

MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

April 1, 2014

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held April 1, 2014, at the Morton Education and Administration Center.

REGULAR MEETING –

President Clint Heinold called the regular meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

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

Reports –

Administrative –

Freedom of Information Requests –

Dr. Hall reported there are no Freedom of Information requests to report.

Recognition of Red Wings –

Ms. Ashby introduced members of the Red Wings basketball team and their coaches. The team earned a silver medal at the state tournament this year. Volunteer coaches are Abby Everett, Erin Chan and Jackie Kerr and two high school student volunteers, Jack Zern and Pete Kuhl. Ms. Ashby noted that Lincoln School, the Jr. High and High School held fundraisers and the Community Foundation made a donation toward purchase of new track uniforms for the Red Wings.

MPTV Recognition –

Dr. Hall recognized the staff and volunteers involved in athletic broadcasts this school year. They include: Coaches – Derrek Drenkpohl, Jennifer Saylor, Eric Lyons, Bob Becker, Jarrett Brown and Jesse Crawford; paid staff – Carol Jankowski, Hayley Hochstettler, Lynn Coverstone, Bill Schock and Becky Christianson; volunteers – Gary Watson, Bill Seidel, Craig Wright, Brian Gordon, Kirk Schick, Jonathan Farrell, Lynn Rudin, Deidre Ripka, Scott Brown, Jeff Stephens, Janet Stephens and Barry Rapp.

High School Student Recognition –

High School Principal, Ms. Johnson, introduced Hayley Hoffmire and Luke Knight as this year's Golden Apple Scholars. The program is designed to prepare future teachers to thrive in the most challenging high-needs school environments where more resilient

teachers are desperately needed. The program provides tuition assistance to each future teacher while they pursue an undergraduate education at one of 52 Illinois universities. In return for the financial, academic, and professional development support that is provided by Golden Apple, Scholars agree to teach in a high-need school in Illinois for five years following college graduation. Golden Apple Scholar Savannah Davenport was unable to attend.

Ms. Johnson also introduced Macy Skinner as a Presidential Volunteer Service Award winner. The President's Volunteer Service Award program is a way to thank and honor Americans who, by their demonstrated commitment and example, inspire others to engage in volunteer service. Ms. Skinner has been very involved in community service since she was four years old including – fundraising for St. Jude by involvement in the backyard talent show, collecting health care kits for Haitian victims, collecting clothing for house fire victims and volunteering in soup kitchens. She won a service award for top service hours in her class in 2013. Miss Skinner takes part in two service organizations at the high school – Key Club and Circle of Friends. She received a certificate of recognition from the President of the United States.

High School Student Ambassador Report –

High School Student Council representatives, Emma Zern and Trysten Florey gave an overview of student council activities at the high school including: Homecoming week, Santa calls, Red Cross blood drive and executive board members attended the Mid Illini meeting. Upcoming events include St. Jude Week and teacher appreciation.

PTO Reports –

PTO presidents from Morton High School, Morton Jr. High School and Jefferson School reported on activities over the past school year. Those reporting included Candy Walters, High School PPP, Stephanie Stalter, MJHS Red and White Club and Abby Kaufman, Jefferson School PTO. Dr. Hall thanked them for all they do for their schools and noted that reports will be heard from the other schools at an upcoming meeting.

Director of Operations Report – Summer Work –

Director of Operations, Rodney Schuck reported on projects planned for the upcoming summer. He noted that due to the large scale project at the high school (HVAC, asbestos removal), projects at the other buildings will be light except for the usual cleaning. This will allow for staff to be available to help at the high school when needed.

Mr. Schuck noted that all bleachers in the district are due to be inspected in April and any recommended repairs will be made. Bleachers are inspected on an annual basis.

Facilities Update –

Dr. Hall reported that she has been working closely with the district's architects, Keach Architectural Design, in assessing the potential work needed in addressing Health Life Safety issues at the District Office. Because the District Office regularly has students in the building for educational purposes, requirements set forth by the state in terms of Health Life Safety inspections and meeting specifications of building codes must be followed. In 2012-13 the Regional Office of Education (ROE) signed off on a "Temporary Facility Elimination Plan" and for 2013-14 the "Temporary Facilities Checklist" was completed and agreed to by the ROE. The point has now been reached that a decision about how to move ahead with addressing the Health Life Safety issues at the District Office needs to be made. Dr. Hall recommended and the board agreed to conduct a 10-year Health Life Safety inspection. The completed inspection would be a categorization of work into three categories: urgent, required and recommended.

Audience Presentations –

Patte Winn of 26 Blackberry Lane, Morton, requested copies of every District 709 assessment test (screen prints) by grade, including but not limited to, ISAT, NAEP and PARCC; copies of research of how Common Core, now called Illinois Learning Standards, better prepare a student to enter Harvard, MIT or the University of Illinois to study math, engineering or medicine over the previous math program; annual certification that states there has been no disclosure or file transfer of personally, identifiable information of the students to anyone, any organization, or any governmental body outside of the School District 709, regardless of who is requesting this information; and annual certification that states that no biometric data of our children, including but not limited to, fingerprints, DNA and retina scans, has been collected by the School District 709, their authorized vendors or by any third party coming into, directed, or abetted by School District 709. This was considered to be a FOIA request and will be handled as such.

Troy Erickson, Mary Beth Pederson, Brad Kennell, Tanya Cooper, Jacque Austin and Whitney Pfeifer spoke of their experiences with dyslexia and asked the school district to train teachers to recognize signs and symptoms of the disorder, acknowledge it in students and provide assistance. President Heinold thanked those that spoke and noted that those that did not get to speak to this subject would be allowed to share at a future meeting.

