

Press Clippings 09/06/2019

---Daily Herald---09/06/2019

U-46 eighth-graders to explore career pathways at Sept. 11 expo

By: Madhu Krishnamurthy



Elgin Area School District U-46 will showcase its curriculum and career pathways during the district's fifth annual career expo on Sept. 11 at the Sears Centre Arena in Hoffman Estates. The event was held there for the first time last year. More than 3,000 eighth-graders will attend the expo this year.

More than 3,000 Elgin Area School District U-46 eighth-graders will learn about academic pathways they can pursue during the district's annual curriculum and career expo Sept. 11.

Now in its fifth year, Explore 2019 is aimed at helping students plan for high school, college and future careers with guidance from teachers, counselors and local professionals representing more than 90 companies and organizations.

The Alignment Collaborative for Education is partnering with U-46 to organize the event, which will run 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Sears Centre, 5333 Prairie Stone Parkway, Hoffman Estates. Parents and guardians can attend a special preview from 6 to 8 p.m. on Sept. 10 at the Centre. Children can attend the preview night with their parents.

"I'm excited that this year we can offer parents a chance to experience our expo as well and to meet some of the inspiring professionals who are volunteering to talk with students and explain how their education and career path led them to their current roles," U-46 CEO Tony Sanders said.

At both the expo and parent preview night, U-46 employees will be present to explain core classes, electives and popular course sequences based on students' career interests. Among the career pathways offered are courses in automotive, welding, health care science and manufacturing.

District officials are developing additional career pathways to be unveiled next school year to seventh-graders. Those programs won't be available for enrollment until the

2021-22 school year, said Lela Majstorovic, assistant superintendent of secondary schools, instruction and equity.

"The full gamut of our actual pathways plans will be there next year," Majstorovic said.

Expo exhibitors include businesses, hospitals, local governmental organizations, industry partners, universities and nonprofits representing about a dozen career clusters.

Representatives from the district's five high school magnet academies, which require an application process, also will be present.

District officials are seeking certification for the academies from Magnet Schools of America. The application window for magnet academies is Sept. 9 through Oct. 16. High schools will host open houses for the academies the week of Sept. 16.

The Citizens' Advisory Council helped launch U-46's first expo. The Alignment Collaborative for Education, an Elgin-based nonprofit that brings together community resources and initiatives to support district priorities, has helped expand the expo the past four years.

The event was moved to the Sears Centre last year to accommodate growing exhibitor demonstrations and equipment, and eighth-graders from all eight U-46 middle schools. U-46 buses will transport students to the event.

"We are thrilled to see so many local businesses invest in our future workforce," said Nancy Coleman, ACE executive director.

Ahead of the expo, school counselors will visit eighth-grade classrooms to help students use Naviance, a web-based college and career readiness platform, to determine the career cluster they want to focus on at the event.