

**Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting of
Hawthorn Community Consolidated District #73, Lake County, Illinois
841 W. End Ct, Vernon Hills IL 60061
7:00 p.m. on the 19th day of March 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

President Robin Cleek called the Board of Education meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call was taken prior to the meeting during the closed session portion of the meeting. The following members attended: George Fievet, Karl Borchers, Michael Engle, Robin Cleek, Joel Finfer, Julie Clifford and Wes Polen. Also in attendance were Asst. Supt. of Finance & Business Operations Ms. Jennifer Akin; Asst. Supt. of Student Services Ms. Alicia Corrigan; Asst. Supt. of Teaching & Learning Dr. Allison Stein; Asst. Supt. for Human Resources Mr. Adam Palmer; and Superintendent Dr. Pete Hannigan.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Matt LaPorte, Executive Director of the Vernon Hills Park District, introduced himself and expressed his appreciation for the strong and ongoing partnership between the Park District and Hawthorn School District 73. He noted that recent building tours highlighted the spirit of collaboration between the partnering organizations. Mr. LaPorte emphasized how meaningful these relationships are to the broader community and conveyed his gratitude for the shared commitment to serving local families.

RECOGNITION

Vice President Wes Polen and Board Member Karl Borchers spoke on behalf of the Recognition Committee to formally acknowledge the Middle North 8th grade boys basketball team for their exceptional season, finishing with a 14-2 record and earning first place in the Conference Tournament. The team was recognized for their dedication, sportsmanship, and teamwork.

Special recognition was also given to Coach Chase Leonardi for his leadership and role in the team's success. Coach Leonardi introduced the athletes as they were presented with medals of achievement and a certificate of recognition.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements at this time.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Board President Robin Cleek reminded board members to complete their Statement of Economic Interest forms, which are due by May 1. The email notification was sent to the email address each member used when filing their election petition. She concluded her report by wishing everyone a restful and enjoyable spring break.

ED-RED REPORT

Mr. Joel Finfer reported that approximately 1,800 bills were introduced in the Illinois House of Representatives this session, with nearly 900 related to education. Of those, roughly 800 bills have been assigned to the committee. He highlighted the volume of legislation and emphasized the critical role of ED-RED in monitoring and analyzing these developments on behalf of school districts. Mr. Finfer noted that it would be unfeasible for individual districts to track such a large number of bills independently. He also shared context on legislative trends, observing that under current Speaker Chris Welch, more bills are reaching the committee stage compared to previous years.

SEDOL REPORT

Mr. Michael Engle reported that the last Executive Board met on February 27 and the Governing Board met on March 5. Proposed Governing Board meeting dates for the next cycle: August 6, December 3, March 4, and June 3 will be brought for approval in June. Dr. Hackett presented the Mid-Year Report tied to the Continuous Improvement Plan, which included updates across four strategic goal areas. While not all objectives are expected to be completed this school year, work will continue into next year, with a final update anticipated in June. The FY23 audit is nearly complete, pending final ESSER-related guidance from ISBE. A positive resolution is expected, though partial repayment of funds may be required. The FY24 audit is on track for completion by the end of the fiscal year. The Governing Board approved one-year contracts for Interim Superintendents Dr. Judy Hackett and Dr. Tim Thomas, effective July 1. The next Executive Board meeting is scheduled for March 20, and the next Governing Board meeting is scheduled for June 4.

SITE & FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. George Fievet reported that the last Site & Facilities Committee meeting was held on March 11, 2025, and discussed several key renewal items, including the food service contract (3% increase), waste disposal contract (10% increase), and landscaping services (modest increases over the next two years). All contracts will be presented for board approval in April. The committee also reviewed an updated facility rental agreement that introduces market-based pricing, distinguishes between youth and adult rates, and includes revised language for security, custodial access, and kitchen use. This item will be brought to the board in April.

for discussion and in May for approval. Mr. Fievet shared that the district received \$50,000 through the School Maintenance Project Grant to support the Middle School North flooring project. The committee also reviewed continued participation in the state's joint purchasing program for rock salt and began planning for the replacement of a retired dump truck with a more practical quad cab pickup.

Looking ahead, the committee will add monthly food service performance reviews and monitor potential changes in education funding that may impact future budgets.

WELLNESS COMMITTEE REPORT

No report at this time.

KEY TO 73 FOUNDATION REPORT

Board Member Julie Clifford shared that the Foundation's Facebook page is now active and regularly updated with upcoming events. She also reminded the public that the Foundation's website launched in February and encouraged everyone to visit and sign up for updates. Volunteers are still needed for upcoming events, and planning continues for the annual Golf Outing, scheduled for Friday, June 6. Sponsorship opportunities are available, and those interested are encouraged to apply through the Foundation's website.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Superintendent Dr. Pete Hannigan discussed the 2025–2028 HEA Contract. He began by outlining key elements of previously negotiated agreements and their impact on the district's current position. He reviewed the bargaining timeline, described the structure of the process, and recognized the members of the bargaining team. Dr. Hannigan also presented highlights of the new contract, including, but not limited to, updates to licensed and support staff salaries, retirement incentives, stipends, and insurance benefits. He concluded by thanking the Board for their ongoing commitment to the district's mission of *Learning for All. Every One. Every Day*. He also acknowledged the Board's efforts over the past seven years in positioning the district to better meet the needs of students, staff, and the broader community.

