



# 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)

December, 2020

Newsletter - December, 2020  
Superintendent  
Randy Kort

At the beginning of the school year, I was optimistic that we would get through fall sports and we did. Thanks to all the parents and fans for your continued support over the fall activities and please continue that same support as we move into the winter activities of basketball and wrestling. Do understand that moving into indoor activities we will have numerous times, dates, and even some location changes as we begin our winter season. We have cancelled our Jamboree basketball game this year. Many other factors will go in to who is allowed to attend winter sports; wrestling might be parents only at times or even a parent. Basketball games could be the same with parents and/or household members only. There will be combinations of JV and opposite varsity playing at the same time. Times will be changing; there may be pass lists, or tickets. PLEASE watch our website and check the attendance allowance each week or game.

### PER NSAA:

**FOR ALL WINTER ACTIVITIES:** The NSAA is requiring the following of schools, officials, and spectators for all winter season contests:

- Active participants are permitted, but not required, to wear face coverings during competition/performance.
- Coaches and non-active participants (those not currently on the court, mat or stage) are required to wear face coverings at all times. Cheer and dance are considered non-active participants.
- Spectators are required to wear face coverings at all times while attending indoor events.
- Face coverings must cover the nose and mouth.
- The host school may establish additional requirements in consultation with local health departments.

Additional requirements implemented by the host school must be the same for all schools, officials, judges, and spectators. The host school shall comply with the current directed health measure (DHM), mitigate risk and provide adequate opportunities for physical distancing procedures for the visiting schools, officials, judges and all spectators. Recommended protocols for winter contest hosts:

- Restricted attendance/seating areas based on current DHM
- Require 6 feet of physical distance between household groups in stands and spectator areas
- Create separate points of entry and seating for home and visitor teams/spectators
- Provide no concession stands or separate/multiple concession stands for home and visitor spectators
- Provide separate/multiple restrooms for home and visitor spectators
- Use signage, stanchions or floor markings to ensure physical distancing of 6 feet at concession stands and restrooms
- Communicate availability of locker room space for the opposing team and officials to maintain 6 feet of physical distance
- Implement diligent and effective cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched objects and surfaces

Please be aware that many schools will not have concession stands or definitely limited selections at their stands. Some of those schools are also not allowing food to be brought inside. Once again, please check the website and plan accordingly.

With Thanksgiving over and as we prepare for Christmas break, please be aware there are approximately 20 school days left until the end of the second quarter. With so many events going on, please help remind your children to stay aware of their grades and assignments that need to be completed.

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

### SCHOOL CLOSINGS:

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

**Board of Education  
Meridian Public Schools  
District – 48-0303**

**Daykin, Nebraska, 68338  
Monday, November 16, 2020**

**Regular November 16, 2020 Meeting**  
**7:08 P.M.**

Meridian Public School Board of Education met on November 16, 2020, as per notice in the Fairbury Journal-News.

President Bartels called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. The open meeting law information was presented.

Roll call was taken: Vorderstrasse-present, Sobotka-present, VanWesten-present, Niederklein-present-virtually, and Bartels-present. Also present were Superintendent Kort, Principal Scott, Ms. Drees, Brian Rut, Bailey Holtmeier, and Kymber Schwisow.

Nothing new was added to the agenda.

VanWesten moved and Vorderstrasse seconded to excuse Scheer from the meeting. Vote taken: Sobotka-aye,



VanWesten-aye, Vorderstrasse-aye, Niederklein-aye, Bartels-aye. Motion passed 5-0.

No comments were heard from the public.

VanWesten moved and Vorderstrasse seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented.

- A: Minutes of Monday, October 12, 2020 Regular Meeting
- B: District Financial Report
- C: Activity Fund Report
- D: Hot Lunch Fund Report
- G: Bills

Vote taken: Sobotka-aye, VanWesten-aye, Vorderstrasse-aye, Niederklein-aye, Bartels-aye. Motion passed 5-0.

An Americanism Committee meeting was held on November 16, 2020, at 6:30 pm. Staff participated in a PBIS in-service that focused on Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies. Staff also was trained in CPR and First Aid. The junior high students will have the option to take their Chromebooks home to allow them to complete class work and participate in class by the Thanksgiving break. The students will have to enter into the same agreement as the high school students and participate in the insurance program already in place.

