



# Meridian Public Schools

## "The Hoof Print" ~ Home of the Mustangs

### Mission Statement:

Meridian Public Schools will educate all students in a safe, nurturing environment while challenging them to develop their integrity, knowledge, and unique talents to become responsible, productive citizens.

Newsletter

[www.meridianmustangs.org](http://www.meridianmustangs.org)

November, 2017

Newsletter–November, 2017

Superintendent  
Randy Kort

Here at Meridian we are winding down the fall sports seasons. Our football team currently has a record of 5-3 and has made it to the playoffs. The first round of football playoffs will be Thursday, October 26th. The volleyball team has only one loss in their season and they wrapped up the CRC volleyball championship. This required the Mustangs to face BDS for the second time this year and Exeter-Milligan for the fourth time. The Mustangs were able to win the CRC for the first time in school history and accomplished this without losing a set. Great job ladies!!!! Please come support the Mustangs as they fight to take state this year. District volleyball is in Fairbury on October 30th, and state volleyball will be November 9th, 10th, and 11th.

We have completed the first quarter of the 2017-2018 school year and have had a great start. Thanks to staff and students who make Meridian such a success.

As the holidays are approaching, please take extra time to spend with your family and friends. Be safe with your travels.

Here are some reminders as we enter the cold weather season in Nebraska:

1. If possible, have a cell phone fully charged and with you.
2. Use the cell phone – call when you leave and expect to arrive home.
3. Have a blanket or extra clothing in your vehicle.
4. Keep your vehicle in working condition.
5. Be careful and leave yourself extra time to arrive at your destination.

The media outlets Meridian Public Schools will use for late starts and school closings:

**KLKN – TV:** Lincoln

**KHAS – TV:** Hastings

**KOLN/KGIN TV:**

Lincoln/Grand Island

**KUTT/KGMT 99.5 FM/**

**1310 AM Radio:** Fairbury

Along with our all call School Messenger System.

**Board of Education  
Meridian Public Schools  
District 48-0303  
Daykin, Nebraska 68338  
Sunday, October 15, 2017**

**Regular October 15, 2017 Meeting  
12:00 P.M.**

Meridian Public School Board of Education met on Sunday, October 15, 2017, as per notice in the Fairbury Journal-News.

President VanWesten called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. The open meeting law information was presented. Members present were Sobotka, Bartels, Scheer, Miller, Vorderstrasse, and VanWesten. Also present were Superintendent Kort, Principal Scott, Mr. VanderSchaaf, Mrs. Hofstetter, and Ms. Hermsmeier.

Nothing new to add to agenda.

No comments from public.

Scheer moved and Vorderstrasse seconded to approve the consent agenda as follows:

1. Minutes of the Special Budget Hearing, Monday, September 18, 2017
2. Minutes of the Special Tax Hearing, Monday, September 18, 2017
3. Minutes of the Monday, September 18, 2017 Regular Meeting
4. District Financial Report

5. Activity Fund Report

6. Hot Lunch Report

7. Bills

Vote taken: Vorderstrasse-aye, Bartels-aye, Scheer-aye, Sobotka-aye, Miller-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion carried 6-0.

Superintendent Kort discussed E-Rate funds. These are funds given to rural districts and are intended to be invested in technology for the district.

Superintendent Kort updated the Board on the status of the school's technology plan. Projects the technology team are evaluating include staying current on computers and chrome books, and smart board updates. Mr. VanderSchaaf and Mr. Pohlman will be attending a conference in November and will look for options the district has to update technology.

Superintendent Kort reviewed the verbal audit received for the 2016-2017 school year. There were no concerns found in the audit and we should have a copy by the end of the month.

The Board discussed the 2000's Policies.

Discussion was held on the Superintendent's Evaluation. Superintendent Kort will email the evaluation form to all Board members, the members will fill out the forms, and turn their completed forms over to President VanWesten.

A motion was made by Sobotka and seconded by Miller for approval of Johnson Controls to update the HVAC system to allow all units to be controlled by one computer. Currently three Trane units will not communicate with any computer. Vote was taken: Scheer-aye, Bartels-aye, Sobotka-aye, Miller-aye, Vorderstrasse-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion passed 6-0.



Discussion was held to Amend Tech Bond Resolution of July 2018.

