

**Urbana School District #116 Board of Education Meeting Synopsis
February 5, 2008**

The Urbana School District #116 Board of Education meeting was called to order by Board President Mark Netter at 7:32 p.m. The agenda was approved and there were no citizen comments.

Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Gayle Jeffries recognized the district's National Board Certified Teachers. Marcy Vancil, Jill Shoda, Alexis Jones, Susan Gleason, Nancy Fehr, Judith Pece, Carol Casbeer, Mark Freedman, Judy Powell, Evelyn Walton, Jeanne Ward, Phyllis Peete, Julie Erlinger, Glenna Rogers, Paula Rogers, Beth Mears, and Frank Modica were all presented with a plaque that will be displayed outside of their classrooms. Each District 116 school will also receive a plaque and the names of the National Board Certified Teachers will be engraved on the plaque. Jeffries also announced that the winners of the Gene Amberg Award will have their names affixed to a plaque that will be on display at the District 116 Central Office as well as in their school and by their classrooms.

The board then heard a presentation from John Morrow, Director of Instructional Technology, who briefed the board members on the past, present, and future of technology in the school district. Morrow told the board that the technology department has a grand dream for the future. He quoted Kathy Barbour from a previous technology meeting saying, "We dream big because our students deserve it." Morrow said the vision for district technology is to be innovators, and to teach students to use cutting edge technology so they can be successful in the world.

Several teachers (early childhood through high school) demonstrated how they use technology in the classroom to help their students learn. After the presentation Assistant Superintendent Don Owen said that the technology in the classroom isn't some attention-getter, it is a "best practice learning tool."

Morrow said the challenges facing the technology department at this time are accessing new technologies, training workers and certified staff on those technologies, and providing ongoing support in schools. The barriers facing the district technology improvements, Morrow said, are quality of service, poor bandwidth, old equipment, and a small support staff.

Morrow expressed his thanks to the board for helping find the funds to upgrade technology for the school district. He said he'd like to spend \$323,000 per year in upgrading staff workstations on a rotating basis, and \$411,000 per year in upgrading student technology on a rotating basis; however he realizes he's "dreaming big." Morrow asked the board to help the district's technology staff by developing revenue resources, advocating for resources, providing a guiding vision, and providing a financial commitment to district technology. Several board members expressed their gratitude to the district's technology staff and acknowledged the importance of technology. Superintendent Williams said it's time for the board to "bite the bullet" and earmark money to essential district technology.

The board then approved as a consent agenda the fingerprinting proposal, the revised 2008-09 school calendar, and the Title I district improvement plan. The board voted to release the September 4, 2007 executive session minutes, but voted to keep remaining executive session minutes confidential.

During the superintendent's report, Dr. Williams reported that the Girls Basketball team won the Big 12 conference title, the UHS Alumni Association's "Cash Bash" will be on February 16, District 116 is holding its Cultural Festival February 22, and the All-District Music Program is February 11. Williams also announced that Jim Graham, former District 116 teacher, coach, and athletic director passed away. Arrangements are pending.

The Board of Education adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

The next meeting of the Urbana School District #116 Board of Education will be Tuesday, February 19, 2008, at 205 N. Race Street, Urbana.