

# THEY CHOSE TO TEACH IN THE PRETZEL CITY.

*WHY YOU SHOULD, TOO.*



**FSD145**  
Freeport School District



**THE SIX EDUCATORS FEATURED ON OUR COVER BECAME “HONORARY PRETZELS” BY CHOOSING TO WORK IN FREEPORT’S PUBLIC SCHOOLS. COULD IT BE THE RIGHT PLACE FOR YOU, TOO?**

**WHO WE ARE**

Teaching is more than just a profession for most teachers at Freeport School District 145 (FSD145). It is their calling. If you are excited to share your knowledge with your students, compelled to help shape and influence young lives, and eager to team with other professionals to create a fun, progressive, and productive work environment centered on strong relationships, Freeport schools may be your perfect landing spot. *Want to know more? Here are some of the principles that will guide your work if you choose FSD145.*



**OUR MISSION**

In partnership with students, family, and community, we educate every student for the challenges of today and the opportunities of tomorrow through the continuous pursuit of excellence.

**OUR DIVERSITY FOCUS**

One of the reasons FSD145 is such a great place to teach is because we value teachers of diverse backgrounds who reflect the rich cultures of our community and our students.



**WHY THE “PRETZEL” NICKNAME?**

Quite simply, Freeport was a prodigious pretzel and beer producer in the 1880s. Being well-known for both, locals preferred “**Pretzels**” for the name of their local school athletic teams. This proud tradition provides lots of fun for staff, students, and the community, and has given Freeport national acclaim on ESPN, the David Letterman show, and in other media outlets.

**PRETZEL PROFILE**



**DANIELLE JACKSON**

School Counselor,  
5th and 6th grade  
14 years



FSD is not just a place to work, but a place to build relationships and make lifelong friends. We are a family. In Freeport, you gain valuable experience as an educator and become part of a great community.



**DISTRICT STUDENTS**



**RACIAL/ETHNIC BREAKDOWN**

WHITE  
51.2%

BLACK  
24.4%

MULTI-RACIAL  
12.9%

HISPANIC  
10.4%

ASIAN  
0.8%

NATIVE AMERICAN  
0.2%

PACIFIC ISLANDER  
0.2%



**ATTENDANCE RATE**

93%



**LOW-INCOME RATE**

66.5%



**DISTRICT EMPLOYEES**

CERTIFIED  
342

SUPPORT STAFF  
350

ADMINISTRATORS  
21

TEACHERS WITH  
MASTER’S DEGREES  
53.2%

MINORITY TEACHERS  
7.8%

# WHERE WE WORK

Nine school buildings and two alternative sites make up the physical homes of our students and staff. It is at these places where our talented teachers and staff members focus on the academic success, social/emotional growth, and safety of our diverse student population. Here is a quick summary of each school.



**BLACKHAWK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** is an eight-time Illinois Spotlight School Award recipient. The building includes 20 classrooms, a multi-purpose room with stage, gym, library, mobile computer labs, expansive playground area, and multiple play structures.



**CENTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** has a diverse student population and houses the district's High Academic Potential Program (HAPP). Students are assigned a classroom teacher, but spend time with the art, music, and physical education teachers during the week.



**EMPIRE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** has been recognized as a Blue Ribbon School and a National School of Excellence. Our school has also received the Excellence Award for Exemplary Academic Performance on the Learning Standards. Our dedicated parent & volunteer communities support the students and staff throughout the year.



**JONES-FARRAR INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB) WORLD SCHOOL** was authorized as an IB World School in June 2013. IB schools share a common philosophy - a commitment to high quality and challenging international education. The school houses 15 classrooms, a gymnasium, an inquiry center, and a computer lab.



**LINCOLN-DOUGLAS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** has earned the Illinois Spotlight School distinction seven times. Students are assigned a classroom teacher, and additionally spend time with art, music, and physical education teachers during the week.



**TAYLOR PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** has been recognized as a Blue Ribbon School and a Spotlight School for Academic Achievement. The building includes 14 elementary classrooms, PASS Pre-school, Special Education services, and Family Resource Coordinator services.



**CARL SANDBURG SCHOOL** serves all 5th and 6th grade students in the District. The school is an AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) Elementary site. AVID Elementary strategies are embedded into the daily instruction of all classrooms in order to help develop the academic habits students will need to be successful in middle school, high school, and college. The school features 40 classrooms, a gymnasium, a conference room, and a cafeteria.



**FREEPORT MIDDLE SCHOOL** serves all 7th and 8th grade students in the District. The school features 56 classrooms, a gymnasium, a conference room, a cafeteria, a pool, a theatre, Special Education services, and Family Resource Coordinator services. Students have the opportunity to participate in numerous extracurricular and co-curricular activities, including the district's Grammy award-winning music program.



