

Morton School District 709



Annual Report 2016



Mission

The Mission of the Morton District 709 Board of Education is to be a provider of and an advocate for the education of all children.

Morton Education and
Administration Center
1050 S. Fourth Ave.
Morton, Illinois 61550
263-2581

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Assistant Superintendent
Dr. Craig Smock

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Dr. Troy Teater

**Director of Student Support
Services**
Ms. Carlen Owens

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**Morton Community Unit
School District 709 is a unit
school district serving stu-
dents in early childhood
through 12th grade. The
enrollment for the 2015-16
school year was 2,940.**

Generations of Excellence

Morton schools have a long history of excellence. MHS graduates are leaders around the world and right here in central Illinois. The Morton School District is a direct reflection of the values of our community, and many families have generations of MHS graduates.



From left to right: Derek Roche (class of 2018), Collin Roche (class of 2020), Mike Woodward (class of 1964), Jenny (Woodward) Roche (class of 1988), and Payton Roche (class of 2015).

The Board of Education and Administration of Morton School District 709 continue to honor the work of past leadership and the generations of excellence. While much has changed in public education, one thing remains the same – the goal of educating the children of Morton and Groveland at the highest level. The goals of the Board of Education support that purpose.

This annual report provides a snapshot of the 2015-16 school year and how the goals of the Board of Education became results.

Board of Education Goals

Achievement: In order to ensure all students have opportunities to achieve their potential, our academic programs will maintain the highest standards and expectations for learning.

Climate: Maintain a cohesive organizational system which facilitates/fosters a productive and trusting climate with a highly qualified staff.

Communication: Provide open and meaningful two-way communication with all members of our community.

Facilities: Provide facilities conducive to student learning and growth, based on evolving needs, with the support of the community.

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

Achievement

All Students ■ Opportunities ■ Highest Standards ■ Expectations

Top Rankings for MHS — Silver Medal from U.S. News & World Reports – 1st time; Bronze Medal awarded 6 out of 7 years; 467th in the nation according to Newsweek magazine.

Class of 2016 Highlights — 35 Illinois State Scholars, 2 National Merit Semi-Finalists, 2 Golden Apple Scholars, 20 ACE Award Winners, and 71 Mid-Illini Scholar Athlete Awardees.

Academic Teams — 6th place state math team – for the last eight years MHS has been the top placing school that is not a private or selective enrollment school. State Championship in English from the WYSE team.

Music — The MHS Marching Band brought home its 11th State Championship. Multiple individuals performed at the All-State Music Festival.

Art — 2016 Graduate Elizabeth Grimm won the 18th Annual Congressional Art Contest. Her work will be on display in the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. for a year. MHS released its first fine arts journal in the spring of 2016, called “Flight.”

2015-16 Athletics — Repeat state championship boys golf team and girls basketball team. Teams and individuals represented at state level competition in: girls cross country, bass fishing, girls tennis, boys tennis, wrestling, and girls track and field.

Red Wings Special Olympics — There were 17 athletes involved in basketball, 4 of whom advanced to state for the Basketball Skills Competition; 20 athletes were involved in track and 16 qualified in at least one event for the state games.

MJHS — 95 percent of students at our junior high participate in a sport, activity, club or fine art program.

Chess teams — At the Tazewell County Chess Meet, Morton students placed in the top 10 in each age

category, more than any other school. Morton students were county champions in three age categories.

Service & Commitment — The Class of 2016 gave back to their community by volunteering their time to serve in soup kitchens, the senior citizen breakfast, food drives, raising over \$6000 for St. Jude, shoveling sidewalks, Pumpkin Festival cleanup, Adopt a Family, raising over \$62,000 for Children’s Hospital, Toys for Tots, Center for Prevention of Abuse, Easter Seals, Samaritan’s Purse, TCRC, and WeCare.

English Language Learners — Our school district served 45 English Language Learners, in various stages of language acquisition. Sixteen different languages were spoken by these students, including but not limited to: Arabic, Gujarati, Mandarin, Thai, Spanish, Telugu, Japanese, Afrikaans, Amharic, Tamil and Tagalog.

Technology — The Morton schools are a technology rich environment, with students in 5th through 12th grade having a personal device (iPad) assigned to them. The investment in technology represents our Board of Education’s commitment to high expectations for learning and preparing our students for college and careers beyond graduation from Morton High School. At the beginning of the 2016-17 school year, all students, Pre K through 12th grade, will receive an iPad.

