

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.

www.meridianmustangs.org

Newsletter

Newsletter – December, 2023 Superintendent Randy Kort

What a fun and exciting experience watching the girls and their 4th place finish at State Volleyball. Great Job!

I am writing this as we prepare for Thanksgiving and know when we come back we will be engaged with One Act, Basketball, Wrestling and the elementary & secondary concerts. We will be finishing with the first semester as we will have approximately 20 days left. Please check with your child and on PowerSchool and see how they are performing academically.

Please be aware there will be changes to schedules and times as the teams will have various quarters able to play. We will work to keep these updates on the webpage, shared through Twitter, Facebook, and all calls as needed.

As the Holidays are approaching please spend quality time with your family and be safe with your travels.

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.

The media outlets Meridian Public Schools will use for late starts and school closings are as follows:

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 20, 2023

Regular November 20, 2023 Meeting

Meridian Public School Board of Education met on November 20, 2023, as per notice in the Fairbury Journal-News.

President Bartels called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The open meeting law information was presented.

Roll call was taken: Rut – present, Barton – present, Niederklein – present, Sobotka – present, and Bartels – present. Also present were Superintendent Kort, Principal Drees, and Principal Hull.

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

Nothing new was added to the agenda.

Comments were heard from the public regarding the upcoming NSAA football classification for the next two school years.

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

- A. Minutes of the Sunday, October 15, 2023 Regular Meeting
- B. District Financial Report
- C. Activity Fund Report
- D. Hot Lunch Fund Report

E. Bills

Vote taken: Rut – aye, Barton – aye, Niederklein – aye, Sobotka – aye, and Bartels – aye. Motion passed 5-0.

Principal Drees presented the Curriculum Report to the Board.

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explained President Bartels that enrollment numbers would classify Meridian for 8-man football for the 2024 and 2025 seasons. Meridian does have the option to use a 2-year exemption and remain eligible for playoffs in 6-man football if the vote is to stay 6-man for two more years. Sobotka moved and Rut seconded to elect to use the 2-year exemption and remain 6-man for the 2024 and 2025 football season. Vote Rut – aye, Barton – nay taken: Niederklein - aye, Sobotka - nay, and Bartels – aye. Motion passed 3-2.

Superintendent Kort explained that there has been a change and Meridian will now be hosting the CRC Quiz Bowl instead of CRC Speech, and therefore the teacher work day will need to change from February 21, 2024 to February 14, 2024. Niederklein moved and Barton seconded to move the teacher work day from February 21, 2024 to February 14, 2024. Vote taken: Rut – aye, Barton – aye, Niederklein – aye, Sobotka – aye, and Bartels – aye. Motion passed 5-0.

Principal Drees and Principal Hull presented the Principals' Reports to the Board.

Superintendent Kort presented the Superintendent's Report to the Board.

The next regular meeting was set for Wednesday, December 13, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

Sobotka moved and Barton seconded to go into closed session to discuss teacher negotiations for the 2024-2025 school year.

Bartels stated that it was moved and seconded to go into closed session at 6:43 p.m. to discuss teacher negotiations for the 2024-2025 school year. Vote taken: Rut – aye, Barton – aye, Niederklein – aye, Sobotka – aye, and Bartels – aye. Motion passed 5-0.

The Board came out of closed session at 6:49 p.m.

Nail to the varsity... Cheer them along the way...

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Rut moved and Niederklein seconded to approve the teachers' negotiations for the 2024-2025 school year pending the approval by the Meridian Education Association (MEA). The total negotiated package is approximately a 2.66% increase from 2023-2024. Vote taken: Rut - aye, Barton - aye, Niederklein aye, Sobotka - aye, and Bartels - aye. Motion passed 5-0.

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

Jamie Niederklein,

Secretary Meridian District #48-0303

"The Dish" with Drees

I feel like I was just writing to you about starting the school year, and now we are looking at the end of the first semester! Basketball and wrestling are underway, and Christmas trees have started to pop up. December is here! We've had a great first semester. The students and teachers have been working hard, and there have been so many things to celebrate, and we aren't done yet. We have winter concerts coming up, One-Act performances, and games meets, classroom celebrations, and our annual elementary movie trip.

As we move into this new season, let's keep the momentum going. It can be hard not to get bogged down with everything that the season brings. Let's not think about what didn't happen or what we didn't get done. If you're showing up and doing the best you can everyday, that's something to celebrate! My hope for everyone is that we can all find some peace and joy this December and enjoy the new season. I want to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



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PRINCIPALLY SPEAKING WITH MR. HULL

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As we turn the calendar to December, there are only three weeks left before the end of the first semester. Our students are hard at work in their classes finishing up the second quarter. We are proud of the work our students have done and their academic gains and achievements. This past month, our counselor, Ms. Hermsmeier, had set up college visits for our students. Our freshmen visited Peru State, the sophomores visited Hastings College, and the Juniors visited UNL. This is a valuable experience for our students to consider their next steps- both if they are interested in a four year college, and what the different types of schools have to offer.

