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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date: 21 November 2014

URBANA HIGH SCHOOL CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

Urbana – The students and staff of Urbana High School will celebrate 100 years of excellence on Monday, November 24, 2014. That day in 1914, marks the first day of student attendance in the historic Race Street building.

The celebration is part of a year-long campaign that includes the In Good Standing student designation supported by O'Brien Auto Park, and will include cake on Monday for all students and staff courtesy of Ararmark Foods. Starting at 6:00pm, there will be a short informational meeting with UHS building tours open to the public from 6:15pm to 7:30pm. The meeting and tours will be led by UHS Principal Matt Stark and USD #116 Superintendent Don Owen and will give a historical background for the building, as well as a look at it's current use.

Brief Early History of Urbana High School:

The high school was conceived by famed architect, and Urbana graduate, Joseph Royer and built upon land donated by former Congressman from Illinois (both House and Senate), W.B. McKinley. The tudor styled building began construction in October of 1913 (cornerstone laid) with the promise of a fall 1914 opening. The actual opening of the school was pushed back by numerous events, including construction delays. When school started in the fall of 1914, students continued to attend Thornburn High School until the current building was opened on November 24. Additions and major renovations were made to the school and surrounding complex in 1916, 1955, 1965, 1977, 1986, and 2011-12, including Cobb Memorial Auditorium and McKinley Field Athletic Complex.

A quote taken from the October 26, 1914 News-Gazette, "In 1914: Unless something unforeseen occurs the new high school for Urbana will be ready for occupancy by next Monday. The school represents an investment of about \$160,000 and has been backed by taxpayers to the limit. It is on five acres, half of which was donated by former Congressman W.B. McKinley for athletic purposes.

The building has been constructed so that it can be doubled at any time by building to the east. Hundreds of people called on the building yesterday, but were disappointed to find it locked.” (<http://www.news-gazette.com/news/local/2014-10-26/area-history-oct-26-2014.html>)

The building is currently home to approximately 1,200 students, faculty, and staff. Facilities include academic space incorporating the latest technology and old-school learning tools, world class athletics fields, a school-based health clinic, historical auditorium used for school and community theatre and musical performances, and diverse, extra-curricular spaces used by USD #116’s award-winning students.

Urbana School District #116 is a unit district located in east central Illinois. Our outstanding schools in an outstanding community comprise of an early childhood school, six neighborhood elementary schools, a middle school, a high school, and an adult education center. To discover more about our award winning schools and students, please visit www.usd116.org. You can find us on Facebook at Urbana School District #116 or follow us on Twitter: @Urbana116.

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Outstanding schools in an outstanding community!

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