Superintendent Dr. Hannigan also discussed the Intergovernmental Agreement with the Vernon Hills Police Department Regarding the Sharing of Information. The agreement establishes guidelines for sharing information related to student safety, including mandatory reporting of verified incidents involving firearms, drugs, and staff attacks, as well as discretionary reporting of other offenses. It also outlines when law enforcement may access student records or share relevant arrest information, while ensuring all data remains confidential and compliant with FERPA and state laws.

Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Business Operations, Ms. Jennifer Akin, presented three service contract renewals for the Board's consideration. She first discussed the renewal of the district's agreement with Quest Food Services, noting a 3% increase in the fixed rate meal pricing. This marks the first year under the master agreement awarded through last year's formal RFP process, following an initial emergency contract with Quest. Next, Ms. Akin reviewed the renewal with Gillio Landscaping, which includes rate increases of 2.06% for the 2025 growing season and 2.53% for 2026. Finally, she presented the renewal of the district's agreement with Waste Management for disposal services, which reflects a 10% flat rate increase consistent with the three-year contract terms established through last year's bid process. Ms. Akin noted the limited market for disposal service providers and emphasized the importance of the long-term agreement in mitigating future cost fluctuations.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Dr. Pete Hannigan announced that returning student registration will open following Spring Break on Monday, March 31. He encouraged families to complete registration by May 1 to support planning for the upcoming academic year and to take advantage of the early bird rate. Dr. Hannigan concluded his report by wishing the Hawthorn community a restful and enjoyable Spring Break and shared that the district looks forward to welcoming students back on March 31.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 8.1 Board Meeting Minutes: February 20, 2025
- 8.2 Closed Session Minutes: February 20, 2025
- 8.3 Expenditure Report: March 19, 2025
- 8.4 Mastercard Report: January 21, 2025
- 8.5 Amazon Expense Report: March 19, 2025
- 8.6 Treasurer's Report: January 2025
- 8.7 Technology Professional Services
- 8.8 Personnel Report

5 New Hires:

4 Leaves of Absence:

3 Change of Status:

15 Resignations:

5: Retirement

5 New Hires: Min Choi, Lunch/Recess Supervisor, EN; Katherine Ferrel, Instructional Assistant, HSYL; Patel Hetvi, Instructional Assistant, Aspen; Irma Martinez, Instructional Assistant, MN; Kelly Theis, Lunch/Recess Supervisor, EN.

4 Leaves of Absence: Yesenia Cisneros, Instructional Assistant, EN, 02/18/2025; FNU Swati, Instructional Assistant, ES, 03/31/2025; Shelby Soto, Teacher, DL, 02/18/2025; Madison Zoot, Teacher, TL, 05/19/2025.

3 Change of Status: Meghan Caby, Principal, DL, 07/01/2025; Christy Hunter, Teacher, TBD, 08/18/2025; John Reid, Teacher, TBD, 08/18/2025.

15 Resignations: Natalie Kalette, Assistant Principal, MS, 06/30/2025; Miles Adamski, 1st Grade Teacher, TL, 05/28/2025; Jessica Baum, math Teacher, MN, 05/28/2025; Shelby Behrens, Social Worker, Aspen/EN, 05/28/2025; Emma Bernstein, 4th Grade Teacher, TL, 05/28/2025; Marie Faye Carmona, LBS1 Teacher, MN, 05/28/2025; Lana Carnazzola, Social Worker, TL/DL, 02/14/2025; Michael Cohen, Social Studies Teacher, MS, 05/28/2025; Brittany Garcia, 3rd Grade Teacher, DL, 05/28/2025; Jennifer Korol, Teacher, HSYL, 05/28/2025; Courtney Odden, 5th Grade Teacher, ES, 05/28/2025; Rene Plona, Language Arts Teacher, MN, 03/04/2025; Eric Ross, Math Teacher, MN, 05/28/2025; Jessica Hoefke, Instructional Assistant, EN, 03/21/2025; Anna Osis, Instructional Assistant, DL, 03/14/2025.

5 Retirement: Anne Foley, Art Teacher, Aspen, 05/28/2025; Dennis Matuch, P.E./Health Teacher, MN, 06/30/2028; Diana O'Connor, Music Teacher, MN, 06/30/2028; Julie Rohfling, Interventionist, MN, 06/30/2028; Svetlana Stahl, STEM Teacher, MN, 06/30/2028.

