

**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 14th day of August 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

President Robin Cleek called the Board of Education meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

The Board Secretary called attendance and the following members attended: George Fievet, Michael Engle, Robin Cleek, Joel Finfer, Stephanie Peters and Julie Clifford. 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. Mr. Karl Borchers was not in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment at this time.

RECOGNITION

No recognition at this time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements at this time.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Cleek shared that the Lake Division Dinner will be held on October 8, and board members interested in attending should contact Ms. Jessica Flores for registration. President Cleek also extended a warm welcome to students, parents, and staff as the district prepares for the start of a new school year. She highlighted the network and technology improvements completed over the summer and expressed gratitude to the facilities and technology departments for their efforts. She also acknowledged the patience and professionalism of staff as technology systems have been updated, recognizing the challenges caused by outages and thanking them for their flexibility. She concluded by wishing the school community a productive and inspiring year ahead.

ED-RED REPORT

Mr. Joel Finfer reported that there have not been any special sessions scheduled recently.

SEDOL REPORT

Mr. Michael Engle reported that the last executive board meeting was held on July 24 and the last governing board meeting on August 6. A public hearing was conducted for the Final FY2025–2026 budget, with no changes from the tentative budget presented at the June 4 governing board meeting. The board approved the Final FY2025–2026 budget. As part of the SEDOL Continuous Improvement Plan, Dr. Hackett will provide revised objectives at the August 28 executive board meeting, including evidence of progress and seeking board input on the 2025–2026 priorities and measures of growth. Focus areas include systems, parent advisory groups, expanded professional learning opportunities, and the hiring of a new superintendent, effective July 1. The next executive board meeting is scheduled for August 28, and the next governing board meeting for December 3.

SITE & FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Vice-President George Fievet reported that the Site & Facilities committee welcomed two new members: Mr. Bill Guenther, School Safety and Support Liaison, and Mrs. Cindy Hooten, Business Office Coordinator. The committee reviewed grant funding for the year, noting that the primary grants relied upon by the district remain available and funded, with a few smaller opportunities still pending. Summer projects were also discussed, with most now complete. The largest project, at Middle North, is approximately 70% finished. Renovations include a completed office, new flooring, and an updated library, with final work expected mid-October. Bus badges are being prepared for all riders and will be available at supply drop-off. Parents are encouraged to download the tracking app for convenience. Quest food service is prepared for the new school year, and recently provided catering for beginning-of-year events which was a great success. The committee will meet again prior to the September 18 board meeting.

WELLNESS COMMITTEE REPORT

No report at this time.

KEY TO 73 FOUNDATION REPORT

No report at this time.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Business Operations, Mrs. Jennifer Akin, presented items related to the business department. She reported that, per USDA requirements, student meal prices will increase by ten cents for the 2025–2026 school year. She also noted that obsolete technology equipment identified through district asset management procedures will be disposed of in accordance with policy. Board Secretary Mrs. Julie Clifford inquired whether there is a cost associated with the disposal process. Mrs. Akin responded that there is no cost, and the district receives a small reimbursement from the disposal company.

Mrs. Akin then reviewed the tentative FY2025–2026 budget. Operating revenue is projected at \$71 million, a slight increase from the prior year, while operating expenses are projected at \$70.7 million, reflecting higher salary and benefit costs. Non-operating expenses are projected at \$10.5 million, a decrease due to the completion of the Elementary North renovations. The budget currently shows a positive balance of \$300,000.

She concluded by conducting a public hearing on the tentative budget, which received no public comment. The final budget will be presented for approval in September before submission to the Illinois State Board of Education.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Dr. Hannigan echoed President Cleek's comments on recent technology upgrades, thanking staff for their patience and flexibility as systems continue to be improved. He also announced that Hawthorn received the *Best Communities for Music Education Award* from the National Association of Music Merchants, recognizing the collective efforts of staff, families, community partners, and the Board of Education.

He highlighted the success of the Hawthorn Educators Induction Program, which welcomed new staff through five days of professional learning, and the districtwide guided coalition meeting featuring guest speaker Devin Hughes, focused on fostering a culture of belonging. He then outlined the 2025–2026 Board Project priorities, which include supporting implementation of new middle school resources, piloting updated elementary math materials, reviewing and refining the Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum, expanding professional development, develop and lead a comprehensive Hawthorn Educator Induction Program, strengthening supports for multilingual learners, updating report card language, and auditing districtwide assessment practices.

