

**uniquely**



**46**



**annual report**

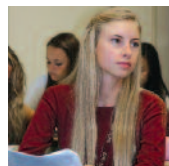
**2014**



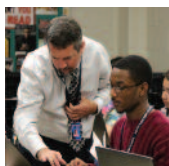
## **5-14 Educational Excellence in Teaching & Learning**



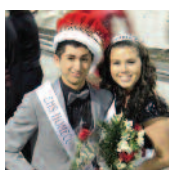
## **15-16 Parent and Community Engagement**



## **17 Award-Winning Schools**



## **18-20 Employee Excellence**



## **21-27 Students in the Spotlight**



## **28-29 Operational Excellence**



## **30-31 Excellence in Financial Health**

This report contains  
highlights of  
U-46 activities  
and achievements  
for January —  
December, 2014.



## Letter from the CEO

Dear Friends of U-46,

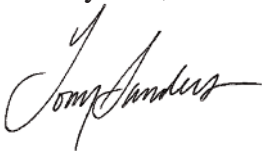
As the district's Chief Executive Officer and parent of two U-46 students, I am proud of all that we have accomplished in 2014. Our success is marked by a shared commitment to improve learning opportunities so that each and every student can reach academic success.

In the 2014 Annual Report, I will share with you highlights of the work we are doing to grow our programs and offer students the very best education. At U-46, we recognize that each student is unique and there is no “one size fits all” approach to teaching and learning. That’s why we are expanding our Dual Language program, gifted offerings, social and emotional supports, and services for students with special needs.

Our stories showcase the district’s commitment to excellence. U-46 provides robust curriculum and high standards to ensure that our students can achieve college and career readiness. Our staff and students continue to earn honors at the state and national level.

We cannot do it alone. We value our community partnerships and continue to increase opportunities to engage parents, businesses and community leaders in our schools. Also, please read to the end of the 2014 Annual Report to stay up to date on our efforts to make fiscally responsible choices that serve the best interests of our taxpayers and our students.

All my best,



Tony Sanders  
Chief Executive Officer



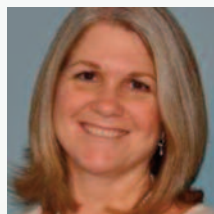
## Tony Sanders

Mr. Tony Sanders joined U-46 in 2007. Prior to serving as CEO, he served as Chief of Staff. Previously, Sanders worked for the St. Louis Public Schools as a Chief Communications Officer and also as a consultant for several education firms. He also had served as Acting Director for Governmental Relations and Public Information for the Illinois State Board of Education, and has more than a decade of experience in leadership positions for several Illinois state agencies. Sanders earned his Master of Business Administration degree from New York Institute of Technology – Ellis College, and his undergraduate degree from the University of Illinois at Springfield.

annual report

to the community

## U-46 Board of Education Members



**Maria Bidelman** is a resident of Elgin and is serving her second term on the Board of Education. She is the Director of the Annex Alternative Education Program in Community High School District 155, Crystal Lake. Ms. Bidelman's term expires in 2015.



**Linda Campos-Moreira**, an Elgin resident, is an Admissions Recruitment Coordinator at Elgin Community College (ECC). She also serves as an adjunct faculty member in ECC's Department of General Student Development, and as an adjunct faculty member at the University of Illinois at Chicago's College of Social Work. Her term expires in 2015.



**Amy Kerber**, Vice President, is a resident of Elgin and is serving her second term on the Board. Currently, she is a teacher in St. Charles Community Unit School District #303. Ms. Kerber has been active in many parent-teacher organizations and committees in U-46. Her term expires in 2015.



**Veronica Noland** is active with the Channing Elementary Parent Teacher Organization, having previously served as Vice President. She also has been a member of both the U-46 Hispanic Parent Leadership Institute and the Citizens' Advisory Council. Ms. Noland's term expires in 2017.



**Traci O'Neal Ellis**, Secretary Pro-Tem, is a resident of Elgin and is serving her first term on the school board. She is an attorney and employed at Northern Illinois University as Assistant Director, Affirmative Action Investigations. Ms. O'Neal Ellis' term expires in 2015.



**Jennifer Shroder**, a resident of Elgin, is serving her first term on the U-46 School Board. Ms. Shroder is a former freelance writer and editor and substitute teacher. She has served as president of the Channing Elementary School PTO and was active in the PTOs of Ellis and Larsen Middle Schools. Her term expires in 2015.



**Donna Smith**, President, a resident of Hanover Park, has been a member of the Board of Education since 2001. She has served as chairperson of the Citizens' Advisory Council and as an active member in the Partnership for Excellence in Learning, Comprehensive High School Committee, P.A.S.S. Committee, and several parent-teacher organizations. Mrs. Smith works in Accounts Payable/Accounts Receivable for a transportation company. Her term expires in 2017.



**Megha Bhattacharya** is the Student Advisor to the Board of Education for 2014-15. Megha is enrolled in the U-46 Gifted and Talented Academy at Elgin High School. She has been President of the Class of 2015, has served as a Link Crew Leader, and helped launch Pretty Little Leaders, a mentorship program for middle school girls.

## U-46 Administration

**Tony Sanders**, Chief Executive Officer  
**Dr. Kenneth Arndt**, Interim Superintendent  
**Steve Burger**, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Schools Instruction & Equity  
**Dr. Suzanne Johnson**, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning  
**Jeff King**, Chief Operations Officer

**Melanie Meidel**, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources  
**Ron Raglin**, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools Instruction & Equity  
**Miguel Rodriguez**, Chief Legal Officer  
**Dr. Ushma Shah**, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Schools Instruction & Equity

# & Administration

# Educational Excellence in Teaching & Learning

educational excellence



## Increasing Opportunities for Early Learners



**U**-46 continues to grow our Early Learners programs to provide educational opportunities for our area's youngest children.

During the 2014-2015 school year, we added a preschool classroom, bringing our total to 51 preschool classrooms at 12 schools.

Illinois Park Early Learning Center received a \$5,000 Fit for

Kids grant for a walking learning track behind the school, and Independence Early Learning Center has a new and improved library.

We offer Full-day Kindergarten Intervention with literacy-rich curriculum at 14 classrooms at four schools and four classrooms of Extended-day Kindergarten at two schools.



