

Freeburg Elementary School  
Monday, March 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, March 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, 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.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

The Board and public stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Visitors**

Visitors to the meeting included district staff Chelsi Lloyd, Rebecca Howard, Scott Schulz, and Ben Junge. Also present were Katie Smith, Scott Smith, Lauren Anderson, Terry Webb, Kari Zipfel, David Zipfel, Jacqueline Jarvis, Joseph Jarvis, Sara Archer, Brian Archer, Mark Gagen, Kailyn Archer, Noah Zipfel, Mila Jarvis, Finnley Gagen, Jackson Webb, Austin Albers, and Zoey Smith. Also in attendance was Hans Carpenter of the Freeburg Tribune.

Moved: Bill May

Seconded: Amber Trout

Mr. Stein requested that the minutes reflect his inability to log in to the meeting due to a malfunctioning link sent by Mr. Janssen, which did not work on his phone. Ms. Foppe noted that three board members successfully used the same link at the last special meeting on March 18. After discussion, the Board agreed to amend the minutes to reflect there were technical difficulties.

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

- MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 24, 2025 REGULAR BOARD MEETING, MARCH 10, 2025, SPECIAL BOARD MEETING, MARCH 11, 2025 SPECIAL BOARD MEETING, AND MARCH 18, 2025 SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
- INVESTMENT SUMMARY THROUGH MARCH 21, 2025
- BUDGET SUMMARY THROUGH FEBRUARY 28, 2025

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

## **Approval of the Bills**

Moved: Amber Trout

Seconded: Ed Scheibel

**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 nine Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests all from Board Member Stein. Mr. Stein's requests pertained to various communications and information.

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

Mr. Stein explained that he files numerous Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests because he feels the Board does not acknowledge his right to access information. Mr. Janssen responded, stating that Mr. Stein has filed FOIA requests for information he has already received and has access to. Mr. Stein disagreed, noting that Mr. May advised him to file the requests to obtain the information.

### **Public Participation**

The Board welcomed the public to the meeting.

### **Teachers' Report**

### **Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Janssen welcomed the students who addressed the Illinois Senate Education Committee. The recognized students were Austin Albers, Kailyn Archer, Finnley Gagen, Mila Jarvis, Zoey Smith, Jackson Webb, and Noah Zipfel. Also in attendance were Principal Tiffany Zurliene and teachers Kaitlin Becker and Carrie Green.

The students' testimony focused on the issues of cyberbullying and inappropriate social media use among their peers. Their efforts contributed to the unanimous passage of a resolution, which will now advance to the full Senate.

The Board expressed its gratitude and congratulations to the students for their impactful contributions. Mr. Janssen and Ms. Foppe presented the students with a certificate of appreciation on behalf of the district and posed for a picture with the Board.

Mr. Janssen provided a year-end schedule of notable activities. Those dates and activities are:

- May 6 - PC Field Day
- May 8 - Elementary School Field Day
- May 9 & 10 - Spring Musical
- May 13 & 14 - Kindergarten Screenings
- May 19 & 20 - Early Dismissals (Tentative)
- May 21 - 11:30 Dismissal
- May 21 - Graduation - 7 pm
- May 22 - Teachers' Institute

Mr. Janssen reported that he has been monitoring the growing deficits in student meal account balances, which have steadily increased over the past few years. Due to state laws limiting the district's ability to recover these funds, the outstanding balance has now reached nearly \$20,000.

To begin addressing this issue, he proposed several steps:

- Sending weekly notifications to parents when their child's account balance falls below \$5.
- Sending an email alert when an account drops below \$0.01.
- Providing only a reimbursable meal (without extras) when a student's account goes negative.
- Considering a policy to refer balances exceeding \$100 to collections at the end of the school year if no payment plan has been arranged, with prior communication to families.

Mr. Janssen emphasized that maintaining frequent communication with families will be essential in this effort. He also will be willing to set up payment plans for any who requests to do so. Mr. Stein questioned whether it was wise to deprive students of meals given the deficit spending and ongoing lawsuits. Mr. Janssen responded that he was not proposing depriving any student of a meal and is bringing the issue to the Board's attention and noted that one option was to take no action. After discussion, the Board agreed to advise Mr. Janssen to communicate with parents, encouraging them to pay their fees while also providing information about the free/reduced meal program.

