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709 Communicator



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2019

MORTON COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 709 SERVING THE GROVELAND-MORTON AREA

MJHS updates coming soon

The Morton District 709 Board of Education approved Phase 1 and 2 facility improvements at Morton Junior High School.

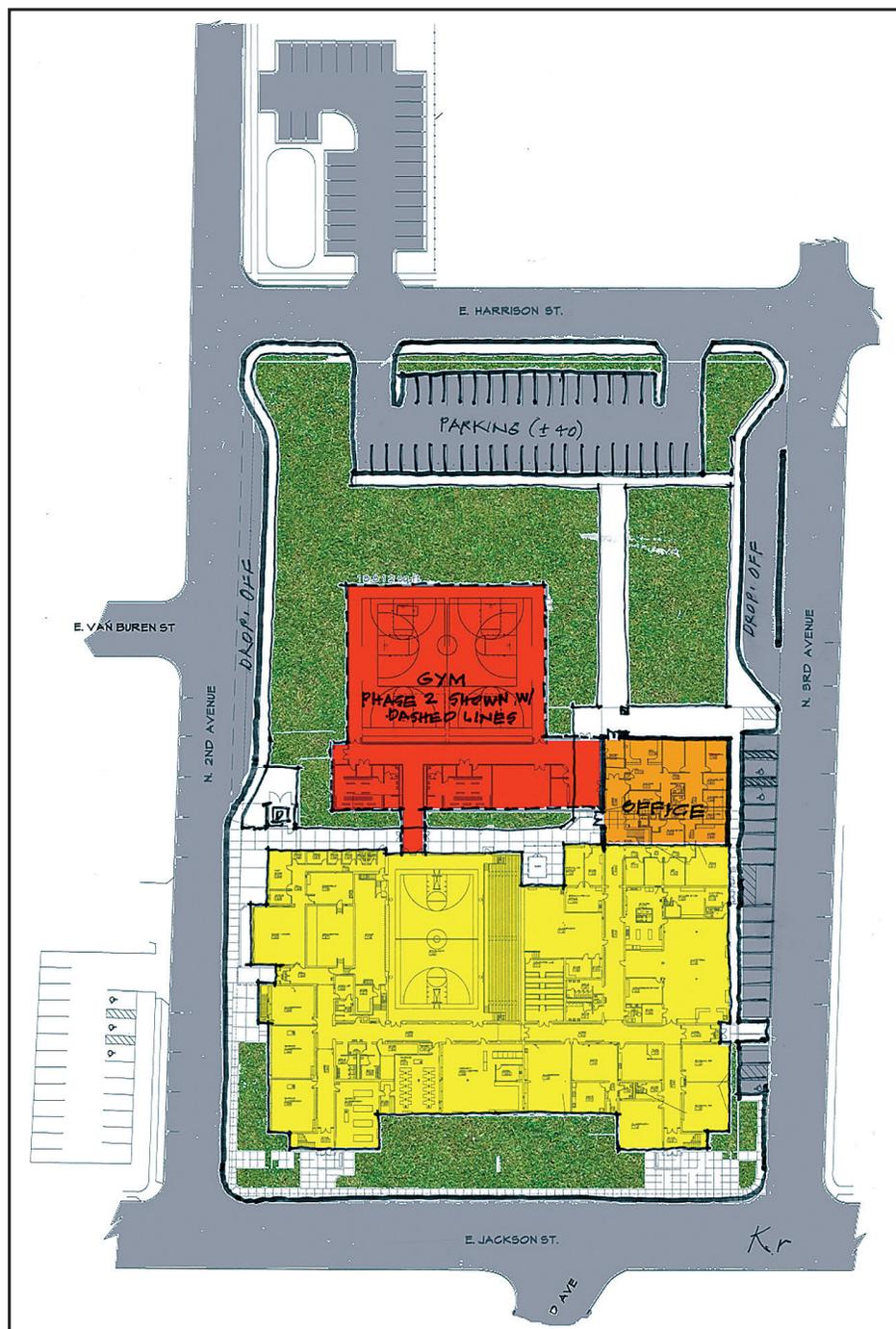
Phase 1

Phase 1 of the project focuses on improving safety, traffic flow, and parking. The plan calls for a new drop-off/pickup area, new office space with a more secure entryway, additional parking, new elevator, and additional classroom space. This work will begin summer of 2019 with the new office; additional classroom spaces for science, special education, and English Language Arts; and a new elevator being completed in the fall of 2019. The new drive, drop-off area and parking area is expected to be completed by August 2020 and will be a joint project with the Village of Morton.

Phase 2

Phase 2, which includes a gymnasium, storage, and new locker rooms, was approved at the June 4 Board meeting. Phase 1 and 2 are expected to cost an estimated \$7 million dollars. Once the gym is completed, it will create two additional spaces for classrooms, because the current auxiliary P.E. room will no longer be necessary. In addition, more cafeteria space will be gained when the concession stand area moves to the new gym, providing space for more cafeteria tables.

Please see **UPDATES**, Page 2



Blueprint for the MJHS updates by Keach Architectural Design, Inc.

**Mark your
calendar:**

**Thursday,
Aug. 1**

7 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**Registration
Day for all
schools**

Look for more
information about
each school on the
pages inside!



**Coach Becker named
Coach of the Year
again after MHS Girls
Basketball state title**

► Read the story by sportswriting
legend Dave Kindred on page 20.

Morton Moving Forward

An update from Superintendent Dr. Jeff Hill

Morton District 709 District Goal Achievement:

Morton District 709 will nurture and challenge each student to reach their potential through the highest quality teaching and using evidence based instructional practices, curriculum, programs, and services.

Morton Moving Forward - Where are we now, what is next?

In fall of 2017, Morton Moving Forward was developed and proposed during the year. The purpose of the study was to identify gaps in academic programming and propose changes to improve student achievement. The District 709 Board of Education approved the Morton Moving Forward plan and we began implementing the plan in **fall of 2018**.

► 2018 - Morton Moving Forward Implementation:

1. Readers Workshop teaching strategy grades K-3
2. Full Day Kindergarten
3. Literacy/Instructional Coaches for each elementary school and at MJHS
4. New teacher leader structure was implemented at MJHS.
5. A Director of Student Engagement was added to increase the number

of students participating in extracurricular activities.

In the fall of 2018, the implementation focused on improving reading. In addition, teachers and administration worked on items identified in the Morton Moving Forward study that would help rigor in the middle/upper grades. These items have been presented and approved by the Board during the past school year and will be implemented in the **fall of 2019**.

► 2019 Morton Moving Forward Implementation:

1. 5th/6th Departmentalization
2. New Junior High Schedule
3. High School certificate programs/career pathways

As we look to 2019 and beyond, we are moving our focus to continuing to develop MHS so it can better serve all students as we seek to help every student become college and career ready. High

school staff and administration will work to accomplish the following:

► 2020 Morton Moving Forward Implementation:

1. Continue to develop/refine career pathways and work-based experiences
2. Increase opportunities to earn college credit
3. Develop/Approve High school schedule change

Each of these items were identified through Morton Moving Forward. As we have worked through the various recommendations of the plan, other important topics impacting teaching and learning in our District have emerged.

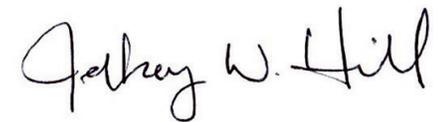
► Emerging topics/areas for development:

1. Trauma-informed practices, social/emotional intelligence, and digital citizenship
2. Vision for student success and

communicating progress

3. Teacher evaluation/teacher leadership development
4. Improving mathematical thinking and understanding

We will be meeting with our districtwide teaching and learning team to help determine our next steps in how to incorporate these topics into our overall plan for advancing our district goal of achievement. Coming in the fall of 2019, we will be communicating our progress in all our District goal areas through our District Dashboard which will be located on our website.



Jeffrey W. Hill, Ed.D
Superintendent
Morton District 709

UPDATE

Continued from page 1

Morton Junior High School Principal Lee Hoffman shared his thoughts, "These updates provide an opportunity to improve safety and security at MJHS, while also advancing our academic and athletic spaces."

In addition to the increase of safety and security measures, the updates at Morton Junior High School offer benefits to the school's neighbors and the community. One of the benefits is that the updates will be paid for out of

both the annual budget and the district's reserves; thus not costing taxpayers additional dollars. Another potential benefit is that upon completion of the project, traffic should be improved due to student drop-off areas for both buses and cars built into the plan.

Until the completion of the project, Mr. Hoffman asks the community to be extra cautious while traveling near the school. "Traffic next school year could still be challenging, depending on the pace of construction and the timing of Phase 1 and 2, so we ask for everyone's patience as we make progress toward an improved facility. Students will be able to enter the

main entrance before school, instead of just the gym doors as they do currently."

In addition to the construction, MJHS is also making changes to the courses offered next year. Students will enroll in an additional course, for a total of 8 classes each day.

"We will offer additional Encore classes to give students a more well-rounded experience," said Principal Hoffman. The new offerings include Spanish, Computer Science with Project Lead the Way, and a class entitled "Future Readiness" that helps students think strategically about their skills, knowledge, and aptitudes as they

prepare for post-secondary options. Students will also receive an additional English Language Arts class, which will be utilized to provide more writing instruction with an emphasis on critical thinking.

These new offerings will complement our current offerings of 2D/3D Art and CareerMaker, which allows students to complete modules in different career clusters such as engineering, technology, and health. The Encore classes, in addition to the academic and music offerings, are the foundation and enrichment students need to best be prepared for high school.



MORTON ACADEMY

260 E. Queenwood | Phone: 284-8033

The mission of Morton Academy is to provide an authentic and varied school curriculum intentionally designed to meet the social, emotional, and academic needs of students from diverse backgrounds. Morton Academy serves the majority of students who reside at Guardian Angel Home, an all-male residential facility operated by the Center for Youth and Family Solutions through a contract from the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Guardian Angel Home currently serves boys ages 6 - 16 and can serve young men up to the age of 18.

Morton Academy has two classrooms, as well as a flexible learning space within the gymnasium. There are three certified special education teachers and two instructional aides. A structured schedule allows the students to switch teachers for different subject areas providing them with an opportunity to work with more than one teacher; allowing students to experience different routines and expectations along with transitioning from one room to another. Students stay with their peers in their age group for the entire school day.

Prior to the Guardian Angel Home's move to Morton, this group of students did not receive physical education or specials as part of their school day. A few highlights from the 18-19 school year include daily PE, playing recorders, ukuleles, and street drumming in music class, participating in yoga sessions, attending the Morton High School Girls Basketball State Finals, visiting Lincoln sites in Springfield, and participating in a Fall Harvest Bonfire. We also won the Main Street window decorating contest for the 2018 Morton Pumpkin Festival!

We strive to provide students at Morton Academy with the same

Meet the 2019-20 staff

Dean - Amanda Rickenberg

Teachers - Rhonda Howard, Shay Nelson, Debrah Moore

P.E. - Bob Becker

Music - Melissa Risner

Social Worker - Paul Thompson

School Psychologist - Katie Zwolinski

Speech/Language Pathologist - Sheri Robinson

Occupational Therapy Assistant - Molly Suellentrop

Instructional Aides - Austin Weyland, Krista Naab



AMANDA
RICKENBERG



Morton Academy students participated in a special Fall Harvest Bonfire!

opportunities as all students in the Morton School District. Support from district administration, our Board of Education, community businesses, and organizations have been very instrumental in achieving this goal.

Thank you for your partnership!

Last school year Morton Academy was able to maintain great partnerships with four organizations/businesses in our community, including:

1. The Morton Public Library welcomed Morton Academy on a weekly basis, providing access to a wide variety of materials for leisure reading and research projects. Weekly library visits are a highlight for Morton Academy students, who are avid readers!

