

MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

OCTOBER 4, 2016

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held October 4, 2016, 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 6:35 p.m.

Members present: Mrs. Michelle Bernier, Mrs. Kelly Scarfe, Mr. Shaun Bill,
Dr. Shad Beaty, Mr. Clint Heinold, Mr. Tom Neeley, Mr. Jeff Schmidgall

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and led by six Lincoln School students – Makenna Cassidy, daughter of Chris and Arnie Cassidy; Katie Davis, daughter of Tim and Becki Davis; Ella Estes, daughter of Scott and Danielle Estes; Parker Frantti, son of Dani West and Todd Frantti; Gaby Heer, daughter of Sam and Tracy Heer; Bryce Sweazy, son of Bryan and Nicole Sweazy.

Audience Presentations – Ben Harkins, Sarah Webb, John Applen, Amy Petersen, Margaret Shafer, Stacy Seaman, Bart Rinkenberger and Jason Martin – all spoke of their concerns for or against the proposed student privacy policy. This portion of the archived meeting may be viewed on MP-TV at the 36:00 point.

Reports –

Administrative –

Freedom of Information Requests -

Dr. Hall noted there were no Freedom of Information requests to report.

Recognition of Principal Appreciation Week, October 17 - 21 –

President Bernier introduced the Principals and announced that October 17th through the 21st is Principal Appreciation Week with October 21st being Principal Appreciation Day. She expressed her appreciation for the District's Principals and for all they do each day throughout the year.

Recognition of National Merit Scholar Students –

High School Principal, Marjorie Johnson, reported that there are seven National Merit Commended students this year. Gavin Blair, Juliet Boyer, Emley Holcomb, Kyra

Postlewait, Maggie Brennan, Lydia DeWeese and Seth Gudeman scored in the top 32,000 students in the nation that took the PSAT last year.

National Merit Semi-finalists Emily Heim, Nicole West and Andrew Rhode scored in the top 16,000 students in the nation taking the PSAT test last year. These students are now eligible to compete for scholarships.

Student Ambassadors Report –

MHS students Kyra Postlewait and Jack Grimes updated the Board of Education on recent Student Council activities. They reported that Homecoming week was a success with over 50% of the student population purchasing dance tickets. During the month of November Student Council will sponsor “No Make-Up” and “No-Shave” November as a fundraiser for various charities.

ELL Update –

ELL consultant, Bethany Scroggs, reported that of the 22 students identified as English language learners in Morton School District, 20 are receiving services. Eight students are new to the program this year and 25 students exited the program at the end of the 2015-16 school year and are now monitored. Students must meet a set of state criteria in order to exit the program. 97% of all students enrolled in the program have exited within three years, at or above the expected rate of growth. Mrs. Scroggs noted a Family and Culture Night is planned for October 25th at Grundy School.

Crisis Management Plan Review –

Dr. Teater reported that the annual Crisis Management Plan meeting was held last May with committee members and local first responders. He noted A.L.I.C.E. (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) has been added to the Crisis Plan and evacuation drills are planned throughout the year for all buildings.

Challenge Program Update –

The Challenge program is the district’s elementary program for academically talented and gifted students in grades 3 – 6. Mr. Saunders reported that the Summer Challenge Science Program took place this past summer with 57 students participating. The program is open to 3rd – 6th graders who participated in the Challenge Program throughout the preceding school year. This year’s Challenge Reading Program has 69 3rd and 4th grade participants along with 32 5th and 6th grade participants in the Challenge Math Program. To be considered for admission into the Challenge program, students must score at or above the 90th percentile on at least 2 out of 3 MAP tests the previous school year.