Bartels moved and Scheer seconded to approve Inter-local membership with ESU 5 and Beatrice. Vote taken: Vorderstrasse-aye, Miller-aye, Sobotka-aye, Bartels-aye, Scheer-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion passed 6-0.

Principal Scott reported:

1. Student numbers continue to increase. Currently we have 122 students in 7-12, and 114 in PK-6.
2. Social Media Followers Increased
3. Fall NWEA Map Testing has been Completed
4. Update on Volleyball Conference Tournament and NSAA Power Points - Currently #1 or #2
5. Thursday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, will be First Round of Football Playoffs
6. School Improvement Team is Completing NDE 5 Year Visit Materials
7. Play Production will be Competing in Conference and Districts Starting November 8th
8. Parent Teacher Conference Participation: 94% Elementary, and 60% Jr High and High School

Superintendent Kort reported:

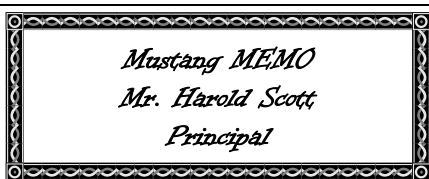
1. NASB Information for November 15-17th
2. Bus update
3. Looking to stay in eight man for next two years of football. Expecting 21 boys out next year. We would not be eligible for playoffs in six man due to student numbers
4. Update on lunch program expenses from last month.

Next Regular Meeting set for Monday, November 20, 2017 – 7:00 p.m.

Vorderstrasse moved and Miller seconded to adjourn at 12:46 p.m. Vote taken: Vorderstrasse-aye, Miller-aye, Bartels-aye, Scheer-aye, Sobotka-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion carried 6-0.

*Jason Bartels,*

Secretary Meridian District # 48-0303



Our current student count: As of 10-13-17:

Pre-Kind	13	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	16
Kindergarten	17	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	19
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	9	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	20
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	18	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	20
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	13	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	23
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	17	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	24
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	15		
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	12		
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>122</b>

**Grand Total 236**  
+3 from September

Facebook followers are up from 710 to 716. Twitter is up from 135 to 142.

Fall NWEA MAP testing has been completed. Students take online tests in Math, Science, Reading and English. Scores are compared at the fall and spring, and to previous years, looking for continuous growth.

Crossroads Conference volleyball tournament began Saturday, October 14, at York auditorium. Meridian currently is either #1 or #2 in D1 Power Points with NSAA. Over the next two weeks, Meridian may be facing a top 5 team possibly 5 times. Sub-district volleyball will be on Monday, October 30<sup>th</sup> at Fairbury, with districts on Thursday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Meridian football has maintained a toehold in the top 20 for D2 Power Points with NSAA. Results from this past Friday night against BDS, along with an important game this Friday at home against Pawnee City, will determine state playoff opportunities. First round of state will be on Thursday, October 26th. There is no school on Friday, October 27th, for fall break.

School Improvement Team is working on preparing for our NDE 5 year visit next school year. Data has been collected and will be analyzed to check for trends. Surveys were available during Parent Teacher Conferences to

allow patrons to share their perceptions and thoughts on Meridian. This will also be made available through the school website and Facebook. Students and staff will also participate in answering surveys directly prepared for them. These will be part of the 5 year visitation presentation. The School Improvement Team has been working with Annette Weise from ESU5 to coordinate preparing for this visit.

Play production competition begins on November 8<sup>th</sup>, in Osceola at 12:45pm. Home performance (dessert theatre) will be Tuesday, Nov 14, at 7pm, with Crossroads Conference contest (south division) at Shickley on Nov 15<sup>th</sup>, at 12:30pm. Class C2 districts will be at Nebraska City Lourdes on Tuesday, November 28<sup>th</sup>, Meridian will perform first (9am). The winner of the district advances to state competition on Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup> in Norfolk. The play this year is "Any Body for Tea?"



