



Legislative Committee
Report
2010-2011

Approved by Legislative Committee: 2011.04.28

Approved by Executive Committee: 2011.04.28

Approved by CAC General: 2011.05.12

Table of Contents

Committee Members	3
Acknowledgements.....	3
Mission Statement.....	3
Use of This Document	4
Committee Goals 2010 – 2011.....	4
State Representative Candidate Forum.....	6
Invitation and preparation material sent to Legislative Candidates.....	6
Forum Attendees	8
Prepared questions for the State Legislative forum.....	9
Board of Ed Forum	11
Invitation and preparation material sent to Board Candidates	11
Forum Attendees	12
Prepared questions for the Board of Ed forum.....	13
Candidate Bios	14
Appendix A: Bibliography and Websites used for reference by the CAC Legislative Committee	17

Committee Members

Pat Broncato	U-46 Liaison	
Thomas Lesiewicz	Lowrie Elementary	Co-Chair
David McFeggan	Streamwood High School	Co-Chair
Kathleen Brown	Kimble Middle School	Secretary
Ed Hayes	Fox Meadow Elementary	
George Fischer	Larkin High School	
Cecelia Diaz	Fox Meadow Elementary	
Daniel Alexander	Larsen Middle School	
Nate Warkel	Glenbrook Elementary	

Acknowledgements

The CAC Legislative Committee would like to thank Mr. Patrick Broncato, Chief Legal Officer, for his time and effort as committee liaison. This is Pat's last year as the liaison for Legislative Committee. He will be leaving U-46 for a new position as the Assistant Superintendent of Personnel and Administrative Services for Woodridge School District 68. We wish him well in all his future endeavors; his hard work and guidance over the years has been invaluable and he will be missed.

In addition, we would like to thank Ms. Kathy Frisbie, Mr. Tony Sanders, Dr. Jose M. Torres, and all others with the school district that made the forums possible.

Mission Statement

Consistent with the mission of the CAC, the Legislative Committee is dedicated to:

- Reviewing State and Federal legislation that affects U-46;
- Acting as a liaison between U-46 and elected officials;
- Educating the public about the impact of legislation on U-46 by conducting candidate forums for Board of Education, State, and Federal elections.

Use of This Document

This Legislative Committee report is intended to provide a summary of this year's Legislative Forums conducted by CAC and also serve as a collection of available resources/information concerning legislative issues that affect u-46.

We have identified various websites and publications that were used in preparation for the forums and those sources can serve as a guide for CAC and the legislative committee in the future. Please see APPENDIX "A" at the end of this report.

Committee Goals 2010 – 2011

1. Conduct two forums: 1) forum for State Legislators and 2) forum for U-46 school board election.

RESULTS: CAC's State Legislative Forum was held on Friday, October 15th at 7:00 p.m. in the South Elgin High School auditorium. The CAC Board of Education forum was held on Thursday, March 10 at 7pm at CAC's monthly general meeting held in the library at Elgin High School. Details about each forum can be found in subsequent sections.

2. Keith Farnham introduced a measure to over-ride Gov. Quinn's veto of SB2499 (a bill that addressed funding inequities for multi-county districts). The Legislative Committee helped raise awareness of the veto override and collected signatures for a petition in support of the veto override.

RESULTS: Many signatures were collected in support of the veto override. On 11/18/2011 the veto override passed both houses of the legislature. On 11/19/2011 SB 2499 became Public Act 096-1480.

3. Contact with area legislators – Identify committee members with existing relationships and assign a committee member to legislators that we need to establish relationships with. The goal will be to understand the legislator's current positions on educational topics relevant to U-46.

RESULTS:

- Invited Senator Michael Noland to attend committee meeting to talk about state legislation. Senator Noland voiced his approval for Rep. Keith Farnham's veto override of Senate Bill 2499 and also wanted support for his funding bill promoting a tax swap. He pushed for a letter from the board that publicly supported his bill.

“What I would like from the (U-46) school board is a letter ... supporting HB174, which is what is necessary to fund (Senate Bill) 2499,” the U-46 funding fix, Noland said.

The “tax swap” bill, which would push the income tax rate for individuals from 3 percent to 5 percent while increasing the property tax credit from 5 percent to 10 percent, passed the Senate in May 2009 but has been stalled in the House for more than a year.

We thanked Sen. Noland for his support and informed him that while we do support HB 174 if it would raise funding for education, the board does not publicly endorse legislation.

- We invited Keith Farnham to address the committee to thank him for his support in overriding Gov. Quinn's veto of SB 2499, addressing funding inequities for multi-county school districts.
4. Update existing spreadsheet that details all Federal and State Legislators contact information that represent U-46 and publish to CAC website.

