



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

January, 2020

Newsletter - January, 2020
Superintendent
Randy Kort

Welcome 2020!

It has been a fast moving year and here we are, preparing for the second semester and the start of 2020. I wanted to point out how wonderful of a school and community we live in around Meridian. If you happened to be in the area the weekend of the 21st you were able to witness that first hand. The morning started with the hosting of a JV basketball tournament then moved into the second annual Reindeer Run and silent auction. This was a fundraiser for the Live On Nebraska organization in memory of Peyton VanWesten and Garrett Klipp. We had approximately 350 participants and many others here to cheer on the runners. This was definitely up from our first year of 85 participants. The Elementary Stu-Co and their sponsor, Mrs. Davis, did a remarkable job of organizing this event. Thank you to everyone for your support of the Meridian family.

Winter sports have begun and the teams are approximately one-third of the way through their respective seasons. The wrestlers have been off to a great start with a team runner up and team champions to start the year. The basketball teams continue to fight and play hard. A reminder on times during the break: Wrestlers travel to Geneva on January 4, with a start time of 9 AM; basketball teams will host Diller-Odell on Friday, December 27, with the JV Girls starting at 4:00. On January 3, the basketball teams' travel to Hampton. JV Girls play at 4:15 PM with JV Boys, Girls Varsity, and Boys Varsity to follow.

The music and vocal concerts for the elementary and high school were held during December and what a FANTASTIC job displayed by the students, Mrs. Morin and Ms. Drees.

MERIDIAN COMMUNITY FITNESS CENTER

The Meridian Community Fitness Center needs your continued assistance in keeping the facility organized and clean. Please continue to put weights, dumbbells, and equipment away when your workout is complete. The facility is available to members 24-7, so please keep each other in mind when completing your workout.

SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION

If Meridian Public Schools should decide to delay or close school due to inclement weather, we will utilize our SchoolReach Instant Parent Contact program. This program will allow us to communicate directly to parents, students, and staff via phone and/or email. If you are not receiving messages via SchoolReach, we will need to update your contact information. In the event of an early out due to inclement weather, we will also contact the news media as soon as possible. The media outlets we will contact are as follows:

KLKN-TV

Lincoln

KHAS-TV

Hastings

KOLN/KGIN-TV

Lincoln/Grand Island

KUTT/KGMT

99.5 FM / 1310 AM Radio

**Board of Education
Meridian Public Schools
District 48-0303
Daykin, Nebraska 68338
Monday, December 16, 2019**

**Regular December 16, 2019
Meeting -7:00 P.M.**

Meridian Public School Board of Education met on Monday, December 16, 2019, as per notice in the Fairbury Journal-News.

President VanWesten called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The open meeting law information was

presented. Roll call was taken: All members were present. Also present were Superintendent Kort, Principal Scott, Mr. Placek, and Josiee Sobotka.

Nothing new was added to the agenda.

Roll call was taken. Vorderstrasse-present, Niederklein-present, Sobotka-present, Bartels-present, Scheer-present, and VanWesten-present. All members present.

There were no comments from the public.

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

1. Minutes of the Monday, November 13, 2019 Regular Meeting
2. District Financial Report
3. Activity Fund Report
4. Hot Lunch Fund Report
5. Bills

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

Principal Scott gave the Curriculum Report. Many of our High School students are interested in Maker Space and we are looking for ways to include them in these classes. Mrs. Peters will be looking to add more classes for next year.

Discussion was held on the Contract for District Bookkeeper/Secretary. Scheer moved and Niederklein seconded to approve the Contract for District Bookkeeper/Secretary. Vote taken: Vorderstrasse-aye, Niederklein-aye, Sobotka-aye, Bartels-aye, Scheer-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion carried 6-0.

Discussion was held on services provided by the ESU.

Discussion was held in regards to the Non-Certified Staff package for the 2020-2021 school year.



Vorderstrasse moved and Sobotka seconded to approve 9000's Policy with change to Policy 9300 of 7:00 meeting start time. Vote taken: Vorderstrasse-aye, Niederklein-aye, Sobotka-aye, Bartels-aye, Scheer-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion carried 6-0.

Principal Scott gave the Principal's Report.

