

MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

March 3, 2015

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held March 3, 2015, at the Morton Education and Administration Center.

REGULAR MEETING –

Call to Order and Roll Call –

President Michelle Bernier called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Members present: Mrs. Michelle Bernier, Mr. Tim Taylor, Mr. Shaun Bill,
Mr. John Applen, Mr. Clint Heinold, Mr. Tom Neeley, Mrs. Kelly Scarfe

Audience Reports -

Mr. Jeff Schmidgall, 701 E. Queenwood, agrees in general with the improvements for the athletic facility at the high school but feels the timing is wrong to be making the improvements now. In his opinion, improvements should be held off until a comprehensive plan is put into place. He also does not agree with the orientation of the football field. He added he is in agreement with naming the new tennis facility after Joal Stanfield.

Mr. Mike Vlahos, 120 N. Third, thanked the Board for the positive movement in the school district this past year concerning dyslexia. He had several questions concerning better training of teachers; when the Wilson method will be used; how students will be screened; when using the Orton-Gillingham method, how students will be tracked; why district is not tapping into local dyslexia tutors until district teachers are trained.

Reports –

Administrative –

Freedom of Information Requests –

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

Recognition of Gabe Pleasants, 5th Place Medalist at IHSA State Wrestling Tournament –

MHS Varsity Wrestling Coach Josh Prichard introduced Gabe Pleasants, the 5th place medalist at the IHSA State Wrestling tournament. Gabe is a senior and a great team leader.

Aide Appreciation Day –

Dr. Hall reported that Monday, March 16, will be Aide Appreciation Day in District 709. At the suggestion of Meredith Mylott, secretary at Lincoln School, this annual recognition day will be in honor of Lincoln School instructional aide Amy Hardin, who tragically lost her life last October in an automobile accident. Her birthday is March 16.

Wellness/Insurance Committee Update –

Dr. Hall shared collective results of the employee health screening that took place in August 2014. She also shared results of an employee survey that included reasons staff chose to participate or not participate in the screening. The 2015 employee health screening will take place August 10th and 11th.

Dyslexia Update –

Special Education Director, Dana Ashby and Elementary RtI Coordinator, Jill Lyons reviewed how the district has addressed and plans to continue to address dyslexia needs.

Staff training has included:

- December 12 – Learning Ally Training
 - Presented by ISBE, Dr. Hall and Ms. Ashby worked to bring the training to Morton for Special Education Region III
 - Morton sent 28 staff members, including teachers from all 6 buildings (special and general education) and administrators
- January – Training for All Teachers
 - Discussion of signs/symptoms, educational impact and RtI/504/SPED supports and a few suggestions for classroom accommodations
 - Staff was provided with Dyslexia Basics Handout from International Dyslexia Association
- Coming Soon –
 - March 6 – Dr. Cecile Arquette (specialist in curriculum, literacy and ELL) and Dr. Deitra Kuester (specialist in special education and kinesthetic learning) from Bradley will present to all K-6 and 7-12 staff on what dyslexia looks like in classrooms and supports that all teachers can provide.
 - Summer/Fall 2015 – Dyslexia Certificate Program – graduate level coursework through Dyslexia Training Institute (associated with University of San Diego) – Orton-Gillingham training with supervised practicum hours. Several teachers have indicated interest in completing this program.
- Ongoing Training in Literacy Instruction –
 - Articulation meetings focus for K-1 teachers on:
 - Phonics instruction scope and sequence
 - Developmental spelling assessments

- Stages of writing development
 - *Words Their Way* instruction
- Articulation meetings focus for 2-6 on:
 - Writing Instruction and Assessment
- Ongoing Training for Elementary Special Education Teachers –
 - *Fountas and Pinnell* Reading Assessments
 - *Developmental Spelling* inventories
 - Incorporating these assessments into instruction and IEP development to inform instruction in specific phonemic skills

Screening of all K-1 Students –

- AIMSweb Tests of Early Literacy
 - Letter naming
 - Letter sounds
 - Segmentation
 - Nonsense words
- Sight Word Decoding*
- Oral Reading Fluency*
- Text Reading Level*
- Developmental Spelling Inventory*
- At Risk Students receive RtI interventions
 *Not given in Fall of Kindergarten

Screening of Grades 2-6 –

- MAP Scores
- ISAT results
- Classroom assessments
- CBM tools
- Observational Data
- Additional data after screening flag:
 - Oral Reading Fluency
 - Text Reading Level
 - Developmental Spelling Inventory