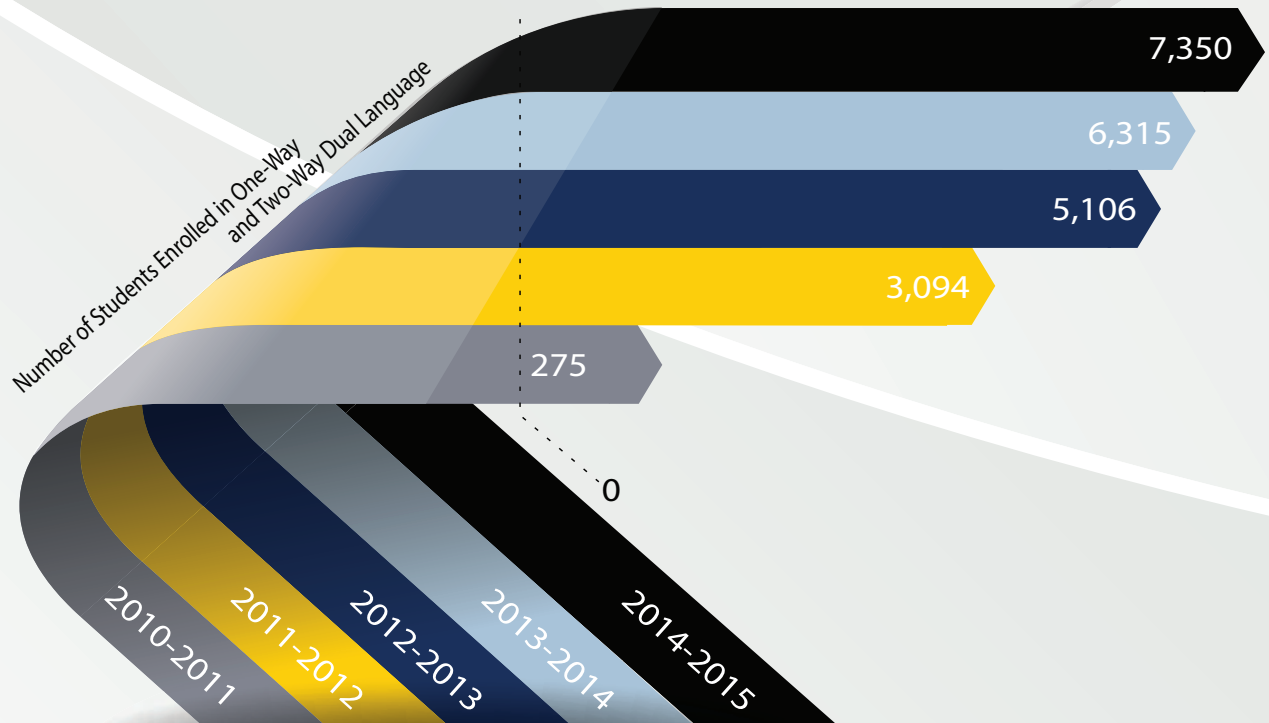
## A National Model for Dual Language

### Expanding Our Renowned Dual Language Program

The U-46 Dual Language program continues to grow in popularity as English-speaking and Spanish-speaking students reap the benefits of learning language alongside each other. Students develop strong skills and proficiency in the student's first and second language in order to become bilingual, biliterate and bicultural. This year, U-46 offers Dual Language to students in preschool through fifth grade at 30 elementary schools. Two-Way Dual Language is offered at 18 of those schools.

Surrounding districts including Barrington 220, Carpentersville 300, and West Chicago Elementary School District 33 have only one Dual Language elementary program.

- U-46's Wilma Valero, Director of English Language Learners, and Patricia Makishima, Dual Language Coordinator, were invited by nationally-renowned researchers Thomas and Collier to share insights on the successful implementation of Dual Language programs for their upcoming book.
- U-46 is recognized as an exemplary Dual Language program model from districts across the nation. We offered guidance and assistance to Cardinal Valley Elementary in Lexington, Kentucky, in implementing a Dual Language program and have frequent visits from districts that hope to emulate our program.
- U-46 CEO Tony Sanders and Director of English Language Learners Wilma Valero will present at the American Association of School Administrators Conference as a national model for ELL programs.
- U-46 Dual Language leaders and principals will present at the Illinois Association for Multilingual and Multicultural Education on Reflective Conversations to Impact Dual Language Instruction.
- New Dual Language teachers, including those recently recruited from Puerto Rico, receive two days of intense professional development in the foundation of Dual Language, biliteracy development, standards-based instruction and learning environments conducive to language and content development.



86%

U-46 saw a four-year graduation rate of 86%, up from 80% last year.



of freshmen are on track for college readiness, compared to the state average of 87.9%.

96.1%



According to ISBE, this means the freshman has earned at least five full-year course credits and has earned no more than one semester F in a core course.

70%

of U-46 schools are at or above the state average in reading and math growth scores.



## Illinois State Report Card

- Seven U-46 elementary schools are in the top 25 percent in Illinois for growth in reading and math, including Fox Meadow Elementary School, Hanover Countryside Elementary School, Liberty Elementary School, Nature Ridge Elementary School, Prairieview Elementary School, Timber Trails Elementary School and Wayne Elementary School.
- Three of the eight middle schools are in the top 25% of growth for grades 7-8 middle schools in Illinois, and one middle school is in the top 25% of growth for grades 7-8 middle schools in Illinois in reading.
- Five of the ten U-46 schools that were previously classified as federal restructuring schools last year have academic growth scores at or above 100 in reading and math.
- Attendance has been climbing since 2011 and reached a six-year high of 94.6 percent this year, up from 94.3 percent last year.



## Reflects Academic Gains

# Aligning Curriculum to new Illinois Learning Standards

U-46 continues to demonstrate steady progress in its efforts to align curriculum to the New Illinois Learning Standards. The standards provide a better picture of what students are expected to learn to be college and career ready. Here is a snapshot of where we are:

- Language Arts and Math Curriculum in kindergarten through twelfth grade have been rewritten to align to the New Illinois Learning

Standards.

- Teacher-led curriculum writing teams have written common assessments to be used throughout the year.
- Instructional leaders are vetting new resources to support implementation of the curriculum.
- Professional development for teachers was offered during the summer and is ongoing.

## Implementing Effective School Improvement Strategies

### U-46 Focuses on Teacher Collaboration to Support Student Learning

Based on the compelling body of research on teacher professional learning, teachers participate in a U-46 Collaborative Inquiry Cycle in which coaches are working with teachers. Together they identify the standards they are expected to teach in the current unit-lesson, to create common assessments that measure students' ability to meet these standards, to design learning progressions and effective instruction to teach toward this competency, to use the common assessments and other measures to assess where students are, to reflect upon and improve teaching practice and to reteach when needed in order to ensure that every child is on target to master the designated standards.



**“During our first cycle, we learned how to closely examine where our students are compared to specific standards, and design learning progressions to fill the gaps to proficiency and beyond. It was very valuable having someone support us as a team while we made these important decisions.”**

*Parkwood Elementary School, 4th grade teacher*

# Implementing Standards-Based Grading at Middle and High Schools

In U-46, we believe in holding students to the highest academic standards that will best prepare them for success in college and the workplace. That's why we have begun transitioning to Standards Based Grading (SBG) practices to better assess what our students are learning across our middle schools and high schools. SBG provides teachers and students with more information about the skills and knowledge that our students are mastering.

We have begun to phase in SBG to allow teachers time to alter instructional practices and assessments. Some of our schools were early adopters and made SBG the professional

development focus in their school improvement plans for the past several years. During the summer of 2014 and throughout the school year, U-46 offered extensive professional development to our teachers. So far, approximately 30 percent of middle and high school teachers have fully implemented SBG.

At this time, teachers are not required to implement SBG; rather, teachers have opted to participate, and U-46 is working collaboratively to support these teachers. What is required for the 2014-2015 school year is Marks grading, using the 0-4 scale. To learn more about our efforts to implement SBG, visit [www.u-46.org](http://www.u-46.org).

