

Urbana School District #116 Board of Education Synopsis
October 2, 2007

The Urbana School District #116 Board of Education was called to order by Mark Netter at 7:32 p.m. All board members were present. The agenda was approved and there were no public comments.

Director of Staff Development Kathy Barbour reviewed the staff development summer activities and participation along with staff development workshops for the fall. Barbour highlighted the success of the teacher mentoring program, noting that when it started in the fall of 2004 there were 12 mentors for 17 new teachers. This year 30 mentors are helping 40 new teachers.

The board then received on first reading of a new board policy regarding background checks for volunteers in schools. Under the new policy all volunteers working with children more than three times in a school year must be finger-printed and must pass a criminal background check. This policy does not apply to adults visiting the school. It only applies to adults who work with children. Currently it costs \$54 to perform a background check. There is currently a backlog of volunteers waiting for their background checks to come through and gain clearance to begin volunteering. Administrators asked the board to think about having non-parents, grandparents, and retired teachers who are looking to volunteer to assume some of the cost. The board had several questions about the program, its cost, privacy issues, and the option of purchasing equipment and conducting background checks in-district (currently District 116 partners with Champaign Unit 4). The board will formally vote on this policy at its October 16 meeting.

Board members then approved the consent agenda that included an approval to submit application for Recognition of Schools with the State Board of Education, personnel items, Approval of New Board Policy 6.495 regarding Admission of Child Sex Offenders onto School Property to School Related Activities and Extracurricular Events, and a proclamation for "Walk to School Day."

Dr. David Adcock, Director of Urbana Adult Education, then gave a presentation to the board about the Truants Alternative and Optional Education Program. Each year the federal government grants UAE money to fund outreach workers to work with students, families, and the community to make sure students attend school. The outreach workers also work with students and families regarding behavior and academic issues. The grant began in 1986 and has remained flat while the workload has gone up. Members of the board had several questions for Adcock and outreach workers in attendance about the program and the uncertainty of waiting each year to see if the grant money comes through. Board members also expressed gratitude to the outreach workers for their hard work and for their patience in being RIFed each spring until the grant money comes back. For more information about the Truants Alternative and Optional Education Program, please contact Dr. Adcock at Urbana Adult Education.

The Board of Education then heard from Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Don Owen about the 2007 AYP results for District 116. Owen told the board that all elementary schools made AYP this year while the middle and high school didn't make it. Owen explained the different subgroups, statistical data, and how the federal government uses this data as a part of the No Child Left Behind Act. There were 56 hurdles for District 116 to clear this year in order for all schools to meet AYP. The Urbana School District made 49 out of 56 hurdles. For more information about AYP, please contact Mr. Owen.

Dr. Preston Williams told the board that it is time to revive the Comprehensive Land Use Committee for the Secondary Campus, and asked for volunteers from the board to serve. John Dimit and Brenda Carter agreed to serve on the newly revived committee.

The board adjourned at 9:55 p.m. The next meeting of the Urbana School District #116 Board of Education will be Tuesday, October 16, 2007, at 7:30 p.m., at 205 N. Race Street in Urbana.