Sobotka reported on the first round of meetings to review the District's Hazard Mitigation Plan Profile as part of the Nine-County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan update. Participating plan entities are eligible for pre- and post-disaster mitigation funds for a wide variety of projects listed in the plan. Second round meetings are scheduled for early next year with the plan being adopted in the fall of 2021.

Superintendent Kort summarized the 2019-2020 Audit completed by Dana Cole.

Sobotka moved and Niederklein seconded to approve the Annual Audit Report. Vote taken: Sobotka-aye, VanWesten-aye, Vorderstrasse-aye, Niederklein-aye, Bartels-aye. Motion passed 5-0.

Vorderstrasse moved and VanWesten seconded to approve the Multicultural

Report. Vote taken: Sobotka-aye, VanWesten-aye, Vorderstrasse-aye, Niederklein-aye, Bartels-aye. Motion passed 5-0.

Policy 7000s were reviewed. Vote to approve will be in December.

Mr. Scott gave the Principal's Report.

1. Student count as of October 18, 2020: 109 Elementary Students; 96 Junior High and High School Students.
2. As an incentive for wearing masks students earned a "no school day" on November 6<sup>th</sup>.
3. Teachers and students of families who are required to quarantine are participating in virtual teaching and learning through Zoom and Google classroom. Superintendent Kort is delivering materials that are not available over the internet.
4. JH basketball and wrestling have begun practicing with some contests already occurring.
5. HS basketball and wrestling practice started today. The basketball jamboree games scheduled for November 24<sup>th</sup> have been cancelled by NSAA.
6. Play production will participate in the CRC competition Wednesday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, at Shickley. Pawnee City Invitational is Saturday, November 21<sup>st</sup>, and Districts are at Pawnee City Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup>. With COVID restrictions these contests will be the same format of perform, critique and leave.

Superintendent Kort reported:

1. Bus Update: The District will apply for NDEE funding for the replacement of the 2008 school bus next fiscal year.
2. NASB Conference has been Changed to a Virtual Only
3. Keeping School Open: Students and staff continue to practice social distancing and wearing masks.
  - \* JV Games and Times: Schedules and times of games may change due to COVID scheduling.
  - \* Separate Days: Discussion of having JV and Varsity events on separate days does not improve social distancing at a small school where only a few athletes would not be attending both events. Scheduling and times may change.

- \* Water saver fountains have been installed.
- \* Basketball tournament for 2021 Christmas Break: Meridian, Deshler, Diller/Odell and Tri-County are scheduling JV and Varsity basketball tournaments starting next year. This will allow the JV to participate and not have a long break with no games.
- \* Ms. Drees is continuing to take classes for her administration degree and is providing additional training for staff.
- \* Mrs. Schropfer will be the girls track coach.

Sobotka moved and VanWesten seconded to go into executive session to discuss the 2020-2021 teachers' negotiations.

Bartels stated that it was moved and seconded to go into executive session at 7:35 p.m. to discuss the 2020-2021 teachers' negotiations. Vote taken: Sobotka-aye, VanWesten-aye, Vorderstrasse-aye, Niederklein-aye, Bartels-aye. Motion passed 5-0. Brain Rut was asked to participate in the closed session discussion as a newly elected 2021 Meridian School Board member.

The Board came out of executive session at 7:54 p.m.

Next Regular Meeting was set for Monday, December 21, 2020, at 6:00 p.m.

VanWesten moved and Vorderstrasse seconded to adjourn at 7:56 p.m. Vote taken: Sobotka-aye, VanWesten-aye, Vorderstrasse-aye, Niederklein-aye, Bartels-aye. Motion passed 5-0.

*Jamie Niederklein,*

Secretary Meridian District #48-0303

**EARNED DAY OFF?**

If students of Meridian Public Schools are able to continue to attend classes in person, they will earn another day off. The administration is hoping to have Monday, December 14th, 2020, as a "NO SCHOOL" day to reward students for continuing to wear masks and social distance. Here's hoping Meridian will be able to maintain its in person status.





