

**Elgin Area League of Women Voters
Observer Report**

MEETING: School Board – Elgin U-46

DATE: June 22, 2009

League Member Observer : Laurel Bault

Elected Officials Absent: none

Was press in attendance? Yes No

Press leaves early to meet deadlines.

Did the press cover the significant issues? Yes No ***

Press covered the Superintendent contract extension only. The District Improvement Plan enhancements are key to community support, yet the press didn't cover. Please see <http://www.u-46.org/> for more on these important changes.

SUMMARY OF MEETING and CRITICAL ISSUES

New Canton Middle School Principal introduced.

Revenue – John Prince reported that cash reserves are soon to be an issue without a state budget crisis resolution.

Citizens Advisory Reports – Family and Community Involvement Report was given. Much of the same information that has been given for years. The observer is hopeful that the new Family and Community Engagement pillar in the District Improvement Plan will indeed have action steps and measurable goals for this critical pillar. All the CAC reports can be found at www.u46cac.org.

District Improvement Plan Report by Dr. Torres – The District Improvement Plan has been sharpened into 5 pillars from six – each with more specific and measurable goals. Again, can be found at <http://www.u-46.org/>. The new pillars are:

- 1. Teaching, Learning, Leadership**
- 2. Recognition and Interventions**
- 3. Operational Excellence**
- 4. Accountability**
- 5. Family and Community Engagement**

Concerns: In 2006, all 40 elementary schools made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), in 07, 39 of the same schools and in 2008, only 19. Note though, that the state of Illinois failed to replace the IMAGE test (second language learner test) with an accepted testing device – and this forced all second language learners to take the ISAT test instead.

New actions that will be taken in 09/10 include reorganizing administration to better serve schools by removing middle layers, new staffing standards at elementary school (lowering class size), realigning resources to create teacher-leader positions, many middle school enhancements and further study of dual language program to consider full implementation across the district.

COMMENTS/NOTES:

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Continue awareness of budget shortfalls.

NEXT MEETING: July 20, 2009

Observer: Please fill out and e-mail to Laurel Bault at laurelbault@yahoo.com after each meeting observed.

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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Membership in the League is open to men and women of all ages. Join us in making democracy work!