

# Family & Community Engagement Committee Report

Spring 2016

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Matt Hovey (Hanover Countryside Elementary) – Co-Chairperson  
Seth Rindner (Hanover Countryside Elementary) – Co-Chairperson  
Madeleine Villalobos (Elgin High School) – Co-Chairperson  
Jeff Book (Hanover Countryside Elementary)  
Vanessa Castelan (Oakhill Elementary)  
Bruce Gartzke (South Elgin High School)  
Erika Nelson (Prairieview Elementary)  
Aimee Novelli (Highland Elementary)  
Phil Novello (Oakhill Elementary)  
Deborah Payleitner (Glenbrook Elementary)  
Kai Rush (Fox Meadow Elementary)  
Paula Villagomez (Coleman Elementary)

## DISTRICT LIAISON

Mary Fergus – Director of School and Community Relations  
Karla Jimenez – Coordinator of Family and Community Engagement

*Accepted by CAC Executive Committee – 04/28/2016*

*Accepted by CAC General Council – 05/05/2016*

*Presented to the Board of Education – 05/16/2016*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Citizens' Advisory Council (CAC) Family & Community Engagement Committee would like to thank Mary Fergus, Director of School and Community Relations and Karla Jimenez, Coordinator of Family and Community Engagement for their ongoing support and encouragement of the committee's work. We would also like to thank Judy Davenport for her administrative support with the PTO/PTA network initiative.



## **COMMITTEE MISSION & INITIATIVES FOR 2015-16**

**The CAC Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Committee mission is to take on challenging initiatives throughout the school year that help improve parent and community involvement at the school and district levels.**

Our 2015-2016 Initiatives:

- *Improve the perception of School District U-46 in the communities it serves. The U-46 Realtor Breakfast event is a communication effort aimed at providing local Realtors with information that they could use to showcase our District to potential home buyers in our communities.*
- *Expand the parent group (PTO/PTA, Boosters, etc.) network to include middle and high school parent groups. Continue developing a network of support to our parent group organizations across the District. Identify contacts, assess needs, and determine potential support opportunities to strengthen and encourage family engagement and partnerships.*
- *Identify opportunities to support the efforts of the District and schools that are currently doing student-led conferences.*
- *Enlist parents from schools that do not have a CAC representative in order to help boost the overall CAC attendance.*

## **OVERVIEW**

For its eighth year of work, the committee determined to explore four initiatives to address various avenues of family and community engagement in U-46. We looked at information provided from our Board of Education (BOE), our most highly engaged and successful school leaders and our invaluable parent volunteers throughout the District for direction. Our goal is to align our work with the BOE and the administration's work and the 2015 Strategic Plan in order to produce useful, effective results. Ultimately, our focus is driven by factors that impact family and community engagement within our District.

## **U-46 FRESH LOOK**

One of the goals of the CAC Family and Community Engagement Committee (CAC FACE) is to improve the image of U-46. The committee agreed to start with a venue where Realtors could come together and learn about U-46. In most instances, Realtors are the first point of contact for families in the communities served by U-46. Sadly, many Realtors are not aware of the programs and services offered by the District. To help inform and equip area Realtors with U-46 information, multiple breakfast events were held in various U-46 schools.

Last school year the CAC FACE Committee held a Realtor Breakfast at Larkin High School in April and the Realtors expressed a desire for the committee to do more of these informative events. This school year, we had two Realtor Breakfasts in the morning from 9am-10am. The first one took place in February 4, 2016 at Elgin High School. We reached out to Realtors via email and social media Realtor pages. A total of forty-two Realtors RSVP'D and thirty-two Realtors attended the breakfast. The Kane County Teachers Credit Union sponsored the breakfast. The morning started with Kai Rush sharing why he chose for his son to attend full day Kindergarten at Fox Meadow Elementary. Then, U-46 CEO Tony Sanders shared about his experience as a parent with children in the district. Tony continued by presenting the State of U-46, which highlighted various U-46 programs - Academies, Ignite, Dual Language, Career and Technical Education and so much more. Principal Jerry Cook ended the morning by letting the Realtors know that he is a U-46 graduate and has since returned to be Principal of Elgin High School. He, then, offered a tour highlighting various offerings such as the Culinary Arts Program, Metals, and Early Learning Childhood to name a few.

