

# Neblock assaults board member

## Board president grabs Strommer by throat during argument



**Bill  
Neblock**

**By SCOTT WILLIAMS**

Rockford Register Star

ROCKFORD — School Board President Bill Neblock grabbed board member David Strommer by the throat Friday during a heated discussion about school desegregation spending.

The incident occurred shortly before 10 a.m. as board members gathered at the school district's law firm, Hinshaw & Culbertson, for a special meeting on the con-

tinuing court battle over desegregation.

Outside the building at 100 Park Ave., Neblock and Strommer got into a loud discussion about whether summer school must be funded with desegregation funds. As the argument escalated, an angry Neblock, 46, reached up and grabbed Strommer, 54, around the neck. Strommer struggled but did not strike back.

Board member Ted Biondo stepped in and separated the two, while Strommer shouted for Neblock to resign. The group dispersed after realizing a Rockford Register Star reporter was watching from just a few feet away.

Other board members said they also witnessed the altercation.

"It was shocking," board member Carol Bell said.

Neblock initially refused to dis-

cuss the incident, but he called a news conference at his Jamestown Drive home Friday night and blamed the outburst on the pressure of school board service.

Since he took over as board president two weeks ago, he said, board members have kept an exhaustive schedule and worked tirelessly to confront many difficult issues.

"For two weeks, the beating

has been relentless," he told reporters. "I'm only human."

He said he would not resign as board president and would try to learn from Friday's incident.

"It was a momentary lapse of good judgment," he said. "It was a momentary lapse of any judgment."

Immediately after the assault, Neblock offered Strommer a public apology inside the Hinshaw &

Please see Neblock, 4A▷



**David  
Strommer**