2. Old School Arts instructor Scott Warner provided art classes to our students, even inviting them to work in his studio on a number of occasions. Students learned about different art techniques, art history, and got hands-on experience from experienced artists.

3. Chef Amanda Pyle from The Cookery in Morton has been a loyal partner with Morton Academy. With

dedication, patience, and passion, she teaches practical skills that students put to work within their residence during their kitchen rotation, and will use throughout life. Students were able to create delicious recipes through her guidance, and the best part, they got to eat what they made!

4. Midwest Food Bank is always open to having Morton Academy students volunteer their time and assist with packing boxes and any other tasks the food bank needed from them. This teaches students the importance of being involved in their community and giving back in meaningful ways.

These partnerships allowed Morton Academy students an opportunity to be part of our community organizations and businesses, build relationships, work collaboratively with each other, practice generalizing skills they are learning in the classroom, and a chance to give back to a community that has been giving to them. We could not thank our partners enough for the time and energy they have given to the boys at Morton Academy and for allowing us to continue to do more this year. Morton Academy is very grateful!

Now recruiting for Morton Mentor Program

The Morton Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Council are now recruiting Mentors for the 2019-20 Morton High School year.

Now in its fourth year, student interest in the Morton Mentor Program continues to grow, and mentors are invited to register and help students explore career paths of interest.

More than 40 mentors are needed in the following career clusters: Agriculture; Food & Natural Resources; Architecture & Construction; Arts; A/V Technology & Communications; Business Management & Administration; Education & Training; Finance; Government & Public Administration; Health Sciences; Hospitality & Tourism; Human Services; Information Technology; Law; Public Safety; Corrections & Security; Manufacturing; Marketing; Science; Technology; Engineering & Mathematics; Transportation; Distribution & Logistics.

The application deadline for Mentors is July 31, after which Mentors will be invited to an orientation to equip them with the program details and toolkit for successful meetings with their Mentees. The program will kick off with an opening reception, and then mentors and students will meet four more times over the course of the school year. Orientation dates and additional information can be found on the Morton Chamber of Commerce website - <https://www.mortonchamber.org/morton-mentor>.

The Morton Mentor Program matches Morton CUSD 709 High School students with business leaders willing to share professional knowledge, skills, contacts, and resources. Through these matches, mentors share their experience, guidance, and encouragement for students to develop their career pathway.

Working professionals, company leaders, and/or trusted retirees with access to company facilities and a willingness to share from their experiences can participate in the program.

Mentors interested in participating can apply online at <https://goo.gl/forms/J4Climyef8roGabF3>.

Questions?

► Call Leigh Ann Brown at 309-263-2491 or email labrown@mortonil-linois.org. Additional details can be found on the Morton Chamber of Commerce website at <https://www.mortonchamber.org/morton-mentor>.



LETTIE BROWN ELEMENTARY

2550 N. Morton Ave. | Phone: 266-5309

School day

Grades K-6

8:10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Policies

Absence reporting:

284-1000. The absence line is open 24 hours a day. Please call prior to 9 a.m. on the day of the absence.

Parking/drop off and

pick-up: In the morning, parents should drop off students in the north parking lot, entering by the pool. There is a drop-off area near the building. After school, parents are asked to park in the north parking lot and come to the front doors to meet their children at 2:30 p.m.

Please do not park in front of the school on North Morton Avenue. It blocks the view of cars that are exiting the parking lot. This is a Village of Morton "no parking" area during the school day. If your child will be riding the bus home with another student or walking home with another student, the school must have a note from both families.

Supply lists: Lists are available at local retailers and on the district website, www.morton709.org. Click on the Lettie Brown icon for information about supply lists and other information about the school.



Lettie Brown celebrated Veteran's Day by recognizing family members who served in the U.S. Armed Forces and by creating a flag of students and staff, dressed in red, white and blue!

Mark your calendar

Aug. 1 – Registration, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Aug. 8 – Class lists posted after 4 p.m.

Aug. 13 – First day for students, 8:10-11:45 a.m.

Aug. 26 – PTO meeting, 7 p.m.

Aug. 27 – Meet the Teacher, 6 to 7:30 p.m.

PTO Officers



Pictured above, left to right, are the 2019-2020 PTO officers for Lettie Brown Elementary. Tara Picken - President; Shantel Zoss - Treasurer; Holly Bones - Vice President; and Renee McClain - Secretary.

LUNCH Schedule

Kindergarten - 10:50 to 11:35 a.m.

5th and 6th grades - 11:15 a.m. to noon

3rd and 4th grades - 11:37 a.m. to 12:22 p.m.

1st and 2nd grades - 12:00 to 12:45 p.m.

Meet the 2019 - 20 staff

Principal – Faith Waterfield

Secretary – Abbey Carpenter

Kindergarten – Kelley Bradford, Jenny Bushman

First – Brenna Stork, Kelsey Kirk

Second – Kristy Boecker, Erin Kellerstrass

Third – Kim Knox, Sydney Smith

Fourth – Stephanie Bishop, Laura Zehr

Fifth – Katy Gingerich, Michael Finck



FAITH WATERFIELD

Sixth – Shane Weyland, Lacey Scholl

Literacy Coach – Casie McDowell

P.E. – Julie Cassidy, Clint Baldwin

Music – Melissa Risner

Technology Aide –

Sondra Dole

Library Aide – Teri Detloff

Rtl Aides – Heidi Robbins, Teri Pheasant, Brianne Stump

Instructional Aides – Brandi Edwards, Julie Schmidgall, Lisa

Tillison, Judy Taylor, Valerie Melten, Tammy LaMirand, Tracey Vickerman, Corrine Wong

Interpreter – Sabrina Vior

Challenge Teachers – Shane Weyland, Laura Zehr

Resource – Edie Russell, Ashley King, Mindy Hartzler

Social Work – Laura Steiner

Psychologist – Dan Ebbert

Clerical Aides – Brenda Grimm, Carol Main, Liz Cigelnik

Custodians – Tim Epkins, Dominique Mackey

Crossing Guard – Jean Melvin

Traditions:

Prior to starting the school day, Lettie Brown students and staff have announcements in the gymnasium at 8:05 a.m. Lettie Brown has a student council for fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. We enjoy participating in the One District One Book program, in which all the elementary students and their families read a book at the same time! On Fridays, students and staff show their school spirit by wearing Lettie Brown blue and orange spirit wear.

Community Service:

Lettie Brown staff and students participate in community service projects throughout the year. Some of our service projects last year included singing carols at Apostolic Christian Restmor (student council), hosting a Red Cross Blood Drive, collecting toys for Toys for Tots, collecting children's books for Children's Hospital of Illinois, collecting food for families at St. Jude, and raising funds for St. Jude and Children's Hospital of Illinois.

WARD GRUNDY ELEMENTARY

1100 S. Fourth Ave. | Phone: 263-1421



School day

ECE

A.M. 8:20 to 10:55 a.m.
P.M. 12:05 to 2:40 p.m.

Grades K-6

8:20 a.m. to 2:40 p.m.

Policies

Morning drop-off:

Please use the driveway on the west side of the building. Students must exit from the passenger side of your vehicle. Please remain in your vehicle to keep the line moving. If you need to walk your child inside, please park in the District Office parking lot.

Afternoon pick-up:

Please park in the right lane of the driveway on the west side of the building or in the District Office parking lot. If you park in the driveway, please remain in your vehicle to keep the line moving.

Supply lists: Parents received a supply list at the end of the 2018-2019 school year. Lists are also available on the Grundy website <http://grundy.morton709.org/home> and at local retailers.



The Grundy kindergarteners busy working on their alphabet.

Mark your calendar

Aug. 1 – Registration, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Aug. 2 – Grundy Pool

Party, 7 to 9 p.m., Morton Pool

Aug. 8 – Class lists posted after 4 p.m.

Aug. 12 – Kindergarten Parent Orientation, 6 p.m.

Aug. 13 – First day of school, 8:20 to 11:55 a.m.

Aug. 19 – Meet the Teacher, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Aug. 26 – PTO meeting, 6:30 p.m., Grundy library

Meet the 2019-20 staff

Principal

– Michael Saunders

Secretary

– Kathy Shaw

Clerical Aides

– Jennifer Sadler, Marjorie Henderson, Leslie Householter

Kindergarten

– Jeanette Grant, Janine Weyland

First – Emily Anderson, Baylie Craig

Second – Lora Kober, Ashlie Reinert

Third – Jessica Gunn, Jami Kaisershot

Fourth – Jacob Stone, Jon Wheat



MICHAEL SAUNDERS

Fifth – Julie Matlock, Jill Veskauf

Sixth – Becky Bazzetta, Holly Manthey

Building Technologist – Beth Shook

Challenge Teachers – Jacob Stone, Janine Weyland

Crossing Guard – Priscilla Oggero

Custodians – Pam Addams, Dwight Schuck

ECE Teachers – Ryan Gillhouse, Bridget Joos

ECE Aides – Tracy Fick, Rachel Herrmann

Food Service – Theresa Hermacinski, Jan Huette, Jennifer Landrith,

Grade Level Aides – Angie Beyer, Leslie Householter,

Leanne Sommer, Danielle Tolly,

Carol Vance

Librarian – Angel Fisher

Music Teacher – Tim Beutel

Nurse – Mary Hills

Occupational Therapy Assistant – Molly Sullentrop

P.E. Teachers – Clint Baldwin, Jayne Eisenmann

Resource Teachers – Jill Jones, Natalie Rollins, Holly Toraason

Resource Aides – Olgajean Atteberry, Jessica Moeller, Michelle Paulson, Pam Riddle, Jen Wilson

RTI Aides – Amanda Derrick, Emily Hauter, Anita Stidman

Social Worker – Elizabeth Antonacci

Speech and Language Pathologists – Brooke Behm, Kelly Webb

Traditions:

► **Educational Excellence:** Grundy is ranked among the top 5% of all schools in the State of Illinois. Grundy has earned the Academic Excellence Award from the ISBE and the School Search Bright A+ Award. Grundy is also among the few public elementary schools in the State of Illinois to have received a distinguished GreatSchools.org rating of 10 out of 10. In 2019, 16% of our 6th-graders earned the President's Award for Educational Excellence and 41% of our 3rd-6th-graders earned the Principal's Honor Roll Award.

► **Community Service:** Grundy staff members and students participate in several community service projects including a Thanksgiving Food Drive, a Christmas Clothing Drive, the Gameball Run, and various other fundraisers for charitable organizations throughout the year.

► **Patriotism:** We teach students to understand the importance of patriotism through the study of American history including important people, places, events, holidays, documents, music, and literature. We hold a Patriot Day Ceremony and a Veterans Day Ceremony to honor those who have served our country.

PTO Officers



Pictured above, left to right, are the PTO officers for the 2019-2020 school year for Grundy Elementary School: Erica Kennedy (President); Anna Bennett (Vice President); Sara Dally (Co-Treasurer); Julie LeMasters (Co-Treasurer); and Dan Beckler (Secretary).

JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY

220 E. Jefferson St. | Phone: 263-2650

School day

Doors open: 7:45 a.m.

For All Students

Announcements: 8:10 a.m.

Classes Begin: 8:20 a.m.

Dismissal: 2:40 p.m.

Policies

Absence reporting: 284-3025.

The absence line is open 24 hours a day. Please call prior to 8:30 a.m. on the day of the absence.

Parking/drop off and pick up:

Jefferson School is located in downtown Morton. Parents are asked to follow these guidelines when dropping off and picking up students at school. Morning drop-off is behind the school on Adams, past the sign. Students should exit onto the sidewalk from the vehicle's passenger side. It is recommended parents come down Clifton and turn left onto Adams. Please do not let students out of the car in the bus lane. Students should enter through the cafeteria door. Dismissal pick-up is on the front side of Jefferson or on Third Street. K-1 students dismiss out of the doors on Third Street. Grades 2-6 dismiss out of the front of the building.

Parents may park across Jefferson Street in the parking lot and wait for their students. Students should cross Jefferson Street with the crossing guard.

