

MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

MARCH 16, 2010

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held March 16, 2010, at Morton Jr. High School.

REGULAR MEETING -

Call to Order and Roll Call -

President Thomas Neeley called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members present: Mr. Thomas Neeley, Mrs. Nancy Overcash, Mrs. Joyce Kaiser,
Mr. John Applen, Mr. Clint Heinold, Mr. Noah Menold, Mr. Doug Riddle

Audience Presentations –

Mr. David King of 1984 E. Jefferson St., Morton, spoke in support of maintaining the current Agriculture Education program at Morton High School.

Reports –

Administrative –

Facilities Update –

Dr. Kilpatrick reminded the Board of Education that they from now until the end of May to develop the final facilities plan.

Freedom of Information Requests –

There are no Freedom of Information requests to report.

Transition Program Newsletter –

Dr. Kilpatrick reported that he has been receiving the monthly newsletter prepared by the Transition Program students at Morton High School. He noted that it is very informational and enjoyable to read.

President's Report –

Mr. Neeley reported that the Board of Education had met earlier in the evening with the Jr. High School teachers. The teachers reported on activities inside and outside of the classroom. The Board also appreciated hearing of all of the community service opportunities for the students throughout the school year.

Mr. Neeley took this opportunity to thank the Administrators for their hard work on budget reductions. There were hard decisions to make and he noted the Board's appreciation for the thoughtful ideas from the Administration in order to retain all or a portion of all the programs offered to students.

Discussion Items –

Discipline Handbook Update –

Dr. Teater pointed out the recommended changes made by the Discipline Committee at its recent meeting. The changes included adding or updating language to reflect current practices or issues. These changes will also be discussed with Administrative Council and reviewed by legal counsel prior to final Board action.

Wellness Policy –

Dr. Teater reported that the Wellness Committee met recently to discuss the District Wellness Policy. Based on requirements of Public Act 094-0199, the locally developed wellness policies must address nutrition guidelines for all foods sold on the school campus, nutrition education and physical activity. The committee provided feedback on how the district is doing following the policy. Dr. Teater pointed out the provision in the policy for the District to provide educational opportunities for nutrition through articles in school papers at the Jr. High and High School, and for parents on nutrition using school lunch menus, district website articles and Channel 20. He noted that the food service is doing well following state guidelines on nutrition.

High School Summer School –

Dr. Kilpatrick reminded the Board of Education of the presentation made at an earlier meeting by Mr. Eucker. He had presented a possible summer school operated by Morton High School that was designed to be self-sufficient given a certain enrollment of students. Mr. Eucker also reviewed the idea of operating a summer school using our new APEX credit recovery program. The program would be limited to 20 students based upon our current licensing of the software. The cost to operate the program this summer would be for the teacher/moderator and a smaller amount of preparation time than a regular summer school program.

Prior to Board of Education approval, there will be an update given at the April 13 Board meeting on the APEX program since it was recently implemented at the start of the second semester.

High School Class Rank –

Marjorie Johnson gave an update on the value of the class rank system since working this past year with the Curriculum and Honors Committee at the High School. The synopsis of their recommendation is to eliminate class rank from MHS transcripts starting in the 2010-2011 school year. Members of the 2011 and 2012 classes would be allowed to have their class rank reported on their transcript per their written request. The Top 10 graduates would

be recognized at graduation in alphabetical order. The tradition would continue to award gold cords to all graduates achieving the equivalent of a 4.0 GPA.

Ms. Johnson shared the justification for eliminating class rank from transcripts. Due to the number of high achieving students at Morton High School, ranking students against their peers does not provide for an accurate representation of the achievement of individual students. As an example, in last year’s graduation class, 76 students received gold cords. The student that was ranked 76th in the class had a 4.0 GPA. Studies have shown that eliminating class rank from a high school transcript for schools with similar achievement does not hurt students, and in many cases gives them a better opportunity to attend the college of their choice. College admissions counselors advise that if class rank is not provided, they will use other factors, the top three being – student’s strength of schedule, grade point average and standardized test score (ACT).

The Board of Education discussed the options of continuing to rank the Top 10, and always giving students the option of including their rank on their transcript if requested. The Board stressed the need to educate the public as to the reasons for eliminating class rank.

Consent Agenda –

Motion by Mr. Heinold, second by Mr. Menold, that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

Approve Bills and Payroll

	Bills 3-5-10	Payroll 3-12-10
Ed. Fund	\$126,930.85	\$417,445.30
Bldg. Fund	97,422.94	28,913.23
Trans. Fund	14,883.70	14,183.49
Payroll Accts. Pay.	--	350,827.59
Fire & Safety	24.17	--

Roll Call Vote:

Yea 7

Nay 0

Motion carried.

Closed Session –

