

Holdrege Middle School February 2008

Children – Our Community's Investment

www.thedusters.org Russ Baker, Principal P.O. Box 2002 • Holdrege • Nebraska • 68949-2002

From the Principal's Desk:

The big point of emphasis this year with our teachers has been the implementation of the WFSG groups in the school district. WFSG stands for Work Faculty Study Groups. Once a week at 7:00 in the morning, staff has been meeting in curricular areas to work on student needs. This process has been a great experience, as it has brought our teachers closer together in improving the product that is being presented to your child. The outcomes of these groups include but are not exclusive to curriculum improvement, student concerns, gifted education, and educational research.

Check the Website

Check the website for news about what is going on in the school. There are several articles dealing with the middle school right now on the front page and the middle school page. The website is www.thedusters.org. Along with the articles, the portal for Infinite Campus is there, as well as an activities calendar to find out what is going on in the schools for a particular sport or activity.

Student-Led Conferences

We will be having student-led conferences on Tuesday, February 12th, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and Thursday, February 14th, from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. We will be scheduling only one conference per student. We believe that if the student is leading this conference and the focus is on him/her, parents should be able to come together at this time for the sake of their child. If you feel like you need time with your child's teacher, the teachers will be available for you to talk to at that time. **SCHOOL WILL NOT BE IN SESSION FOR STUDENTS ON FEBRUARY 14TH & 15TH.**

Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day is quickly approaching, and we would like to encourage **those parents who want to give gifts to their children to do that at home**. The process of having it delivered to school makes for a disruption in the school day and can lead to hurt feelings for many students. Thank you for your sensitivity to this issue.

Spring Pictures

Spring pictures will be on Thursday, January 31st. The student can choose not to have their picture taken or choose from different poses. No money is required the day they take the pictures. Pictures are then sent home for you to review to see if you would like to purchase any of them in the packet. **It is important that the pictures be returned if you do not like the portraits, as you will be charged for any pictures not returned to the school.** Visit www.lifetouch.com for clothing suggestions, grooming tips, pose choices, program details, and more.

Hoops For Heart:

Once again, the Holdrege Middle School Physical Education 5th & 6th graders will be doing the Hoops For Heart to help the American Heart Association raise money for research. All money collected will stay in Nebraska. The activities will be done on the morning of February 8. Students who choose to get involved will be allowed to get out of their exploratory classes that morning. Students that don't like to go house to house to collect money may donate \$5 themselves to get involved. This is for a great cause. If a student comes to your door, I hope you will help sponsor them. ~ Ms Balcom, Holdrege Middle School Physical Ed.

From the School Nurse:

7th Grade Checklist for 2008-2009

1. Make appointment and take student for physical examination
2. Check on immunization to make sure you are in compliance with Nebraska State Law
3. Check about the Meningitis immunization
4. Make sure blue physical form is completed, front and back

The physical examination and being completely immunized against Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hepatitis B and Varicella (if student has not had the Chicken Pox) are all required by Nebraska State Law. The completed physical form must be turned into the middle school by the first day of school for the 2008-2009 school year. The physical is to be done by a physician, physician's assistant or nurse practitioner. Students not in compliance are in danger of being excluded from school until the requirements are met. Please contact Rachel Wells, RN, School Nurse, Holdrege Public Schools, if there are any concerns or questions.

Influenza Recommendations

This recommendation has been made in coordination with the Nebraska Health and Human Services Systems, local school officials, and medical officials in the affected areas.

Influenza or flu is a respiratory infection caused by a virus. Those infected with the flu virus, will usually feel symptoms 1-4 days after being infected. ***Infected individuals can spread the flu to others before they have symptoms and for another 3-4 days after their symptoms disappear.***

Symptoms of the flu may start very quickly and may include: body aches, chills, dry cough, fever, headache, sore throat and stuffy nose. Typically the fever begins to decline on the second or third day of illness. The flu almost never causes symptoms in the stomach and intestines.