State Representative Candidate Forum

Invitation and preparation material sent to Legislative Candidates



José M. Torres, Ph.D., Superintendent

School District U-46
Educational Services Center
355 E. Chicago Street, Elgin IL 60120-6543
Tel: 847.888.5000
Fax: 847.888.7030

U-46.org

October 1, 2010

Dear Candidate:

On behalf of the Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) of School District U-46, I would like to thank you for your interest in the Candidates Forum on October 15, 2010, from 7:00-9:00 p.m. at South Elgin High School in the auditorium. South Elgin High School is located at 760 East Main Street.

The event will be moderated as a "Candidate's Forum" meeting so that each candidate will have adequate time to address the audience. Because this is an education-based Forum, the questions asked will involve pre-K-12 education-related issues. Sample questions from the CAC Legislative Committee are attached. Due to time limitations all the enclosed questions may not be asked. The format will be 2 minutes for an introductory comment; 2 minutes per question; 30 minutes for audience questions; and 1 minute for a closing comment.

Please call me or Kathy Frisbie at 847.888.5000, ext. 5305 to let us know whether you will attend. If you have any questions regarding the Forum, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Patrick J. Broncato'.

Patrick J. Broncato
Chief Legal Officer

PJB/kf

Attachment

ISO 9001:2000 Certified Quality Management System

CAC LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
CANDIDATE FORUM

October 15, 2010
7:00—9:00 PM

South Elgin High School
760 East Main Street

Question 1: Last session, legislators had a big push on the issue of “unfunded mandates.” What actually happened to the legislation that was passed, and what impact will it have on school districts?

Question 2: Do you feel that the veto of SB2499 by Governor Quinn (the bill that would have provided U-46 with a corrected General State Aid claim and leveled the playing field in terms of funds brought to School District U-46) was the proper course of action? If not, what would you do to support the bill in Springfield?

Question3: There has been a lot of conversation about accountability in the schools, especially as it has been related to student achievement. What is your view on the accountability of administrators, teachers and other staff toward the academic achievement of students? Do you believe that current laws, such as tenure, have an impact on accountability and if so, what is your position on this?

Question4: The District currently spends over \$30 million toward bilingual education, yet receives only about 10% in State and federal funds to cover the costs of this education. Do you believe that the State should support bilingual education, and if so, would you support fully funding bilingual education? If not, why?

Format for Speaking per Speaker:

Introductory Comment:	2 minutes
Per Question:	2 minutes
Closing Comment:	1 minute

There will then be approximately 30 minutes for audience questions.

Forum Attendees

State Rep. Keith Farnham (D), 43rd District
Challenger Ruth Munson

State Rep. Randy Ramey (R), 55th District
Challenger Gregory Brownfield.

State Sen . Mike Nolan (R), 22nd District
Challenger Steve Rauschenberger

Prepared questions for the State Legislative forum

Questions in blue were mailed to the candidates prior to the forum.

1. What is your reaction to the negative campaign ads that have been circulated recently regarding this race?
2. Question 2 Do you feel that the veto of SB2499 by Governor Quinn (the bill that would have provided U-46 with a corrected General State Aid claim and leveled the playing field in terms of funds brought to School District U-46) was the proper course of action? If not, what would you do to support the bill in Springfield?
3. U-46 has made cuts across the Board in all areas, including staffing and programs. Are you in favor of increasing funding to schools, and if so, why, and also tell us how you would fix it and what would you do to fix it?
4. Why, at a time when constituents are taking pay cuts across the State that lawmakers continue to take pay raises?
5. Are you in favor of reducing spending? And if so, how would you reduce spending and still provide adequate funding for schools?
6. Question 1 Last session, legislators had a big push on the issue of “unfunded mandates.” What actually happened to the legislation that was passed, and what impact will it have on school districts?
7. The State of Illinois has recently purchased more bonds to cover the obligations of the Illinois Teacher Retirement System. If elected, do you feel that there is a need for pension reform, and if so, how would you do it?
8. Do you believe that a “tax holiday” is a good thing for Illinois, when you take into account the lost revenue for the State of Illinois v. the increase in spending?
9. How do you feel about English-only instruction, or would you support bilingual education in Illinois schools?
10. What are you hearing from your constituents regarding the needs of the community and how would you address those needs?
11. Early Childhood Education has been identified as very successful in helping children entering and succeeding in school. Recognizing the need to balance the budget, what is your view of early childhood education and would it be a priority for you if elected?

12. As a candidate for public office, define your role in the process of public education and define the role of the local school board in this process.

13. Question3 There has been a lot of conversation about accountability in the schools, especially as it has been related to student achievement. What is your view on the accountability of administrators, teachers and other staff toward the academic achievement of students? Do you believe that current laws, such as tenure, have an impact on accountability and if so, what is your position on this?