Additional Diagnostics –

- Utilized by RtI team, as needed, to acquire specific data on phonological concerns or for students making limited progress with interventions:
 - Yopp-Singer Test of Phoneme Segmentation
 - Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals (CELF-5) screener (this is a speech and language screening tool addressing word structure, auditory memory, semantic relationships)
 - Consortium on Reading Excellence (CORE)
 - Woodcock Reading Mastery Test
 - Red Flag Checklist for Teachers on Warning Signs of Dyslexia**
 **coming fall 2015

RtI Intervention Opportunities –

- Determined by area of concern to provide targeted instruction:
 - *Leveled Literacy Intervention* (all 5 areas)
 - *Words Their Way* (phonics, spelling)
 - *Lexia* (phonemic awareness, phonics)
 - *Earobics* (phonological awareness)
 - *Six Minute Solution* (fluency)
 - *Reading Plus* (fluency, comprehension)
 - *Wilson Foundations* (phonological awareness, phonics) –
Orton-Gillingham system – *coming fall 2015*

Curriculum Changes –

- *Words Their Way* – phonics, spelling and vocabulary instruction at K, 1, 2
 - Systematic, sequential phonics/phonemic awareness instruction
 - Differentiated at K-2
- *Wilson Reading* (Orton-Gillingham based) Special Education
 - 2 kits purchased recently with plans to purchase at least 2 more (1 per elementary building)

Ms. Ashby reported that she and Mrs. Lyons are a part of a regional dyslexia committee that has formed with representatives from the following counties:

- Knox/Warren
- Woodford
- Tazewell

and the Peoria-Tazewell Dyslexia Awareness Network

The tasks before the committee include:

- Developing a Guidance Document with Best Practice thoughts for the regional school districts, including guidelines for assessors and what diagnostic tools are recommended
- Supports for Special Education Staff and Evaluators on a shift from “Diagnosis” to “Identification”
- Bringing in additional dyslexia trainings to our region and providing access to dyslexia certification courses
- Training for schools on 504 and the evaluation and team process involved

The complete Dyslexia Update can be viewed on [MPTV](#) at the 17:00 point of the meeting.

Update from Alliance Leadership Summit –

Dr. Hall reported that a team including Mrs. Bernier, Mr. Neeley, Dr. Smock, Mrs. Getz, Ms. Johnson and herself attended the Alliance Leadership Summit in Springfield on February 17th. Mr. Neeley also attended on the 18th. The focus of the summit was on legislation and telling our story of public education, what is going well and learning to

interact with legislators and becoming more engaged with the process of lawmaking and advocating for schools and students. The Director of Learning from Apple spoke to the group about the use of technology in education. They learned of legislation that has been introduced that is directly related to the Vision 20/20 project. Newly introduced legislation includes:

- Licensure reciprocity that would ease the certification process for out-of-state teachers relocating to Illinois
- A county-wide sales tax to support technology
- Shared accountability – PARCC test would count for 30% with other 70% from local measures
- Shift in funding to evidence-based funding

Mr. Neeley spoke with Representative Sommer on several issues including the amount of testing that is required. He attended a meet and greet with representatives from across the state and noted that lawmakers are reaching out to educators and school board members to see how laws affect them. This is a shift in thinking by legislators.

Discussion Items –

1st Reading and Discussion of Bullying Policy 7:180 –

Dr. Hall reported that a revision to Policy 7:180 is being made to reflect the recent legal revisions made because of new legislation passed and signed last summer. The recommendation is being presented to the Board of Education for discussion and a first reading. It is recommended that the Board review the suggested changes/additions, conduct the First Reading of this Board Policy's revisions/additions and approve the policy at the March 17, 2015, meeting. The policy has been reviewed and approved by the administrators.

Board Goals Discussion – Finance –

Dr. Hall reviewed the Board goal of finance which is to support student learning (which includes achievement, climate, facilities, communication) in an efficient and cost-effective manner. She focused on the bullet point that states:

“The district will seek out opportunities for financial partnerships with local business/corporations as well as alternative revenue sources.” This impacts students by providing the opportunity for direct community involvement in the financial stability of the district.

