



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

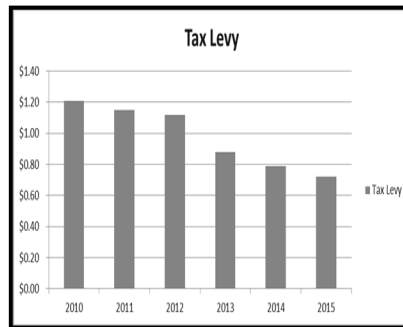
October, 2015

Newsletter-October, 2015
Superintendent
Randy Kort

What a great time of year - especially being around a farming community. This is the time when the year's work pays off and it is time to harvest. I really enjoy the daily drive; every day the view changes. The corn has been tall for a few months, now within a day or two, when you pass a field that has been harvested it gives the countryside a new look and I am able to see further. This also leads me to say PLEASE be careful with your driving as trucks, semis, and combines will be driving down the roads. We wish everyone a safe and bountiful harvest.

The Meridian Board of Education met on September 16, 2015, and approved the 2015-2016 annual budget as presented. The Budget Hearing was held at 7:00 P.M. and the 2015-2016 Tax Request Hearing at 7:15 P.M. The 2015-2016 General Fund expenditures are set at \$3,550,000.

The District Assessed Valuation increased 9.98% for a total of \$436,291,823. Based upon this evaluation the Board of Education approved tax requests and levy requests of: \$2,195,405.03 (\$0.503196 per \$100 assessed valuation) for the General Fund; \$610,101.00 (\$0.139838 per \$100 assessed valuation) for Special Building Fund; \$225,252.52 (\$.051629 per \$100 assessed valuation) Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund; \$124,357.57 (\$.028503 per \$100 assessed valuation) for the Technology Bond Fund. Each of the amounts includes the County Treasurer's one percent commission. The total tax request for the 2015-2016 budget is \$3,155,116.1 (\$.723166 per \$100 assessed valuation). The levy request amount decreased \$.062569.



HOT LUNCH WEEK

October 12th through the 16th is National Hot Lunch Week. Meridian Public School would like to publicly thank our fabulous Hot Lunch Workers: Head Cook – Elaine Bartels, Cook – Sue Connealy, Dishwasher – Shari Bachle, Secretaries – Kathy Houser, Judy Grummert, Bookkeeper and Secretary Trish Endorf. Please take the time to thank them for their efforts and great work in serving our students.

NATIONAL SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK

October 19th through the 23rd is National School Bus Safety Week. Meridian would like to thank our great bus drivers: Elizabeth Noel, Janelle Heiserman, Charles Houser, Tonya Griffin and Allen Lintz. These individuals safely transport our students to and from school during daily routes, field trips and school activities. Safety is their number one priority. Please thank them when you have an opportunity. Please encourage your child/children to obey these School Bus Safety Rules:

1. Be at the bus stop at least 5 minutes early.
2. Always use bus handrails when entering or exiting the bus.
3. Take your seat promptly.
4. Keep aisles clear at all times.
5. Stay seated until the bus stops or as directed by the driver.

6. Be quiet to avoid accidents – there must be absolute QUIET at a railroad crossing stop.
7. Keep your head and arms inside the bus at all times.
8. Cross street/roads only when it is safe.
9. Obey the bus driver.

Board of Education Meridian Public Schools District – 48-0303

Daykin, Nebraska, 68338
Monday, September 16, 2015

SPECIAL PUBLIC HEARING - 7:00 P.M. 2015-2016 BUDGET HEARING AND BUDGET SUMMARY

Meridian Public School Board of Education met on September 16, 2015, as per notice in the Fairbury Journal-News.

President VanWesten called the hearing to order at 7:00 p.m. The open meeting law was presented. Members present were Vorderstrasse, Miller, Sobotka, Bartels, and VanWesten. Also present were Superintendent Kort and David Endorf.

Bartels moved and Miller seconded to excuse Board Member Scheer. Vote taken: Vorderstrasse-aye, Miller-aye, Sobotka-aye, Bartels-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Superintendent Kort provided information concerning the proposed 2015-2016 budget. Comments from the public were heard.

A motion was made by Miller and seconded by Vorderstrasse to adjourn the hearing at 7:21 p.m. Vote taken: Vorderstrasse-aye, Miller-aye, Sobotka-aye, Bartels-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion carried 5-0.



