

MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

August 2, 2022

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held on August 2, 2022, at the Morton Education and Administration Center.

REGULAR MEETING

Call to Order and Roll Call –

President Tim Braker called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Members Present at Roll Call: Mr. Tim Braker, Mr. Bart Rinkenberger, Dr. David Cross, Dr. Diane Krall, Mr. Tom Neeley and Mr. Jerry Rudd. Members Absent: Mrs. Amanda Leman

Members Present: 6

Members Absent: 1

Audience Presentation: Audience Presentation— Kevin Miller, MHS Asst. Boys Tennis Coach addressed the Board of Education and Administration to thank them for allowing the Tri-County Tennis tournament to be held at the Joal Stanfield Memorial Tennis Complex. Over the course of two weekends, 150 players played 209 matches. He thanked Scott Jones for his help in the coordination of the event. He noted it was an opportunity for the MHS boys' tennis team to provide acts of service and to build team relationships. He thanked the board and administration for being present at the event. They are going to use funds raised with a Morton Community Foundation Grant to purchase gates for the tennis courts. The gates are already in place. Dr. Smock thanked Coach Miller for all he did for the event and for his attitude of gratitude. Dr. Smock thanked him for honoring our district with his service and for carrying on Joal's legacy of "Character Before Victory".

Administrative Reports:

Superintendent's Report— Dr. Smock

- All FOIA requests were fulfilled and posted on the website.
- We've welcomed 34 new teachers New Teacher Orientation and Dinner. They represent a little over 10% of our entire teaching staff. It was a great success.
- Dr. Smock welcomed back Morton 709 Administrators, thanking them for their hard work these past weeks getting ready for school to open. It was noted the MHS leadership pitched in to help with some flooding that occurred. Their efforts were above and beyond the call of duty.
- Maintenance, Custodial, and Grounds are winding up and completing summer projects including a couple of S.T.E.M. Labs at MHS. We hope to have the Board of Education tour the new labs soon.
- Update from Central Illinois Educators (CIE), our Co-op without 30 other districts to achieve the best rates for health insurance. Health care costs continue to rise. We knew it would be more. CIE settled on Blue Cross/Blue Shield (BCBS). We will not be changing networks. We can still use OSF and UnityPoint. We will no longer use CVS Pharmacy. The good news, Ms. Kowalski was on target with her budgeting of a 15% increase in premiums, as employees and the district split the cost. We will rebid next summer, hoping for better rates. If better rates are not available, BCBS is locked into a no more than 22% increase for FY24. The start date is October 1, 2022 for the new plan.
- August 10th there will be a Teacher's Institute day with Administrators serving breakfast. The Board of Ed members are invited to the breakfast at MHS to welcome everyone back. Students begin with a half day on August 11th.
- 2021-22 Physical Restraint Data Report was made available for the Board of Education with no questions for Ms. Franklin.

President's Report— Mr. Braker

- The New Teacher Dinner was great. The New Teacher Orientation was well done. Mr. Braker enjoyed being a part of it all.
- The Policy Committee still needs to meet when schedules match up.
- Facilities Committee will be meeting soon.
- Board Members offered input on staying focused on our District Goals. Mr. Rinkenberger suggested a regular reading of the goals we have listed in every agenda. Mr. Neeley suggest we could focus on one a month for a deeper dive. Dr. Cross suggested we might focus on the goals that align with the agenda each month, to keep the focus and discussion relevant. Mr. Braker and Mr. Rudd noted they get information related to certain goals in specific months. Mr. Rudd noted we've addressed three of the five goals recently. Dr. Krall elaborated. New Teacher Orientation goes to climate.
- No agenda-building items were added.
- Mr. Neeley noted the Resolutions Chairs for the IASB will meet Friday, August 5, 2022. 16 have been submitted. We will make recommendations "To Adopt", "Not To Adopt" or a new category, "Not To Present". Some of the issues have been divisive and the Parliamentarian has talked about the rules for the Resolutions Committee as to how to manage some of the issues. The Delegate Assembly will have an opportunity to speak to some of the issues. One Mr. Neely shared. One of the Suburbs is proposing the State do better about funding building. Naperville is requesting it. Districts like ours send money but get little in return. 8/8 he is in a Zoom meeting with the Illinois State Superintendent. We wait too long for testing results. The data isn't helpful if we don't get the results in a timely manner for better planning.

