

## MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

July 7, 2020

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held July 7, 2020, at the Morton Education and Administration Center.

### REGULAR MEETING

#### Call to Order and Roll Call –

President Shad Beaty called the Regular Meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

Members present: Dr. Shad Beaty, Mr. Jeff Schmidgall, Mr. Kevin Austin,  
Mr. Tim Braker, Dr. David Cross, Mr. Tom Neeley, Mr. Bart Rinkenberger

**Audience Presentation** – Dr. Hill read an email from a group of MHS alumni asking that the school district review its history/English curriculum to determine if students are receiving an accurate representation of Black history/issues contributing to a more diverse education.

#### **Reports –**

##### Administrative –

##### Freedom of Information -

Dr. Hill reported there have been no Freedom of Information requests.

##### External Counseling Report –

Mr. Walt Nunnally of Illini Family Counseling offers early intervention counseling services to MHS students two days per week. The report includes the number of students served by semester and types of issues encountered.

##### Superintendent's Report -

- Dr. Hill reported on the planning taking place for reopening school in August. Guidelines from ISBE will be followed. A recommendation will be brought to the Board at the July 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. In planning for in-person learning, he noted:
  - The focus will be on learning over logistics.
  - Will try to mitigate risk, but will not be able to eliminate risk.
  - As a school community, all have to love and respect their neighbor.
  - Will accommodate those at medical risk
  - Some remote learning will probably have to take place.

- Dr. Hill reported on preliminary survey results. The survey was sent to all parents in the school district concerning the possibility of returning to in-person learning in August.
  - 75.9% of student population is represented.
  - 64% responded they will return to school.
  - 30% will return to school, but prefer certain conditions be in place.
  - 54% of those 30% would like students to be able to take breaks from wearing masks during the day.
  - 12.7% would like mask wearing be strictly adhered to.
  - 11% would like physical distancing adhered to.
  - 5% will not attend with the vast majority stating it is due to the mask requirement.
  - 11 students will not attend due to medical conditions.
- Dr. Hill reported that athletics and marching band are working through the Phase 4 guidelines recently released by IHSA.
- Dr. Hill noted the “*Communicator*” will be going to press on July 21. It is being delayed to be able to include the most up-to-date relevant information on starting school in August.

The archived discussion can be viewed on [MP-TV](#) at 8:40.

Mr. Neeley thanked Dr. Hill for his efforts in working with area Superintendents in contacting state legislators and the Governor’s office lobbying for local control in making return to school decisions.

Dr. Smock updated the Board on hiring of professional staff. As of today, all teaching positions have been filled. There is a possibility for the need for two additional positions for Early Childhood and Kindergarten. Principals will know more after registration on July 30. Due to the COVID-19 circumstances in the spring, Kindergarten screening could not be held, but there is a roster of those that had registered for the screening. Instructional aides and coaching positions will be hired at the July 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. At this time, the C.H.I. (cooperative work-study program for seniors) is uncertain as students may not be able to be placed at a position of employment.

He noted his appreciation for the administrative team for getting positions filled with quality people.

### **President’s Report –**

Dr. Beaty noted the district Administrators are involved in much more work this summer due to COVID-19. Having 94% of survey respondents commit to returning to school speaks volumes to the work they have done. Things will look different in the school setting, but everyone needs to be flexible. Mr. Schmidgall noted he has heard positive comments from parents concerning returning to in-person learning five days per week. Mr. Neeley added that everyone needs to be prepared for remote learning sometime during the school year, as well.

**Discussion Item –**

**2020 – 2021 Revised School Calendar –**

The 2020-2021 school calendar was approved by the Board of Education at its November 19, 2019 meeting. Dr. Smock noted the calendar is being brought back to the Board for two reasons:

- The first has to do with a new law that just passed that makes November 3, 2020, (Election Day) a mandatory school holiday for everyone. One day will need to be added to the end of the school year to compensate for that day. The following day, November 4, will be a regular school day instead of a half day professional development day.
- The other change has to do with a proposal to create a more flexible calendar if there is a need to close school for a length of time. In this flexible calendar, we would incorporate ten emergency days (instead of five) into the calendar, and school would run from August 10<sup>th</sup> (same start date) through June 7<sup>th</sup>. As with all emergency days, this would be a worst-case scenario in order to maximize the number of in-person instructional days. If there were no closure days, the teachers’ last day would be May 21<sup>st</sup>. Up to 10 closure days in the midst of the school year potentially would not count as instructional days nor teacher workdays, unless the district decided to implement remote learning. Like snow days, a closure may just push back the last day of school.

Dr. Smock noted the MEA Executive Committee is receptive to the changes. It is imperative that if approved, the changes be communicated to parents and faculty so as not to plan vacations until after June 7.

**Action Items –**

**Approve Non-Resident Student Per Board Policy 7:60 –**

Per Board Policy 7:60, the Board of Education can approve a request for a non-resident student to attend the Morton Schools. It is the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the request that the Board of Education has received, per the guidelines and parameters outlined in this policy.

Motion by Mr. Rinkenberger, second by Dr. Cross, that the Board of Education approve the request for a non-resident student to attend the Morton Schools.