When it comes to activities, our Winter activities are hard at work preparing for their competitions. Our One-Act team has had a good start to their season with third place finishes at the Fairbury Competition One-Act and the Crossroads Conference. Basketball and wrestling practices have begun with competitions to follow shortly. One item to note in basketball is that The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) changed their rules regarding bonus and free throws:

- Fouls: No more 1-and-1 free throws
- Bonus will be two shots
- Bonus begins at five fouls
- Team fouls will reset each quarter
- Scoreboard will show a maximum of five fouls per quarter

It will take time for officials and scoreboard operators to adjust to these changes.

We also want to congratulate our First-Team and Honorable Mention All Conference selections and for volleyball. Jaala Stewart and Kaira Niederklein were First-Team selections and McKenzie Hofstetter and Braxtyn were Honorable Mention. Rut Congratulations!

Finally, I hope everyone has a great holiday season and enjoys time with their families! I hope that Winter Break gives everyone an opportunity to rest and get set for a great second semester!



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 11-15. 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 а 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. From here, you will fill in specific information and also select your testing date and site. Each ACT costs \$68.00, 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 5th, for the February 10th ACT, by March 8th, for the April 13th ACT, and/or by May 3rd, for the June 8th ACT. Keep in mind that all juniors will be taking the ACT at school in April.



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<u>Seniors...have you submitted your</u> <u>college applications?</u>

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 and the senior google classroom 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, December you will be able to file for 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. Before you start, create an FSA ID for you and one for a parent at fsaid.ed.gov. You'll need them to access and sign the FAFSA.

What to expect after you submit your FAFSA

The FAFSA opens in December so many of you will soon complete and submit 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* Meridian Public School, District 48-0303

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 collegespecific 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. <u>Give them at least two weeks</u> <u>advance notice and a specific</u> <u>deadline</u>.

*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.

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.

Just a From the Music Department

As the old saying goes, "Time flies when you're having fun." We are having a great time in the music department, and it is so hard to believe we are ready for the month of December and the last month in the first semester of school! In November, we had eight junior high students and one high school student participate in special events. Jacob Buresh, Lani Lutjemeyer, Levi McKenzie, Ximena Nunez, Jetta Stewart, Darius Suarez, Cylas Welch, and Kylee VanWesten represented Meridian at the Crete Junior High Vocal Clinic at Crete Middle School. Students sang with other junior high students from around Southeast Nebraska and performed a concert that evening. Braiden Durflinger participated in the Festival Band at Doane University's Fall Festival of Winds on November 4.

Please be sure to mark your calendars for our Elementary Winter Concert on Monday, December 4 at 7pm and our Junior High & High School Winter Concert on Tuesday, December 5 at 7pm. Both performances will be in the high school gym.

Thank you to the many generous donors who have supplied instruments for beginning band students! We are so grateful for your support and generosity!

We are so proud of all that our students have accomplished this semester! Thank you for all you do to support music in our school!



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Sat	A Menu is subject to Change without notice.	6	16	23 This institution is an equal opportunity employer	30
Frí	t Cinnamon Rolls Creamed Turkey Mashed Potatoes Gravy/Roll Mixed Vegetables	8 Sausage Egg Tornado Chicken Fajita Lettuce/Salsa Spanish Rice Corn	15 Biscuits & Gravy Philly Sandwich Fries Fruit Cup	22 1:30 DISMISSAL French Toast Sticks Pizza Corn Ice Cream	76
Thu		7 Fruit & Granola Parfait Goulash Cheese Breadstick Carrots	14 Pancakes Chicken Teriyaki Brown Rice Bread Broccoli	21 Apple Frudel Chicken Drumstick Mashed Potatoes Gravy/Roll Fruit Cup	28 Sak
Wed		6 Donut Turkey Noodle Soup Hot Ham & Cheese	13 Muffin Tater Tot Green Beans Roll	20 Ham Egg Bar Creamy Italian Parmesan Pasta Green Beans Garlic Toast	27 2 NO SCHOOL - Holiday Break
Tue		5 Ham Egg Bar Hotdog Sauerkraut Baked Beans Cookie	12 Omelet/Toast Breaded Pork Sandwich Hash brown Patty Coleslaw	19 Pancake on a stick Soft Shell Taco Lettuce/ Salsa Refried Beans Churro	26 NC
Mon		4 Pop-Tart Pizza Green Beans Pudding cup	11 French Toast Sticks Corndog Baked Beans Fruit cup	18 Breakfast Pizza Cheesy Bread Marinara Sauce Carrots Cookie	25 Christmas Day
Sun		m	9	11	24 Christmas Eve 31 New Year's Eve

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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)

<u>Cost per Transaction:</u> \$1.75 flat fee when using a checking account \$2.95 per \$100 when using a credit/debit card

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Go Mustangs!

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



Step-by-Step Guide for Parents

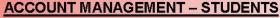
Getting started with e~Funds for Schools Mobile Website

e~Funds for Schools



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.



- 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.





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.

ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT - PAYMENT INFORMATION

- 1. Log into your Account
- 2. Select Payment Methods under Payment Settings.
- 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.