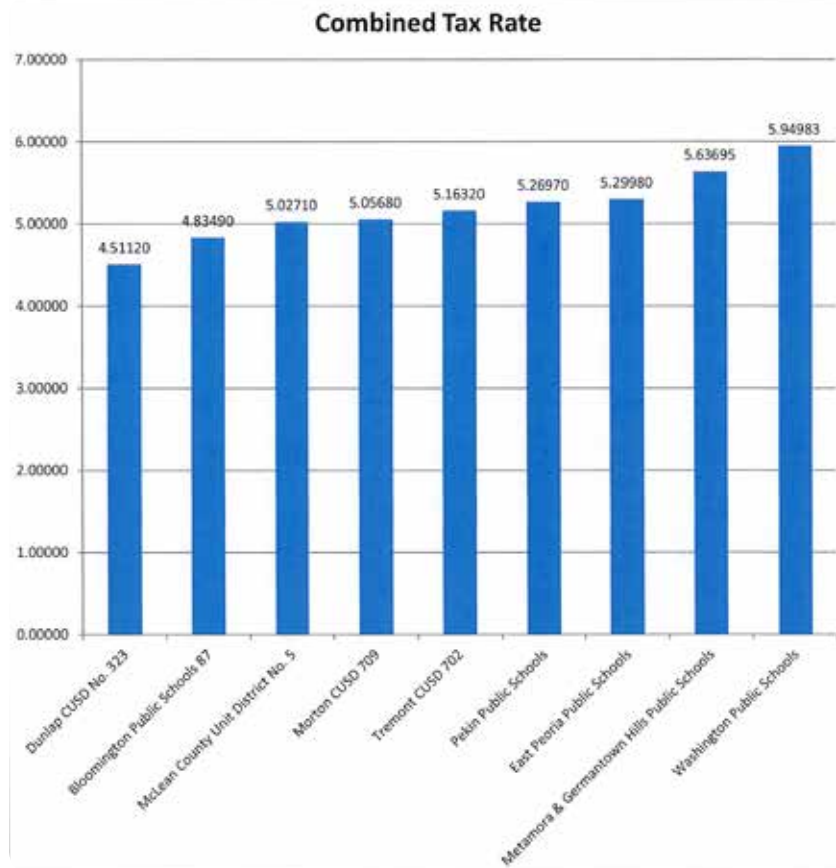
Enrichment — About 16% of our elementary students qualify for enrichment classes offered after school; 55 students participated in the summer enrichment program in 2016. This science-focused program is team taught by elementary and MHS teachers.

Advanced Placement/Dual Credit at MHS — Seven AP classes were offered at Morton High School. Many dual credit classes are offered as well, and in 2015-16, 702 credit hours were earned at Illinois Central College by our MHS students enrolled in dual credit.

Why is achievement important?

How our students perform tells us if we are preparing them for the next grade level and ultimately their next step after graduation. Testing is one way of determining achievement. We believe achievement in fine arts, athletics and service prepares young people for life. The creation of a technology-rich learning environment is also a priority. Our goal is to cultivate lifelong learning, hard work, determination and the desire to do your best every day.

Supports Learning ■ Efficient



Tax Rate Comparison

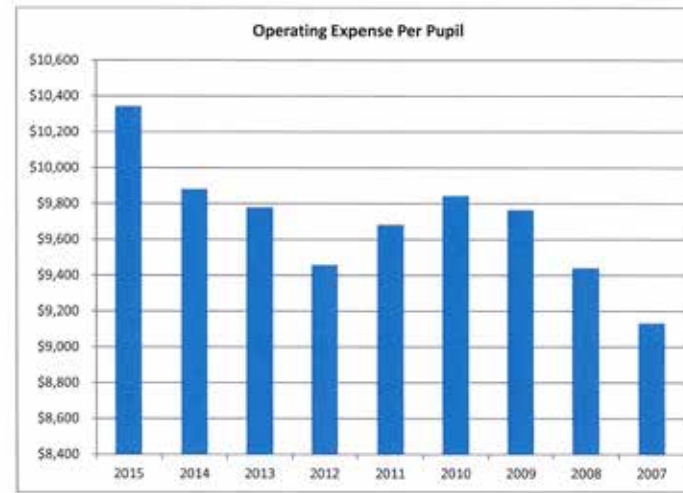
District 709 is proud to offer a competitive tax rate that is lower than most surrounding districts. Morton taxpayers receive excellent value from their schools for their tax dollars. We know young families evaluate the school district when they consider buying a home, and a competitive tax rate is part of the decision.