## Rolling Out New Opportunities for Gifted

U-46 rolled out an extensive strategic plan to expand gifted services for elementary school students. In 2014, U-46 launched the Access to Inquiry and Meaning program (AIM) to provide opportunities for the development of student potential in students from diverse cultural, racial, socio-economic and linguistic backgrounds and students with disabilities. Gifted Specialists act as coaches and collaborative teachers helping classroom teachers develop specific curricular and instructional modifications. The program was implemented for third grade in 2014 and will be rolled out to first through third grades by 2016-2017.

In 2014, IGNITE was launched for fourth grade students and will roll out by 2016-2017 for fifth and sixth grade students. It includes core academic gifted classes for students who demonstrate exceptional intellectual ability and high-level performance across core academic subjects: language arts, math, science and social studies. Two-Way Dual Language core academic gifted classes were also implemented in 2014 for students enrolled in the Dual Language program who are identified as gifted.



**+24%**

Increase in number of exams taken by African-American and Hispanic students who scored a 3+.

**+16%**

Increase in number of exams taken by African-American and Hispanic students.

**+74%**

Increase in the number of AP exams taken by African-American and Hispanic students.

**+50-54%**

Unique students taking 3 or more AP exams increased from 50% to 54%.

**+57.50-59.50%**

AP test takers earning a score of 3 or more increased from 57.50% to 59.50%.

# AP Successes

U-46 reported positive progress in its initiatives to increase the number of students taking advantage of the district's Advanced Placement (AP) course offerings as well as those taking AP exams. The district offers more than 20 AP courses.

During the 2013-2014 school year, there were 3,052 AP exams taken by U-46 students, up from 2,244 in 2010-2011; 1,660 students earned a score of 3 or more, up from 1,243 in 2010-2011; and U-46 high schools saw 1,642 unique AP test takers, up from 1,299 in 2010-2011.

## AP Courses included:

AP CALCULUS AB  
AP ENGLISH LITERATURE & COMPOSITION  
AP MACROECONOMICS  
AP BIOLOGY  
AP WORLD HISTORY  
AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE & COMPOSITION  
AP ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE  
AP US HISTORY  
AP EUROPEAN HISTORY  
AP CALCULUS BC  
AP PSYCHOLOGY  
AP CHEMISTRY  
AP HUMAN GEOGRAPHY  
AP GOVERNMENT/POLITICS USA 1  
AP STATISTICS  
AP PHYSICS C  
AP SPANISH LANGUAGE (1)  
AP ART HISTORY  
AP SPANISH LANGUAGE (1.5)  
AP SPANISH LITERATURE  
AP COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT



# Promoting Social & Emotional Health



U-46 recognizes the importance of social and emotional support for all students. That's why we have aggressively implemented and continue to grow our PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions & Support) system to ensure that our schools are safe, caring environments where students can learn.

- In 2014-2015, 47 U-46 schools are implementing PBIS – up from 44 last year. New PBIS schools include Fox Meadow Elementary School, Sycamore Trails Elementary School and Larkin High School.
- In 2013-2014, four U-46 schools out of 28 across the state of Illinois earned platinum status for PBIS implementation, the highest level of recognition possible from the state. Those schools include Abbott Middle School, Century Oaks Elementary School, Glenbrook Elementary School and Highland Elementary School. Platinum means that schools have reached 80 percent fidelity on all three tiers of PBIS implementation and that the school has documented measurable behavioral and academic trend improvements.
- In the Fox Valley area, outside of School District U-46, only one other school earned platinum status for PBIS.
- All U-46 schools are offering MTSS (multi-tiered systems of support) in some capacity, including MTSS/RTI Problem Solving Teams and Academic Interventions for Math, Reading and Social Emotional Learning.



## U-46 Launched Campaign to Improve Student Attendance

U-46 launched a campaign called, “I’m Here! ¡Aquí estoy!” to help improve the district’s student attendance rates. The messaging campaign raised awareness about the importance of ensuring students are in school every day.

The attendance rate at U-46 for the 2013-2014 school year was 94.3 percent. On average, 1,949.4 students are missing from U-46 classrooms each day. The campaign was created to support the District Improvement Plan (DIP) attendance goal of 98 percent.

U-46 families will receive Attendance Toolkits with information about excused and unexcused absences and tips for getting students to school on time each day. As part of each school’s PBIS goals, students with improved and excellent attendance will receive special recognitions.

# Improving Services

# for Students with

# Special Needs

U-46 developed and released a strategic plan aimed at improving the district's services for students with special needs. The plan was initiated after an internal review of the U-46 Special Education Program, which was focused on instruction and support for students with disabilities so that every student in every school is prepared for college, career, and community engagement. It includes changing the name of the district's Special Education Department to Specialized Student Services to encompass a larger scope of the children served.

The strategic plan includes ten recommendations that address streamlining and improving the district's process

of determining eligibility of services, screening tools, preschool instruction for students with special needs, social and emotional support services, and more.

## Special Education Parent and Community Engagement

In 2014, the Citizens' Advisory Council's Special Education Committee hosted a Special Education Resource Fair to connect U-46 families with community resources and support for students with special needs. The Committee also hosted a Parent University series of workshops to provide families with information to support their students during various stages in their education.

## Collaborative Classes Offered at Elgin High School

Elgin High School developed nine collaborative classes to offer a continuum of services for special education students. The classes incorporate a General Special Education teacher and a General Education teacher working collaboratively together in one classroom to meet the needs of students with and without disabilities. The collaborative classes were so successful during the first year that two additional classes will be offered next year.

## Intensive Hands-On Autism Training

More than 30 U-46 teachers and support staff attended Best Practices for Supporting Students on the Autism Spectrum, a four-day intensive training. Participants applied lecture information by working as a team and side-by-side with Autism coaches and students in a simulated classroom. A panel of parents of children with autism shared their experiences and guidance.



# Learning & Growing Outside the Classroom

## New Intramural Opportunities



As part of its three-year agreement with the Elgin Teacher Association, U-46 added a new middle school intramural program, including boys and girls soccer, boys and girls cross-country, cheerleading, and flag football.

## Engaging Students with STEM

U-46 continues to expand its programs focused on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education. Through hands-on, real world learning experiences, students engage in STEM programs and curriculum. Students discover new interests, emerging technologies, and explore potential college and career paths. U-46 works collaboratively with public and private partnerships to offer:

- U-46 STEM Expo
- You Be the Chemist Challenge
- Illinois Science Olympiad
- Discovery STEM Summer Camp
- Public and Community Nights at the U-46 Planetarium

## Veterans Day Celebrations

For the second year in a row, U-46 has held school on Veterans Day instead of using the day as a non-attendance holiday. The result has been inspiring. Across the District, schools hosted special ceremonies for their hometown heroes. Many schools invited veterans to speak to students and share their stories of outstanding sacrifice and service to our nation. These celebrations have ensured that our students receive an authentic, eye-opening lesson about what Veterans Day means in this country and what area servicemen and servicewomen have contributed to our past and our future.



