

## MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

July 16, 2024

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held on July 16, 2024, at the Morton Education and Administration Center. **The meeting included the District Goals of Achievement, Communication, Climate, Facilities, and Finance.**

### SPECIAL MEETING

**Call to Order and Roll Call** – Vice-President Rudd called the Regular Meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

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

Roll Call:            Yea 6      Nay    Absent 1 (Dr. Cross)

### Agenda Related Audience Presentations –

Dr. Ashley Fischer, Mr. Wes Ohnesorge, Ms. Elaine Hopkins, and Mrs. Amanda Mettleman requested time to address the Board regarding items. Dr. Fischer spoke for 3 minutes reserving time for non-agenda items later in the meeting. Mr. Ohnesorge, Ms. Hopkins, and Mrs. Mettleman spoke for five minutes to the Board of Education.

### Administrative Reports

#### Superintendent's Report— Dr. Smock

- Dr. Smock congratulated Mrs. Eleanor Higus on being selected as the new Grundy principal. Mrs. Higus has been in all of our Elementary buildings as an instructional coach so she is a familiar face. This is her fourteenth year as an educator. Everyone is excited to see her in her new role.
- Dr. Smock congratulated the SkillsUSA teachers, Mrs. Tiffany Beard and Mr. Chad McFarland on the bronze medal students earned at the SkillsUSA national convention. They will come with the students to Board Meeting on August 20, 2024. It was an exciting time for our staff and students.
- Ms. Lisa Kowalski, CFO, presented the Tentative FY25 Budget. It included a review of the FY24 budget and expectations on costs and revenue for the coming year. Board Policy requires 180 days of operating expenses in reserve be in the budget. She explained the funding of capital projects and funding sources. 81% of the budget is salaries and benefits. The O&M has a larger budget than typical for current capital projects including Morton High School renovations. The FY25 budgeted health insurance expenditure increased 10% to \$2.75M from 2.5M in FY24. Ms. Kowalski noted that Director of Operations, Mr. Rodney Schuck, has vital knowledge of the District buildings and grounds. His expertise provides vital input when the District is looking at capital projects. The 25-year cycle of roof replacements is nearly complete. The Board thanked Ms. Kowalski for her work and ability to explain a complex budget with many rules on use of funds. The Board observed that the funds in reserve meet the 180 days but there is not an excessive reserve.
- Extended School was cancelled today because of last night's weather. Many buildings were without power, including some for extended periods. The summer staff provided extra hands helped clean up the mess after the storm.

**Vice-President's Report – Mr. Rudd**

- Mr. Rudd thanked Ms. Kowalski for the precise and clear budget presentation and explanation.
- He thanked Mr. Schuck and his team for having much of the grounds cleaned up by 8:30 AM to be sure our grounds were clean and safe. It was an EF-1 tornado.

**Discussion Item –**

**Board Meetings and Building Meetings –**

Dr. Smock reflected on the long held practice of Building Dinner Meetings with each school. The Board spent time reflecting on if it was time for some changes. The Board discussed several options for refreshing the practice. They enjoy seeing teachers and meeting with them. They threw out ideas and possibilities, including reducing the actual meeting schedule to one per month. The Board seeks organic conversations and two-way communication. They want to converse about mutual and unique priorities educators may have for students. They would love to observe when students are present, but that is difficult for members who work during school hours. The Board will continue this conversation at a later meeting.

**Action Item(s) –**

**Approve Admission of Non-Resident Students Per Board Policy 7:60**

Mr. Roth moved for the approval of three Non-Resident tuition students for Special Education instruction. Mrs. Lemman supported the motion.

Roll Call:            Yea 6     Nay    Absent 1 (Dr. Cross)

The motion carried.

**Approve Non-Resident Tuition per Parent Request Per Board Policy 7:60**

Dr. Krall moved for the approval of a Non-Resident tuition students per parent request for Special Education instruction. Mr. Roth supported the motion.

Roll Call:            Yea 6     Nay    Absent 1 (Dr. Cross)

The motion carried. It was noted that everyone benefits from this arrangement to meet student needs. The program, the students, and the school districts who want to give their students more opportunities all receive benefits.

