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# School District U-46

## Freshman Seminar Curriculum and Resource Proposal for Implementation in the 2027-2028 School Year

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# Our Purpose

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This proposal recommends the adoption of an updated Freshman Seminar curriculum, including aligned rubrics and assessments. It also proposes expanding the course into a full-year elective for ninth-grade students.

# Alignment to Strategic Plan

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# Rationale

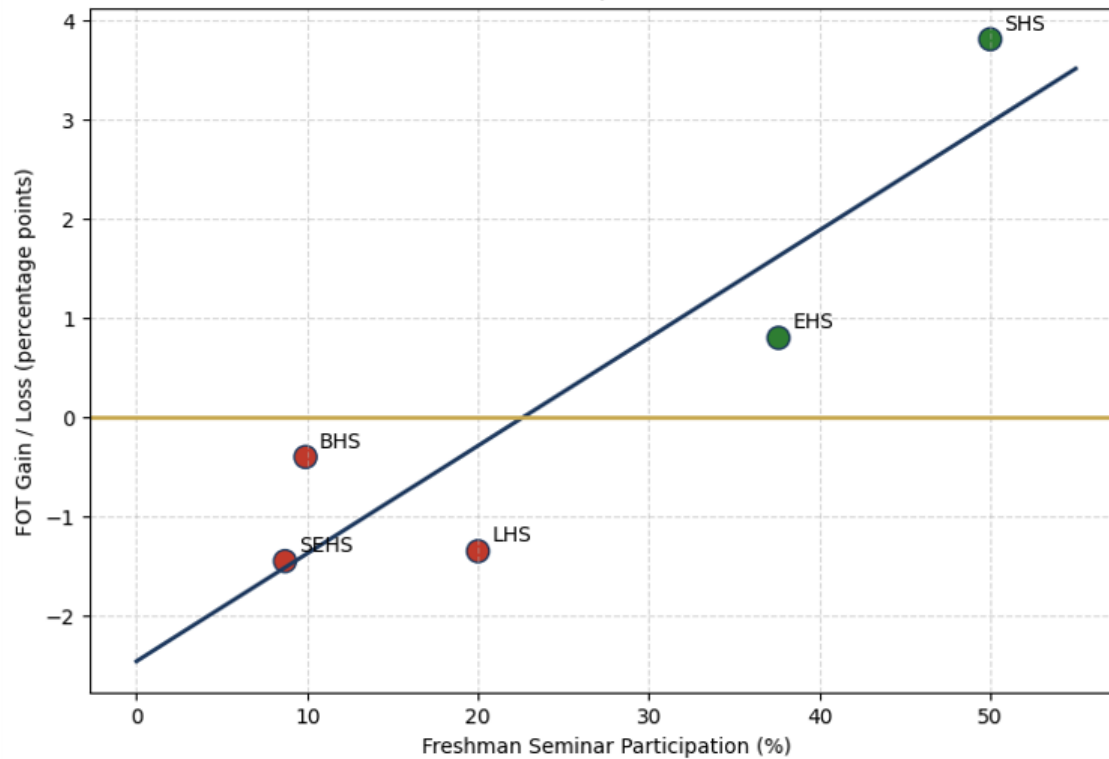
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Early data demonstrates that School District U-46 high schools with multiple sections of the one-semester Freshman Seminar have higher mid-year Freshman on Track rates. We believe this is due in part to the strong enrollment of students in the one-semester Freshman Seminar Course.

<u>School</u>	<u>Percentage taking Freshman Seminar</u>	<u>Number of Sections Fall 2025</u>	<u>2024–2025 Sem 1 FOT</u>	<u>2025–2026 Sem 1 FOT</u>	<u>Gain / Loss</u>
Bartlett High School	9.9%	3	96.34%	95.94%	-0.40 pp
Elgin High School	37.6%	9	92.37%	93.17%	+0.80 pp
Larkin High School	20%	6	88.93%	87.58%	-1.35 pp
South Elgin High School	8.7%	3	96.05%	94.60%	-1.45 pp
Streamwood High School	50%	10	91.74%	95.55%	+3.81 pp
ALL U-4			93.37	93.48%	+0.11 pp

# Rationale

Freshman Seminar Participation vs. FOT Outcomes  
Semester 1, 2025-2026



Interpretation: Higher Freshman Seminar participation is associated with improved FOT outcomes. Schools with greater access show stronger gains.