The CAC FACE Committee planned on hosting one Realtor breakfast this year. However, the Mayor of the Village of Bartlett, Kevin Wallace heard about the Elgin Realtor Breakfast and reached out to Tony Sanders asking that our committee host a breakfast in the Bartlett area before the end of the school year. The event was quickly set to be held at Bartlett High School on April 14, 2016. This was new terrain, as we had to reach out to Realtors from Bartlett, Streamwood, Hanover Park, Carol Stream, Wayne, Schaumburg and other surrounding communities. District communication tools, email and social media were used to promote the event. A total of thirty-one Realtors RSVP'D and twenty-one Realtors attended the breakfast. Among the 12 additional attendees was our school board member Sue Kerr. The Bartlett Breakfast was sponsored by BMO Harris. CAC Chair Melissa Owens kicked off the morning by sharing why she chose for her son to attend a school in our District. She continued by sharing why she joined the Citizens' Advisory Council and became a member of the CAC Special Education Committee. Tony Sanders followed by showcasing the Annual Report video. During his presentation about U-46 he received a few testimonials of positive experiences as U-46 parents from Mayor Kevin Wallace, BMO Harris representative and a couple of Realtors. Dr. Richard Lebron, Principal of Bartlett High School shared highlights and school achievements and awards. Those in attendance were asked to complete a survey that will provide necessary information to plan similar events in the future (see Exhibit A-B).

At both events, Realtors received folders containing brochures and handouts with information on the various U-46 programs, a copy of the presentation, and much more. What was effective especially during the Bartlett Realtor Breakfast was the video shared by Tony Sanders. Testimonials from those in attendance in the room who had children attending schools in U-46 were impactful. Setting time aside at the end of the event for Realtors to fill out a survey worked out great as well.

The feedback from the Realtors and attendees was very positive. We received many "I didn't know that" comments. "I didn't know about the Academies or Dual Language." "I didn't

know that you had Full-Day Kindergarten.” Suggestions for future events were shared. Some to consider include using the District radio station to keep the Realtors informed with what’s happening in the district and have students interview city leaders such as the Village of Bartlett Mayor, the City of Elgin Mayor. These interviews could then be aired on the radio station. It was also suggested that each of the high schools should have a Facts at a Glance (see Exhibit C) on their website and the District website.

Quote excerpted from U-46 website:

*“Realtors are our direct link to new families and these presentations have proven to be invaluable amid the busy spring selling season,” said Tony Sanders, CEO of School District U-46. “We know that once people learn about the breadth and depth of our curriculum and opportunities, such as our Dual Language program and our comprehensive special education services, they are much more comfortable and eager to let others know that this District is indeed a wonderful place to raise a family.”*

## **PARENT GROUP NETWORK**

The 2015-2016 school year marked the second year of the Parent Group (PTO/PTA, Boosters, etc.) Network initiative developed by the CAC FACE Committee. This initiative was started in an effort to help School District U-46 better assist all school parent groups. At these network events parent groups obtain useful information in an open and candid discussion amongst one another. The goal is to better equip all schools in the District to improve the quality of education for our students and to increase opportunities for parent groups to meet their individual school goals. These goals include fundraising, volunteer recruitment, and general support of the school. Following up on a highly successful first Parent Group Network meeting in May of 2015, our subcommittee looked to increase not only the number of school parent groups attending, but also the quality of the information shared amongst the parent group representatives that regularly attend the meetings. Our goal was to hold Parent Group Network meetings at three points in the school year: the beginning (October), middle (February), and end (April) of the 2015-2016 school year.

The first meeting in October of 2015 was an open forum presentation to the parent groups. The meeting was held at Poplar Creek Public Library in Streamwood and was an orientation to the Network with existing and new parent group leadership in attendance and an idea sharing session discussing what topics should be presented and expanded upon in future meetings of the network. Representatives from thirteen primary schools attended, with a total attendance of approximately twenty-five individuals. It was determined that the first program agenda would focus on parent group technology purchases and how the District can support these purchases within the schools. Beginning of the year fundraising and teacher volunteerism were other topics discussed in fine detail.

