

Holdrege Middle School

November 2007

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 school year is moving very quickly here at Holdrege Middle School. It is already the end of the first quarter and report cards were handed out on October 25th. As the second quarter starts, it is important that we all remind and encourage your student to keep focused on the importance of getting their work done. At this time of year with the holidays coming up and winter activities starting, it is sometimes distracting to our students to the point that we forget what is important. I would like to again stress the importance of making your house a great place for students to be successful.

Communication About Activities and Other Events

In an effort to keep parents informed about upcoming activities and events, the web site (www.thedusters.org) has an activities button that you can activate to learn more about what is going on in the district. The activities button is on the right hand side of the web site. The site has dates and times of upcoming activities. It even has, in some cases, maps of where activities are located in away games and events. Please take the time to go through the site to see how it can be of benefit to you in planning the school week for your son or daughter. I will continue to put into the newsletter activities that will be coming up and any changes to those plans. We also post the daily announcements on the web site, under middle school information. If an event is canceled I will use the Connect Ed message system to get the word out to all of the parents involved.

Infinite Campus

During Parent-Teacher Conferences I was able to set up several new parents to the district as well as fifth grade parents on the parent portal. If you were not able to get signed up for the portal, please give me a call and I will get you set up. On the portal you are able to check your child's grades, attendance, behavior, and assignments.

School Safety

I have again heard from patrons that children are crossing the street up or down from the school crosswalk. We have adults at the crosswalk to make sure that students are safe in crossing the street. With it getting dark earlier, motorists do not pick up the sight of students crossing the road as easily. Please talk to your child about this matter, so that they remain safe in crossing the road. We are excited about the number of students that are walking and biking to school. We will be having our first drawing of the new bicycle for those students that have been participating in the program.

We had our school safety meeting this month with the middle school safety team. We are continuing to update our safety procedures and practice safety drills, like school lock downs. If you have any concerns about safety at the middle school, please call me at school or e-mail me at rubaker@esu11.org.

Activities Update

We are into girls basketball and boys wrestling season here at the middle school. Practices have already begun and the girls' first contest will be November 6th with Broken Bow. The wrestlers will be at Gibbon on November 9th. We encourage all of our students to participate in as many activities as possible. Research done by the school activities association shows that there is a link in the academic success of a student and their participation in school activities.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

We had a successful Parent-Teacher conference. Our figures indicate that we had about 94% of our parents in attendance. This is great! Thanks. We also asked you to fill out a survey at that time. Your response was greatly appreciated. We use this to help in our self-evaluation. Here are the results from that survey and the survey questions.

Survey Results of last Five years

	2003	2004
1.	SA-47%, A-46%, DK-7%	SA-49%, A-48%, DK-3%
2.	SA-56%, A-43%, D-1%	SA-50%, A-50%
3.	SA-38%, A-61%, DK-1%	SA-42%, A-48%
4.	SA-50%, A-50%	SA-49%, A-49%, D-1%,DK-1%
5.	SA-50%, A-50%	SA-69%, A-31%
6.	SA-36%, A-63%, Dk-1%	SA-43%, A-57%
7.	SA-33%, A-64%, D-1%, DK-2%	SA-40%, A-47%, D-1%, DK-2%
8.	SA-32%, A-68%	SA-34%, A-66%
9.	SA-42%, A-58%	SA-40%, A-58%, DK-2%
10.	SA-42%,A-56%, D-2%	SA-26%, A-71%, D-2%, DK-1%
11.	SA-51%, A-46%, DK-3%	SA-50%, A-49%, DK1%
12.	Grade-A-69%, B-30%, C-1%	Grade-A-70%, B-29%, C-1%
	2005	2006
1.	SA-46%,A-51%,D-2%,DK-1%	SA-51%, A48%, DK-1%
2.	SA-52%, A-47%,D-1%	SA-54%, A45%, DK-1%
3.	SA-49%, A-50%,D-1%	SA-53%, A46%, DK-1%
4.	SA-52%, A-47%, D-1%	SA-45%, A-46%, D-1%, SD-1%, DK-6%
5.	SA-62%, A-38%	SA-72%, A-28%
6.	SA-46%, A-51%, D-1%, DK-2%	SA-51%, A-45%, D-1%, DK-3%
7.	SA-48%, A-46%, D-2%, DK-4%	SA-47%, A-48%, DK-5%