Students who are ill should stay home until 4-5 days after symptoms start. We recommend that you consult your primary care physician or your local clinic if you have symptoms. Your health care provider may prescribe an antiviral medicine. Antiviral medication may reduce the length of time fever and other symptoms last and allow you to feel better faster. To work well, this medication must be taken within 48 hours after the flu begins. If your family has been affected by the flu and you plan to visit your local health provider please let them know in advance that you are having flu-like symptoms to reduce the transmission to other patients. Here are some tips for helping those who are sick with the flu:

- * To keep them hydrated, have them drink lots of liquids
- * Rest is important!
- * For fever, sore throat and muscle aches, use ibuprofen (Motrin) or acetaminophen (Tylenol). **Do not use aspirin with children or teenagers;** it can cause Reye's syndrome, a life-threatening illness.
- * Instruct them not to cough into their hand; coughing should be done into a sleeve or other article of clothing.
- * Be sure everyone in your home washes their hands frequently.
- * Keep the people who are sick with the flu away from the people who are not sick.

The flu can be a serious illness with approximately 200,000 individuals hospitalized and 36,000 deaths in the United States each year. It is not too late to get flu vaccine. In our area we are noting that those who had flu vaccine are not becoming ill. Contact your health provider for information about obtaining flu vaccine or contact the Two Rivers Public Health Department, 701 4th Avenue, Suite 1, Holdrege, NE 68949, (308)995-4778, fax (308)995-4073.

Fifth's Disease

Recently we have had several confirmed cases of Fifth's Disease throughout the district. Fifth's Disease is caused by a virus known as Parvovirus B 19. It is a common childhood disease. **You can only get this once in your lifetime!**

Fifth's Disease is spread mostly by respiratory droplets. This means when an infected person coughs or sneezes, the virus can spread. Fifth's Disease is **ONLY** contagious during the early part of the illness, before the rash appears. By the time the child has the characteristic "slapped cheek" rash; he or she is no longer contagious and may remain in school. Fifth's Disease is highly contagious in a classroom environment.

The symptoms of Fifth's Disease are as follows:

- low grade fever (or no fever), cold-like symptoms, headache,
- Bright red rash on the cheeks ("slapped cheek" rash) followed by a fine lacy rash over the rest of the body that may itch. The rash may last for 5 to 7 days. After exposure to sunlight or heat, the rash may reappear for 1-3 weeks. Other symptoms are usually gone by the time the rash appears.
- 20% of adults and children with Fifth's Disease will show no symptoms
- Symptoms begin from 4-20 days after exposure

Fifth's disease has no specific treatment because it is caused by a virus. There are also few complications of Fifth's Disease. However, children with sickle cell anemia, chronic anemia, or impaired immune systems may become seriously ill and require medical care. Also, pregnant women (who have not previously had the illness) should avoid contact with persons who have Fifth's Disease. The virus can infect the baby prior to birth and could cause serious complications. **If you are pregnant and think you have been exposed to Fifth's Disease, call your doctor as soon as possible!**

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call me at 995-8988 or email me at rwells@esu11.org. Thank you!

Information From the Activities Department:

Holdrege Public Schools activities department uses Schedule Star to manage activity schedules and related information. The activity information is available to everyone on the Internet. The website for Holdrege Public Schools activities can be accessed one of two ways:



- Use the Holdrege Public Schools website at: <http://www.thedusters.org/> and then click the activities icon
- or go to <http://www.highschoolsports.net> (select Nebraska and select Holdrege High School)

The Holdrege School activities website will display current daily activities and the choice to view either the current week or month schedule. Specific sport schedules may be downloaded to your Outlook Calendar. Interested individuals may also sign up to receive email updates related to postponed and canceled events. You also can print out directions to contests.

D.A.R.E. Classes Begin For 5th Graders:

Our annual D.A.R.E classes began on Tuesday, January 15. The instructor for this year's class is Holdrege Police Officer Mitch Jones. DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) is a fifteen week program that helps students make correct choices in resisting drugs, alcohol, tobacco and violence. The program has been taking place in Nebraska since 1990 but has undergone several changes to keep up with the times. The program will culminate with a graduation ceremony at The Tassel. The date for this celebration will be set at a later date. We would like to invite everyone to come at that time and congratulate the students who have qualified as a D.A.R.E. graduate.