**SPECIAL PUBLIC HEARING -
7:15 P.M.**

2015-2016 FINAL TAX REQUEST

Meridian Public School Board of Education met on September 16, 2015, as per notice in the Fairbury Journal-News.

President VanWesten called the hearing to order at 7:23 p.m. The open meeting law was presented. Members present were Vorderstrasse, Miller, Sobotka, Bartels, and VanWesten. Also present were Superintendent Kort and David Endorf.

Bartels moved and Miller seconded to excuse Board Member Scheer. Vote taken: Vorderstrasse-aye, Miller-aye, Sobotka-aye, Bartels-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Superintendent Kort provided information concerning the proposed 2015-2016 Tax Request. Comments from the public were heard.

A motion was made by Vorderstrasse and seconded by Sobotka to adjourn the hearing at 7:29 p.m. Vote taken: Vorderstrasse-aye, Miller-aye, Sobotka-aye, Bartels-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion carried 5-0.

**Regular September 16, 2015 Meeting
7:30 P.M.**

Meridian Public School Board of Education met on September 16, 2015, as per notice in the Fairbury Journal-News.

President VanWesten called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. The open meeting law information was presented. Members present were Vorderstrasse, Miller, Sobotka, Bartels, and VanWesten. Also present were Superintendent Kort, David Endorf, Erin VanderSchaaf, and Chris Schropfer.

Vorderstrasse moved and Miller seconded to excuse Board Member Scheer. Vote taken: Vorderstrasse-aye, Miller-aye, Sobotka-aye, Bartels-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Miller moved Bartels seconded to approve the consent agenda as follows:

1. Minutes of the Monday, August 17, 2015 Regular Meeting
2. District Financial Report

3. Activity Fund Report
4. Hot Lunch Report
5. Bills

Vote taken: Vorderstrasse-aye, Miller-aye, Sobotka-aye, Bartels-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Miller moved and Sobotka seconded to approve the 2015-2016 Budget. Vote taken: Vorderstrasse-aye, Miller-aye, Sobotka-aye, Bartels-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Vorderstrasse moved and Bartels seconded to approve the 2015-2016 Tax Request of \$3,155,116.00. Vote taken: Vorderstrasse-aye, Miller-aye, Sobotka-aye, Bartels-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Sobotka moved and Bartels seconded to approve Ric Ortmeier to complete the 2014-2015 audit. Vote taken: Vorderstrasse-aye, Miller-aye, Sobotka-aye, Bartels-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Superintendent Kort stated he had received confirmation that the School's insurance provider will conclude in November. Quotes from other providers will be presented at the October meeting.

Superintendent Kort discussed using North Star Negotiation Software for the 2016-2017 teacher negotiations.

Miller moved and Sobotka seconded to approve the Superintendent's evaluation tool for the 2015-2016 school year. Vote taken: Vorderstrasse-aye, Miller-aye, Sobotka-aye, Bartels-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Principal Scott reported:

1. ACT and NESA scores –The 2014-2015 seniors who took the ACT test outscored the state and national averages in all areas.

Superintendent Kort reported:

1. Meridian Education President and Board Negotiations Committee meeting will be held next month
2. Plymouth Electric is installing a light in the parking area
3. Installation of cameras in the buses

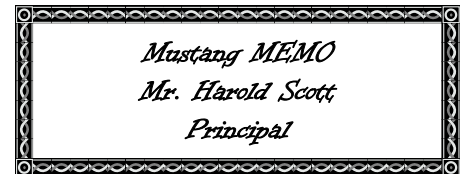
4. State NASB Meeting
5. BCBS coverage
6. School's speaker system
7. NASB Workshop held September 9th
8. Review of Policy 7000 series next month

Next Regular Meeting set for Wednesday, October 14, 2015 – 7:30 p.m.

Miller moved and Bartels seconded to adjourn at 8:23 p.m. Vote taken: Vorderstrasse-aye, Miller-aye, Sobotka-aye, Bartels-aye, and VanWesten-aye. Motion carried 5-0.

J. Scott Sobotka,

Secretary Meridian District #48-0303



Meridian students outscore state and national averages on ACT. The 2014-15 seniors that took the ACT test outscored the state and national averages in all areas. The following chart shows the comparisons.

	English	Math	Read	Science	Composite
School	23.1	22.4	23.5	22.7	23.1
State	21.1	21.0	21.9	21.6	21.5
Nation	20.4	20.8	21.4	20.9	21.0

NeSA scores provide data for school wide goals. NeSA (Nebraska State Assessment) scores have been finalized by the Nebraska Department of Education. Here are the percentages of students that met proficiency in each area by grade level.

