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98-18

January 22, 1998

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

PURCHASES, LABOR AGREEMENT LEAD EIU BOT AGENDA

CHARLESTON -- Eastern Illinois University trustees will meet in regular session next week to consider several items, including replacing windows in two campus buildings, approving a labor agreement with university facilities planning and management workers and approving the university's Constitutional Plan.

The meeting is scheduled for Monday, Jan. 26, beginning at 8:30 a.m. in the University Ballroom of the Martin Luther King Jr. University Union.

Windows in Lincoln and Douglas halls need to be replaced and associated repairs made at a cost of \$346,375. Eastern staff are recommending the selection of a Jerseyville construction firm who submitted the lowest qualified bid.

The labor agreement calls for a 3 percent wage increase effective July 1, 1997, and an additional 3 percent increase effective Nov. 6, 1997 (the date the contract was ratified) for members of the International Union of Operating Engineers Local #399. The increases address equity issues for the employees. The cost to the university is nearly offset by new contract language that reduces overtime, for an estimated savings of \$15,000 per year. Other contract

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changes give the university more flexibility in staffing operations and provide for wage increases the next two years to be tied to state salary appropriations.

The Constitutional Plan outlines the university's mission and goals in several areas, including academic achievement, resources and personnel. The final plan requires board approval. The plan has been circulated and is supported by campus constituencies.

The board also will act to formally bring the board regulations in compliance with new state mandates in the areas of tuition waivers and sick leave accrual.

The changes include expanding the 50 percent tuition waiver provision from being used at the former Board of Governors Universities to all Illinois public universities. The children of university employees who have been employed for at least seven years at a public university are eligible for the waivers. The other change ends the option of providing cash payouts for sick leave days accrued after Jan. 1, 1998, for employees terminating their service.

In other business, the board will discuss the upcoming presidential search process, which is expected to take several months to complete. President David Jorns has indicated his desire to retire from Eastern in 1999.