

CITY OF MORRISON COUNCIL MEETING
Morrison Community Room 307 S Madison
Morrison IL 61270

May 17th 2021 ♦ 6 p.m.

AGENDA

- 1) Call To Order
- 2) Roll Call
- 3) Pledge Of Allegiance
- 4) Public Comment
- 5) Approve replacing Arlyn Deets with Brian Melton as signatories on TBK bank accounts.
- 6) Approve Morrison Preschool Community Room Usage

Adjournment

Morrison Community Preschool

Organization Information & Location Search

Who We Are:

- Morrison Community Nursery School was founded in 1969 and was housed in the Morrison United Methodist Church for many years before moving to Northside Elementary. The preschool now goes by Morrison Community Preschool (MCP).
- MCP is a private, non-profit, tuition-based preschool for children ages 3-5 years old. In non-COVID times we run 2 sessions:
 - M/T/W/Th/F afternoon program for 4-5 year olds
 - M/W/F morning program for 3 year olds
- Our license allows up to 20 children per class; we serve 40 children per school year at capacity.
- We follow the same calendar as MCUD 6, except we do not start until after Labor Day and are always done by Memorial Day.
- Because we are non-profit, we are governed by a volunteer board.
- MCP is required to carry insurance through our DCFS licensure; our carrier is currently MORE Insurance Agency (copies available upon request).
- MCP uses Tegeler Accounting Services for payroll and taxes.
- MCP owns all classroom furnishings, office equipment, and cleaning supplies (tables, chairs, toys, rugs, copy machine, etc.). We are responsible for cleaning our own space and equipment.

How We're Funded:

- We have a paid staff of 2 – a Director/Teacher and an Aide. These positions are paid based on student enrollment/tuition.
 - Tuition for our 3's program (3 days/week) is \$100.00/mo.
 - Tuition for our 4-5's program (5 days/week) is \$150/mo.
- Annual United Way support helps keep tuition costs down by sponsoring our scholarship program and covering rent expenses.
- MCP hosts a spring and fall fundraiser to help with classroom supplies, technology, and other expenses.

Is MCP Still Needed?

- Morrison currently has 2 dedicated preschool-only programs: Morrison Early Learning Program (MELP), which is the school district run program at Northside Elementary School and MCP. MELP is a free program, but is invite-only, based on need and capped at 40 kids. MCP is also capped at 40 children.
- This spring, MELP screened and identified 82 children as needing preschool in the Fall. MELP can accept 40. MCP and MELP have developed a good relationship while being neighbors at Northside and have been working together to help families find the best preschool option for their family.

- Last Wednesday, Emmanuel Church announced to their membership that they plan to start their own free, faith-based preschool program. In the email, they state they plan to accept 15 four-year olds in the Fall, giving their church members priority. We honestly do not know how this will impact MCP enrollment, but do know that based on screening numbers, at least 27 children still would not have any preschool options in Morrison if MCP closed. For many years, a free, religious program was held at Christian Reformed Church under Doris Bielema. It recently closed, but we know MCP was still needed when that program was also operating in Morrison.
- Morrison Community Daycare and the new Early Learning Academy also state they provide integrated preschool activities, but children in these programs cannot receive preschool as a stand-alone service; they must be enrolled for childcare as well.

Why We Need a New Location:

MCP enjoyed 47 years at the Morrison United Methodist Church (MUMC), until fire code changes required us to relocate in 2016. MCUD 6 generously offered to rent MCP classroom space at Northside which is where MCP has been since. We recently learned Northside is experiencing a space shortage and will need the classroom space MCP rents for the coming school year. Therefore, we need to find a new location.

Location search: March 2021 – present

The MCP Board has been diligently exploring potential locations since mid-March. **As required by law, all non-religious preschools must be licensed by the Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) and follow Illinois State Fire Marshal regulations.** We were lucky enough to have a gentleman with local Fire Code experience walk us through numerous spaces to advise on likely upgrades and scenarios. The following organizations have generously allowed MCP to explore their spaces:

- **Presbyterian Church – space above Morrison Community Daycare**
 - An open staircase and 2nd floor location require a sprinkler system to be installed in the whole building that houses the daycare and space available to the preschool. The sprinkler system would need to have a dedicated 4-inch line installed from the street. Also, a full size external door with full metal staircase (not wood, not an emergency fire escape) would need to be installed to satisfy the 2nd fire egress requirement.
- **Kingdom Life Church – classroom that used to house Head Start**
 - Since Head Start left, Kingdom Life has replaced their boiler with forced gas furnaces, which are now located in the corner of the classroom. The furnace requires a 1-hour fire wall and door around it. That is not possible because the furnace has return vents on the wall of the closet to function, therefore negating a fire wall rating. The only other option is to install a sprinkler system in the room, but with the current well system, the cost would be easily \$10,000 and up.
- **Super Wash Center – Conference Room**
 - A fire alarm system would need to be installed throughout the entire building. Also, because there is no outside entrance to the conference room, the hallway of exit would need to be have self-closing, fire doors installed on all doors in the 2 egresses, which would be a significant

amount of doors. The closet space inside the room housing electronic equipment would also require fire-rated, self-closing doors.

