

## MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

January 14, 2025

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held on January 14, 2025, at the Morton Education and Administration Center. The meeting included the District Goals of Achievement, Communication, Climate, Facilities, and Finance.

### REGULAR MEETING –

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, Mrs. Amanda Leman, Mr. Andrew Roth, Mr. Tom Neeley, Mr. Rudd, Dr. Smock, Dr. Joseph Sander, and Mrs. Valerie Smith. Absent: Dr. Diane Krall (arrived 5:32 p.m.)

Roll Call: Yea 6 Nay 0 Absent 1 (Krall)

Dr. Krall arrived at 5:32 p.m.

### Administrative Reports—

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

- MHS Renovation Update: The new spaces are in use except the lobby. The lobby is coming along. Parent volunteers appreciate the new concession space.
- Crosswalks Update: Jefferson’s crosswalk is working well to provide safer crossings 24/7. The Board appreciates the increased safety that comes with each new crossing. They asked if there was a way to speed up the implementation process for the additional new crosswalks. Dr. Smock will look into it with the Village, as it is a cooperative project the Village. The District and the Village are both pleased to be sharing the cost of each new crossing.
- Breakfast hit the ground running. 130 to 200 students are taking breakfast. The first seven days have seen good numbers.
- Dr. Smock shared that the National PowerSchool Database had a security breach. It was caught and it is believed that the data obtained has been deleted. The FBI is involved. As a District, we are always concerned with protecting data. The information breached included names, addresses, phone numbers, and some medical needs noted. Morton 709 does not keep social security numbers in PowerSchool.
- Mr. Kirk Edwards, MHS principal, will bring the updated Grade Point Average (GPA) plan to the Board at the February 4, 2025, meeting for discussion. If approved by the Board, it will be approved in March.
- The Regular Meetings of the Board of Education have been cancelled for January 21, 2025, and February 18, 2025. Special meetings can be called if necessary. The Board will be touring the new MHS space soon.
- Officer Andrew Dryden of the Morton Police Department (MPD) was introduced as the new School Resource Officer from Morton CUSD 709. He shared a little of his background including military service, his education at I.C.C. and ISU, and beginning his law enforcement career with the Peoria Police Department before coming to the MPD. Dr. Smock noted Officer Dryden hit the ground running and is doing a fantastic job.
- Student Support Services Report – Ms. Lindsay Franklin, Director of Student Support Services (SSS) Mrs. Franklin presented a comprehensive report to the Board on the many facets of Student Support Services. Her presentation gave the full scope of the program and the many ways the SSS student needs are being met. The Board appreciated the data, the details, the explanations, and the many ways the SSS Department is serving students with SPED/SEL/MLL special learning needs.

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

Dr. Cross made a public statement in response to the public speaker at the December 10, 2025, Board of Education meeting.

### **Public Statement from the Board of Education –**

*On behalf of the Board, I want to address the allegation that board members have violated board policy through political action in our schools. That is a false allegation, and it has not occurred.*

*Regarding our bullying policy, protocols, and climate within our schools, Dr. Teater more than adequately covered that topic in his presentation on October 29, 2024. All reported cases of bullying are investigated and properly addressed according to policy and the law.*

In regards to policy, Dr. Cross reminded the Board that in July we will begin a two-year calendar that will review all policies upon completion. It will be a good way to stay current on all policies and there are new policies that come with things like A.I.

### **Agenda Building–**

Mr. Rudd worked on the Smart Goals. All Board members can add thoughts and make notes.

The Board noted the excellent communication going out in the form of school/principal/program newsletters and The Potter Post. Podcasts are another avenue of communication in line with Board goals.

The Board noted the many ways our District is communicating regularly with parents. We have newsletters going out regularly, the website, Care-U Podcast, and the Board welcomes and is accessible by email. Board meeting reports are full of information are available for those who are interested.

Cell phone usage and policies in other schools are under review. Dr. Teater has been talking with other schools on what they are doing. The Board would like to have feedback from parents and teachers. The Board would like to hear Mr. Edward's thoughts as principal at MHS.