- 1. Current Student Count is 230
2. Students' Last Day is Friday, December 20th
3. Elementary students who met their Accelerated Reader goal will be attending a movie in Fairbury Wednesday, December 18th.
4. Play Production finished the season with 3 Superior and 6 Excellent ratings. Congrats to Mo'Nae Moody, Brynn Holtmeier, Andon Sales, and Ashley Hummer for receiving Superior acting ratings at Districts.
5. JH Wrestling had a Great Season
6. JH Basketball is in Full Swing
7. HS Wrestling Started Year with 2nd Place at Harvard; 1st Place at Bob Oliver Invite
8. Elementary had a Great Concert - JH/HS Concert is Thursday
9. Teacher In-Service Held Monday, January 6th, 2020
10. Classes Resume Tuesday January 7th, 2020
11. Speech Season Begins Saturday, January 11th, at Fairbury

Superintendent Kort gave the Superintendent's Report.

- 1. Starting Work on 2020-2021 Calendar
2. Meridian Beef Program Update - Cash Donations Acceptable at This Time
3. Update from NCSA/Legislative
4. Update from NSAA
5. Update from CRC/MUDECAS
6. Wrestling Meet
7. Ms. Ruiz and Naturalization Process
8. Charging Station

Sobotka moved and Scheer seconded to Approve Teacher Negotiations for 2020-2021 with a base pay increase of \$550 (approximately 3.5% increase). Vote taken: Vorderstrasse-aye, Niederklein-aye, Sobotka-aye, Bartels-aye, Scheer-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion carried 6-0.

Discussion was held on the Superintendent Evaluation Form. Completed forms are due back to the Board President by January 9, 2020.

Next regular meeting is set for Monday, January 20, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Vorderstrasse moved and Niederklein seconded to adjourn at 7:58 p.m. Vote taken: Vorderstrasse-aye, Niederklein-aye, Sobotka-aye, Bartels-aye, Scheer-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion carried 6-0.

Jason Bartels, Secretary Meridian District # 48-0303



Table with 4 columns: Grade, Count, Grade, Count. Grand Total 230 +1

Students last day of the semester was Friday, December 20, with a 1:30 dismissal.

Elementary students in 1st through 6th grades, who met their Accelerated Reader goal, attended a movie at the Bonham Theater in Fairbury on Wednesday, December 18.

Play production finished the season with three superior and six excellent ratings. Mo'Nae Moody, Brynn Holtmeier, Andon Sales and Ashley Hummer were recognized for superior acting at Districts.

Junior High wrestling had a great season, with many individual and team successes.

Junior High basketball is in full swing, with the Junior High girls winning the Dorchester tournament, and the boys finishing 3rd.

High School wrestling has started strong, with a 2nd place finish at Harvard and 1st place finish at the Bob Oliver invite at Meridian.

Elementary had a great concert on December 9, with the Junior High/High

School students having a stellar performance on December 19. The musical talent of our students was showcased and it was apparent Ms. Drees, Mrs. Morin, and the entire music department (Pre-K through 12) worked hard to make their performances memorable.

Teacher in-service will be held on Monday, January 6. One of the all-day workshops will be for elementary math teachers. Professional development trainers from Pearson Envisions will be presenting follow-up training on our math series.

Students first day for second semester will be on Tuesday, January 7, 2020.

Speech season begins on Saturday, January 11th at Fairbury. We currently have 10 students on the team with a few more expected to join.



Upcoming Dates: January 10 - Deadline to register for February 8 ACT Test

- Seniors:
* Many seniors are beginning to finalize their college plans. Seniors should be done at this point with applying to their top college choices. If they have not done so, they need to complete their college applications as soon as possible! The deadlines for certain scholarship applications are coming due.
* Local scholarship applications will be available at the end of the month. Please note that one of the biggest state scholarships is the Susan Buffett Scholarship (due February 1st). A link to this scholarship and all others are found on the "Counselor" link of the school website.
* Scholarships, scholarships, scholarships. Make an account at ScholarshipQuest to find Nebraska-based awards, and also check out the counselor website for the ones that Mrs. Kruse has received.
* Please check my counselor website often for scholarship updates! Seniors, see additional information regarding the FAFSA below!



Juniors:

- * Juniors interested in taking the ACT should sign up to take the February 8th, April 4th, or June 13th test. When making ACT plans, juniors should know that they will also be taking the ACT free of charge at school in April as a part of state testing. For all ACT tests other than the school test, go to www.actstudent.org to register. If you qualify for Free & Reduced meals, you may be able to use a Fee Waiver (please see Ms. Kruse for details).
- * Juniors will also have the option to take the ACCUPLACER test at the beginning of this semester (previously known as the COMPASS test). The ACCUPLACER test is similar to the ACT but is used more as a college placement test for many two-year schools. Please sign up with Mrs. Kruse if you are interested.
- * Parents... please note that Girls and Boys State applications will be out next month. If your child is interested in attending this weeklong event next summer, make sure they submit their applications.

