

Freeburg Elementary School
Monday, August 24, 2026
6:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Board of Education for Freeburg Community Consolidated School District No. 70 was held on Monday, August 24, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Meeting Room at Freeburg Elementary School.

Call to Order

Mrs. Trout called the meeting to order and asked for a roll call of the members.

Roll Call

In addition to Mrs. Trout, board members Bill May, Ben Mueth, Erin Shook, and Ben Howes were in attendance. Board members Ed Scheibel and Nicki Schilling were absent. Also in attendance were Dr. Mark Bearley, Superintendent and Mark Janssen, Financial Officer and Recording Secretary. Principals Cara Brown and Stacey Sommerfield were present along with Amanda Hargan, Director of Student Services.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Board and public stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Visitors

There were no visitors.

Recognition

Consent Agenda

Moved: Amber Trout

Seconded: Ben Mueth

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

- MINUTES OF THE JULY 27, 2026 REGULAR BOARD MEETING WITH A CHANGE NOTATING THE BOARD ENTERED INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION BY VIRTUE OF 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(8) NOT 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(1)
- INVESTMENT SUMMARY THROUGH AUGUST 21, 2026
- BUDGET SUMMARY THROUGH JULY 31, 2026

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 5-aye, 0-nay.

Approval of the Bills

Moved: Ben Mueth

Seconded: Erin Shook

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

AYES: May, Mueth, Shook, Howes, Trout
Motion Carried

Committee Updates

Petitions/Communications

Seven Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests were received this month, as outlined below:

1. DataBranch submitted five separate requests for purchasing data related to select vendors.
2. SmartProcure submitted one request for purchasing data dating back to May.
3. Allium submitted one request for information regarding the District's property and workers' compensation insurance.
4. David Stein submitted a request seeking correspondence between a staff member and another parent.

All requests were fulfilled within the required five-business-day timeframe.

Public Participation

The Board welcomed the public to the meeting.

Teachers' Report

Administrators' Report

Elementary School Principal's Report

Freeburg Elementary reported a smooth start to the school year, with strong attendance at Open House. During the first week, students participated in "Boot Camp" to review behavioral expectations throughout the building, along with a bus evacuation drill and review of bus expectations.

Language Arts teachers completed initial HMH curriculum training. Fall sports are underway, with baseball holding a 5-3 record and softball a 3-2 record. Staff have also proposed several fall after-school clubs, including math games, Lego building, book club, and a service and kindness club.

Games with Grownups for grades 3-5 is scheduled for September 11.

Primary Center Principal's Report

- Open House was held on August 10 and provided students and families an opportunity to visit the school and prepare for the new year.
- The staggered start for kindergarten was very successful, providing students with a calm environment and allowing staff to offer more individualized attention while modeling classroom and school expectations.
- Freeburg cheerleaders helped welcome students on the first day of school and brought school spirit and excitement to the start of the year.
- Students participated in "Boot Camp" to learn and review school-wide expectations of being respectful, responsible, and ready.

Upcoming Events:

- September 3 – Picture Day
- September 4 – Early Dismissal
- September 10 – PTO Back-to-School Picnic
- September 11 – Primary Center Games with Grownups for grades K-2

Director of Student Services Update

Special Education/504

We are off and running. I want to send a special thank you to the entire special education team; teachers, paras, related service, everyone. One of the first big jobs of the school year (which actually sometimes starts the previous May) is scheduling. Meeting the prescribed needs of kids while adhering to a school schedule and teachers' individual schedules is a daunting task. There are always adjustments and tweaks and I am so thankful for everyone's patience and flexibility. I am really excited for some big plans and activities this year so stay tuned.

MTSS/Response to Intervention

Fall benchmarking is completed and students who qualify for some extra academic support will begin receiving interventions next week. Thank you to everyone who supported the school wide screening.

Superintendent's Report

Enrollment and Suspension Report

The district began the school year with an enrollment of 696 students. Last year, the district began the year with 722 students. There was no discipline data to report.

District Update

Dr. Bearley thanked the staff for a great start to the new school year.

Dr. Bearley updated the Board on the District's need for an additional wheelchair-accessible vehicle. The District currently has one accessible bus, a 2002 model that requires frequent repairs, raising concerns about the lack of a backup vehicle if it becomes inoperable. He is exploring the purchase of an accessible van at an estimated cost of \$10,000 to \$15,000, which would provide greater flexibility at a lower cost than purchasing a new bus. Dr. Bearley may present a formal proposal for the Board's consideration next month.

Dr. Bearley informed the Board that Officer Scott proposed establishing a student crossing guard program at the intersection of Belleville Street and Lincoln Court. Student crossing guards would remain on the side of the road at each end of the crosswalk and assist students in determining when it is safe to cross. He noted that the PTO is interested in purchasing sashes for the student crossing guards.

Dr. Bearley congratulated Board Member Scheibel on attaining "Established Board Leader" status. This recognition is earned through participation in training and professional development during his years of service as a Board member.

Bullying Policy

The Board reviewed the district's bullying policy. Dr. Bearley noted the policy must be reviewed every two years. The Board re-evaluated and determined no changes were necessary.

Old Business

New Business

Moved: Ben Howes

Seconded: Ben Mueth

A MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE FY27 TENTATIVE BUDGET, AS PRESENTED (SEE ADDENDA).

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 5-aye, 0-nay.

Moved: Erin Shook Seconded: Bill May

A MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE 1ST READING OF THE POLICY CHANGE TO REVISE THE VACATION POLICY FOR 12-MONTH NON-CERTIFIED EMPLOYEES, AS PRESENTED (SEE ADDENDA).

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 5-aye, 0-nay.

Moved: Bill May Seconded: Ben Howes

A MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE 2ND READING OF BOARD POLICY REVISIONS, AS PRESENTED (SEE ADDENDA).

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 5-aye, 0-nay.

Moved: Ben Howes Seconded: Erin Shook

THE BOARD APPROVED THE FOLLOWING VOLUNTEER ASSISTANT COACHES, PENDING BACKGROUND CHECKS:

Jenny Hendrix – Cross Country
Ben Mueth – 7th Grade Baseball

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 5-aye, 0-nay.

Other Business

Adjournment

Moved: Ben Mueth Seconded: Erin Shook

There being no further business to come before this body, **A MOTION WAS MADE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 6:27 P.M.**

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 5-aye, 0-nay.

Amber Trout, President
Board of Education, Dist. #70

Erin Shook, Secretary
Board of Education, Dist. # 70