- **Emmanuel Church**
 - We asked if they would have room and provided our information. They decided to open their own program. As they are opening a church program, they are exempt from DCFS licensure and state fire code compliance.
- **Ebenezer Church**
 - We are scheduled to explore this space on 5/17, but it appears any space they offer would be in a basement or 2nd floor, thereby necessitating a sprinkler system throughout the building.
- **Crossroads Community Church**
 - Basement space with an open staircase (not enclosed by fire doors) so would necessitate a sprinkler system throughout the building.
- **Various empty buildings in town**
 - As a non-profit, we have a small budget and have to keep costs down to keep tuition as affordable as possible. We currently pay the school \$250/ month. We cannot afford an old empty building for rent AND utilities. That is why we are looking for a space within a building.

Why the Community Room?

Up until very recently, we did not consider the Community Room for our program because we value its use to the community and didn't wish to cause disruption. Hopefully you can see from the above information that we are now simply out of possibilities. If the community would like to maintain preschool options for young families, this is it.

What We Are Asking:

We would need to use ½ of the community room, preferably the western portion with the direct entrance/exit, and have access to the bathrooms and kitchen. The kitchen area is needed as a hand-washing station only (no food prep/cooking). We would put up temporary partitions from the south wall, near the telephone, straight across to the window. This would allow Community Room users to still access the kitchen and closets. The empty portion of the Community Room could still be used/rented when MCP is not in session, after 3pm and on weekends.

After an informal evaluation from our Fire Code contact, we believe the Community Room would pass inspection with minimal changes. We are asking for use on a 1-year trial basis, June 2021-May 2022. During that time, MCP will evaluate the need for the preschool and to continue looking for an existing space or raise money to build a compliant structure. Pastor Mike Selburg and the First Presbyterian Church have generously agreed to explore putting a small school building on their property at Knox and Genessee.

MCP would need to move into the Community Room over the summer, sooner rather than later. MCP re-licensure is due in June and the program needs to have an address. In order for DCFS to inspect and license MCP, our space must be completely set up as a preschool. Once DCFS approves the space, they will schedule the Fire Marshal to come down from Chicago.

According to our fire code contact, the Fire Marshal will likely find the following:

Changes:

- The kitchen stove would need to be capped and moved to the attached storage room.
- A fire door may need to be installed to the closet by the bathrooms because it houses a water heater.

The Good News:

- We would NOT need to put fire doors on the closet in the community room because there is a sprinkler head inside the closet.
- Our 2nd egress would be through the hallway and out the front door. Because we have direct outside access from the classroom as the first egress, fire doors are not necessary in the hallway.
- The facility is already equipped with a fire alarm system, pull boxes, and visual and audio signals.

MCP has funds available to have the stove gas line capped professionally and the stove moved to the storage room. MCP would also be responsible for the cost of the closet fire door. Unfortunately, there could be fire code issues we did not catch; there is no guarantee until the actual Fire Marshal inspection.

A Time Crunch:

Due to our licensure requirements, MCP must give 30-days notice before moving and our re-licensure paperwork is due by June 25th. As part of re-licensure, DCFS requires recent lead and radon testing. After submitting our re-licensure paperwork, the space needs to be inspected by DCFS (space has to be set up as the complete preschool) and then DCFS would contact the State Fire Marshal. If the State Fire Marshal or DCFS finds that something needs to be changed, they would then need to come back to check that we have remedied the issue. As you can tell, this will take a few months, which makes it difficult for us to open on schedule.

Thank you for your consideration. We have included sections of the Day Care Center Requirements for fire code compliance from the Office of the Fire Marshal in Chicago for reference. They help explain why many buildings in Morrison cannot accommodate the preschool.