8.	SA-47%, A-51%, D-1%, DK-1%	SA-45%, A-52%, DK-3%
9.	SA-48%, A-52%	SA-51%, A-47%, DK-2%
10.	SA-41%, A-57%, D-1%, DK-1%	SA-43%, A-52%, D-5%
11.	SA-52%, A-46%, D-1%, DK-1%	SA-42%, A-55%, D-1%, DK-2%
12.	Grade-A-72%, B-24%, C-3%, D-1%	Grade-A-64%, B-33%, C-3%

2007

1.	SA-45%, A-54%, D-.5% SD-.5%,DK-.5%
2.	SA-47%, A-52%, D-1%, DK-.5%
3.	SA-36%. A-63%, D-.5%, DK-.5%
4.	SA-45%, A-54%, D-.5%, DK-.5%
5.	SA-61%, A-39%
6.	SA-46%, A-53%, DK-1%
7.	SA-43%, A-51%, D-2%, SD-1%, DK-3%
8.	SA-43%, A-56%, D-.5%, DK-.5%
9.	SA-44%, A-55%, D-.5%, SD-.5%
10.	SA-34%, A-63%, D-2%, SD-1%
11.	SA-35%, A-64%, D-.5%, DK-.5%
12.	Grade-A-63%,B-35%, C-1%, D-1%

SA=Strongly Agree; A=Agree; D=Disagree; SD=Strongly Disagree; DK=Don't Know

HOLDREGE MIDDLE SCHOOL
Parent Survey – October 2006

- This school has clear, consistent rules for student behavior.
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Don't Know
- The principal and teachers really care about students.
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Don't Know
- This school encourages my child to be self-directing, independent, and successful.
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree

- C Disagree
 - D Strongly Disagree
 - E Don't Know
4. I feel that the school is a safe place for my child.
- A Strongly Agree
 - B Agree
 - C Disagree
 - D Strongly Disagree
 - E Don't Know
5. The school is neat, clean, and well maintained.
- A Strongly Agree
 - B Agree
 - C Disagree
 - D Strongly Disagree
 - E Don't Know
6. Staff at this school are willing to listen to parents.
- A Strongly Agree
 - B Agree
 - C Disagree
 - D Strongly Disagree
 - E Don't Know
7. It is easy for me to talk to the principal or another school administrator.
- A Strongly Agree
 - B Agree
 - C Disagree
 - D Strongly Disagree
 - E Don't Know
8. Teachers in this school are dedicated to helping all students learn.
- A Strongly Agree
 - B Agree
 - C Disagree
 - D Strongly Disagree
 - E Don't Know
9. Teachers make parents feel welcome at school.
- A Strongly Agree
 - B Agree
 - C Disagree
 - D Strongly Disagree
 - E Don't Know

10. I am kept informed about school activities.
- A Strongly Agree
 - B Agree
 - C Disagree
 - D Strongly Disagree
 - E Don't Know
11. This school is doing a good job teaching the basic academic subjects.
- A Strongly Agree
 - B Agree
 - C Disagree
 - D Strongly Disagree
 - E Don't Know
12. Students are often given the grades A, B, C, D, and F to denote the quality of their work. Suppose the public schools themselves, in this community, were graded in the same way. What grade would you give this school -- A, B, C, D, or F?
- A = A
 - B = B
 - C = C
 - D = D
 - E = F

Exercise More + Eat Well = Live Longer

The Holdrege Schools have received grant money for implementing a wellness program for their students. The Holdrege Middle School has begun a walk or bike to school program and a noon recess mileage club for their students. Students will be allowed to put their name in a drawing for some neat prizes by being involved in either of these programs. The wellness program is also in the process of working with the lunch program to offer healthier choices for snacks or extras students might pick up to go with their lunch. - Diane Balcom, Physical Ed. Dept.