Supply lists: Lists are available at local retailers and on the district website, www.morton709.org. Click on Our Schools: Jefferson: Virtual Backpack for information about supply lists.



Jefferson students and staff salute the American flag at the Patriot Day assembly.

PTO Officers



Jefferson PTO Officers for the 2019-2020 school year from left to right: Sarah Webb (secretary), Emily Hinch (treasurer), Jen Donovan (president), Sarah Fore (vice president)

Traditions

Jefferson School, established in 1928, is home of the Patriots. Jefferson encourages students to excel in their academics, while being respectful, responsible, and ready citizens. We sponsor many after-school clubs and activities for students. Jefferson holds family nights throughout the year at no cost to families. The PTO organizes and hosts the annual Carnival, Laugh Olympics, and Read-a-thon. Read-a-thon has become a Jefferson tradition and serves as the main fundraiser for the school. Jefferson also supports The Children's Hospital Of Illinois and St. Jude. Jefferson is proud to be the home of the annual Morton Pumpkin Festival.



Meet the 2019-20 staff



KATE WYMAN

Principal – Kate Wyman

Secretary – Grace Nessler

Kindergarten – Allison Bohnhoff, Emily Ropp

First – Ashley Parker, Melissa Ralston

Second – Heather Hochstetler, Teresa Oaks

Third – Ashley Sarver, Margaret Shafer

Fourth – Steve Brenkman, Lindsey Pierz

Fifth – Emily Cline, Kristy Kieser

Sixth – Summer Geist, Therese Scifres

P.E. – Justin Tilford, Dan Gashaw

Music – Heather Berger

Rtl Aides – Shelby Nicholson, Nicole Gold, Christy Powers

Rtl Coordinator – Kristen D'Alfonso

Literacy Coach – Randi Deverman

ELL Coordinator – Dayrim Sheehan

Challenge Teachers – Ashley Sarver, Sara Dirks

Title 1 Math – Sara Dirks

Rtl K-2 Math Aide – Elaine Campbell

Rtl 3-6 Math Aide – TBD

Resource – Kristin Muzzarelli (5-6), Christine Seneca (3-4), Nadine Worstell (K-2)

Speech – Chelsie Chaney

Technologist – TBD

Library – Amy Jones

Clerical Aides – Tammy Presley, Sarah Fore

Custodians – Dave Keen, Joe Schick

Psychologist – Dan Ebbert

Social Worker – Kelly Hobson

Crossing Guard – Stacy Krantz

Resource Aides – Amy Glass, Nan Reynolds, Jeany Righi, Brittini Taylor, Sarah Webb

Classroom Support Aides – Mandy Collins, Lindsey O'Donnell, Monica Taylor, Zoé Troxell, Keshia Wenninger

ELL Aide – Robin Sizemore, Stacy Zukowski

** Personnel subject to change.



LINCOLN ELEMENTARY

100 S. Nebraska Ave. | Phone: 266-6989 | Fax: 284-4015

School day

8:20 a.m. to 2:40 p.m.

Policies

Absence Reporting:

284-4000. The absence line is open 24 hours a day. Please call prior to 9 a.m. on the day of the absence.

Parking/Drop off and Pick-up: Please help follow these guidelines in the morning and after school to ensure the safety of all children.

► Students who arrive at school by car should be dropped off in the circle drive on the west side of the school. Please do not drop off your child on Nebraska Avenue, as Nebraska is very busy and it is not safe for students to cross traffic on Nebraska or in the circle drive.

► The north parking lot is for bus drop off and pick-up; please do not drop off or pick up children in this parking lot.

► Cars should pull up in the drive as far as possible to allow for multiple cars to drop off their children. After your child exits the passenger side, proceed out the drive to allow for more cars to pull through. It is important for children to exit the vehicle on the passenger side so they do not cross in front of other vehicles. Please help keep the traffic flow moving smoothly by having your child ready to exit the car once

it is stopped.

► Walkers and bicycle riders should walk on the sidewalk that goes up to the building. Do not cross the driveway to park a bicycle or to walk to the building.

Proof of Residency:

Families who are enrolling in the district for the first time (including all kindergarten students) need to provide proof of residency. In addition, families who may have moved during the previous school year or during the summer need to provide proof of residency for their new address. Proof of Residency includes a copy of one document from this group: property tax bill, mortgage paperwork, rental agreement and previous month's payment, letter from landlord in lieu of lease; along with copies of two documents from this group: driver's license, voter registration card, public aid card, homeowner/renter insurance policy, gas/electric/water bill, library card, cable bill.

Supply Lists: School supply lists will be distributed at registration. The lists are also available at local retailers and can be found on the district website, www.morton709.org. Click on the Lincoln icon for information.



The Lincoln Lions love to support GameBall Run! Each year, over 100 students, teachers and staff members participate in our community's fundraising efforts for the Children's Hospital of Illinois.

Mark your calendar

Aug. 1 – 2019-20 School Year Registration in cafeteria 7 a.m.-5 p.m.

Aug. 5 – PTO meeting, 7 p.m. in Gym Vestibule

Aug. 8 – Class lists posted at 4 p.m.

Aug. 8 – PTO Back to School Swim Party at Morton Pool 7-9 p.m.

Aug. 12 – "Unpack Your Backpack" for all K-6 students; 4-5 p.m.

Aug. 13 – First Day of School; 11:55 a.m. dismissal

Aug. 19 – Meet the Teacher Night 6-7:30 p.m.

Aug. 20 – School Picture Day

Meet the 2019-20 staff

Principal – Julie Albers

Assistant Principal –

Michelle Peterson

Secretaries

– Sueann Spinder, Jen Bakirdan

Office

Clerical Aide – Leah Collins

Nurse – Annette Kelso

Kindergarten – Jodi Hoelscher, Haley Veldhuizen, Jody Vernon

First – Kara Brooks, Madison Kumpf, Wendy Vastine

Second – Erika Bastian, Sarah Mosby, Abby



JULIE ALBERS

Schwarting

Third – Kelley Friedrich, Janelle Guetschow, Kayla Knoblauch

Fourth – Kaiti Brown, El Higus, Emily Turner

Fifth – Barb Blanco, Samantha McKee, Stuart Smith

Sixth – Jennifer Auxier, Andrea Knepp, Rachel Roush

P.E. – Bob Becker, Clint Baldwin, Claire Schmitt

Music – Shane Rocke

Resource – Erin Chan, Diane Puetz, Molly Stephens

Autism/Communication Classroom – Sara Sheldon

Instructional Program – Megan Levitt (Middle) and Joy Gronewold (Intermediate)

Literacy Coach – Olivia Gabbert

Speech – Karli Beaty, Rachel Hale, Sherry Robinson

Social Worker – Molly Winkler

Psychologist – Melissa Kerber-Long

District Technologists – Keri Dodson, Rhonda Stalter

Building Technology Aide – TBA

Library Aide – Mikaela Monday

Custodians – Dwight Hamilton, Bob Harkless, Dante Williams

Crossing Guards – Rhonda Konieczny, Heidi Tovey

Food Service Staff – Lisa Horn, Ronae Fender, Mary Dralle

Traditions:

► On Fridays, students and staff are encouraged show their school spirit by wearing Lincoln Lions (green and white) or Morton (cherry and gray/red and white) colors. Families will have an opportunity during the school year to purchase Lincoln spiritwear.

► At the end of the year, one 6th-grade girl and one 6th-grade boy are recognized with the Ruth Myers Citizenship Award. This award has been given annually to outstanding students at Lincoln School since 1989. The names of the winners from 1989 until present are located on a plaque inside the front door of Lincoln School.

► Lincoln has a strong tradition of a supportive and active Parent Teacher Organization and families who are regularly involved in our school activities. Our PTO provides a tremendous amount of financial support for both teachers and student programs and our classrooms benefit from the many volunteers who play a variety of roles at Lincoln. We encourage all parents and guardians to become involved with our PTO and to be active in our classrooms and school activities.

PTO Officers



Lincoln Elementary PTO Officers for 2019-20 (left to right): Christy Getz, Secretary; Rebecca Schelkopf, President; Maggie Klokenga, Treasurer; Bonnie Ricci, Vice President.



MORTON JUNIOR HIGH

225 E. Jackson St. | Phone: 266-6522

School day

8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Policies

Absence reporting: Call 284-5000 and use the automated system. Absences can be reported 24 hours a day.

Morning arrival: Students that ride the bus to school will arrive between 7:15 and 7:50 a.m. All students are to enter the gym through the north entrance and should find a seat in the bleachers until 7:50 a.m.

Orientation: Orientation for new students and incoming 7th-grade students will be from 2:30-3:30 p.m. Aug. 12. Students can stay until 3:45 p.m. to practice their locker combinations. The school is open a few days before school starts if students want to practice their locker combination or review their schedule and location of classes.

Website: Parents and students can find a lot of information on the MJHS website, www.morton709.org. Click on the MJHS icon for detailed information and the daily announcements that students hear at school.

Cell phones: The MJHS cell phone policy states that students are allowed to bring cell phones to school. However, students must leave phones turned off and in their locker during the school day.

Identification: MJHS

students are issued ID cards. IDs are needed during the day in the Library and Media Center (LMC) to check out books and use the computer. IDs are also needed at lunch. ID pictures can be taken during registration, orientation, and during the first week of school.

Team concept: MJHS has a team teaching concept. The 7th-grade students are divided into two teams – Green and White. The 8th-grade students are divided into two teams – Red and Gray. Each team has a group of teachers, and the curriculum for each team is the same. The team teachers meet to plan and discuss upcoming tests, interdisciplinary units, and the progress of all students.

Lunch: Students at MJHS can purchase a lunch for \$2.65 a day, or they can buy ala carte items. Money can be added to your child's lunch account through E-Funds. Your child's charging habits can be tracked on My Lunch Account. Both of these websites can be accessed under the Parent tab on our school's website (www.morton709.org).

Dress code: MJHS does have a dress code and it can be found in the student handbook. Parents and students should become familiar with the dress code. In short, students are to be covered from shoulder to mid-thigh.



Picture from the Morton Junior High School's "Mary Poppins" Musical.

Meet the MJHS 2019-20 Staff:

Principal – Lee Hoffman

Assistant Principal – Chris Carter

Counselors – Beth Spaniol, Danielle VanMeenen

Secretaries – Holli Pfeifer, Valerie Smith, Jill Parod

English Language Arts – Rachel Shore, Cady Windish, Megan Hasler, Jeanenne Plevka, Sarah Gorshe, Moriah Millburg

Math – Tom Hermann, Kirk Schick, Ashley Geil, Sean Breaux

P.E. – Caryn Goss, Dan Gashaw, Jesse Crawford

Science – Brandon Parrott,



LEE HOFFMAN

Jordan Williams, Melissa Tortorella, Kelsey Ewing

Social Studies – Don Swearingen, Adam Sheley, Alex Bishop, Jennifer Rabe

Project Lead

the Way – Jesse Sams

CareerMaker – Josh Ames

Foreign language – Kaylie Breaux

Music – Tim Beutel, Pete Martin, Katrina Fitzpatrick

Art – Brittany DuPont

Resource/Collaboration – Gena Jones, Leslie Gray, Abby Everett,

Jaclyn Herr, Dylan Stork

Speech Therapist – Rachel Meier

Health – Toni Trilikis

Library – Jacqueline Akers

Social Work – Paul Thompson

Psychologist – Amanda May

Interventionist – Katie Miller

Study Hall – Clara Jo Odgen, Mark Moore, Andy Zuck

Custodians – Brad Berry, Steve Culbertson, Elliot Spinder

Crossing Guard – Jessica Nall

Aides – Diane Conklin, Kim Serrurier, Ashley Turner, Dawn Blunier, Wendy Wright, Daniel Williams, Jeff Arbisi, Andrew Funk

Traditions

MJHS has a tradition of hosting Grandparents' Day each spring. The Red and White Club hosts the event with assistance from the Student Council. Grandparents attend two class periods and have lunch or breakfast with their grandchildren. Over 350 grandparents attended the event last year.

