

MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT
October 7, 2025

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held October 7, 2025, at the Morton Education and Administration Center. The meeting included the District's goals in **Achievement, Communication, Climate, Facilities, and Finance.**

REGULAR MEETING

Call to Order and Roll Call and Pledge

Vice-President Jerry Rudd called the Regular Meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Members recited the Pledge of Allegiance. **Members present:** Dr. Diane Krall, Mrs. Amanda Leman, Mr. Wes Ohnesorge, Mrs. Krystiana Purdy, and Mr. Jerry Rudd; **Absent:** Dr. David Cross (arrived 7:20 p.m.) and Mr. Andrew Roth

Administrative Reports

Superintendent's Report – Dr. Joseph Sander

- **Preschool, RISE, and High School Transition Program Update:** Mrs. Bethany Scroggs, Assistant Director of Special Education, provided an update on the District's Pre-K programs, Reaching Independence with Support and Education (RISE), and the High School Transition Program serving MHS graduates up to age 22.
- **Gratitude:** Dr. Sander expressed appreciation for *The Potter Post* (Mrs. Valerie Smith) that provides ongoing communication, as well as for the District Principals and Custodians. He noted the month's focus on promoting kindness as a core value.
- **MHS Parking Update:** Dr. Sander reported a shortage of parking spaces at MHS, with 330 applications for 260 available spots. The District and the Village recognize the need for additional parking; however, no suitable property is currently available. Designated 15-minute visitor spaces have provided limited relief. Recently painted yellow curbs designate no-parking zones that will be ticketed.
- **School Safety Updates:** Dr. Sander provided safety updates, noting Mrs. Kate Wyman's work implementing the *Raptor Visitor Management System* for district-wide rollout. Evacuation and fire drills have been completed in several schools. Mrs. Wyman also introduced an Emergency Management System app to enhance communication during crisis situations, and district facilities have been digitally mapped to improve emergency response times.
- **Audit:** The Regional Office of Education will conduct an audit covering safety, records, policy, and compliance.
- **Destruction Verbatim Records** – Dr. Sander noted that closed session verbatim records are to be destroyed after 18 months, per Board Policy 2:220. The item will appear on an upcoming agenda.
- **Finance:** The EIS Teacher/Administrator Salary and Benefits Report has been completed and is available on the District website. Dr. Sander reviewed FY25 financials with the District auditor.
- **FOIAs:** Dr. Sander reported FOIA requests received from Christopher Miller (CT Mills), Shari Reid (Staff Directory), Matt Langer (Freedom from Religion Foundation), Janie Jordan (Data Research Partners), and a second request from Matt Langer, which was determined to be unduly burdensome.

- **Site Visits:** Board site visits are scheduled at various schools, beginning with Jefferson School on October 21, 2025. No Board business will be conducted. Mrs. Valerie Smith will provide official notice.
- **Monthly Board Policy Review:** Dr. Sander noted the board policies under review for October.

President's Report – Vice-President Jerry Rudd

Vice-President Rudd shared that appreciation for excellent communication in the District. This included: “The Potter Post,” the Principal reports, teacher to students communications, principal to teacher communication, and MP-TV. The Board would like to have SMART Goals ready by December.

Board Committee Updates:

- The TLC (Teaching & Learning Council) Committee (Mrs. Purdy) met. They used the “Start, Stop, Continue” method of gathering of information with Mrs. Stephanie Brown.
- Extra-Curricular Committee (Mrs. Leman & Mr. Ohnesorge) met and discussed the use of surveys to gather feedback. MJHS distributes parent surveys, and MHS surveys student-athletes. An ongoing athletic feedback form is also available for parents. Suggestions included adding the level of sport played and considering a midseason review. All surveys are anonymous. All feedback is welcome.
- The Facilities Committee (Mr. Rudd & Mrs. Leman) meets on October 23 to review upcoming summer projects for 2026. Items on the long-term facilities plan include the tennis complex and the athletic complex (turf, track, and related improvements).

Mr. Rudd thanked the Board for their work on the Committees.

Discussion Item(s)

Review FY27 Budget & Tentative 2025 Levy – Ms. Lisa Kowalski, CFO

Ms. Lisa Kowalski presented the FY27 Budget and Tentative 2025 Levy. The Board will approve the 2026–27 Proposed Budget and 2025 Tentative Levy on November 4, 2025. The Truth in Taxation notice will appear in the Peoria Journal Star on November 19, 2025, and the Public Hearing for the 2025 Final Levy and its approval will be held on December 2, 2025.

Ms. Kowalski noted that \$500,000 could be allocated to Capital Projects while maintaining 217 days in reserve. Some fund transfers will be required in November. She also reported that the proposed levy increase does not fully cover salary and health insurance increases.