Campus Visits:

- *Seniors and parents: You are encouraged to make any remaining campus visits in January if possible to schools you are seriously considering attending in the fall of 2020.
- * Juniors and parents: Don't forget that you are allowed two excused absences during your junior year to go on a campus visit! Arrangements should be made through Mrs. Kruse for campus visits and student sign out sheets.
- * Forms with sample questions are available in the counselors office.



Information on Collegebound Nebraska (for the University of Nebraska):

You will pay no tuition as an undergraduate student at the University of Nebraska if you: ·Are a Nebraska Resident; ·Meet the university's admission requirements; and ·Qualify for the Federal Pell Grant Program. If you file the FAFSA and are told you are not eligible for a Federal Pell Grant, the university will automatically review your FAFSA to determine whether you

qualify for Collegebound Nebraska. If your expected family contribution is \$5,000 or less, you will qualify. (Note: students with expected family contributions above \$5,300 may qualify for grant assistance but for amounts less than full tuition.)

Seniors, complete your FAFSA:

Seniors... if you haven't done so already, it's time to complete the FAFSA! The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is the application for state, federal and college-specific financial aid. Contact Mrs. Kruse for more information if you haven't already filed the FAFSA. Priority filing dates will soon be approaching! For those of you how have already completed the FAFSA, expect financial aid award notifications soon from the colleges you listed on your FAFSA. The notifications will detail the financial aid assistance the colleges are offering (could be a combination of scholarships, grants, work-study, and student loans).

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. Thank you!
Lisa Kruse; PreK-12 Guidance;
lkruise@meridianmustangs.org
402-446-7265 ext 1253

Attendance-At-Risk

A committee of Mr. Kort, Mr. Scott, Mrs. Kruse, Kathy Houser, and Kelly Kanost have met monthly with the truancy officer this school year. In the process of these meetings, the *Jefferson County Attendance Support Team* has notified the Meridian School that after or close to five (5) days of absences of any of your children, the school is to notify the parents/guardian, and shortly thereafter, refer the child's name to the Jefferson County Attendance Support office along with reasons the student has been absent. **This is why a note from the doctor, hospital, therapy, etc. is very important.**

The following paragraph is information the truancy officer sent to us to help with the process and to reassure you as parents.

"The most important thing to tell the parents is just because the school is referring their child over to us, doesn't mean they are in trouble. Our main goal is truancy intervention. If we can start watching students at around five to ten (5-10) absences that allows us to intervene

before they get to 20, but only if necessary. If the student isn't continuing to miss days, the parents will never hear from us. We have a standard policy to have all students referred to us at five (5) days. Early intervention can be more beneficial to the student. There are circumstances in which not all students require this intervention, but by having a standard policy it provides safeguards from any student who may be falling through the cracks. Once a referral is received, we review each case to determine the appropriate action needed. If we can see that a student has legitimate reasons for missing school, we will have minimal, if any, contact with them.

The school wants to reassure you as parents/guardian that we have the child's best interest in hand. Therefore, the school will be **notifying the parent/guardian at or close to five (5) or more absent days.** Please call the school if you have any concerns on your child's attendance at 402-446-7265 ext. 3 and talk to Mr. Scott, Mrs. Kruse, Kathy Houser, or Kelly Kanost (ext. 4).

Please remember to contact the school by 8:30 a.m. each morning to inform the school of a student's absence and explain the reason why the student is absent from school. **Students are asked to bring documentation from appointments such as doctors, dentists, therapists, eye doctor, hospitalization, etc. This is very important as the truancy office has asked us to send a doctor notice or any documentation along with the attendance referral. See attached flyer from the truancy office.**

FFA

On December 2nd the welding students went to Fairbury to hear from a Tulsa Welding School representative. Students



learned about the demand for skilled welders and the variety of environments they could weld in.

