

## **MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709**

**October 7, 2014**

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held October 7, 2014, at the Morton Education and Administration Center.

### **REGULAR MEETING –**

President Michelle Bernier called the regular meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Members present: Mrs. Michelle Bernier, Mr. Tim Taylor, Mr. Shaun Bill,  
Mr. John Applen, Mr. Clint Heinold, Mr. Tom Neeley, Mrs. Kelly Scarfe

### **Reports –**

#### **Administrative –**

##### **Freedom of Information Requests –**

Dr. Hall reported there have been no Freedom of Information requests.

##### **Recognition of National Merit Commended Students –**

High School Principal, Marjorie Johnson, reported that there are two National Merit Commended students this year. Emma Darcy and Matthew Lauer scored in the top 32,000 students in the nation that took the PSAT during their sophomore year. Both students were in attendance and were congratulated by the Board of Education.

##### **Student Ambassadors –**

Students from the MHS Student Council Executive Board reported on iPad integration, AP classes, Art classes and Homecoming activities.

##### **IL Youth Survey Report –**

High School Principal, Marjorie Johnson, reported on results of the IL Youth Survey administered every two years to students in 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. The anonymous survey is part of a state-wide survey that reports information by school and by county on students' positive and negative behaviors. Overall, MHS students are lower than the state average on negative behaviors and higher than the state average on positive behaviors.

##### **Crisis Management Plan Review –**

Dr. Teater reported on the annual Crisis Plan meeting held in May. Evacuation drills and shooter simulations held during the 13-14 school year were reviewed along with planned drills for the 14-15 school year. Consumables in crisis kits (batteries and food items)

were updated as well as making sure safety plans were returned to each classroom at the high school following the heating project this past summer.

### **Challenge Update –**

Grundy Principal, Michael Saunders, reported on the summer Challenge Program and the after school Challenge Program. Teachers Mary Holmgren and Laura Zehr taught 53 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade students hands-on science this past summer. The numbers of students participating in the Challenge Reading Program this fall totals 59 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students. Challenge Math fall totals are 20 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders. To be considered for admission into the Challenge Program, students must score at or above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile on at least 2 out of 3 MAP tests the previous school year.

Board members discussed the possibility of lowering the benchmark to the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile or inviting students who are on the cusp of the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile in order to involve more students in the Challenge Program.

### **Board Reports –**

President Bernier congratulated Dr. Hall on the birth of her new granddaughter.

President Bernier reported on the Central Illinois Valley Division dinner recently hosted by Morton District 709. She thanked Emily Stubbs for organizing the dinner and Arbor Management for preparing and serving the dinner. The meeting included break-out sessions focusing on state legislative issues, negotiations and The New State Standards (Common Core).

Mr. Neeley commented on the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) initiative “Stand Up 4 Public Schools.” The purpose of the initiative is to focus attention on the importance and value of public schools in Illinois. IASB is inviting local districts to take the initiative into their communities by videotaping messages of support in and off the school campus. The videos will be housed on IASB’s YouTube page and shared on its website, Facebook fan page and Twitter account.

President Bernier reported she attended a presentation by Susan Barton on dyslexia. An Internationally Recognized Expert in dyslexia, Ms. Barton spoke on many aspects including the Orton-Gillingham approach, which is an instructional approach intended primarily for use with persons who have difficulty with reading, spelling, and writing of the sort associated with dyslexia. It is most properly understood and practiced as an approach, not a method, program, system or technique. President Bernier noted the presentation was very educational and informative and that District 709 has begun screening for dyslexia this school year and will continue to educate the staff in this area.

Mr. Neeley noted he was very proud of the student section during the recent Homecoming football game at MHS. They showed positive school spirit throughout the game. He had

a chance to observe some of the Jr. High groups that participated in the Help-A-Thon. He was very proud of the students serving throughout the community – “hats off” to Mr. Hoffman and his staff.

### **Discussion Item –**

#### **Auditor’s Report –**

Ms. Hope Wheeler of CliftonLarsonAllen reported the findings of the recent audit conducted on the district’s finances. She noted a clean unmodified opinion on the modified cash basis and also, a clean opinion on major federal programs. The district is in a good financial position, comparing assets to liabilities. The district’s financial profile per the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is shown as “Recognition,” which is the highest designation a district can receive from ISBE. The Board of Education will be asked to approve the Auditor’s Report at the October 21 Board meeting.

Dr. Hall acknowledged Business Manager and Treasurer, Barb Getz, and her accounting team for their thorough preparation and success of the audit.

