

## **MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709**

**January 15, 2013**

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held January 15, 2013, at the Morton Education and Administration Center.

### **REGULAR MEETING –**

President Tom Neeley called the regular meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

Members present: Mr. Tom Neeley, Mr. John Applen, Mrs. Joyce Kaiser,  
Mrs. Michelle Bernier, Mrs. Michelle Kaeb, Mr. Tim Taylor

Member absent and did not participate in the meeting in any manner or to any extent whatsoever:

Mr. Clint Heinold

### **Reports –**

#### **Administrative –**

##### **Arbor Update –**

Mrs. Getz reviewed the changes that have taken place with the food service program this year. Due to Arbor Management being a new food service provider to our district this year, they are required to fully implement the Hunger Free Kids Act. Those not new to a school district are allowed to phase in the program. Due to this requirement, some offerings are limited and there are portion and calorie restrictions. Mrs. Getz noted that many items are not yet available in whole grains as required by the Act.

Mrs. Getz compared this year's participation rates to previous years. Though participation rates are down, there could be many reasons. She explained that our school district is one of 351 from the state of Illinois chosen by the USDA to participate in a pilot program. Students on Medicaid are directly certified for the free lunch program. This has increased the number of students eligible for free lunch in our district.

Dr. Hall reported that she and Mr. Smock were invited to observe a presentation by Ms. Shopiro's exploratory class at the Jr. High. The students demonstrated the impact of Styrofoam plates on the environment. As a result, Dr. Hall has approved a pilot program for the lunch room at the Jr. High. They will be using bio-degradable plates instead of Styrofoam for the remainder of this school year. Depending on the findings, use of this product could be expanded district wide. Dr. Hall commended Ms. Shopiro and her students for their research into this topic.

**Facilities Update –**

Dr. Hall noted that the upcoming projects were reviewed at the December meeting. She will have a more specific report at the February 5 meeting. Planning for the more imminent projects is proceeding. She commended those involved for their teamwork.

**Freedom of Information Requests –**

Dr. Hall reported there were no Freedom of Information requests.

**Curriculum Loft Update –**

Dr. Teater reviewed with the Board that *Curriculum Loft* is a cloud-based service that allows staff to store instructional resources in a structured environment that can then be shared with other staff and students. Since it is cloud-based, these resources can be accessed by anyone who has permission from anywhere that has an internet connection. Lecture notes, PowerPoints, supplemental reading and worksheets can be available any time for students to access. While the *Curriculum Loft* can be accessed with any PC, MAC, tablet or smartphone, when paired with a *Kuno* tablet, teachers have the power to push resources out to students during the day and eliminate the need for internet access when students go home. *Kunos* also give teachers a high level of control over what content is available to the students on the tablet at any given time. *Kunos* are an android based tablet that has the internet filter embedded in its kernel providing internet protection no matter where the device is taken.

Dr. Teater reported that he held a webinar for teachers in our district to introduce Curriculum Loft and Kunos. Teachers from the Green Team at the Jr. High wrote a proposal to pilot the program for use by their entire team for the remainder of the school year. Students will use the Kunos in the classroom and save assignments to Curriculum Loft. They will be allowed to take the Kunos home to complete the assignments. Parents will be introduced to Curriculum Loft and Kunos at open houses being planned for this week by the Green Team teachers. They will begin using them in their classes the week of January 21. Dr. Teater commended the teachers for their initiative. The teachers will present to the Board in late spring on the results of using this program.

**Crisis Management/Safety Update –**

Dr. Hall reviewed safety plans and protocols that have been heightened since the tragedy in Connecticut in December. Upgrades will take place at the entrances of Lettie Brown, Lincoln and the high school. Cameras and a buzzer system will be installed as have already been done at the other buildings. The Illinois Street entrance will be the only entrance available for visitors to the building. All employees have been reminded to wear their ID's whenever in any of the buildings. There will be more staff monitoring before and after school. All buildings will continue to practice various drills including an earthquake drill and an evacuation drill. A meeting with the police chief and fire chief will be planned with the Leadership team. Dr. Hall stressed the need to maintain a safe but warm environment in all of the buildings.

Board discussion included mandates that may be coming from the state in the area of crisis safety; the possibility of hiring an outside consultant to review our buildings for safety; the need to deal with the mental health side of this issue.

### **President's Report –**

Mr. Neeley reported that he and Dr. Hall recognized Rhonda Howard earlier in the day. Mrs. Howard is a resource teacher at Brown School and was instrumental in planting a vegetable garden with students. They also recognized Rosie Durand at the high school for promoting, encouraging and overseeing the wellness initiative of "Biggest Loser" at Morton High School. Mr. Neeley noted the Board's gratitude to all teachers for what they do each day with their students.

