right there in the boat with me—still paddling along or, in many cases, bailing water. Thanks for keeping our tiny ship afloat.

**Kudos to Lisa Luchtman, Julie Piecko and Lisa Roy, in the Payroll Department, from Lisa Jackson, in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

I extend my appreciation to them for their meticulous attention to detail and unwavering commitment to excellence. Your efforts have not gone unnoticed. Thank you for going above and beyond.

**Kudos to Rebecca Lefever, from Erin Bryant, both at Centennial Elementary School**

Thank you for always being a consistent person of support for a student. I appreciate how amazing you are with him!

**Kudos to Mary Mangione, Rafa Martinez, Shannon Pennington and our Amazing Student Panel from Sarah Said, all at Dream Academy**

As an educator, I think amplifying student voices is key to empowering and motivating students in the classroom. I want to give kudos to my principal at Dream Academy - Mary Mangione, my associate principal - Rafa Martinez, our teacher leader - Shannon Pennington, and our amazing student panel who came to the Illinois Digital Educators Alliance Conference (IDEAcon) and taught



educators from across the country what it means to cultivate a sense of belonging in schools. Thank you all for elevating your voices to impact the future of education.



School District U-46

