



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, 2024

Newsletter - January, 2024
Superintendent
Randy Kort

As I am preparing to write my article for the 2024 January Newsletter I have had a chance to recognize the joys of rural Nebraska.

Growing up only an hour to the west of Meridian and in the 80's, I still am able to enjoy the country feel - seeing the crops be planted, grow and harvested while at school here at Meridian. While at basketball games and school events, there are so many conversations of family holiday plans and events. It is just a great feeling to be in rural Nebraska, especially around the holidays.

Please take time to visit with your family and friends.

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
Wednesday, December 13, 2023

Regular December 13, 2023 Meeting

Meridian Public School Board of Education met on December 13, 2023, as per notice in the Fairbury Journal-News.

President Bartels called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. The open meeting law information was presented.

Roll call was taken: Niederklein - present, Rut - present, Scheer - present, and Bartels - present. Also present was Superintendent Kort.

Niederklein moved and Scheer seconded to excuse Barton and Sobotka from the meeting. Vote taken: Niederklein - aye, Rut - aye, Scheer - aye, and Bartels - aye. Motion passed 4-0.

Nothing new was added to the agenda.

No comments were heard from the public.

Rut moved and Scheer seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented.

- A. Minutes of the Monday, November 20, 2023 Regular Meeting
- B. District Financial Report
- C. Activity Fund Report
- D. Hot Lunch Fund Report
- E. Bills

Vote taken: Niederklein - aye, Rut - aye, Scheer - aye, and Bartels - aye. Motion passed 4-0.

RJ Paul requested to be approved for early graduation next school year. RJ explained to the Board why he wanted to be approved for early graduation. He also provided letters of

recommendation from three staff members in support of RJ's plans to graduate early. RJ answered questions the Board had regarding his plans to graduate early. RJ has satisfied all of the criteria of the Early Completion Plan. Scheer moved and Niederklein seconded to approve the request from RJ Paul for early graduation. Vote taken: Niederklein - aye, Rut - aye, Scheer - aye, and Bartels - aye. Motion passed 4-0.

Superintendent Kort presented the Curriculum Report to the Board.

Superintendent Kort gave an update on the report being released from the state assessment.

Superintendent Kort discussed the Multicultural Report and provided lesson plan information for review.

Superintendent Kort gave an update on the ESSER Funds the District has received and how the funds have been used.

Superintendent Kort presented hard copies of the audit report to the Board from Dana F. Cole & Company for the year ending August 31, 2023.

Superintendent Kort presented the Principal's Reports and the Superintendent's Report to the Board.

Evaluation forms for Superintendent Kort were reviewed. The Board felt that Superintendent Kort meets or exceeds expectations in all four performance objectives that include budget, communication, positive school culture, and instructional leadership.

The next regular meeting was set for Monday, January 15, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

Scheer moved and Rut seconded to adjourn at 6:30 p.m. Vote taken: Niederklein - aye, Rut - aye, Scheer - aye, and Bartels - aye. Motion passed 4-0.

Jamie Niederklein,

Secretary Meridian District #48-0303



"The Dish" with Drees

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and a wonderful holiday season. We are excited to have the students back in the building on January 4. Breaks and rest are good for us, but so are our routines. Sometimes, we need a break from the break.

I'm looking forward to the beginning of a new semester. We had a great first semester, and now we can start fresh for another. The second semester brings so many exciting things...field trips, more basketball, music contests, track, and even those dreaded tests to see all the progress we have made. Our school will also have a team of educators visiting this semester. They will evaluate us on our last five years. They will learn about our school and community and give us feedback and recommendations to help us continue to grow and serve our students better. It will be a positive experience for us. We know that we could not do what we do without your support, and we are thankful for you. We love seeing you at games and concerts, and we love showing you all the great things happening at Meridian.

PRINCIPALLY SPEAKING WITH MR. HULL

I want to begin by celebrating the outcome of our 2022-2023 State Proficiency. Meridian Public Schools achieved "Great" status classification. The high school moved from "Good" the previous year to "Great" for the 2022-2023 year.

NSCAS Results (Percent Proficient):
Language Arts District: 45% State: 58%
Mathematics District: 71% State: 61%
Science District: 67% State: 70%

Our students had a busy December. Our Winter sports are off and rolling and I have been impressed by how hard our athletes have been working! We hosted our Bob Oliver Wrestling tournament; it was a very successful event. Thank you to everyone who helped make that tournament as well as our JV basketball

tournament successful. Additionally, Our bands and choirs at all levels had very successful concerts. I appreciate all of the work that Miss Drees and Mrs. Halama put in to helping our students prepare for those events.

