

**MINUTES
STUDY SESSION
URBANA BOARD OF EDUCATION
JEAN F. BURKHOLDER
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE CENTER
March 4, 2008
7:30 P.M.**

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

President Netter call the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

2.0 ROLL CALL

Present: Mark Netter, President
John Dimit, Vice-President
Ruth Ann Fisher, Secretary
Benita Rollins-Gay, Secretary Pro Tem
Brenda Carter, Member
Cope Cumpston, Member
Steve Summers, Member

Others Present: Preston L. Williams, Jr., Superintendent
Don Owen, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum/Instruction
Gayle Jeffries, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources
Susan Baker-Ory, Assistant Superintendent of Special Services
Carol Baker, Director of Business
Ota Dossett, Director of Grounds and Facilities

3.0 ADDITIONS, CORRECTIONS AND MODIFICATION OF AGENDA

4.0 CITIZENS STATEMENTS

Leal Elementary 4th Grade Teacher Yvonne Vitosky spoke to the board in support of the professional development program in place by District 116.

5.0 CALL FOR EXECUTIVE MEETING/SESSION (After Current Meeting)

6.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Member Cumpston moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Vice-President Dimit. Motion passed.

7.0 ADMINISTRATIVE BRIEFINGS AND REPORTS

8.0 POLICY REVIEW

9.0 PUBLIC HEARING

10.0 ACTION ITEMS (Consent)

Vice-President Dimit moved to approve the following consent action item, seconded by Member Summers. On a roll call vote, all members present voted “aye”. Motion passed.

10.01 Personnel Item(s)

Approval for various personnel items were requested.

11.0 STUDY TOPIC(S)

11.01 Center for Education in Small Urban Communities Presentation

Director, Dr. Julia Johnson, gave the Board of Education a presentation about how to we can work together in the area of education.

According to its website, “Established in the spring of 2007, the Center for Education in Small Urban Communities is a research, teaching, and outreach unit within the College of Education. It focuses on enhancing teaching and learning, houses a number of the College’s professional development activities, and serves as a liaison for school-university partnerships. The Center’s entire staff work daily to play an active role in fulfilling UIUC’s improved, strategic service directions and to guide the establishment of an ongoing, research-based professional development partnership.” The center has been partnering with District 116 to provide professional development opportunities for Urbana School District teachers. Representatives from the Center expressed thanks to the school board and school district for a fruitful partnership. Superintendent Dr. Preston Williams remarked that the Center for Education in Small and Urban Communities has been a success story and indicated that he would recommend that the school board support the center through funding. “I think it’s the right way to go,” Williams said.

11.02 Staff Development/Curriculum & Instruction Initiatives

Jean Korder, Director of Curriculum/Instruction and Kathy Barbour, Director of Staff Development, facilitated discussion about the current and future staff development and curriculum and instruction initiatives.

The school district has built time into the school day, after school, and in the summer for teachers to collaborate on professional development and curriculum issues. Kathy, told the school board that the goal of professional development will help provide teachers with a common body of knowledge and time for professional discussion about student learning and planning for change. Jean presented data that shows that student achievement has shown measurable gains since this form of professional development has been instituted. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Don Owen submitted a memo formally asking that the

board extend the secondary early-out Wednesdays and full-day elementary in-service dates through the 2010-2011 school year. The Superintendent remarked that “some of the success we’ve had at the elementary and middle school levels (in a short amount of time) is unbelievable.” Board Member Dimit admitted that while he was skeptical of the in-service proposal in the past, he announced that he will be happy to support the administration recommendation after seeing the number of staff absences during this time.

12.0 CALL FOR FUTURE SPECIAL/EXECUTIVE MEETINGS

13.0 SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Public Relations Specialist Mark Schultz updated the board on some of the school district activities taking place. He told the board the online newsletter for April has been published (<http://www.usd116.org/enews/0803pages/0803index2.html>) and alerted the board of the highlights of the issue. He also briefed the board on the March 8, 2008, “Read Across America Day” event at Lincoln Square Village (<http://www.usd116.org/news/newsfolder/readam08.html>). Mr. Schultz also announced that several UHS students participated in a recent IHSA Solo and Ensemble contest and scored very well. This month is also “Music in Schools Month” and he said there will be many special concerts and activities to promote the arts in schools in March. Members Dimit and Netter both praised the District 116 music programs.

14.0 ADJOURNMENT

Secretary Fisher moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Member Rollins-Gay. Motion passed.

President Netter declared the meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

President

Secretary