

**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
6:30 p.m. on the 21st day of May 2026**

CALL TO ORDER

Board President Robin Cleek called the Board of Education meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The Board Secretary called attendance and the following members attended: George Fievet, Karl Borchers, Michael Engle, Robin Cleek, Joel Finfer, Stephanie Peters, and Julie Clifford.

ENTER INTO CLOSED SESSION

Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9), President Cleek requested a motion to enter into CLOSED SESSION for the following purpose(s): *Student disciplinary cases.*

With no further business to discuss in open session, Joel Finfer made a motion to enter into closed session. The motion was seconded by Karl Borchers. The Board entered into closed session at 6:30 p.m. The Board adjourned closed session at 6:42 p.m.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

President Robin Cleek called the Board of Education meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call was taken during the closed session portion prior to the meeting. Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

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

Josh McColough commented on the District's exploration and use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in education, including recommendations for policies, safeguards, and student choice. His written remarks were submitted to the Board and will be attached to the minutes.

Emily Kim, speaking on behalf of the Key to 73 Foundation, announced a \$19,000 donation to support family resources through the Hawthorn Food Pantry (The Nest), reflecting the Foundation's continued commitment to supporting the whole child.

Joel Finfer, representing the Lake County Regional Office of Education Foundation, made a public comment announcing an \$18,000 donation to support the launch of a pilot vision support program modeled after the "See Better, Learn Better" initiative.

RECOGNITION

Board Members George Fievet and Karl Borchers recognized students who represented Hawthorn District 73 at the state level through Math Team, Bowling, and Science Olympiad competitions. Students from Middle School South and Middle School North were recognized for their outstanding achievements, dedication, and sportsmanship throughout the season. Coaches Ralph, Malec, Andonova, Breeden, and Hunter provided remarks regarding their students' accomplishments, while comments from Science Olympiad Coach Villanueva were shared on her behalf. Each student received a certificate in recognition of their achievements. The Board congratulated all students and thanked the coaches for their support and dedication.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcement(s) at this time.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Robin Cleek invited Board members to attend the ED-RED Summit on June 11 and reminded them to contact Jessica Flores for registration assistance. She thanked the district's staff, students, and families for a successful school year and wished everyone a safe and enjoyable summer.

ED-RED REPORT

Board Member Joel Finfer reported that the Illinois legislative session was scheduled to conclude on May 31 and noted that education-related legislative activity continued to be closely monitored. He also congratulated Dan Didech on being named Legislator of the Year.

SEDOL REPORT

Board Member Michael Engle reported on the last SEDOL Executive Board meeting held on April 23 and the last Governing Board meeting held on March 4. He noted that the tentative budget had been presented to the Executive Board and would be reviewed by the Governing Board on June 3, with final approval anticipated in August. He also shared information about the upcoming Pucks for Autism fundraiser, which supports program enhancements for children and young adults with autism through SEDOL, and encouraged community participation and volunteer involvement. Mr. Engle concluded his report by sharing that the next SEDOL Executive Board meeting was scheduled for May 28 and the next Governing Board meeting was scheduled for June 3.

SITE & FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Board Member George Fievet reported on the Site and Facilities Committee meeting held on May 12, 2026. The committee reviewed food service operations with Quest Food Management, including plans to improve meal quality, consistency, menu offerings, and parent engagement. The team also discussed implementation of the district's five-year facilities plan, transportation updates related to local road construction, ongoing grant opportunities, and summer technology initiatives. An update was provided on student device procedures, including the collection of all devices at the end of the school year and revised device distribution practices for the upcoming school year.

WELLNESS COMMITTEE REPORT

No report at this time.

KEY TO 73 FOUNDATION REPORT

Board Secretary Julie Clifford provided a Key to 73 Foundation update, encouraging community involvement and participation in the Foundation's upcoming golf outing and silent auction on June 5. She also shared information about a recent visit to The Nest, the district's food pantry, and highlighted its role in supporting District 73 families through donations of food, clothing, and other essential items.