Mr. Neeley announced that the Board of Education will have a special meeting on Tuesday, February 12, at 5:30 p.m. at the MEAC. The time will be used for evaluation with the Superintendent.

There will be a meeting of the Central Illinois Valley Division of IASB on Wednesday, March 6, in Dunlap. School board candidates will be invited, as there will be a workshop provided for them as part of the meeting.

Mr. Neeley reported that he attended a meeting recently as part of the Executive Committee of the IASB Board of Directors. After the meeting, the committee met with Representative Michael Tryon, representing the 66<sup>th</sup> district. Discussion included pension reform and tax caps.

Mr. Neeley asked to pursue having a draft of a law written for a permanent waiver for P.E. (possibly by a law student intern). It would be yet another way to urge legislators to look at the daily P.E. requirement and the burden it would place on school districts. All agreed, but Mr. Taylor asked that the board also consider the advantages of daily P.E. for our students.

Mr. Applen reported that the Transportation Committee met in December. The director is researching the possibility of leasing some of the larger buses. Mr. Applen reported that the district is seeking clarification on the regulations for drivers of the smaller white buses. Requirements have changed over the past five years since use of the buses began. Originally, no CDL was required of drivers, but that may have changed. Our district is making a good faith effort to seek clarification.

### **Discussion Items –**

#### **Board Instruction Policies Compliance Report -**

Mr. Neeley reported that as part of the policy compliance monitoring practice, a review of the Instruction policies was conducted. After review, it is the Superintendent's opinion that these policies are being followed and that the District is in compliance with those

policies. Mr. Neeley will sign the policy compliance form and place it in the master compliance file in the district office.

**709Connect – Next Steps –**

Dr. Hall noted that two main ideas came out of the 709Connect recommendations – **Communication** and **Long Range Planning**. The committee’s recommendations (in bold) along with Dr. Hall next steps include:

**Create and share a long-range plan for facilities, finance and curriculum. Long-range is defined as 3-5 years. Plans for 5-10 plus years will be defined as a vision.**

- Explore, determine, recognize and acknowledge the past work that has occurred in this area. Repeating work and time will be frustrating for our community, especially in the area of facilities.

Determine the appropriate “jumping off point” for future planning.

Some mechanisms are in place for this type of planning—CAC, for example.

Form a Facilities Advisory Committee, to serve in a purely advisory capacity to the board.

Long term strategic plan developed after board election in conjunction with IASB.

**Create a long-range plan for facilities, including the possibility of land purchase. Create this plan in conjunction with and by communicating with other governmental bodies. Long-range is defined as 3-5 years. Plans for 5-10 plus years will be defined as a vision.**

- The board is examining these possibilities. This recommendation is linked to the first recommendation.

**Explore the topic of all-day kindergarten in a more in-depth approach and gather data about this program. Also create a plan, timeline and cost for how this program could be implemented in District 709.**

- We will be moving ahead with examining all aspects of implementing full day Kindergarten. This includes budgeting, staffing, equipment, academic need, long term financing, enrollment projections, and attempting to identify Kindergarteners who might attend District 709 who currently are not.
- We have already formed a committee to examine Kindergarten screening, and there will be changes in this process this spring. We hope to identify students who could be at-risk learners, thereby being able to more quickly provide interventions and support.

**Explore options for high school students such as additional dual credit courses, Advanced Placement classes, working with other school districts, zero hour courses or summer school.**

- Will be adding AP Chemistry for next year. Other AP offerings are being discussed at MHS.
- Moving ahead with studying summer school options, implementation in summer of 2014.
- Other options listed will be explored.

**Explore alternative revenue sources such as a county-wide facilities tax, private donations or grants.**

- County Schools Facilities Sales Tax will be on the April 9th ballot so our voters can decide upon this alternative revenue source.
- Other sources of revenue are always being explored.
- Grants should be viewed as a one time and/or temporary funding source.

Dr. Hall will provide a tentative timeline for the facilities plan and all-day kindergarten plan. Mr. Neeley thanked Dr. Hall for her presentation. He noted it is now time for the Board to take the lead after all the work of the 709Connect committee. He does not want to lose momentum.

**Action Items -**

**Approval of Resolution for County Schools Facilities Sales Tax -**

President Neeley announced that the Board of Education would consider the adoption of a resolution directing the Regional Superintendent of Schools for The County of Tazewell, Illinois, to certify to the County Clerk of said County the question of imposing a retailers' occupation tax and a service occupation tax at a rate of 1% to provide revenue to be used exclusively for school facility purposes for submission to the electors of said County at the consolidated election to be held on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2013.