Music Boosters' Update:

The Holdrege Music Booster Soup Supper held January 12th was a huge success, as it raised over \$1300, which will go to benefit both band and choir in the high school and middle school. Applications for the Holdrege Music Boosters' Scholarship are available in the Guidance office. Students can earn credit toward a music trip by bringing food for concessions for the upcoming district conference in April; sign up sheets will go up next month on the band/choir room doors. The music boosters' next meeting is February 19th at 7:00 PM in the high school band room. If you have a student in band/choir in high school or middle school, you are a music booster! Please plan on attending!



Those with More Education and Higher Household Incomes are More Likely to Have Had Music Education:

Music education influences level of personal fulfillment for many U.S. adults

Rochester, N.Y. – November 12, 2007 – Whether it's chorus, band or just violin lessons, music impacts Americans' lives. While singing in a chorus or playing an instrument is fun, it can also provide important skills like creative problem solving that can help lead to higher education and incomes as well as personal fulfillment.

Three-quarters (75%) of American adults were involved in some type of music program while in school. Half (51%) were involved in chorus while 42 percent had some type of formal instrumental

lessons. Just over one-third (35%) were in a school instrumental ensemble, such as an orchestra or band while 14 percent were part of an informal group, such as a garage band and 12 percent had formal vocal lessons.

Music education is associated with those who go on to higher education. In looking at what groups may have participated more in music, education shows the largest differences. Two-thirds (65%) of those with a high school education or less participated in music compared to four in five (81%) with some college education and 86 percent of those with a college education. The largest group to participate in music, however, are those with a post graduate education as almost nine in ten (88%) of this group participated while in school.

Music education is also associated with higher incomes. Three-quarters of people (74%) with household incomes of \$34,999 or less and 72 percent of those with incomes of \$35,000-\$49,999 participated in music, compared to 83 percent of those with incomes of \$150,000 or more.

The Harris Poll® #112, November 12, 2007

By Regina Corso, Director, *The Harris Poll*, Harris Interactive.

Music Education Provides Personal Fulfillment

Seven in ten U.S. adults say that music education had at least some influence on their current level of personal fulfillment, with more than one-third (37%) saying that their music education has been extremely or very influential and one-third (33%) saying it was somewhat influential. Just one-quarter say music education had no influence at all. Those with a post-graduate degree are more likely to say music education was extremely or very important than those with a high school or less education or a college graduate (51% compared to 28% and 38%, respectively).

The type of music program one was involved in and how long that involvement lasted also matters when looking at personal fulfillment. Over half of those who had vocal lessons (52%) or were in a garage band (54%) say music education was extremely or very influential to their current level of personal fulfillment as do 46 percent of those who took instrument lessons. And, while it's probably not surprising that over three quarters (78%) of those who are still involved in music say it was extremely or very influential, three in five (60%) of those with more than five years of involvement also say music education was extremely or very influential to their current level of music fulfillment.

We Can Work It Out: The Skills Music Education Provides

Besides just the music, participating in music programs can also provide people with certain skills that can be utilized in a job and career. Just under half (47%) of those who were in a music program say music education was extremely or very important in giving them the ability to strive for individual excellence in a group setting. A plurality (44%) say music education was extremely or very important in teaching how to work towards common goals and two in five (41%) say it was extremely or very important in providing them with a disciplined approach to solving problems. Just over one-third say music education gave them the skill of creative problem solving (37%) and how to be flexible in work situations (36%). The more education one has, the more likely one thinks that music education was important in providing each of these five skills. In fact, almost six in ten (58%) post-graduates say music education was extremely or very important as they strive for individual excellence in a group setting. Besides post-graduates, African Americans are also more likely to say that music education was important in providing them with each of these skills. In looking at what the learnings and habits from music education provide, two-thirds of adults (66%), and 72

percent of those who were involved in music, say it equips people to be better team players in their career. Music education also helps one to solve problems – three in five adults (61%) and two-thirds (66%) of those involved in music say music education provides people with a disciplined approach to solving problems. Music also provides a sense of organization. Three in five adults (59%) and almost two-thirds (64%) of those who had music education say that it prepares someone to manage the tasks of their job more successfully.

