

MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

February 21, 2023

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held February 7, 2023, at the Morton Education and Administration Center. The meeting focus included **District Goals of Achievement, Communication, Climate, Facilities, and Finance.**

REGULAR MEETING

Call to Order and Roll Call –

President Tim Braker called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Members present: Mr. Tim Braker, Dr. David Cross, Dr. Diane Krall, Mrs. Amanda Leman, Mr. Tom Neeley, Mr. Andrew Roth, and Mr. Jerry Rudd

Audience Presentations—

Mr. Bruce Sauder addressed the Board to express his gratitude for the Morton 709 School District. He is grateful for the Board and Administration for their leadership and efforts to reflect and keep the core values of our community and a high standard of morality. He encouraged them with a “Keep it up!”

David Getz shared with the Board about The Composer’s Guild and In Their Own Write. It is a unique club at MHS for creative students. The highlight is students get to see their compositions performed. For some, the performers are professional. It is the 12th year of In Your Own Write on March 12 at 6 PM at Bertha Frank. He invited the Board and Administration to attend.

Administrative Reports--

Superintendent’s Report– Dr. Craig Smock—

Dr. Smock thanked Mr. Getz for sharing about The Composer’s Guild and In Their Own Write.

Dr. Smock thanked Mr. Carter and Morton Jr. High for the meal and sharing what they do daily at MJHS.

Dr. Smock shared some thank-you notes from the community.

Dr. Smock will attend a meeting with 44th District Senator, Sally Turner with other School Superintendents on March 1. She is asking them to share the challenges/issues they are facing in their districts. He will take the District’s desire for local control, including control over curriculum and mandates. He will seek information on the Governor’s plan for Early Childhood Education (ECE). He invited the Board to share questions.

Dr. Smock introduced Dr. Joe Sander and Ms. Lindsay Franklin who presented on some staffing current needs for 2023-24 for Special Education. They provided a visual presentation on the areas of greatest need. The plan is within their budget. Dr. Sander and Ms. Franklin answered questions. Ms. Franklin articulated that the pool of good new graduate candidates shrinks

quickly. President Braker affirmed that they have a job to do. There were no objections from the Board. They were thanked from their work.

President's Report – Mr. Tim Braker

President Braker emphasized to Dr. Smock to advocate for local control with Senator Turner.

Mr. Braker thanked the Administration and Staff for the new boardroom and updates. Dr. Smock gave credit to the many who helped.

Mr. Braker thanked Principal Chris Carter and his team for the chance to eat a great meal and hear what they are doing at Morton Jr. High. The Board always enjoys going to their building and hearing directly from them.

The Board was asked to review the current Board of Education Mission Statement. They determined to keep the present mission statement.

The Facilities/Property committee met the previous Friday to work on an agenda for the Committee of the Whole (COW). There are two meetings in April. The Board may reschedule the second meeting to be a Committee of the Whole. Dr. Smock has shared a tentative agenda for the COW with the Board. Mr. Braker said it looked good. The Board wants to give direction and Administration is seeking guidance. Dr. Cross noted that such a meeting has been helpful in the past. The Board wants to do it right. Mr. Braker noted that we want our schools to reflect we value education. The Board was in agreement. Mr. Neeley spoke about keeping balance with consideration to the taxpayer. Dr. Smock noted we have made incremental changes when we can afford them.

Discussion Items –

Policy Committee Reviews and Recommendations

The Policy Committee reviewed some policies that have not been reviewed. Many needed no changes, but a few policies needed updates. The Board discussed the policies in review. The Board asked questions and offered feedback with regards to the policy on dual credit classes and ICC classes. Dr. Teater was available to add some clarification about Strong Start and ICC Classes.

Mr. Neeley gave some history on the role of Board Committees and Superintendent Committees. Mr. Neeley shared the Illinois Association of School Board's history. The Attorney General and IASB had differing opinions. Dr. Smock consulted attorney, Jay Greening, for input. Superintendent Committees with no more than two Board members to help guide Administration before taking something to the whole Board. Administration appreciates the Superintendent Committees for their direction and feedback. Mr. Rudd noted our process seem to be working well. There was general agreement from the Board that the current process is working well. Mr. Neeley wanted to be sure the Board understood the history.

Action Items –

Approve the Bids for Summer Maintenance Work and STEM Labs–

A motion was made by Mr. Rudd, second by Dr. Cross, that the Board of Education approve the Summer Maintenance and STEM Lab work for 2023.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

Consent Agenda –

A President Braker asked for a motion to accept the consent agenda as presented. A motion was made by Mr. Neeley, second by Dr. Krall, that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented:

- Approve Personnel Report
- Approve Out of State Trip for Orchestra
- Approve Minutes of the February 7, 2023, Regular Meeting and the February 7, 2023, Regular Meeting Closed Session.
- Approve Bills and Payroll

	Bills 2-10-23 2-13-23	Payroll 2-3-23	Payroll 2-17-23
Ed. Fund	\$102,804.50	\$901,832.89	\$925,831.90
Bldg. Fund	\$18,353.46	50,185.79	48,445.95
Trans. Fund	\$13,395.89	28,702.53	29,119.41
IMRF Fund		42,518.99	44,690.02
Torte	\$5,695.24		

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

Dr. Smock added that with the approval of that report, we are very excited to officially hire Adam O’Neill as a Strength and Conditioning Teacher and as our Head Football Coach. The Board received information about Coach O’Neill. He comes with good championship experience in two different states. His core values are faith, family, future and football. He was a teacher of the year at his school for 2020-2021. Mr. Braker thanked everyone involved in the process of hiring Coach O’Neill. We want them to win. We want them to have character, too.

Closed Session –

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

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried. The board entered closed session at 7:51 p.m.

A motion by Dr. Cross, second by Dr. Krall, that the Board of Education return to regular session.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried. The board returned to regular session at 9:07 p.m.

Adjournment –

A motion by Mr. Neeley, second by Mrs. Leman, that the meeting be adjourned.

Voice Vote: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Recorded by,

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Smith, Recording Secretary

Jerry Rudd, Secretary

Tim Braker, President