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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **U-46 Parents, Teachers, Students Urged to Participate in 5Essentials Survey**

*Responses taken through Feb. 14*

**ELGIN** - School District U-46 is participating in a statewide, research-based survey of school climate and learning conditions that provides a unique opportunity for students, teachers, and parents to have a voice in improving their schools.

Called the 5Essentials Survey, K-12 teachers and students in 6th through 12th grades take the survey during the school day. The version open to parents takes about 15 minutes to complete, is available in Spanish and English, and they can access it via their desktop, laptop, tablet, or mobile phone. The survey is open for just over one more week, through Feb. 14.

"We strongly encourage participation in the 5Essentials Survey because we know it helps administrators to identify a school's strengths and areas that can be improved," said U-46 CEO Tony Sanders. "It can help our schools better target resources, new initiatives and interventions."

U-46 has participated in the 5Essentials Survey every year since the 2014-15 school year. All school leaders receive a custom report based on surveys taken by their teachers and students. In 2018, eight of U-46's schools were found to be "well organized" for school improvement — meaning they are ready to do great work. That number increased to 11 schools in 2019.

There has also been an increase in parent participation. A 20 percent parent participation rate is required to generate a parental supplemental report. In 2018, 52 schools provided enough survey data to receive a report; in 2019 that number increased to 56 of 58 schools.



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So far in 2020, 35 of the District's 58 schools have met the threshold to generate the parent report, which provides important, actionable data for those schools.

For instance, the "Sidewalk Heroes" campaign with the City of Elgin was inspired by a desire to improve the "supportive environment" at Washington Elementary School by making it safer for students who walk to school during winter weather. Sidewalk Heroes encourages those who are able to keep sidewalks clear of ice and snow in their neighborhoods.

Similarly, at Ronald D. O'Neal Elementary School, 5Essentials feedback led to the school staff visiting homes of all O'Neal students a week before the first day of school to greet families and distribute door hangers with important school event dates. This resulted in an increase in registration before the beginning of the school year.

The Illinois 5Essentials Survey provides a comprehensive picture of a school's organizational culture in an individualized report measuring five "essentials" critical for school success:

- Effective Leaders
- Collaborative Teachers
- Involved Families
- Supportive Environment
- Ambitious Instruction

Twenty years of research at the University of Chicago in more than 400 schools has shown that schools that were strong on at least three of the 5Essentials were 10 times more likely to make substantial gains in improving student reading and math than schools that were weak on three or more of the Essentials. Those differences remained true even after controlling for student and school characteristics, including poverty, race, gender, and neighborhood characteristics. Strength on components within the Essentials also correlated with increased teacher retention, student attendance, college enrollment, and high school graduation.



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Families who want to see how many parents have participated in the survey so far at their school can visit [this page](#). Parents who want to see the results of the 2019 survey can find it on their school's Illinois Report Card on the school's website, usually located under Our School/About Us. State report cards for individual schools can also be found at [www.illinoisreportcard.com](http://www.illinoisreportcard.com).

Principals and superintendents will receive their latest 5Essentials reports in April 2020. Survey results will also be reported publicly on the 5Essentials reporting site in spring 2020 and on the State School Report Card website in Fall 2020.

For more information visit: [www.5-essentials.org/illinois](http://www.5-essentials.org/illinois).

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*School District U-46 serves families in 11 communities: Bartlett, Elgin, Hanover Park, South Elgin, Streamwood and Wayne, as well as portions of Carol Stream, Hoffman Estates, St. Charles, Schaumburg, and West Chicago. In total, the District encompasses 90 square miles within the Fox River Valley, approximately 45 minutes west of downtown Chicago, and includes communities within Cook, DuPage and Kane counties. More than 38,000 pre-K through 12th graders attend the 57 District schools and programs. To learn more, visit the U-46 [website](#), or like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#).*