Then on December 12th, 10 FFA members travel to Omaha to the Farmer2Farmer Conference with thousands of agricultural leaders from across 40 states and Canada. Members learned about the Farmers Business Network, attended sessions on biofuels, women in ag, trade



wars, cattle markets, and hot topics in ag. They also heard from farmers that



Front Row (l to r): Erika Schwisow, Erin Kujath, Schyler Schwisow, Kim Schropfer, Jaslyn Ward
Back Row (l to r): Hector Nuñez, Drew Niederklein, Keagan Sones, Chase Bartels, Patrick Williams

became well known through telling their story of ag by creating YouTube videos. We held our December FFA meeting on December 19th. Upcoming contests were discussed, community service and National FFA Week committees were formed, and Brynn Holtmeier was named the FFA Member of the Month. The past couple of weeks, ag students have been presenting lessons on agriculture in Nebraska through the Connecting Chapters Program. This program is sponsored by the NE Farm Bureau and connects ag students with elementary students and their community to teach them ag



Front Row (l to r): Gabriel Jones, Braxton Davis, Kellen Sones, Savannah Turner, Fenton Paul
Back Row (l to r): Brynn Holtmeier, Lyla Brandt, Levi McKenzie, Tiffany Vinsonhaler, Ximena Nuñez, Naomi Hursh, Destiny Schippers, Ally Kort

literacy. Students read a book on popcorn raised in NE, did some popcorn related activities, and enjoyed snacking on popcorn. Members have also been preparing for LDE's (Leadership Development Events) and will be holding a Community Practice Night on January 9th at 6:30pm to showcase the parliamentary procedure demonstrations and speeches they've been working on. All family and community members are welcome to attend. A special thanks to

all who helped support our fundraiser, and to those who donated care package items to be delivered to the Omaha Med Center and Children's Hospital. We appreciate your continued support and generosity!

Upcoming Events:

- January FFA Meeting: January 9th at 6pm
- Community LDE Practice Night: January 9th at 6:30pm
- LDE's: January 15th in York
- FFA Concessions: February 13th
- National FFA Week: February 24-28th
- Welding Contest: February 26th in Lincoln

Sincerely,
Nylah Moody
Meridian FFA Reporter

FBLA

Christmas break is finally here! Perfect time to bake cookies with the cookie dough from the FBLA fundraiser and the Butter Braids too! Everything from the fundraisers has come in, so members have been busy making deliveries this past month.



Seated (l to r): Kala Most, Delaney Homolka, Ashley Hummer
Standing (l to r): Brynn Holtmeier, Breanna Boyce, Halle Pribyl, Josiee Sobotka

The FBLA chapter wanted to donate something special to the school. Members decided to "Take Charge" and purchase a charging station. The charging station has cords for Apple and Samsung devices. There are also USB ports. The station is out in the commons.

When members get back from break, it will be time to start preparing for competition. The State Leadership Conference is March 20-April 1 and

there is a lot to do before then. The chapter will be working on completing ribbon projects for SLC as well. Wishing you Happy Holidays!
Reporter, Brynn Holtmeier

THANK YOU

MPIE (Meridian Partners in Education) would like to thank everyone who supported our basket raffle last month. We appreciate everyone who bought raffle tickets and the businesses and families who generously donated a basket or made a monetary donation. All money raised will go towards activities and projects throughout the year for the students and staff and scholarships for the class of 2020.

Families & Businesses:

- The Image
- Farmers Cooperative
- Jo Jo's Childcare
- Jack & Jean Sobotka
- Larry & Gina Schafer
- Gary Marschman
- LandMark Implement
- Milligan Insurance Agency
- Jack & Angie Pribyl
- Cameron & Jenny Kumpf
- Mike & Chris Haake
- Scott & Wendee Sobotka
- Neal & Tami Filipi
- Derrick & Megan Haake
- Eric & Jamie Niederklein
- Craig & Stacy Lutjemeyer
- Matt & Deb Schwisow
- Jimmy & Anne Simms
- Scott & Damara Woitalewicz
- Deb Brunkow
- Plains Equipment
- Meridian FFA
- Meridian Student Council
- Jay & Staci VanWesten
- Scott & Joy Wolfe
- Van & Erin VanderSchaaf
- Blue Skies Photography
- Panko Ag Services
- CNCS-Amy Rains