**Upcoming Dates:**

**November 6** – Peru State College Visit - all Freshman will be attending (lunch will be provided)

**November 8** – UNL/Nebraska Wesleyan College Visits – all Juniors will be attending (lunch will be provided)

**November 15** – Southeast Community College Visit – interested Seniors can attend

**November 16** – Hastings College/ Central Community College Visit – All Sophomores will be attending (lunch will be provided)

**Red Ribbon Week:**

The end of October was filled with fun and presentations for our Meridian students. The focus for two presentations were "Know the Truth" and "Real Heroes Don't Do Drugs." If you have not done so, please take a few moments to talk to your child about the presentation/speakers they saw.



**Career Academy/Dual Credit Classes:**

High school students who want to explore a career field and are interested in getting a first-hand look at what college classes will be like by taking a dual-credit college class, should check out SENCAP's Career Academy. Besides the experience gained, the other big benefit is the cost. Southeast Community College-Beatrice and Meridian will cover the full cost of tuition, which means the only cost to the student is the textbook. This option is for juniors and seniors, but sophomores can be considering the option for next year. Please check out <https://www.southeast.edu/sencap> or talk to Ms. Hermsmeier for more information.

Junior and Senior students also have the option of taking dual-credit college classes from Peru State College. Students are encouraged to stop by Ms. Hermsmeier's office in the next few weeks if they are interested in taking a college class during second semester. Class sizes are limited, so early registration is encouraged.

**EducationQuest – A Useful Tool**

**Seniors...a reminder of what to do this fall...**

There's A LOT going on right now with the financial aid and college admission processes, but don't get overwhelmed! Here's a recap of tasks you should complete this fall to stay on track to college.

**1. Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**

- First, create an FSA ID for you and one for a parent at [fsaid.ed.gov](http://fsaid.ed.gov). You'll need it to access and sign the FAFSA.
- Find free FAFSA Tools at [EducationQuest.org](http://EducationQuest.org) to help you through the process.
- For free personal help, you can call EducationQuest to make an appointment:  
 Omaha – 888.357.6300  
 Lincoln – 800.303.3745  
 Kearney – 800.666.3721  
 Scottsbluff – 800.303.3745, ext. 6654

**2. Retake the ACT and/or SAT. Colleges use your best scores for college admission and scholarships. Register by November 3, for the**

December 9, ACT.

3. **Get serious about applying for scholarships.** See ScholarshipQuest at [EducationQuest.org](http://EducationQuest.org) for Nebraska-based scholarships and a list of national search sites. You can also visit the counselor's website off of the school website.

**Juniors...start researching colleges**

If you narrow your college choices by the end of your junior year, your senior year will be less stressful. Here's how to get started:

1. **Review College Profiles at EducationQuest.org for information about colleges in Nebraska and across the country.** If you're interested in an out-of-state school, check out the Midwest Student Exchange Program to learn about tuition discounts.
2. **Meet with college representatives** who visit your school, and then visit the websites of the colleges that interest you to learn more about the schools.
3. Once you've narrowed your choices, **schedule campus visits.** Try to visit in the spring of your junior year while colleges are still in session.

**National Honor Society:**

The Meridian National Honor Society plans to participate in a toy and clothing drive for those in need for the Holiday Season. Please look for information in the December newsletter about donations we plan to collect.

Save the Date! NHS will be hosting a blood drive on Tuesday, February 6, 2017 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. If you currently donate, please consider donating to our drive. If you have never donated blood before, now would be a great time to start! NHS members will be getting more information out in January and will be setting up appointments closer to this date.

**VETERAN'S DAY**

The Meridian Veteran's Day program has been rescheduled to Monday, November 13th, 2017. All area veterans, their spouses, and spouses of deceased veterans are welcome to join us for lunch at 12:22 p.m. (courtesy of

Kathy Houser). Please call Meridian at 402-446-7265 (extension 3) by November 8th, if you are planning to eat at the school. A 1:00 p.m. program will follow with Tanner Miller, son of alum Lyle Miller, as the guest speaker.

**FBLA OFF TO A GREAT START**

The Meridian FBLA started the year off with a meeting on September 22. The chapter welcomed their new members and their new officers. The officers include: President-Erin Johnson, Vice President-Breanna Miller, Secretary-Jaicee Sobotka, Treasurer-Halle Pribyl, News Reporter-Rylee Pieper, Historian-Adeline Beals, and Parliamentarian-Hailey Schafer. The chapter talked about what ribbons they want to get for the State Leadership Conference. They also discussed selling Rata kitchen utensils when they sell butter braids, cookie dough, and fruit.

