

Freeburg Elementary School
Monday, September 28, 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, September 28, 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, Ben Howes, and Nicki Schilling were in attendance. Also in attendance were Dr. Mark Bearley, Superintendent and Mark Janssen, Financial Officer and Recording Secretary. Amanda Hargan, Director of Student Services was also present.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Board and public stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Visitors

Visitors included district teachers Michelle Freebairn, Ashley Krakosky, and Jennifer Scheuchner. Hans Carpenter of the Freeburg Tribune was also present.

Recognition

Consent Agenda

Moved: Ben Mueth

Seconded: Erin Shook

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

- MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 24, 2026 REGULAR BOARD MEETING
- INVESTMENT SUMMARY THROUGH SEPTEMBER 25, 2026
- BUDGET SUMMARY THROUGH AUGUST 31, 2026

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 6-aye, 0-nay.

Approval of the Bills

Moved: Nicki Schilling

Seconded: Bill May

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

AYES: May, Mueth, Shook, Howes, Schilling, Trout

Motion Carried

Committee Updates

Petitions/Communications

Four Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests were received this month:

1. MetroEast Sun requested the names of employees who retired following the 2025–2026 school year and the names of newly hired employees.
2. Public Info Access requested direct phone numbers and extensions for Central Office staff.
3. StarBridge requested district purchasing data dating back to January 1, 2026.
4. Prairie State Wire requested information related to the District’s lobbying activities as they relate to the Freedom of Information Act.

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

Public Participation

The Board welcomed the public to the meeting.

Teachers’ Report

The District’s Response to Intervention (RtI) teachers, Michelle Freebairn, Ashley Krakosky, and Jennifer Scheuchner, provided the Board with an overview of the District’s RtI program and processes. Mrs. Freebairn reported that beginning-of-the-year student benchmarking has been completed. The benchmarking process is used to identify students who may benefit from additional academic support through RtI services and to help staff monitor student progress and determine appropriate interventions.

Mrs. Freebairn also explained that benchmarking data is used in conjunction with Lexia, the District’s literacy program, which provides individualized instruction and practice based on each student’s skill level and progress. Students work through the program at an individualized pace, allowing instruction and support to be targeted to their specific needs.

The next round of benchmarking will take place later this winter and will provide staff with updated data to evaluate student growth and determine whether adjustments to interventions or supports are needed.

Administrators’ Report

Elementary School Principal’s Report

- **Games with Grown-Ups:** Third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade students hosted Games with Grown-Ups. It was wonderful to see students enjoying quality time with their families. The event received many positive comments from families about how much they enjoyed the experience.
- **Band and Chorus:** The band and chorus recently held their first concert of the school year and did a fantastic job.
- **Learning Highlights:** A variety of engaging learning activities have been taking place throughout the building. Third-grade students dressed as idioms, such as “social butterfly” and “chip on his shoulder.” Fourth-grade students built and assessed chain reactions, ELA students performed comma “surgery” on sentences, and eighth-grade Science students conducted helicopter lab trials.
- **Cross Country:** The Cross Country team recently concluded its season, with students demonstrating significant growth and achieving numerous personal records.
- **PTO Back-to-School Event:** Many families attended the PTO Back-to-School/“Meet the Principal” event and enjoyed an evening of fun and fellowship.

Upcoming Events

- **October 8:** First Quarter ends. Students will have an early dismissal.
- **October 9:** Teacher Institute Day; no student attendance.
- **October 12:** No school.

Primary Center Principal's Report

- **Games with Grown-Ups:** The event had an excellent turnout, with students and their families enjoying the activities.
- **First Grade:** First-grade students completed their farm unit with a Barn Dance. Students also celebrated Johnny Appleseed by dressing up and participating in a variety of apple-themed activities.
- **Pre-K and Kindergarten:** Pre-K and Kindergarten students participated in an apple-picking field trip, which had a strong turnout of parent volunteers. Both grade levels concluded their apple units with a variety of engaging activities.

Upcoming Events

- **September 30:** An informational parent night will be held featuring Amy Maus, who will present and discuss ADHD.
- **Week of October 6:** In recognition of Fire Prevention Week, students will visit the local firehouse.

Director of Student Services Update

Mrs. Hargan provided an overview of several activities designed to help students develop practical life and social skills through hands-on experiences. One example is the Hydration Station, where students take and fulfill drink orders for staff members throughout both buildings. Students are responsible for greeting customers, taking orders, handling money and making change, preparing and delivering drinks, and practicing courteous and professional communication. Through these activities, students strengthen functional academic, communication, social, and independent living skills in real-world settings. Mrs. Hargan noted that the Hydration Station is just one of several opportunities being provided to help students gain meaningful, practical experiences and develop skills that can be applied beyond the classroom.