14. What is your opinion on the recently enacted SB315, which requires performance based measures such as student achievement to be part of teacher and principal performance? Do you believe that funds should be allocated for the implementation of this new law, and if so, why?

15. Question4 The District currently spends over \$30 million toward bilingual education, yet receives only about 10% in State and federal funds to cover the costs of this education. Do you believe that the State should support bilingual education, and if so, would you support fully funding bilingual education? If not, why?

Board of Ed Forum

Invitation and preparation material sent to Board Candidates



José M. Torres, Ph.D., Superintendent

School District U-46
Educational Services Center
355 E. Chicago Street, Elgin IL 60120-6543
Tel: 847.888.5000
Fax: 847.888.7030

U-46.org

February 11, 2011

Dear Candidate:

Listed below are the questions for the CAC School Board candidate forum that will be held on March 10, 2011 at Elgin High School Library at 7:00 PM. The questions will be asked of each candidate in a rotating fashion and there may also be audience questions. We are also instituting a new wrinkle. We are asking candidates to submit two questions each for all candidates to answer, and at least two will be selected to be asked by the moderator. The selected questions will be chosen by random by the legislative committee in advance. Please submit your two questions for review by February 16, 2011 to Patrick Broncato at patbroncato@u-46.org. We anticipate the forum to last until 8:45 PM. We also ask that you have a brief 1 minute introduction of yourself prepared, and a 1 minute conclusion. Again, CAC thanks you for your participation, and wishes you the best in the election!!

- #1 What should a student expect from a U-46 education, and how can U-46 meet the needs of all students?
2 minutes

- #2 School District U-46 was proactive in getting SB2499 to pass, which leveled the playing field for funding in U-46. Do you believe the Board of Education should have a role in the legislative process? If so, how large should that role be and what do you believe should be the District's top legislative priority?
1 minute

- #3 What do you think the Board can do to better help the District communicate with its parents?
2 minutes

- #4 What do you think the role of a board member is in guiding the decisions of the District?

ISO 9001:2008 Certified Quality Management System

Forum Attendees

Amy Kerber (incumbent)

Maria Bidelman (incumbent)

Gary Percy (Vice Chair of CAC)

Traci O'Neal Ellis

Jennifer Shroder

Mary Akemann VanSlyck

Prepared questions for the Board of Ed forum

Question 1: What can students expect from a U-46 education and how can U-46 meet the needs of all students?

Question 2: Should U-46 Board of Education (BOE) have role in legislative process? Or role of Board member in guiding the district? (choose one)

Question 3: How do you propose to be fiscally responsible while promoting rigorous and challenging educational environment?

Question 4: Public education system founded on local school control (the school code is voluminous); do we need reform?

Question 5: What role should BOE have in selecting library textbooks and materials?

Question 6: Ideas for identifying and encouraging future board members?

Question 7: How do you define parental involvement and how do you increase it and if parents don't get involved, what do you do?

Question 8: What would you recommend to district safety coordinator (dsc) to reduce behavior issues at high school level?

Question 9: What is one decision that current BOE made that you would handle differently? (none of the challengers wanted to take a crack at criticizing the incumbents)

Question 10: Are we expecting enough from our students and are they being held sufficiently accountable for their own education?

Candidate Bios

Amy Kerber

City: Elgin
Occupation: Part-time Medical Records



Education

- Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Ball State University.
- Master's in Curriculum and Instruction from Concordia University.

Civic Involvement

- Elected to U-46 Board of Education in 2007
- U-46 Citizens' Advisory Council: 2002-2007
- Highland Elementary PTO President: 2003-2005
- Elgin Parent Co-Op Preschool President: 2004
- United Way Safe and Vibrant Neighborhoods Impact Council: 2006-2008



Maria Bidelman

City: Elgin
Occupation: School Social Worker

Education

- Bachelor's degree in Biology from University of Chicago.
- Master's in Social Service Administration from University of Chicago, and MA in Educational Administration from Northern Illinois University.

Civic Involvement

- Elected to U-46 Board of Education in 2007
- Northeast Neighborhood Association

Gary Percy



City: Elgin
Occupation: Aircraft Maintenance Technician and Crew Chief – American Airlines

Education

- U.S. Navy Tech School and University of the District of Columbia for Aviation Maintenance Technology.

Civic Involvement

- U-46 Citizens' Advisory Council since 2004/2005
- Currently CAC Vice-Chair and co-Chair of the Enrollment and Facilities Committee
- Past Chair and Vice-Chair of Legislative Committee
- Served for five years on former Congresswoman Melissa Bean's NCLB/Education Advisory Committee



Traci O'Neal Ellis

City: Elgin
Occupation: Attorney and Business Owner

Education

- Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Florida A&M University.
- Juris Doctorate, The Ohio State University, College of Law.