Stay Connected to MJHS

- ▶ **Mid-Term Reports** – Mailed home to students receiving D's and/or F's at the mid-term.
- ▶ **Parent/Teacher Conferences** – Thursday (8a.m.-7p.m.) and Friday (8 a.m. - noon) Oct. 17 and 18 are the two days set aside as conference days. Parents have the opportunity to meet with individual teachers to discuss their child's progress. To sign up, simply call the office beginning in September.
- ▶ **PowerSchool** – Parents can access their child's grades, attendance, and the school's daily announcements. Parents can also sign up to receive email updates of grades, attendance, and/or announcements (<https://powerschool.morton709.org/public>).
- ▶ **Report Cards** – Report cards are distributed to students approximately one week after the conclusion of the term.
- ▶ **Team Meetings** – If parents would like to meet with the teachers, they are welcome to attend a team meeting. To set an appointment, contact the team leader. Meeting times: Green 10:30-11:10 a.m.; White 8-8:40 a.m.; Gray 9:45-10:25 a.m.; Red 8:55-9:35 a.m.

▶ **Facebook and Twitter**– Follow what is going on at MJHS (www.twitter.com/MJHSJrPtrs and www.facebook.com/MortonJuniorHighSchool).

▶ **Sports Notification** – By signing up and providing an email and/or phone number, parents receive email notification when an event is cancelled or changed (il.8to18.com/mortonjhs/).

▶ **Help-a-thon** – MJHS will conduct a Help-a-thon fundraiser again this year. Students will seek donations to sponsor their involvement in community service projects. The proceeds will benefit MJHS and selected charities.

Red and White Club

The MJHS Red and White PTO does many things for the students and staff. Some of the activities Red and White coordinate or assist with are:

Help-a-thon fundraiser – The main fundraiser at MJHS. Students complete a service project in the community.

Teacher Appreciation – Provide food for staff on the first Monday of the month.

Potter Pride Night and Spaghetti Supper – This event is during basketball season and is a fun event for students, staff, and families. All music groups perform as well as all four basketball teams, and the spirit squad (cheer and dance).

If you are interested in either chair-



MJHS Red & White PTO Board 2019-2020. From left to right; Kristie Boeker - Activities Chair, Amy Robinson – Treasurer, Beth Shook – Secretary, Jessica Belsly - Vice President, and Kara Knepp – President.

ing an activity or simply helping out, please sign up at registration or contact the office. All parents are encouraged to consider an opportunity to get involved with MJHS. Monthly meetings are typically held on the third Thursday evening of the month. The new calendar will be available at registration.

Junior High Supply List

Pens (blue/black and red)
Pencils and pouch
Colored pencils
Highlighters
Loose leaf paper
Protractor
Box of tissues
5 pocket folders
3 spiral notebooks
Index cards (3x5)

3-ring zippered binder
Earbuds for iPad
TI-NSpire CX graphing calculator for 8th grade students
Heartrate monitor strap (*this will be purchased at registration*)
Morton Public Library Card (*not required but available at no cost to*

ALL Morton students)
Teachers may have additional supply expectations depending on the Team.
Physical Education uniform: shirt (\$10), shorts (\$12) (*Available on registration day or from PE teacher*), and athletic shoes

Mark your calendar

- July 29** – MJHS office opens
- Aug. 1** – Registration, 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- Aug. 12** – 7th-Grade and New Student Orientation, 2:30 – 3:45 p.m.
- Aug. 13** – First day of school, 8-11 a.m.
- Aug. 15** – Meet the Teacher Night, 6-8 p.m.

MJHS Daily Schedule

- 1st Period:** 8:00-8:49 a.m.
 - 2nd Period:** 8:53-9:37 a.m.
 - 3rd Period:** 9:41-10:25 a.m.
 - 4th Period:** 10:29-11:13 a.m.
 - 5th Period:** 11:17-12:01 p.m.
 - 6th Period:** 12:05-12:49 p.m.
 - 7th Period:** 12:39-1:23 p.m.
 - 8th Period:** 1:27-2:11 p.m.
 - 9th Period:** 2:15-3:00 p.m.
- Lunches will be for 30 minutes during 5th, 6th and 7th periods.

Athletic Information:

When students enter Morton Junior High School, they have the opportunity to try out for athletic teams. They also can show their support for MJHS by joining the Red Storm club. Students can pay a fee to join Red Storm, and in return they receive a t-shirt and a free bag of popcorn at all home events.

Athletic passes: MJHS offers athletic

passes for students and for families. These passes are valid for all home, indoor events. These events include boys and girls basketball, volleyball and wrestling. Passes are available at registration and the MJHS office. Passes are \$8 for students, \$10 for adults and \$30 for a family. Passes are valid for regular season events only. Regional and sectional events hosted at MJHS are required to charge an admission fee. Admission fees

to regular season MJHS athletic events are \$1 for students and \$2 for adults. Seniors 60 and older are admitted for free.

Sports participation: Athletes must be registered online. Visit Morton Junior High's athletic website, il.8to18.com/mortonjhs, to complete the online registration process. The only document students need to turn into the office is the sports physical. Athletes will not be allowed to try-out, practice, or partici-

pate without registering and turning in their physical.

Website: The athletic website is especially helpful with MJHS sporting events because last-minute changes can be posted immediately. Practice schedules, game schedules, and other information can be found at <http://il.8to18.com/mortonjhs/>. For questions regarding athletics at MJHS, contact Mr. Carter at 284-5060 or chris.carter@mcusd709.org.

MHS COMMENCEMENT MEMORIES

May 9, 2019



MHS Class of 2019 students serving in the Armed Forces

David Fisher — Army National Guard
Tristan Gallagher — Air National Guard
Chase Jones — Army National Guard (did not participate in graduation)
Zachary Losey — Air National Guard
Hayley Miller — Army National Guard
John Stephens — Air Force
Bridget Wood — Air Force
Dylan Rusnak — National Guard
Bryce Bennett — National Guard
Jenna Thomas — Navy



These students received the Highest Honor Student distinction for the Morton High School Class of 2019. Front row, left to right, Sarah Honegger and Allison Smith. Middle row, left to right, Kathryn Reiman, Coreena Witzig, and Aleks Knepp. Back row, left to right, Elsa Hurst, Carson Smith, Kevin Lauer, and Drake Seibert.



Deidre Ripka named new MHS principal



DEIDRE RIPKA

The Morton District 709 Board of Education approved Mrs. Deidre Ripka as the principal for Morton High School, effective July 1, 2019. She replaces Mr. Michael Gourley, who was named the principal of Morris High School in April. Mrs. Ripka has been serving at Morton High

School the past 14 years. The past three years she served as dean and assistant principal, and prior to that she served as school counselor for 11 years.

Mrs. Ripka expressed her enthusiasm and eagerness for her new position as principal. "I'm excited for this opportunity at Morton High School and I look

forward to carrying on the tradition of student excellence. The teachers at MHS are dedicated and focused on preparing our students for life after high school and I'm eager to support them in those endeavors. I also look forward to continuing to create opportunities for our students to prepare them

for their post-secondary plans," she said.

Mrs. Ripka has been instrumental in leading a variety of initiatives at Morton High School, including increasing certificate programs for students and implementation of trauma informed teaching strategies.

"We are excited for Mrs. Ripka to take this next step of leadership at Morton High School," said Dr. Jeffrey Hill, Morton 709 superintendent. "She has the confidence of our faculty and students and will help Morton High School continue to improve."

Check out Morton Potter Television - and become a volunteer!

MPTV provides programs that highlight the Morton School District meetings, musical and award programs, athletic contests, graduation, and more. The MPTV crew is comprised of school district employees as well as community volunteers. Programs are available on local cable stations, Comcast Channel 20 and i3 Broadband Channel 21. Programs are also available live and on demand through our online streaming NFHS site - <http://www.nfhsnetwork.com/schools/morton-high-school-morton-morton-il>

Connect with MPTV

- ▶ Follow us on Twitter: @MPTV_709
- ▶ Visit us at www.morton709.org/mptv for the broadcasting schedule and more information.



to the games.

"MPTV is vital to our Athletic Department and the promotion of our interscholastic sporting teams," said Scott Jones, Morton High School's Director of Athletics. "I am amazed at the number of people in the community who talk about watching games on MPTV when unable to attend events, or who even watch games on their phones as they are attending another school event. MPTV is a great asset to our community and our school district."

If you are interested in volunteering for a couple of games, please email us at MPTV@mcusd709.org.

2018-19 MPTV Volunteers - THANK YOU

Our volunteers have put in countless of hours behind the scenes at MPTV in order to showcase our Morton school district students. Our volunteers are the driving force that makes the MPTV engine run. Each and every one of these volunteers is a vital asset to the function

of MPTV. We could not broadcast all of the sporting events without their selfless commitment to the team. Thank you!

Todd Bisping
Tim Cooper
Mike Craft
Jonathan Farrell
Brian Gordon
Marcus Greiner
Lee Hall
Rachel Henderson
Blake Hochstetler
Jeff King
Alex LeMasters
Ryan Lindley
Ralph Mattia
Sean Mikel
Greg Prichard
Nate Rugaard
Llew Smith
Jeff Stephens
Craig Wright

NFHS Subscription

Don't forget to get your subscription

for the upcoming school year!

A subscription must be purchased to watch Live sporting events. Non-sporting events such as school board meetings and music programs are available to stream without a subscription.

An annual pass of 12 months is \$50.00, a seasonal pass of 4 months is \$30.00, and a 1 month subscription is only \$9.95.

There are a lot of benefits a person will get from subscribing to MPTV's NFHS network. Not only can viewers watch any MPTV produced home game, they may be able to view away games if the other school is a participating NFHS Network school.

Another advantage is that they can watch any game in the United States on the NFHS network. So, if a person has a grandchild or a relative who plays sports at another school on the NFHS network, the individual can watch that sporting event too.

Subscribers also have the ability to watch games online whenever and wherever they want. They can watch from their smart phone, tablet, laptop, and with the new Apple TV app.

The programming on Comcast channel 20 and iTV-3 channel 21 will remain the same. It will continue to broadcast graduation, orchestra and band concerts, school board meetings and all of their original broadcasting on the channel as usual.



MORTON HIGH SCHOOL

350 N. Illinois Ave. | Phone: 266-7182

Deidre Ripka
Principal

Scott Jones
Assistant Principal/
Activities & Athletic Director

Matt Oyer
Assistant Principal A-L

Jamie Adolphson
Assistant Principal M-Z

Patrick Mainieri
Director of Student Activities and
Engagement (5th - 12th grade)

Our Vision

Morton High School students are independent, critically-thinking citizens of strong character who are prepared to succeed in society through rigorous curriculum and extracurricular opportunities.

Our Mission

The Mission of Morton High School is to prepare all students for life as productive citizens. This necessitates the MHS Community to be dedicated to: maintaining high standards, offering relevant courses, providing a rigorous and responsive curriculum, being technologically progressive, providing opportunities for extracurricular activities, and meeting the needs of students.

School day

8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Daily schedule

1st hour – 8-8:49 a.m.

2nd hour – 8:54-9:42 a.m.

3rd hour – 9:47-10:35 a.m.

4th hour – 10:40-11:28 a.m.

5th hour – 11:33 a.m.-1:14 p.m.

(Students have class, a 16-minute study hall and lunch during 5th hour)

6th hour – 1:19-2:07 p.m.

7th hour – 2:12-3 p.m.

Teacher Assistance - 3-3:40 p.m. (as needed)

Counseling office

Phone: 263-8585. Counselors will be in the office starting July 29. Office hours are 7 a.m. – 3 p.m. through Aug. 9. Beginning Aug. 12, the counselors will be available from 7:50 a.m. – 3:40 p.m. daily. Appointments should be scheduled in advance.