On September 26, the officers went to the Fall Leadership Conference where they learned their duties and responsibilities. There were 400 FBLA members at the Fall Leadership Conference. The officers got to listen to Rhett Laubach who was a motivational speaker. He explained that you need to do more and to be more successful.

On October 2, the chapter had its second meeting. They talked about the point system to be able to go to the State Leadership Conference, the bylaws, and when FBLA dues are due. There was a cake raffle on October 5th, at the home volleyball game. The FBLA members picked up trash on October 5th, from the ditches along Highway 4.

**THANK YOU**

The Junior Class would like to thank everyone who supported them by purchasing Runzas, Pizzas, and Christmas wreaths. If you have not received your runza and pizza orders already, please contact the school or the student who sold to you. The Christmas wreaths will be picked up on November 18th, and you should receive yours that weekend or shortly thereafter. **To keep your greenery fresh, please remember**



to mist your greenery daily. This is especially important if your wreath is the south side of your home or in between doors. Since we have to order full cases, we always have a few extra. If you would like like a wreath, swag, or centerpiece, please contact the school at [402-446-7265](tel:402-446-7265) (Ext. 3).

### STUCO NEWS

It seems as though we only just started school, but amazingly enough the first quarter has already come and gone. During this time, the Meridian Student Council has been hard at work creating a fun and safe environment for all of the students of Meridian.

The Student Council has just recently started a new tradition. As many of you have noticed, most teachers have a recycling box in their rooms. We began to notice how difficult it can be for many of these teachers to find the time to empty their recycling boxes which creates a bit of chaos. So, as a solution to this small dilemma, the Student Council has begun to empty those boxes every Friday. It is our gift to both the teachers and the environment. This is just one of the few ways that we, as student leaders, can try and make a difference in world. One small act such as this can really make a difference even if it may seem insignificant. I encourage all of you to find a way to make a small change in your daily routine that will benefit the environment in some way. It may be as simple as recycling your papers instead of throwing them in the trash. Small changes can have the biggest impact.

Another exciting activity that has recently come to an end is the annual magazine sales. This year was an especially good year for magazine sales because we weren't only selling magazines. This year's catalogue included a variety of items such as: kitchen utensils, candles, Christmas wrapping paper, and, of course, magazines! I think that the variety in items really made a difference in the amount of item we sold. It made it a lot easier for all of us to interest people in what we had to offer This might have been one of our best magazine selling years yet!

In recent news, Kathy Houser, an amazing person and a dedicated staff member at Meridian, just had her birthday. During the entire week of her birthday she chose to celebrate by having candy in her room for all of the students of Meridian to enjoy. Kathy is a person who dedicates so much of her time to Meridian and we are all so thankful for her presence. On the day of her birthday, it was decided that we would all surprise her with an impromptu happy birthday serenade. I would just like to thank Kathy for everything she does for the Student Council, Meridian, and the community. Thank you so much Kathy, never stop being such a wonderful and caring person.

This month may have moved at lightning speed but the Student Council did a great job keeping up. It has been great putting together so many different, fun activities for Meridian students. I hope all of you enjoy them as much as I do. Time may be rushing by, but be sure to stop, even for just a moment, to appreciate all of the good things you have. That is the one thing I would like to leave with you all. Even though we seem to sense time is moving so quickly never forget that the Meridian Student Council is using that time as efficiently as possible to give you a fun and safe learning environment.

Wishing you a Nifty November,  
Public Relations, Jacqueline Dimas

### Engage in School with Occupational Therapy

Every person is different. Every physical *body* is different. Every *mind* is different. Everyone is different in many ways, especially when it comes to learning in school. How can you help a child who is not understanding the material, or is falling behind the rest of the class? How about the students who lack concentration, or appear to simply not care about learning? Teachers can make adjustments and refer students to special education teachers for extra help, but what if special education is

not the solution? There is, however, another solution to help your child engage in learning to his or her full potential: occupational therapy.

Occupational therapy (OT) is a form of therapy that utilizes the activities that one enjoys in life in order to learn or regain independence and function in his or her activities of daily living. In other words, OT uses your occupations, the ways you spend your time, to participate in things you want and need to do. OT works with a wide array of people, including those with mental illness, physical illness, mental illness, learning deficits, and emotional instabilities that run through the lifespan from birth to our final breaths.

