

Holdrege Middle School

November 2011

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 21st. 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 home a great place for students to be successful.

MAP Results

MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) has been very helpful to the middle school staff. The information that they receive from the reports is timely (the old ITBS reports took months) and informative for the teachers. We receive reports on reading, language usage, math and science. Each subject is then broken down into smaller categories where, for example, in reading we receive reports on reading level and five other categories of reading ability. Teachers can then take each category and find what skills they have mastered and which skills they still need to learn. Teachers will be sharing these results with parents during parent-teacher conferences.

Free and Reduced Lunch

If you receive SNAP benefits (formerly food stamps), or TANF, your household qualifies for free meals. If your family meets certain guidelines based on income, you may qualify for free or reduced meals. If your family has experienced a job loss or reduced hours at work, you may now qualify as well.

This program is designed to make sure all our students receive healthy meals at school. You can ask for and submit an application at any time during the school year. You only need to complete one application for your entire family, and you can simply fill it out and send it back to school with your child. Once we receive your application, you will be notified shortly if your household qualifies. If you need help filling it out, please talk to Linda Flaherty or Dana Brinkman at the HPS Central Office, 995-8663, or Mr. Baker at school, 995-5421. The school staff would be happy to help you.

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 for 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 Blackboard Connect message system to get the word out to all of the parents involved.

Infinite Campus

During parent-teacher conferences I would be happy to set up parents on the Infinite Campus parent portal if you have not yet done so. On the portal, you are able to check your child's grades, attendance, behavior, and assignments. You can also put money on your child's lunch account utilizing the PaySchools link. Infinite Campus is also accessed through the school web site, www.thedusters.org.

School Safety

I have again heard from patrons that children are not crossing the street at the school crosswalk. We have adults at the crosswalk to make sure that students are safe when crossing the street. With the early morning darkness, motorists do not see students crossing the road as easily. Please talk to your child about this matter, so that they remain safe when crossing the road.

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 entering girls basketball and boys wrestling season here at the middle school. Practices have already begun, and the girls' first contest will be November 8th with Broken Bow. The wrestlers will be in action on November 10th at Gibbon. 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 between the academic success of a student and their participation in school activities.

Picking up and dropping off students.

Reminder: please do not park in the drop off lane as this impedes traffic. Please park in the parking stalls if your child is not out there standing to get picked up.

Weather Emergencies

When weather or emergency issues arise, we often cannot plan for them. **Please make a plan with your children as to what to do or where to go if school has to be closed early with little warning, or if the weather changes by dismissal time.** It is a concern that students do not know what to do in such a situation. Phone calls and messages are difficult to dispatch at these times. It helps if your child has an idea of what he/she is to do in these situations ahead of time.

School Closing Information

When weather is a concern, parents ultimately have the final decision on whether or not to send children to school or to pick them up early. An attempt will be made to have school every scheduled day. If, however, due to inclement weather or if unforeseen circumstances arise, Radio Station KUVR Holdrege and Television Station KHGI Channel 13 Kearney will carry information related to the school closing. Information will also be posted at www.thedusters.org and Blackboard Connect calls will be made.

School may be delayed to allow for additional assessment of weather conditions and/or for snow removal. Announcements will be made if food service (breakfast/lunch) schedules are disrupted.

If weather conditions develop during the day that warrants dismissal, the same procedure will be followed. Conditions may exist that children on bus routes will be dismissed and taken home, but school will remain in session.

Tour Washington, DC

Space is still available for the trip to Washington, D.C., on June 4-8, 2012. This tour is open to current 7th & 8th graders and any adult. The FINAL registration deadline is NOVEMBER 30, 2011. Don't miss this opportunity to tour our nation's capital with your friends. You can register online at www.worldstrides.org using the Trip ID #66284 or register by phone at 1-800-468-5899. Registration forms may be picked up from Mrs. Daffer in the middle school media center. If you have any questions, contact Mrs. Daffer at school or call her at 308-995-5120.