2014-15 school year NeSA percent of students proficient
x=not tested at this grade level

	Reading	Math	Science	Writing
11 th grade	73%	73%	73%	47%
8 th grade	85%	55%	80%	62%
7 th grade	88%	94%	x	x
6 th grade	81%	81%	x	x
5 th grade	75%	83%	83%	x
4 th grade	76%	82%	x	53%
3 rd grade	90%	90%	x	x



The data supports our teachers' decision that writing needs to be one of our goals for this accreditation cycle (2014-2019). Plans are in place for writing experiences across all curriculum areas. This is in addition to continuing with our goals of improving reading and math outcomes.

MAP testing continues throughout the month of September. Thank you to Mrs. Kroon for her help in setting up the testing schedule and prepping and trouble shooting computers. The company that manages the MAP tests (NWEA) has been having computer issues on their end, which has caused our testing to be disrupted. They are working to fix the problem.



Upcoming Dates:

- Oct 1** – Financial Aid Presentation for Seniors @ 3:15pm (Parents welcome!)
- Oct 2** – Southeast Community College Rep
- Oct 6** – ASVAB Interpretation
- Oct 7** – Seniors visit UNL and SECC
- Oct 9** – Creative Arts Center Rep
- Oct 14** – PSAT for Juniors
- Oct 16** – End of Quarter 1
- Oct 20** – Cloud County Community College Rep
- Oct 24** – ACT
- Oct 28** – Freshmen visit Peru State College

Testing:

- ◇ The ACT test prep course taught by Mr. Smiley & Mrs. Hofstetter is currently in progress. The John Baylor ACT Prep Online Course is also an investment by our school to assist your student in preparing for the ACT (an important measure used for college admission and financial aid). We are excited that our students will have the opportunity to receive excellent test preparation between these two courses. We will be offering the John Baylor Test Prep class (free of charge) to juniors and seniors during the school day leading up to the October 24th test.
- ◇ Juniors interested in taking the PSAT

will do so on Wednesday, October 14th. The PSAT is the qualifying test that includes students in the annual academic competition among high school students for recognition and college scholarships. The program is conducted by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. It shows firsthand the kind of reading, math, and writing skills that students need to succeed in college. If you have any questions regarding the test, please call Mrs. Kroon at (402) 446-7265.

- ◇ Juniors and seniors needing to take the COMPASS test will do so on Thursday, November 4th. Representatives from SCC-Beatrice will come to Meridian to administer the test to our students. This test is used to help place students in level appropriate classes for many junior colleges. It is also used to place students in dual-credit courses that require entrance scores during the senior year (ex: English Composition). There is no fee to take this test.

Group College Visits:

The freshmen class will have the opportunity to tour Peru State College on October 28th. Their day will begin with a presentation from the admissions office. The students will get a tour of the campus and have the opportunity to ask questions. The students will also experience the college cafeteria (lunch will be provided at no cost to your student).

Students Missing Days of School

Meridian Public Schools and staff take student attendance very seriously and we hope that you, as parents, do as well. We feel attendance is a big part of the learning experience and helps mold children into independent, responsible, prompt young men and women.

Remember...communication is necessary between the school and parents as to why a student is not in school. Parents can call, send a note, or email the school. If your child tends to miss a

large number of days of school, this can be an important detriment in earning his/her credits. REMEMBER-Grades are not the only thing taken into account in earning credits for each class. **Attendance is a big factor.** If your child always misses the same morning class period, he/she might not be earning those credits. Know what classes are required for graduation.

Here are the 2015-16 handbook guidelines for attendance, verification of absences, and graduation requirements.

2015-16 Handbook guidelines – ATTENDANCE (page 24) states:

Any student's absences, excused or unexcused, of more than five (5) days in one quarter or the hourly equivalent may cause his/her class credits to be denied for the semester. The number of absences is considered on a period-by-period basis. The building principal will make the determination if credit is to be granted or withheld after investigating the student's EXCESSIVE ABSENTEEISM RECORD. The principal has the right to require any / all missed time from class period(s) to be made up before favorable determination of granting credits will be considered.

