



MORTON

UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

Board of Education Meeting Highlights

November 15, 2022

Administrative Reports—

Superintendent's Report— Dr. Smock

- ◆ November 15th was Board Member Appreciation Day. The Board received a small token of appreciation. Dr. Smock thanked the Board and shared some special notes of thanks from students. Lettie Brown, Grundy, Jefferson and Lincoln expressed their thanks. They mentioned Mystery Science, playground equipment and GaGa Ball Pits. Many were grateful for their service to the school district and our community. Mr. Tom Neeley was recognized as a Legacy Board Member by the IASB for his 33 years of service as a School Board Member. Dr. Smock thanked him for his service. He was one of only six in Illinois to achieve this status. Mr. Neeley received the award, giving thanks for the opportunity to serve with many wonderful people over the years.

School Board President —Mr. Braker

- ◆ President Braker thanked Lincoln School and Mrs. Horchem for their hospitality and their presentations. He thanked everyone. He noted it is an honor to serve. He reflected that schools are a big part of what makes Morton great. It is humbling to see all they pour into their students. He credited the administration, teachers, and staff for the work they do. They make our schools great. He, also, thanked the Administration for further explaining the School Report Card data that does not tell the whole story at first glance. Dr. Smock thanked Dr. Teater for his work.

Discussion Items —

The Board discussed many items. They shared their plan for covering learning opportunities at the School Board Conference. Mr. Rudd will be our Morton 709 delegate to the assembly, where he will vote on Resolutions to help guide the IASB leadership and how they represent member school districts before our legislators. The Board discussed the resolutions, asked questions, and offered clarification on whether we should support or oppose the items going before the assembly.

Mr. Schuck presented the plan for Summer Facilities Work at Jefferson, MJHS, and MHS. The facilities committee, Mr. Braker and Mr. Rudd, met with Dr. Smock, Keach Architecture, and Ms. Kowalski. The Softball Field project is already underway. The number of projects is limited by the short summer weeks. President Braker noted [\(40:14\)](#) we need a committee of the whole soon. Dr. Smock added that there was much discussion. A consult was brought in to help evaluate how to best address the Jefferson floor replacement. We will do phase one of two phases this summer. MJHS needs roofing addressed and some masonry issues. MHS will receive some roofing and additional STEM classrooms. Mr. Braker noted that we will go over budget, but these projects need to be done. He wanted to be sure everyone was comfortable with going over budget. We have the funds available for use on these projects. Ms. Kowalski nodded approval. Some things could go into next year's budget, if necessary.

Ms. Kowalski presented the Property Tax Relief Grant. She would like to apply for this grant, again. It reduces the burden on the local property taxpayer [\(58:00\)](#). We did not receive the grant last year. She presented and explained the ins and outs of this very competitive grant. If awarded, we will not have to reapply. Once granted, it is annual. \$877, 663 is the FY23 amount. The board asked some great questions. Dr. Smock recommended to the Board we go for it. The Board gave support.

Assistant Superintendent, Joe Sander, presented the 2023-24 School Calendar. It is a draft and not final. The Board really liked the idea of pushing back the start date for school. Dr. Sander shared that he presented three drafted calendars to the MEA for their input. The draft calendar comes to the Board with MEA input and approval. One other note of newness, is the plan to pilot different Parent/Teacher conference days for different buildings based on age. MJHS and MHS would hold conferences on October 19-20, 2023. Grade schools conferences would be on November 9-10, 2023. There is a consensus this will better serve our students. The Board asked questions for clarity and understanding. Dr. Smock noted that they are the ones who officially approved the calendar. We will bring it back to them on December 13, 2023 for approval.

Next Meetings— December 13, 2022, Regular Meeting, MEAC, 5:30 p.m.

January 17, 2023 5:30 PM & January 24, 2023 7:00 PM (Board Meets with SSS at 5:30 PM at MEAC)

February 7, 2023 5:30 PM & February 21, 2023 at 7:00 PM (Board Meets at MJHS at 5:30 PM)

Valerie Smith—

*Administrative Assistant to Superintendent/School Board
Morton Unit School Dist. 709*

If you wish to learn more about a subject, you may view an archived broadcast of the meeting on [MP-TV](#) available on the District website, and/or watch our website for posted minutes after being approved by the Board of Education.