We will continue to look for a good night to tour the new MHS spaces, once it is completed.

### **Discussion Items–**

#### **2025-26 District Calendar—**

The Board Members and Administration discussed the proposed school district calendar for the 2025-26 academic year (FY26). Dr. Sander gave everyone a paper copy. Dr. Sander acknowledged MHS Associate Principal, Jamie Adolphson, for her work on the calendar. The committee requested Columbus Day as a holiday. The Committee recommended frontloading a Teacher Institute Day on the first day of the second semester. Spring Break is linked to Easter Break in 2026. The last day of attendance for students and teachers will be the same day. The goal is to keep the number of days in each semester as balanced as possible while still completing first semester before Christmas Break. The Board complimented the committee on their work.

**Action Item(s)–**

**Action on License Agreement Extension & Addendum with Center for Youth and Family Solutions (CYFS)–**

Mr. Rudd made a motion for the Board to approve the License Agreement Extension and Addendum with the Center for Youth and Family Serviced as presented. Mr. Braker supported the motion. It is an additional \$2000 per year. We are using some additional space. Guardian Angel Home provides building maintenance.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0 Absent 0

Motion carried.

**Consent Agenda –**

Dr. Krall moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Mrs. Lemman supported the motion.

- Approve Personnel Report
- Approve Overnight Trip per Board Policy 6:240 Key Club (DCLC) – February 2025
- Approve Overnight Trip per Board Policy 6:240 – MHS SkillsUSA State Officers & Amplify Training – February 2025
- Approve Overnight Trip per Board Policy 6:240 – MHS SkillsUSA CTE Advocacy: Training & Congressional Meetings – March 2025
- Approve Overnight Trip per Board Policy 6:240 – MHS SkillsUSA State Officers Mtg. & State Championship Prep – April 2025
- Approve Overnight Trip per Board Policy 6:240 – MHS SkillsUSA Illinois Championship Finals – April 2025
- Approve Overnight Trip per Board Policy 6:240 – MHS SkillsUSA State Officers Present at Education Conference - February 2025
- Approve Donation Report
- Approve Minutes of the December 10, 2024, Regular Meeting; December 10, 2024, Regular Meeting Closed Session
- Approve Bills and Payroll

	<b>Bills 12-13-24 12-16-24</b>	<b>Bills 12-20-24 12-23-24</b>	<b>Bills 1-10-25 1-13-25</b>	<b>Payroll 12-6-24</b>	<b>Payroll 12-20-24</b>
<b>Ed. Fund (10)</b>	\$291,148.26	\$486,694.53	\$266,866.29	\$910,732.51	981,673.04
<b>Bldg. Fund (20)</b>	\$198,936.58	\$45,473.58	\$105,981.76	54,146.79	54,176.27
<b>Trans. Fund (40)</b>	\$33,483.45	\$11,846.71	\$28,963.54	25,951.62	30,499.19
<b>IMRF (50)</b>				33,296.10	37,085.81
<b>Capital Projects (60)</b>	\$392,614.88				

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0 Absent 0

Motion carried.

Dr. Smock gave some history on the Donation Report. 135 Years ago, a trust was formed by the Ogle Trust Fund was dispersed between five district. It was earmarked for elementary teachers when it was established. He offered thanks to the Ogle family. We will respect the wishes of the family and will figure out the best way to disperse the funds.

**Closed Session-**

President Cross called for a Closed Session to discuss Personnel and Student Discipline as Stated in the Open Meetings Act (ILSC 120/2). Mr. Roth motioned for the Board to enter into closed session. Mr. Neeley supported the motion. The Board entered Closed Session at 6:55 p.m.

Mr. Roth made a motion for the Board to return to Open Session. Mr. Neeley supported the motion.

Roll Call:        Yea 7    Nay 0    Absent 0

The Board re-entered Open Session at 9:37 p.m.

**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 9:39 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