# Rationale

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- Positive student outcomes resulting from participation in one-semester Freshman Seminar course.
- Poor cohesion between Freshman Seminar and Semester 2 AVID and creates gaps in student experience.
- Existing course sequencing between Semester 1 Freshman Seminar and Semester 2 AVID 1 lacks alignment, limiting the ability to build to sustain academic behaviors and refine academic skills.
- The pairing of Freshman Seminar with Semester 2 AVID serves as a barrier to student enrollment in many schools.
- A year-long course ensures coherence, consistency, and sustained support.
- Year-long course expands focus on culture, academic readiness, career exploration and goal tracking to improve Freshman on Track outcomes.

# Committee Members

Jacqueline Batz	Bartlett High School
Cassandra Malhosky	Larkin High School
Nelly Gonzalez Munoz	Larkin High School
Kimberly Shead	South Elgin High School
Trena Smith	Streamwood High School
Gabrielle Tozier	Elgin High School
Tammy Reicha	Instructional Coach, Post-Secondary Success

# Process Timeline

<b>Fall 2025</b>	New one-semester Freshman Seminar curriculum offered in all five comprehensive high schools and Central School Programs. Students enrolled in cohort sections of semester 2 AVID 1
<b>January 2026</b>	Current teachers shared feedback on one-semester course.
<b>January - February 2026</b>	Curriculum committee met to analyze feedback, revise summative assessments and develop curriculum for year-long course. Organization and SEL standards added.  Character Strong curriculum explored for course use
<b>Fall 2027</b>	Proposed year-long Freshman Seminar class offered at all high schools. Course is no longer aligned to AVID elective.

# Program Overview

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## **UNITS OF STUDY**

- ❖ Goal-setting and Monitoring
- ❖ Critical Reading Strategies
- ❖ Organization of Time, Materials and Information
- ❖ Career Exploration
- ❖ Social-Emotional Learning: Self-awareness, conflict resolution, community building

# Standards

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**The proposed curriculum for Freshman Seminar was developed using these standards:**

[The New Illinois Learning Standards for English Language Arts  
Incorporating the Common Core ILLINOIS SOCIAL SCIENCE STANDARDS](#)

[Illinois Social and Emotional Learning Standards](#)

[American School Counselor Association Student Standards: Mindsets &  
Behaviors for Student Success](#)

# Recommended Resources

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## **SchoolLinks**

- U-46 has a license for this resource.
- Freshman Seminar is using this resource for career development.

## **Character Strong, Grade 9**

- Curriculum is aligned to the Character Strong Grades 6-8 currently used in Middle School Advisory.
- License for grade 9: \$22,793.40.

# Professional Learning

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Spring 2027: Freshman Seminar teachers will have access to review and analyze new curriculum standards and common summative assessments.

2026-2027 School Year: Quarterly meetings for grade-level teams to calibrate, collaboratively plan and share feedback. Teachers will be provided substitutes to meet during the school day.

# Cost

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## **Character Strong, Grade 9**

License and teacher training for grade 9: \$22,793.40

Freshman Seminar is using this for Social Emotional learning.

Curriculum aligned to Character Strong Grades 6-8 currently used in Middle School Advisory.

# Plans for the Evaluation of Change

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The Post-Secondary Success Department and Assistant Principals of Freshman Success will review Freshman Seminar common assessment data and Freshmen on Track data to make shifts in professional learning, support resource utilization, and align with the U-46 Strategic Plan.

Formative and summative assessments will be used to collect data on:

- Alignment with standardized test achievement scores
- Resource usage
- Teacher collaborative time support



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