The February meeting of the Parent Group Network at Gail Borden Public Library was truly a resounding success with over 20 schools being represented and close to 40 individuals

attending. U-46 Technology Director Craig Williams presented his Technology Master Plan tailored to parent groups and how they can get installation and ongoing support of their purchases in their schools. The U-46 Community Alliance Parent and Family Engagement Work Group joined the meeting to present their mission, work plan and how they can assist parent groups with parent engagement. Feedback obtained following the February Network meeting proved that the new format was extremely well received and it was decided to continue with the program-based meeting.

The final Parent Group Network meeting for the 2015-2016 school year was held on April 21 at the Bartlett Public Library. The main program presentation of this Network meeting was U-46 District Literacy support which featured librarians from U-46 schools and both the Bartlett and Gail Borden Public Libraries. Anderson book fairs and Scholastic book fairs presented information about their program offerings for schools and parent groups, including Spanish reading materials. Suggested topics for the 2016-2017 school year were discussed.

The subcommittee was dedicated to holding one meeting at each of the main public libraries that serve the U-46 community, which we were happy to report was accomplished. We are extremely pleased with the progress made with the Parent Group Network over the past school year and look to continue the success of this initiative with the support of the U-46 Board of Education and Administration for many years to come.

## **SUPPORT OF STUDENT LED CONFERENCES**

Last year, the Student-led Conferences (SLC) subcommittee met with Dr. Ushma Shah to discuss the possibility of supporting the ten transformation schools within the District. As a result of that conversation it was evident that student-led conferences aligned with our goals of community and family engagement. The first step was to research about student-led conferencing nationwide and districtwide. The subcommittee observed student-led conferences taking place in U-46 schools. The following is an update on work accomplished for the student-led conferences in U-46 based on recommendations from the CAC FACE committee in May of 2015:

1. A Lead Principal team was formed in early October of 2015 through an application process (see Exhibit D). Four Principals whose buildings currently participate in school-wide student-led conferences, were chosen: Dr. Angelica Ernst from Huff Elementary; Joe Corcoran from Harriet Gifford; Lori Brandes from Washington Elementary; and Luis Fernando De Leon from Laurel Hill Elementary. Moving forward, the Lead Principal team, with Dr. Ushma Shah, and input from the CAC FACE committee will coordinate the development and implementation of a Project Plan for the student-led conferences initiative within U-46.
2. The CAC FACE Committee received updates from the lead principals at the November 2015 and March 2016 meetings. We look forward to having the team again in 2016-2017.
3. The lead principals developed a Project Plan which included long term expansion mapping for school-wide student-led conferences throughout U-46. During this process the team

agreed that U-46 would be best served through a steady and organic process of implementation yielding deep and lasting results rather than a quick approach that might lead to a short life and impact for SLC.

4. The lead principals' team completed a district wide assessment of the current level of SLC implementation within elementary schools. A Google Form was sent to each elementary school Principal to assess the level at which SLC are functioning in their building as well as what their current and future interest is for implementing school-wide student-led conferences.
5. All elementary school teachers and administrators were personally invited to observe student-led conferences in action at Harriet Gifford, Laurel Hill and Washington elementary schools during the month of January. A CAC FACE representative observed the student-led conferences at Washington Elementary School on January 21, 2016. A key takeaway from this observation was the opportunity the schools had to engage parents to complete the 5Essentials Survey by having laptops available.
6. A student-led conferences course was developed by the lead principals and held on February 29, 2016 at the ESC for schools interested in learning more about SLC. Teachers and Principals from interested schools attended. The lead principals presented key aspects and "Must Haves" for student-led conferences in conjunction with personal examples and first hand stories from teachers, parents and students who have participated in SLC in one of the lead principal's schools.
7. A framework for implementing SLC and a grade specific multi-media Tool Kit (i.e. K-2, 3-6) with detailed and vetted resources is being developed for schools interested in implementation for the 2016-17 school year. This complete package of resources will be presented at the Principals meeting on June 1, 2016.

## **ENLIST CAC REPRESENTATIVES**

The objective of this subcommittee is to enlist parents from schools that do not have a CAC representative in order to help boost the overall CAC attendance. Participation within CAC from its diverse community is important to fairly represent the interests of the students and community members. We recognize that robust involvement makes the work of CAC and various subcommittees more relevant and effective. Current participation is good from many schools, but some still do not have any representation at all. Unfortunately, many schools are de-certified annually due to lack of participation and so that a quorum can be realized to vote on committee reports and the election of new CAC leadership.

