

**MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709**

**December 10, 2024**

Minutes of the 2024 Levy Hearing and Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held on December 10, 2024, at the Morton Education and Administration Center. The meeting included the District Goals of Achievement, Communication, Climate, Facilities, and Finance.

**LEVY HEARING –**

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

Members present: Mr. Tim Braker, Dr. David Cross, Dr. Diane Krall, Mrs. Amanda Leman, Mr. Andrew Roth, Mr. Tom Neeley, Mr. Rudd, Dr. Smock, Dr. Joseph Sander, and Mrs. Valerie Smith.

President Cross declared the Levy Hearing open for the purpose of answering questions from the public on the proposed 2024 Levy. Ms. Lisa Kowalski, CFO, was present to answer questions. Dr. Cross directed Mrs. Smith to add the FY24 Truth in Taxation final balances of FY24 on June 30, 2024, to the hearing minutes.

<b>FY24 Truth in Taxation School Board Meeting – December 10, 2024 All Balances as of 6-30-24</b>	
<b>Education Fund</b>	<b>\$24,965,388</b>
<b>Operation, Building and Maintenance Fund</b>	<b>\$13,845,574</b>
<b>Bond &amp; Interest Fund</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Transportation Fund</b>	<b>\$802,293</b>
<b>Municipal Retirement Fund</b>	<b>\$846,845</b>
<b>Working Cash Fund</b>	<b>\$3,802,769</b>
<b>Tort Cash Fund</b>	<b>\$532,568</b>

There being no audience questions or discussion, President Cross declared the Levy Hearing closed at 5:32 p.m.

**REGULAR MEETING –**

**Call to Order and Roll Call –** President Cross called the Regular Meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

Members present: Mr. Tim Braker, Dr. David Cross, Dr. Diane Krall, Mrs. Amanda Leman, Mr. Andrew Roth, Mr. Tom Neeley, Mr. Rudd, Dr. Smock, Dr. Joseph Sander, and Mrs. Valerie Smith.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0 Absent 0

**Recognition of Excellence –** The Board recognized the Morton High Boys Cross Country Team for the team’s 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish at the IHSA State Cross Country Finals. MHS Athletic Director, Scott Jones, introduced head coach, Joe Zeller. Coach Zeller reflected on the history-making season. He commended the team for their work ethic, character, and community building. Team leadership, Phillip Canopy and Paul Yontz shared about the intentionality of team leadership all season. The students communicated that the 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish was amazing, but it was the team building and sense of family that make cross-country special.

**Agenda Related Audience Presentations –**

Dr. Ashley Fischer addressed the Board of Education for five minutes.

## Administrative Reports—

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

- **MHS Renovation Update:** MHS hallway spaces are ready for use. The lobby space is coming along. The locker rooms will be ready for use in January. Glass panels are coming soon.
- **Jefferson Crosswalk Project:** The crosswalk is done and operational. It is a safety update for the entire community. It operates 24-hours a day. The District is grateful for the partnership with the Village on the project.
- **Recognition:** Mr. Todd Herrmann was recognized and congratulated for being selected the Central Illinois Valley Assistant Principal of the Year.
- **AI Magic School Presentation:** Technology Integration Specialist Don Sturm presented to the Board on the AI tool known as Magic School, the AI program the District has selected. Mr. Sturm gave some highlights and possibilities that come with AI. He noted that AI is here. The Board appreciates the proactive approach to AI. They thanked Mr. Sturm for his excellent work and presentation.

### President's Report and Agenda Building – Dr. David Cross

- The Board will look at discussing and developing Smart Goals. The Board will collaborate. Mr. Rudd added a first draft to the Board Folder.
- The Board mentioned that Vision 2030 launched at the convention. The Board wants to be in a position to lobby for the items that are high priority for our district. Dr. Smock will check to see what he has received.