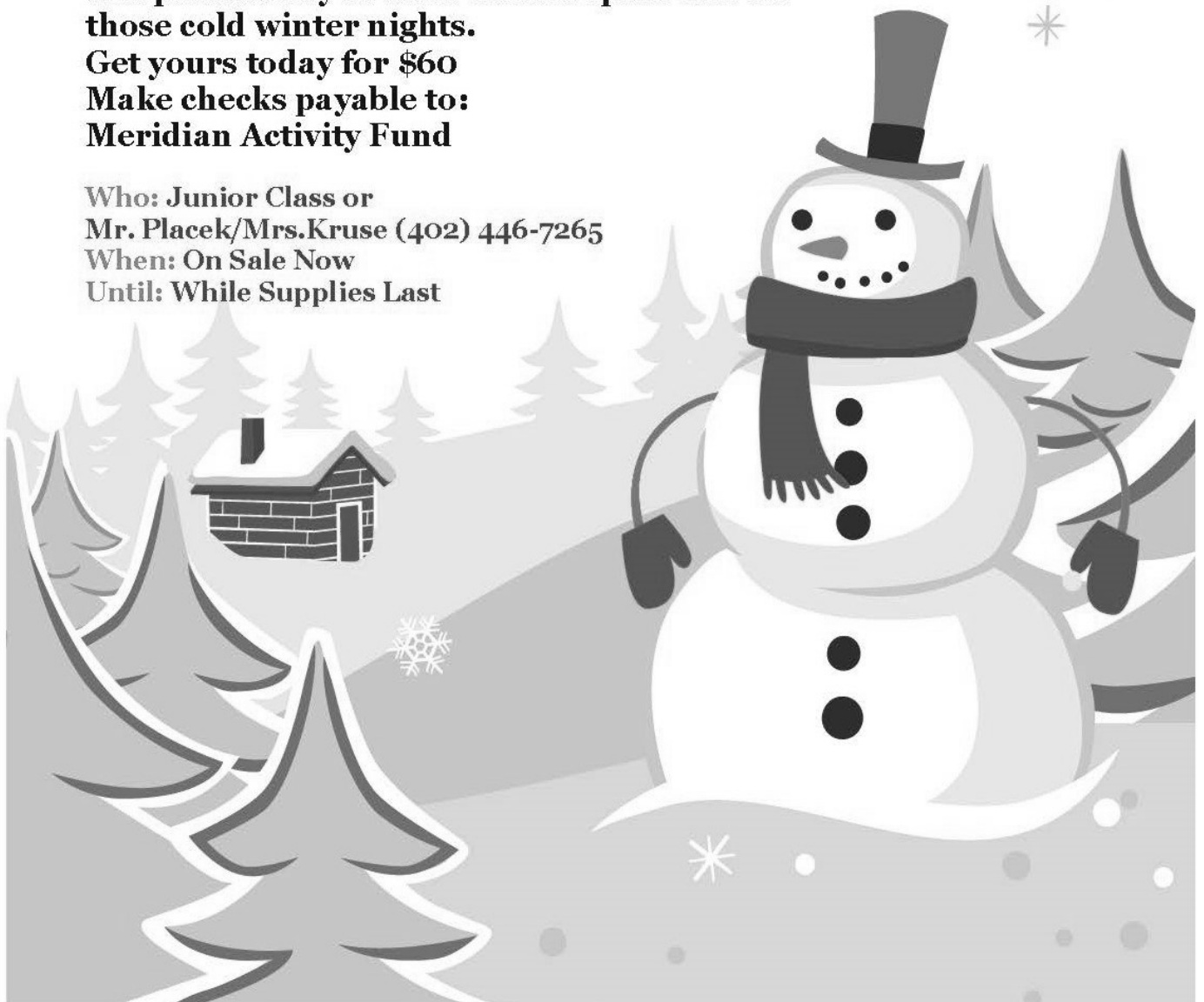
Help Support the Meridian Junior Class

Purchase a Meridian Mustang Blanket and show your school spirit this winter.



Blankets are 60" X 80", very soft, heavy & plush. The perfect way to show school spirit and for those cold winter nights. Get yours today for \$60. Make checks payable to: Meridian Activity Fund

**Who: Junior Class or Mr. Placek/Mrs.Kruse (402) 446-7265
When: On Sale Now
Until: While Supplies Last**





M-PIE SOUP SUPPER

(Meridian Partners In Education)

Tuesday, January 21, 2020

Meridian School Commons
During the Meridian vs. Exeter-Milligan
Basketball Games
Serving from 5:00-8:00 p.m.



\$6.00 Meal Deal

Choice of Chili, Chicken Noodle or Potato Soup
Ham & Cheese Sandwich, Dessert, Drink

Items Also Sold Separately

Soup-\$3.00, Sandwich-\$1.50, Dessert-\$1.50, Drink-\$.50




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