L.E.A.P.'s (Learning Enhancement Action Plan) Updates–

Dr. Hall reported that L.E.A.P.'s replaces the School Improvement Plans (S.I.P.'s). Principal Michael Saunders reported on the two goals set by the Grundy School team:

- By the end of the 2016-2017 school year, the staff of Grundy Elementary School will fully implement PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports). For the last several years, the district has focused on the academic side of RtI by developing an extensive menu of Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions to meet the individual academic needs of students. This year the focus has shifted to the behavioral side of RtI by implementing PBIS to meet the individual behavioral needs of students. This links to the Board Goal of "Climate."
- By the end of the 2016-2017 school year, the staff of Grundy Elementary School will use Google Classroom and other technology resources to enhance learning and increase student achievement. Teachers and students in District 709 have access to a wide variety of electronic and digital resources. Many teachers have expressed a need for additional professional development to use these resources efficiently and effectively to enhance learning and increase student achievement. This links to the Board Goal of "Achievement."

Principal Kate Wyman reported on the two goals set by the Jefferson School team:

- The PBIS team, along with the Jefferson Staff, will implement the 3 R's behavior matrix in all six areas to establish school-wide consistency and common language. The PBIS team will develop a staff expectations matrix to align with behavior matrix. The PBIS team will provide guidance for office referrals in an effort to collect data and evaluate effectiveness of the expectations. Jefferson staff will identify and teach key lessons in the Second Step program to support the social emotional and 3R expectations. This links to the Board Goal of "Climate and Achievement."
- 709 Above the Line: Engagement and Higher Order Questioning in Reading – The Jefferson staff will participate in ongoing, targeted discussions and professional development, as it relates to selecting effective instructional "best practices" in the area of Reading. The staff will demonstrate understanding of the common "709Above the Line" definitions of Engagement and Higher Order Questioning and incorporate academic conversations and student engagement strategies to challenge and empower students in their own learning. Through innovation and collaboration, staff will incorporate technology in their instructional planning. This links to the Board Goal "Climate and Achievement."

Principal Julie Albers reported on the two goals set by the Lincoln School team:

- The PBIS team will create lessons for all the areas in the Lincoln School building to teach common behavioral expectations. The PBIS team will use data to choose the targeted behavioral focus for the month. The PBIS team along with the staff

will implement “green” days to promote and support the identified target behavior. This links to the Board Goal of “Climate and Achievement.”

- Increase the complexity of both oral and written questions to provide opportunities for differentiated questioning. This links to the Board Goal of Climate and Achievement.”

Activity Account Overview –

Mrs. Getz reviewed the differences between the schools’ activity accounting procedures and the general ledger procedures.

- Student activity funds are owned, operated and managed by organizations, clubs or associations with the student body under the guidance and direction of one or more faculty or staff members for educational, recreational or cultural purposes. The funds are used to safeguard and account for money raised by students and expended for the benefits of those students.
- There are three student activity bank accounts: Morton High School, Morton Jr. High School and Elementary Schools & Special Education. The High School and Jr. High School accounts are managed by the building secretaries. The elementary and special education accounts are managed by the accounts payable bookkeeper at the district office.
- The District has a written procedure manual for activity funds and external auditors do testing on each of these accounts each year.

State of Our Schools Event: October 27 –

President Bernier announced plans for a community dinner being planned for Thursday, October 27 at the MHS west gym. Flyers are being mailed and distributed inviting the entire community, but those interested must RSVP by October 14. The meal is complimentary and being underwritten by local businesses – Keach Architects, Billy Daniel Excavating, Bob Grimm Chevrolet, CORE Construction, Eli’s Coffee Shop, FJT Office Supplies, Lighthouse Buick/GMC, Midwest Engineering Professionals, Mike Murphy Ford, NCI Business Systems, Sam Leman Chrysler/Jeep/Dodge, Truck Centers and ThermoKing.

President’s Report –

President Bernier reported that:

- A Committee of the Whole - Finance meeting was held prior to the Regular Meeting for the preliminary presentation of the 2017-2018 Tentative Budget and the 2017 Levy.
- A Policy Committee meeting has been scheduled for December to meet with the IASB representative for the second consultation on policy revisions.
- Agenda Building – there were no requests by board members for upcoming agenda items.

Discussion Items –**Auditor's Report –**

Mr. Adam Pulley, CPA, Principal of CliftonLarsonAllen reported the findings of the recent audit conducted on the district's finances. He noted a clean unmodified opinion on the modified cash basis. The district's financial profile per the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is shown as "Recognition," which is the highest designation a district can receive from ISBE. The Board of Education will be asked to approve the Auditor's Report at the October 18 Board meeting.