We reached out via phone and email to the Principals of schools with no representation at the beginning of the school year and some now have representatives. Many of these Principals had little understanding of the role of CAC and subsequently their role in supporting it. Subcommittee members also attended PTO/PTA meetings to explain the role of CAC and recruit new members. Meetings with Principals and/or Assistant Principals at twenty-three schools

took place to learn about their unique perspectives and encourage more participation with CAC. For example, after giving a CAC presentation to the parents at a PTO meeting they went from no representatives to 4 pledged CAC members. During a CAC Executive committee meeting we learned that Tony Sanders will be encouraging CAC membership from the Principals and a nominating form has been developed. We applaud and support the administration for this effort.

### **Recommendations to the Board of Education:**

1. The committee recommends that we continue the effort in reaching out to area Realtors at least once or twice a year before the busy, spring house buying season. Now that we have a Realtor base perhaps it may be time to consider a bus tour where the Realtors visit an elementary, middle and/or high school.
2. Continue to support the goals and progress of the Parent Group Network by providing complete transparency on U-46 guidelines and policies as they apply to the parent groups.
  - a. Show Board support from FACE aligned board members by attending one or more Parent Group Network meetings during the course of the school year.
3. Develop a more thorough Parent Group Toolkit that has relevant information for the parent group organizations of the District.
  - a. Information of interest includes: 501(c)(3) applicability, insurance applicability, PTO/PTA Expos – possible sponsorship for registration fees, etc.
4. Provide ongoing support to the SLC Lead Principal team.
5. Provide resources to ensure continued successful development and implementation of the SLC toolkit.
6. Convert the attendance keeping as a joint responsibility of the CAC Secretary and the current administration personnel and that the information be posted publicly on the CAC webpage.
7. Have access to the district's phone and email contact list including group email to facilitate contact with the Principals and schools.
8. Research ways to incorporate child care into all the general sessions with the guidance of the District's Legal Department.



## EXHIBIT A

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number:

\_\_\_\_\_ Email Address:

\_\_\_\_\_ Company:

\_\_\_\_\_ Name:

Please complete the following or attach a business card.



**Thank You**

Thank you for attending the U-46 Realtor® Breakfast at Bartlett High School. We hope that the information you received will translate into sales.

In order to plan another successful event, we ask that you take a moment to answer the questions below. Your responses will be used when planning our next Realtor® event.

Any prospective buyer that would like to know more about a U-46 school can visit [www.u-46.org](http://www.u-46.org) or call the U-46 Department of School & Community Relations at (847) 888-5000 ext. 5003.

U-46 Educational Services Center / Centro de Servicios Educativos del Distrito U-46  
355 E. Chicago Street, Elgin, IL 60120 Phone: (847)888-5000 Website: [www.u-46.org](http://www.u-46.org)

**ACADEMIC SUCCESS FOR ALL**

**From the presentation, what was the one takeaway that will help you sell within U-46 boundaries?**

**What are the misconceptions about U-46 you come across from potential buyers?**

**What are other community resources that we can invite which will support your work as a Realtor?  
(i.e. after-school programs, park districts, libraries, healthcare, social services, etc.)**

**As a Realtor learning about U-46, how would you describe your experience at this morning's session?  
(Please note we may use your quote in our marketing material.)**

## EXHIBIT B

### **From the presentation, what was the one takeaway that will help you sell within U-46 boundaries?**

BHS Nationally Ranked & ESL Programs superior  
The large variety of programs & their success.  
Nationally ranked schools w/specialized academies  
Highlighted stats  
ACE- Allstate insurance  
Academic standards  
Amazed at all the A/P classes  
Excellent ESL programs in the district. Second largest school district in IL  
the schools  
I like the dual language programs  
Academies  
How the boundaries will make a positive change of the district.  
Schools rated higher  
Kindergarten is tuition free  
High scores relative to national average  
The statistics from the handouts