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

### **March Events Summary:**

- On Tuesday, March 4th, 6th-grade student Jace Shoulders celebrated the end of his 3.5-year battle with leukemia. He arrived at school via firetruck, greeted by cheering students, followed by an afternoon assembly featuring Fredbird and a \$1,800 check presentation to his family. Special thanks to Mrs. Range, the 6th-grade team, the Freeburg Fire Department, and others for making the day memorable.
- Mrs. Becker's 7th-grade Language Arts class held a float parade at the Primary Center, showcasing shoebox book report floats.
- Quarter 3 was celebrated before Spring Break with students rotating between the cafeteria for games, the MPR for the gaga pit, and gym games.

### **Upcoming Events:**

- Spring pictures at the Elementary School on Wednesday.
- IAR Testing begins next week, with testing on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, continuing the following Tuesday and Wednesday. Families are encouraged to ensure students get plenty of rest.
- The Freeburg District 70 Talent Show is on Friday at 6 p.m. in the Elementary Gym.

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

### **Spring Events Summary:**

- A district-wide tornado drill was conducted on Tuesday, March 4th, to prepare for spring weather.
- Quarter 3 ended on Friday, March 7th, with report cards sent home for PC and posted for elementary on March 14th.
- On Tuesday, March 11th, the American Heart Association Assembly featured a fun activity where students "painted" teachers and administrators.

### **Upcoming Events:**

- Pre-K screening is scheduled for March 31st and April 1st.
- Kindergarten screening information will be sent out on April 1st, with screenings set for May 13th and 14th.

Director of Student Services Amanda Hargan presented her report.

### **Special Education Summary:**

During March and April, the district reflects on special education data to plan for future services. Significant progress has been made in reducing time spent in special education while increasing inclusion in general education, promoting a least restrictive environment with academic growth. Celebratory end-of-year data will be shared in April/May.

The success is attributed to the entire education team's efforts in addressing students' academic and social-emotional needs. The district currently serves about 90 students with diverse disabilities and 42 students receiving speech and language services, striving for inclusivity and holistic growth.

### **504 Plans:**

The district serves 40 students with 504 plans, ensuring education remains accessible by addressing individual needs.

### **Response to Intervention (RTI)/MTSS:**

Regular data reviews focus on reading and math skill deficits, with organizational support for junior high students. Currently, about 100 students from Kindergarten to 8th grade are in or being monitored in the intervention program. End-of-year data will highlight students' growth.



Moved: Jayson Baker

Seconded: Ed Scheibel

**A MOTION WAS MADE TO EMPLOY BROOKE BIFFAR AS TEACHER FOR THE 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR, AS PRESENTED.**

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

Moved: David Stein

Seconded: Ed Scheibel

**A MOTION WAS MADE TO EMPLOY LAUREN DONALD AS TEACHER FOR THE 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR, AS PRESENTED.**

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

Moved: Jayson Baker

Seconded: Jamie Smith

**A MOTION WAS MADE TO ACCEPT THE LETTER OF RESIGNATION FROM TEACHER REAGAN BIRKNER, EFFECTIVE AT THE END OF THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR.**

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

Moved: Amber Trout

Seconded: Jayson Baker

**A MOTION WAS MADE TO ACCEPT THE LETTER OF RESIGNATION FROM TEACHER JENNIFER DELASHMIT, EFFECTIVE AT THE END OF THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR.**

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

Moved: Jamie Smith

Seconded: Bill May

**A MOTION WAS MADE TO ACCEPT THE LETTER OF RESIGNATION FROM BOYS' BASKETBALL COACH JIM JANSSEN, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.**

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

### **Other Business**

### **Adjournment**

Moved: Jayson Baker

Seconded: Ed Scheibel

There being no further business to come before this body, **A MOTION WAS MADE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:02 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