From the Counselor's corner:

Happy Fall to you all! ☺

This year has started off great! This year the theme for the school year is "EVERYONE FITS IN THE HMS PUZZLE!" Each student is an important piece to the HMS puzzle. Without them our puzzle is incomplete. We need each student to be in attendance regularly, making their best efforts in their classes. The fifth graders are doing wonderful and enjoying being in the middle school and are fitting in well in the HMS puzzle. They have been a great addition. I am still learning all their names. We have one hundred and two fifth graders. The sixth, seventh and eighth graders are also adjusting to their new grade levels. Please let me know if you or your son/daughter have any questions or concerns at any time during the school year. Together we can all make HMS a safe place for learning and growth. We are glad you are a part of the HMS TEAM!

STUDENTS + PARENTS + STAFF = SUCCESS!

HMS Happenings so far this year:

*A big thank-you to our PTO parents for the ice cream social at the beginning of the school year!

*Student Council elections – there were so many good kids that ran for Student Council this year. Please refer to this list of students that were elected. They are here to serve all HMS students and help to welcome all students!

*Our first seventh and eighth grade dance went well! ☺

*The Duster Dollar Cart is up and running, students can still spend their duster dollars they earned from last year till the end of October.

*October is ANTI-BULLYING PREVENTION MONTH – I am going into the classrooms and doing education about how to be aware of and stop bullying in school. I will continue to go into the classrooms and teach the students how to be assertive and what to do if a bullying situation happens. We also have a "BULLY BOX" that students can write a note and put it in the box if they have been bullied or have seen someone being bullied. Mr. Baker and I read the notes and deal with the situations right away. We do not tolerate bullying at HMS!

*RED RIBBON WEEK was October 17-25. Student Council planned a lot of fun activities for the week: Each student was given a dog tag that said: "THESE PAWS DON'T TOUCH DRUGS", we drew two names from each homeroom and prizes were given if they were wearing their dog tag. StuCo tied red ribbons on all the cars in the parking lot at HMS, central office and the High School for a reminder to be drug-free. The StuCo served "Freaky Floats" for 50 cents and we had a Red Ribbon Celebration in the gym, Mr. Baker talked about all the achievements for the first quarter and STUCo planned a tug of war contest with fun games and relay to end the Celebration.

*TeamMates is underway with 50 students from the 6th, 7th & 8th grade. We have fifteen new fifth graders who will be joining the HMS TEAMMATES program.

Lot's of fun and exciting things here at HMS! We are glad your student is a part of the HMS puzzle!
~Mrs. Berreckman

HOLDREGE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT COUNCIL 2011-2012

5th GRADE:

MRS. BULT

Alexa Berney
Sydney Reed

MRS. GRIMM

Gage Holt
Alivia Nelson

MR. MATTSON

Matt Anderson
Tyler Bialas

MRS. URIBE

Morgan Marquardt
Ty Urbom

6th GRADE:

MR. EVANS

Creighton Hinrichs
Justine Johnson

MR. HUDSON

Natalie Janssen
Charles Weed

MRS. SCHNEIDER

Sydney Nelson
Alex Wells

MRS. WELL

Caitlin Dahl
Preston Garringer

7th GRADE:

MRS. BREWER

Jackson Berney
Karli Hale

MR. HILD

Makenzie Wells
Tyler Buck

MRS. FUEHRER

Haley Hixson
Brennan Williams

MRS. MENTZER

Cal Nelson
Jacqueline Schrock

8th GRADE

MRS. ANDERSON

Ellie Brown
Jared Hunke

MRS. HARTZOG

Grace Schrock - PRESIDENT
Avery Johnson -TREASURER

MR. KOMENDA

Mariclaire Prill
Abbie Nelson - SECRETARY

MR. OTT

Josh Anderson
Alex Alber-VICE PRESIDENT

CONGRATULATIONS!!!