**FREEPORT HIGH SCHOOL** is the sole high school serving the District. The school includes 80 classrooms, two gymnasiums, a technology wing, Pretzel Stadium, and a 400-seat cafeteria. Students have the opportunity to participate in numerous extracurriculars, including our Grammy award-winning music program. Students also have access to dual-credit opportunities, the CollegeNOW program with Highland Community College, courses through the Career and Technical Education Consortium, and AVID elective courses. Our College & Career Center also provides guidance to our students as they prepare for life after graduation. FHS is a 1-to-1 campus: all students in the school are provided with a Chromebook for their studies.



## KATELYN COPUS

Speech and Language Pathologist  
10 years



There are many opportunities to get involved in the community. I coach Special Olympics soccer and elementary-level soccer, and also sit on a couple of boards. I like being involved in the community in which I live, and that has been rewarding to me. My family also lives in the area and I want to give back to the district and community where I grew up. Once a pretzel, always a pretzel!



## WHAT WE ACCOMPLISH

FSD145 is proud to boast a full array of award-winning music, speech, ROTC, and athletic programs that bring pride to our students and give identity to our community. From orchestra to AP classes to dual-credit courses with our local community college, we are always pushing to expand our reach. Our district is also working hard to create a 21st century learning environment that is safe and engaging for our students and well-positioned to do more big things. Every day holds small successes that, properly nurtured and shared, will produce large accomplishments.



With the help of its innovative staff, committed administrators, and dedicated board members, FSD145 shows its Pretzel Pride every day of the year. Though we always have more to do, here is a look at some of our most recent achievements.

- Implemented 1:1 Chromebook technology at Freeport High School
- Approved freshman academy and high school career academy model
- Focused on project-based learning initiatives
- Implemented Innovative K-12 English, reading and math curriculum
- Increased high school Advanced Placement, dual -credit, and business course offerings
- Expanded AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) to fourth grade
- Implemented new bilingual curriculum and assessments
- Introduced the latest in science and social studies curriculum
- Provided additional social work support in each building
- Strong partnership with the local Boys & Girls Club
- Continued diversity training for all educators
- Expanded Preschool Program to include an all-day classroom
- Added behavior support specialists at the elementary schools
- Focused on involvement of community members through volunteering and mentoring



## NATASHA JACKSON

Elementary Teacher, Kindergarten  
9 years



Working at FSD#145 means you are part of a learning community that strives to improve. We have a Grammy Award winning music program, AVID program, technology in our classrooms, and a strong connection with Highland Community College. Plus, Freeport is only 1-2 hours away from several major cities and tourist destinations, so you can get there quickly and not miss out on fun events.

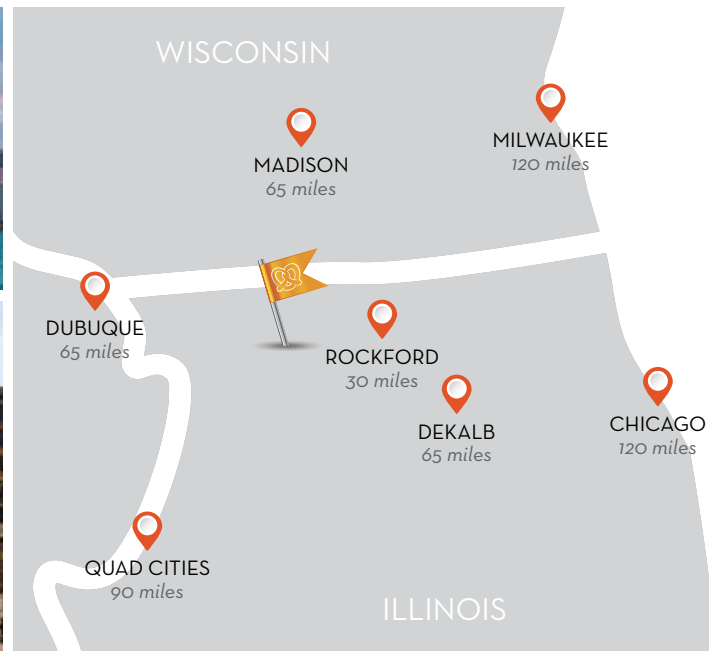




Photo courtesy of The Journal Standard.

**THE PRETZEL CITY IS A GREAT PLACE TO TEACH, GROW, AND LIVE.**

Geographically speaking, Freeport, Illinois, is a small town with a district population of 26,000 nestled in the rolling hills of northwestern Illinois. Our proximity to several larger cities, however, gives our residents all the perks of a small town - affordable housing, short commutes, and friendly neighborhoods - while allowing frequent trips to urban centers for concerts, sporting events, festivals, and other activities if you want them. In one to two hours, you can easily be in the middle of it all...but not have to battle the traffic, incur the costs, or stand in the lines inherent to big city life every day. Plus, with a plethora of festivals and events downtown and around Stephenson County, there is something fun to do every weekend right here at home.



