MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT
June 2, 2026

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held June 2, 2026, at the Morton Education and Administration Center. The meeting included the District's goals in **Achievement, Communication, Climate, Facilities, and Finance.**

REGULAR MEETING, June 2, 2026

Call to Order, Roll Call, and Pledge President Jerry Rudd 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.

Agenda-Related Audience Presentations None.

Administrative Reports

Superintendent's Report – Dr. Joseph Sander

- **Gratitude –** Dr. Sander offered gratitude for the excellence recognized at the Potter Awards. Kristy Boecker(Master Potter), Holli Pfeifer (Potter's Hand, and Cassie Little (Dana Ashby Memorial Service Award) represent the best of the best in the District. The nominations, made by peers, parents, and students, were outstanding.
- **Compliance Audit -** Dr. Sander thanked the team that worked on the ISBE Compliance Audit, including Mrs. Kate Wyman, Mr. Todd Herrmann, Dr. Troy Teater, and Mrs. Valerie Smith, for their work.
- **Facilities Update** – Dr. Sander shared gratitude for the progress on the MJHS Library, classroom, and STEM Lab renovations. The MJHS team and students did a great deal to get things ready.
- **MHS MTSS Update -** Mr. Todd Herrmann, MHS Assoc. Principal & Ms. Jaclyn Hoskins, Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), gave a detailed presentation to the Board on MTSS at MHS, highlighting the program's positive impact on student growth, attendance, relationships, and culture.
- **Building Goals 2025-2026 –** Dr. Sander reviewed building goals for each of the seven learning centers. The Board was presented with reflections on goals set, goals met, and areas of growth still in progress.
- **MHS Cell Phone Policy & District Handbook Updates -** Mason Tennell, MHS Assistant Principal, presented the new cell phone policy (no phones out from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.) and District Handbook revisions. The Board and Administration recognize that this will be a difficult change, but ultimately believe it will be worth it for students. The Board would like to have feedback at the end of the school year.
- **Election Day - November 3, 2026** - No legislation was passed to make Election Day - November 3, 2026, a holiday. The Administration, with MEA support, will revise the 2026-27 School calendar to designate November 3, 2026, as a day of attendance. The official first day of school for students will be pushed back to August 12, 2026. It will be an action item on the July 14, 2026, agenda.
- **FOIA** – Administration received a FOIA from Rhonda Howard (Communication).
- **MHS Girls Soccer** – They are still in postseason play.
- **Monthly Board Policy Review:** The Board reviewed the June policies (Section 6, 6:100-6:160) as part of the bi-annual review schedule.

President's Report – President Rudd

- President Rudd thanked Mr. Edwards and the MHS team for a great job with graduation. He echoed congratulations to the Potter Award winners.
- He thanked Mrs. Jordan Spicklemire for sending many links with great information. He thanked Mr. Herrmann and Ms. Hoskins for their presentation.
- He expressed gratitude for the many behind-the-scenes efforts to prepare for the next school year, including handbook revisions and learning days. He noted that Mr. Don Sturm will be presenting at a conference later this month.
- The new policy to put away phones during the school day will not be easy, but beneficial to the learning environment.

Board Committee Updates:

Superintendent's Extra-Curricular Committee – The committee met on May 28, 2026, to review feedback from MJHS sports, MHS sports, and the MHS Senior exit survey. The committee appreciates the increase in the number of surveys completed. It was noted that some sports are still in postseason play. Returning summer camps to the Morton Park District will increase the number of houses receiving information about the camps. Committee Members: Mrs. Leman & Mr. Ohnesorge
Superintendent's Policy Committee – The Committee met on May 27, 2026, to review PRESS Issue 121. Most policies were revised to reflect legal and reference updates and for clarity. Policies 2:200, 2:220, 4:165, 5:110, plus policies 5:250, and 7:190 were recommended for further discussion. Policy 7:190 addresses changes to cell phone use during the school day. Committee members: Dr. Krall and Mrs. Purdy.

Agenda Building
No new agenda-building items.

Discussion Item(s)

Financial Review FY26 & FY27 – Ms. Lisa Kowalski
Ms. Lisa Kowalski, CFO, presented a financial review to the Board of Education, including a summary of FY26 and the top projects for FY27. She answered the Board's finance-related questions in preparation for the 2026-27 school year. Some numbers remain unknown. Ms. Kowalski shared that State and Federal funds are decreasing. She has planned for the decrease where she can adjust. Mandates without funding continue to increase, along with the high cost of health insurance. Maintaining 180 days in reserves is challenging, but it is the District's finance goal and is fiscally responsible.

