

Freeburg Elementary School
Monday, January 27, 2025
7:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Board of Education for Freeburg Community Consolidated School District No. 70 was held on Monday, January 27, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the Cafeteria at Freeburg Elementary School.

Call to Order

Mrs. Foppe called the meeting to order and asked for a roll call of the members.

Roll Call

In addition to Mrs. Foppe, board members Jamie Smith, Ed Scheibel, Jayson Baker, Amber Trout, David Stein (via Google Meet), and Bill May were in attendance. Also in attendance was Mark Janssen, Interim Superintendent, Financial Officer, and Recording Secretary. Principals Tiffany Zurliene and Stacey Sommerfield, along with Student Services Director Amanda Hargan were also present. Board attorney Heidi Eckert of Blitz, Bardgett, and Deutsch was also present.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Board and public stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Visitors

Visitors included district staff Rachael Stehl, Leah Beth Black, Kacey Hawkins, Brooke Krauss, Theresa Goscinski, and Emily Vasquez. Also in attendance were Tim Buss from the Illinois Association of School Boards, Jeanine Sheppard, William Sheppard, John Lawson, Eric Vasquez, Teri Maddox, Roger Skaer, and Danita Duecker.

Moved: Amber Trout

Seconded: Bill May

A MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA, AS PRESENTED (SEE ADDENDA).

- MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 17, 2024 REGULAR BOARD MEETING, JANUARY 2, 2025, SPECIAL BOARD MEETING, AND JANUARY 14, 2025 SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
- INVESTMENT SUMMARY THROUGH JANUARY 24, 2025
- BUDGET SUMMARY THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2024

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 7-aye, 0-nay.

Approval of the Bills

Moved: Ed Scheibel

Seconded: Bill May

A MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE BILLS, AS PRESENTED (SEE ADDENDA).

AYES: Smith, Scheibel, Baker, Trout, Stein, May, Foppe
Motion Carried

Reports of Standing Committees

Reports of Special Committees

Petitions/Communications

There were 14 Freedom of Information Act requests, with 11 from Board Member Stein and three from the *Belleville News-Democrat*. Mr. Stein's requests were for various communications and information. The Belleville News-Democrat also sought various communications.

All requests have been or will be filled within the applicable timeframe.

Public Participation

The Board welcomed the public to the meeting.

Teachers' Report

Theresa Goscinski addressed the Board and thanked everyone for their donations and help in making our Trivia Night a success. Just over \$8,000 was raised for the athletic programs. She thanked the trivia attendees, contributors, and volunteers for making the night a success.

Superintendent's Report

Tim Buss of the Illinois Association of School Boards provided an update on the Superintendent search process. Surveys were distributed to the Board, staff, parents, and the community, yielding 294 responses. The survey identified the top seven desired characteristics for the next Superintendent:

1. Fosters a professional culture for educators focused on engagement, accountability, and empowerment.
2. Ensures an inclusive, safe school environment.
3. Has excellent written and verbal communication skills and is genuinely collaborative.
4. Develops and supports rigorous, clear systems for curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
5. Facilitates meaningful, authentic, and ongoing family/community engagement.
6. Develops and works cooperative/effectively with Board of Education.
7. Develops and enacts as hared mission, vision, and core values to advance a high-quality education.

The Board expressed a preference for the next Superintendent to have previous teaching and administrative experience. There will be no residency requirement. The Board tentatively scheduled the first round of interviews for March 10-11, with the second round to follow on March 18. The goal is to name the new Superintendent at the regular March meeting.

Mr. Janssen presented a draft of the 2025-2026 district calendar for the Board's review. This calendar was a result of a collaboration with local Superintendents and is similar to this year's calendar. Some highlights of the calendar:

- August 13 - 1st Day of School
- December 22 - January 2 - Holiday Break
- March 30 - April 6 - Spring Break
- May 19 - Last day of school

The Board discussed the St. Clair County Regional Office of Education's decision not to remove Board Member Stein and explored the remaining options. Attorney Eckert explained that while the Board could appeal to the Circuit Court, it would face significant challenges, as it is exceedingly rare for an elected official to be removed from office. Board Member Trout expressed frustration over the lack of feedback from the Regional Office of Education regarding its decision, noting the limited recourse available to Boards in such situations. After discussion, the Board agreed to postpone further discussions until after the conclusion of the Protective Order hearing against Mr. Stein, scheduled for February 20.

Mr. Scheibel gave an update from the Illinois Association of School Boards. Division meetings will take place in March and April.

Principal Tiffany Zurliene presented the Elementary School Principal's Report.

