



# MORTON

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## UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

April 13, 2021

## Morton teachers get new contract

Morton School District 709 has inked a new three-year contract with teachers that reflects both the quality of the local work force and the extra effort they put in during a once-a-century pandemic.

“Our staff really stepped up, doing everything that was asked of them through the uncommon demands of a year unlike any in memory,” said Morton Superintendent Jeffrey Hill. “They worked with our students both in person and remotely, which required a significant increase in duties and in time. This contract is a recognition of that.”

“I would like to commend all involved for the spirit of cooperation, collaboration and civility that marked our negotiations of the last few months.”

The agreement will provide pay increases of 2.5 percent, 3 percent and 3 percent in years one, two and three, taking teachers through the 2023-24 school year. In addition, all teachers will receive a lump-sum, one-time stipend of \$1,200, which does not become part of the base salary.

Entry-level compensation will rise from \$42,851 next year to \$44,128 in 2023-24. On average, Morton teachers currently make just north of \$55,300 annually.

Extra-duty base salaries, such as for coaching, will rise 1 percent in each year of the contract. A new Health Reimbursement Arrangement, or HRA plan will replace the current medical reimbursement plan.

The contract, which covers approximately 200 educators, was ratified by Morton Education Association (MEA) members on April 9. The Morton School Board followed up with its unanimous seal of approval on April 13.

“This contract represents an investment in our teachers, to be sure, but we also believe it is a fair and affordable request of our taxpayers,” said Morton School Board President Shad Beaty. “Our staff, our parents and the community at large went above and beyond through unprecedented adversity this past year, and for that we are appreciative.

“Where the rubber hits the road in any school system is in the direct interaction between students and teachers in classrooms and, this year, beyond them. We are proud of our school district and the job it does for the community. We believe this contract continues to make us competitive for talent, and as such will pay concrete dividends for Morton moving forward.”

“Developing a new contract is always a daunting task, but the bargaining process put forth by the Association's negotiation team and the District 709 Board of Education and administration demonstrated professionalism and cooperation, which led to a successful ratification of the new contract,” said MEA President Tony Feleccia. “The Association is proud of what the certified staff accomplished over the past year.”

Support staff and other employee groups not covered by a collective bargaining agreement also are in line for a bonus to recognize their work under the trying circumstances of the last year. It will be calculated somewhat differently, as a percentage of the individual's annual compensation as opposed to a fixed amount for all. Further details will be forthcoming.

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