Discussion Items –**Discipline Handbook Changes -**

Dr. Teater reported that the Discipline Handbook committee met on March 11, 2014, to discuss recommended changes to the student handbooks for the 2014-2015 school year. He reviewed the changes with the board and noted that legal counsel has been consulted

on the changes along with the Leadership Team. The Board will approve the changes at a future meeting.

2014-2015 Student Fees –

Dr. Hall reviewed the proposed fee changes for the 2014-2015 school year. A slight increase in lunch prices is recommended not only due to food costs, but also due to the federal requirement that the gap be closed in the difference between our lunch prices and the federal reimbursement rate for free/reduced lunches.

No fee increases are being recommended for textbook rentals (K-6 - \$73; JH-\$115; HS-\$180), co-curricular activities, drivers education, student parking, library fines, athletic gate receipts and I.D. replacements, but the administration would like to recommend the additions of a technology fee and a High School marching band fee. The recommended technology fee is \$15.00 for each student in Kindergarten through 4th Grade and \$45.00 for each student in 5th Grade – 12th Grade. The recommendation for the High School marching band fee is \$650.00 per student. This fee is required for each student in High School marching band and covers the cost of the band camp, charter bus rentals, food and other expenses incurred during the season. This is not a new fee as it has previously been assessed at this same level, but has been previously collected and managed by the High School Band Boosters.

In addition, the administration would like to recommend that the band instrument rental fee be dropped. The consensus of the band directors, orchestra directors and the administration is to drop this fee but request that the student's family pay the cost of instrument cleaning when their student is finished using the instrument.

The Board will be asked to approve the fees at the May 6 meeting.

Facilities Advisory Committee Report - Follow Up –

Dr. Hall reviewed the core issues of need recommended by the Facilities Advisory Committee including: amount of space, type of space and age of space. Areas needing more information include: financials, building/grade level configuration and room/space utilization. The prioritization of needs includes: short term – physical education, athletics at MHS, district office HLS work; long term – grade reconfiguration, new building.

Dr. Hall reviewed a proposed timeline for facilities planning that includes May – Sept. 2014 - data collection, in depth information about grade configurations, proceed with planning/design/cost analysis on high priority items and determine course of action regarding the county wide sales tax; Oct.-Nov. 2014 – public forums/town hall meetings; Dec. 2014-Jan. 2015 – Utilizing feedback from community along with other relevant information, Superintendent will make recommendations to the Board about a long-term facilities plan; spring 2015 – decisions made regarding – finalizing financing/cost/budget,

referendum dates, architect. Throughout the process continue to communicate with the community about the process, decision making and timelines.

The Board discussed priorities for short and long term planning.

Board Goal Discussion – Finance –

Dr. Hall reviewed the Board finance goal. She then reviewed and discussed the district's general state aid entitlement for 2012-2013. Dr. Hall shared the county sales tax referendum results from around the state.

MJHS Math Materials –

Dr. Teater reported that a textbook committee at Morton Jr. High School has reviewed texts for a 7th and 8th grade math series that works well with the New Illinois Learning Standards. The committee wanted a series that would take advantage of the personal computing initiative and that would better cover 7th grade standards that are currently skipped by the current series by students taking Algebra their 8th grade year. The review committee analyzed 4 different series. A rigorous study was conducted that included using materials from each series for in-class instruction. A recommendation and report was presented to the Curriculum Advisory Committee and approved. The committee is proposing buying a classroom set of textbooks and a 6-year license to the instructional materials. The text will be placed on public display at the Morton Public Library and will be on display for 30 days. Adoption of the recommended textbook by the Board of Education will be considered at a meeting in May.

Recommendation:

Big Ideas, (2014) by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt is the student text/subscription recommended for purchase.

TEXT:

Est. # of students – 6-yr License **TOTAL EST. COST = \$37,250 (including supplemental materials)**

Supplemental Materials: (Teacher edition, assessments and resource manuals)

Board members noted their hopes that the public will weigh in on the textbooks by reviewing them at the library. It was stressed that the district's textbook adoption process allows for the district to choose all of its materials. Curriculum decisions remain in the district's control.

Approve Agreement with Farnsworth Group –

Dr. Hall noted that in December of 2013, the Board of Education gave a consensual approval to exploring conceptual design options, with costs, for the athletic facilities at Morton High School. After reviewing submittals from four architectural firms in response to a Request for Proposal, Farnsworth Group was selected to complete this work. The agreement being approved contains outlined costs for three phases of work:

Phase 1: Condition Assessment, \$12,000

Phase 2: Surveys

Boundary Survey: \$5,750

Topographic Survey: \$15,750

Phase 3: Concept Design: not to exceed \$40,500

Motion by Mr. Applen, second by Mrs. Scarfe, that the Board of Education approve the agreement with Farnsworth Group to complete the three phases of work described in the contract.

Roll Call:

Yea 7

Nay 0

Motion carried.

Consent Agenda –

Mr. Neeley asked that items A. and B. be pulled from the Consent Agenda and voted on separately after closed session.

Motion by Mrs. Bernier, second by Mr. Taylor, that items C. – F. on the Consent Agenda be approved as follows:

Approve Maintenance Grant

Approve February Treasurer's Report

Approve the Minutes of the March 18, 2014, Regular Meeting and Closed Session

Minutes of the March 18, 2014, Regular Meeting.

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Adjournment -

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

Voice Vote:

Yea 7

Nay 0

Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Bernier, Secretary

Clint Heinold, President