### **What are the misconceptions about U-46 you come across from potential buyers?**

low rankings  
That it performs below average.  
Elgin schools are not very good  
N/A  
N/A  
Poor student academies. Budget issues  
Didn't realize how well students did  
N/A  
what it really has to offer  
The amount of programs offered  
gangs, poor education  
How the schools are not great! So wrong!  
Many buyers think U-46 has very low ratings  
Poor performing district and that their children will not receive a good education  
Low grades  
N/A

**What are other community resources that we can invite which will support your work as a Realtor?**

park districts & social services

N/A

Opportunities to get involved

Down payment assistance programs & Home buyer education classes

N/A

N/A

After school resources

Business organization that will help small or new businesses that can be pitched to homebuyers

local business

Can't think of any right now

Healthcare

Having park district & library give more feedback

Info on the

N/A

park district- libraries

N/A

**As a Realtor learning about U-46, how would you describe your experience at this morning's session?**

My children went through U-46, so most info not new to me... :) However, I am interested in joining CAC & ACE

Very positive. One thing I would like to know is how BHS compares to the other local HS

Very helpful

Very positive

The diversity & quality/ Classes & schools

Very Informative

Very helpful as I have a listing in Bartlett

Very educational

informing

Excellent. I believe there is a strong need to keep the agents informed of the school district

Very Informative- well worth coming! I work in the district as well as Bartlett HS

Informative

This was excellent information

Educational & Eye opening!

Very informative

Very informative



# ELGIN HIGH SCHOOL

*Education For All*

Principal Jerry Cook - Associate Principal Alan Flota - Assistant Principal Josefina Melendez

## Nationally Ranked



U.S. News and World Report named Elgin High School among the Best High Schools in the nation for 2014 and granted the school with a bronze award.



## Academic Success

### ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) EXCELLENCE

Elgin High offers **25 AP course options**. During the 2013-2014 school year, more than **240 students** took at least one AP class; **618 AP exams** were taken with **61%** resulting in a 3,4, or 5.

Elgin High students outperformed the national average.

Subject	Elgin High	National Average
Chemistry	3.8	2.92
English Language	3.9	2.77
Statistics	4.2	2.80

### AVID (ADVANCED VIA INDIVIDUAL DETERMINATION)

**196 students** enrolled in the college readiness program; **14** of those were seniors who were all accepted into college.

## Award-Winning

BY THE NUMBERS

**556**

National Career Readiness Certificates

**9**

Platinum

**117**

Gold

**256**

Silver

**174**

Bronze

**53**

National Honor Society Members

**52**

Illinois State Scholars

**9**

Superintendent Scholarship Winners

**2**

Golden Apple Scholars

**2**

National Merit Finalists, 4 Semi-Finalists  
2nd Place in the National Spanish Examinations

**1**

National Merit Scholarship Winner

## Rich History

Elgin High School is one of the oldest public high schools in Illinois – it was established in 1869 and had its first graduating class in 1872.

**Culturally-Diverse**  
2,524 Students



70% Hispanic/Latino    5% Asian  
7% Black

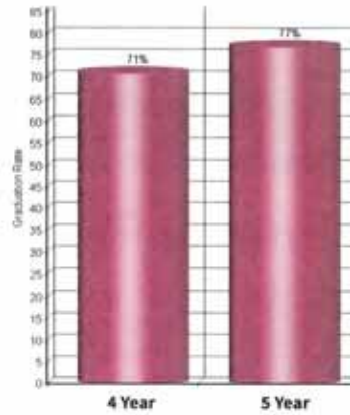
**Scholarships**

Students received  
**\$591,930**  
in Scholarships

**Notable Full-Ride Scholarships include:**

- Stanford University
- University of Chicago
- University of Illinois
- University of Iowa

**College and Career Ready**  
High Graduation Rates



**Student Life**

Students participate in more than 25 sports and 20 activities and clubs.

- Elgin High Clumsy Chefs Restaurant Management Team placed first in the Illinois ProStart Competition; 8 received a total of \$16,000 in scholarships from the Illinois Restaurant Association.
- Elgin High's speech team was awarded an Upstate 8 Championship in Dramatic Duet Acting, and a Championship medal at the Lake Forest Forensics Festival.
- Elgin High's band was awarded Division One ranking by the IHSA and was selected to participate in the Disney World Performing Arts Workshop.
- EHS students received the only 2 HOSA (Health Occupation Students of America) state scholarships given this year and 15 students ranked first in their category at the State Leadership Conference.
- Environmental students secured mayoral declaration for Elgin Water Day in 2013 as well as a governors declaration recognizing September 2014 as Illinois biodiversity month.
- 64 students have taken advantage of international travel opportunities to Barcelona, Paris, China and Costa Rica.