# Increasing Technology In the Classroom

In 2014, U-46 increased initiatives to promote instructional technology in the classroom. The Information Services and Instructional Technology Departments teamed up to develop an internal mini-grant process. As part of the application process, teachers developed instruction plans and established rubrics to measure student progress with new technology. As a result, 49 teachers or teacher groups received laptops for their classrooms, and 57 received tablets, engaging students in a digital learning experience.

The Information Services Department is working to improve the district's technology infrastructure and has a plan in place to provide wireless access to every classroom in every school by the end of the 2015-2016 fiscal year. As of December 2014, wireless coverage has been installed in 22 schools. U-46 also recently upgraded the network connecting schools to the district's data center, providing 12 times the bandwidth schools previously had.

U-46 also switched to Google Apps for Education, providing students with drive space that allows them to access their schoolwork from any computer. Students also received Google-based email accounts.

## Connecting through Computers

Classroom technology enabled Elgin High School environmental students to plan a national Biodiversity Teach-in. Using the 100th anniversary of the extinction of the passenger pigeon, the students recruited experts from around the world to participate in a week-long webinar which attracted more than 5,000 students and teachers as virtual attendees.



*With the help of Coleman Elementary School P.E. teacher Steve Haskin, student Lizbeth Rios checks her heart rate with a monitor purchased by the U-46 Educational Foundation.*



# U-46 Educational Foundation

## Provides Extra Support

**L**aunched in 2008, the U-46 Educational Foundation provides extra financial support to educational programs and activities. In 2014, some of the projects it funded include:

- Supporting the district's attendance campaign by providing resources for educational toolkits and student recognitions to increase the district's attendance rate;
- Providing funding for the U-46 Planetarium to offer the Dawn of the Space Age Sky Show so students can learn about the universe and our nation's success with space exploration;

- Purchasing heart monitors for U-46 physical education classrooms to inspire students to stay active and allow them to understand the impact physical activity has on their heart rate; and
- Supporting Talentfest which showcases the abilities and talents of U-46 students at a community performance held at The Hemmens Cultural Center.

# Parent & Community



Engagement

## U-46 Launches Alignment Education Initiative



*Elgin Mayor Dave Kaptain visits Highland Elementary School during U-46's popular Principal for a Day event.*

In May 2013, a diverse group of more than 175 civic, business, religious, and educational leaders met at an Education Summit, convened by Elgin Mayor David Kaptain, to evaluate the educational needs of our community and discuss community-wide systems focused on strategic school support. It was determined that hundreds of partnerships already exist in U-46 schools, but there is no coordination of community resources in support of education. Every resident of our partner communities has a vital interest in the success of U-46 schools. In an effort to capitalize on these existing community resources, U-46 teamed up with several key community partners to develop the Alignment Education Initiative. A public-private partnership was formed to coordinate the approach of aligning community resources in support of U-46 schools and the district's strategic plan.

The plan was developed using the Alignment Nashville and Alignment Rockford models. The Alignment Steering Committee includes U-46, United Way of Elgin, Elgin Community College, the City of Elgin, Judson University, the Grand Victoria Foundation and CUSD 301. The work is organized around the priorities of U-46, focused on students who need the most support in order to be successful.

*(In February, 2015, Alignment for Collaboration in Education – ACE- was established.)*



## U-46 Parents Take Advantage of Leadership Institutes

U-46 continues to see great results from the district's African-American Parent Leadership Institute (AAPLI) and Hispanic Parent Leadership Institute (HPLI), which provide parents with extensive leadership training and opportunities to get engaged with U-46. In 2014, there were eight AAPLI graduates and 19 HPLI graduates.

community engagement



# Award-Winning Schools

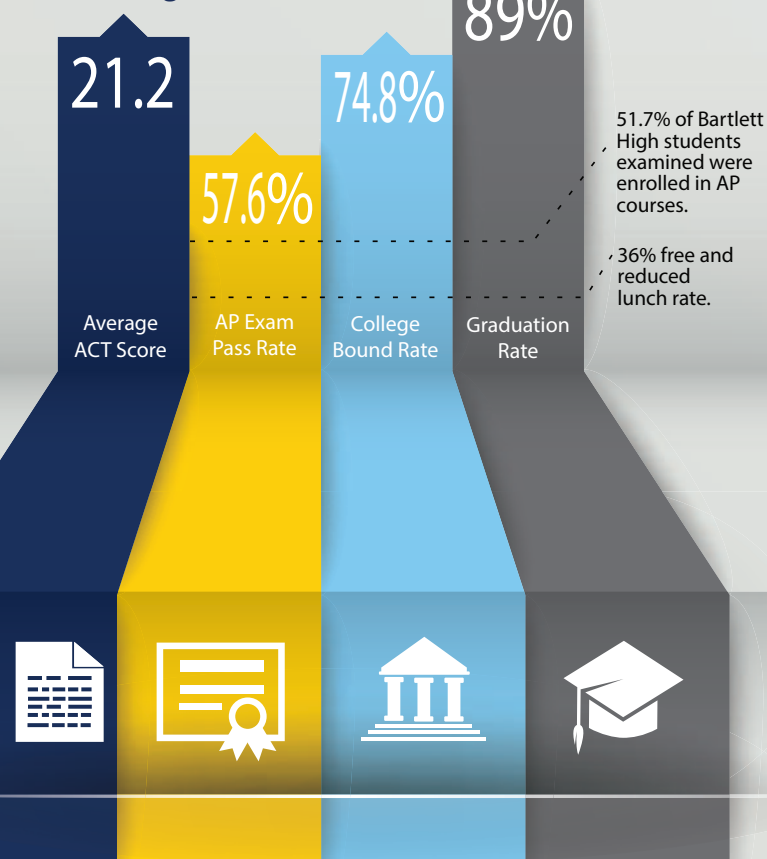
**THE DAILY BEAST**  
America's Top High Schools 2014

**B**artlett High School was named to The Daily Beast's list of America's Best High Schools for 2014. The award-winning publication examined the nation's high schools with a graduation rate of 85 percent or higher and then analyzed 1,200 schools for graduation and college acceptance rates, percentage of free and reduced lunch students, SAT and ACT scores, academic rigor using Advanced Placement (AP) and other test scores, and student performance on college admission exams.



**U**.S. News and World Report named Elgin High School among the Best High Schools in the nation for 2014 and honored the school with a bronze award. This is the second year in a row that Elgin High School has been honored with this prestigious, national recognition. U.S. News and World Report analyzed more than 31,000 public high schools across the country to determine its rankings.

## Bartlett High School Students:



## National Lighthouse Schools of Excellence

Ellis Middle School and Streamwood High School received national Lighthouse School of Excellence awards from Renaissance Learning. Renaissance Learning's Lighthouse School program aims to help schools across the nation improve students' academic achievement by using data to improve instruction.

**"Renaissance Learning programs have boosted test scores for our students in both reading and math,"** said Ellis Middle School Principal Perry Hayes.

**"Since the implementation of Renaissance programs at Streamwood High, we have seen underperforming students turn their reading and math performance around,"** said Streamwood High School Principal Dr. Terri Lozier.



