

MORTON UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709

November 4, 2014

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Morton Unit School District 709 held November 4, 2014, at the Morton Education and Administration Center.

REGULAR MEETING –

President Michelle Bernier called the regular meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

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

Member arriving at 7:15 p.m. – Mr. John Applen

Audience Presentations –

David King, 1984 E. Jefferson St., - asked for more two-way communication between the Board of Education and the public.

Reports –

Administrative –

Freedom of Information Requests –

Dr. Hall reported on two Freedom of Information requests received in the month of October. Carl Bimm of the Mid-Central Illinois Regional Council of Carpenters requested copies of documents concerning the Morton High School Window Replacement. The district responded on October 23 and the response is posted on the district website.

David King requested all comments and questions written by attendees at the past and future 709 Connect meetings, including meetings on October 23, October 28, November 3 and November 6. The district responded on October 29. Information from past meetings is publically available on the district website. The request for information from current meetings was denied. The complete response is posted on the district website.

Recognition of MHS Marching Band –

Band director, Jeff Neavor, and three drum majors representing the entire band were recognized for their 10th consecutive state championship. In addition the band won the Governor's Trophy at the University of Illinois among numerous other awards this year. Mr. Neavor thanked the Board of Education, District Administration and the community for the great outpouring of support for the marching band.

Rising Star Update – Jefferson School –

Jefferson School Principal Susan Grzanich reviewed the Rising Star objectives set by the team members at Jefferson School. The objectives have been met or are ongoing and continually being refined. The team, consisting of the principal, teachers and a parent, meets at least twice per month to review performance data and aggregated classroom observation data and then uses that data to make decisions about school improvement and professional development needs.

RtI Update – Secondary Level -

Jr. High RtI teacher, Katie Miller, and psychologist, Alyson Baker gave an update on RtI interventions at the Jr. High and High School. Mrs. Miller is new this year as the full-time RtI teacher at the Jr. High. Having a certified RtI teacher offers the advantages of being available after school, more parent contact, more experience planning and differentiating within the classroom (reading, math, writing and behavior interventions within the same period). Mrs. Miller met with the elementary RtI coordinator at the beginning of the year to discuss the needs of incoming 7th graders and will plan to meet at the end of the year rather than waiting until fall. There are a total of 21 students currently receiving RtI interventions at the Jr. High.

Alyson Baker reported on the RtI program at the high school. There are 20 students currently receiving RtI interventions at the high school. Mrs. Baker and high school teacher Mr. Roberts had eight students that participated in a transition to high school program that focused on credits, course requirements, supports available and organization and study skills.

ELL Update –

ELL (English Language Learners) Coordinator Sarah Strickley gave an update to the board on the ELL program. Mrs. Strickley is new to the district this year and reported that of the 69 students identified as ELL students, 36 are receiving services. Those not receiving services have opted out of the program for differing reasons. The second annual ELL family night was held in October with close to 50 people in attendance.

709Connect: Facilities Update –

Dr. Hall reported that 42 people attended the October 22 morning meeting for 709Connect: Facilities, 88 attended on October 28 and 90 attended on November 3. The final meeting will take place on November 6 in the high school cafeteria. The format of the meeting includes a Power Point presentation by Dr. Hall giving an overview of the past timeline for facilities and four questions are asked of the participants to gain their feedback. After the meetings conclude, the Power Point presentation will be posted on the district website. Feedback and a summary will be given at the November 18 Board of Education meeting.

Board Reports –

President Bernier reported that the transportation committee met recently to discuss the leasing of five new busses.

Discussion Item –**Board Compliance – Board/Superintendent Relations –**

Dr. Hall reported that she and President Bernier have reviewed the Board/Superintendent relations 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.

Board Goals Discussion – Communication –

Dr. Hall reviewed the Board goal of communication that states that the Board of Education will provide open and meaningful two-way communication with all members of our community. She noted that the school district is currently in the midst of community engagement with the 709Connect: Facilities meetings. The board members have made themselves available to the public by posting email addresses and phone numbers on the district website. Email addresses collected at the 709Connect meetings will be added to the list of recipients of electronic newsletters from the district. Dr. Hall often meets and speaks with local groups to reach out to those that do not have children in district schools. The Key Communicators meetings are held quarterly and everyone is invited to attend. The next meeting will be held December 1. She suggested holding another town hall style meeting in the future.