Discussion Items—

- **Employee Covid Leave Reinstatement--** Dr. Smock revisited the law that was passed giving back vaccinated employees Covid-related sick time. It was a long and tedious process for the business department, but they did it. We went strictly by the law and did our best to track down absences, verify and give the time back. The law is still in effect for future absences. The law continues to be in effect, even now for future absences. So the question before us is, do we really need to eliminate the unvaccinated employees from receiving administrative leave? Would we be willing to extend the same administrative leave to all employees with qualifying absences regardless of vaccination status? We are calling it "Administrative Leave". We ask because it impacts how we do things. By extending it to all employees, whether they are vaccinated or not, we can quit asking people if they are vaccinated or not. That would be the preference. It is a private concern that we don't need to ask. Will the board consider extending it to all employees whether they are vaccinated or not? Some people medically cannot be vaccinated or have sincere religious or philosophical beliefs that keep them from being vaccinated. We would be discriminating against them. It was uncomfortable being forced to discriminate against those employees. Following comments by Mr. Rinkenberger and with the support of other Board members, the Board of Education fully supported the decision to not discriminate against any employee regardless of vaccination status. Dr. Smock thanked the Board of Education and related there are many others who would thank them as well.
- **Back to School 2022-23 Covid Plan** – Dr. Smock presented the drafted Covid plan for back to school. We were involved in a lawsuit that indicated we should stop testing, stop masking and stop healthy quarantines. We followed that direction. The plan eliminates contact tracing and healthy quarantines. Healthy students and healthy employees can come to school. Sick students and sick staff need to stay home. Students can wear a mask if they are instructed by their parents to do so. They will not allow students to be bullied for wearing a mask. Parents can request symptoms checking. Symptoms checks can be set up through the health office. If students live with someone who is medically fragile, we can

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notify parents if a student has been exposed. An online form will generate a notification list. Parents can choose to healthy quarantine their children and that will be respected. Control is put back in the parents hands. Students at home are expected to keep up with classes using Schoology. Dr. Teater and his team did a great deal of work to make sure students can assess assignments and keep learning if they are home for any reason. We know there could be laws passed that might add mitigations back in to the plan. Dr. Smock is happy to take thoughts regarding the plan. Shane Weyland from the MEA has already met with Dr. Smock to discuss the plan. Mr. Weyland felt teachers should know if someone in their class tests positive. The attorney will review. On August 16, we hope to formally approve the plan. Mr. Rinkenberger asked for school to be as normal as possible. Mr. Braker agreed the plan supports that ideal.

Action Items—

Approve FY23 Tentative Budget

Mr. Rinkenberger moved that the FY23 Tentative Budget be approved, and put on display for 30 days with the Budget Hearing set for September 6, 2022 at 5:30pm at the MEAC. Dr. Cross seconded.

Mr. Neeley noted and the Board concurred that Ms. Kowalski has done an outstanding job preparing the budget and providing us with information. Dr. Smock affirmed that she is outstanding at finding money and is an excellent part of our team.

Roll Call: Yea 6 Nay 0 Absent 1

Motion carried.

Approve Lease for FY23 Transportation Vehicles

Dr. Cross moved that the Lease for the 22-23 Transportation Vehicles be approved. Mr. Rudd seconded.

Roll Call: Yea 6 Nay 0 Absent 1

Motion carried.

Consent Agenda –

Mr. Braker asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Mr. Neeley made the motion to accept the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Mr. Rinkenberger.

- A. Approve Personnel Report
- B. Approve Overnight MHS Girls Varsity Tennis Trip
- C. Approve Overnight/Out of State MHS Concert Band Trip
- D. Approve Overnight MHS Madrigal Trip
- E. Approve Bills
- F. Approve Treasurer's Report
- G. Approve Minutes of the July 12, 2022, Regular Meeting; Closed Session Meeting held July 12, 2022

H. Approve Bills and Payroll

	Bills 7-15-22 7-18-22	Bills 7-20-22 7-22-22	Bills 7-29-22 8-1-22	Payroll 7-8-22	Payroll 7-22-22
Ed. Fund	\$231,613.98	\$217,407.89	\$175,057.93	\$695,524. 33	\$695,399.23
Bldg. Fund	759,645.53		47,070.15	67,649.62	64,956.51
Trans. Fund	26,206.35		21,672.54	30,265.15	12,456.39
TORT Fund					
IMRF Fund				30,265.15	27,339.02

Roll Call: Yea 6 Nay 0 Absent 1

Motion carried.

Closed Session

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

Roll Call: Yea 6 Nay 0 : Absent 1

Motion carried. The board entered closed session at 8:15p.m.

Motion by Dr. Krall that the board return to regular session. Seconded by Mr. Rudd.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 6 Nay 0 Absent 1

Motion carried.

The board returned to regular session at 8:40 p.m.

Adjournment –

Motion by Mr. Neeley to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Dr. Cross.

Voice Vote: Yea 6 Nay 0 Absent 1

Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

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Recorded by,

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Smith, Board of Education Secretary

Bart Rinkenberger, Secretary

Tim Braker, President