**Gifted and Talented Academy**  
Since 1997

Unique to Elgin High School, the Academy is dedicated to providing an innovative academic environment to challenge the intellectual and creative abilities of students. During the 2013-2014 school year, 167 students benefitted from rigorous coursework, weighted grades in core subjects, AP classes and community involvement.



**Get Involved**

**Join or Contribute to:**

**The Elgin High School Boosters**  
Twitter: @EHS\_Boosters  
Facebook: elginboosters  
Email: ElginHighBoosters@gmail.com  
**The Elgin High School PTO**  
elginpto@yahoo.com

**Parent University:**

Doug Johnson  
dougjohnson@u-46.org  
847-888-5100 X 4857



**Contact Us:**

Elgin High School  
1200 Maroon Drive  
Elgin, IL 60120  
theelginhighschool.com

**Follow Us:**





*2015-16 Lead Principal - Student-led Conferences*  
(Revised 8.25.2015)

The **Citizen's Advisory Council – Family and Community Engagement Committee** presented a report on Student-led Conferences to the elementary principals in April, 2015 and to the Board of Education in June, 2015. This body of work emanates from parent leadership within our own district, is aligned to our U-46 Strategic Plan /Community Engagement Priority #3 and reflects the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders.

Link to report:

[https://docs.google.com/a/u-46.org/document/d/1ELMLaoBy4lNivgKgsK1j\\_Mv4EhNljVzjte8OdSwxMqs/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/a/u-46.org/document/d/1ELMLaoBy4lNivgKgsK1j_Mv4EhNljVzjte8OdSwxMqs/edit?usp=sharing)

In 2015-16, we are looking for elementary principals who have a demonstrated leadership history and commitment to K-6 school-wide student-led conferences to begin the process of responding to the recommendations presented by the CAC to the Board of Education. The 2015-16 Lead Principals/Student-led Conferences will be charged to complete the following tasks:

- 1) Review in detail the report by CAC FACE Committee.
- 2) Arrange to meet with Principal Smiley and/or teacher leaders at Tefft in order to learn about student-led goal-setting at this nationally recognized U-46 school
- 3) Follow the recommendation at the end of the CAC FACE Committee report to develop an on-line toolkit for principals and SIP Teams that reflects the potential for this practice at elementary sites.
  - Be sure to gather information from elementary schools at which we may have individual teachers/grade levels who have implemented this practice.
- 4) Create invitational opportunities for principals and SIP team members to attend school-wide student-led conference events at your schools in 2015-16.
  - Announce these via email and at principal meetings.
  - Consider having teacher and/or student leaders available as guides for visitors to your events.
- 5) Consult 1:1 or in small groups with principals/SIP Teams who would like to explore this practice at their own sites.



6) Meet with Steve/Ushma during the Lead Principal/Student-led Conferences dates indicated on the 2015-16 Elementary Principal Key Meeting Dates calendar.

7) Design and recommend to Steve/Ushma an application process for schools that would like to implement student-led goal-setting in 2016-17 or 2017-18. Assuming the availability of funds, the application would be used to decide how to provide opportunities for additional funding to support this practice at schools that are interested. A rubric should also be included for the purpose of evaluating application.

8) Work with CAC FACE Committee to give an update to the BOE on this work in Spring, 2016.

If you are interested in serving as a Lead Principal/Student-led Conferences, please respond to the application questions below and be prepared to discuss.

A) Does your whole school or, at a minimum, one full grade level from preK - 6 (including teachers from ALL programs at that grade level) currently conduct preK-6 school-wide student-led conferences? **Please note that this is a prerequisite to apply to be a 2015-16 Lead Principal/Student-led Conferences.**

B) Describe the student-led conference practice at your school.

C) Given the charges outlined for **2015-16 Lead Principals/Student-led Conferences**, what strengths will you bring to this role?

This position will be offered a stipend \$2500 for the 2015-2016 school year.