



# 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)

January, 2021

Newsletter - January, 2021  
Superintendent  
Randy Kort

### WE MADE IT !!!!!

The first semester is over. WOW! What a year it has been. I want to say Thank You to all the staff, students, and parents for your support and efforts in coming together during this year. We have had to make suggestions, limitations, and requirements from attendance at events to creating video concerts and mandating masks. We have continued to make decisions that were needed to keep kids in school and instruction in person. We did it. This would not have been possible if it were not a community effort and I want to thank everyone who helped make this possible. Looking ahead, I wish I could say it would all be over in weeks, but the reality is we are months down the road. The vaccine is arriving in Nebraska and the plan to offer the vaccine has begun. I am unsure how this rollout will affect the easing of requirements but as we get word that we are able to roll them back, we will.

### WINTER SPORTS

We have been able to begin basketball and wrestling this year. Current NSAA rules allows for 25% capacity and has limited live fans to household members only. January 4<sup>th</sup>, the NSAA will revisit and offer updated policy. We will communicate that through our website, Facebook and Twitter. The current state of attendance has had schools adapt and it seems every event is either on Striv or Youtube.

### MERIDIAN COMMUNITY FITNESS CENTER

The Meridian Community Fitness Center is excited to have the new treadmills and have heard nothing but good things about this upgrade. There is other equipment on order and will be updated soon. We ask everyone to continue to assist 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. Continue to clean and wipe down the equipment after you are finished.

### **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 21, 2020**

### Regular December 21, 2020 Meeting 6:00 P.M.

Meridian Public School Board of Education met on December 21, 2020, 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: Scheer-present, Sobotka-present, VanWesten-present, Niederklein-present-virtually, and Bartels-present. Also present were

Superintendent Kort, Principal Scott, Brian Rut, Lane Barton, and Brayden Rut.

Nothing new was added to the agenda.

VanWesten moved and Scheer seconded to excuse Vorderstrasse from the meeting. Vote taken: Sobotka-aye, VanWesten-aye, Scheer-aye, Niederklein-aye, Bartels-aye. Motion passed 5-0.

No comments were heard from the public.

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

- A: Minutes of Monday, November 16, 2020 Regular Meeting
- B: District Financial Report
- C: Activity Fund Report
- D: Hot Lunch Fund Report
- G: Bills

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

Teachers' in-service in January will focus on Math and setting five year goals. Ms. Ruiz certificate has been approved and hopefully the immigration process will now proceed.

The yearly review of the District's English Language program has been completed. The District, with the help of ESU, started a mental health program last year. The program has been successful with an individual coming once a week to talk with students and staff.

Sobotka moved and VanWesten seconded to approve Policy 7000 series. Vote taken: Sobotka-aye, VanWesten-aye, Scheer-aye, Niederklein-aye, Bartels-aye. Motion passed 5-0.

Michael Heidemann requested that the District enter an access easement to farm ground across the District's south property line. The Heidemann family is selling the farmstead and they don't want to maintain an access easement across



their property to the existing farm ground. The matter was tabled and it was stated that Superintendent Kort and Board member Sobotka will further investigate. The Board will continue this discussion at the January Board Meeting.

Principal's Report:

- \* Student Count as of December 15, 2020: 106 Elementary Students; 96 Junior High and High School Students
- \* Students earned another no school day on December 14, as an incentive for wearing their masks and the continuation of in-person learning.
- \* Some students are doing virtual 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 teams (and younger) are having success starting off the season with tournament wins. JH boys won the Lewiston tournament. JH girls won the Dorchester tournament. 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade boys won the Fairbury tournament.
- \* JV girls and boys basketball teams both won the Meridian JV Tournament. Congratulations to all!
- \* Wrestlers are having individual successes on the mat.
- \* High school basketball and wrestling continues over break. Keep watching for updates to visitor guidelines and media broadcasts.
- \* Elementary and JH/HS concerts were presented virtually online – pre-recorded.
- \* School will dismiss for break on Tuesday, December 22 at 1:30 p.m. Teachers will be back on Monday, January 4, for in-service work on curriculum and school improvement. Students return on Tuesday, January 5.
- \* Speech season begins in January. Currently, meets will be held synchronously and asynchronously. (Either performing at Meridian and zooming to a site, or sending in a pre-recorded speech. Either way, judges are critiquing from home.)
- \* NSAA moratorium is December 23-27. No practice or competition.

Superintendent Kort reported:

- \* Start working on 2021-2022 calendar – This year implemented 2 Fridays off in March.

- \* Meridian Beef – Receiving another beef in January. FFA will work this summer to establish facilities to possibly raise a couple feeder cattle.
- \* Update from NCSA / Legislative
- \* Update NSAA – Current and Ever-Changing Restriction for Attendance
- \* Update from CRC / Mudecas- Back up plans for basketball and protocol. Looking at alternative sites in case of a shut down.
- \* Wrestling Meet – Meridian had no fans and showed it on Striv and YouTube. YouTube had some technical difficulty with all the students login to the wireless.
- \* Green House – Plymouth Electric Wired this Month.

Sobotka moved and VanWesten seconded to approve the teachers negotiations for the 2021-2022 school year. The total negotiated package is an approximately 3 percent increase from 2020-2021. Vote taken: Sobotka -aye, VanWesten-aye, Scheer-aye, Niederklein-aye, Bartels-aye. Motion passed 5-0.

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.