PRESS (Policy Reference Education Subscription Service) Issue 121 Updates, plus 5:110 & 7:190 The Superintendent's Policy Committee met on May 27, 2026, to review PRESS Issue 121 and policies 5:110 and 7:190. The updates, which included legal requirements, revised language, and updated legal references, were presented to all Board members. The Board reviewed and discussed six policies.

Morton Academy Schedule 2026-27
Ms. Lindsay Franklin, Director of Student Support Services, and Mrs. Courtney Erickson, Morton Academy Assistant Director, presented a revised daily schedule for Morton Academy. The student attendance day would be from 7:45 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The new daily schedule maximizes support for student learning while ensuring preparation time for the educational team.

Action Item(s)

Action on 2026-27 District Handbook
Mrs. Leman moved that the Board of Education approve the 2026-27 District Handbook as presented. Mrs. Purdy supported the motion.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0 Absent 0

Motion carried.

Action on PRESS Issue #121 Updates & 5-Year Reviews
Mr. Roth moved that the Board of Education approve the PRESS Issue 121 updates and 5-Year reviews as presented. Dr. Cross supported the motion.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0 Absent 0

Motion carried

Approve Consent Agenda
Mr. Ohnesorge moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Mrs. Purdy supported the motion.
Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0 Absent 0
Motion carried.

Consent Agenda

- Approve Personnel Report
- Approve Treasurers' Reports - April 2026
- Approve Overnight Trip Request Approval per Board Policy 6:240 - MHS Basketball (Boys)
- Approve Overnight/Out-of-State Trip Request Approval per Board Policy 6:240 - MHS Soccer (Girls)
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- Approve Overnight Trip Request per Board Policy 6:240 - MHS Madrigals
- Approve Overnight Trip Request Approval per Board Policy 6:240 MHS Basketball (Girls)
- Approve Peoria County Cooperative Purchasing Program Agreement
- Approve Treasurers for the 2026-2027 School Year and Adopt Treasurers Resolution
- Approve Resolution Designating Depositories and Signatories
- Approve Resolution Authorizing Interfund Loans and Transfers
- Approve Liability Insurance Renewal
- Approve Resolution to Set Fees for Freedom of Information Act
- Approve Hazardous Bus Routes
- Approve Substitute Positions Rate of Pay for 2026-27
- Approve Challenge Summer Program 2026
- Approve Donation Report
- Approve Minutes: May 5, 2026, Regular Meeting; May 5, 2026, Regular Meeting Closed Session
- Approve Bills & Payroll

	Bills 5-8-26 5-11-26	Bills 5-13-26	Bills 5-22-26 5-25-26	Payroll 5-15-26	Payroll 5-29-26
Ed. Fund (10)	$316,901.91	$11,123.37	143,279.92	113,6675.1	1,164,967.61
Bldg. Fund (20)	37,798.38	($1,738.47)	$70,164.16	59,599.83	64,363.4
Trans. Fund (40)	$7,433.42	$387.28	$12,619.68	39,217.29	38,094.77
IMRF (50)				59,552.76	61,061.15
Capital Projects (60)			$847,398.00		
TORT (80)	$197.00		$1,452.00		

Non-Agenda-Related Audience Presentations None.

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

President Rudd called for a closed session for the purpose of Personnel 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) and Purchase or Lease of Property 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5), Personnel 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), and Litigation 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11) as stated in the Open Meetings Act.

Dr. Cross made a motion to move into Closed Session for the purpose of Purchase or Lease of Property, Personnel, and Litigation. Supported by Mrs. Leman.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0 Absent 0

Motion carried. The Board entered closed session at 7:22 p.m.

Open Session

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

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0 Absent 0

Motion carried. The board returned to regular session at 8:30 p.m.

Dr. Sander reminded the Board to let Mrs. Smith know if they plan to attend the Illinois Association of School Boards (ISAB) convention in November. Reservations go in on July 1, 2026. The Board noted the value of the learning and team-building that occur at the Conference, especially for new Board Members. The Board and Administration will look at ways to reduce conference expenses.

Adjourn

Dr. Cross made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Voice Vote: Yea 7 Absent 0

Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Recorded by, Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Smith, Recording Secretary Amanda Leman, Secretary

Jerry Rudd, President