## Abbott Teacher Inducted into “Fuel Up to Play 60” Hall of Fame

Abbott Middle School mathematics teacher Kim Elders was named the 2013-2014 Illinois inductee into the Fuel Up to Play 60 Hall of Fame. Elders received the award for her role as program advisor by promoting healthy lifestyle changes among students and staff while ultimately reshaping the culture of her school to include nutritional awareness and physical activity as an important part of their daily routine. Established by the National Dairy Council and National Football League, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Fuel Up to Play 60 is a national school wellness program that encourages young adults to eat healthy and stay active for at least 60 minutes a day.

Because of its active involvement in Fuel Up to Play 60, Abbott Middle School achieved “Touchdown” status this year, an honor awarded to schools who reach program goals and show a dedication to healthy change. Kenyon Woods Middle School and Larsen Middle School were also named Touchdown Schools for their participation in Fuel Up to Play 60.

## South Elgin High Teacher Receives Award for Nursing Publication

South Elgin High School Nurse Julia Olsta received The Journal of School Nursing/SAGE First Publication Award by a School Nurse at the National Association of School Nurses Conference in San Antonio, Texas, in July. Olsta received the award for her publication titled “Bringing Breakfast to Our Students: A Program to Increase School Breakfast Participation.” The JOSN SAGE First Publication Award celebrates writing excellence of a first-time school nurse author. Olsta’s publication reviewed literature linking breakfast consumption to improved student learning. It also outlined the breakfast cart program at South Elgin High School which allows study hall students to purchase a complete school breakfast to eat during study hall.

# Excellence



## Congresswoman Tammy Duckworth Visits Elgin High School's Environmental Class

Front row, from left, Elgin High School students Alexis Perez, Amanda Graham, U.S. Congresswoman Tammy Duckworth, Erin Duffer, and Sarah Pfau. (Back row, from left) Elgin High School students, Abel Tepozoltan, Katie Collins, Sabrina Stockman, Megha Bhattacharya, Natalie Pitts, and Elgin High School Principal Jerry Cook.



## Elgin High Teacher Awarded the 2014 Environmental Educator of the Year

Elgin High School teacher Deb Perryman was honored to receive the 2014 Environmental Educator of the Year award by the Environmental Education Association of Illinois (EEAI). Perryman was recognized for implementing environmental education in and out of the classroom, including using the 35 acres of natural space at Elgin High School as an instructional tool.

Perryman and her students spearheaded an advocacy campaign about Miss Martha, the Last Passenger Pigeon on Earth, to promote protecting biodiversity. The campaign resulted in former Illinois Governor Pat Quinn's naming September 2014, the Month of the Passenger Pigeon and U.S. Congresswoman Tammy Duckworth's recognizing EHS in the official congressional record. Perryman and her students organized a National Biodiversity Teach-in to honor the 100th anniversary of Miss Martha's death.

## Liberty Elementary Teacher Serves on National Dream Team

Liberty Elementary School sixth grade teacher Kim Stanci was named to a Dream Team of 200 teachers from across the country who participated in TeachFest in New Orleans on June 4-7. The professional development event is organized by Learn Zillion and gathers the nation's top Math and English Language Arts (ELA) teachers together to work on best practices around Common Core curriculum. Approximately 4,000 teachers around the world applied for the opportunity to participate, and Stanci was one of eleven chosen from Illinois.

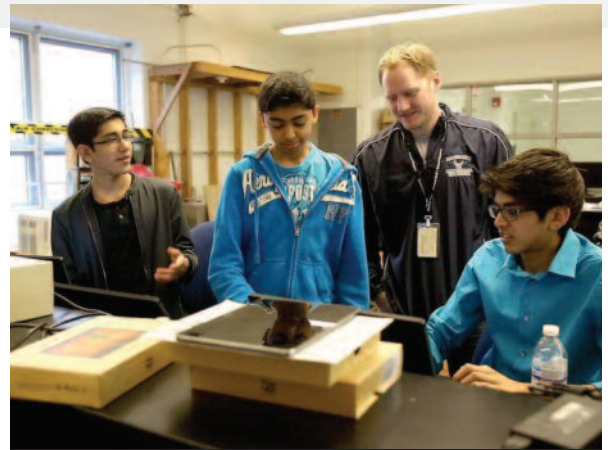


# Employee

# Excellence

## U-46 Paraprofessional Honored with the 2014 Education Support Professional of the Year

U-46 Library Paraprofessional Karen Westerman was honored with the Illinois Education Association's (IEA) 2014 Education Support Professional (ESP) of the Year Award in 2014. Westerman works at Clinton and Hillcrest Elementary Schools. Her accomplishments include sponsoring Battle of the Books and initiating a mentor program for library paraprofessionals through her local association.



## U-46 Employees Honored by ISBE

U-46 employees Casey Lauinger and Philip Church were recognized at the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Those Who Excel banquet in October. They were selected among 91 recipients from across the state for an Award of Recognition. Lauinger is an occupational therapist at Otter Creek Elementary School and other U-46 schools and Church is a Biology Teacher at Bartlett High School's Science, Engineering and Technology Academy.



## Larkin High School Teachers Selected for Prestigious Stanford Fellowship

Larkin High School teachers Bethany Vandercar and Brandie Burgess were selected to participate in the Hollyhock Fellowship program through the Graduate School of Education at Stanford University. The program is geared to support talented early-career high school teachers. Vandercar graduated from Illinois State University in May, is in her first year teaching Algebra 1-2 to freshmen at Larkin High School, and is the school's math interventionist. Burgess is in her second year and teaches Biology and Chemistry at Larkin High School.

# Producing College & Career Ready Graduates

## Four U-46 Students Named Golden Apple Scholars

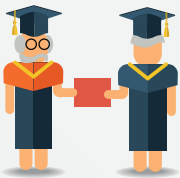
Four U-46 high school students were selected to participate in the 2014 Golden Apple Scholars program which trains promising teachers for successful careers in high-needs schools. The students include Larkin High School seniors Mireya Castillo and Lizzbeth Granda-Ocampo and South Elgin High School seniors Johanna Rundio and Rebecca Hernandez. Additionally, Larkin High School Class of 2012 alum Alberto Vargas was chosen as a Golden Apple Pathway Scholar.

## Producing College and Career Ready Graduates

More than 2,700 students received their high school diplomas on May 24, 2014, at the Sears Centre in Hoffman Estates. The graduating Class of 2014 included:

## U-46 Students Compete at International Business Conference

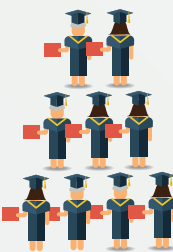
Ten U-46 high school students competed at the DECA International Career Development Conference in Atlanta in 2014. Students qualified for the competition after earning first through third place in the state DECA Conference in Decatur. Students from Bartlett, South Elgin and Streamwood High schools competed against more than 12,000 students from all over the world. Eight of the ten students earned competency in all their events which means they scored a minimum of 70% at the national level. Nora Hartman from Streamwood High School received an International Scholarship of \$1,000 and was recognized at the Grand Award Ceremony on May 6, 2014, in front of 18,000 students. She currently is attending the University of Minnesota and majoring in business administration.