Looking ahead to January, we have a number of events coming up. Students return from break on January 4, and we will be busy with basketball games, wrestling meets, and speech meets. We look forward to celebrating all of the success our students have in academics, activities, and athletics this month.

COUNSELOR'S CONNECTION by Lisa Hermsmeier

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 Ms. Hermsmeier 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 10th, April 13th, or June 8th test. When making ACT plans, juniors should know that they will also be taking the ACT free of charge at school in March 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. Hermsmeier for details). Registration deadlines are usually about a month to a month and a half before the test date.

- * Juniors will also have the option to take the ACCUPLACER test at the beginning of this semester. 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 Ms. Hermsmeier 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 2024.
- * 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 Ms. Hermsmeier 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... it's time to complete the FAFSA! Hopefully, by the time you receive this newsletter, it is now active! The goal was to be active sometime in December. The FAFSA (Free



Application for Federal Student Aid) is the application for state, federal and college-specific financial aid. Contact Ms. Hermsmeier for more information if you haven't already filed the FAFSA. Priority filing dates will soon be approaching! For those of you who 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 Hermsmeier; PreK-12 Guidance;
lhermsmeier@meridianmustangs.org
402-446-7265 ext 1253

E-FUNDING

Meridian Public Schools will be accepting electronic payments (credit card and electronic transfers from checking accounts) beginning January 4th, 2024. Any transactions for the Activity Funds and/or Hot Lunch Fund (i.e. computer repairs, student fees, organization sales, lunch/milk tickets, etc.) can be paid using this service. Included in this newsletter is a flier with information you will need and step by step instructions to help you set up an account. If you do not wish to use e-Funding, we will still accept checks and/or cash as well. If you have any questions please call 402-446-7265 extension 2.

THANK YOU

MPIE (Meridian Partners in Education) would like to thank everyone who supported our basket raffle. 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 2024.

Families & Businesses:

- AKRS
- The Image
- Craig & Stacy Lutjemeyer
- Amy Rains
- Neal & Tami Filipi
- Heartland Bank
- Eric & Jamie Niederklein
- Milligan Insurance Agency
- Scott & Wendee Sobotka
- Paula Simms
- Farmers Cooperative
- Mike & Chris Haake
- Scott & Joy Wolfe
- Jack & Jean Sobotka
- Larry Schafer, Channel Seeds
- Bear-N-T's
- Derrick & Megan Haake
- LandMark Implement
- Jimmy & Anne Simms
- Have's Place
- Road Runner Bar & Grill
- Double B Bar & Grill

Flashback on Meridian Boys' Basketball History

Did you know that in 1974 a team coached by Don Weeks would win Meridian's first Pioneer Conference championship? In 1979 Coach Sobotka would have players that would win the Pioneer Conference championship for a second time. One of his players on that team would be Jim Weeks, Don's son. Jim weeks would go on to be one of the most successful boys basketball coaches in the state. He currently coaches at Auburn where the las 5 years his teams have played in the C-1 championship games - winning 3 of them consecutively. Congratulations to Jim Weeks, a former Meridian student and basketball player.