**Consent Agenda –**

Mr. Braker moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Mr. Neeley supported the motion.

- Approve Personnel Report
- Approve Resolution to Regulate Expense Reimbursements
- Approve Overnight Trip per Board Policy 6:240 – MHS Dance Team
- Approve Overnight Trip per Board Policy 6:240 – MHS Cross Country/ Track & Field
- Approve Overnight Trip per Board Policy 6:240 – Volleyball Team
- Approve Minutes of the June 25, 2024 Special Meeting; and the June 25, 2024, Special Meeting Closed Session
- Approve Bills and Payroll

	<b>Bills 7-1-24</b>	<b>Bills 7-12-24 7-15-24</b>	<b>Payroll 6-28-24</b>
Ed. Fund (10)	\$495,636.13	\$296,619.03	\$1,000,288.97
Bldg. Fund (20)	20,340.38	240,829.98	49,455.43
Trans. Fund (40)	111,569.15	14,053.12	33,593.29
IMRF (50)			51,206.20
Capital Projects (60)		984,312.22	
TORT (80)	471,646.50	15,922.00	

Roll Call: Yea 6 Nay 0 Absent 1 (Dr. Cross)

Motion carried.

**Non- Agenda Audience Presentations:**

Dr. Ashley Fischer and Ms. Heather McMeekan requested time to address the Board regarding non-agenda items. Dr. Fischer spoke for her remaining three minutes and Ms. McMeekan spoke for five minutes to the Board of Education.

**Closed Session-**

Vice-President Rudd called for the Board entered into Closed Session for the purpose of Negotiations, Personnel, and Hearing as stated in the Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/2 115 ILCS 5/18). Dr. Krall moved for the Board to enter into Closed Session. Mr. Braker supported the motion.

Roll Call: Yea 6 Nay 0 Absent 1 (Dr. Cross)

Motion carried. The Board entered into Closed Session at 6:58 p.m.

Mr. Roth moved to re-enter open session. Dr. Krall supported the motion.

Roll Call: Yea 6 Nay Absent 1 (Dr. Cross)

Motion carried.

The Board re-entered open session at 9:50 p.m.

**Approve Board Ruling on Complaint Appeal**

Mr. Jay Greening, District Attorney, prepared the motion at the conclusion of the hearing. Vice-President Rudd read the motion. Mr. Roth moved for the approval of the motion as presented. Mr. Braker supported the motion. The motion read: “I move that the Board of Education:

- a. Prohibit Bryan Groth from all school property indefinitely, provided that Mr. Groth will still be allowed on school property briefly for dropping off or picking up his children from school or school activities;
- b. Prohibit Bryan Groth from all athletic and extracurricular events until May 10, 2025, provided Mr. Groth shall be allowed to attend athletic or extracurricular events of his own children if he submits a written statement to the Superintendent promising to refrain from verbally communicating with any district coach or extracurricular sponsor on the day of any game, practice, or extracurricular contest, and until such time that Mr. Groth schedules a meeting with such coach or sponsor. (In the event such written statement is provided and the Superintendent later determines that Mr. Groth broke the promise prior to May 10, 2025, the Superintendent shall have the right to revoke the privilege of Mr. Groth to attend athletic or extracurricular games, practices, or contests until May 10, 2025, by providing written notice of such revocation. In such event, the Superintendent's determination shall be final); and
- c. Direct the Superintendent to provide Bryan Groth with notice of such prohibitions, with directions on how to participate in any necessary parent-teacher conferences or other meetings directly involving the education of his children.

Roll Call:        Yea 6    Nay    Absent 1 (Dr. Cross)

The motion carried.

**Adjournment –**

Mr. Neeley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Braker supported the motion.

Roll Call:        Yea 6    Nay    Absent 1 (Dr. Cross)

The motion carried with a voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:56 p.m.

Recorded by,

Respectfully submitted,

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Valerie Smith, Recording Secretary

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Amanda Leman, Secretary

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Jerry Rudd, Vice-President