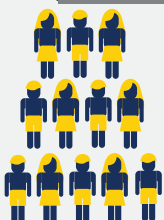
**4 National Merit Finalists**



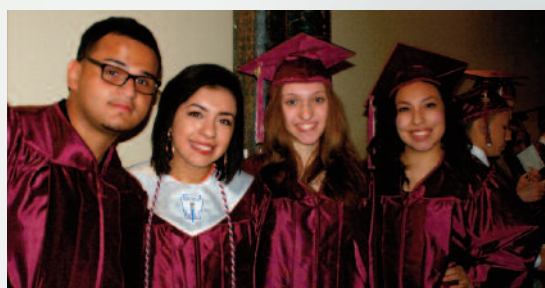
**264 Illinois State Scholars**



**353 AP Scholars**



**2,432 National Career Readiness Certificates**



# Students in the Spotlight



*From left: Dr. Richard Lebron, BHS Principal, Aishwarya Jois, Amar Patel, Autumn Chung, Philip Church, Faculty Advisor, Ivana Bozic, Steve Juracka, Associate Principal, Purav Shah, and Shil Shah.*

## Bartlett Academy Students Develop Winning Technology

A team of Bartlett High School Academy of Science Engineering and High Technology freshmen won a national competition sponsored by Verizon Wireless and MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology). The students' winning app concept "Fittastick" allows users of any fitness level to create a user profile that then connects them with other similar users and organizations through the use of social media. The app will eventually include caloric intake monitors and food recognition software allowing users to take photos of favorite meals and document the calories and nutrient values within each meal. The app will be available on Google Play by next year.

## Bartlett High School Robotics Students Win State, Compete in World Championship

The Bartlett High School Robotics Club and students from the school's Science, Engineering and High Technology Academy won the Illinois Vex Robotics State Championship in March. The win qualified the students to compete at the VEX World Championship in Anaheim in late April. More than 2,000 elementary, middle and high school robotics teams competed, including 430 high school teams from 23 countries- Spain, Hong Kong, China, Saudi Arabia, and India, to name a few. BHS students who competed at the World Championship include Noah Lee, Brandon Pepa, Christopher Szul, Ron Mikulecky, Matt Groboske, Kyle Calvert, Nathan Sparacino, Kartikey Desai, Kevin Worytko and Eric Mitchell.

*From left: Ron Mikulecky, Brandon Pepa, Bartlett High School Coach Gary Cotie, Kevin Worytko, Matt Groboske, Kyle Calvert, Eric Mitchell, Christopher Szul, Kartikey Desai, Noah Lee, Nathan Sparacino (kneeling).*



## Larkin High School Student Wins National Mathematics Honor Society Scholarship

Allison Rychtanek, a Larkin High School senior with the class of 2014, won a \$4,000 Mu Alpha Theta Scholarship. Mu Alpha Theta is the National Mathematics Honor Society. She was the only high school winner from Illinois. She also qualified for the Illinois Council of Teachers of Mathematics State Championship in the individual pre-calculus category.

## South Elgin High Students' Documentary Screened at All-American High School Film Festival

Four South Elgin High School seniors were finalists in the All-American High School Film Festival for their seven-minute film, "All About M.E.," about Matthew Erickson, a two-year-old boy who was born with brain cancer. Produced by students Alex Sandoval, Jeff Schooler, Cosette Teschke and Val Wilson, the film played in Times Square in New York City.



## Elgin High Clumsy Chef Alums Recognized by National Restaurant Association

Ten Elgin High School Clumsy Chef alums earned national certificates of achievement from the National Restaurant Association. Elgin High School alums accounted for ten of the 24 certificates earned by students across the state of Illinois.

*"This national recognition is considered a passport to a bright future in the restaurant industry," said Elgin High Clumsy Chef teacher Ann Leider.*

## A Winning Season

The Streamwood High School varsity soccer team scored a winning season with a majority of new players, including five freshmen. After beating Larkin High School 2-0 to win the program's 2nd Regional Championship, the team was ready for more. The Sabres overcame Rockford's Boylan Catholic High School in overtime, winning the program's first-ever Sectional Championship plaque. The win put the Sabres in the Super-Sectional game and a win away from State vs. Lake Park High School. The team didn't disappoint and beat Lake Park 2-1. The Sabres fought hard at State, coming in fourth place. They ended the season with a 17-7-2 record and will have a large group of players coming back next season.



# Spotlight

## U-46 Students Produce Award-Winning Radio Shows

Five U-46 students received Terri Hemmert High School Student Radio/Audio Awards at the Midwest Regional High School and College Radio/Webcast Conference at Columbia College Chicago in September.

Students from Elgin High School and South Elgin High School won first place in the Interviewing and Podcast categories. Elgin High School students who earned first place in interviewing include Karino Blanco, Jackie Mendez, Luis Muñoz, and Selena Rodriguez. South Elgin High School student Justin Kosek earned First Place in Podcasts. Bartlett High School student Michael Koss earned Honorable Mention in the Radio Public Service Campaign/Production category.



*From left: Barbara Calabrese, Columbia College Chicago Radio Department Chair; Luis Muñoz, Elgin High School student; Terri Hemmert, WXRT Radio Personality; Jackie Mendez, Elgin High School student.*

## U-46 Gifted Students Honored by Northwestern for High Test Scores

Sycamore Trails Elementary School fifth grade student Eugene Lim and Creekside Elementary School sixth grade student Michael Scheidler were recognized by the Center for Talent Development at a special award ceremony on September 6, 2014, for their high scores in the Northwestern University Midwest Academic Search (NUMATS) program. Northwestern's Center for Talent Development launched the NUMATS program in 1982 as a way to identify and test high-performing students in third through ninth grade and help them develop an educational roadmap that promotes growth for gifted students. Nationwide, nearly 20,000 students participate in the NUMATS program, and only the top three percent are recognized at the ceremony.

# U-46 Bluestars Shine

U-46 continues to offer students with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to participate in organized sports through our own Special Olympics team, the Bluestars. U-46 is proud to be part of Illinois Area 2 Special Olympics and host Special Olympics Basketball, Track and Bowling teams. About 75 student athletes, ages 8-22, participate.

## Bluestars Bests

The two Bluestars high school basketball teams placed second and third in their division at the regional tournaments in Arlington Heights and the two Junior Bluestar basketball teams placed second and third in their division at the tournament in Cicero.

In track and field, U-46 had 45 athletes participate in events at the North Central College Regional Spring games. Our first-ever relay team placed fourth in their division in the 4 by 100 meter race. Six athletes earned gold medals and qualified for the State Summer Games. At the Summer Games, our athletes earned two gold medals, two silvers, one bronze and one fourth place in their events.

In bowling, U-46 had the largest bowling team in its history with 52 students participating. Six athletes won gold at the June Naperville Regional Tournament and are headed to the Sectional tournament.

U-46 Bluestars proudly hold their banner during the opening ceremony of the 2014 Summer Games.



## Sixth Grade Student Wins National Chess Championship

Sycamore Trails Elementary School sixth grade student Marissa Li earned First Place in the Under 12 category of the 2014 National All-Girls Chess Competition organized by the Kasparov Foundation and the Renaissance Knights.



From left: Marissa Li proudly displays her trophy alongside United States Chess Federation President Ruth Haring.