Dr. Hall noted that the group “Build 4 Community” has formed with representatives from the MHS Band Boosters, MHS Athletic Boosters, Club Soobie and Morton Lacrosse. They have set up a pass through fund at the Community Foundation to assist in funding the renovations on the MHS athletic facility.

Board of Education Code of Conduct –

President Bernier noted there are 12 points on the Code of Conduct for Board of Education members. The third point was reviewed this month. It states: "I will recognize that a board member has no legal authority as an individual and that decisions can be made only by a majority vote at a board meeting."

Request to Name New Tennis Facility After Coach Joal Stanfield –

Dr. Hall read a letter from Mr. Neil Stimpert requesting that the new tennis facility be named for Joal Stanfield. The letter was accompanied by a signed petition. Per Board policy 4:150, President Bernier will appoint a committee to take the request under consideration and then bring a recommendation to the Board for approval. Those serving on the committee are Mr. Bill, tennis coach Pete Martin, assistant tennis coach Jon Wheat, athletic director Greg Prichard along with two students and two parents. Dr. Hall noted the Stanfield family is aware of and pleased with the request.

Action Item –**Approval of Bids for MHS Athletic Facility Repair/Renovations –**

Motion by Mr. Applen, second by Mr. Neeley to table the approval of the bids in order to have more time to review the bids. Other board members noted the drawings were approved last fall and the bids came in under budget. Putting the bid approval off two more weeks will set the project back and impact the fall 2015 activities.

Roll Call: Yea 2 Nay 4 Abstain 1 (Heinold)

Motion failed.

Motion by Mr. Taylor, second by Mrs. Scarfe, that the Board of Education accept the General Packages bid from Stark Excavating of \$3,895,000 to upgrade the High School Athletic Facilities and accept the bid from RK Seating of \$889,845 to replace the bleachers and press box.

The bid opening was held on February 26th. The project was split into two bid packages – the bleachers and press box were bid separately due to their specialized nature.

In addition, the General Packages (site and buildings) bid was bid with five alternatives. Alternates 1 - 4 would remove a portion of the overall upgrade while Alt. 5 would utilize a different material for some of the storm sewer piping. In other words, the base bid includes the facilities upgrade as designed by Farnsworth Group and the alternates 1 - 4 remove certain components. The alternates bid options were as follows:

- Alt. 1 – Remove the band tower
- Alt. 2 – Remove the lighting on two of four batteries of tennis courts
- Alt. 3 – Remove synthetic turf playing surface and install new fill and natural grass sod
- Alt. 4 – Remove 1 of 2 long jump/triple jump runways
- Alt. 5 – In non-paved areas provide HDPE storm sewer piping in place of RCP piping

Four companies submitted the General Packages bids and two companies submitted bleacher and press box bids. The administration recommends that only Alternate Bid 5 be accepted.

The four companies that submitted General Packages bids were Leander Construction, Midwest Construction Professionals, Stark Excavating and CORE Construction with prices ranging from \$4,290,000 to \$3,895,000 with Stark Excavating submitting the low bid.

The two companies that submitted bleacher and press box bids were RK Seating and Southern Bleacher with prices of \$863,495 from RK Seating and \$894,500 from Southern Bleacher. Both of these companies submitted a voluntary alternate addition for a non-skid walking surface which the administration recommends adding. This addition is \$26,350 for RK Seating and \$24,000 for Southern Bleacher resulting in a total bid price of \$889,845 from RK Seating and \$918,500 from Southern Bleacher.

Dr. Hall is hopeful for an agreement with the Morton Park District to assist with the construction of the new tennis facility. She commended Farnsworth Group for the rapid turnaround of getting the drawings and bid package together.

Roll Call: Yea 6 Nay 0 Abstain 1 (Heinold)

Motion passed.

Consent Agenda –

Motion by Mr. Bill, second by Mr. Taylor, that the Consent Agenda be approved as follows:

- Approve Personnel Report
- Approve Reappointment of Administrators
- Approve Elementary Summer School
- Approve January, 2015 Treasurer’s Report
- Approve Out of State Trip - Physics
- Approve the Minutes of the February 24, 2015, Regular Meeting; and the February 24, 2015, Closed Session Minutes.

Adjournment -

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

Voice Vote:

Yea 7

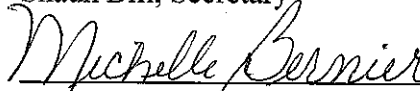
Nay 0

Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shaun Bill, Secretary



Michelle Bernier, President