Roll Call:                      Yea 7                      Nay 0

Motion carried.

**Approve Non-Resident Tuition Student per Board Policy 7:60 –**

Delavan Unit School District has made a request for Morton CUSD 709 to consider again accepting a tuition student for our Young Adult Life Academy for the 2020-21 school year. Delavan does not operate their own young adult life skills program. Given yearly Board approval, students from Delavan High School have attended the MHS Instructional Program and Young Adult Life Academy since the 2014-15 school year.

The recommended tuition rate for each student is based on the actual per pupil cost to operate our Young Adult Life Academy during the 2019-20 school year, as reported to ISBE through program cost centers and personnel reporting.

Motion by Dr. Cross, second by Mr. Schmidgall, that the Board of Education approve the acceptance of one tuition student from Delavan Unit School District to our Young Adult Life Academy at MHS for the 2020-21 school year.

Roll Call:                      Yea 7                      Nay 0

Motion carried.

**Approve Resolution Regarding Intergovernmental Agreements with Village of Morton**

The agreements with the Village will allow for an exchange of real estate between the Parties and the subsequent construction of a new parking lot at Morton Jr. High School, along with curb, gutter, and sidewalk improvements in the area to be completed by the Village and with expenses shared by the Village and the School District.

Dr. Hill noted that the Village Board approved the agreement at its meeting last evening. He showed a comparison of the original plan without the additional land for parking. Dr. Beaty added that the plan will be safer for students and the traffic flow will be much improved. He noted the exceptional working relationship with the Village on completing this process.

Dr. Hill shared the proposed phasing plan for the work to be completed. All depends on weather and work that needs to be completed by Ameren:

- Stage 1 & 1A/1B/1C – begin August 3 with completion by November 15
- Stage 2A/2B – begin March 15 with completion by June 30, 2021

Motion by Mr. Schmidgall, second by Mr. Austin, that the Board of Education approve the Resolution authorizing the execution of a real estate exchange agreement and a post-closing intergovernmental agreement with the Village of Morton.

Roll Call:                      Yea 7                      Nay 0

Motion carried.

**Consent Agenda –**

Motion by Mr. Neeley, second by Mr. Rinkenberger, that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented:

Approve Personnel Report  
 Approve Substitute Pay Rate  
 Approve April 2020 and May 2020 Treasurer's Report  
 Approve Minutes of the June 2, 2020, Regular Meeting; the June 2, 2020, Regular Meeting Closed Session; the June 23, 2020, Regular Meeting; and the June 23, 2020, Regular Meeting Closed Session.

Approve Bills and Payroll

	Bills 6-5-20	Bills 6-12-20	Bills 6-26-20	Bills 7-1-20	Bills 7-3-20	Payroll 5-22-20	Payroll 6-5-20	Payroll 6-19-20	Payroll 6-30-20
Ed. Fund	\$25,380.73	\$685,342.89	\$289,196.52	\$197,434.02	\$1,361.65	\$818,540.60	\$717,052.32	\$688,529.67	\$16,443.95
Bldg. Fund	1,501.68	104,799.28	71,195.54	--	--	45,527.19	46,879.69	49,955.95	--
Trans. Fund	159.10	9,025.62	2,276.63	99,592.70	--	23,084.03	11,102.23	11,102.23	--
TORT Fund	--	--	--	342,101.00	--	--	--	--	--
IMRF Fund	--	--	--	--	--	44,972.32	32,975.15	32,975.15	221.25

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

**Closed Session –**

Motion by Dr. Cross, second by Mr. Austin, that the Board of Education enter into closed session for discussion of Personnel, Purchase/Sale of Property, and Student Discipline. **(5ILCS 120/2 115 ILCS 5/18)**

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried. The board entered closed session at 6:50 p.m.

Motion by Mr. Austin, second by Dr. Cross, that the Board of Education return to regular session.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried. The board returned to regular session at 7:15 p.m.

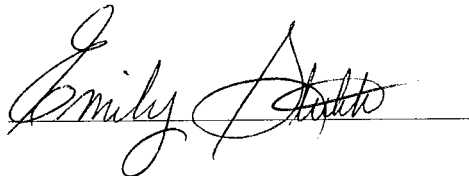
**Adjournment –**

Motion by Mr. Neeley, second by Mr. Rinkenberger, that the meeting be adjourned.

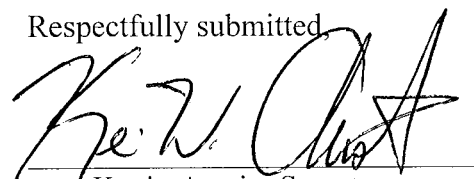
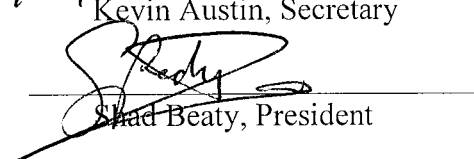
Voice Vote: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Recorded by,



Respectfully submitted,

  
 Kevin Austin, Secretary  
  
 Chad Beaty, President