## Larkin High School Senior Publishes Novel



In December of 2014, Larkin High School senior Karla Luna published a 743-page novel called *The Bad Girl and The Good Boy*. It is available on Amazon. Initial reviews on Amazon.com have been very positive.

# South Elgin High School Student Makes U.S. Deaflympic Hockey Team

South Elgin High School junior Derek Struwing will compete with the U.S. Deaflympic Hockey Team in the 18th Winter Deaflympics in Russia in 2015. Sponsored by the American Hearing Impaired Hockey Association, the Deaflympic Hockey Team is comprised of deaf and hearing-impaired athletes 17-35 years old. At 17, Derek is the youngest player on the U.S. team.



# Larkin High School Boys Basketball Team Makes History

In 2014, the Larkin High School boys basketball team became first in school history to win back-to-back conference championships. In addition, the team was undefeated in their conference for the first time ever.



# Streamwood High School AVID Students Earn \$1.6 Million in College Tuition Awards

In 2014, 21 seniors were enrolled in AVID (Advance Via Individual Determination) at Streamwood High School. Those seniors received 70 college acceptances and accrued \$1.6 million in college tuition awards.



# Giving Back—

## Ice Bucket Challenge for ALS

Staff and students from 13 U-46 schools participated in the popular Ice Bucket Challenge to raise awareness for the neurodegenerative disease ALS. In total, U-46 schools raised more than \$6,500 for initiatives in the fight against ALS. Principals, staff and students took to social media to promote their fundraising efforts and to challenge others to join in the cause.



## Volunteering In Our Communities

National Honor Society members at Streamwood High School logged nearly 600 hours of volunteer time. Students have volunteered with Pillars of Honor, the travelling WWII Memorial, Woodfield Area Children's Organization (WACO) helping underprivileged children shop for their families for the holidays, and the SHS Music Department's rummage sale.

From left: Halle Brady, Jordan Stibal, Emily Dominguez, Alejandra Pineda, Stephanie Corona, Christina Corona



## Students Participate in Change for Hunger

Last school year, 14 partnerships raised \$14,500 for the Change for Hunger Campaign to fight food insecurity. This year, schools that have signed on to participate include Abbott Middle School, Bartlett Elementary School, Bartlett High School, Elgin High School, Highland Elementary School, Kenyon Woods Middle School, Kimball Middle School, Larkin High School, South Elgin High School, Streamwood High School, Washington Elementary School, and Wayne Elementary School.

Bartlett High School students (from left) Kennedy Kingsmill, Sammy Kirstein, Alyssa Medina, and Nick Sanft collected pennies for Change for Hunger as part of the school's homecoming festivities.

# U-46 Demonstrates Consistency in Operational Efficiency Initiatives

- From July 2013-June 2014, U-46 saved \$798,776.95 in printing costs because of a strategic decision to close our printing shop and outsource to Office Depot.
- U-46 received \$63,284 for recycling in 2013-2014 and \$43,952 in 2014-2015.
- As a result of Business Services' negotiating better prices for goods and services, the district saved \$4,418,474 in 2013-2014.
- A switch to LED lighting at two high schools, paid in part by state incentives and grants, yielded \$191,894 in cost savings and recurring annual electric savings of \$26,573.
- In 2002, the U-46 Plant Operations Department purchased a tub grinder for \$63,000 and began making its own mulch. Each year, U-46 produces a minimum of 1,500 cubic yards of mulch and playground surfacing material, saving the district approximately \$33,775 to \$59,600 per year.
- Due to reduced routing in high school bus stops and other transportation efficiency steps, U-46 reduced overall mileage to 4,306,412 in 2013-2014, down from 4,644,653 in 2012-2013.
- Savings were identified by the Transportation Department mechanics, performing services that were previously purchased through outside vendors. In 2013-2014, \$603,945 was spent in mechanic services, down from \$710,250 in 2012-2013.

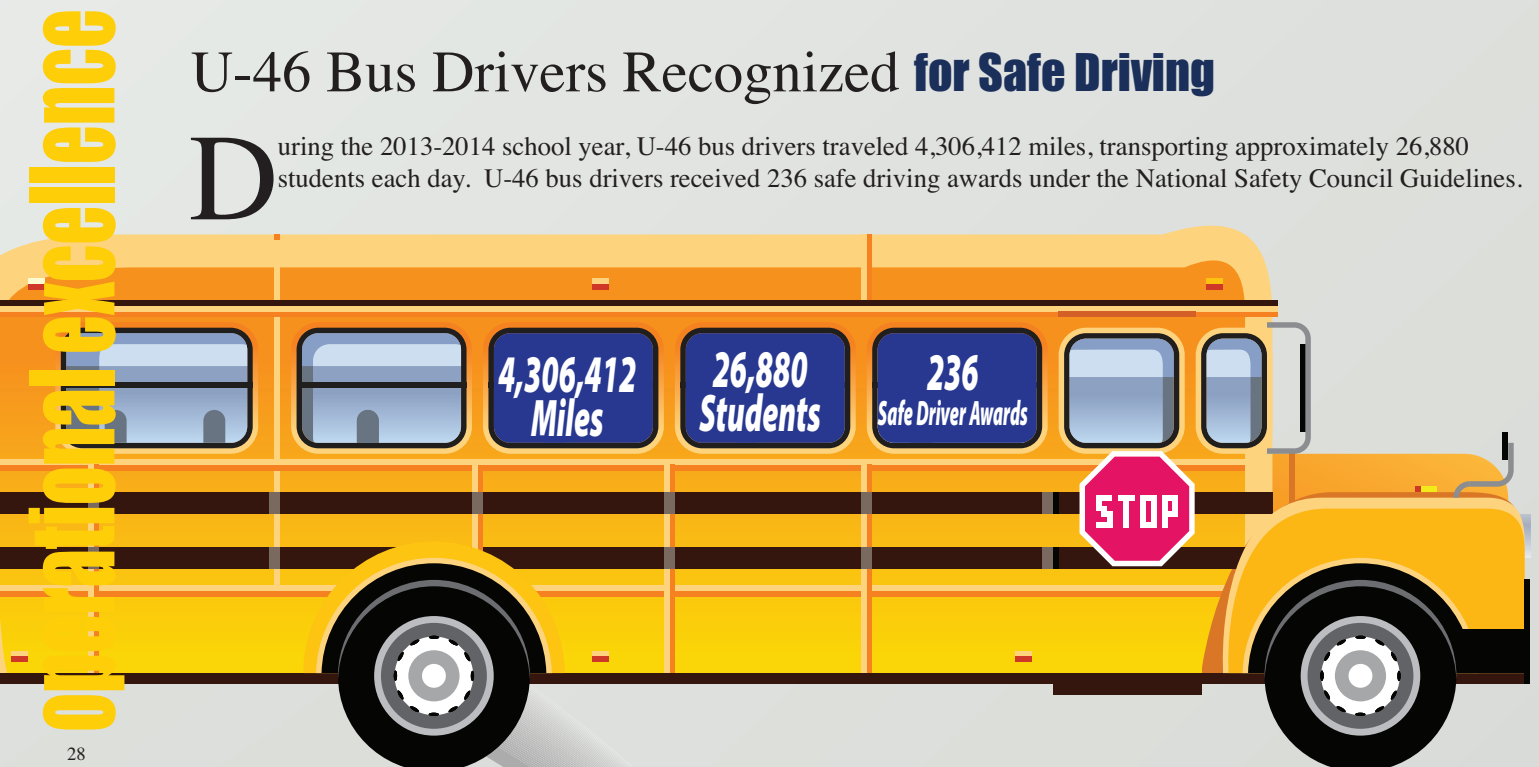
## U-46 Book Bus Drives Increase in Reading

The Book Bus is a mobile give-away book exchange for U-46 students. It's a chance for students to get books, give books, and trade books. Each student receives three books, and another for each book donated. U-46 bus drivers, the U-46 Transportation Department and members of the District U-46 Transportation Union sponsor the event. During the summer and throughout the year, the Book Bus made stops at Century Oaks, Garfield, Highland, Hillcrest, Lords Park, Oakhill, Parkwood, Sunnysdale and Washington Elementary Schools.