Civic Involvement

- Graduate, Elgin Leadership Academy
- Past member, United Way Allocation Panel
- Past member, Community Crisis Center of Elgin Board of Directors
- Past member, Hannah's Hope Board of Directors
- Past member, Riverwoods Christian Center Board of Directors
- Active member of Second Baptist Church of Elgin

Jennifer Shroder

City: Elgin
Occupation: Freelance copy editor/layout editor, substitute teacher



Education

- Bachelor of Arts, English, University of Illinois, Chicago.

Civic Involvement

- President of Ellis Middle PTE, member GPA, and ECN newsletter publisher - current
- Larsen Middle PTO – past treasurer
- Channing Elementary PTO – past president and secretary
- Girl Scout leader
- Elgin Community Network board
- Bethlehem Lutheran board
- BLC Child Development Center board
- U-46 Citizens' Advisory Council
- U-46 Bilingual Task Force



Mary Akemann VanSlyck

City: Elgin
Occupation: Career Specialist, Bartlett High School – 10 years

Education

- Presently finishing a BS thru Northern Illinois University.
- Attended University of Wisconsin Madison a long time ago for 3 years.

Civic Involvement

- Larkin Center – 12 years on board and 2 as president
- U-46 Citizens' Advisory Council – 10 years
- Elgin Community College Alliance for College Readiness – 4 years with 2 as co-chair of Allied Health Committee
- Long time adult Sunday school teacher
- Boy and Girl scout leader

Appendix A: Bibliography and Websites used for reference by the CAC Legislative Committee

1. The Aspen Institute, The Commission on NCLB: Beyond NCLB, ©2009
<http://www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/no-child-left-behind/beyond-nclb>
3. Crystal Apple: Education Insiders Predictions for NCLB's Reauthorization, ©2007
<http://www.edexcellence.net/publications-issues/publications/crystalapple.html>
4. The Fordham Report 2006: How Well Are States Educating Our Neediest Children?
<http://www.edexcellence.net/publications-issues/publications/fordhamreport2006.html>
5. House Committee on Education and Labor
<http://edworkforce.house.gov>
6. Special Ed Advocacy Center
www.specialedadvocacycenter.org
7. Information about special education law, education law, and advocacy for children with disabilities
www.wrightslaw.com
8. NCLB Act of 2001 **and** the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004
http://www.isbe.state.il.us/nclb/pdfs/nclb_idea.pdf
9. Various U.S. Department of Education publications:
 - Building on Results: A Blueprint for Strengthening the No Child Left Behind Act, ©2007
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/nclb/buildingonresults.pdf>
 - NCLB: A Parent's Guide, ©2003
<http://www2.ed.gov/parents/academic/involve/nclbguide/parentsguide.html>
 - IDEA: A Guide to Frequently Asked Questions, ©2005
http://www.doe.in.gov/exceptional/speced/docs/idea_faq.pdf
 - NCLB: Desktop Reference, ©2002
<http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/nclbreferenc/reference.pdf>
 - No Child Left Behind Act 2001, Public Law 107-110
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/107-110.pdf>
10. National Center for Education Statistics The Condition of Education, ©2006
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2006071>

The Nation's Report Card: 12th Grade Reading and Mathematics 2005, ©2007
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2007468>
11. Legislative information from the Library of Congress
<http://thomas.loc.gov>
12. The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act ©2004
<http://idea.ed.gov/>

13. US Department of Education, 26th Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals, with Disabilities Act, 2004 Vol. 1 and Vol. 2

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/osep/2004/index.html>

14. Federal Register, Department of Ed. Code of Federal Regulations Parts 300 and 301 Aug. 2006

<http://idea.ed.gov/download/finalregulations.pdf>

13. National Education Association & National, Association of State Directors of Special Education, IDEA NCLB The Intersection of Access and Outcomes, ©2004

http://www.nasdse.org/Portals/0/Documents/3_IDEANCLBIntersections%20final%202004.pdf

14. Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, Tough Choices Tough Times Executive Summary, ©2007

http://www.skillscommission.org/?page_id=283

Miscellaneous Reference Websites

1. Education Week online edition: www.edweek.org

2. Interactive Illinois Report Card maintained by NIU: <http://iirc.niu.edu/>

3. Education Advocacy Organization, <http://www2.edtrust.org/edtrust>

4. Official Website for Everyday Math: <http://everydaymath.uchicago.edu>

5. Education Commission of the States: <http://www.ecs.org>

6. The Education Sector: <http://www.educationsector.org>

7. Dept. of Ed. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: <http://idea.ed.gov>

8. Illinois Association of School Administrators: <http://www.iasaedu.org>

9. Illinois Council of School Attorneys: <http://www.iasb.com/lawdir>

10. Illinois General Assembly: <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation>

11. Illinois Association of School Boards: www.iasb.com

12. Illinois State Board of Education: <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/>