In schools, students can receive help in areas such as: paying attention in class and concentrating, cognitive abilities, fine motor, visual motor and visual perceptual skills, sensory integration, social interactions, and self-help skills to keep them appropriate and functional in their academic environments. Behavior disorders such as, Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Conduct Disorders (CD), among others can be treated with OT.

A lot of development takes place between pre-school and high school. Subsequently, there are different indicators that OT could be beneficial for students between the ages of 5 and 18.

Here are five signs that indicate OT could be beneficial for children between ages 5 and 10:

1. Demonstrates poor fine motor skills, including poor pencil grasp, and trouble manipulating small objects such as zippers, buttons, shoe laces, etc.
2. Exhibits trouble concentrating on the task at hand and following directions.
3. Has a difficult time walking in line with children and being touched, but has no trouble administrating touch.
4. Demonstrates more trouble than peers with reading and writing.
5. Takes excessive risks and demonstrates decreased safety awareness.



Here are five signs that indicate OT could be beneficial for adolescents between ages 11 and 18:

1. Exhibits trouble keeping belongings organized and turning in assignments on time.
2. Demonstrates difficulty with time, concentrating during lectures and while studying.
3. Has trouble with hallway transitions between classes and arriving to classes on time.
4. Resorts to misconduct when things do not go as planned.
5. Has difficulty learning new material and keeping up with the workload at school.

A few helpful websites to learn more about OT are: the American Occupational Therapy Association, or [aota.org](http://aota.org), [www.sensoryresources.com](http://www.sensoryresources.com), (for general information on sensory processing), [www.eyecanlearn.com](http://www.eyecanlearn.com), (for eye exercises to promote visual processing skills). If you feel that your child could benefit from OT, talk to your school's principal, or special education director about getting a referral for services. A family doctor can also be helpful with the referral if a diagnosis is involved. Every child is different. Find out how OT can help your child can participate and engage in academics and social activities to his/her fullest potential.

**BIO:**

My name is Mikayla Schafer. I am from Tobias, Nebraska, and I am a Meridian Alum, class of 2015. I am currently in my last year of the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Central Community College in Grand Island, Nebraska. My goal here is for you, as a parent, teacher, student, or community member is to expand your horizons and learn about what occupational therapy is, and also how it can help you or a loved one. Feel free to e-mail me with any questions regarding OT at [mikayla63881@cccneb.edu](mailto:mikayla63881@cccneb.edu).

Thank you  
for all the ways  
you make this world  
a brighter one.

We are all aware of the devastation Houston and the surrounding areas of Texas experienced when *Hurricane Harvey* made land-fall on Friday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017. *Harvey* is the first Category 4 hurricane to hit the United States since 2004. After seeing a site to “adopt” a school effected by the hurricane on social media, Echoe Davis, Fourth Grade teacher at Meridian, decided she would extend a helping hand to Heights Elementary School of Texas City (suburb of Houston). Mrs. Davis set out boxes at key points throughout Meridian and asked the school community for donations. She didn’t expect what came next – enough school supplies to fill *seven large boxes*. Meridian Public Schools would like to thank everyone who donated, the Student Council for helping prepare the supplies for shipping, Mike Hofstetter for hauling the heavy boxes to the Post Office, and give special recognition to Mrs. Davis for her efforts. THANK YOU!



Thank you Very  
much for your  
generous donation of  
School supplies. Your  
kindness is GREATLY  
appreciated.  
THANK YOU!  
HEIGHTS  
Elementary!



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_



## Meridian Mustang Apparel

**All Orders & Payments Due Thursday, November 9, 2017**

- Please make checks payable to "MPIE".
- Please turn the order forms in to Meridian Public Schools or Jamie Niederklein. Questions, please contact Jamie @ 402-446-2080.

**Short Sleeve T-Shirt – Red, Black or White ..... \$12.00**

**Long Sleeve T-Shirt – Red, Black or White ..... \$17.00**

**Crew Neck Sweatshirt – Red, Black or White ..... \$20.00**

**Hooded Sweatshirt – Red, Black or White ..... \$24.00**

**All shirts 2XL and larger add \$2.00 per shirt.**

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