PRESENTATIONS

As requested by the Board, Assistant Superintendents presented as a team considerations related to the potential implementation of an outdoor education program. The presentation reviewed curriculum alignment, student accommodations and accessibility, site selection, safety and supervision requirements, staffing considerations, scheduling logistics, and estimated program costs. District administrators discussed the planning and resources necessary to ensure equitable access and a meaningful educational experience for all participating students. Board members asked follow-up questions and expressed interest in revisiting the topic at a future meeting if needed.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Business Operations Jennifer Akin discussed the Resolution Transferring Funds from the Educational Fund to the Debt Service Fund. Ms. Akin explained that, following a preliminary audit review, the district was advised that the new copier lease requires a transfer of funds to comply with Illinois accounting and reporting requirements. The proposed resolution would authorize the transfer of \$40,770.46 from the Educational Fund to the Debt Service Fund to properly account for the lease obligation and ensure compliance with audit guidelines for fiscal year 2025–2026.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Dr. Hannigan recognized the accomplishments of the Class of 2026 and shared information regarding the upcoming 8th Grade Promotion Ceremonies scheduled for May 29 at Vernon Hills High School. He noted that Middle North's ceremony would begin at 6:00 p.m. and Middle South's ceremony would begin at 8:00 p.m. and encouraged families to allow additional travel time due to updated traffic and parking procedures coordinated with the Vernon Hills Police Department.

Dr. Hannigan expressed appreciation for the hard work and achievements of Hawthorn students throughout the school year and thanked staff and families for their continued support. He also shared end-of-year reminders, noting that the last day of school would be June 2 and that summer school programming would take place throughout the month of June. Dr. Hannigan concluded by wishing all students, staff, and families a safe and enjoyable summer and stated that the district looked forward to welcoming students back for the first day of school on August 20.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 9.1 Board Meeting Minutes: April 16, 2026
- 9.2 Expenditure Report: May 21, 2026
- 9.3 Amazon Expense Report: May 21, 2026
- 9.4 Mastercard Report: March 23, 2026
- 9.5 Treasurer's Report: March 2026
- 9.6 2025-2026 Final Calendar
- 9.7 Disposal of Surplus Technology Equipment
- 9.8 Personnel Report

New Hires: 9

Resignations: 10

Leave of Absence: 6

Change of Status: 3

9 New Hires: Kristina Franchi, Building Assistant Supervisor, DL, 08/10/2026; Teagan Cabral, 4th Grade Teacher, TL, 08/17/2026; Jelayne Clemens, 1st Grade Teacher, ES, 08/17/2026; Jacqueline Gallo, 3rd Grade Teacher, EN, 08/17/2026; Tamara Green, LBS1 Teacher, EN, 08/17/2026; Rachel Kim, Speech/Language Pathologist, MS, 08/17/2026; Ari Rootberg, PE/Health Teacher, MN, 08/17/2026; Celeste Nuñez, Lunch/Recess Supervisor, DL, 05/11/2026; Eaylah Marie Smith Trinidad, Nurse, TL, 06/08/2026.

10 Resignations: Emma Bonifazi, Instructional Assistant, Lincoln, 06/02/2026; Georgina Castellanos, Instructional Assistant, EN, 05/19/2026; Melissa Goldenson, Instructional Assistant, AS, 06/02/2026; Sandra Morales, Lunch/Recess Supervisor, EN, 04/24/2026; Sumathi Natarajan, Lunch/Recess Supervisor, ES, 05/08/2026; Luciene Sanchez Oliveira, Lunch/Recess Supervisor, HSYL, 05/08/2026; Yharosliv Cruz, 4th Grade Teacher, DL, 06/02/2026; Christine Keil, LBS1 Teacher, TL, 06/02/2026; Andie Sobotka, PE Teacher, MN, 06/02/2026; Victoria Velazquez, LBS1 Teacher, DL, 06/02/2026.

6 Leave of Absence: Anna Chubchenko, Interventionist, DL, 08/17/2026; Cara Hunwick, Resource ELL Teacher, EN, 05/01/2026; Tatum Kreis, LBS1 Teacher, TL, 10/8/2026; Sarah Lawless, 1st Grade Teacher, ES, 05/12/2026; Andrea Carrero, HR Specialist, District, 06/22/2026; Yesenia Cisneros, Instructional Assistant, EN, 04/27/2026.