The Beat Goes On

Even when the lessons could end, those who had music education continued with the program. Just one in six (14%) continued with their program for less than one year, while one-third (33%) continued for 1 to 3 years. Almost one-quarter (22%) participated for three to five years and 19 percent of those who had music participated for over 5 years. One in ten adults are still involved in a music program. Education also plays a role as those with post graduate degrees are more likely to be involved in music longer; three in ten participated for over 5 years and 14 percent are still involved. Type of music program also impacts how long one participated. One-quarter of those who took instrumental lessons (24%) and orchestra (25%) continued with their programs for more than five years. Also, one in five of those who take vocal lessons (22%) and are in a garage band (20%) are still involved in a musical program. With these, as opposed to chorus, the knowledge of reading music is necessary and, with that skill, one may want to continue their involvement longer.

So What?

Whether it is singing with a group of other students, playing trumpet in the junior high orchestra or taking years of piano lessons, music education hopefully provides, on its face, an appreciation of music. But it also provides much more than that. Even after the lessons are long gone, the skill set that those years provided lives on for those who had music education. Whether it's learning to work in group settings or becoming more disciplined, music education provides certain fundamentals and those with this background now say it was influential in contributing to their current level of personal fulfillment. With all the benefits of music education, its continued importance in education is something that cannot be denied. In fact, in looking at how those with more education are more likely to have been in a music program, we can probably say that music education is a tool to not only get students to stay in school, but to continue to further their education.

From the Counselor's Corner:

Just recently, I received a wonderful thank you note from our local food pantry. I wanted to share it with you. "We would like to thank all the students, parents and staff for their contributions of food and items needed for our pantry. It's humbling to know that there are many students, parents and staff who gave from their heart to help others. The generosity of food will help to fill many food boxes in the months to come. Our shelves are full thanks to your donations of over 2, 000 items. Thanks again for caring about the people of Phelps County. Your donations were greatly appreciated. Great job HMS students, parents and staff!!!!!! With thanks, Phelps Community Pantry Board and Volunteers

p.s. Thank you fifth and sixth grade students for making all the special Thanksgiving and Christmas cards that went with the food boxes.

I visited the fifth grade homeroom and talked with the students about becoming a TeamMate Mentee. Each student was to take a note home explaining what The TeamMate program was about. Twenty-nine students returned their parent permission slip. So far, Mary Schneider and I have trained twenty adults as TeamMate Mentors. The next step for me is to interview the students to see what their interests are and match them up with a Mentor. We hope to have them matched and ready to meet each other by the third week in February. If you are interested or if you know of someone who might enjoy becoming a TeamMate Mentor, please call the school @ 995-5421 or talk with Mary Schneider or me. Each month I will put something in our newsletter about our new TeamMates program!

Mark Your Calendar

Friday, February 1st, our Student Council will be having a cake raffle at the girls and boys varsity basketball game. Along with raffling off cakes, they will be raffling off some Danny Woodhead pictures autographed by him, as well as a couple of Sports Illustrated magazines he was featured in, in October 2007. Danny grew up in North Platte, Nebraska and plays football at Chadron State College. "He has become the most prolific rusher in college football history, breaking the NCAA career record of 7,353 yards. Woodhead has rushed for 7,550 yards. Woodhead has caught the eye of NFL scouts," as quoted in Sports Illustrated, October 22, 2007 edition. All proceeds will be to benefit our TeamMates program. We hope you will consider purchasing some raffle tickets. We will also be introducing our newly trained TeamMate Mentors along with our TeamMate Mentor Advisory Board during the halftime of both games.

Random Acts of Kindness and Be a Friend Month

The month of February is called "Random Acts of Kindness and Be a Friend Month. Each week I put together TEAM SKILLS for the fifth and sixth grade homeroom teachers to do with their homeroom students. These are various activities that I have planned for the week. The first week of January, the students wrote down five things on a star that they were going to do throughout the year "2008" to make it a "GREAT" YEAR! They also did an activity called: "Toot Your Own Horn:" They were to write down or draw three things that they felt that they did well at school or at home. They were invited to share these with their fellow classmates. The past two weeks we have been focusing on the importance of good study skills. The students enjoyed listening and watching their fellow classmates perform skits about how zeros can affect their grade and how important it is to plan out and do their homework. The focus for February will be learning and doing random acts of kindness, and how to make friends and be a friend. Please encourage your students at home about the importance of thinking of others and doing kind and helpful things for you and others. Thanks for your continued support! Mrs. Berreckman or Mrs. B. ☺

Just remember:

Together Everyone Achieves More!