IASB Conference Resolutions

The Board discussed the IASB Assembly Conference Resolutions, which this year includes one resolution and several constitutional amendments. The Board acknowledged the work of the IASB Resolution Committee and decided to vote “Yes” on all items. The IASB Delegate will submit a single ballot on behalf of the Board. The Board noted the importance of the IASB in representing districts when the State of Illinois enacts unfunded mandates.

Action Items**Action on Board Policy-PRESS 119 Updates**

Mrs. Leman moved that the Board approve the Board Policy updates reviewed with PRESS Issue 119 (Policies 4:50 and 7:40). Mrs. Purdy seconded.

Roll Call: Yea 5 Nay 0 Absent 2

Motion carried.

Action on IASB Assembly Delegate and Alternate

Mr. Ohnesorge moved that Mr. Andrew Roth be the 2025 IASB Assembly Delegate and Mr. Jerry Rudd will be the Alternate. Mrs. Leman seconded.

Roll Call: Yea 5 Nay 0 Absent 2

Motion carried.

Vice-President Rudd removed the Personnel Report from the Consent Agenda to be approved after Closed Session.

Approve Consent Agenda:

Dr. Krall moved that the Board approve the Consent Agenda without the Personnel Report. Mrs. Purdy seconded.

Roll Call: Yea 5 Nay 0 Absent 2

Motion carried.

Consent Agenda

- Approve Overnight MHS Wrestling Tournament per Board Policy 6:240 Naperville/Joliet-December 5-6, 2025
- Approve Overnight MHS Wrestling Tournament per Board Policy 6:240-Mascoutah, IL-December 19-20, 2025
- Approve Overnight/Out of State MHS Wrestling Tournament per Board Policy 6:240-Whitewater U, WI - December 29-30,2025
- Approve Overnight MHS Wrestling Tournament per Board Policy 6:240-Geneseo, IL-January 16-17, 2026
- Approve Overnight/Out of State per Board Policy 6:240-FFA Convention-Indianapolis, IN-Oct 29-31, 2025
- Approve IMRF Authorized Agent – Mrs. Heather Ford
- Approve Bills and Payroll

| | Bills 9-5-25 | Bills 9-12-25 9-15-2 | Bills 9-26-25 9-29-25 | Payroll 9-5-25 | Payroll 9-19-25 |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Ed. Fund (10) | \$24,425.70 | \$207,955.01 | \$35,619.39 | \$1,238,091.96 | \$1,109,433.70 |
| Bldg. Fund (20) | \$8,736.03 | \$199,784.65 | \$802,282.47 | \$85,586.49 | \$59,244.17 |
| Trans. Fund (40) | \$796.19 | \$10,709.97 | \$19,180.54 | \$46,569.42 | \$35,619.39 |
| IMRF (50) | | \$10,709.97 | | | |
| Capital Projects (60) | | | \$46,440.30 | | |
| TORT (80) | | \$159.32 | | | |

Non-Agenda Related Audience Presentations

Ms. Jessica Fuller Mohn addressed the Board for 5 minutes regarding policy reform, communication, and threats of violence.

Closed Session as stated in the Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/2)

Vice-President Rudd called for closed session for the purpose of Student Discipline (5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9)), Personnel (5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)) Security and Safety Procedures Complaint Appeal (5 ILCS 120/2(c)(8)), Litigations (5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)), and Property (5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (5) as stated in the Open Meetings Act. at 7:16 p.m.

Mrs. Leman made a motion to move into Closed Session for the purpose of Student Discipline, Personnel, and the Purchase or Lease of Land. Mr. Ohnesorge supported the motion.

Roll Call: Yea 5 Nay 0 Absent 2

Motion carried. The Board entered closed session at 7:16 p.m. Dr. David Cross was present for Closed Session Roll Call.

Open Session

Mr. Ohnesorge motioned for the Board to return to Open Session. Seconded by Dr. Krall.

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

Motion carried. The board returned to regular session at 9:25 p.m.

Action Item(s)

Action on Board Ruling for Complaint Appeal

Mrs. Leman motioned: "I move that the Board of Education approve the decision of the Complaint Manager and Superintendent for the complaint appeal as reviewed and determined by the Board of Education." Dr. Cross seconded.

Roll Call: Yea 6 Nay 0 Absent 1

Motion carried.

Action on Personnel Report

Dr. Cross moved that Board of Education approve the Personnel Report as presented. Mrs. Purdy seconded.

Roll Call: Yea 6 Nay 0 Absent 1

Motion carried.

Adjournment –

Mrs. Purdy made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Voice Vote: Yea 6 Absent 1

Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Recorded by,

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Smith, Recording Secretary

Amanda Leman, Secretary

Jerry Rudd, Vice President