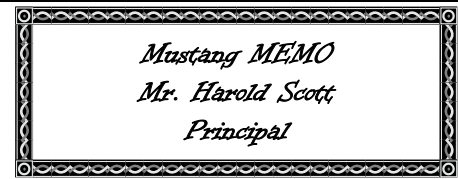
Jay VanWesten was thanked for his 15 years of dedicated service as a Board member representing both Jefferson and Saline Counties.

Next Regular Meeting was set for Monday, January 18, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

VanWesten moved and Scheer seconded to adjourn at 6:55 p.m. Vote taken: Sobotka-aye, VanWesten-aye, Scheer-aye, Niederklein-aye, Bartels-aye. Motion passed 5-0.

*Jamie Niederklein.*

Secretary Meridian District #48-030



Student count for 2020-2021  
As of 12-15-20

PreK	12	7 <sup>th</sup>	19
Kindergarten	14	8 <sup>th</sup>	19
1 <sup>st</sup>	9	-1	9 <sup>th</sup> 12
2 <sup>nd</sup>	17	10 <sup>th</sup>	18
3 <sup>rd</sup>	15	-1	11 <sup>th</sup> 16
4 <sup>th</sup>	12	-1	12 <sup>th</sup> 12
5 <sup>th</sup>	15		
6 <sup>th</sup>	12		
	106	-3	96
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>-3</b>	

Students earned another “No School” day on December 14, as an incentive for wearing their masks and school staying with in-person learning.

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

Junior High and Elementary basketball teams are having success starting off the season with tournament wins. Junior High boys won the Lewiston tournament. Junior High girls brought home gold from the Dorchester tournament; and 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade boys were champions of the Fairbury tournament.

Congratulations to the JV boys and girls basketball teams for each winning the Meridian JV Invite.

Wrestlers are having individual successes on the mat.

High school basketball and wrestling continues over break. Keep watching for updates to visitor guidelines and media broadcasts.

Elementary and JH/HS concerts were pre-recorded and presented virtually online.

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January 4, for in-service work on curriculum and school improvement. Students will return on Tuesday, January 5.

Speech season begins in January. Currently, meets will be held synchronously and asynchronously. (Either performing at Meridian and zooming to a site, or sending in a pre-recorded speech. Either way, judges are critiquing from home.) We will see what February brings regarding the Meridian Invite and CRC.



**Upcoming Dates:**

January 8 – Deadline to register for February 6 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 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 6<sup>th</sup>, April 17<sup>th</sup>, or June 12<sup>th</sup> 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](http://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).

- \* 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 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 2021.
- \* 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... 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 Ms. Hermsmeier 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 Hermsmeier;  
PreK-12 Guidance;  
[lhermsmeier@meridianmustangs.org](mailto:lhermsmeier@meridianmustangs.org)  
402-446-7265 ext 1253



**Seed and Plant Sales**

The Meridian 7-12 grade students will be selling seed packets and plants after the new year. Sales will run a little differently this year. **The seed sales will run from January 7<sup>th</sup> through January 25<sup>th</sup>**, with delivery during Parent Teacher Conferences - the week of February 15<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup>. This allows you to get an early start on planting, if you so choose. With the early arrival of the packets, you will have time to start the seeds indoors and have seedlings ready for outside planting. Due to COVID, we are trying to limit the contact our students have with the public to a minimum. We will also sell plants along with the seeds, **BUT NOTE THE ACTUAL PLANT CAMPAIGN runs from March 3<sup>rd</sup> through the 26<sup>th</sup>**. The delivery dates for the plants will be on April 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>.

If a student asks you to buy from them, they may send you a link to view the catalogs or you can go directly to [www.janetsjungle.com](http://www.janetsjungle.com). Please enter "Meridian" when you are prompted to enter your organization and the seed and plant catalogs will pop up for you to view at your leisure. Notice there is



also an order form below each catalog you can order from. If you wish to give a student credit, enter their name on the order form in the space provided. You can pay using a credit card. Students may also contact you personally with a catalog. Due to COVID 19, we are allowing each student to choose the method (online or in person) they use to sell this year. Remember our prices are very comparable to purchase in stores.

If you have any questions, please contact the school at 402-446-7265 extension 3.

**FBLA**

Happy Holidays! Rada and Butter Braids have come in! Members should be out delivering. Thank you to all who contributed to ordering this year. Everybody made enough to reach the

goals needed for SLC. However, it is with heavy hearts that SLC has been made virtual this year. The chapter is optimistic that COVID-19 will be cleared up soon, so that activities can go back to normal. In order for this to happen, everyone is being encouraged to continue wearing their masks.

Wishing everyone Safe and Happy Holidays!

Reporter, Tyleiah Gooding and President, Brynn Holtmeier

**STUCO**

The end of the semester looked a little different this year. The administration and the Student Council worked out a plan so each of the classes could be together for the End of the Semester Party. The classes competed in a class

competition socially distanced. Unfortunately, due to COVID regulations, the Student Council is not doing the half-time free throw contest for Make-A-Wish.

Magazine sales came in this past month just in time to use the wrapping paper and bake the cookies from the sales. Students should have everything delivered by now. Awesome job to everyone who sold and thank you to everyone who supported us!!

December was also the time for donating hats, mittens, and scarves. The Student Council hosted its Annual Hat and Mitten Tree. Thank you to everyone who donated! Stu-Co sent the donations to Blue Valley in Fairbury.

Wishing everyone a Wonderful Winter Break!  
Public Relations, Brynn Holtmeier






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