Dr. Hannigan presented Ms. Meghan Caby as the proposed Dual Language Principal candidate. The district conducted an extensive search for the position, receiving 29 applications. Interview teams, including parents, staff, and administrators, engaged in a thorough selection process to identify the best fit. After careful evaluation, Ms. Caby was selected to lead the Dual Language program, bringing strong leadership and a deep commitment to bilingual education at Hawthorn.

Karl Borchers requested to remove section 8.1 **Board Meeting Minutes from February 20, 2025** and 8.2 **Closed Session Minutes from February 20, 2025** from the consent agenda.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: Wes Polen moved that the Board of Education approve 8.1 **Board Meeting Minutes from February 20, 2025** and 8.2 **Closed Session Minutes from February 20, 2025** as presented; seconded by Julie Clifford.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Wes Polen, George Fievet, Julie Clifford, Karl Borchers, Michael Engle, and Joel Finfer.

Motion carried: 6 ayes; 1 abstain

RECOMMENDED MOTION: Wes Polen moved that the Board of Education approve the remaining **Consent Agenda** items as presented; seconded by Karl Borchers.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Wes Polen, Karl Borchers, George Fievet, Julie Clifford, Michael Engle, and Joel Finfer.

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

Following board approval on the consent agenda, Ms. Meghan Caby expressed her gratitude to the Board, Dr. Hannigan, and the Hawthorn community for the opportunity to serve as Principal of the Dual Language School. She reflected on her 12 years in the district and the impact her colleagues have had on her growth as an educator and leader. Ms. Caby shared her excitement to continue advancing the Dual Language program and affirmed her commitment to supporting students, staff, and families through a strong, inclusive school culture.

Dr. Allison Stein, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning, reviewed the Title I Schoolwide Waiver for Hawthorn School of Dual Language and Townline Elementary. The waiver is required as part of the district's Consolidated District Plan submission. Dual Language's Title I status is up for renewal, and Townline newly qualified based on free and reduced lunch data. Plans for both schools were developed with input from their Guiding Coalitions and require board approval.

Mr. Adam Palmer, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, reviewed the 2025-2026 Staffing Plan, developed through a review of enrollment trends and staffing needs. With enrollment holding steady, staffing will remain unchanged with the exception of one new multilingual Russian teacher. The plan supports small class sizes and maintains flexibility for future needs.

As previously presented by Dr. Hannigan, the Intergovernmental Agreement with the Vernon Hills Police Department Regarding the Sharing of Information outlines secure and compliant procedures for sharing student safety information, in alignment with FERPA and state laws.

As previously shared by Dr. Hannigan, the 2025–2028 HEA Contract reflects the outcome of a thorough bargaining process, including a review of the previous agreement, committee timelines, and key highlights of the newly negotiated terms.

ACTION ITEMS

Title I School Wide Waiver DL/TL

MOTION: Wes Polen moved that the Board of Education approve the Title I School Wide Waiver DL/TL; Julie Clifford seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Karl Borchers, Wes Polen, George Fievet, Julie Clifford, Michael Engle, and Joel Finfer.

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

2025-2026 Staffing Plan

MOTION: Karl Borchers moved that the Board of Education approve the 2025-2026 Staffing Plan; George Fievet seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Karl Borchers, Wes Polen, George Fievet, Julie Clifford, Michael Engle, and Joel Finfer.

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

Intergovernmental Agreement with the Vernon Hills Police Department Regarding the Sharing of Information

MOTION: Wes Polen moved that the Board of Education approve the Intergovernmental Agreement with the Vernon Hills Police Department Regarding the Sharing of Information; Michael Engle seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Wes Polen, Karl Borchers, George Fievet, Julie Clifford, Michael Engle, and Joel Finfer.

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

Ratification of HEA Contract 2025-2028

MOTION: Joel Finfer moved that the Board of Education approve the Ratification of HEA Contract 2025-2028; Michael Engle seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Wes Polen, George Fievet, Karl Borchers, Julie Clifford, Michael Engle, and Joel Finfer.

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Enrollment - Uploaded
2. FOIA Log, Dr. Hannigan reported that the District has received one FOIA request since the last board meeting and has been responded to as identified in Section 10.2 of the Board agenda.
3. Media Clips

TOPICS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

No topics for future meetings at this time.

ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION

Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) President Cleek read the motion(s) to adjourn to CLOSED SESSION for the purpose of:

The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or specific volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or a volunteer of the public body or against

legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity. However, a meeting to consider an increase in compensation to a specific employee of a public body that is subject to the Local Government Wage Increase Transparency Act may not be closed and shall be open to the public and posted and held in accordance with this Act. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1).

With no further business to discuss, George Fievet made a motion to adjourn to Closed Session, seconded by Wes Polen. The meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m. **All in favor? Yes.**

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Flores

Robin Cleek, President

George Fievet, Secretary

Date Minutes Approved: _____