Mrs. Hargan also reminded the Board Amy Maus will be here to give a presentation on ADHD to students and parents this Wednesday, September 30. The presentation starts at 6:30 pm.

Superintendent's Report

Enrollment and Suspension Report

Dr. Bearley reported that current District enrollment stands at 698 students, an increase of three students from last month's enrollment of 695. He also reviewed the District's discipline data for the month with the Board.

District Update

Dr. Bearley thanked the District's Response to Intervention (RtI) teachers for their continued hard work and dedication to supporting students on a daily basis.

Dr. Bearley also recognized Mr. Havel and Mr. Kennedy for installing the new outdoor volleyball net for students to use during recess. He noted that the new equipment has already been well received and used extensively by students.

Dr. Bearley informed the Board that several teachers from Belleville District #118 will visit the District next week to work with staff on the newly adopted ELA curriculum. Dr. Bearley reached out to Dr. Boike at Belleville #118, who offered the assistance of the District's instructional coaches. Because Belleville #118 has several years of experience with the curriculum, its instructional coaches will be able to share their knowledge and practical experience with Freeburg #70 teachers. The collaboration is intended to support staff as they become familiar with the new curriculum and help ease the transition during its initial implementation.

Finally, Dr. Bearley thanked the District's fall coaches for their flexibility and cooperation in managing schedules during periods of extreme heat. The weather required several adjustments, including moving baseball and softball games to the evening and holding cross-country practices before school to take advantage of cooler temperatures. He also expressed appreciation to the Freeburg Park District for its cooperation in allowing the District to hold games under the lights during the cooler evening hours.

Mr. Janssen presented the salary compensation report. This report must be presented to the Board and posted on the district website by October 1.

Old Business

New Business

Moved: Erin Shook

Seconded: Ben Howes

A MOTION WAS MADE TO ACCEPT BOARD MEMBER ED SCHIEBEL'S LETTER OF RESIGNATION, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY (SEE ADDENDA).

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 6-aye, 0-nay.

Moved: Ben Mueth

Seconded: Bill May

A MOTION WAS MADE TO MOVE INTO A BUDGET HEARING.

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 6-aye, 0-nay.

Motion: Nicki Schilling

Seconded: Ben Howes

A MOTION WAS MADE TO RE-ENTER REGULAR SESSION.

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 6-aye, 0-nay.

Moved: Bill May

Seconded: Erin Shook

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

AYES: May, Mueth, Shook, Howes, Schilling, Trout

Motion Carried

Moved: Ben Mueth

Seconded: Nicki Schilling

A MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE 2ND 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, 6-aye, 0-nay.

Moved: Amber Trout

Seconded: Erin Shook

A MOTION WAS MADE TO APPOINT NICOLE SCHILLING AS THE DISTRICT'S DELEGATE FOR THE ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS DELEGATE ASSEMBLY.

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 6-aye, 0-nay.

Motion: Erin Shook

Seconded: Ben Mueth

A MOTION WAS MADE TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 6:35 PM TO CONSIDER:

THE APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION, DISCIPLINE, PERFORMANCE, OR DISMISSAL OF SPECIFIC EMPLOYEES OF THE DISTRICT INCLUDING HEARING TESTIMONY ON A COMPLAINT LODGED AGAINST AN EMPLOYEE. 5 ILCS 120/2(C)(1)

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 6-aye, 0-nay.

Moved: Bill May

Seconded: Ben Mueth

A MOTION WAS MADE TO RE-ENTER REGULAR SESSION AT 6:48 PM.

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 6-aye, 0-nay.

Moved: Ben Howes

Seconded: Erin Shook

A MOTION WAS MADE TO EMPLOY BRYAN BLOMENKAMP AS THE ASSISTANT BOYS' BASKETBALL COACH, AS PRESENTED.

AYES: May, Mueth, Shook, Howes, Schilling, Trout

Motion Carried

Moved: Bill May

Seconded: Ben Mueth

A MOTION WAS MADE TO EMPLOY AMANDA LENT AS A PARAPROFESSIONAL/NOON SUPERVISOR, PENDING HER BACKGROUND CHECK, AS PRESENTED.

AYES: May, Mueth, Shook, Howes, Schilling, Trout

Motion Carried

Moved: Bill May

Seconded: Nicki Schilling

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

Girls' Basketball – Rachel Lisch, Jack Bayers, and Jenna Breitwieser

Boys' Basketball – Matt Trout, Jake Howes, and Ben Mueth

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 6-aye, 0-nay.

Other Business

Adjournment

Moved: Bill May

Seconded: Nicki Schilling

There being no further business to come before this body, **A MOTION WAS MADE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 6:50 P.M.**

Upon a voice vote, Motion Carried, 6-aye, 0-nay.

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

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