

Freeburg Elementary School
Monday, February 24, 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, February 24, 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 (7:01), 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 to the meeting included district staff Jennifer Hopfinger, Jim Janssen, Cory Lawrence, Amanda Braun, and Jenny Hummert. Also in attendance were Danita Duecker and Hans Carpenter of the Freeburg Tribune.

Moved: Amber Trout

Seconded: Jamie Smith

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

- MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 27, 2025 REGULAR BOARD MEETING, FEBRUARY 3, 2025, SPECIAL BOARD MEETING, AND FEBRUARY 10, 2025 SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
- INVESTMENT SUMMARY THROUGH FEBRUARY 21, 2025
- BUDGET SUMMARY THROUGH JANUARY 31, 2025

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

Approval of the Bills

Moved: Amber Trout

Seconded: Bill May

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

AYES: Smith, Scheibel, Baker, Trout, May, Foppe

NAYS: Stein

Motion Carried

Reports of Standing Committees

Reports of Special Committees

Petitions/Communications

There were five Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests: three from Board Member Stein, one from SmartProcure, and one from Allium Data. Mr. Stein's requests pertained to various communications and information, while SmartProcure requested purchasing data, and Allium Data sought property insurance information.

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

Public Participation

The Board welcomed the public to the meeting.

Teachers' Report

The fifth-grade teachers summarized events in their classrooms.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Janssen informed the Board that the district has used all five of its allotted eLearning days for the year. Any additional snow days will be treated as traditional snow days, meaning each snow day will extend the school year by one day. There are four remaining snow days available. Additionally, Mr. Janssen proposed scheduling Graduation for the evening of May 21 at 7 p.m.

Mr. Janssen provided an update on the Superintendent search process, stating that the application window closed last Thursday. The number of applicants is currently unknown. The next step is a meeting with the Illinois Association of School Boards to review the list of candidates. The Board desires to have this meeting prior to the first round of interviews on March 10 & 11. Mr. Janssen will inquire to the IASB and let the Board know if this will work.

Mr. Stein requested a discussion on the Boys' Volleyball Club. Mr. Janssen explained this is the third year of the program. Kari Zipfel, a parent who spearheaded the initiative, serves as the volunteer coach.

Mr. Janssen noted that Coach Zipfel requested district approval for the boys to ride a bus to two tournament games and a scrimmage. Believing it to be nice gesture, he approved the request and with the understanding it would not be a regular occurrence. Mr. Stein, however, raised concerns about potential liability and argued that granting this request effectively made Boys' Volleyball a district-sanctioned sport.

Board members consulted Attorney Eckert, who disagreed with Mr. Stein's interpretation. She stated that there was no liability, as the club remains an unsanctioned program. Mr. Stein disputed

this conclusion, citing conflicting information he received from the Illinois State Board of Education.

After discussion, the Board granted Mr. Janssen the flexibility to continue making decisions based on what is best for the students regarding this issue.

Mr. Scheibel gave an update from the Illinois Association of School Boards. Division meetings will be held later this spring.

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

Elementary students held a Pep Rally on January 28th to recognize Scholar Bowl, Chess, and Volleyball teams, with fun games to celebrate their achievements.

On February 7th, the district came together to support the Raban family, raising over \$1,500 to help them in their battle with cancer—thank you for your generosity!

Students in 7th & 8th grade who earned straight A's for Quarter 2 enjoyed a special McLimo lunch on February 4th.

Upcoming Events:

- **Feb. 27** – NJHS students Kailyn Archer, Austin Albers, Finnley Gagen, Mila Jarvis, Zoey Smith, Jackson Webb, and Noah Zipfel will travel to Springfield to be recognized for their work in raising social media awareness and advocating for Senate Bill 7.
- **Feb. 27** – First **Lego Club** meeting for 3rd-5th graders (3:10-4:30). Donations of Legos are welcome!
- **March 1** – Pajama Day fundraiser celebrating **Jace**, a 6th grader who won his fight against Leukemia!
- **March 4** – Volleyball game vs. Waterloo (*Wear purple to support Elsa*).
- **March 4** – 4th Grade Band Contest.
- **March 11** – K-5 **Paint Your Teacher Assembly** for the American Heart Association fundraiser.
- **March 12-13** – 5th & 6th Grade Band Contest.
- **March 17** – 5th Grade field trip to the **St. Louis Science Center**, thanks to PTO support.

Lots of exciting events ahead—thank you to all who make these opportunities possible!

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

The PTO hosted the Daddy/Daughter and Mommy/Son dance last weekend, and it was a great success! A big thank you to the staff and student council members—Finnley Gagen, Lucy Fiedler, Wyatt Kraemer, Rhett Frausto, and Mila Jarvis—for their hard work in running the craft area, troubleshooting issues, and cleaning up.

Upcoming Events:

- **Feb. 26** – Miles of Smiles visit (for those signed up)
- **March 3** – Spring Book Fair begins (held at PC)
- **March 4** – Kids for Christ resumes
- **March 4** – Reading Night at PC (6:00-7:30, *Glow Night* theme)
- **March 7** – End of Quarter 3
- **March 19** – Early Dismissal

Director of Student Services Amanda Hargan presented her report.

Special Education Update

After some disruptions from e-learning days and flu season, students and staff are settling back into a routine.

Next Tuesday, a meeting with high school staff will focus on the transition process for 8th-grade students with IEPs.

March 3rd marks National School Social Worker Day, and we want to recognize Theresa Goscinski for her invaluable work in supporting Freeburg families.

Exciting news: Freeburg 70 has been awarded the Memorial Foundation Grant, which will fully fund an additional school social worker or counselor for at least the next three years, enhancing social-emotional learning and student support.

Upcoming awareness days include Rare Disease Awareness Day on February 28th, highlighting challenges faced by individuals with rare conditions, and World Down Syndrome Day on March 21st—wear your mismatched socks in support!

504 Plans

Staff continue ensuring education remains accessible to all students by meeting individual needs.

Response to Intervention/MTSS

Over 20 staff members are engaging in a book study on *The Anxious Generation* by Jonathan Haidt, exploring youth mental health and research-based implications.

Our next data day is scheduled for March 7th to assess student progress in reading and math interventions. Additionally, primary center teachers are utilizing Science of Reading strategies, yielding rapid improvements through data-driven instruction.

Old Business

Mr. Stein inquired to the Board regarding an update on the severance issue with an employee and the RFP process for the attorney. Ms. Foppe informed Mr. Stein those issues can be discussed in executive session.

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 6-aye, 0-nay.

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

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