

**MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**November 4, 2025**

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held November 4, 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**

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

**Administrative Reports**

**Superintendent's Report – Dr. Joseph Sander**

- **School Board Appreciation Month:** MP-TV prepared a video for the Board of Education from students. Dr. Sander thanked the Board for their dedication and hard work.
- **Finance- Auditor's Report**— Lisa Kowalski, CFO & Brian Mateas, Director, CLA Mr. Mateas presented the report, noting that while they await some government numbers to finalize, the audit is essentially complete. He commended Lisa Kowalski and the Business Office for their outstanding preparation and prompt response to requests. Dr. Sander also praised the team's excellent performance, even while short-staffed. The audit was deemed excellent.
- **Student Achievement & Illinois Report Card** – Mrs. Kate Wyman, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Technology, & Safety presented on Student Achievement looking at test scores and measuring growth. She shared the Illinois Report Card showing how Morton 709 compares with other Districts. The scores were excellent. Morton 709 has essentially recovered what was lost during the Covid years. Mrs. Wyman noted that every point of data represents a teacher, a student, and a relationship.
- **Facilities** – Dr. Sander and the Superintendent's Facilities Committee gave updates on the status of facilities and maintenance.
- **School Safety Updates:** Mrs. Wyman gave a report on completed drills. Lincoln completed evacuation in 22 minutes. Morton Academy evacuated in 8 minutes. A reunification team component was also practice. Transportation Director, Mrs. Julie Tharp and the Morton Police Department were recognized for the important roles they play in the drills. Grace Church was recognized for all that they do to help prepare for the arrival of the students and staff.
- **FOIAs:** Dr. Sander reported FOIA requests received from Steve Watts, Justin Wenig, and Steve Weigand.
- **Site Visits:** The Board visited Jefferson School on October 21, 2025. No official Board business was conducted. Teachers and staff provided tours. Several Board members attended during school hours to observe the environment. The next site visit is scheduled for Lettie Brown on November 18, 2025, at 5:30 PM.
- **Monthly Board Policy Review:** Dr. Sander noted the board policies under review for November to be updated in PRESS as reviewed with a date of 11/4/25.

## **President’s Report – President Cross**

The Board is continuing to work on SMART Goals to have them ready in December.

### **Board Committee Updates:**

- Facilities Committee (Mr. Rudd & Mrs. Leman) met on October 23 to review upcoming summer projects for 2026.
- Policy Committee (Dr. Krall & Mrs. Purdy) will be scheduling a meeting. PRESS Issue 120 was released 10/31/25. They will review additional crisis procedure and communication related policies 4:170, 4:190, and 7:180.

### **Discussion Item(s)**

#### **IASB 2025 Joint Annual Conference Selections**

The Board shared their IASB Joint Annual Conference selections to insure they cover a variety of topics at the conference. The Board discussed the positive experiences in the past. The new board members are looking at some of the special sessions directly relevant to new Board members. Mrs. Valerie Smith will deliver conference packets and badges at the Lettie Brown site visit.

### **Action Items**

**2026-27 Proposed Budget and 2025 Tentative Levy—** Mrs. Leman moved that the Board of Education approve the 2026-27 Proposed Budget and the 2025 Tentative Levy at the maximum extension increase of the CPI rate of 2.9%. Mr. Rudd supported the motion.

Roll Call:                      Yea 7                      Nay 0                      Absent 0

Motion carried.

#### **Action on Destruction of Verbatim Records (up to and including May 4, 2024 )**

Dr. Sander noted that closed session verbatim records are to be destroyed after 18 months, per Board Policy 2:220. This item will appear on upcoming Consent Agendas.

Mr. Roth moved to approve the destruction of verbatim audio recordings of closed session Board of Education meetings that are at least 18 months old, pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/2.06), with written closed session minutes having been approved and retained in accordance with statute, up to and including May 4, 2024. Dr. Krall supported the motion.

Roll Call:                      Yea 7                      Nay 0                      Absent 0

Motion carried.

### **Approve Consent Agenda:**

Dr. Sander noted some highlights on the Consent Agenda. He recognized the donation report that included: Morton Opportunity Club (\$500 to Girls Basketball), Howard & Howard (\$500 to Lincoln’s Trunk or Treat), and an anonymous donor gave \$30,000 to Jefferson School. He offered gratitude for their gifts and for the generous community we have in Morton. He noted the expansion of the Boys Lacrosse and Girls Lacrosse Co-op to include six schools. The Board expressed appreciation for the gifts and to see Lacrosse growing for boys and girls.

Mr. Rudd moved that the Board approve the Consent Agenda. Mrs. Purdy seconded.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0 Absent 0

Motion carried.

**Consent Agenda**

- Approve Personnel Report
- Approve MHS Boys and Girls Lacrosse Co-op Agreement with Washington Community High School (Host), Metamora, Morton, East Peoria, Eureka, and Pekin
- Approve Donation Report
- Approve School Maintenance Project Grant Submission
- Approve Minutes: September 2, 2025, Regular Meeting; September 2, 2025, Regular Meeting Closed Session; October 7, 2025, Regular Meeting; October 7, 2025, Regular Meeting Closed Session
- Approve Treasurers Report - July 2025 & August 2025
- Approve Bills and Payroll

	<b>Bills 10-10-25 10-14-25</b>	<b>Bills 10-17-25</b>	<b>Bills 10-24-25 10-27-25</b>	<b>Payroll 10-3-25</b>	<b>Payroll 10-17-25</b>	<b>Payroll 10-31-25</b>
<b>Ed. Fund (10)</b>	\$361,031.78	\$8,917.78	\$348,435.76	1,108,492.59	\$1,100,827.38	\$111,0288.41
<b>Bldg. Fund (20)</b>	\$62,136.74	\$360.00	252,500.219	57,879.09	59,236.16	6,1303.23
<b>Trans. Fund (40)</b>	\$14,164.82		22,309.79	\$39,710.00	39,296.56	36,402.59
<b>IMRF (50)</b>				\$60,870.94	60,997.33	56,728.37
<b>TORT (80)</b>		11,930.00	16.48			

**Non-Agenda Related Audience Presentations** None.

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

President Cross called for closed session for the purpose of Student Discipline (5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9)) and Litigations (5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)) as stated in the Open Meetings Act.

Mr. Rudd made a motion to move into Closed Session for the purpose of Student Discipline and Litigation. Mr. Ohnesorge supported the motion.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0 Absent 0

Motion carried. The Board entered closed session at 7:20 p.m.

**Open Session**

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

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0 Absent 0

Motion carried. The board returned to regular session at 8:00 p.m.

**Action Item(s)**

**Action on Parent Appeal of Suspension of Student Having ID Number #26-001**

Mr. Rudd motioned: “I move that the Board of Education uphold the suspension and CAP assignment of student #26-001 as recommended by the MHS Administration and provide a written decision of the suspension review as required.” Dr. Krall seconded.

Roll Call:                      Yea 7                      Nay 0                      Absent 0

Motion carried.

**Adjournment –**

Mr. Roth made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Voice Vote:                      Yea 7                      Absent

Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Recorded by,

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_

Valerie Smith, Recording Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_

Amanda Leman, Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_

David Cross, President