## U-46 Bus Drivers Recognized for Safe Driving

During the 2013-2014 school year, U-46 bus drivers traveled 4,306,412 miles, transporting approximately 26,880 students each day. U-46 bus drivers received 236 safe driving awards under the National Safety Council Guidelines.



# U-46 Receives One Million Dollar Grant to Improve School Security

U-46 was awarded with a \$1 million grant by the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) to improve safety and security at the district's 40 elementary schools, eight middle schools, and five high schools. The district will use the grant to enhance security for elementary school entrances and implement a district-wide digital radio system.

Electronic access control (EAC) will be installed at two entrances of each elementary school and school employees will receive key fobs. Additionally each elementary school will

receive a new door intercom system and additional exterior cameras, allowing the school's main office staff to monitor every door entrance at all times.

The district-wide digital radio system will be stationed in five high schools and broadcast to all schools. All principals will receive new radios with district-wide broadcast ability. The system also will allow local police departments the ability to communicate with all U-46 schools instantly and send out emergency messages directly to all principals.

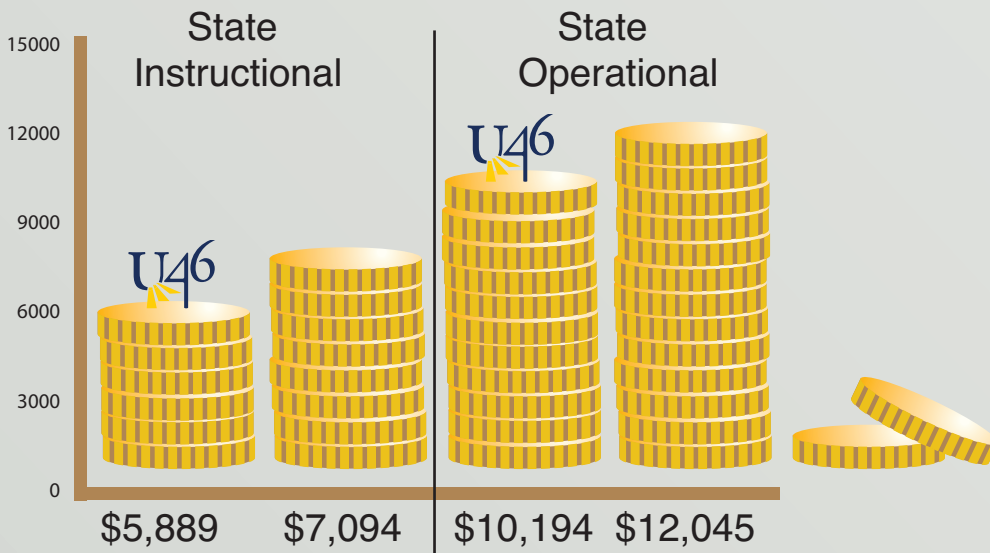
## U-46 Hosts Area-Wide Safety Training

In July, U-46 partnered with the City of Elgin Police and Fire Departments for an Active Shooter/Mass Casualty training at Otter Creek Elementary School in Elgin. Nearly three dozen fire departments, several SWAT teams, four area hospitals, 200 volunteer actors, and several U-46 staff members participated in the drill.

The empty weapon drill involved deploying police units, command post operations, casualty collection points, rescue task forces, mutual aid, evacuations and re-unification protocol.

These training exercises strengthen the emergency preparedness of U-46 and the safety of our students.





## Excellence in

### U-46

\$5,889 in Instructional Spending  
\$10,194 in Operational Spending

### State Average

\$7,094 in Instructional Spending  
\$12,045 in Operational Spending

### Responsible Spending

Despite being the second largest school district in Illinois, U-46's per-pupil spending is lower than the state average. We work hard to spend responsibly both on instruction and operations.

### Doing More With Less

U-46 has lost \$36 million over four years due to cuts in state aid. U-46 does more with less so that our students will not suffer. Illinois has not fully funded the state aid formula since 2011.

### A Balanced Budget

School District U-46 proposed a balanced Fiscal Year 2015 budget of \$488 million in revenue and \$487.7 million in expenses.

The budget projects a revenue increase of \$20 million. Expenditures are estimated to increase by \$13 million, with \$12 million related to capital investments in buildings and equipment. To cover the cost of contract increases, \$4 million is slated for salaries and benefits.

The district issued \$40 million dollars in bonds for capital projects to be completed in the next three to four years.

### Did you know?

Illinois contributes a quarter of the total investment in K-12 education; other states, on average, cover half.

CEO Tony Sanders and the U-46 Board of Education have been vocal proponents of Senate Bill 16, the School Funding Reform Act of 2014. SB 16 passed the Illinois Senate in May but was not called for a vote in the House. The legislation aims to make education funding more equitable, based on student need, and is estimated to generate \$24 million for U-46. The Board of Education adopted a resolution in support of the bill and Sanders traveled to Springfield to speak at a public hearing and lobby Illinois lawmakers. U-46 will continue to take proactive steps to fight for statewide school funding reform.

### Did you know?

U-46 expenditures have increased by \$54.5 million in the past seven years. That's an average of 1.95% each year...less than the average rate of inflation.

# Property Tax Update

In the 2014 property tax bills, DuPage County homeowners saw a significant increase while other U-46 taxpayers saw their bills decrease. The increase was an error caused by misreporting by the Kane County Clerk's Office. County and state officials have said the miscalculation will be corrected and reflected in tax bills in 2015. This means that DuPage homeowners may see their taxes decrease next year and Kane County homeowners should expect an increase in their tax bills.

## Investing in Our Future

U-46 is committed to investing in programs that will ensure our students are college and career ready. Our 2014-2015 spending priorities include:

- Expanding the number of All-day Kindergarten, Dual Language, Early Childhood, and Gifted classrooms.
- Providing educational and extracurricular opportunities for all students.
- Aligning curriculum to new learning standards.
- Increasing technology in the classroom, including expanding our wireless access to every classroom in every building and replacing old computers.





## Thank you for Connecting with Us



6,461  
people  
like us on  
Facebook



3,685  
people  
follow us  
on Twitter



40,000+  
views on  
YouTube



5,201,399 page views  
since the district  
launched its new website.



4,988 Things You  
Should Know  
newsletter sub-  
scribers