Finally, Dr. Hannigan shared that staff are ready to welcome students back on August 21. Families are encouraged to check the website for supply drop-off schedules. He asked the parents and community for their patience as traffic and bus routes may run longer than usual during the first days of school to ensure student safety.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 6.1 Board Meeting Minutes: July 9, 2025
- 6.2 Expenditure Report: August 14, 2025
- 6.3 Amazon Expense Report: August 14, 2025
- 6.4 Mastercard Report: June 21, 2025
- 6.5 Treasurer's Report: June 2025
- 6.6 Personnel Report

New Hires: 23

Leaves of Absence: 3

Resignations: 15

Change of Status: 2

23 New Hires: Kathleen Brockway, ELA/Social Studies Teacher, MS, 08/18/2025; Olivia Burnside, 4th Grade Teacher, ES, 08/18/2025; Declan DePoy, LBS1 Teacher, EN, 08/18/2025; Eleanor Frega, Music Teacher/Building Substitute, MS, 08/18/2025; Logan Griffin, Art Teacher, AS, 08/18/2025; Kailee Guerrieri, 5th Grade Teacher, TL, 08/18/2025; Stefanie Guggenheim, Science Teacher, MN, 08/18/2025; Darcy Hawkins, 5th Grade Teacher, ES, 08/18/2025; Sarah Magsakay, Speech/Language Pathologist, MN/DL, 08/18/2025; Ishtar Notali, 1st Grade Teacher, TL, 08/18/2025; Reid Strellner, Speech/Language Pathologist, HSYL/Lincoln, 08/18/2025; Sandra Tinoco, 5th Grade Teacher, DL, 08/18/2025; Marisa Tyser, Pre-K Teacher, Lincoln, 08/18/2025; Kevin Watson, LBS1 Teacher, MN, 08/18/2025; Holly Aronoff, .5 Nurse, HSYL, 08/18/2025; Catherine Carani, Instructional Assistant, EN, 08/18/2025; Stephanie Eberle, Lunch/Recess Supervisor, ES, 08/21/2025; Uma Eswaran, Instructional Assistant, EN, 08/18/2025; Sharon Harris, Instructional Assistant, MN, 08/18/2025; Shravanidevi Kethireddy, Instructional Assistant, EN, 08/18/2025; Dena Mahrenholz, .5 Nurse, HSYL, 08/18/2025; Sunkari Roselin, Instructional Assistant, MN, 08/18/2025; Sayali Shete, Instructional Assistant, EN, 08/18/2025.

3 Leaves of Absence: Lauren Brownstein, Social Worker, MS, 10/27/2025; Marissa Hakimian, Speech Language Pathologist, 08/18/2025; Edna Thompson, 2nd Grade Teacher, DL, 12/3/2025.

2 Change of Status: Jessica Glezer, Principal Secretary, MS, 08/04/2025; Deborah Zajac, Instructional Assistant, DL, 08/18/2025.

15 Resignations: Milton Arrieta-Lopez, Foreign Language Teacher, MN, 05/28/2025; Stephanie Bonifazi, Pre-K Teacher, Lincoln, 05/28/2025; Benicia Colon, Bilingual Psychologist, District, 05/28/2025; Carolyn Fraguera, Occupational Therapist, AS/HSYL, 08/11/2025; Laura Hoffman, LBS1 Teacher, MN, 07/02/2025; Kathleen Kelly, Speech Language Pathologist, HSYL, 05/28/2025; Jennifer Ofner, LBS1 Teacher, DL, 05/28/2025; Samantha Ruby, LOP Teacher, EN, 05/28/2025; Brittany Truppa, Art Teacher, AS, 07/08/2025; Matthew Beans, Instructional Assistant, Luke Bruschuk, Technology Support Supervisor, District, 09/09/2025; Ashley Cass, Principal Secretary, MS, 06/25/2025; Aaron Chan, Health Clerk, Middle South, 05/28/2025; Ashley Gwynne, Registered Nurse, EN, 05/25/2025, Xochitl Willis, Instructional Assistant, ES, 05/28/2025.

Stephanie Peters requested to remove section 6.1 **Board Meeting Minutes from July 9, 2025** from the consent agenda.

MOTION: Joel Finfer moved that the Board of Education approve 6.1 **Board Meeting Minutes from July 9, 2025** as presented; seconded by Michael Engle.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Michael Engle, George Fievet, Julie Clifford, Stephanie Peters and Joel Finfer.

Motion carried: 5 ayes; 1 abstain

MOTION: George Fievet moved that the Board of Education approve the remaining **Consent Agenda** items as presented; seconded by Stephanie Peters.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Michael Engle, George Fievet, Julie Clifford, Stephanie Peters, and Joel Finfer.

Motion carried: 6 ayes; 0 nays

Mrs. Jennifer Akin presented the action item regarding student meal prices. As discussed earlier, the USDA's Paid Lunch Equity Tool requires a minimum \$0.10 increase to remain in compliance with federal program requirements. The Business Office sought Board approval to increase the paid lunch price from \$3.50 to \$3.60 per meal for the 2025–2026 school year.

ACTION ITEMS

Student Meals Prices

MOTION: Michael Engle moved that the Board of Education approve the Student Meal Prices; George Fievet seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Robin Cleek, Michael Engle, George Fievet, Julie Clifford, Stephanie Peters and Joel Finfer.

Motion carried: 6 ayes; 0 nays

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Enrollment - Uploaded
2. FOIA Log, Dr. Hannigan reported that the District has received three FOIA requests since the last board meeting and has been responded to as identified in Section 8.2 of the Board agenda.
3. Media Clips

TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

No topics for future discussion.

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 Michael Engle. The meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m. **All in favor? Yes.**

Motion carried: 6 ayes; 0 nays

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Flores

Robin Cleek, President

Julie Clifford, Secretary

Date Minutes Approved: _____