A family who has a student with more than five (5) days missed (or "the hourly equivalent") in any given quarter and/or does not send the required parental notes to school as school policy requires, can expect written correspondence from the school or a request for a meeting to discuss the excessive absenteeism. The school may report to the county attorney of the county in which the person resides when the school has documented the efforts to address excessive absences, the collaborative plan to reduce barriers identified to improve regular attendance has not been successful, and the student has accumulated more than twenty (20) absences per year. The school shall notify the child's family in writing prior to referring the child to the county attorney. This is as suggested by Nebraska State School Law 79-209 (Compulsory Attendance).





**2015-2016 Handbook guidelines-
VERIFICATION OF ABSENCE**

(page 25) states:

Parents/guardians are required to call 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. After 8:30 a.m., a phone call to the parents/guardian will be made if notification has not been completed. Parents/guardians are asked to submit a written excuse for all absences ***in advance if at all possible.*** *The written excuse should include the number and dates of the days gone, and a specific reason for the absence. IF THE STUDENT HAS BEEN ILL OR IS ABSENT FOR SOME OTHER REASON, THE STUDENT SHOULD BRING AN EXCUSE FROM HOME ON THE DAY HE/SHE RETURNS TO SCHOOL IF AN EXCUSE IS NOT RECEIVED WITHIN TWO SCHOOL DAYS, THE ABSENCE WILL BE CONSIDERED UNEXCUSED AND THE STUDENT WILL BE RECORDED AS TRUANT.* *Class time missed exceeding the seven (7) day limit will be made up before class credit will be given. Written excuses from the parent/guardian must be specific in regard to the reason for the absence. Notes that are generic (i.e. John was absent yesterday (give date), please excuse.) will be considered UNEXCUSED until further specific information is given to the High School Principal's Office. Additionally, students are asked to bring documentation from appointments such as doctors, dentists, therapists, eye doctors, etc. This documentation could be very useful to the student if the student exceeds his/her allowed absences.*

**2015-2016 Handbook guidelines -
GRADUATION AND COURSE**

REQUIREMENTS (page 25) states

To participate in commencement exercises or receive a Meridian Public Schools diploma a student must fully complete all requirements for graduation prior to the official commencement exercises, and complete other administrative requirements or conditions. Students who graduate from Meridian Public Schools must accumulate 220 hours. The total

graduation requirements must include the following core curriculum:

- English = 40 Semester Hours
- Science = 30 Semester Hours
- Math = 30 Semester Hours
- Social Studies = 40 Semester Hours
(American Government is required)
- PE = 10 Semester Hours
- Fine Arts = 20 Semester Hours
(Music, Art, Curricular Speech, Curricular Drama)
- Computer Education = 10 Semester Hours
- Vocational Education or Foreign Language = 10 Semester Hours
- Electives = 30 Semester Hours

All credit hours will be based on the formula set by the Nebraska Department of Education.

INFORMATION FOR MILITARY

Every year, military services call and request a list of our Junior and Senior students. Out of courtesy to the armed forces, the school releases the requested information. If you wish to have your child's name deleted from the list given to the military, please contact us.

STUCO NEWS

Student council is a very unique organization. The council is run by students who try to boost school spirit. This kind of responsibility builds character and teamwork in the students involved that can help benefit them individually in the future.

As the new school year begins, the Student Council gets rolling with lots of activities and responsibilities. As usual, one of the biggest tasks the council has all year is right at the beginning of the year...Homecoming. There is much work to be done. Decorating, voting, flowers, crown bearers, crowns, music...the list goes on. The dance is made possible due to all the hard workers in the council. Homecoming is such a big task that multiple committees had to be made in order to get everything done. We do appreciate all the students who helped decorate. We couldn't have done it without you.

The Student Council didn't just get the dance ready for homecoming; other factors were also involved. The council had to round up everyone's vote for

Homecoming King and Queen, and make sure that everyone who wanted to, had the chance to vote. They were in charge of putting together information on each candidate and flowers the homecoming court would receive on Friday night.

In order to have homecoming look spectacular, Student Council assigned certain jobs to different classes to get the decorations done on time. Student council still made sure everyone did his or her job correctly and had it done nicely.

One big date coming up for the council is the state convention. The Student Council usually takes a selected few to attend this event. Members who are chosen to go are to meet new people and get new ideas. The new ideas adapted from other people are to help improve the council or activities we do. Since there is always room for improvement when it comes to organizations like this one. The members are excited to go and learn new ideas that could benefit the council in order to improve it. If any questions or concerns come to your attention please ask or tell an active student council member. But don't be too concerned, just smile:)

Still Fabulous,
Crystal Nuñez,
Public Relations

WREATH SALES

The Sophomore and Senior Classes are selling fresh evergreen Classic, Victorian, and Cranberry wreaths, sprays, and centerpieces again this year. Orders and payments are due by October 16th. Please make checks payable to **Meridian Activity Fund**. All checks will be cashed October 20th. Your items will be delivered the week of November 21st-28th. If you have any questions, please call the school at 402-446-7265 Ext. 3.