Textbooks

Textbooks will be distributed during the first week of school. Teachers will make arrangements during each class. Textbooks will NOT be distributed to individual students before Aug. 13.

iPad Checkout

iPad checkout will occur for freshmen and new students on Thursday, Aug. 8 from 12 p.m. - 2 p.m. Returning students will need to check out their iPads in the cafeteria from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 9.



The 2018-2019 Morton High School Math Team won 1st place at the ICTM Math State Finals for the Junior/Senior 8-Person Team and 1st place for the Freshman/Sophomore 2-Person Team. The Math Team is coached by Mr. Zeller and Mr. Zehr.

Follow us on Social Media

Facebook: Morton High School - @MortonHighSchoolPotters

Twitter: Morton Athletics - @Potter_Pride709

Facebook: Morton Athletics - @PotterPride

Response to Intervention/ Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

The District's Response to Intervention program identifies students that might need help in an academic area. Teachers use best practices and give individual attention to help bring a student up to the level needed for that class. If a teacher is still concerned after that step, a student is referred to the RTI Team. At that time, a student will have a designated team of teachers, counselors and deans that will discuss the student's needs and develop a plan that addresses the student's academic or behavioral needs. After the plan is established, it will be given to all the student's teachers. A review will be scheduled to monitor the student's progress.

Policies

Handbook: Parents and students can view the student handbook online at www.morton709.org, click on the MHS icon on the top right. The handbook is under the "About" tab. The policies listed below are an overview and more detailed information is listed in the handbook.

Absence: 263-0611. All absences, including appointments, should be called into the attendance secretary, Lisa Cook. Notes from parents will not be accepted. Parents can leave messages for Mrs. Cook 24 hours a day. Attendance is taken at MHS each class period during the day. If students are leaving MHS during the school day for any reason, they must sign out in Student Services. They also need to go to Student Services to sign in when arriving any time after 8:05 a.m.

Parking, drop off, and pick-up:

Students that do not drive can be dropped off at the canopy doors off Jackson Street in the student parking lot or the Main Office doors on Illinois Avenue. School buses also use the canopy entrance. On school days, parents should not drop off and pick up students in the south lot at the band room entrance.

Parking passes: Parking spaces at MHS are assigned and the passes are available at registration or will be mailed to your home before school starts. Students apply and pay for a parking spot in the spring. Information about the application and fee will be announced at school and will also be on the MHS website in the spring. New students may apply for a parking pass at registration or through the Student Services office starting Aug. 1.

Orientation: MHS will host an orientation for all new students and incoming freshmen on Aug. 8, from 8:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. in the Bertha Frank. iPad checkout for these students will occur immediately after orientation concludes until 2 p.m.

Cell phone policy: MHS students may carry their cell phone with them during the day, but the phone is to be off and out-of-sight. Cell phones are not to be used during the school day from 8 a.m-3 p.m.

Dress code: Each year, parents and administrators at MHS review the dress code and suggest changes. Those suggested changes are reviewed and approved by the Board of Education. The goal is to create an environment that promotes the educational process. Parents should become familiar with the MHS dress code when selecting clothing

for school. Ultimately, students should be covered from shoulders to mid-thigh, with no holes in apparel above mid-thigh. Again, the MHS handbook provides specific examples and guidelines about appropriate clothing for school, and parents are encouraged to review the dress code section. The staff appreciates the cooperation of parents and students as we continue to create an environment focused on academics.

Lunch: There are four lunch periods at MHS that take place during 5th hour. Students attend class, lunch, and have a 16-minute study hall during 5th hour. Some courtyard seating is available for students so they can eat outside during warmer weather. Seniors are allowed to leave campus for lunch, but must scan their student ID at the canopy doors as they leave and when they return.

Meet the 2019-20 staff

Principal – Deidre Ripka
Principal's Secretary – Lisa Schafer
Athletic Director – Scott Jones
Athletic Secretary – Terri Schuck
Assistant Principals – Jamie Adolphson and Matt Oyer
Director of Student Activities and Engagement – Patrick Mainieri
Attendance Secretary – Lisa Cook
Student Services Secretary – Samantha Frey
Receptionist/Secretary – Maranda Joos



DEIDRE RIPKA

Counseling – Chase Bushman, Christina Kinenz, Taylor King, Holly Riggins, Jordan Spicklemire
Counseling Secretary – Sara Hornsby
Social Worker – Peter Klinkner
Speech Therapist – Rachel Hale
Psychologist/Rtl – Katharine Zwolinski
Resource Officer – Mark Ehlike
Language Arts – Carol Bally, Courtney Eddleman, Tony Feleccia, Sarah Isacksen, Krista Kolls, Ryan

Lindley, Lauralee Moss, Helen Plevka
Mathematics – Ashlee Becker, Tim Bradford, Rose Durand, Sarah Knapp, Kristin Lucas, Joi Monferdini, Josh Smith, Joel Zehr, Joe Zeller
Science – Kate Fritts, Ben Ginzler, Mary Holmgren, Clark Ingwersen, Shannon McClure, Jacob Tierney, Emily Wegner, Nathan Young
Social Studies – Tory Delong, Brian Deters, Matt Franks, Robert Hornsby, Jaclyn Smith
Modern Language – Kim Johnson, Mackenzie Love, Jay Mahannah, Rafael Rodriguez, Vonda Zehr, Ben Zoss

Business – Erin Kemp, Jace Mortimer, Eric Myers
Library Media Specialist – Stacy Reisdorf; **Aide** – April Goggins
Technology Education and Engineering – Tiffany Beard, Christopher Garner, Chad McFarland
Family and Consumer Science – Karen Gardner, Kait Morissette
Art – Amy Woods
Band – Tim Gray, Mitchell Jones
Orchestra – Dave Getz, Pete Martin
Vocal Music – Heather Berger
Physical Education/Health – Tim Brillley, Stacey Buescher, Darren

Hurst, Jessica Kerby, Josh Prichard
Driver's Education – Edward Henderson, Marshall Tucker
Special Education – Dawn Block, Denise Fountain, Jamie King, Alison Eckart, Kara Powers, Christopher Roberts, Michelle Roberts, Lisa Schock, Jennifer Wheat
Security and MPTV – Patrick Mainieri
Technology Specialist – Becky Christiansen
Custodians – Bobby Barker, Mary Blair, Rodney Duneheew, Daniel Epkins, Allen Fort, Brandon Jacob, Deb Lane, Millicent Sanders

Athletic passes

MHS offers athletic passes. They are available with Ms. Frey in Student Services or at the Cherry & Gray night and Winter Red & White night. Admission prices are as follows: adults, \$4; students, \$2; and senior citizens are free. Season tickets are \$30 per adult and \$15 per student in grades K-12. For more information about passes, please contact Ms. Frey at MHS, 284-6120.

Mark your calendar

Aug. 8 – New student orientation 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m. Freshmen iPad distribution 12 p.m. - 2 p.m.
Aug 9 – iPad distribution for sophomores through seniors 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Aug. 13 – First day of school, 8 - 11 a.m.
Aug. 23 – Cherry & Gray Night, 5:30 p.m.
Aug. 22 – Meet the Teacher Night, 6:30 p.m.
Aug. 22 – Potter Post-Secondary Planning Sessions, 8:15 - 9 p.m.
 ▶ Opportunity for 10-12th grade families to learn more about post-secondary options and planning toward admissions to these institutions.
 ▶ Session topics include-Financial Aid FAFSA filing, 2-year college pathway, 4-year college pathway, military planning, and trade school preparation.
 ▶ Registration to attend and select a session will begin Aug. 1 via email. Contact Counseling with questions.
Oct. 4 – Homecoming Game vs. Metamora
Oct. 5 – Homecoming Dance, 7:30-10:30 p.m., East Gym

Registration information

MHS parents were mailed a registration invoice along with emergency card information sheet at the beginning of July for the 2019-20 school year. Parents have the option of pre-registering MHS students by one of the following methods:

▶ Pay registration fees online with EFUNDS at www.morton709.org website. You also can pay for your yearbook, ICC Dual credit classes, PTO membership, as well as Athletic Season Passes.
 ▶ Parents also can send registration fees by mailing a check to: Morton High School, 350 N. Illinois St., Morton, IL 61550, c/o Lisa Schafer. Please make checks payable to Morton Unit District 709. Please include corrected emergency card information as well.

▶ Come to the main office of the high school to make your payment and bring in your updated emergency card sheet. The MHS summer office hours are 7 a.m. - 3 p.m. weekdays (we are closed for lunch).

▶ All students/parents will have access to PowerSchool on Tuesday, July 30. iPad checkout will occur for freshmen and new students on Thursday, Aug. 8 from noon - 2 p.m. in the cafeteria. Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors will need to check out their iPads in the cafeteria from 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 9. If you choose not to pre-register your student, please come to registration at the MHS main office on Thursday, Aug. 1, from 7 a.m. - 5 p.m. Our goal at MHS is to make the registration process as easy as possible for parents

and students.

If a new ID is needed by your student, it can be purchased at registration in the Student Services office for \$6.00. Freshman and new students will receive their IDs at New Student Orientation on Aug. 8.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call the MHS office at 266-7182. Fee waiver/free and reduced lunch applications are available upon request from the main office.

Registration fees: \$180 per year
Technology fee: \$45
Yearbook: \$50
PPP membership: \$10
Parking Pass: \$75
Driver's Education: \$75
MHS ID (replacement): \$6.00
High School lunch: \$2.90



MHS 2019-20 PTO Officers, from left to right: Amy Retherford, Vice President; Malinda Radloff, President; Dana Weber, Secretary; and Becki Davis, Treasurer.

Parent organization

Information regarding PTO can be found on the District 709 website and will be available at registration. PTO sponsors Teacher Appreciation Week, provides breakfast to students taking college and career testing, and provides funds to teachers for additional classroom items. These are just a few of the ways PTO supports education at MHS. PTO has one fundraiser, Potter Card sales. Morton Potter Cards offer discounts at local merchants and are sold for \$10 each. Potter Cards are always available at the MHS office. PTO usually meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 1 p.m. at the high school. Check the District 709 website for specific meeting times and dates.

I N F O R M A T I O N C E N T E R

District calendar

August

12 No school: Teacher Institute Day
13 First day of attendance for students, half day a.m.

September

2 Labor Day, no school
4 Early dismissal day

October

2 Early dismissal day

11 Inservice Half day a.m., no school p.m.

14 Columbus Day, no school

17 No school: P/T Conferences

18 No school: P/T Conferences

November

6 Early dismissal day

11 Veterans Day, no school

27-29 Thanksgiving Vacation, no school

December

4 Early dismissal day

20 Inservice Half day a.m., no school p.m.

23-31 Christmas Vacation, no school

January 2020

1-3 Christmas Vacation continues

6 School resumes

8 Early dismissal day

20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day, no school

February

5 Early dismissal day

17 Presidents Day, no school

March

4 Early dismissal day

6 Inservice Half day

a.m., no school p.m.

April

1 Early dismissal day

6-13 Easter Break, no school

May

6 Early dismissal day

17 MHS Graduation, 2 p.m.

25 Memorial Day, no school

28 Last day for stu-

dents, half-day a.m.

29 No school: Teacher Institute Day

Note: In the event that no emergency days are

used, May 20 would be the last student atten-

dance day and May 21 a Teacher Institute Day.

Regular & Special Schedules

for 2019-20

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL, AUG. 13

The first day of school for students is Tuesday, Aug. 13. A special schedule applies that day only:

Grundy

Grades K-6 8:20 - 11:55 a.m.

A.M. Early Childhood 8:30-9:30 a.m.

P.M. Early Childhood 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Lettie Brown 8:10 - 11:45 a.m.

Jefferson and Lincoln 8:20 - 11:55 a.m.

Morton Junior High 8 - 11 a.m.