*Mustang MEMO*  
*Mr. Harold Scott*  
*Principal*

Student count for 2020-2021

As of 10-8-20

PreK	12	7 <sup>th</sup>	19
Kindergarten	14 -1	8 <sup>th</sup>	19 +1
1 <sup>st</sup>	10	9 <sup>th</sup>	12
2 <sup>nd</sup>	17	10 <sup>th</sup>	18
3 <sup>rd</sup>	16	11 <sup>th</sup>	16
4 <sup>th</sup>	13 -1	12 <sup>th</sup>	<u>12</u>
5 <sup>th</sup>	15		
6 <sup>th</sup>	<u>12</u>		
	109 -2	96	+1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>205 -1</b>		

Meridian hosted a socially distanced, virtual Veterans Day program on November 11<sup>th</sup>. It was broadcast on STRIV to the classrooms and to the public.

Students earned a “no school day” on November 6 as an incentive for wearing their masks in school and continuing in-person learning.

We have some teachers and students that are doing virtual teaching and learning through Zoom and Google classroom. This is available for families who are required to quarantine. Mr. Kort has been making home deliveries of materials that are not available over the internet.

JH basketball and wrestling have begun practicing with some contests already occurring.

HS basketball and wrestling practice began Monday, November 16. The basketball jamboree games scheduled for November 24 have been cancelled.

Play production competitions began Wednesday, November 18, with CRC competition at Shickley. With COVID restrictions changing, each school performed, had their critique and left. Unfortunately, with this schedule, we missed out on seeing other school productions this year. Meridian attended the Pawnee City Invitational on Saturday, November 21, and will have districts at Pawnee City on Monday, November 30. These contests had the same format of perform, critique and leave.

**COUNSELOR'S CONNECTION**  
*by*  
*Lisa Hermsmeier*

**2nd Semester Schedule Changes**

All 7-12 students interested in making changes to their 2nd semester schedule should do so before the holiday break. Please plan to do this the week December 14-18. Meridian offers different electives each semester, and dual-credit classes are available for juniors and seniors. Parents: If you have questions on your child's schedule, please call or email Mrs. Hermsmeier at school.

**Freshman to Seniors... College Timeline will keep you on track to college...** EducationQuest has a **College Timeline** (<https://www.educationquest.org/myeducationquest/college-timeline/>) for students in grades 9-12 that spells out steps you should take during fall, winter, spring, and summer of each year to plan for college.

The Timeline also allows you to add your own tasks, get reminders when it's time to complete tasks, and check off tasks when they're complete. You can access these features by creating and/or logging into your MyEducationQuest account at **EducationQuest.org**.

Check it out and give it a try. It will make the college planning process more manageable!

**ACT Registration**

This is a reminder that to register for the ACT, an account needs to be created at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org). From here, you will fill in specific information and also select your testing date and site. Each ACT costs \$55.00, but if you qualify for free or reduced lunches, you may request a fee waiver from Mrs. Hermsmeier. Our school code is 282-345. Please feel free to contact Mrs. Hermsmeier with any questions or concerns. Juniors, earn the best possible ACT/SAT scores by taking the exam in the spring of your junior year and again in the fall of your senior year. You must register by January 8th, for the February 6th ACT, by March 12th, for the April 17th ACT, and/or by May 7th, for the June 12th ACT. Keep in mind that all juniors will be taking the ACT at school in April.

**Seniors...have you submitted your college applications?**

If you haven't submitted your college admission applications yet, it's time to get serious! Contact your top college choices for application deadlines and procedures. Ask if the admission application is also the application for college-based scholarships. If not, ask about the scholarship application process. By now, you should have applied to your top three colleges, and you should also be working on upcoming scholarships. The counseling webpage is updated with scholarships periodically! Please make sure you know deadlines for scholarships offered by the college(s) of your choice.

**Senior FAFSA Information (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)**

Seniors, if you haven't done so already, it's time to file the FAFSA! You'll need to complete the form before your college's priority date (typically March 1 or April 1) to apply for federal, state, and college-based financial aid. You and a parent can complete the form at [FAFSA.gov](http://FAFSA.gov). Before you start, create an FSA ID for you and one for a parent at [fsaid.ed.gov](http://fsaid.ed.gov). You'll need them to access and sign the FAFSA.