Coach Jack Sobotka





January 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Breakfast is also served with fruit, juice and milk. Cereal is a substitute for any breakfast entrée.</p>	<p>1 <i>New Year's Day</i></p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 <i>Classes Resume</i> Pop-Tart Corn-dog Baked Beans Cookie</p>	<p>5 Donut Breaded Chicken Sandwich Scalloped Potatoes Carrots</p>	<p>6 Menu is subject to Change without notice.</p>
<p>7 Fresh fruit & Vegetable bar offered each day.</p>	<p>8 Ham & Egg Bar Pizza Green Beans Pudding Cup</p>	<p>9 Pancakes Creamed Turkey Mashed Potatoes Peas/Roll</p>	<p>10 Omelet/Toast Warm Ham & Cheese Sandwich Tomato Bisque</p>	<p>11 Sausage Eggs Tornado Breaded Pork Sandwich Hash Brown Patty Coleslaw</p>	<p>12 Fruit & Yogurt Parfait Goulash Cheese Breadstick Carrots</p>	<p>13</p>
<p>14 Choice of 1% white & Chocolate milk is offered each day. PK get 1% White milk only</p>	<p>15 <i>Martin Luther King Jr. Day</i> French Toast Sticks Chicken Cheese Crispito Refried Beans Cookie</p>	<p>16 Pop-Tart BBQ Rib Sandwich Hash Brown Patty Peas</p>	<p>17 Blueberry Muffin Tater Tot Casserole Green Beans Roll</p>	<p>18 Breakfast Sandwich Chicken Fajitas Lettuce/Salsa Spanish Rice Corn</p>	<p>19 Biscuits/Gravy Hamburger Fries Baked Beans</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>21</p>	<p>22 Apple Frudel Chicken Fried Steak Mashed Potatoes Gravy/Roll Corn</p>	<p>23 Breakfast Pizza Chicken Alfredo Green Beans Garlic Toast</p>	<p>24 1:30 DISMISSAL Cinnamon Roll Turkey Deli Sandwich Chips Pickle Spear</p>	<p>25 Breakfast Bake Chili Soup Crackers Cinnamon Roll String Cheese</p>	<p>26 Omelet & Hash Brown Hotdog Sauerkraut Baked Beans</p>	<p>27</p>
<p>28</p>	<p>29 Pancakes Cheesy Bread Marinara Sauce Green Beans Cookie</p>	<p>30 Sausage Pancake Stick Chicken Strips Scalloped Potatoes Mixed Veggies</p>	<p>31 Breakfast Burrito Chicken Monte Carlo Sandwich Fries Corn</p>			<p>This institution is an equal opportunity employer</p>



BEGINNING JANUARY 2024, YOU CAN PAY YOUR STUDENT'S LUNCH BALANCE ONLINE!

Go to:

<https://payments.efundsforschools.com/v3/districts/56837/>

Please note: Make sure the website says Meridian (you must follow this link exactly)

What you will need to sign up:

****Student's Last Name**

****Student School ID Number**

(Contact the office to get this)

Cost per Transaction:

\$1.75 flat fee when using a checking account

\$2.95 per \$100 when using a credit/debit card



• <https://payments.efundsforschools.com/v3/districts/56837/> • 402-446-7265 ext 2 •



Step-by-Step Guide for Parents Getting started with e~Funds for Schools Mobile Website



CREATING A NEW ACCOUNT

1. Visit the website that was provided to you by your school district.
2. Click on **Create an Account**.
3. Provide Requested Information.
4. Click **Create Account**.



ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT – STUDENTS

1. Log into your account.
2. Select **Manage Students** under **Manage Account**.
3. Enter student Last Name and Family or Student ID#.
4. Select **Add Student(s)**.
5. Repeat steps 2-4 to add additional students.



ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT - PAYMENT INFORMATION

1. Log into your Account
2. Select **Payment Methods** under **Payment Settings**.
3. Select **New Credit Card** or **New Direct Debit** to add new payment information.
4. After entering all required information, read Consent and select **Add** to save information to account.

MAKE A PAYMENT

1. Select type of payment you would like to make.
2. Select student.
3. Enter amount of payment.
4. Select **Begin Checkout**.
5. Choose payment method or enter new method.
6. Review items and total.
7. Select **Pay Now**.





DRESS CLOSET EVENT!!

If you can not find or afford a dress for Winter Formal, Brittany Kroeker (a former Fairbury High School; graduate class of 2023) is doing a dress closet.

ABOUT THE EVENT:

What is all there?

There will be dresses, shoes, and accessories! There are over 100 dresses to choose from. There are all different designs, lengths, and sizes. There are also all different designs of shoes, earrings, necklaces, and bracelets.

How much does it cost?

ABSOLUTELY NOTHING!!!
EVERYTHING IS FREE!!! All you have to do is come and try the dress(es) on and if you like them and they fit, you can take it home!!

Do the dresses, shoes, and accessories need to be returned?

No they do not! Nothing needs to be returned unless you want to return them.

 **Contact Brittany with any questions at:**
402-300-0072



1 PM - 4 PM

6

JANUARY

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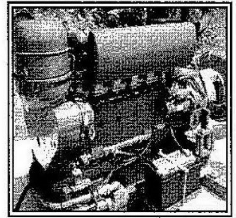
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