**WHAT ELSE DOES FREEPORT OFFER?**

**GREAT PARKS.** Our city is home to ten parks which include an abundance of fun destinations to explore and activities to pursue. Enjoy over 36 holes of golf, miniature golf, disk golf, tennis, ice skating, swimming, hiking, biking, picnicking, kayaking, softball, a skate park, and more. We even have a waterfall, a carousel, and a miniature replica of Wrigley Field that hosts peewee baseball games and Wiffle ball tournaments.

**IMPRESSIVE THEATERS.** The Winneshiek Players is the country's oldest continuously running amateur theater, offering plays year round, while the Lindo Theatre, built in 1922, was designed by world famous Chicago architects C.W. Rapp and George L. Rapp. Today, it has nine screens and auditorium seating. The high school theater and community college also offer excellent productions.

**IMPACTFUL HISTORY AND MUSEUMS.** Stephenson County is home to more than seven museums that celebrate the rich history of the area. The second of the famous Lincoln-Douglas Debates was held right here, and social activist and Hull House founder Jane Addams was born and raised in Cedarville.

**LIFELONG LEARNING.** Highland Community College offers college-level credit, junior college sports teams, and a YMCA on its beautiful campus. The college offers dual-credit courses for our high school students, many of them taught by FSD145 instructors.

**GOOD EATS AND DRINKS.** Freeport offers multiple dining out options, which serve a variety of traditional American fare and ethnic cuisines. The area is also rich with craft breweries, wineries, and distilleries, and hosts the Pretzel City Brew Fest each fall.



**PRETZEL PROFILE**

**JOHN GIUFFRE**  
 Biology and AP Biology Teacher  
 HCC Biology Instructor  
 Assistant Wrestling Coach, High School  
 17 years

Freeport and northwest Illinois is not the exciting, big city life, but that is why I like it. It is easy to get around and affordable, and there are many outdoor opportunities in the beautiful rolling hills...It's amazing that for a small town, our school is able to offer so many quality programs to the students. I feel supported by the school district and they give me the resources I need, while also allowing me freedom to be an individual and bring my personal talents to the classroom. It's been a great fit for me and for my children.



## JOSH BOST

Social Studies Teacher, High School  
Golden Apple Scholar  
1 year



The most rewarding thing about teaching at FSD145 is the support I get from everyone inside and outside of the building – co-workers, administrators, and community members. I feel like I can go to anyone in the district, if I know them or not, and ask them for help. I realized this during the first session of new teacher academy when all of the mentors made themselves so readily available to me. Freeport has been extremely welcoming and friendly. This is a great place to work.



## WHAT YOU GET

If you choose to work in Freeport, you will find a welcoming community, inspirational co-workers, and a challenging but fulfilling position. You'll also receive a competitive salary and benefits package while working and living in a region with an affordable cost of living.

### PACKAGE HIGHLIGHTS

- Educational assistance funds to help you continue your studies
- Competitive salary (see insert or [www.fsd145.org/employment](http://www.fsd145.org/employment) for salary schedule)
- \$1,000 for participation in our New Teacher Academy orientation program
- Healthcare packages that include health, dental, and vision coverage—you can select one or all (ala carte)
- Wellness/preventative services covered 100% with no deductible with qualifying plans
- MD Live telehealth visits at 100% coverage
- District sponsored \$10,000 term life insurance policy
- Wellness Program for those covered by FSD145 healthcare plans – free flu shots, free biometric screenings, wellness seminars, monthly health challenges, and more
- Flexible spending accounts – all regular employees who are scheduled to work 20 hours or more per week are offered participation in a medical and dependent care spending account
- **Opportunities for federal student loan forgiveness; FSD145 is a qualifying district for the Federal Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program**

*From a “bang from your buck” perspective, Freeport gives you lots more options than many larger cities.*



### COST OF LIVING INDEX COMPARISON

The Freeport area has a lower than average cost of living index, meaning that your dollar will go farther here than many other places in the country:

US AVERAGE: 100	CHAMPAIGN, IL: 92
FREEPORT: 82	CHICAGO, IL: 110
ROCKFORD, IL: 85	DAVENPORT, IA: 90
DUBUQUE, IA: 91	NAPERVILLE, IL: 128

Source: Council for Community and Economic Research

### Consider Freeport School District 145 in YOUR professional plans.

For more information about FSD145 or if you have additional questions, please explore our website at [www.fsd145.org](http://www.fsd145.org) or contact our Human Resources Department at 815-232-0306. Fill out an application at [www.fsd145.org/employment](http://www.fsd145.org/employment)

Freeport School District 145 is an Equal Opportunity Employer



COME TO FREEPORT. **BECOME A PRETZEL.**  
FIND YOUR UNIQUE TWIST.



## CANDACE RODRIGUEZ

Elementary Teacher, 4th grade  
13 years



When I first came to the district, I interviewed with an administrative team that seemed amazingly supportive, student-centered, and genuinely invested. From my experiences, I knew that wasn't the norm, and I wanted to be a part of the unique environment they seemed to be nurturing. Now, I am directly involved with this innovative educational experience.





**FSD145**

Freeport School District

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