- Thank you to all parents, teachers, and staff who attended the Trivia Night. It was a fun evening for all! A big thank you to Mrs. Goscinski for coordinating and organizing this event our district is grateful for your dedication.
- December 20th marked the end of Quarter 2. Report cards were posted on January 14th on TeacherEase.
- On Wednesday, January 15th - The 8th grade students had the opportunity to go to the high school in two groups for tours.
- On Friday, January 17th the high school FFA students hosted a Dairy Day in the cafeteria for the 4th grade students. This included making homemade ice cream which the students enjoyed!

Upcoming Events:

- Tomorrow the Elementary will have a Pep Rally for Scholar Bowl, Chess and Volleyball Teams. All teams have started their season and are having great success! Way to go Hornets!
- Wednesday - 8th grade students will take their Algebra Proficiency test for the high school.
- Tuesday, February 4th McLimo - for students who earned straight As in all subjects in grades 7th and 8th

Principal Stacey Sommerfield presented the Primary Center Principal's Report.

- On Wednesday, January 22nd the American Heart Association came to Freeburg District 70 and presented to students K-5.
- Early Dismissal Day-we are meeting with a reading curriculum company. We are in our initial stages of seeing what curriculums are out there.

Upcoming Events:

- January 28th-PTO Dairy Queen Night-4-8
- January 31st-3rd quarter midterm
- February 14th-Early Dismissal
- February 17th-Presidents Day
- Friday, February 21st - PC Daddy and Daughter Dance
- Saturday, February 22nd - PC Mommy and Son Dance

Director of Student Services Amanda Hargan presented her report.

Special Education:

Students continue progressing toward individual goals, with notable success in increasing time spent in general education settings. After an extended break, students quickly refocused on their objectives.

The special education team is developing a "Life Lab," a hands-on learning space with a kitchen, designed to support literacy and math through real-life experiences. The space has been cleared and partially furnished, with planning underway for meaningful activities.

A group of students will participate in the ACE Special Olympics in late April, with more details to come.

504 Plans:

No new data is available, but staff remain dedicated to addressing student needs and contributing to planning for success.

Response to Intervention/MTSS:

Interventions have resumed.

Administration recently led an inservice for elementary teachers, utilizing grade-level data walls to inform instruction and help students meet their goals.

Preschool screenings are scheduled for March 31st and April 1st at the primary center to welcome future students.

Board Member May thanked Mrs. Richter for her daughter's lunch at Reifschneider's. Mr. May won the auction item of lunch with Mrs. Richter at the Trivia Night for his daughter.

Old Business

New Business

Motion: Amber Trout

Seconded: Jayson Baker

A MOTION WAS MADE TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 7:56 PM TO CONSIDER:

**THE APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION, DISCIPLINE, PERFORMANCE, OR
DISMISSAL OF SPECIFIC EMPLOYEES OF THE DISTRICT INCLUDING HEARING TESTIMONY
ON A COMPLAINT LODGED AGAINST AN EMPLOYEE. 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(1); AND**

**SECURITY PROCEDURES, SCHOOL BUILDING SAFETY AND SECURITY, AND THE USE OF
PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT TO RESPOND TO AN ACTUAL, A THREATENED, OR A
REASONABLY POTENTIAL DANGER TO THE SAFETY OF EMPLOYEES, STUDENTS, STAFF, THE
PUBLIC OR PUBLIC PROPERTY 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(8)**

AYES: Smith, Scheibel, Baker, Trout, Stein, May, Foppe
Motion Carried

Moved: Jamie Smith Seconded: Amber Trout

A MOTION WAS MADE TO RE-ENTER REGULAR SESSION AT 8:54 PM.

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 7-aye, 0-nay.

At the request of the employee’s attorney, the Board tabled the issues of rescinding the acceptance
of resignation and termination for cause for one week. There will be a special meeting next
Monday, February 3 at 6 pm to revisit these issues.

Moved: Amber Trout Seconded: Jamie Smith

**A MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ADMINISTRATIVE STIPENDS TO BE
PAID THROUGH JUNE 30, 2025, AS PRESENTED:**

**Interim Superintendent - \$15,000 Primary Center Principal - \$5,000
Elementary School Principal - \$5,000 Director of Student Services - \$5,000**

AYES: Smith, Scheibel, Baker, Trout, May, Foppe
NAYS: Stein
Motion Carried

Moved: Jayson Baker Seconded: Bill May

**A MOTION WAS MADE TO ACCEPT THE LETTER OF RESIGNATION FROM ASSISTANT TRACK
COACH REAGAN BIRKNER, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.**

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 7-aye, 0-nay.

Other Business

Adjournment

Moved: Bill May Seconded: Jamie Smith

There being no further business to come before this body, **A MOTION WAS MADE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:00 P.M.**

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 7-aye, 0-nay.

Michelle Foppe, President
Board of Education, Dist. #70

Jamie Smith, Secretary
Board of Education, Dist. # 70