CHANGES TO THE CALENDAR

PLEASE note these significant changes to the Red Book Calendar:

- October 2nd** - Game Time @ 7:00 p.m.
- October 3rd** - Band @ Hastings
Melody Roundup
- October 9th** - Football @ Lawrence
- October 10th** - JH VB @ Davenport



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Dear Parent or Caregiver,

The SKIP Flu immunization clinic will be offered at your child's school on **Wednesday, October 21, 2015.**

To have your child vaccinated, please do the following:

1. Complete and Sign the Permission Form

You must complete the attached Permission Form and answer **all** the Screening Questions. Return the completed form to your child's school. **Children without a completed and signed consent form will not be immunized. All questions must be answered.**

2. Insured? - - Just include a copy of your Insurance or Medicaid/Medicaid Managed Care Cards

Please **include a photocopy** of your Insurance or Medicaid/Medicaid Managed Care card. There will be **no cost to your family** as we bill the insurance company.

3. Are you uninsured?

Mark the uninsured box on the Permission Form. There will be **no charge** for the vaccination thanks to the support from the county boards.

All students will receive FluMist (nose spray) vaccine unless:

- The student has a health problem or risk such as asthma where the flu shot is recommended.
- You write on the permission form that you want your child to receive the flu shot instead of the nose spray.

Children under the age of nine who have never had the flu vaccine before, or did not receive two doses last year, will need a second dose (booster). Our nurses will review your child's record and will let you know if a booster is needed. We will come back to your child's school to give the booster.

If you need a flu shot, or know someone who needs one, and are unsure where to go, please call us!

Remember—your flu shot protects both you and those you love!

Questions? Call Public Health Solutions District Health Department at 402-826-3880 or toll-free 1-844-830-0813.

This program is supported by Public Health Solutions Board of Health, County Commissioner / Supervisor Boards, and Schools which provide funding for anyone who is uninsured.

Sincerely,

M Jane Ford Witthoff
Health Director



Public Health Solutions Vaccine Screening / Permission Form
Seasonal Influenza 2015-2016

The information collected on this form will be used to decide which vaccine to give and to make sure we have permission to give vaccine. The vaccination will be recorded on Nebraska's state immunization site.

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Sex: Male Female

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Insurance (COPY ATTACHED) Medicaid/Managed Care (COPIES ATTACHED) Uninsured

School: _____ Doctor: _____

SCREENING QUESTIONS -Parent/Guardian: Please answer all the questions below with either YES or NO. Vaccine will not be given if this form is not completed, signed and returned to school on or before flu vaccine day.

Table with 12 screening questions and Yes/No columns. Questions cover flu symptoms, allergies, medical conditions, and recent hospitalizations.

Definitions: Severe allergic reaction - (anaphylaxis) - a quickly developing, exaggerated response by the body to any substance.

Thimerosal - a preservative found in some vaccines.

Guillain - Barré Syndrome - A disease of the nerves. Symptoms are muscle weakness and decreased feeling beginning in the legs and moving upward, sometimes causing a person to be paralyzed or have trouble breathing.

Gentamicin - An antibiotic medicine.

Permission: I have been given a copy of the 2015-2016 Influenza Vaccine Information Statement, and I have read and/or have had explained to me the information on influenza (flu) disease and influenza (flu) vaccine.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
Parent of child receiving vaccine or adult receiving vaccine

For Office Use Only

Nurse Signature: _____

Nurse: Please attach vaccine information sticker here and sign form.
Seasonal Flu 2015-2016



COSTUME FUNDRAISER!



The Meridian Senior Class is sponsoring a costume fundraiser! Go online to order your costume and receive **15% off your entire purchase**. This includes same day shipping if ordered before 3PM! With over 20,000 costumes and low prices you're sure to find one that you and the kids both like!

Now through **Friday, October 23, 2015**, order and receive 15% off your costume order while helping out the senior class!

Website: www.costumeandpartyfundraiser.com

Use promo code **FUN4612** at checkout.



Promo Code:
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GO MUSTANGS!!