MHS Athletic Facilities –

Board members were given a spread sheet prepared by Farnsworth Group with the costs for the items included in the repairs and maintenance plan for the outdoor high school athletic facilities. Preliminary cost estimates were included. At an upcoming meeting, Board members will decide what segment(s) of the project to bid and how many alternate bids to include. Dr. Hall asked board members to study and review the figures. She noted she has met with the park district director concerning their participation in building new tennis courts. She will be meeting with various booster and community groups to discuss fund raising.

In response to the question of why the district would spend money on the facilities at the current high school, Dr. Hall noted that the board and administration are still in the process of determining a long-term facilities plan, and if in the future a new school should be planned for the property on Fourth Avenue, a timeline for a new building takes years. The needed repairs at the current facility are a safety issue and cannot be put off any longer. Repairs and maintenance on the athletic facilities at MHS have been delayed for many years and cannot wait until a new venue might possibly be built.

2015-2016 and 2016-2017 School Calendars –

Dr. Hall reported that the calendar committee consisting of teachers and administrators, met on October 20 to determine school calendars for the next two years. Key considerations (the calendar's impact on student achievement and school attendance, parent/teacher conferences, the length of the school terms and quarters, final exams, the dates of holidays) are taken into account in the development of the calendars. Mr. Smock noted that for both years, teachers start on August 10 with students starting on August 11. No holidays will be used for inservice days and high school finals will take place before Christmas break. He noted that the teaching staff is currently reviewing the calendars.

The final recommendation will be brought back to the Board of Education for approval at its December 2 meeting.

Action Items –**Approve 2015-2016 Tentative Budget and 2014 Tentative Levy –**

Dr. Hall reported that an overview of the 2014 Tentative Levy was presented at the October 7 Board of Education meeting.

Motion by Mr. Applen, second by Mrs. Scarfe, that the Board of Education approve the 2015-2016 proposed budget and 2014 tentative levy.

Mr. Taylor noted that being in a tax capped community, Boards are forced to levy to the maximum in order to not be penalized the following year. He struggles with collecting more revenue than is being spent and having significant reserves.

Other Board members commented that with tax caps, Boards have no choice but to levy to the maximum; having certainty from the state would be beneficial – not knowing what will happen with pension reform in the future; the board has spent money from the reserves for the new heating system at the high school and will also use reserve funds for the repair and maintenance of the high school outdoor athletic facilities among other projects currently in the planning stages.

Roll Call:

Yea 6

Nay 1 – Taylor

Motion carried.

Approve Bus Lease –

Dr. Hall noted this is the second year for the district to enter into a lease/purchase agreement with Commerce Bank for 5 new buses. Five older buses will be traded for the new vehicles.

Motion by Mr. Neeley, second by Mr. Bill, that the Board of Education enter into a 5 year lease/purchase agreement with Commerce Bank to lease three 2015 84-passenger Thomas buses and two 2015 29-passenger Thomas Buses for an annual lease cost of \$95,809.45/year.

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

Consent Agenda –

Motion by Mr. Heinold, second by Mr. Taylor, that the Consent Agenda be approved as follows:

Approve Personnel Report
 Approve the Minutes of the October 21, 2014, Regular Meeting and the Closed Session Minutes of the October 21, 2014, Regular Meeting.
 Approve Bills and Payrolls

	Bills 10-24-14	Bills 10-31-14	Payroll 10-24-14
Ed. Fund	\$1,777.72	\$195,720.61	\$434,526.54
Bldg. Fund	--	62,899.46	33,747.94
Trans. Fund	16.00	9,552.24	14,648.38
Payroll Accts. Pay.	--	--	411,329.72
Fire & Safety	--	--	--

Roll Call: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried.

Closed Session –

Motion by Mr. Bill, 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. (5 ILSC 120/2 115 ILCS 5/18)

Roll Call Vote: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried. The board entered closed session at 8:40 p.m.

Motion by Mr. Applen, second by Mr. Taylor, 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 9:32 p.m.

Mr. Neeley asked the administrators to gather current enrollment numbers for the Morton parochial schools.

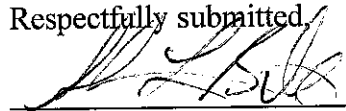
Adjournment -

Motion by Mr. Neeley, second by Mr. Heinold, that the meeting be adjourned.

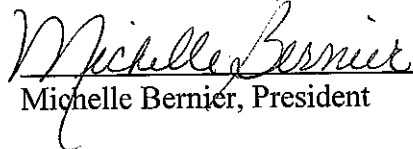
Voice Vote: Yea 7 Nay 0

Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shaun Bill, Secretary



Michelle Bernier, President