**What to expect after you submit your FAFSA**

The FAFSA opened October 1 so many of you have already completed and submitted your form. Here's what happens next:

- \* **Expect a Student Aid Report (SAR).** You'll receive it via an email link if you provided an email address on your FAFSA. The SAR acknowledges that your FAFSA was received, and if you need to take further action to process your FAFSA.
- \* **Make sure you applied for admission to colleges you listed on your FAFSA.** Colleges who receive your FAFSA results typically won't send you a financial aid package until you've applied and have been accepted to the school.
- \* **Watch for verification requests.** The college(s) you listed on your FAFSA might request verification of your FAFSA information. If so, send the required documents to the colleges' financial aid office. *The college will not process your financial aid until they receive the documents.*
- \* **Watch for financial aid award notifications.** The colleges you



applied to – and listed on your FAFSA – will send you a financial aid award notification detailing the types and amounts of aid they're offering based on your financial need.

**Winning the Scholarship Game**

Follow these tips to increase your chances of earning scholarships:

- \***Don't ever pay for scholarship searches!** Use free resources such as ScholarshipQuest at EducationQuest.org with over 2,000 Nebraska-based scholarships. Free national sites include Peterson's, FindTuition, Cappex, and Chegg.
- \* **Visit your school counselor often** for information about local scholarships.
- \* **Focus on local and college-specific scholarships** because you're more likely to earn them.
- \* **Earn the best possible ACT/SAT scores** by taking the exam in the spring of your junior year and again in the fall of your senior year.
- \* **Use quality references** such as a teacher, coach or counselor. Encourage them to write specific examples of your leadership skills. Give them at least two weeks advance notice and a specific deadline.
- \* **Tailor your essay to the scholarship.** Ask an English teacher to read your essay and offer advice on making a big impact. Your essay will need to stand out from other applications.

**Virtual College Fair site will remain open until Dec. 1**

EducationQuest held virtual college fairs Sept. 27-30 and on Nov. 17 so that students could meet with college reps and watch live college-prep presentations. Even though the live fairs are over, you may visit the site at eqf.org/collegefair until Dec. 1 to visit college booths and watch recorded sessions. If you visit at least 3 booths, you'll be automatically entered into a drawing for a \$500 scholarship!

**CALANDAR DISCLAIMER**

Meridian Public Schools would like to advise the community, due to COVID, dates and events are subject to change. We will do our best to keep you updated and informed as to the changes through our website, daily announcements, and SchoolMessenger

(our all-call system). If you have any questions, please call Mr. Kort or Mr. Scott at 402-446-7265. Thank you.

**FFA**

FFA has been very busy throughout this past month. This month at our November chapter meeting we awarded Kim Schropfer the FFA Member of the Month. She volunteered at several community service opportunities, competed in the



L to R: Kim Schropfer, Brayden Rut

land judging contest, sold fruit, and attended nearly every FFA event. On November 4th, 15 FFA members traveled to the York County Fairgrounds to compete in the



L to R: Olivia Schafer, McKenzie Hofstetter, Kymber Schwisow, Taelyn Filipi, Chase Bartels, Erin Kujath

Livestock Judging competition. In the junior high division, McKenzie Hofstetter placed 16th, Olivia Schafer



L to R: Olivia Schafer, McKenzie Hofstetter, Taelyn Filipi, Chase Bartels

17th, Taelyn Filipi 19th, Kyan Sones 21st, and Becca Vinsonhaler 22nd out of 62 contestants. Sam Thomas,

Tucker Simms, and Colby Smith also competed. The team of McKenzie, Olivia, Taelyn, and Kyan placed 3rd out of 13 teams. In the junior division (freshmen and sophomores) Kymber Schwisow placed 25th and Kailyn Paul placed 34th out of 100 contestants. Bailey Holtmeier and Chase Bartels also competed. In the senior division (juniors and seniors) Keagan Sones placed 17th out of 97 contestants. Erika Schwisow and Erin Kujath also competed. The Meridian FFA Chapter



would like to thank Akrs for sponsoring the entire chapter with free John Deere t-shirts with our chapter name and the FFA logo on them. We also wrapped up our annual fundraiser this month. We sold a total of \$14,101 of fruit, meat, cheese, and candy with our top five individual sellers including Erin Kujath, Chase Bartels, Tucker Simms, Jaylee Sobotka, and Taelyn Filipi. We would also recognize siblings who met the selling goal: Kailyn and Kelsi Paul, Erika and Kymber Schwisow, and Keagan and Kyan Sones. We would like to give a big thank you to everyone who supported our fundraiser. The money raised will allow us to attend state and national convention, leadership conferences, and compete in contests.