Physical Education - What's Up!

As the first quarter is finishing up, the students have all been tested to see how they stand with the national norm. These tests are to just let the students know if they have any weaknesses in certain areas, such as abdominal strength, arm strength, and cardiovascular. If your child received an N in certain areas that is an indication they have a weakness in that area set up by the national norm. When students are exercising in Physical Ed. it is also very important they have a good pair of tennis shoes. The feet are our base to support our body. Aches and pains may be because of inadequate shoes. Besides working on our fitness, students also get involved in games to help develop their social skills. - Diane Balcom, Physical Ed. Dept.

From Rachel Wells, RN, HPS School Nurse:

Community-Associated Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus

Holdrege Public Schools has had no reported cases of Staph infections. We are taking precautionary measures to ensure this does not happen. On November 5, Dr. Scott Ehresman will be talking with HMS and HHS students and staff about these infections. Additionally, coaches and custodial staff are being educated on the prevention of Staph infections. Maintaining a healthy safe school environment is a priority for HPS.

Staphylococcus aureus is bacteria (germ) normally found on the skin, which usually never causes a problem. This germ can cause mild to severe infections of the skin, lungs, bones, and blood, if it becomes displaced or overgrows. In the past, staph infections have been easily treated with antibiotic therapy; however, there is a new strain being seen that is resistant to many antibiotics. The name of this bug is Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA). There are two types of this bacteria, healthcare acquired and community acquired. Community-associated MRSA is what affects people who are not in a hospital setting.

Anyone can get sick with MRSA. However, there are risk factors that make people more likely to develop this infection. Being very young or very old, having a serious illness, playing contact sports, sharing towels, personal items, or athletic equipment, and living or having close contact with someone who is infected are some of the risk factors.

MRSA infections can start as small red bumps on the skin and may look like pimples or spider bites, they then, quickly turn into severe abscesses (pus-filled areas of infection). MRSA can also start in other ways and spread deeper into the body. However, the infections involving the skin are showing up more often among the healthy people and are affecting students and athletes.

MRSA infections are usually treated with powerful antibiotics. Preventing a Staph infection is the best treatment. Here are some helpful tips on preventing these infections:

- WASH HANDS thoroughly and often with soap and water
- Keep cuts and abrasions clean and covered with a bandage until healed.
- Avoid contact with other people's wounds or material contaminated by wounds.
- DO NOT SHARE items such as razors, soap, ointments/balms, towels/wash cloths, clothing, or uniforms.
- If participating in contact sports, cover all cuts, scrapes, and other wounds with a bandage
- Shower with soap immediately after each practice or game. Wash clothing frequently and wipe all non-washable equipment (head protectors, helmets, etc.) with alcohol or antibiotic solution after each person uses it.
- See a physician promptly if you have a suspicious skin sore or rash.

8th Grade Science

8th grade classes are now studying science projects and scientific method. They will be applying what they learn by doing an 'at-home' science project to investigate some topic they choose. Please encourage each student to challenge themselves with a project they can really learn from.

Life has many opportunities to solve problems by using the scientific method, such as finding the right oil to keep a door hinge from squeaking, or which paper product might be the most absorbent. Some will actually have to create their own equipment to use in the investigation. Who knows, they might actually 'invent' something new!! – Mr. Ott

From Mrs. Berreckman, Guidance Counselor:
RED RIBBON WEEK - October 29th – Nov. 2nd

The following Holdrege Public School Staff members have planned a school wide celebration for Red Ribbon Week:

Dan Atchinson – High School Counselor
Jean Berreckman – Middle School Counselor
Julie Freburg – Elementary Counselor
Rachel Wells – School nurse
Jamie Christensen – School Psychologist

How Red Ribbon Week was started: The 1985 murder of Enrique “Kiri” Camarena, a special agent with the Drug Enforcement Administration, was the driving force behind Red Ribbon Week. In his hometown of Calexico, California, loved ones started Camarena Clubs in his honor. Members wore red ribbons and pledged to live drug free lives. In multiple states, parent groups took up the cause of promoting red ribbons. Red Ribbon Week became an official national event in 1988.

