

Freeburg Elementary School  
Monday, August 10, 2020  
6:00 p.m.

A special meeting of the Board of Education for Freeburg Community Consolidated School District No. 70 was held on Monday, August 10, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in the Freeburg Elementary School District #70 Cafeteria. The meeting was also broadcasted on Zoom.

### **Call to Order**

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

### **Roll Call**

In addition to Mrs. Bauman, board members Andy Bittle, Michelle Morgan, Jamie Smith (via telephone), Ed Scheibel, Ron Humphries, and Michelle Foppe were also in attendance. Also in attendance were Tomi Diefenbach, Superintendent (via telephone), Mark Janssen, Assistant Superintendent and Recording Secretary, Ryan Wittenauer, and Justin Imm, Principals.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

The Board and public stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Public Participation**

Visitors to the meeting included district teachers Sarah Gagen, Abbey Payne, and Paula Mullins. Other visitors included Tara Garcia, Chelsea Bergmann, Kristie Ingram, Amanda Bryant, Stephanie Hitchcock, Donna Kisgen, Heather Beccue, Bill May, and Charles Ellett.

Sarah Gagen addressed the Board and spoke of the importance of face-to-face instruction. She emphasized the need for Kindergarten teachers to see their students in-person to teach. She explained remote learning is difficult for students in Kindergarten.

Brian Garcia cited a letter from Superintendent of Schools from the Belleville Diocese. In the letter, it was explained schools can go back to school in-person. Mr. Garcia expressed a desire for our district to follow that lead.

Bill May spoke to the board on the importance of in-person learning. He is the father of an incoming Kindergarten student and strongly implored the district to remain with the hybrid plan.

Donna Kisgin spoke to the Board explaining the guidance from the St. Clair County Health Department is not a mandate. Rather, it was "strong encouragement". She believes it is better for our children to stay with the hybrid plan.

Abbey Payne addressed the Board stating she believes children are safer in school, rather than at home. At school, students will be kept safe with the safeguards in place and the face-to-face interactions to ensure their mental health, as well.

Amanda Bryant explained to the Board she moved to Freeburg for the excellent schools. She wants her children to be in school and being taught by our teachers in-person.

Kristie Ingram cited professionals from the CDC and pediatricians are all recommending students go back to school.

All board members thanked those who spoke and for expressing their views.

Mrs. Bauman then asked each board member for their thoughts. Mr. Bittle explained he was inclined to stay with the hybrid plan approved last month. Ms. Morgan explained she has a hard time with the decision but she agreed with Mr. Bittle. Mr. Smith and Mr. Scheibel both expressed agreement and implored parents to be diligent with their child's health to ensure everyone's safety. Mr. Humphries disagreed stating he believes remote was the better option for the safety of students and staff. Mrs. Foppe stated she agreed with staying with the hybrid plan.

Mrs. Bauman explained since the consensus was the Board stay with the hybrid plan, there is no need for further action since that plan has already been approved.

## **Other Business**

## **Adjournment**

Moved: Andy Bittle

Seconded: Ed Scheibel

There being no further business to come before this body, **A MOTION WAS MADE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 6:49 P.M.**

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

Barbara Bauman, President  
Board of Education, Dist. #70

Jamie Smith, Secretary  
Board of Education, Dist. # 70