#### **Board Compliance – Operational Policies –**

Dr. Hall reported that she and President Bernier have reviewed the Operational Policies and have determined that the district is in compliance. They will sign the form and place it in the Master Compliance binder in the District Office.

Mr. Neeley asked Dr. Hall for a review of the policies for the transport of bus students. Dr. Hall will review the policies with Mr. Neeley soon.

#### **Tax Levy Presentation – Preliminary Review –**

Dr. Hall provided an overview of the proposed 2014 tax levy and noted the levy resolution is scheduled to be approved at the December 2 board meeting. A public hearing will be held at that same meeting prior to the approval. Dr. Hall is recommending a 1.5% increase in the levy, which is also the percentage of the CPI increase. The entire presentation may be viewed at the 1:05:47 point of the meeting on MPTV.

#### **Board Goals Discussion – Finance –**

Dr. Hall reported that as part of the ongoing monthly discussion of the Board of Education’s five goals, this month’s discussion would focus on the goal of finance. The goal reads: “Support student learning (which includes achievement, climate, facilities, and communication) in an efficient and cost effective manner.” Dr. Hall noted that the audit report presented earlier in the meeting speaks for itself. There is a balanced operating budget on a yearly basis. Dr. Hall commended the Board of Education for its standard of excellence in managing tax payer monies. She also noted the district has applied for and received sizable grants over the last two years that have been used toward large maintenance projects.

**Presentation by Farnsworth Group – Morton HS Athletic Facilities –**

Mr. John Bishop and Mr. Bruce Brown of Farnsworth Group reported their findings to the Board on the current condition of the MHS athletic facilities. There are many critical safety issues that need attention including bleachers (original from mid-70's), football field (no crown-improper drainage), press box, storm water detention, restroom facilities are undersized, along with the addition of a girls locker room to comply with Title IX. Dr. Hall noted that any of the work in these areas would be considered repair and maintenance, not renovation/remodeling. Dollar amounts for the repairs and maintenance will be sent to Board members prior to the October 21 meeting. At that meeting, decisions will be made as to what direction the Board wants to take so a final design can be approved and the bidding process can begin for work to start next spring. The entire presentation may be viewed at the 1:32:47 point of the meeting on MPTV.

**Action Items –****Approve IASB Delegate and Alternate –**

Motion by Mr. Bill, second by Mr. Heinold that the Board of Education appoint Tom Neeley as Delegate and Tim Taylor as Alternate for the IASB Annual Conference Delegate Assembly for 2014.

Roll Call Vote:

Yea 7

Nay 0

Motion carried.

**Consent Agenda –**

Motion by Mr. Neeley, second by Mr. Bill, that the Consent Agenda be approved as follows:

Approve Personnel Report

Approve August Treasurer's Report

Approve the Minutes of the September 16, 2014, Regular Meeting, the Closed Session Minutes of the September 16, 2014, Regular Meeting, the Minutes of the September 30, 2014, Committee of the Whole Meeting and the Closed Session Minutes of the September 30, 2014, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

Approve Bills and Payrolls

	<b>Bills 9-19-14</b>	<b>Bills 9-26-14</b>	<b>Bills 10-3-14</b>	<b>Payroll 9-26-14</b>
Ed. Fund	\$76,564.77	\$2,213.89	\$217,007.62	\$443,512.81
Bldg. Fund	103,250.15	--	315,897.77	36,392.56
Trans. Fund	14,186.76	--	7,722.28	14,568.55
Payroll Accts. Pay.	--	--	--	401,848.35

Roll Call:                                      Yea 7                                      Nay 0

Motion carried.

Closed Session –

Motion by Mr. Applen, second by Mr. Taylor, 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. (5 ILSC 120/2 115 ILCS 5/18)

Roll Call Vote:                                      Yea 7                                      Nay 0

Motion carried. The board entered closed session at 9:34 p.m.

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

Roll Call Vote:                                      Yea 7                                      Nay 0

Motion carried. The board returned to regular session at 10:46 p.m.

Adjournment -

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

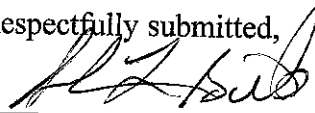
Voice Vote:                                      Yea 7                                      Nay 0

Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:49 p.m.

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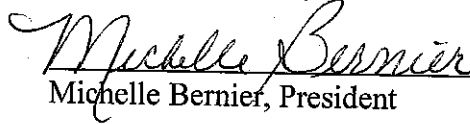
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Respectfully submitted,



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Shaun Bill, Secretary



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Michelle Bernier, President