This year our theme for our Red Ribbon Week is:

“JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST DRUGS!

BELIEVE, ACHIEVE, AND SUCCEED!

Believe in Yourself! Achieve your Dreams!

Set Goals and Succeed! BE DRUG FREE!

Here is the schedule of activities for the week for HMS:

All 5th & 6th graders were invited to participate in the Red Ribbon Week contest. They had the choice of designing a poster with a bill board drug free message, designing a T-shirt with a drug free message, or writing a poem or short story about being drug-free. Top 3 places will be awarded.

All projects will be hung up in the middle school hallways – the week of October 29th.

MONDAY – Kick-off in the gym – 8 A.M. - Brad Butler & Rancho, the drug investigation dog and a skit with a drug free message performed by some senior leaders.

Wrist bands will be handed out in their homerooms today. Every student and staff member will receive one.

Drawing for prizes at the end of each day – if a student's name is drawn they will receive a drug free prize. They must be wearing their wrist band.

HMS Student Council – will tie red ribbons on the car antennas in the middle and high school parking lots after they eat lunch.

TUESDAY - Freaky floats will be served (rainbow sherbet & lemon lime pop) 6th & 8th grade Student Council will make these for their classmates and serve them for 75 cents. Drawing

WEDNESDAY - Wear RED as a sign to be DRUG FREE! Drawing

THURSDAY - Freaky floats will be made and served for all students in the 5th and 7th grade for 75 cents. Drawing

FRIDAY - Popcorn will be sold for 50 cents to all students and staff in CELEBRATION OF RED RIBBON WEEK! Final drawing

***Parents, continue to talk to your children about the importance of being Drug-Free! If you have questions or need support, call me here at the Middle School! Mrs. B. (995-5421)

***Thank you to all parents who signed up for the Red Ribbon Committee through the Holdrege Middle School Parents Association (HMSPA). We appreciated your help and support! -Jean Berreckman & Mary Schneider

ATTENTION PARENTS!!!

Do you have an interest to be involved with a fun parent organization here at HMS? If so contact our new Holdrege Middle School Parent Association (or HMSPA) President, Janelle Pfiefer, Vice President, Lori Watson, Treasurer, Mary Jo Breece, and Secretary, Brandy Edgren. We had our 1st meeting on October 1, 2007. At that time parents were asked to sign up to be on a committee, to help out with one or two activities. Come join the fun! Be a part of the HMS TEAM! Just remember: Together Everyone Achieves MORE!

Title 1

Fall is here and it's time for the Title 1 Annual Fall Parents' Meeting, which will be on Tuesday, November 13, 2007 at 7:00 in room 105.5. Parents who have children in the 5th and 6th grade Title 1 program are invited to this meeting. Come and learn about the Title 1 program and how it gives students an "extra boost" in the area of reading and math. – Mrs. Shield

Scholastic Book Fair

**THE SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR WILL BE COMING TO
HOLDREGE MIDDLE SCHOOL
NOVEMBER 12 - NOVEMBER 16, 2007.**



Hours for viewing the book fair:

Monday, November 12: 7:30 am – 4:00 pm

Tuesday, November 13: 7:30 am - 4:00 pm

Wednesday, November 14: 7:30 am – 4:00 pm

Thursday, November 15: 7:30 am - 7:00 pm*

Friday, November 16: 7:30 am – 2:30 pm

Remember.....encouraging your child to read helps to ensure his or her success!

Also, please remember that money made from the book fair will be used to purchase new books for our library. Bring friends and family to do some birthday or early Christmas shopping. Adult titles are also available. Help support our school while encouraging your entire family to read!

The book fair will include the newest titles as well as books that are fun, interesting and inspirational. Students who purchase items will be eligible for a drawing for free posters.

*Please note that the book fair will be open Thursday evening until 7:00 pm.