

Holdrege Middle School

February 2012

Children – Our Community's Investment

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

From the Principal's Desk:

Our school improvement goal is "Improving reading in all curricular areas for all students." We will be using the WFSG to work toward this goal. The WFSG stands for Whole Faculty Study Groups. Once a week at 1:45 on Friday afternoons, the teachers will meet to look at strategies and indicators to work towards improving reading scores in the district.

Check out the Web Site

Check the web site for news about what is going on in the school. 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. Holdrege Public Schools activities department uses Schedule Star to manage activity schedules and related information. 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.



Student-Led Conferences

We will be having student-led conferences on Tuesday, February 14th, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and Wednesday, February 15th, from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 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 to 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 Friday, February 17TH.** **We will have 1:30 dismissal for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of the week of February 13th.**

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. This applies to birthdays and other special occasions as well. Thank you for your sensitivity to this issue.

Spring Pictures

Spring pictures will be on Wednesday, February 29th. The student can choose not to have his/her 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.

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

Our annual D.A.R.E classes have been going on first semester for the fifth grade. 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 February 6th at 7:00. 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.

ATTENTION 6TH GRADE PARENTS

Do you have a student that will be in 7th grade next year? It is not too early to start getting them ready. Nebraska Law (LB79-444) states that **any student entering Seventh Grade for the first time is required to have a physical examination** given by a physician, physician's assistant or accredited nurse practitioner within six months prior to the entrance of the student in a Nebraska school. If the physical is also an athletic physical, **May** is the earliest it can be scheduled. Please don't wait until close to the start of school to obtain the physical. The doctor's offices have many physicals that are required prior to school starting and by waiting until the last minute, it might be difficult to get the physical before school starts. **The completed physical form** is to be presented to the school no later than the first day of school in August. The local medical clinics have these physical forms.

There are also immunizations that your 7th grader is required to obtain. **All 7th graders are to receive a Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis) vaccine. It must be noted that your child received a Tdap and not just a TD.** Effective July 2011, every student, enrolled in school, regardless of grade, is required to have **2 Varicella (Chicken Pox) immunizations**, unless your child has had the disease, Chicken Pox. We must have documentation, on file, stating that your child has had the disease, Chicken Pox and when.

The vaccine against Meningitis is not required but is suggested. This protects your child against bacterial Meningitis, which can be deadly.

There are other immunizations that your medical provider might discuss with you and your child. All of these immunizations are for the protection of your child.

There is an Immunization Clinic in Holdrege, the 4th Thursday of each month, excluding November, from 2-4 pm at Phelps Memorial Health Center community room. Call toll free, 1-877-209-3723, to make an appointment. A parent or guardian must accompany the child and the child's immunization record must be presented at the clinic or your child will be denied receiving the immunizations. There is a nominal fee but no one is refused because of inability to pay. If you have any concerns or questions, don't hesitate to contact the school nurse, Abbie Soneson, RN.

Master Teacher

The Master Teacher Award was established in 1977 by the Board of Education to recognize outstanding teaching in the Holdrege Public Schools. The award is presented at the May Board of Education meeting.

The Board may choose to give no award, one award, or no more than two awards in any given year. The recipient shall be currently teaching in the Holdrege Public Schools and have a record of outstanding teaching based on the growth of his/her students in the classroom and of the teacher himself/herself in his/her professional field. Nominations submitted on the appropriate form will be accepted by the Board of Education from any patron of the school district.

Members of the Board of Education review nominations and select the recipient(s) and a Master Teacher Award plaque is presented to each awardee. A cumulative plaque, recognizing recipients, is on display at the Central Office.

Nominations are due in Central Office by March 31, 2012. Forms are available at www.thedusters.org or Central Office.

Technology News

If you have a student in 7th or 8th grade Tech. this quarter, you may want to monitor their progress. They should be done with the first module on 1/16/12, the second module on 1/30/12, third module on 2/10/12 and the last module on 3/2/12. All of these dates are target dates to help the student know their progress is on time, behind or ahead. The dates are not hard fast deadlines just guidelines for getting all of the work completed.



Don't forget to click the Activities button at www.thedusters.org for current schedules of activities!

JANUARY IS NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH – To celebrate and thank our TeamMate Mentors. Jean Berreckman and Kristin Prill Co-Coordinator of the TeamMates Mentoring Program and the mentees of the Holdrege Middle School had a "Mentor Subway Thank you Celebration" on Wednesday, January 18th and Thursday, January 19th during lunch time. The mentors and mentees signed up for what day worked best for them. We currently have sixty-three matches in the TeamMates Mentoring program 5th – 9th grade. Before Christmas we had a pizza party for the Mentees and Mentors at the Holdrege High School. Teresa Moore is the TeamMates contact person at the High School. We appreciate the time that each mentor takes each week to meet with their student mentee. They spend time having lunch, talking, playing cards or a board game, making a craft, shooting hoops or baking. Just to listen, care and be a friend – that is what mentoring is all about.

TEAMMATES MISSION: *To positively impact the world by inspiring youth to reach their full potential through mentoring.*

We are still in need of more adults both female and male to be mentors. If you are interested or know of someone who would make a good mentor, please contact Jean Berreckman or Kristin Prill at the Holdrege Middle School at 995-5421.