**Upcoming Events:**

- Food Sales Delivery: Week of November 30-December 4th
- December FFA Meeting: December 8th at 7:15am

**LDE (Leadership Development Event) Practices:**

- Parliamentary Procedure: Wednesdays at 7:15am
- Quiz Bowl: Wednesdays at 4pm
- Conduct of Chapter Meeting: Wednesdays at 4:45pm

Sincerely,  
Chase Bartels, Reporter





### STUDENT COUNCIL

It's starting to get cold out, and the Student Council is using these winter months to give back. Stu-Co is once again putting up the Hat, Mitten & Scarf Tree. The Hat and Mitten Tree is for donations of winter clothing such as hats and gloves. The Student Council will give all donations to Blue Valley in Fairbury. We place a Christmas tree in the commons, just inside the front doors, so let's do what we can to fill the tree! Donations will be accepted until the last day of the semester, December 22.

Student Council members did a follow up clean-up of corn husks for a Daykin resident after several days of intense winds. If there are any community members with similar needs please contact the school to see if we can help.

The Student Council would like to welcome its new members, Mackenzie Rau and Edward Haverluck. Vacancy elections took place the first week in November.

Happy holidays!

Public Relations, Brynn Holtmeier

### OPEN HOUSE

The annual Struckman-Baatz Library Open House will be on December 19, 2020, from 9:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. in Western. The library will be accepting trees to display starting Tuesday, December 1, through Wednesday, December 16th, between the hours of 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. We will not accept trees taller than 3' high. If you have any questions, please call Patsy Meyer at 402-433-2177 during library hours.

## Mustang Masks For Sale!!

The junior class is selling Mustang Masks/Gaiters. Please submit this order form with payment below. Orders turned in by Monday, will be proceed during the week and you will receive your mask by Friday of the same week. Please contact Ms. Hermsmeier with any questions and/or ask a junior class member. Please make checks payable to "Meridian Activity Fund".



### Red/Black Mustang Mask (Badger Brand) B-CORE 3-PLY MASK - \$7.50

- 3 Ply construction—Layers made of soft B-Core moisture management polyester
- Comfort Anti-Chafe ear loops stretch 100% and hold their shape while being soft on the ears for all-day wear
- Anti-microbial odor protection
- Middle seam contours and conforms to the face
- Durable lab-tested fabrics hold shape and fit wash after wash
- Writable interior name bar for identification
- Sizes Available: Youth S/M, Youth L/XL, Adult S/M, Adult L/XL



### Red/Black Mustang Gaiter (Badger Brand) - \$10.00 PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY MASK

- 83% Polyester/17% Spandex moisture management fabric
- Serves as an additional barrier to the outside environment for essential outings
- On the Flat Dimensions (S/M) Length 9" Width @ Top 8" Width @ Bottom 7"
- On the Flat Dimensions (L/XL) Length 10" Width @ Top 10" Width @ Bottom 9"
- Easy, pull up style
- Seamless, comfort design

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student to send mask home with: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mark the number of masks below.

**Red Mask**  
\$7.50 ea.

Y L/XL \_\_\_\_\_  
Y S/M \_\_\_\_\_  
L/XL \_\_\_\_\_  
S/M \_\_\_\_\_

**Black Mask**  
\$7.50 ea.

Y L/XL \_\_\_\_\_  
Y S/M \_\_\_\_\_  
L/XL \_\_\_\_\_  
S/M \_\_\_\_\_

**Red Gaiter**  
\$10.00 ea.

S/M \_\_\_\_\_  
L/XL \_\_\_\_\_

**Black Gaiter**  
\$10.00 ea.

S/M \_\_\_\_\_  
L/XL \_\_\_\_\_

Make Checks Payable to **Meridian Activity Fund**. Total Due: \_\_\_\_\_  
Forms can be returned to HS or Elementary Office, or Lisa Hermsmeier.




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