Respectfully submitted:

The Morrison Community Preschool Board – Jessica Wroble, Katie Rider, Anna Story, Joy Tegeler
Morrison Community Preschool Teacher/Director – Anne Mills

Addendum: Selections from the Life Safety Code Requirements Manual

Life Safety Code Requirements from the Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal New Day Care Centers Guidelines

Minimum Building Construction Requirements

Day care centers are restricted to certain levels within a building dependent upon construction type and whether or not an automatic sprinkler system is present. Be advised that new day care centers are not permitted in basements or stories below the level of exit discharge unless the entire building housing the day care center is protected throughout with sprinklers. A summary of day care center construction requirements are as follows:

A building of any construction type classification, without sprinkler protection, is permitted if the day care center is located only on the first floor (grade level).

Most construction types will require that a day care center located on the second floor or higher shall be located in a building protected throughout with an automatic sprinkler system. Fire resistive and 2-hour fire-rated protected non-combustible construction types will not require sprinklers except in high rise buildings.

1. Protection of Vertical Openings

Fire and smoke travel upward in a fire building via vertical paths, primarily stairwells. The purpose of requiring a fire-rated door, with a self-closing device, is to provide time for occupants, alerted by required smoke detection, to exit the center before a fire jeopardizes escape paths allowing them to fill with smoke.

Vertical protection requirements for day care centers are as follows:

- Any vertical opening (e.g., stairways, elevator shafts, laundry chutes) shall be enclosed.
- Vertical openings serving three stories or less shall be enclosed by 1-hour fire-rated construction using 1-hour self-closing and self-latching fire doors.
- Those serving more than three floors shall require 2-hour fire-rated construction using 1½-hour self-closing and self-latching fire doors.

Buildings that have unprotected openings in accordance with Section 8.6.6 are required to be protected throughout by an automatic sprinkler system.”

1. Separation of Hallways or Corridors

Every interior corridor shall be constructed of fire barriers having not less than a 1-hour fire-rated construction resistance rating including the protection of openings in corridor walls with

doors, frames, and hardware (including door closing devices) which have a 20-minute fire rating. Such corridor protection is not required if every room subject to client occupancy has a door leading directly to the outside. Also, in buildings protected throughout by an automatic sprinkler system, corridor walls need not be fire rated, but only resist the passage of smoke. This means that while totally unprotected openings are not allowed, items such as hollow-core doors and glass partitions may be located in corridor walls. Doors are still required to be self-closing in these situations. Bathrooms are not subject to having rated doors on their openings into corridors if the walls separating the bathrooms from the other spaces have a 1-hour fire-rating.

1. Fire Alarm Systems and Smoke Detection

Day care centers shall be provided with a fire alarm system. The system shall consist of manual means of initiation (pull boxes) and any required smoke detectors. The alarm system must alert the occupants of the center when it is activated, as well as automatically notify the local fire department. Occupant warning must be accomplished by both audio and visual signals. The exception to needing a fire alarm system are day care centers which are housed entirely in one room.

****Possible Fire Code Violations We See in the Community Room:**

- **Kitchens and Cooking.** Kitchens containing listed domestic stoves used for food warming only and not used for any cooking that creates grease-laden vapors are not required to comply with NFPA 96, *Standard for Ventilation Control and the Fire Protection of Commercial Cooking Operations*. A kitchen with a single stove, listed as a residential stove, and used for meal warming or limited cooking, does not require separation as a hazardous area. However, the presence of commercially-listed stove, multiple stoves, or the performance of cooking that creates grease-laden vapors from frying, requires compliance with NFPA 96. This is achieved by either one-hour fire resistant separation of the kitchen or protection of the day care center by automatic fire sprinklers. Also, commercial cooking surfaces require the installation of a wet chemical fire suppression system over the cooking surfaces.

Note: In accordance with Section 16.3.2.4, openings between commercial cooking areas and dining areas are not required to be protected as long as these commercial cooking areas comply with NFPA 96. Kitchens may still need to have a fire-rated door if they have any openings into corridors.



NORTHSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Morrison, Illinois 61270
(815) 772-2153

Diana VanRiet
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Andy Harridge
PRINCIPAL

Duane Shaffer
DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY

5/17/21

To Whom It May Concern

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Morrison Community Preschool who are in dire need of a room for their program for the 2021-22 school year. The program is losing their room at Northside due to no fault of their own and would be a fantastic renter for you.

Due to COVID-19, Northside school needs to address the learning loss incurred by our students during this unprecedented year. In order to address these needs, we have hired two new teachers to work with two different groups of students in order to minimize the effects of this year. In order for these teachers to have classrooms, we have had to ask Morrison Community Preschool to find a new location for their program.