Morton High 8 - 11 a.m.

Parents of children in Early Childhood classes will accompany their student and stay with them while they are in attendance on the first day.

REGULAR SCHEDULE

The daily District 709 school schedule is as follows:

Grundy

Grades K-6 8:20 a.m.-2:40 p.m.

A.M. Early Childhood 8:20 - 10:55 a.m.

P.M. Early Childhood 12:05 - 2:40 p.m.

Lettie Brown 8:10 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Jefferson and Lincoln 8:20 a.m. - 2:40 p.m.

Morton Academy 8:10 a.m. - 2:40 p.m.

Morton Junior High 8 a.m.-3p.m.

Morton High 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

EARLY DISMISSAL WEDNESDAYS

Every 1st Wednesday of the month, the students will be released early to provide continuous and collaborative professional development for faculty. The dismissal times are now the same as the half day schedule.

Lettie Brown 11:45 a.m.

Other Elementary Schools 11:55 a.m.

MJHS and MHS 11:00 a.m.

e-Funds online payment system

District 709 will hold registration for the 2019-20 school year from 7 a.m. – 5 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 1, in all buildings.

An online payment system called e-Funds allows parents to pay for registration fees, technology fees, school lunches, yearbooks, athletic fees and other school specific fees online.

Parents can pay online using three different payment methods – an ACH automatic withdrawal from their bank account, a debit card or a credit card. The ACH payment is a lower cost to the school district and is provided at no charge to parents. A \$2.65 fee per \$100 will be charged for credit and debit card transactions.

Parents will be able to enter the Power School ID number for each student and pay for all students in one transaction. If you do not know your Power School ID number, please contact your building principal. This makes payment easier for families with students in more than one building. This system

also allows parents to put a certain amount of money into e-Funds for student lunches, and that amount is drawn down when purchases are made. Parents also can schedule payments to be made in advance. These features make paying for lunches easier and eliminate the need to send cash or checks to school with students. For a small fee, parents have the option of having text messages sent when the lunch account balance is low. Email notices are sent free of charge.

Parents are encouraged to register in e-Funds prior to registration day. This registration will require the parents to connect their students to the parent account and to register a bank account, credit card or debit card. They can pay in advance on the e-Funds website, print the receipt and bring that receipt to registration. If parents prefer to wait and pay at the school building on registration day but still want to use an ACH payment or a debit or credit card payment, they should still register in e-Funds in advance.

School lunches:

There are two websites

District 709 uses for school lunches.

► e-Funds can be used to place money on your student's account with a credit card or electronic check.

► MealMagic/Send Money To School can be used to view how students spend their money on school lunches. Money can be added to student accounts using the MealMagic web page, but the fees are higher so District 709 suggests using e-Funds when making payments.

Both websites require you to set up accounts and then associate your student to your account, so you will need to know their PowerSchool ID numbers.

To access e-Funds and MealMagic/Send Money to School, go to www.morton709.org and click on the "Parent" section, under "Parent Resources," select "Lunch Resources."

Free and reduced lunch

District 709 has applications available for free and reduced lunch. Applications are available at each school and at the district office throughout the school year as well as registration on Aug. 1.

School Fees

for 2019-2020

MORTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

EC-6 textbook

Rental and supply fee..... \$73

Technology

K-4 Technology fee \$15

5-6 Technology fee \$45

MORTON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Textbook rental & supply fee

All \$115

Technology

All \$45

General

Padlock lost \$6

I.D. card lost \$6

Library fines per day..... 10c

Band

Instrument Maintenance Fee (yearly for District owned Inst.) \$50

Percussion Use Fee (per semester) \$50

User supply fee

Co-curricular activities \$65

MORTON HIGH SCHOOL

Textbook rental & supply fee

All \$180

Technology

All \$45

General

I.D. replacement fee \$6

Library fines per day..... 10c

Marching Band Fee* \$650

Instrument Maintenance Fee (yearly for District owned Inst.) \$50

Percussion Use Fee (per semester) \$50

User supply fee

Co-curricular activities \$95

Athletic gate receipts

Adults \$4

Students/Seniors..... \$2

Season ticket, adult..... \$30

Season ticket, student..... \$15

Parking

Student parking \$75

Driver education

1st & 2nd semester \$75

Summer school \$75

LUNCH PRICES FOR 2018-2019

Adults, staff and visitors..... \$3.20

Grades K-6..... \$2.70

Grades 7-8..... \$2.80

Grades 9-12..... \$2.90

Milk..... 50 cents

*Marching Band students will also be assessed the User Supply Fee, Co-curricular Activities

Fee of \$95.

District 709 Policies

Morton District 709 has established School Board policies and administrative procedures that keep the District in compliance with federal and state laws. You can access all school district policies from our website — www.morton709.org — by clicking on the Board of Education tab.



Visit www.morton709.org for more information.

Morton District 709 Staff

District Office – 263-2581

Superintendent – Jeffrey Hill, Ed.D.

Assistant Superintendent – Craig Smock, Ed.D.

Director of Curriculum and Technology – Troy Teater, Ed.D.

District Office Secretary – Carolu Kizer

Secretary to the Superintendent – Emily Stubbs

Accountant – Stephanie Siggers

Business Office Assistant – Amy Zimmerman

Chief Financial Officer – Lisa Kowalski

Communications Coordinator – Amy Greiner

District Data Aide – Molly Smith

District Technologists – Anthony Crum, Keri Dodson, Patty Munson, and Diana Schauer

Human Resources Coordinator – Brenda Heppard

Payroll Bookkeeper – Clay Payne

Technology Integration Specialists – Lauri VanDerVoorn and Don Sturm

Technology Manager – Rhonda Statler

Videographers (MPTV) – Becky Christianson, Brooke Janes, and Dawn Rademaker

Transportation – 284-5091

Director of Transportation – Nancy Weigle

Office Bus Drivers – William Akers II, Jeri Baldovin, Steven Castleman, Nancy Domnick, Raymond Finck, Pamela Glascock, Eric Glaser, Theresa Goodspeed, Joe Grant, Kandis Grant, Linda Kerby, John Pfeifer, Edmund Railey, Christine Rankin, Karen Remmert, Ruth Smith, Michelle Spicer, Nancy Stephens, Julie Tharp, Donette Waller, Nancy Weigle, and Danny Wolf.

Bus Aides – Sandra Bowen, Amanda Bray, Heather Brooks, Anna Decker, Stacy Grawe, Jennifer Landrith, Elizabeth Miltenberger, Sara Savicz, Deb Warner, Julie Zoss

Special Education

Director of Student Support Services – Carlie Owens

Special Education Coordinator – Amanda Rickenberg

Secretary – Marcia Wallace

Clerical Aides – Dawn Cole and Carol Williams

Social Workers – Elizabeth Antonacci, Kelly Hobson, Peter Klinkner, Laura Steiner, Paul Thompson, Molly Winkler

School Psychologists – Dr. Dan Ebbert, Melissa Kerber-Long, Amanda May, Katharine Zwolinski

Districtwide Staff

K-6 Rtl Coordinator – Kristen D'Alfonso

ELL Coordinator – Dayrim Sheehan

Custodial/Maintenance

Director of Operations – Rodney Schuck

K-8 Custodial Supervisor – Lene Shumaker

K-8 Grounds – Greg Murphy

MHS Custodial/Maintenance Supervisor – Steve Young

K-8 Maintenance Director – Scott Schoon

Maintenance – Leonard Shumaker

District Office – Jason Winkel

Health and Medical Information

Information about dental and eye exams, physicals, and immunizations is available at each building. The Morton School District also has a policy regarding administering medication during school hours and school-related activities. This policy can be found on the District website – www.morton709.org – under the Board of Education tab, Policies. Morton District 709 also employs a medical office assistant at MJHS and a school nurse that is responsible for the care of students with diabetes and other significant health needs.

EYE AND DENTAL

Students entering kindergarten must have proof of an eye exam. Students entering kindergarten, second and sixth grades must have proof of a dental exam.

IMMUNIZATIONS

These are the immunization requirements for the 2019-20 school year.

Preschool: physical exam, 3 polio vaccines, 3 Hepatitis B vaccines, TB screening, lead screening, 4 DTaP vaccines, 1 HIB vaccine minimum, 1 MMR vaccine, 1 chicken pox vaccine or proof of the disease, 1 pneumococcal vaccine.

Kindergarten: physical exam, eye exam, dental exam, 4 or more polio vaccines, 4 or more DTaP vaccines, 2 MMR vaccines, 2 chicken pox vaccines or proof of the disease, lead screening.

2nd and 6th Grades: vaccines above and dental exam.

6th Grade and 10th Grade: vaccines above and 1 meningococcal vaccine on or after 11th birthday

6th-12th Grades: vaccines above and 3 hepatitis B vaccines (if not already received), 1 Tdap vaccine

6th and 9th Grade: vaccines above, physical exam, and 2nd chicken pox vaccine or proof of the disease

12th Grade: vaccines above and

meningococcal vaccine on or after 16th birthday.

All requirements: To view a complete list of immunization requirements for all grade levels, go to www.morton709.org and click on the Parents Tab, Medical Information.

Clinics: Tazewell County Health Department hosts immunization clinics. Go to www.tazewellhealth.org to view their schedule.

SCHOOL PHYSICALS

School physicals are required for students entering the early childhood program, kindergarten, 6th and 9th grades. The school physical form for 9th-grade students also qualifies as the athletic physical if that student is participating in an extra-curricular activity at MHS. Local physicians have school physical forms or they are available at your school.

MORTON JUNIOR HIGH

Students that plan to participate in extra-curricular activities need to register online by going to the MJHS website, select the Activities and Athletic Homepage under the Athletics tab, and click registration tab to begin the process. Students must have an athletic physical before they will be allowed to participate. It is important to get the athletic physical during the summer if your child plans to participate in a fall sport. Both forms – insurance waiver

and athletic physical – are available during the online registration process as mentioned above and on the MJHS web site under online forms.

MORTON HIGH SCHOOL

Students participating in athletics

– These students need to register online by going to the MHS website, selecting the Activities and Athletic Homepage under the Athletics tab, and clicking the registration tab to begin the process. Students interested in participating in an athletic program must have an athletic physical before they will be allowed to try-out or participate in athletics at MHS. Parents are encouraged to schedule these physical exams during the summer. The following forms will also need to be completed and filed at MHS – athletic physical, concussion information, insurance waiver, drug/alcohol testing, and consent to treat. These forms are available during the online registration as mentioned above and on the MHS web site under the Athletics tab.

Note: By law, students who are not in compliance with physical and immunization requirements by October 15th must be excluded from school until the school has evidence that both requirements are completed and the student is in compliance.

Asbestos Management Plan

District 709 has submitted its management plan prepared pursuant to the requirements of the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act for school buildings. Copies of the management plan are available in the administrative office of the District and each school. These plans are available for inspection by appointment during normal business hours – Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. To make arrangements, please contact Superintendent Dr. Jeffrey Hill at 263-2581.

District 709 Board of Education

President: Dr. Shad Beaty

First Elected: 2015; Term Expires: 2023
shad.beaty@mcusd709.org

Vice President: Jeff Schmidgall

First Elected: 2015; Term Expires: 2023
jeffrey.schmidgall@mcusd709.org

Secretary: Kevin Austin

First Elected: 2017; Term Expires: 2021
kevin.austin@mcusd709.org

Tim Braker

First Elected: 2019; Term Expires: 2023
tim.braker@mcusd709.org

Dr. David Cross

First Elected: 2017; Term Expires: 2021
david.cross@mcusd709.org

Tom Neeley

First Elected: 1989; Term Expires: 2021
thomas.neeley@mcusd709.org

Bart Rinkenberger

First Elected: 2017; Term Expires: 2021
bart.rinkenberger@mcusd709.org

Contacting the board

Stakeholders in District 709 are encouraged to contact school board members at any time with questions, comments and concerns. Board members can be contacted by email through their individual email addresses listed above or as a group at board@mcusd709.org.