Mr. Pulley acknowledged Business Manager and Treasurer, Barb Getz, and her accounting team for their thorough preparation and success of the audit.

Discussion of Proposed Student Privacy Policies –

The Board of Education discussed a Student Privacy policy being proposed by Mr. Schmidgall. The purpose of the policy as stated is "In recognition of student physical privacy rights and the need to ensure student safety and maintain school discipline, this Policy is enacted to advise school site staff and administration regarding their duties in relation to student use of restrooms, locker rooms, showers and other school facilities where students may be in a state of undress in the presence of other students."

Dr. Hall pointed out the current district policy and administrative procedure that speaks to sex equity. She noted that policies are approved by the Board of Education and are used to guide the board in decision making. Administrative Procedures are how administration is to carry out the corresponding policy. Procedures are written by administration, guided by IASB and are rooted in state statute and law.

Dennis Triggs, attorney for the school district, spoke to the board on the current law and cited outcomes of recent cases involving schools challenging the law. His firm advises that schools handle on an individual basis, to find an approach that meets the needs of each case. This advice is consistent with all of their clients throughout the state of Illinois.

Mr. Schmidgall noted the proposed policy is from the Alliance Defending Freedom and found it to be a model policy that could be used as a starting point for developing a similar policy for District 709 as an alternative to the current policy. The proposed policy would align facilities with the biological sex of students. He is concerned with what is best for all students of District 709.

Dr. Hall noted that Administrative Procedure 7:10 addresses non-discrimination of all students and addresses gender identity. The procedure is from IASB and recommended by the district's legal counsel.

Board member discussion included:

Mr. Neeley supports the position of Mr. Schmidgall and is in favor of the proposed policy.

Mr. Bill expressed his desire to heed the advice of the attorney. He suggested a compromise – using the money that would be spent on lawsuits and make accommodations within the schools to give anyone who wants privacy their privacy.

Mr. Heinold noted he would support the proposed policy if it were legal. He cannot support it as it is now. He does not want to spend the district’s resources on lawsuits.

Mrs. Scarfe agrees with Mr. Bill and Mr. Heinold on the legality of the proposed policy. It is important to her to approach the discussion with kindness and accommodate each student as needs arise. She explained that she did not attend the Special Meeting called for September 1 so as not to take the chance of talking about specific students in open session. She believes each student should be treated individually and confidentially. The proposed policy does not do that, so she cannot support it at this time.

Dr. Beaty expressed that this is a sensitive issue and that transgender student issues involve all students. He believes there is legal risk no matter what approach is taken and he supports the proposed policy.

Mrs. Bernier explained her reason for not attending the special meeting due to the issue of confidentiality of students. She is not willing to take the district down the path of litigation and prefers waiting until if and when a Supreme Court decision is made on the current laws. A second reading and vote of the proposed policy will take place at a future meeting.

Mr. Neeley stated he is not comfortable with Administrative Procedure 7:10 and would like to bring it more in line with the proposed privacy policy.

Closed Session –

Motion by Mrs. Scarfe, second by Mr. Bill, that the Board of Education enter into closed session for consideration of appointment, employment, compensation, performance, or dismissal of employees, student discipline, purchase/sale of property, litigation, negotiations and/or school building safety and security. (5 ILSC 120/2 115 ILCS 5/18)

Motion by Mr. Neeley, second by Mr. Schmidgall, to table the motion to enter closed session.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 3 (Beaty, Schmidgall, Neeley)
 Nay 4 (Bill, Heinold, Scarfe, Bernier)

Roll Call Vote to enter Closed Session: Yea 6 Nay 1 (Heinold)

Motion carried. The board entered closed session at 9:40 p.m.

Motion by Dr. Beaty, second by Mr. Schmidgall, that the Board of Education return to

regular session.

Roll Call Vote:

Yea 7

Nay 0

Motion carried. The board returned to regular session at 9:51 p.m.