Word problem:

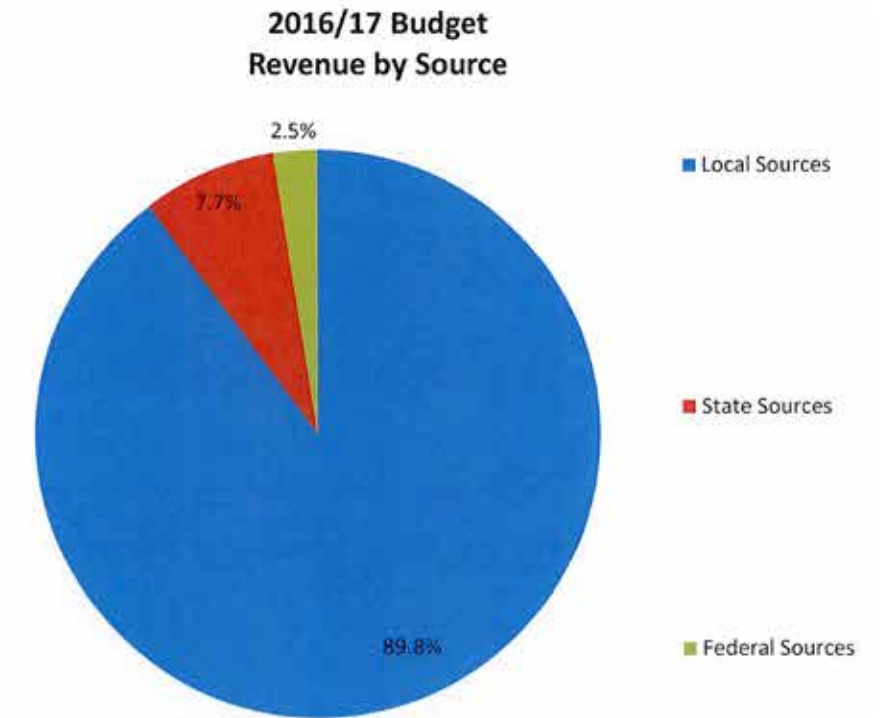
John and Susie bought a house in Morton for \$180,000. If the tax rate for the Morton School District is 5.0568 per every \$100 of EAV (one-third of the assessed value of the home) then what is the school district portion of their tax bill?

Answer:

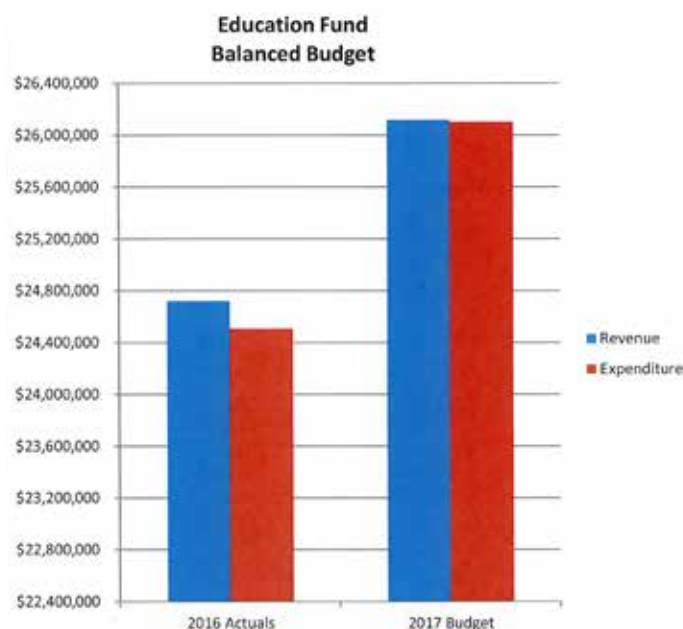
\$180,000 – value of home
 \$60,000 – EAV of home (one-third of value)
 Tax rate - \$5 for every \$100 of EAV
 $\$60,000 \div \$100 = \$600$
 $\$600 \times \$5 = \$3,000$
 Annual school district portion of the tax bill – **\$3,000**



Per-Pupil operating expense — In District 709, \$9,881 was spent in operating costs to educate each child each year (2014 data). The state average in 2014 was \$12,521. Our goal is to provide the highest quality of education for our students at the best value to the taxpayer. Source: illinoisreportcard.com



Revenue — About 90 percent of our revenue comes from local property taxes.



Financial Rating

— District 709 has received the highest rating for the last 13 years from the Illinois State Board of Education. The 2017 budget reflects revenues and expenditures related to the referendum.

Why is finance important?

Most of the money we receive comes from our local taxpayers so we want to make sure they get the best value for their investment, which is educating the children of Morton and Groveland. The Board of Education has a history of planning ahead, building a reserve and operating a balanced budget.

Facilities

Conducive To Learning ■ Growth ■ Needs ■ With Community Support

On March 15, 2016, District 709 voters approved a \$10.5 million bond issue for work in all six school buildings. The district also will be using \$1.5 million from reserves to complete this work. Below is the scope of work that is part of the bond issue and a timeline for work.