3 Change of Status: Colleen Hehr, Lead Payroll Specialist, District, 07/01/2026; Stacie Brettner, Assistant Principal, MS, 07/01/2026; Catherine Carani, LBS1 Teacher, 08/17/2026.

Dr. Hannigan presented Ms. Stacie Brettner as the proposed candidate for the Assistant Principal position at Middle School South for the 2026–2027 school year. He shared that the position was posted through major educational job platforms and attracted 53 applicants. Following a comprehensive interview process involving district administrators and middle school staff, Ms. Brettner was identified as the recommended candidate. Dr. Hannigan highlighted her commitment to student learning, collaboration, and leadership, as well as her strong connection to the Hawthorn community.

Dr. Hannigan also presented Ms. Kristina Franchi as the proposed candidate for the newly created Building Assistant Supervisor for Dual Language position. He reported that the position attracted 19 applicants and that, following a thorough interview process involving administrators and Dual Language representatives, Ms. Franchi was identified as the recommended candidate. Dr. Hannigan noted that her experience, collaborative approach, and dedication to students and families make her well-suited for the leadership role.

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

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

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

Following Board approval, Ms. Kristina Franchi addressed the Board and expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to serve as Building Assistant Supervisor for Dual Language. She thanked the Board of Education, district leadership, and the Hawthorn

School of Dual Language community for their support. Ms. Franchi shared her commitment to fostering strong relationships, collaboration, and student-centered learning, and highlighted her passion for supporting multilingual learners, bilingual families, and diverse school communities. She expressed her enthusiasm for joining Hawthorn School District 73 and supporting a school community that values bilingualism, culture, and the unique identity of every student.

Alicia Corrigan reviewed the first two action items for Board consideration. She noted that the first action item involved a determination that had been discussed and considered during closed session. She also reviewed an updated Memorandum of Understanding regarding School Resource Officers that was previously discussed at the April Board meeting. Ms. Corrigan explained that the revised agreement prohibits School Resource Officers from issuing fines, tickets, or citations to students as a disciplinary consequence on school grounds or during school transportation and aligns with Board policy and Illinois law.

Jennifer Akin reviewed the final two action items for Board consideration. She explained that the Resolution Transferring Funds from the Educational Fund to the Debt Service Fund was necessary to process the third installment payment for leased Apple devices used by students and staff and to ensure compliance with accounting and financial reporting requirements. Ms. Akin also reviewed the annual appointment of the District Treasurer for the 2026–2027 school year, outlining the responsibilities of the position and recommending her appointment to serve in that capacity.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Student Suspension Review Determination

MOTION: George Fievet moved that the Board of Education approve the Student Suspension Review Determination; Stephanie Peters seconded the motion.

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

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

Hawthorn D73 Memorandum of Understanding - School Resource Officer

MOTION: Stephanie Peters moved that the Board of Education approve the Hawthorn D73 Memorandum of Understanding - School Resource Officer; George Fievet seconded the motion.

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

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

Resolution Transferring Funds from the Educational Fund to the Debt Service Fund

MOTION: Michael Engle moved that the Board of Education approve the Resolution Transferring Funds from the Educational Fund to the Debt Service Fund; George Fievet seconded the motion.

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

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

Appointment of Treasurer for the 2026-2027 School Year

MOTION: Karl Borchers moved that the Board of Education approve the Appointment of Treasurer for the 2026-2027 School Year; Stephanie Peters seconded the motion.

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

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

INFORMATION

1. Enrollment - Uploaded
 2. FOIA Log, Dr. Hannigan reported that the District has received seven FOIA requests since the last board meeting and responses were provided as identified in Section 11.2 of the Board agenda.
 3. Media Clips
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TOPICS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

No future topics at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Joel Finfer *made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by* Karl Borchers. The meeting *adjourned at 8:10p.m.* **All in favor? Yes.**

Motion carried: 7 ayes; 0 nays

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Flores

Robin Cleek, President

Julie Clifford, Secretary

Date Minutes Approved: _____