Dr. Hall reviewed the presentation from December on the purpose and potential use of the county schools facilities sales tax. Specific uses of the sales tax could be:

- Safety/Security Improvements
- Long term facility planning
- Life Safety projects
- Abatement of property taxes

Dr. Hall reviewed why to go to the voters with another tax:

- Uncertainty of state funding
- Pension reform – shifting burden locally

Dr. Hall stressed the importance of getting accurate information out to the public. She looks forward to the opportunity to meet with different groups and organizations throughout the

community in the upcoming months.

Mr. Smock noted there are items that are exempt from the tax including groceries, vehicles and other large ticket items.

Motion by Mr. Taylor to table the motion for two months failed due to lack of a second.

Motion by Mr. Applen, second by Mrs. Kaiser, that the Board of Education approve the Resolution directing the Regional Superintendent to certify the question of imposing school facility sales taxes in Tazewell County at the April 9, 2013, consolidated election.

Roll Call Vote:                      Yea 6                      Nay 0

Motion carried.

**Approve High School SIP –**

Dr. Hall noted in December of 2012, Ms. Marjorie Johnson gave an overview to the Board of Education about the MHS School Improvement Plan and the Rising Star continuous school improvement process. The SIP was provided to the Board of Education. The state requires a vote of approval by the Board of Education to formalize the school improvement process.

Motion by Mrs. Bernier, second by Mrs. Kaeb, that the Board approve the Morton High School School Improvement Plan.

Roll Call Vote:                      Yea 6                      Nay 0

Motion carried.

Mr. Neeley thanked the high school staff for their past and continued work on this process.

**Consent Agenda –**

Motion by Mrs. Kaiser, second by Mrs. Bernier, that the Consent Agenda be approved as follows:

- Approve Personnel Report
- Approve 2013-2014 School Year Calendar
- Review of Closed Session Minutes
- Approving and Signing Minutes of the December 11, 2012, Regular Meeting and Closed Session Minutes of the December 11, 2012, Regular Meeting.
- Approve November, 2012 Treasurer’s Report

- Approve Bills and Payroll

	<b>Bills 12-14-12</b>	<b>Bills 12-21-12</b>	<b>Bills 1-11-13</b>	<b>Payroll 12-21-12</b>	<b>Payroll 01-04-13</b>
Ed. Fund	\$91,065.59	\$388,770.20	\$268,192.39	\$414,136.68	\$367,762.4 3
Bldg. Fund	36,381.11	172,853.12	36,639.26	31,631.66	30,676.44
Trans. Fund	4,240.84	7,800.75	32,163.82	14,387.40	8,479.51
Payroll Accts. Pay.	--	--	--	403,221.31	381,064.17
Fire & Safety	--	92,931.60	--	--	--
Municipal Ret/Soc Sec	--	57,181.29	--	--	--

Roll Call: Yea 6 Nay 0

Motion carried.

**Closed Session –**

Motion by Mr. Taylor, second by Mr. Applen, that the Board of Education enter into closed session for consideration of appointment, employment, compensation, performance, or dismissal of employees, student discipline, purchase of property, litigation and/or negotiations.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 6 Nay 0

Motion carried. The board entered closed session at 9:00 p.m.

Motion by Mr. Taylor, second by Mrs. Kaeb, that the Board of Education return to regular session.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 6 Nay 0

Motion carried. The board returned to regular session at 9:34 p.m.

Mr. Neeley asked for a motion to re-enter closed session.

Motion by Mr. Applen, second by Mrs. Kaeb, that the Board of Education enter into closed session for consideration of appointment, employment, compensation, performance, or

dismissal of employees, student discipline, purchase of property, litigation and/or negotiations.

Roll Call Vote:                      Yea 6                      Nay 0

Motion carried. The board entered closed session at 9:35 p.m.

Motion by Mr. Applen, second by Mrs. Kaiser, that the Board of Education return to regular session.

Roll Call Vote:                      Yea 6                      Nay 0

Motion carried. The board returned to regular session at 9:58 p.m.

Dr. Hall noted that she has requested to sit on the Morton Economic Development Council. She feels it is important that District 709 be represented on the council and receive pro-active information about projects and possible tax abatements. She is awaiting the council's decision.

**Adjournment -**

Motion by Mrs. Bernier, second by Mr. Taylor, that the meeting be adjourned.

Voice Vote:                      Yea 6                      Nay 0

Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Joyce Kaiser, Secretary

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Thomas Neeley, President