More information

More information about the Board of Education is available on our website – www.morton709.org. Board meetings are streamed live on the Internet and posted on Comcast Channel 20 and iTV3 Channel 21. Click on the MPTV logo on our website for a broadcast schedule and to go to the online streaming feature.



Photo Credit: Jacque Austin

District 709 Board of Education: Front row, left to right; Jeff Schmidgall, Dr. David Cross, and Tom Neeley. Back row, left to right; Bart Rinkenberger, Tim Braker, Dr. Shad Beaty, and Kevin Austin.

Mission

The Mission of the Morton District 709 Board of Education is to be a provider of and an advocate for the education of all children.

Goals

Achievement: In order to ensure all students have opportunities to achieve their potential, our academic programs will maintain the highest standards and expectations for learning.

Communication: Provide open and meaningful two-way communication with all members of our community.

Climate: Maintain a cohesive organizational system which facilitates and fosters a productive and trusting climate with a highly qualified staff.

Facilities: Provide facilities conducive to student learning and growth, based on evolving needs, with the support of the community.

Finance: Support student learning (which includes achievement, climate, facilities, and communication) in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Upcoming meetings

The Board of Education meetings are at the District Office, 1050 S. Fourth Ave. The school board is scheduled to meet on the following dates:

2019	2020
Aug. 6 – 7:30 pm	Jan. 14 – 6:30 pm
Aug. 20 – 6:30 pm	Jan. 21 – 7:15 pm
Sep. 3 – 6:30 pm	Feb. 4 – 6:30 pm
Sep. 17 – 7:15 pm	Feb. 18 – 7:15 pm
Oct. 1 – 6:30 pm	Mar. 3 – 6:30 pm
Oct. 15 – 7:15 pm	Mar. 17 – 7:15 pm
Nov. 5 – 6:30 pm	Apr. 21 – 7:00 pm
Nov. 19 – 7:15 pm	May 5 – 6:30 pm
Dec. 3 – 6:30 pm	May 19 – 6:30 pm
	Jun. 2 – 6:30 pm
	Jul. 7 – 6:30 pm

Tim Gray named new MHS Band Director

The Morton 709 School Board approved the recommendation from the administration to hire Tim Gray as the next Director of Bands at Morton High School beginning in the 2019-20 school year.

"We are excited to have Mr. Gray join our faculty. We feel his work with our students, parents, and band staff will continue the long tradition of excellence in the Morton Band program," explained Dr. Jeff Hill, Superintendent of Morton 709. Patrick Mainieri, Morton 709 Director of Student Activities and Engagement, stated, "Mr. Gray brings with him a wealth of knowledge through his varied experiences as a designer, consultant, and adjudicator for the performing arts. Mr. Gray has seen our students perform numerous times over

the past few years and is excited to begin work with our band program."

Tim Gray was raised in a rural community in Southeast Iowa but spent most of his early adulthood in larger cities throughout the Midwest and East Coast. He has been involved in instrumental music for over 35 years as a student and educator.

Mr. Gray studied Music Performance on Euphonium at Illinois State University and also holds a degree in Music Education from the University of Iowa. He has been featured as a soloist and guest artist with many regionally and nationally recognized ensembles. As a devoted educator, he is also active as an adjudicator



TIM GRAY

for many pageantry arts organizations such as Drum Corps International, Winter Guard International, and multiple local competitive circuits throughout the country. Mr. Gray has designed for hundreds of marching and pageantry units. Most recently, Mr. Gray designed, taught, and conducted University of Iowa's Hawkeye Marching Band's 2017 "Wave" field show, recognized by ESPN as one of the top 10 moments in sports for that year.

Mr. Gray has an extensive history with successful high school band programs and multiple pageantry ensembles. He marched with the Phantom Regiment from 1990-1994; has taught multiple drum corps, including Phantom Regiment, Bluecoats, and Blue Knights; and was the drill designer and visual coordinator for the Colts based out of

Dubuque, Iowa. In addition to his most recent work with the marching band at University of Iowa, Mr. Gray has taught a marching band methods seminar at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte.

Mr. Gray is passionate about teaching, collaborating with staff and faculty, and enabling his students to be steadfast in reaching for their goals. He prides himself on creating solid relationships based on mutual respect with his staff and students. He is elated to join the fine arts faculty at Morton High School this fall and will be moving to the community with his wife, Sara, and sons, Garrett (14) and Gaige (8). They are all looking forward to meeting and getting to know the students, parents, staff, and community supporters of the Morton Bands!

Fine Arts Calendar

The following are the Fine Arts events for the school district for first semester of the 2019-20 school year.

August

29 – 6th Grade Band Parent Meeting at Bertha Frank

September

4 – 6th Grade Instrument Rental Night and MEC sign-up at Bertha Frank

7 – Marching Band at Washington Invitational at Washington High School

11 – Choirs at Pumpkin Festival Grand Opening

14 – HS and JH Marching Band in Morton Pumpkin Parade

14 – Morton Marching Band Invitational at Carper Field

28 – Marching Band at Bands of America Cedar Rapids, Iowa Regional



The Morton Elementary Schools and Morton Junior High School Choirs joined voices as they performed at the fall choir awards ceremony together.

October

7 – Grundy 3rd and 4th Grade Music Program at Bertha Frank

8 – Brown 4th and 6th Grade Music Program at Bertha Frank

10 – Lincoln 6th Grade Musical at Bertha Frank

12 – Marching Band at Normal Marching Band Invitational at Illinois Wesleyan University

19 – Marching Band at Illinois State Marching Band Cham-

pionships at ISU Hancock Stadium

21 – 5th-12th Grade Choir Concert at Grace Church

22 – Marching Band Community Performance at Carper Field

24 – MJHS Orchestra Concert at MJHS Gym

24 – Bum Bums and B-Naturals at Youth in Harmony Festival in Bloomington

25-26 – Marching Band at

Bands of America Indianapolis, Ind. Super Regional

28 – MHS Orchestra Concert at Bertha Frank

29 – MJHS Band Concert at MJHS Gym

November

2 – Illinois Music Educators Association All-District Festival at Western Illinois University

5 – Jefferson 3rd and 4th Grade Program at Jefferson

7 – MJHS Music Ensemble at MJHS Spaghetti Supper at MJHS Gymnasium

8-10 – MHS Fall Play at Bertha Frank

12 – Madrigal Tour around Morton

25 – Mid-Illini Madrigal Sing at Bertha Frank

December

6-7 – MHS Madrigal Dinners at Bertha Frank

9 – 5th-12th Grade Choir Concert at Grace Church

10 – Lettie Brown Christmas

Program at Bertha Frank

12 – MJHS/MHS Orchestra Christmas Concert at West Gym/MHS

14 – MJHS Band Christmas Concert at MJHS Gym

16 – Grundy 1-2 Christmas Program at Grundy Gym

17 – Lincoln K-1 Christmas Program at Bertha Frank

17 – Jefferson K-2 Christmas Program at Jefferson

19 – Lincoln 2-3 Christmas Program at Bertha Frank

Note: All dates, times, and locations subject to change. Check the specific school calendar for the most up-to-date information. All events, school district and community events, which are scheduled for the Bertha Frank Performing Arts Center at Morton High School are available at www.berthafrank.org. You can also follow Morton 709 Fine Arts on Facebook @Morton CUSD709 Fine Arts.

Outstanding employees receive honor awards

Every year, Morton Community Unit School District 709 honors teachers and support staff with three awards; The Potter's Hand (support staff), The Dana Ashby Memorial Service Award (outstanding special educator), and The Master Potter (outstanding teacher). These are the highest awards District 709 rewards its staff who go above and beyond their job expectations.

The Potter's Hand Award is bestowed upon the top support staff employee in the Morton School District. "The nominee must display a dedication to the positive impact of student well-being by going above and beyond the call of duty," said Morton School District Assistant Superintendent Dr. Craig Smock.

Nancy Weigle, the Morton School District's Director of Transportation, was awarded the Potter's Hand Award for the 2018-19 school year.

An excerpt from a nomination letter stated, "Nancy's work ethic is second to none. She inspires others as she works tirelessly above and beyond her job title and responsibilities. Her passion for her job runs through her veins. She never asks anyone to do something that she is not willing to do herself. There is never a task that Nancy has turned away with a response of, she can't or she won't, but rather a 'let me see what I can do.' Her servant-like work ethic is not to make herself look good, but rather to make the Morton School District look good. She puts the district above herself. She goes above and beyond the call of duty. Her dedication to Morton 709's children and staff is echoed in all that she says and does."

The Dana Ashby Memorial Service Award recognizes the outstanding service of any employee who works with students with special needs. "This award, given in the honor of the late Dana Ashby, represents the hard work, care, compassion and diligence of individuals who give of themselves in service to students with special needs," said Director of Student Support Services Ms. Carlie Owens.

Mr. Shane Weyland, a Lettie Brown Elementary School teacher, was named the recipient of the Dana Ashby Memorial Service Award this year.

Several nomination letters painted a picture of Mr. Weyland's exemplary character and the level of dedication he brings to his profession; "Mr. Weyland has shown what it means to be a teacher with a true heart for students. He goes out of his way to encourage students. His desire is to make every single student feel like they are an important part of



2019 Potter Awards winners. left to right, Mr. Shane Weyland, Mrs. Nancy Weigle, and Mrs. Stephanie Brown.

the class and all students are valued."

A parent wrote, "Students learn from not only what a teacher teaches, but by the actions of how the teacher treats each student. We have appreciated Mr. Weyland and how he has worked diligently to make our child feel like a part of the classroom. I believe Dana Ashby would be extremely proud to have a general education teacher like Mr. Weyland as part of the team and to be a voice for our students with special needs."

The Master Potter Excellence in Education Award is given annually. It is the highest honor the district may bestow on an educator and recognizes a lifetime of accomplishment. "This award is a tribute to an outstanding educator who exemplifies the quality of high standards, professionalism, and dedication to students," said MCUSD 709 Superintendent Dr. Jeff Hill.

The Master Potter Award was presented to Stephanie Brown, a counselor at Morton High School.

A colleague wrote, "Stephanie Brown has presented the school district with deep insights into both students and staff. She has a will to make a difference in everyone with which she works. Her determination to lead and influence, for the betterment of others, has led her to become a region and state leader in her field. She has become a resource for other school districts responding to a need that is felt throughout the country in the education community. She has helped the school district to better understand our students and ourselves."

The award recipients were honored May 29 at an end-of-the-year celebration and received a standing ovation from their colleagues.

Retirees recognized for service

Morton School District 709 honored 15 retirees this spring. "I want to thank our retirees for their combined 397 years of service," said Superintendent Jeff Hill. "Thank you for your dedication and what you have done over the years to make our district one of excellence."



MCUSD 709 2018-19 Retirees: Back row (from left to right): Lori Clark, 21 years; John Brown, 41 years; Bill Dunn, 45 years; and Bill Schock, 19 years. Front row, from left to right: Carol Davison, 32 years; Michelle DeBoer, 32 years; Ginny Cody, 27 years; Shari Wilkerson, 26 years; Lori Prichard, 25 years; and Liz Rebmann, 25 years. Not Pictured: Jeanie Davis, 25 years; Barb Getz, 24 years; Theckla Krzysak, 17 years; Ann Skaggs, 24 years; and Janet Zehr, 14 years.

Meet our new teachers

The following people will join the District 709 staff this year.