Scope

Lettie Brown Elementary: 1 classroom, 1 gymnasium (5,000 square feet), restrooms, storage

Grundy Elementary: 2 classrooms, 1 gymnasium (7,000 square feet), restrooms, storage

Jefferson Elementary: new windows

Lincoln Elementary: 3 classrooms, 1 gymnasium (7,000 square feet), restrooms, storage

Morton Junior High School: Remodeling of band room/choral room areas and other classrooms

Morton High School: Remodeling of band room area, replace outdoor storage building



Timeline

Summer 2016: Work at Morton Junior High and Morton High School took place and was completed for the start of the 2016-17 school year. The bids for this work were approved by our Board of Education on May 3, 2016. The work included the remodeling of the band room at MHS; and at MJHS - the remodeling of the band and orchestra rooms and four other classrooms.

Early September 2016: With bids approved by the Board of Education on Aug. 2, 2016, and a groundbreaking taking place on Aug. 18, 2016, work is ready to begin in early September on additions at Lettie Brown, Grundy and Lincoln elementary schools. Each building will receive a gymnasium as well as classrooms, restrooms and storage areas. Bids came in approximately \$2 million **under** estimated costs.

Summer 2017: The windows at Jefferson Elementary will be replaced next summer. Because of the magnitude of the project, it could take through the summer of 2018 to be completed.

Regular Maintenance Projects

These projects were completed during the summer of 2016 and are part of the school district's five-year maintenance plan.

- ▶ Remodeling of the primary wing restrooms at Jefferson Elementary. These facilities are over 40 years old.
- ▶ Resurfacing of the parking lot at Morton High School. This includes replacement of the lights and a reconfiguration of parking spots.
- ▶ Resurfacing of the blacktop at Grundy Elementary.

Why are facilities important?

Our facilities directly impact the learning of our students; therefore, we keep them maintained, clean and safe. Our facilities house our most precious resources – students and staff – on a daily basis.

Climate

Cohesive ■ Productive ■ Trusting ■ Highly Qualified

Wellness — District 709 offers a wellness program for employees that includes monthly health information and an annual wellness screening.

Competitive salaries — District 709 offers a competitive salary/benefits package.

Recognition — Our employees are a valuable asset. Monthly staff recognition honors exceptional work. The annual Master Potter award recognizes an outstanding District 709 educator. This award was established by the Board of Education as a tribute to someone who exemplifies the qualities of high standards, professionalism and dedication to students. Katrina Fitzpatrick, a band instructor at Morton Junior High, was the 2016 recipient. The Potter's Hand award was given for the first time this spring to recognize an outstanding member of the support staff. Clara Jo Ogden, an aide at Morton Junior High, was recognized for her gentle encouragement and care for students.

Qualifications — We value a qualified staff because the most important part of a student's education is the teacher in the front of the room. About 65% of our teachers have master's degrees. We also have six National Board Certified teachers.

Why is climate important?

Our goal is to create a positive environment most conducive to student learning and achievement.

Communication

Open ■ Meaningful ■ With Everyone

Our tools — We use our website (www.morton709.org), Facebook, Twitter, 709 Communicator, MPTV, face-to-face meetings, and an email newsletter to connect with citizens. We continue to look at ways to improve how we use these communications tools.

Our broadcasting brand, MPTV, airs locally on Comcast Channel 20 and iTV3 Channel 21. We also stream events live on the internet, including Board of Education meetings. MPTV produced about 170 programs in the 2015-16 school year.



Why is communication important?

We want to hear from and engage with our citizens and also share information about our schools. While we may have differing ideas, we are thankful to have a community that values education. Your input matters to us.

Stay Connected

Morton 709 Education & Administration Building

1050 S. Fourth Ave., Morton, IL 61550
263-2581

Morton High School

350 N. Illinois
Morton, IL 61550
266-7182

Principal: Marjorie Johnson

Morton Junior High

225 E. Jackson,
Morton, IL 61550
266-6522

Principal: Lee Hoffman

Lettie Brown Elementary

2550 N. Morton Ave.
Morton, IL 61550
266-5309

Principal: Faith Waterfield

Grundy Elementary

1100 S. Fourth Ave.
Morton, IL 61550
263-1421

Principal: Michael Saunders

Transportation Facility

250 W. Courtland, Morton, IL 61550
263-1086

Director of Transportation: Nancy Weigle

Jefferson Elementary

220 E. Jefferson St.
Morton, IL 61550
263-2650

Principal: Kate Wyman

Lincoln Elementary

100 S. Nebraska Ave.
Morton, IL 61550
266-6989

Principal: Julie Albers

District Communications Coordinator: Amy Greiner — 284-8046

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www.facebook.com/Morton709

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