## Discussion Items—

### IASB 2024 Joint Annual Conference Selections—

The Board Members and Administration discussed the School Board Convention offerings they attended. Board members noted that the sessions are consistently valuable, with topics including IHSA updates, many AI-related sessions, Superintendent Evaluation tools, community engagement, leadership, tax levy, effective school board governance, inviting diversity, and more.

## Board Protocols—

The Board reviewed, discussed, and revised the updated board protocols with an additional agreed upon amendment. The updated protocols are ready for approval.

## Action Item(s)—

### Action on Property Tax Relief Grant Application

Dr. Krall moved for the Board of Education to approve the Property Tax Relief Grant Application. Mrs. Leman supported the motion.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0 Absent 0

Motion carried.

**Action on 2024 Levy Resolution–**

Mr. Rudd made a motion for the Board to approve the 2024 Levy Resolution as presented. Mr. Braker supported the motion.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0 Absent 0

Motion carried.

**Action on Expansion of Breakfast to all other Schools–**

Mr. Roth motioned for the Board of Education to approve the expansion of the Breakfast program to Lettie Brown, Lincoln, Grundy, and Morton Academy in January 2025 at a cost of \$1.60 per meal and a Grab-and-Go to Morton Jr. High and Morton High School in the spring as staffing permits. Mr. Rudd supported.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0 Absent 0

Motion carried.

**Action on Board Protocols–**

Mr. Neeley made a motion to adopt the revised agreed upon Board Protocols with the discussed amendment. Mr. Braker supported the motion. The revised Board Protocols included an additional amendment agreed upon by the Board prior to the vote.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0 Absent 0

Motion carried.

**Consent Agenda –**

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

- Approve Personnel Report
- Approve Donation Report
- Approve Overnight/Out-of-State Trip per Board Policy 6:240 – MHS Skills USA – March 2025
- Approve Minutes of the November 19, 2024, Regular Meeting; No closed session November 19, 2024
- Approve Bills and Payroll

	<b>Bills 11-22-24</b>	<b>Bills 11-26-24 11-27-24</b>	<b>Payroll 11-8-24</b>	<b>Payroll 11-22-24</b>
<b>Ed. Fund (10)</b>	<b>\$301,645.90</b>	<b>\$301,846.24</b>	<b>\$1,020,497.46</b>	<b>\$1,035,306.18</b>
<b>Bldg. Fund (20)</b>		<b>\$61,830.66</b>	<b>59,260.16</b>	<b>56,432.56</b>
<b>Trans. Fund (40)</b>		<b>\$6,178.97</b>	<b>33,413.88</b>	<b>29,013.94</b>
<b>IMRF (50)</b>			<b>53,536.71</b>	<b>52,564.51</b>

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0 Absent 0

Motion carried. Dr. Smock noted that the District is grateful for the donors listed on the Donation Report noting that we are fortunate to have such excellent community support.

**Closed Session-**

President Cross called for a Closed Session to discuss Personnel as Stated in the Open Meetings Act (ILSC 120/2). Mr. Braker motioned for the Board to enter into closed session. Mr. Rudd supported the motion.

Mr. Braker made a motion for the Board to return to Open Session. Mr. Rudd supported the motion.

Roll Call:        Yea 7    Nay 0    Absent 0

The Board re-entered Open Session at 8:05 p.m.

**Action on Lincoln Principal Candidate for 2025-26 –**

Mr. Braker motioned to approve Ms. Wendy Vastine, for the position of Principal at Lincoln Elementary School for the 2025-26 school year. Mrs. Leman supported the motion. Mrs. Vastine currently serves as Assistant Principal at Lincoln Elementary School. She will begin her position as principal for the 2025-26 school year.

Roll Call:        Yea 7    Nay 0    Absent 0

Motion carried.

**Adjournment –**

Mr. Roth made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Roll Call:        Yea 7    Nay 0    Absent 0

The motion carried with a voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:32 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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David Cross, President