Brown

Clint Baldwin – Physical Education
Mindy Hartzler – S. E. Resource
Kelsey Kirk – 1st Grade
Melissa Risner – Elementary Music

Grundy

Clint Baldwin – Physical Education
Craig Bailey – 1st Grade

Jefferson

Christine Seneca – S. E. Resource
Justin Tilford – Physical Education

Lincoln

Jennifer Auxier – 6th Grade
Clint Baldwin – Physical Education
Sarah Sheldon – S. E. Resource
Molly Winkler – Social Worker

Junior High

Josh Ames – STEM/CareerMaker
Megan Bolliger – S. E. Instructional
Sarah Gorshe – 8th Grade ELA
Moriah Millburg – 7th Grade ELA

Paul Thompson – Social Worker

High School

Tiffany Beard – Project Lead the Way
Ashlee Becker – Math
Chase Bushman – Counselor
Timothy Gray – Band Director
Sarah Isaksen – ELA
Shannon McClure – Biology
Chad McFarland – Industrial Arts
Jace Mortimer – Business
Eric Myers – Business
Helen Plevka – ELA
Michelle Roberts – S. E. Resource
Joshua Smith – Math

Morton Academy

Deborah Moore – Special Education
Melissa Risner – Music
Paul Thompson – Social Worker

District

Rachel Hale – Speech Language Pathologist

New Administration

Matt Oyer – High School Assistant Principal & Dean

Morton Community Foundation Grants & Scholarships

District receives \$39,156 from MCF

Morton District 709 received \$39,156 in grants and scholarships from the Morton Community Foundation during the spring 2019 grant cycle. The mission of the Morton Community Foundation is "to improve the quality of life for Morton area residents now and for generations to come." They do this by building community endowment, investing

in the community through strategic grant-making, turning donor's dreams into permanent legacies, and providing leadership to identify and address changing community needs. The Morton School District would like to thank the MCF and the many donors that make these grants possible.

2019 Competitive Grants

- ▶ Lettie Brown Elementary

School was awarded \$908 to go towards the purchase of STEM kits for 6th grade.

▶ Jefferson Elementary PTO was awarded \$7,800 to go towards the purchase of new playground equipment, which includes a Volta Inclusive Spinner – ADA accessible – in the amount of \$6,000.

▶ Morton Junior High School was awarded \$1,000 towards the

purchase of a new lecturn.

▶ Morton High School Music Department was awarded \$1,378 for the purchase of Arturia Keylab 88 and Spectrasonics Omnisphere synthesizer software.

▶ Morton High School Composers' Guild was awarded \$600 for the purchase of two accounts for Sibelius/Ultimate, a notation software to create compositions.

▶ Morton School District Department of Special Education was awarded \$2,000 for the purchase of sensory supports for the Sensory Support Lending Library.

▶ Morton High School Bertha Frank Performing Arts Center was awarded \$2,295 for the purchase of a Blackmagic Design ATEM Television Studio Pro HD Live Production Switcher.

Scholarship Recipients

The MCF also manages several scholarships that benefit MHS students. These scholarships are awarded at Honors and Awards Night at MHS each May. The 2019 recipients are:

▶ **\$2,500 - Wayne L. Sampson Memorial Educator's Scholarship Fund:** Recipient: Caleb Sauder. An award is made annually from the fund in memory of Wayne L. Sampson for the purpose of granting a senior at MHS or a prior graduate from MHS a scholarship to attend a college or university to pursue a degree in education.

▶ **\$2,500 - Drew M. Cousins Memorial Scholarship Fund:** Recipient: Tag Grampp. This fund was started in May of 2005 by Sue and Jeff Cousins in memory of the sudden passing of their late son Drew. The established purpose of the fund is to provide annual scholarships to MHS Senior Boys' Football players who plan to play football at the college level.

▶ **\$1,500 - Renee M. Mahrt Memorial Scholarship Fund:** Recipient: Aspen Gordon. This fund was started in August of 2005 by Cathy & Dan Mahrt in memory of the sudden passing of their late daughter Renee. The established purpose of the fund is to provide annual college scholarships to MHS Senior girls who participated in and demonstrated a commitment to either track or cross country during high school.

▶ **\$750 - Kay Beth Jibben Bane Memorial Scholarship Fund:** Recipient: Jacob Le. This fund was started in 1989 by the Class of 1954 in loving memory of their classmate Kay Beth Jibben. The fund was established to provide annual scholarships to qualified MHS Seniors who have exemplified outstanding leadership and overall music contribution.



The 2019 Morton Community Foundation Scholarship Recipients as pictured, from left to right: Ethan Schultz, Tag Grampp, Aspen Gordon, Coreena Witzig, Megan Harrmann, and Caleb Sauder. Not pictured: Jacob Le and Alekski Knepp.

▶ **\$1,000 - William E. and Betty L. McCormick Memorial Scholarship Fund:** Recipient: Ethan Schultz. This fund was started in April of 2008 by Judy McCormick, who married William McCormick after the passing of his first wife Betty. Judy established this annual scholarship to assist deserving Morton High School Seniors who desire to pursue a college education, and who live with a single, widowed or divorced parent.

▶ **\$1,500 - Ethel Gerber Scholarship Fund:** Recipient: Ethan Schultz. The Ethel Gerber scholarship was originally established by a gift from the Ethel Gerber estate in April of 1998. The established purpose of the fund is to provide annual scholarships to MHS Seniors pursuing a career in education.

▶ **\$500 - Morton Rotary Scholarship Fund:** Recipient: Alekski Knepp. The Morton Rotary Club awarded a \$2,000 scholarship to a graduating MHS senior who has served at least 2 years in the Interact Club. Their fund at the MCF generates \$500 toward these scholarships and the Morton Club donates the

remaining \$1,500. The club plans to grow their endowment fund so it can fully fund these annual scholarships.

▶ **\$1,750 - Kelli S. Hendryx Memorial Scholarship Fund:** Recipient: Coreena Witzig. This scholarship fund was started in March of 2015 by Jeff Hendryx (Kelli's husband), and his daughters, Holly and Chelsie, after Kelli's passing. The fund is intended to provide an annual scholarship to a Morton High School Senior who is pursuing a degree in either Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, or Elementary Education.

▶ **\$1,000 - Morton Soccer Scholarship Fund:** Recipient: Megan Harrmann. This fund was started in October of 2010 by a committee of volunteers who organized a celebration of the 25th year of Morton High School Soccer. The Morton Soccer Scholarship Fund has been established to assist students who have participated in various Morton soccer programs with college expenses, and to encourage their participation as adults in community youth soccer programs.

Non-Competitive Grants

Other non-competitive grants were distributed from the following endowed funds:

- ▶ \$825 - District 709 Band Endowment Fund
- ▶ \$500 - Heidi White Memorial Music Endowment Fund
- ▶ \$2,750 - Performing and Visual Arts Endowment Morton CUSD 709 Fund
- ▶ \$500 - Robert W. Brown Memorial Morton CUSD 709 Activity Fees Fund
- ▶ \$1,175 - Morton CUSD 709 Youth Golf Fund
- ▶ \$575 - Joal T. Stanfield Memorial MHS Tennis Endowment Fund
- ▶ \$700 - Dan & Preston Poyner Huge Hearts Memorial MHS Wrestling Fund
- ▶ \$1,200 - Tom Shipley Memorial Fund
- ▶ \$1,000 - Morton 709 Cross Country Fund
- ▶ \$950 - Morton 709 Orchestra

If you would like to have more information or donate to any of the school-related funds, please contact Scott Witzig at the MCF, 291-0434 or go to www.mortoncommunityfoundation.org.

'Consistent Excellence'

Bob Becker: Coach of the Year for the 10th time

By Dave Kindred

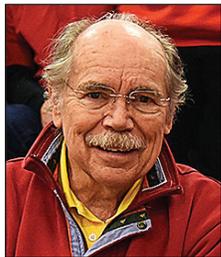
For the 10th time, Bob Becker has been named Coach of the Year by the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association. I have only one question. How'd they miss him the other 10 years? In my mind, Becker is the best at what he does EVERY year. Twenty years running now, he has made the Morton High School girls basketball program a model of what the high school experience

should be for every student: the pursuit of excellence.

It's nice that his Lady Potters have won state championships. It's all but incredible that they have won four of the last five 3A championships, a feat unparalleled in Illinois girls

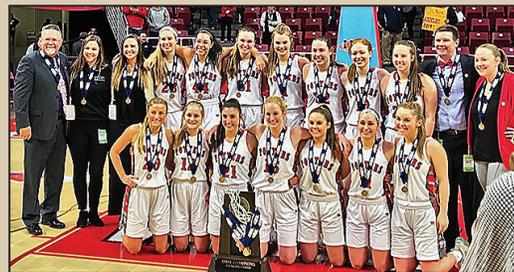
basketball history. But let me say this: had Becker's teams never won a state championship, my opinion on his value to the school, the program, and the community would be the same. His foundation beliefs -- what he preaches and practices every day with his teams -- are "consistent excellence" and "humble swagger." Now I ask: What can be better than inspiring your students to value excellence and believe in themselves whole-heartedly without shouting it out loud?

I once interviewed an Indiana University professor of Russian history who made a habit of attending Bob Knight's basketball practices. "I come every chance I get because Coach Knight is the best teacher on campus," the professor said. He saw Knight render complex ideas simply. He saw Knight's students, the players, accept those ideas as truths. He saw Knight's players put those truths into action. All that, I have seen Bob Becker do



DAVE KINDRED

Photo Credit: Donald Pyles



Lady Potters 2019 State Championship



Lady Potters 2017 State Championship



Morton Lady Potters 2015 State Championship

Credit: Donald Pyles



2016 State Championship Lady Potters

at Morton High School. Coach of the year? How about Teacher of the year?

Here's one way to answer that question. The last five seasons the Lady Potters have won 164 games and lost 13. That's a .927 winning percentage. I don't wear matching socks that often, and I daresay most teachers don't have students earning As at that rate.

I grew up in Atlanta, a small town 40 miles south of Morton. After a lifetime away as a sportswriter, my wife, Cheryl, and I returned to Illinois in the fall of 2010. Because I cannot watch a sports event without wanting to write about it, I went to a Lady Potters game and chased down a man who had created a website devoted to the team. I thought of myself as a veteran sportswriter recognizing a great story. Dave Byrne, on the other hand, has described our meeting as "this disheveled old man came out of the bleachers." We both were right.

Anyway, with Byrne as matchmaker,

I first met Bob Becker nine years ago. We had lunch at the Morton Steak 'n Shake. Since that day, I've written maybe 500,000 words on the Lady Potters, stories on the 310 games I've attended, plus four books on the state championship teams -- the fourth coming this fall, "The Un4gettables."

True, had the Potters been 13-164 these last five years, a disheveled old man may have lost interest in driving all over Central Illinois in snow, sleet, and the dark of night to watch girls basketball. But even without the state championships, I would have been there because in the four years before the first state title, I had seen enough to know the Potters were extraordinary. I saw girls grow from awkward freshmen into resourceful seniors. I saw girls without a chance at scoring become scorers, girls who couldn't rebound become rebounders. I came to think of the Potters as exemplars of class, grace, and excellence.

For that, the girls get all the credit.

They did the work.

And they did the work because they had a teacher whose belief in them was so great that even last season -- his 20th season -- he told them, "The highlight of my day, every day, is coming to practice."

I have seen great basketball coaches up close and personal. Adolph Rupp, John Wooden, Bob Knight, Dean Smith, Mike Krzyzewski. None, I swear, for their millions of dollars, none was ever more

engaged with their teams than Bob Becker has been with the Lady Potters. This is a girls high school coach being paid pennies an hour. I once asked Becker's wife, Evelyn, how much her man liked basketball. "He doesn't like basketball," she said. "He loves basketball."

I have seen Becker exhausted after winning at Galesburg, so drained he couldn't stand. I have seen him wrestle out of his sports coat, so agitated at a referee's refusal to protect one of his players. Twice I have seen him perform such sideline gymnastics as to rip the seat out of his slacks. I have seen him in a daze, walking on the Redbird Arena court, talking to himself after the Potters had won their third straight state championship, repeating one word, "Unbelievable, unbelievable." No, no. The victory was no accident. It had been well and truly earned. As one girl said, "Believable, TOTALLY!"