While the program was located in our building, they were fantastic to work with and were able to meet the needs of many of our students before they started kindergarten. Without their program, many of these students will go without preschool services before kindergarten. It would be heartbreaking if one group of students would be forced to go without preschool services due to our district trying to meet the needs of a different group. I am asking that you please allow them to use a portion of your community room in order to work with the future students at Northside school and prepare them for kindergarten.

The quote "It takes a village..." gets used often, but in this case, it truly is going to take the efforts of the entire community of Morrison to meet the needs of students and prepare them for future endeavors. The impact of COVID-19 could be monumental upon our students. However, with our collective efforts as a community, we can minimize the negative effects and teach all of our students the very important lesson of why Morrison is such a fantastic community to be a part of.

Sincerely,

Andy Harridge
andy.harridge@morrisonschools.org
Principal
Northside Elementary School

"EMPOWERING EVERY STUDENT TO POSITIVELY IMPACT AN EVER CHANGING WORLD"



Morrison Community Unit School District #6

300 Academic Drive
Morrison, Illinois 61270

May 17, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Andrea Wolever and I am writing in support of the Morrison Community Preschool relocation proposal.

I have several connections to the preschool that make it important to myself, my family, and beyond. I attended the preschool some 35 years ago. When my family moved back to Morrison, we enrolled my daughter, Ava, into the preschool. I was an active board member who helped with the first move to Northside. The Morrison Community Preschool was an absolute asset to our community when I attended just as it is present day.

I teach first grade at Northside Elementary School. I see the benefits of the preschool firsthand. Students who attend are ready for their next step to kindergarten. My daughter was very prepared both social-emotional and academically.

To see the preschool dissolve due to location would be a disservice to our community and children. There are not enough programs to service all children needing a preschool program.

Please allow the use of the library community room so the preschool can continue to make a positive impact as it has and always will.

Sincerely,

Andrea Wolever
1st Grade Teacher
Northside Elementary School
andrea.wolever@morrisonsschools.org
815-772-2153

Dear Council Members,

I am writing this letter in support of Morrison Community Preschool as both a former MCP Director and Morrison community member. As such, I can attest to the community need for Morrison Community Preschool's continued existence. Research shows that the largest period of learning and development in our lifetime occurs from birth through age five. These experiences become the foundation on which all future learning is built. It is essential that our youngest citizens receive a quality early childhood education.

MCP is rooted in community collaboration to provide high quality early education to Morrison's youngest learners. The MCP board is composed of local parents, educators, and community members and works closely with District 6's Morrison Early Learning program and community organizations such as the United Way of Whiteside County to ensure MCP is a true asset to the community.

Through our close ties to District 6's Morrison Early Learning program, we assist in early childhood screenings to ensure as many local students as possible are placed in the learning program that is right for their needs. MCP often serves families who may not qualify for the district's free and reduced cost preschool program. This inter-program partnership benefits all of Morrison's families-we are better educators and more responsive to the community's needs together. Our relationship with the United Way of Whiteside County not only allows MCP to continue to grow as a program, but to help bring exciting learning opportunities to Morrison families such as the Born Learning Academy, which first ran in 2019-2020 and was open to all Morrison families with children aged birth-five.

To ensure MCP remains accessible to all, I began the MCP Financial Assistance Program in 2018. This program is ongoing in 2021 and provides financial support for local families who are identified as being in financial need or as having specific academic risk factors, allowing students to receive essential early education regardless of socioeconomic status.

It is an honor to have served a program that has such a tremendous impact on the community, and I treasure my experiences as an MCP director. I have seen our staff, students, and families support one another through successes and hardships alike, and become a community focused on helping one another grow. I know that in the dedicated hands of Director Anne Mills and our MCP board, Morrison Community Preschool will continue to be an extraordinary early childhood experience for all who need it. To put it simply, Morrison Community Preschool gives so much to the community-it is my hope you are able to give this organization the "room to grow" it so dearly needs.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Wendt
Morrison Community Preschool Director 2016-2020

Statement of Support

Magen Mertes, former MCP Board member and parent of 2 MCP graduates

MCP has such a rich history in this community and there are so many children that have benefitted from this program. While faith based programs fulfill a need for some, when I was looking for a pre-k program I was looking for a program like MCP. I wanted a program that was focused on teaching the tools that would be necessary in kindergarten-letter recognition, handwriting, colors, shapes, etc. For families that do not qualify for the preschool offered through the school, MCP is the only alternative in Morrison that offers this type of program. I am certain that young families looking to move to Morrison would be looking at pre-school availability and without MCP families would have to drive to Sterling-Rock Falls for a similar program if they do not qualify for the program at the school.