Discussion continued on the proposed student privacy policy.

Mr. Schmidgall stated he does not believe the proposed policy violates Illinois statutes. To his knowledge, no schools with this policy in place have lost federal funding. Board members need to vote without fear of lawsuits. He feels the current Administrative Procedure would allow for the invasion of privacy. In his view, the proposed policy protects privacy.

Mrs. Scarfe reiterated she wants to avoid wasting taxpayers' money on lawsuits. She would like to wait for cases to be settled in the courts.

Mr. Neeley stated he needs to ultimately vote on what he believes.

Dr. Beaty would like to lead, not follow. The Board needs input. He would like to hear from the community and appreciates any opinion.

The discussion can be viewed on MP-TV at the 2:25 point of the archived meeting.

Board Goals Discussion – Finance –

Dr. Hall reviewed the goal of Finance:

The Goal states – Finance: Support student learning (which includes achievement, climate, facilities, communication) in an efficient and cost effective manner.

- The district will assume conservative financial projections in revenues and expenses in order to maintain fund balances and provide contingencies for the future, as evidenced by the following actions:
 - *The district will maintain a balanced operating budget on a yearly basis.*
 - *The district will maintain and review financial projections with a 3-5 outlook.*
 - *The district will maintain the highest financial rating as determined by ISBE*
- The district will seek out opportunities for financial partnerships with local businesses/corporations, and other governmental entities as well as seeking alternative revenue sources.
- The district will continue forward progress with fiscal responsibility, taking into consideration that implementing new programs must be balanced with the ability to sustain those programs financially.

- The administration will strive to communicate financial and budgetary information in a clear, concise, regular and informative manner so that our taxpayers are informed and apprised of board level decision making.

Board Compliance – Operational Services –

Dr. Hall reported that she has reviewed the Operational Policies and has determined that the district is in compliance. She and President Bernier will sign the compliance form and place it in the Master Compliance binder in the District Office.

Board of Education Code of Conduct #8 – Dr. Beaty –

Dr. Beaty reviewed the eighth point in the Code of Conduct for Board of Education members: *I will be sufficiently informed about and prepared to act on the specific issues before the board, and remain reasonably knowledgeable about local, state, national and global education issues.* Dr. Beaty stressed the need to come to the Board table prepared and knowledgeable and feels every one of the current board members is ready for each meeting.

Action Item –

Second Reading and Approval of Revisions/Updates to Board Policy 1:30 –

Dr. Hall reported that Board Policy 1:30 pertains to the Board Mission and Goals. The policy is being revised to reflect recent changes made by the Board of Education to the Mission and Goals. The first reading and discussion took place at the September 6th Board meeting.

Motion by Mr. Bill, second by Mrs. Scarfe, that the Board of Education approve the revisions to Board Policy 1:30.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion passed.

Approve IASB Delegate and Alternate –

Each year the Board of Education approves the delegate and alternate for the IASB Annual Conference per Board Policy 2:120.

Motion by Mrs. Bernier, second by Mr. Neeley, that the Board of Education appoint Shaun Bill as Delegate and Kelly Scarfe as Alternate for the IASB Annual Conference for 2016.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

Consent Agenda –

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

- Approve Personnel Report
- Approve August Treasurer's Report
- Approve Minutes of the September 20, 2016, Regular Meeting, and the September 20, 2016, Regular Meeting Closed Session Minutes.
- Approve Bills and Payrolls

	Bills 9-23-16	Bills 9-30-16	Payroll 9-30-16
Ed. Fund	\$129,226.66	\$55,173.22	\$519,976.47
Bldg. Fund	57,141.48	1,130.35	36,140.99
Trans. Fund	9,167.97	45.87	17,851.02
Capital Projects	14,248.66	--	--
Payroll Accts. Pay.	--	--	258,405.99

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

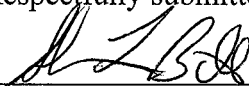
Adjournment -

Motion by Dr. Beaty, second by Mr. Heinold, that the meeting be adjourned.

Voice Vote: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shaun Bill, Secretary



Michelle Bernier, President